

# History of Banksia Palliative Care Service Inc.



An Overview  
1989 - 2017

On behalf of Bankisia Palliative Care Service I wish to acknowledge the effort and dedication of volunteer Anne Chomiak. Anne compiled a major part of the content of this document and also established an archive of Bankisia's historical documents.

The foundations laid by Annie were built upon and completed by our Community Liaison Coordinator Tim Paul.

This document is an overview of Bankisia's history, capturing our significant chapters.

We value the importance of community partnerships in ensuring Bankisia's past successes and for those in the future.

We look forward to reading about more successes over the next 27 years.

Julie Paul

Executive Officer

October 2017

---

<b>DATE</b>	<b>EVENT</b>
<b>1989</b>	Interim Committee of Management holds its first public meeting Report of Feasibility Study by the firm Wyse, Wannan & Morris
<b>1991</b>	Dr Chris Brook of the Health Department (Vic.) announces a recurrent grant of \$50,000 to allow Banksia Palliative Care Service (Banksia) to begin
<b>1992</b>	Initial office set up at RDNS Diamond Valley  Our first President - John Shilliday. First staff were; Annette Brunton Administration/Patient Care Coordinator and Pam Hickingbotham Volunteer/Pastoral Care Coordinator with Walter Cosolo Honorary Patient Care Medical Consultant  A year of transition for Banksia with movement from the Pilot Project Stage to the initial Operation Phase and acceptance of clients onto the formal program.  First client referral to Banksia
<b>1993</b>	Federal Government allocates \$50 million to palliative care in Australia, and Banksia received \$400,000 in 1994/5  1 <sup>st</sup> Anniversary Thanks giving Service at St John's Anglican Church
<b>1994</b>	Brian Luby is appointed as Project Officer. Foundation committee member Katherine Kingsbury resigns. Annette Brunton resigns and Karen Code replaces her whilst Julie Paul also joins as a palliative care nurse. Eva Burns becomes first receptionist and Pam Hickingbotham continues in her role.
<b>1995</b>	Alan Johns is appointed as Executive Officer  Nursing Needs Assessment Study by Success Works recommends an increase in nursing staff as well as close involvement with the Royal District Nursing Service  Client referrals increase to 120  Dr Brian McDonald is appointed as Medical Practitioner /Palliative Care Consultant
<b>1996</b>	Banksia establishes a formal Service Agreement with the Royal District Nursing Service (RDNS)  First breakfast at Montsalvat to recognise National Palliative Care Awareness Week

---

---

<b>1998</b>	<p>Carers Support Program established</p> <p>State Government required tenders for community palliative care services. Banksia was successful and the service area was expanded to include Ivanhoe and Eaglemont</p>
<b>1999</b>	<p>John Shilliday and Ann Francis, founding members, are awarded inaugural Life Memberships for dedicated service</p>
<b>2000</b>	<p>Banksia achieves accreditation by the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards for the next 3 years</p>
<b>2001</b>	<p>Art therapy introduced for clients</p> <p>Banksia moves office from Eltham to Ivanhoe</p> <p>Role of Intake Nurse is reviewed</p>
<b>2002</b>	<p>Banksia launches a video called 'Palliative care for all people' in a joint project with Melbourne City Mission Palliative Care, aimed at assisting cultural and diverse communities</p>
<b>2003</b>	<p>Learning Centre is formally established with Julie Paul as Director of Education</p>
<b>2004</b>	<p>First visits to Banksia by a range of health care professionals from Japan</p> <p>Banksia achieves Registered Training Organisation status</p>
<b>2005</b>	<p>Julie Paul and Karen Code are formally endorsed as Nurse Practitioners</p> <p>Julie Paul, Learning Centre Director and Alan Johns Executive Officer visit Japan for 10 days to promote the Learning Centre at Banksia</p> <p>Tim Paul is awarded Life Membership for voluntary services</p>
<b>2006</b>	<p>Client referrals increase to 507</p> <p>Syringe drivers project funded for aged care palliative care residents</p> <p>Formal sister relationship with Pallium of Tokyo Japan is signed</p>
<b>2007</b>	<p>Alan Johns retires as Executive Officer after 12 years' service to Banksia.</p> <p>Julie Paul is appointed Executive Officer</p>
<b>2008</b>	<p>Banksia is involved in an International Research Program involving sister organisation, Pallium, and Hospice Hawaii</p> <p>Alan Johns is awarded Life Membership for dedicated service</p> <p>A Consumer Reference Group – later named Consumer Advisory Group is established to provide consumer feedback about Banksia's services</p> <p>Banksia's website is redesigned and launched</p>

---

<b>2009</b>	A volunteer Reference Group is established to streamline communication between volunteers and Banksia.
<b>2011</b>	<p>Maureen Glover, Noel Paine and Yvonne Mee are awarded Life Memberships for their support of the organisation</p> <p>Banksia moves to new premises in Lower Heidelberg Road, Heidelberg</p> <p>Review by the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards shows that Banksia meets all 47 criteria</p> <p>Focus is given to how Banksia can better understand the needs of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities</p>
<b>2012</b>	<p>Community Liaison Coordinator at Banksia participates in, “The Conversation Hour” with John Faine on 774 Radio</p> <p>Marion Cooper is awarded Life Membership for her support of the organisation</p> <p>Banksia introduces a leadership program for staff aimed to develop skills in emotional intelligence, change management and leadership</p> <p>606 client referrals to Banksia</p>
<b>2014</b>	At the Annual General Meeting Banksia celebrates its 25 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of serving the communities of Banyule, Nillumbik and Whittlesea
<b>2015</b>	<p>ACHS accreditation resulted in 2 ratings of extensive achievements</p> <p>National Palliative Care Benchmarking Outcomes achieve excellent results</p>
<b>2016</b>	Committee of Management volunteers, Damian Neylon and John Richardson awarded Life Memberships for dedicated voluntary service
<b>2017</b>	<p>Victoria Health Minister Jill Hennessy attends Banksia with MP Anthony Carbines to announce funding increase in palliative care.</p> <p>Banksia receives support from Victoria Minister for Multicultural Affairs and the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria for its multicultural project.</p> <p>Banksia receives support from Federal Minister Jenny Macklin for the partnership with Watsonia RSL and initiative of welcome packs</p> <p>Julie Paul gives notice of her resignation in June. To leave organisation after 25 years on 31 October</p> <p>Dr. Michael “Taffy” Jones awarded Life Membership for dedicated voluntary service at the Annual General Meeting</p>

## The Pioneers' The Beginning

It is impossible to name all persons who have had an impact upon the history of Banksia. Banksia wishes to acknowledge all past Committee of Management, Staff and Volunteers for their contribution over many years and also the many supporters who have enabled the organisation to be financially viable. The history of Banksia Palliative Care Service (Banksia) is a story of people. At the centre are the clients who must face the confronting knowledge they have a progressive terminal illness. Alongside of them are their carers, partners and families who support them so that they can choose to live at home surrounded by those they love and have a choice for their place of death.

It is also the story of medical and community leaders who see the need for a palliative care service in the north east region of Melbourne, and who rally the local community, lobby politicians and hold countless meetings to discuss the best ways of making the service a reality and the thriving organisation it is today.

It is the story of the nurses, therapists and social workers who care for and support the clients so that they can stay at home during this challenging time. It is the story of the administrators and office staff who, organise the processes, fill in the paperwork, answer the phones and keep the organisation functioning smoothly. It is the story of volunteers who donate their time to support: clients, reception and administration and health promotion via community awareness.

The word 'history' presupposes that the story is in the past, but although Banksia has 27 years of past history, it is without question an organisation functioning in the present as well as the future. It is continually involved in reviewing and evaluating its services and searching for ways to improve. In a time when people live longer, when cancer is the second commonest cause of death, and when the members of the Committee of Management have to wrestle with budgets to meet the increasing demand for community palliative care, Banksia seems certain in the future to continue to provide an invaluable service to the communities of Whittlesea, Banyule and Nillumbik.

*The spark which fired up the idea of a north east community-based palliative care service came from Dr Michael (Taffy) Jones. He is an extraordinary person, who has shown a life-long commitment to using his talents and energy to help others and bring about reforms to improve the lives of others. Not surprisingly, he has received an Order of Australia Medal in recognition of his service and dedication to society.*

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017

Dr Taffy Jones has such a long record of achievements and such a variety of job titles that it would take a lengthy biography to do them justice. In addition to many other achievements and job descriptions, he has worked as a GP, a Medical Administrator at Geelong Hospital, the Austin Hospital and the Alfred Hospital, served as a consultant to the World Health Organisation in Vietnam and the Philippines and also worked with the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards (ACHS). (Sdrinis 2008)

While he was an administrator at Geelong Hospital, a palliative care service was set up in 1982. He was therefore surprised when he moved to the Austin Hospital in 1987 and discovered that no such service existed either in the hospital or the community. In his opinion there was a great need for such a service, and, as he says, 'I knew what was required to get such a service off the ground'. (Jones 2014).

His first strategy was to begin a campaign to educate the community about palliative care. He spoke to individuals and addressed service clubs, drumming up support and enthusiasm for the concept of a palliative care service. During this time, he was grateful for the support he received from a number of people. Dr Roger Woodruff, Oncologist at the Austin Hospital, who began an in-patient palliative care service at the hospital, understood what Taffy Jones wanted to do and gave his strong support to the plan. Frank Evans, the CEO of the Royal District Nursing Service (RDNS), also strongly backed the concept and offered generous support and cooperation from the RDNS. Taffy Jones also acknowledges the work of Lyn Robertson, his personal assistant, who made appointments for him to see key community people and kept his office running while he was out talking to people about palliative care. (Jones 2014).

Taffy Jones's philosophy on palliative care is summed up in a speech made to a local service club in 1990: 'It is time that we stopped denying the need for terminal care and stopped continuing the myth that somehow science and medicine will defeat death or provide an escape from death as the natural end of our lives.'

*"To feel unwanted, a misfit, a burden and a disappointment to others is no way to positively deal with the end of one's life. We must help people to die a good death, to provide a positive approach to the end of their lives, and to do this we must support the family as the primary carers both before and after they are bereaved.' (Jones 1990).*

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017

Katherine Kingsbury is another extraordinary person whose presence at Banksia helped the service to get off the ground. She chose nursing as her career, becoming interested particularly in services for the frail aged, disabled and terminally ill. In 1979 she was awarded a Churchill Fellowship to report on the viability of home-based services for terminally ill people. She wrote a book, *I want to die at home*, that sold over 6,000 copies.

As Director of Nursing Palliative Care Service at Melbourne City Mission in 1980-82, she established and managed Australia's first home-based palliative care service. John Shilliday describes her as a 'fiery idealist'. (Shilliday 2015). She too was awarded an Order of Australia Medal.

In order to bring a palliative care service into life and kick-start it into action, it was necessary to form a Steering Committee. Believing strongly that it should be a community-based service and should have a well-known, respected member of the community for its first chairperson, Taffy Jones asked John Shilliday if he was interested in the role. John, who was Principal of Ivanhoe Girls' Grammar School at the time, was certainly highly respected and had all the abilities needed for the job. However, he conceded later that at the time he 'knew little about palliative care and health, but a lot about people. 'Taffy Jones trained me in Palliative Care.' (BPCS Minutes 1995).

During his five years as Chairman, John not only learned the medical jargon and the theory and practice of palliative care but also lobbied politicians, recruited new members, spoke at public meetings, prepared local press releases, wrote newsletters, interviewed new staff, and, according to another Board member, Katherine Swift, provided 'gentle support when nerves were frayed'. ('Volunteers are the Foundation of Hospice' Awards 1997).

John also achieved a masterstroke by recruiting Mrs Jean McCaughey, wife of the then-State Governor as the Patron of Banksia. Ann Francis, President of the Committee of Management (1997) summed up John's achievements a few years later: 'John has been tireless in his interest, endeavours, time and support, and the success of Banksia Palliative Care Service has been largely due to his excellent leadership in our early years.' ('Volunteers are the Foundation of Hospice' Awards 1997).

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017



Some of the most significant people in Banksia's history. Pictured left; John Shilliday helping at a fundraising auction. And above, from left Dr. Taffy Jones, Katherine Kingsbury and Ann Francis pictured at the 2014 AGM.

Ann Francis was another of the loyal pioneers who was present at the first public meeting in March 1989, and who devoted energy and enthusiasm to Banksia's Committee of Management for the next ten years. A retired qualified nurse and Director of Nursing for many years, Ann had lived and worked in the area since 1963. She served on the Committee as an Honorary Treasurer in 1993, and as Vice President for two years. She was then elected President in October 1995, serving until 1997 when she served another year as Vice President. Damian Neylon, President of the Committee of Management in 2000, described her as one of the 'pioneers, who had the tough task of starting the organisation with little more than strong convictions and a great deal of energy.' (BPCS Annual report 1999/2000)

John Shilliday nominates the Mayor of Heidelberg Hector Davis as one of those people who were vital to Banksia's successful start. Having had a terminally ill relative and knowing of others, he was passionate about providing a better support services. He was also what John describes as 'an expert arm twister'. (Shilliday 2015).

The Interim Committee organised a public meeting at the Heidelberg Town Hall in March 1989. As it is such a pivotal moment in Banksia's history, it is surprising that there is no mention in the archives of the precise date of this meeting, although a letter from Dr Roger Woodruff written on 15 March to Taffy Jones to congratulate him on the meeting's success, mentions that it took place 'last week'. (Woodruff 1989).

# Hospice care meeting

A PUBLIC meeting will be held to gauge the level of community interest in establishing a palliative or hospice care service in Melbourne's north eastern suburbs.

Dr John Buchanan, the first medical director of the Melbourne Citymission Hospice Program, will be the guest speaker at the meeting, to be held in the McCubbin Room, Heidelberg Town Hall, Upper Heidelberg Rd, Ivanhoe on Thursday, March 2 at 7.30 pm.

Dr Taffy Jones, the chairman of the Austin Hospital's Community Advisory Committee, said members of the Heidelberg, Diamond Valley, Eltham, Northcote, Preston and Whittlesea communities were welcome to attend the meeting.

"We are very keen to get as many there as we can because the purpose of the meeting is to determine what level of interest there is in those local government areas to establish a hospice service," Dr Jones said.

"The Melbourne Citymission already provides support in several of these municipalities. If any service is established we would continue to work closely with them."

Palliative or hospice care is concerned with the alleviation of pain and symptoms once a cure for the disease is no longer possible. Dr Jones said palliative care meant total care of the terminally ill person by providing for their physical, psychological, social and spiritual needs and involves supporting family or friends as principal caregivers.

### Extra help

"Although, we believe the family is perfectly capable of giving care in most instances, a hospice program provides additional support like medical and nursing care, social workers and home help," he said.

"When you are caring for a sick person 24 hours a day additional resources are needed."

Dr Jones said a lot of these services were already available in the community but that a hospice program would draw them together.

"It's about bringing the people with these skills together to provide these services," he said.

"If there is enough interest at the meeting to establish a program, our plan is to form a steering committee to ascertain what the needs really are.

Any further inquiries about the meeting can be directed to Mrs Robertson on 450 5550 or Ms Kingsbury on 430 1154.



Dr Taffy Jones

Leader Newspaper – February 1989 – unknown source

The first meeting of the Interim Committee was held on 20 March 1989 at 5.30 p.m. and was attended by Michael Bertram, Ann Francis, Vin Heffernan, Taffy Jones, Katherine Kingsbury, Brian McMahon, Diane Morgan, John Shilliday, Maureen Smith, Denise Strauss, Gwyneth Terry and Anne Turley.

On 19 June at another meeting the following office bearers were elected: Chairman: John Shilliday, Deputy Chairman: Taffy Jones, Secretary: Katherine Kingsbury; Treasurer: Michael Bertram, Minute Secretary and Publicity Newsletter: Diane Morgan. And so, propelled by this enthusiastic committee, Banksia began.

The Steering Committee's first objective was for the service to become incorporated as this made it possible for Banksia to obtain funding, accept donations and have legal recognition. Brian McMahon, a local solicitor, generously volunteered to do all the legal work pro bono. The Committee also needed to define the proposed catchment area for the service, raise funds and educate the local communities about palliative care as well as raising awareness about the services that could be provided.

Incorporation could not occur until the service had decided on a name. At one of the first meetings, Vin Heffernan suggested that it be called the 'Yarra Valley Palliative Care Service', and other people expressed the hope that they should avoid resorting to abbreviation. (BPCS Minutes 1989). However, in June, after what the minutes of the meeting describe as 'considerable discussion', the Committee unanimously chose the name 'Banksia Palliative Care Service'. This name was chosen because 'Banksia' was the name given by the State Government to the region covering Heidelberg, Diamond Valley, Eltham and Whittlesea. Banksia Street was also the north east border where the catchment area for City Mission terminated.

In May 1989 Banksia was offered an amount of \$30,000 by the Health Department for consulting fees to establish a framework for the new palliative care service. The Committee chose the firm of Wyse, Wannan and Morris to carry out this study. They produced a comprehensive report defining the catchment area, identifying staffing and resources required, and documenting principles and philosophies of care. They also suggested ways in which Banksia could relate with local agencies.

According to John Shilliday, the background work done by Lynne Wannan and Trudy Wyse was essential. He also writes, 'Without their enthusiasm and expertise, we might have given up the fight.'

Lynne knew how the health bureaucrats thought and reacted. She could also be quite ruthless in using influence.' (Shilliday 2015).

Diamond Valley News,  
November 1989

DENSED COPY

# Helping terminally ill people live last days

By MICHELE PURTLE

**T**HE number of people who die from a terminal illness will more than quadruple in the shires of Eltham and Diamond Valley and the cities of Heidelberg and Whittlesea by the year 2001.

This frightening prediction follows the release of figures from the Anti-Cancer Council, which show an average of 368 people living in these areas died from a terminal illness in any one year from 1982 to 1985.

Based on these figures and the projected population growth, it is estimated that 1618 people who live in these areas will die from a terminal illness in the year 2001.

Cancer accounts for about 80 per cent of all terminal illnesses.

And while about 60 per cent of terminally ill patients want to die at home, only about half of those 60 per cent actually get their wish.

An incorporated body known as the Banksia Palliative Care Service Committee has been established to look into ways of providing this dying wish for terminally ill patients living in those areas.

The committee has received a \$30,000 grant from the Victorian Health Department to conduct a feasibility study into providing a palliative care service for the north-eastern region — one of the only metropolitan areas without such a service.

The Banksia Palliative Care Service would be designed to allow terminally ill patients to remain at home with their family as long as possible once they had been diagnosed as having a terminal illness.

According to a research consultant, Mrs Lynne Wannan, people prefer to be surrounded by their family and friends in their own home when they are sick.

She said the care service would aim to provide the support and services those people would need to achieve that.

Mrs Wannan said the service had three major benefits:

- many patients who preferred to be surrounded by their family and friends while they were terminally ill could remain at home, making the experience more comfortable for them and their families;
- terminally ill patients would free up hospital beds; and,
- medical staff were provided with a streamlined account of the terminally ill patient's progress.

The care service would be designed to provide services such as nursing care, transportation, meals on wheels, and medical check-ups for patients, and grief and bereavement counselling, pastoral care, home help and respite care for the family.

Ms Wannan said the program would ensure that the patients always had access to hospital beds.

"Once a person is diagnosed and decides they do not want to go to hospital they move into a system which ensures they will get the services they need and in an appropriate way."

She said the service would be the co-ordinating mechanism.

Ms Wannan said when a hospital discharged a terminally ill patient it would be ensured the patient received the care needed.

She said in the past people who refused to be hospitalised did not receive the range of services they needed.

As more of the palliative services were being established, an increasing number of people were choosing to stay at home and die and were managing to do this.

The care service was designed to let people die with dignity, Ms Wannan said.

"It's aimed at the death ending up being a nice thing."

"People have the right to be looked after right up until they die."

"This makes the death easier for the whole family," she said.

"The care service will cost more than \$100,000 to co-ordinate a year."

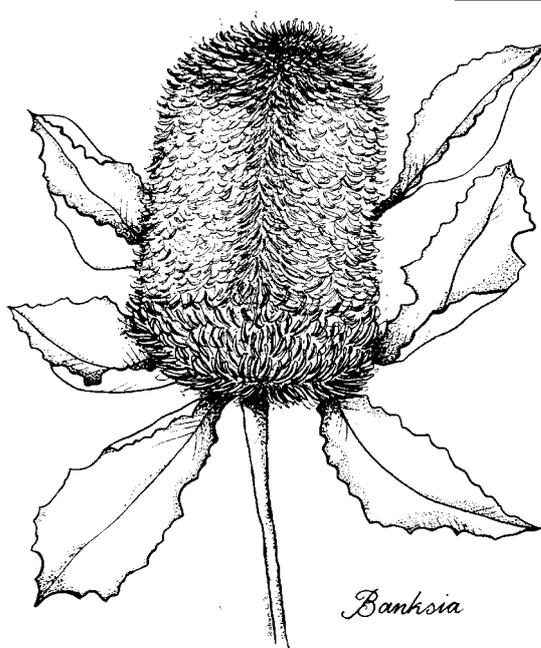
The service has not been guaranteed State Government funding but Ms Wannan said the Government had been showing an increasing commitment towards palliative care.

She said the service should be helping its first patients by mid next year.

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017

The search for a logo proved to be difficult, and it took two years before a suitable one was found. Perhaps this was due to the Committee's lack of funding and consequent decision to ask local school children to submit their ideas.

*The minutes of meetings state that the first attempts 'were not viewed favourably by the Committee' and later drawings submitted were rejected because they had a 'strong medical or religious emphasis'. (BPCS Minutes 1989). A design showing a banksia flower was eventually chosen in 1992.*



Lack of funding was the main obstacle for Banksia, and despite vigorous lobbying by Committee members, the government did not produce any money. In April 1989 Taffy Jones received a telephone call from the Health Department intimating that funding was available, but it was not forthcoming. A newsletter to supporters in December 1989 stated, 'We do understand that for many of you who need the service now, the process of setting up must seem incredibly long.' (BPCS Newsletter 1989).

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017

John Shilliday describes the period between 1990 and 1992 when nothing happened as 'Limbo'; however, the Committee used the time to promote Banksia at every possible opportunity. Using their own money and charitable donations, they attended as many public events as possible and produced banners, posters and pamphlets, liberally handing out balloons and sausages. John was tireless in helping out in all events, no matter how small the task, even selling raffle tickets at auction fundraising events. (Tim Paul 2017)

But the funding was to take even longer. At the AGM in June 1990 the President reported that no funding had been allocated to Banksia. Yet another year passed before Dr Chris Brook, the Regional Director for the Health Department, who was very supportive of Banksia, spoke as a guest at the 1991 AGM in September and announced a grant of \$50,000 per annum as a recurring grant.



(Vice President Katherine Kingsbury at the funding announcement of \$50,000. Diamond Valley News 10 December 1991, page 27)

As in the early days of the history of mankind and without a permanent place to call its own, Banksia's Steering Committee became a nomadic group moving from one meeting place to another. Meetings were held at Ivanhoe Girls' Grammar School, the Ivanhoe RSL, Vin Heffernan's rooms and the Royal District Nursing Service (RDNS) rooms at Diamond Creek.

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017

To start the service it was necessary to have a Project Officer. After advertising the position, Trude Wyse was appointed in December 1991. Then Banksia conducted a pilot project from February to August 1992, limited to Diamond Valley and Eltham. It involved working with six patients, their families and various agencies involved in their care.

In February 1992 Banksia had found a place to operate from at the RDNS Diamond Valley Centre, 25 Station Street in a 'single, rear room'. In a letter confirming the agreement the RDNS generously reassured Banksia, 'We have no objection to a tasteful sign identifying your occupancy, entrance, etc.' (RDNS 1992).

At the end of August 1992, service operations began, with the first referral to Banksia in September of the same year. Annette Brunton was appointed as the first Service Coordinator and Pam Hickingbotham as the first Volunteer Coordinator and Pastoral Care Coordinator. Their office was at the RDNS complex at 5 Station Street, Diamond

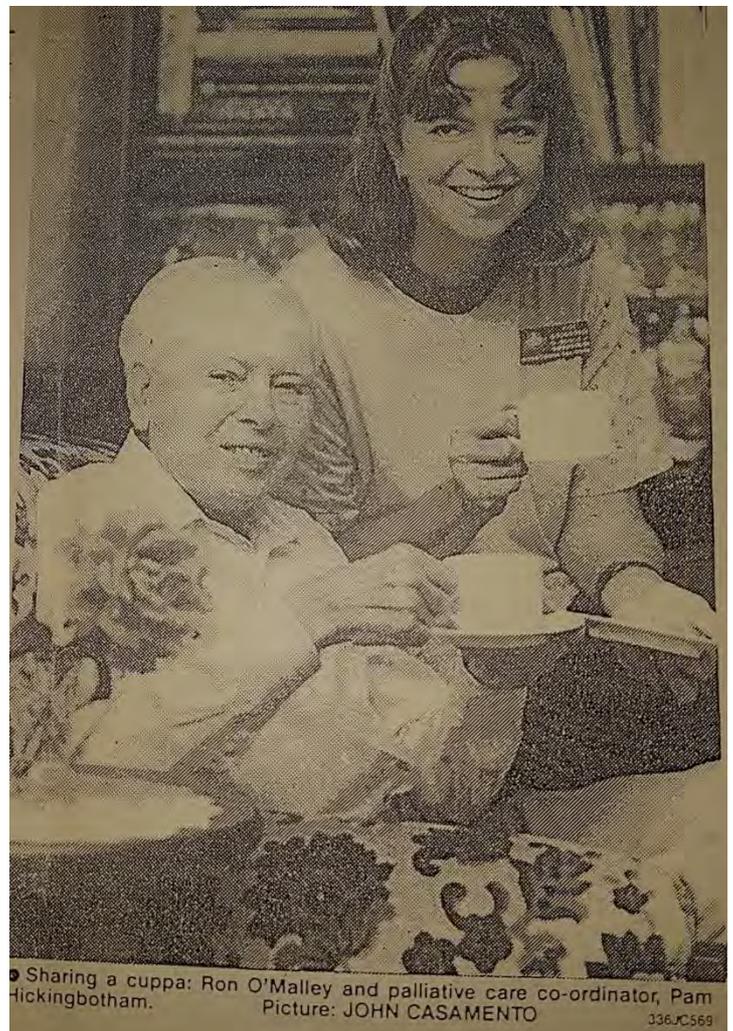


The committee met to say goodbye to Project Worker Trude Wyse (left) and to welcome new Project Worker Annette Brunton with John Shilliday President. (The Ivanhoe Advocate August 1992 Page 3)

History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017



Banksia continued to lobby via the local media. In 1993 an article appeared in the Diamond Valley Leader titled, Dying with Dignity. Carer Shirley Holland (pictured left) told her story about caring for her father and the support she received. Banksia was also able to publicise they were holding "a cake stall outside the Diamond Creek Tuckerbag store.



In 1994 Ron O'Malley of Mill Park (pictured right) became Banksia's 100<sup>th</sup> patient. An article appeared in a local newspaper where Pam Hickingbotham Volunteer and Pastoral Care Coordinator was quoted, "caring for someone who is terminally ill was a last loving gesture." Source unknown March 1994 Local Newspaper

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017

In November 1994 Brian Luby was appointed as Project Officer, responsible for developing a number of policies, staff planning and relocation from the office at Diamond Creek to Eltham.

In 1994/5 Karen Code became Patient Care Coordinator and Julie Paul was appointed Assistant Patient Care Coordinator. In 1995, Alan Johns became Banksia's first Executive Officer, serving with distinction for 12 years. Under his leadership, Banksia grew significantly and extended its influence via the Learning Centre all the way to Japan.

To quote John Shilliday,

*'Alan Johns could claim to be the godfather of Banksia. Julie Paul and Karen Code were the Banksia midwives!' (Shilliday 2015)*

In 1996 an article appeared on the front page of the Heidelberg Leader stating Banksia Palliative Care Service faces an uncertain future with the Federal Government failing to commit funding after June the following year. Alan Johns EO was quoted, "if federal funding was cut completely the service would either shut down or operate two days a week instead of five."



(Heidelberg Leader 18 December 1996)

Eighteen months later Banksia again made front page news of the Heidelberg leader under the heading, Tender Success. "Banksia's Executive officer Alan Johns, said last week the service had won a state Government tender, worth hundreds of thousands of dollars, to carer for terminal patients and their carers in the Banyule, Nillumbik and Whittlesea municipalities."



(Heidelberg Leader 8 July 1998)

Funding was still an issue for Banksia as only 75 per cent of its budget came from federal and state government sources. From 1995 Banksia had begun fundraising via celebrity auction nights and had obtained the free services of many celebrities and entertainers to attend the event. In 1998 an article appeared in the Heidelberg Leader where Julie Paul thanked the community and the special guests including boxing legend John Famechon, Television personalities Ken James and Terry Gill and AFL footballer Paul Hudson. The night raised \$20,000 clear profit which was double the two previous years. (Heidelberg Leader 2 September 1998 page 7)

Alan Johns was very strategic in his quest for funding for Banksia's survival. In 2001 Alan Johns sought a new premises for Banksia from the Eltham Susan Street. A ground floor office space was located at 450 Upper Heidelberg Road, Ivanhoe and Banksia was situated there until the move to Heidelberg in 2010.

Julie Paul was appointed Executive Officer in 2007 to replace Alan Johns. Under Julie Paul Banksia has continued to grow, achieving excellent results. Julie has been able to build upon the foundations laid by Alan Johns and significant achievements continued to be made over the next decade. In explaining why she still is working at Banksia after 24 years Julie says, "the challenge; I like the challenge. Every different role I've had has been an enormous learning curve for me, so it keeps me interested."

The list of jobs Julie Paul has held at Banksia is an extensive one. Since she started work at the Service in 1994, Julie has been Patient Care Coordinator, Nurse Practitioner, Business Development Manager, Director of the Learning Centre, Quality Manager and Executive Officer. Her career at Banksia has grown with the development of the Service, and its path is closely interwoven with the directions the Service has taken. After more than 20 years at Banksia, Julie is still enthusiastic about her job. 'Banksia has been really good to me,' she says. "It created enormous flexibility. When my kids were little, I could work. So, you gave 300 per cent but you got it all back from the organisation."

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017

When asked about the most rewarding part of her job, she says,

*“I think the fact that we do make a difference for families and our community. I continue to learn every day about what is important from our patients and families perspective.”*

In 2008 the Community Liaison Coordinator visited Dame Elizabeth Murdoch at her home, “Cruden Farm”. A short time later Dame Murdoch forwarded an open letter of support to assist Banksia’s search for a patron, ambassadors and supporters. In 2008 Actor Krista Vendy became the patron of Banksia after supporting the organisation at fundraising and awareness events. Unfortunately Krista moved to the United States and in 2014 succumbed to the issues of travel and absence, and resigned due to not being able to fulfil the role to the best interests of the organisation or herself.



Pictured above are Eva Burns who was Banksia’s first and long serving receptionist and administration officer with Krista Vendy. Above right is Patron Krista Vendy with carer and Banksia Consumer Advisory Group member Don Gillies. Krista and Don were assisting Banksia to create awareness by participating in an article in the Heidelberg Leader on 26 March 2009, praising Banksia for the care of his wife Shirley.

In 2009 Banksia developed a new logo. Several options were utilised with amendments. A community partnership was developed with Norwood Press. In recognition of the services Banksia provides, Norwood Press provided their expertise at no cost. In 2014 it was decided to solely utilise a logo bearing the phrase, Not for Profit, Caring for our Community.



## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017

In 2010 a banner was designed to be utilised in publications reflecting the multicultural, mixed gender and diverse ages of Banksia clients, carers and families. This banner appears in most publications, including the website.



Again, as a result of a community partnership, Lois Outjers an artist with the Sunbury Art Society, gave permission for Banksia to utilise her beautiful painting of a banksia flower. Since then this image has appeared on the front of Banksia's cards.



## Raising the Bar Standards and Review

From its early days when long-awaited funding enabled Banksia to employ two staff members (both part-time), the Service has grown steadily in numbers of staff and variety of services offered to an ever-increasing number of clients. In order to operate a service and strengthen its role over the first 25 years, Banksia has had to strive to meet the high standards demanded by medical authorities and government departments. In addition to this, Banksia's managers have always had a strong commitment to review the clinical practices and services offered to clients, and have continually improved them. Banksia also asks for feedback from past carers and the General Practitioners who refer clients to the Service.

Banksia has also looked for benchmarking projects with other palliative care agencies. For example, in 2001/2 projects included a pain assessment tool, preferences for place of death project and a comparison and review of volunteer programs. This culture of striving for improvement is seen all through Banksia's history. In 2001 the review by the Australian Council of Healthcare Standards (ACHS) reported, 'The service is striving towards a culture of improving performance at all levels.' (BPCS Annual report 2001/2).

Within Banksia itself, reviews of practices have been continually carried out by staff and consultants. These included a consultant's report about the management structure of Banksia in 1999/2000 and reviews of the ways in which clients are assessed. In 2012/13 Banksia reviewed the Nursing Service Model which resulted in increased clinical support for nurses on the road and introduced the practice of senior nurses coordinating client visits. A Client Support Services Model review in 2013/14 examined the psychosocial program and led to the broadening of the point of entry to clients.

*In order to develop a way of obtaining feedback about its services, Julie Paul was keen to set up a Consumer Reference Group and the first group was formed in 2008/9. (The name of the group changed to Consumer Advisory Group in 2013/14). The Group, consisting of past carers since 2009, meets at regular intervals with staff members and provides feedback on service delivery, programs and ensures documentation for clients and families is user friendly and culturally sensitive. The Group also identifies other ways in which the Service can be improved.*

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017

In 2013 Pauline Heath, a National Standards Assessment Program mentor wrote: 'Continuous quality improvement is driving the service, and the benefit of a dedicated Quality Manager is clearly visible in the way in which the service is progressing and proactive.' (BPCS Annual report 2013/14).

The authorities that set external standards for palliative care services come with enough acronyms to cause an outside observer to flinch when confronted with them all, but their importance is beyond doubt. The Australian Council of Healthcare Standards (ACHS) has reviewed Banksia's services regularly over the last 25 years, and Banksia has always achieved accreditation.



(Heidelberg Leader Article 13 September 2000 page 5)

In August 2013, Banksia maintained its accreditation with ACHS after a periodic review. The Service achieved a Marked Achievement (MA) in all mandatory criteria. The surveyors stated:

*"The clinical services provided by Banksia Palliative Care Service are highly regarded by referring bodies. The clinical workforce are well trained, supported and are very passionate about the care and service they provide to clients and families, mostly during very difficult times."*

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017

The support systems in place to manage items such as Care Planning, Medication Management, and Infection Control etc. are all very well established. It was clear to the survey team during this survey that for the staff employed this was not just a job, but a well thought out and calculated career decision to work for Banksia Palliative Care Service. The Corporate and Support functions were also found to be appropriate for the size and function of the organisation. It must be remembered that the service operates from a Corporate Head Office and services are coordinated and provided in the client homes. The care is delivered in partnerships with other providers, which makes this service slightly unique in their approach. As such the systems, processes and policies have been developed and are maintained to a standard that ensures the organisation continues to provide safe and appropriate service for their client and staff. The survey team were able to maintain and confirm MA ratings in all the mandatory criteria reviewed during this Periodic Review survey.”

In 2015 Banksia received two criteria rated as Extensive Achievement (EA) in its ACHS Accreditation Review. Banksia received recognition of the extensive work undertaken in these areas.

*Criteria 1.6.3: “The organisation meets the needs of consumers / patients and carers with diverse needs from diverse backgrounds. Acknowledging the extensive work completed in this areas, surveyors recommend increasing the rating from MA to EA.”*

*Criteria 3.2.5: “The survey team found no evidence of any breaches of or adverse security or safety events, and the breadth and depth of Banksia approach and measures to implement effective security and safety for staff and volunteers and patients and carers, supports a revision of the organization’s self-rating of MA to EA.”*

The National Standards Assessment Program (NSAP) ‘is a national framework for continuous quality improvement built on the Palliative Care Australian Standards for providing quality care for all Australians.’ (BPCS Annual report 2008/9). In a pilot study in 2008/9 Banksia set up a multi-disciplinary team to conduct this review and find areas for improvement. In the following years, evaluations of Banksia’s service against the standards continued to establish Banksia’s priorities for improvement. A Peer Review in August 2010, and another in July 2013, provided guidance for the Service’s improvement program.

Julie Paul commented;

"As Executive Officer I am pleased to convey to our supporters and partners the following summary of Banksia Palliative Care Service, which was provided by our NSAP peer reviewer, in September. The report clearly outlines the great outcomes being achieved by Banksia Staff and Volunteers. Our staff and volunteers have rose to the challenges and are working towards achieving goals which are in sync with Banksia's 2011/13 Strategic Plan". (Julie Paul EO, Banksia Newsletter)

*The NSAP Reviewer made the following assessment of Banksia.*

*"Banksia is an enthusiastic, innovative and professional organisation. It has prioritised continuous quality improvement with the appointment of a quality coordinator and there is a tangible ethos of reflecting on and improving processes throughout the organisation. Staff have identified specific opportunities to improve processes and steps are being taken to achieve this.*

*There is an impressive attitude from the Executive Officer through to the clinical staff, to strive for excellence as a Level 2 Specialist Palliative Care service. This team has recently moved into creatively renovated accommodation with community visibility, which has resulted in an impressive, functional staff environment. There is a well-equipped educational centre, which is being used for palliative care education by other services as well as the Banksia team. The educational unit is an excellent resource. The organisation appears to be well funded with generous community support." (NSAP Reviewer 2013)*

In 2009 Julie Paul EO was selected to be a peer reviewer for the inaugural NSAP Peer Review Program. Julie travelled interstate to New South Wales and Western Australia to review and work with palliative care organisations.

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017

Another quality initiative to help review Banksia's service is the Palliative Care Outcome Collaborative Program (PCOC). PCOC is a voluntary quality initiative to help palliative care services improve their practices. Clinical outcome data is collected over a six-month period and benchmarked against other national palliative care services. Committed to this Program, Banksia has shown 'progressive improvement'. (BPCS Annual report 2011/12). Striving for improvement is embedded at Banksia and is highlighted by PCOC achievements.

In 2014 another example of striving to maintain best practise, was the result of the Victorian Palliative Care Satisfaction Survey. This is a state-wide survey funded by the Department of Health which captures feedback from adult patients, carers and bereaved carers from both community and inpatient palliative care settings.

Julie Paul EO summarised the findings;

*'This year we had 59 community respondents from patients and carers who were clients during the month of February. This group of clients rated their overall satisfaction with our Service at 4.72 out of a possible 5 (Very High). We are really pleased with our overall results in many instances. Clients' experience of palliative care at Banksia exceeded the Regional and State-wide mean scores.'*

The following quotes from the 2014 survey, are some examples of client feedback about Banksia.

- It was difficult to hand [patient] over to strangers but they all gave him loving and gentle care. I had no complaints of any of them.
- Knowing help was there at any time if required. Knowing the nurses were there to listen to me with my concerns.
- Knowing that support was only a phone call away.
- That it is available and there is no cost. The quality of care was sensitive, skilled, relevant, respectful but not intrusive.
- The nurses, masseur, counsellor and music therapist were all so respectful, helpful and caring. It was my daughters wish to pass at home and they all made this possible. Bereavement counselling for myself and a bereavement group also have been very good.
- To have experienced, empathetic people available to listen, give advice, answer questions and to reassure you when anxiety sets in.

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017

In 2017 a member of Banksia's clinical team Amanda Petricola presented on behalf of Banksia at the National PCOC Workshop of the significant improvement made by Banksia and the strategies employed to have achieved one of the best results in Australia. This was a significant achievement by Banksia.



(Amanda Petricola who presented at the National PCOC Workshop 2017)

Banksia has continued to review its role, its practices and its services throughout its 27 year history. The success of this strategy must certainly result in Banksia Palliative Care Service having a long and successful future caring for its clients.

## **‘Wisdom, Tenacity and Professionalism’ The Committee of Management**

After becoming aware how much time members of Banksia’s Committee of Management have devoted to their roles, it is remarkable to discover that they are all volunteers and therefore unpaid for their service to the community.

In 1989 when Banksia was in its infancy, members performed a multitude of different tasks to ensure that their vision of a palliative care community service became a reality. Because there were no paid staff members, the first Committee members needed to do everything from trying to persuade politicians and government officials that Banksia merited continuous funding, to writing letters and buying the stamps to post them. Alan Johns, Executive Officer (1995-2007) elaborated on the first Steering Committee members’ invaluable service in the following words: ‘They deserve considerable credit for their wisdom, tenacity and professionalism that brought success to Banksia in those formative years’. (BPCS Annual Report 2005/6).

The Committee consists of up to 10 members who are either selected by the financial members of Banksia, or appointed by the Committee due to a casual vacancy. They meet about 10 times a year and are also able to call a special meeting outside the normal schedule when urgent matters require it. The Committee knows how the organisation is functioning because it receives reports from the Executive Officer as well as from senior managers. Part of its role is to examine proposed policies and make decisions on implementing them.

Over the years Committee members have come from a range of different professions, including medical administrators, lawyers, doctors, nurses, managers and social workers. In 2006, Alan Johns described how this was beneficial to Banksia. ‘The strength of the Board was implicit through the mix of skills in its members. This skill mix was invaluable to the Executive Officer and the senior management team with advice and support - but never interference - in the day to day management of the organisation.’ (BPCS Annual report 2005/6).

Over the past 27 years, it has been inevitable that the role of the Committee of Management has changed. Damien Neylon (President) wrote in 2000, ‘The organisation is quite different today than it was in its early years.’ (BPCS Annual report 1999/2000)

In more recent years, governance issues have dominated the business of Committee meetings. In 2007/8 the CoM set in place a Committee self-assessment process and compiled an information package for new Committee members. They also discussed how Banksia could best meet the increasing demand for palliative care services as well as providing new services and improving existing ones. (BPCS Annual report 2007/8). In 2009/10 self-assessment undertaken by the Committee showed an overall improvement in its governance processes, and in 2010/11 it began self-assessment against the Code of Governance Standards for the Australian Community Sector.

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017

The number of years served by some members is extraordinary. Early members, Ann Francis and John Shilliday were presented with life membership certificates in 2000 after serving for 10 years. Other Board members, Damien Neylon and John Richardson have performed different roles on the Board for over 20 years and were awarded Life Memberships in 2016

When asked about why he had volunteered for this service, Damian Neylon, a Principal at a legal firm, replied, 'The complexities of running a significant community organisation make it desirable to have a Committee member who is legally qualified. I am proud to be involved with Banksia to support the wonderful work it carries out in our community.' (BPCS Annual report 2011/12).

Explaining why he had volunteered as a Committee member, John Richardson, a General Manager of Human Resources, replied, 'Having access to a range of professionals on the Committee giving their time and energy pro bono is absolutely essential to the very existence of community-based organisations such as Banksia. Every time the Committee read the letters of appreciation from clients' families, we realise why we stay involved.' (BPCS Annual report 2011/12).

"At our 2016 Annual General Meeting, long serving Committee of Management members, John Richardson and Damien Neylon were awarded Life Memberships in recognition of their distinguished voluntary service to Banksia, for in excess of 20 years. Damien who retired from the Committee of Management in last year (2015) has provided legal expertise, whilst John who has been elected to President for 2016/17 has provided HR expertise. To have devoted so much voluntary time to Banksia is an incredible achievement and a very well deserved award". (Julie Paul EO, Banksia Newsletter)



Pictured above, life members, from left is Damien Neylon with John Richardson at Banksia's 2016 AGM.

## **‘With Them on This Journey’ Our Team**

For those of us from the general public with a sketchy understanding and little experience of palliative care, nursing dying patients might seem to be one of the most confronting and difficult of all occupations. Death is a subject many of us shy away from, frightened by the thought of our own mortality. To many palliative care nurses must therefore possess unique qualities to enable them to do their jobs.

The palliative care nurses at Banksia bring much more than end stage care to the clients. Palliative care in the community can be for much longer periods and consist of many types of specialist health care and practical support. The nurses possess unique skills and qualities which they have gained through years of clinical practice and education. In particular, they have extensive knowledge and experience in the management of pain and in dealing with the symptoms of terminal illnesses. It is their role to relieve stressful symptoms and improve ‘the quality of the person’s remaining life while avoiding futile intervention.’ (BPSC Annual report 07/08).

Robyn, a nurse at Banksia, explained one of her roles in this way: ‘My aim is to bring some hope to this family, not hope of a cure or a longer life, but hope based on the knowledge that they are not alone, support is available and that we will be with them on this journey’. (BPSC Annual report 2010/11).

At Banksia each family is seen by a palliative care nurse who coordinates their care and manages their symptoms with a team of other medical staff. The Royal District Nursing Service (RDNS) works closely with Banksia providing hands-on nursing care in clients’ homes and attending to visits after hours. In April 2012, due to one off funding Banksia extended its service to include a Saturday shift on a trial basis.

In the early days of Banksia’s history, nursing care was provided by Banksia nurses and nurses from the RDNS, with the RDNS providing most of the hands on care. Then there was an increase in client referrals from 42 in 1992/3 to 120 in 1994/5. In order to clarify what nursing services would be required to meet increased patient numbers, Banksia commissioned the company Success Works, Inc. to conduct a study, the Nursing Needs Assessment Study. The report was completed in May 1995 and recommended an increase in nursing staff as well as a closer involvement with RDNS.

Karen Code was appointed Patient Care Coordinator with Julie Paul as Assistant Patient Care Coordinator. For Julie, it was the start of a long career at Banksia and the first of many roles she has carried out in the 25 years since.

After many meetings and discussions, Banksia and RDNS established a formal Service Agreement in 1996. Karen Code wrote: ‘I for one am proud that two agencies like Banksia and the Royal District Nursing Service have been

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017

able to come together in a client-focussed manner and develop such a service.' (BPCS Annual report 2005/6). The agreement was updated and consolidated in 2008.

In 1997 Karen Code and Julie Paul set up a Carers Support Program to assist carers who play a vital role in helping the clients stay at home until death. As part of the program, they developed a Carers Support Group Facilitator Package.

In October 1997 an article was published in the Australian Nursing Journal, "Family and friends who act as carers for people with terminal illnesses often face trying times. Two RN's from Melbourne Karen Code and Julie Paul have found a way to make the caring a little easier on the carers. (Vol 5 No.4 Australian Nursing Journal October 1997)



(Julie Paul with carer Olive Mullenger, Diamond Valley News 15 May 1996)

Banksia's nurses have always used new technologies and professional development to improve the service they provide for their clients. In June 2001 the Department of Human Services Productivity Fund awarded Banksia a grant to set up a new computer program that downloaded client information from the server at Banksia's offices via a mobile phone, so that nurses were kept up-to-date. This has continued to the present date in 2017, with Banksia gaining a government grant to provide laptops to enhance case note recording in the home.

In June 2001 the Department of Human Service awarded a grant to Banksia to conduct an Advanced Nurse Practitioner Project in its catchment area. A special committee produced a Drug Formulary for the use of nurse

practitioners, and later, another committee consisting of a broad spectrum of the community and medical and nursing representatives, oversaw the guidelines.

*The Nurses Board Victoria endorsed the candidates Julie Paul and Karen Code in mid-2005. At that time only eight Nurse Practitioners in Victoria had been endorsed and Julie and Karen became two of the first four “palliative care nurses” to be endorsed.*

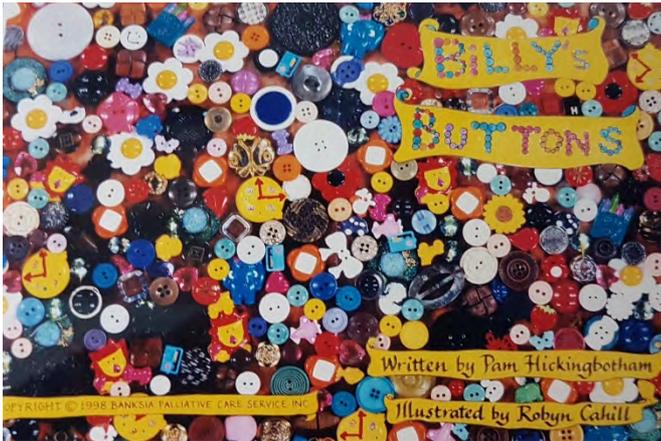
Their endorsement meant the Nurse Practitioners could prescribe medication from a restricted drug formulary, order pathology and radiology services, and refer clients to specialists.

Massage therapy, considered as one of the Clinical Services, was introduced to Banksia first by volunteer Marilyn Lewis. In early 1999, Banksia decided to fund 12 hours per week, and in October of the same year increased funding to allow for 20 hours a week in order to cope with the demand for the service. As Executive Officer Alan Johns explained, ‘The availability of therapeutic massage is enormously popular with so many of Banksia’s clients’ (BPCS Annual report 1998/99). Massage therapy is still an important part of the services offered to clients. It helps clients by promoting comfort and relaxation, restoring feelings of self-worth, reducing pain and discomfort in pressure points and also aiding in reducing oedema. Although the clients are given priority, massage is also offered to carers to reduce stress and promote relaxation.

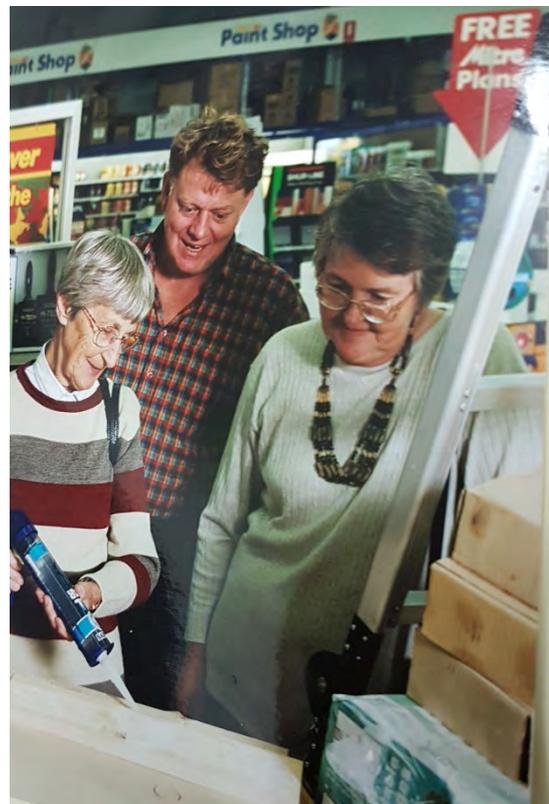
As with the rest of Banksia’s organisation, Clinical Services are evolving to produce the best care for clients. It is necessary for organisations to be very accountable to government funding and Banksia is no exception. In 2011, the role of the Intake Nurse was reviewed and hours were increased to 5 days a week. In 2012/13 the Nursing Services Review conducted by Banksia resulted in increased clinical support for nurses on the road by having everyday access to a senior nurse who is based in the office. In 2013/14 Banksia aimed to improve client access to the service by making it more adaptable to fluctuations in demand and client needs. Improvements resulted in 99% of clients being assessed for admission within seven days.

Client Support Services include Social Work, Spiritual Care and the therapies of Art, Music and Massage. Banksia offers these services as ‘supportive care for the purpose of improving quality of life for patients and their families for symptom management, relaxation and exploration of the emotional impact of the disease.’ (BPCS Annual Report 2007/8). The role of the Banksia social worker is to provide counselling and support and give clients access to written information and resources. Social workers also perform advocacy and liaison for the clients with agencies like Centrelink, explore end of life issues with clients and refer clients to support groups. Pam Hickingbotham, who was appointed with the dual roles of Volunteer Coordinator and Pastoral Care Coordinator in early 1993, was the first of Banksia’s staff members to implement a social work service for clients. She also introduced a Bereavement Program and networked with a number of related groups and agencies. On 8 August 1993 Pam organised the 1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary and Thanksgiving Service at St John’s Anglican Church where a candle-lighting ceremony commemorated those clients who had died during the year.

A Bereavement Program for primary aged children called the Super Memory Program was launched by comedian Rod Quantock in 1997. A book titled, Billy Buttons was written by Pam and the artwork was completed by one of Banksia's receptionists Robyn Cahill. The super memory program, developed by Pam, resulted in more publicity for Banksia in radio interviews and a feature article in the Department of Health Services journal. Rod Quantock pictured below with the Billy Buttons book.



Under the leadership of Social Worker Neville Walker, bereavement groups increased in number and variety. Among others, a program called 'Reflections' designed for adolescents was held for the first time, and in 2001, Jackie Brennan started a Walking Group for bereaved partners. A New Skills Group began in 2005/6, organised by a social worker and volunteers. The group consisted of experts in their field providing people whose partners had died with new skills to help them cope. Subjects covered included cooking for one, managing household expenses, general maintenance and, for some of the older generation, the completely mystifying problem of how to set up and program a video or DVD recorder. (Pictured is Social Worker Neville Walker with Carers)



## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017

In 2009/10 Banksia created a new position called the Manager of Client Support Services and reviewed the Bereavement Program using The Clinical Practice Guidelines for the Psychological and Bereavement Support of Palliative Care. This led to an increase in hours allocated to the Bereavement Program, and a dedicated program coordinator. In September 2013 a Consultant Social Worker/Psychologist reviewed Banksia's program and recommended improvements that could be achieved within funding constraints, including broadening the point of entry soon after admission and introducing a comprehensive psychosocial spiritual assessment.

The Spiritual Care worker provides spiritual and pastoral care, building up relationships with staff and clients. The work involves visits to clients, organising staff reflection sessions, attending clinical meetings, presenting programs on spirituality and spiritual care, and facilitating bereavement groups. Banksia added Art Therapy to its client support service when Susie Parry began work in May 2001. In March the next year Claire de Bruin became the first Banksia Music Therapist.

Susie Parry explains her work in these words:

*'Art Therapy has relevance in palliative care in providing ways to give expression to feelings of loss, fear, powerlessness, humiliation, body image change, inadequacy, and to meet emotional and spiritual needs.'* (BPSC Annual report 2005/6).

By using various art materials, clients can reflect on their lives and express themselves in an alternative way to spoken language.

Music Therapy is also used to express emotions that might otherwise be difficult to explore. By writing a song, a client can produce something which can be recorded and provide a way to help family cope with grief. Music Therapy can also distract clients from negative emotions, change mood and cause relaxation.

In 2015, on a very sad note, Julie Paul EO acknowledged on behalf of Banksia Palliative Care Service,

*“One of our highly respected and devoted Palliative Care Nurses, Jenny Lumsden, passed away peacefully on Thursday 2 July 2015. Jenny first worked at Banksia in a casual role for approximately four years and then as a permanent staff member for ten years. During this period Jenny formed many lasting friendships. Jenny was treasured for her ability to make others happy and for seeing the positive side to situations. She was admired for the dedication she showed to her work and for the care she gave to patients and their families. Jenny performed her work whilst facing her own personal challenge of having a terminal illness. Her bravery over the past years is an inspiration to those who knew of her private journey. On behalf of our President Paul Oppy and our Committee of Management, Staff and Volunteers, we express our deepest sympathies to her husband Ashley, her sons Shaun, Juy, Corey and to her family and friends. May we all treasure our special memories of a very brave lady, a very likable and respected person who we were fortunate to have worked with at Banksia. (Banksia Newsletter)*



In 2015 Julie Paul Executive Officer nominated a Staff Member Alex Talty for a Rotary Youth Leadership Award. The Rotary Club of Diamond Creek became Alex's sponsor to attend the week leadership training course. Banksia thanked Rotarian Kerrie Jones for her support. The following is a brief account by Alex of what the award meant to her.

*“This year I was fortunate enough to be nominated by Banksia to attend the Rotary Youth Leadership Award (RYLA) Conference and was graciously sponsored by the Diamond Creek Rotary. This 7 day conference at Doxa Camp, Malmsbury was a terrific opportunity to develop our understanding of leadership across our professional and personal lives. RYLA is an incredible experience that provides mental, emotional and physical challenges; it enhances participants’ leadership skills through a carefully designed itinerary of exceptional guest speakers, activities and projects. I am confident that each person who attended took valuable lessons away with them at the conclusion of the conference. RYLA 2015 taught me a great deal about professional and community leadership. It was also the beginning of so many wonderful friendships. I would strongly encourage anyone between the ages of 18 to 30 to attend this annual conference- it is truly life changing. Lastly, I would like to thank Banksia and Diamond Creek Rotary for this incredible experience.” (Banksia Newsletter)*

In 2016 Banksia and the Lumsden family honored the memory of Jenny Lumsden at the 2016 AGM with the establishment of the inaugural Jenny Lumsden Nursing Award. It was special that some of her family attended the AGM. Pictured from right, proud husband Ashley, her sister in law Irene and one of Jenny and Ashley's three sons, Shaun.



## Sharing the Knowledge

### The Learning Centre

Banksia had always been interested in providing palliative care education, particularly to the aged care industry. In the 1990s, the courses and workshops run by Banksia were limited and conducted without a specific business strategy in mind. One example was a half-day educational session offered to aged care facilities by a multidisciplinary team of Banksia staff members.

Then in 2000, a management restructure at Banksia opened up an opportunity to target palliative care education as a way of bringing additional revenue to the organisation. Julie Paul, the Business Development Manager, expanded her work experience portfolio by also taking on the role of Learning Centre Director and combining it with her role as Quality Manager. In the early years, most of the education provided by Banksia was sporadic, but in 2003, when the Learning Centre was formally established, Banksia was ready to take off as a preferred provider of palliative care education.

Banksia achieved Registered Training Organisation (RTO) status in 2004. A range of courses were offered and provided in the fields of nursing, social work and complementary therapies. Funding to run the courses came from course fees and grants from philanthropic foundations. The 2006/7 Annual report credited the Learning Centre with a 'successful year with strong interest in course enrolments and new initiatives'. (BPSC Annual report 2006/7).

Over the next eight years within Victoria, the Learning Centre continued to grow, providing training to a variety of different aged care and health care organisations. A continuing partnership with Goulburn Valley Hospice Care Services and Wodonga Health Service led to palliative care courses being conducted in Shepparton. Southern Cross Care (Vic.), Benetas and the Royal Freemasons' Homes of Victoria also relied on Banksia for palliative care education.

In 2008/9 Banksia began a partnership with the Australian Catholic University for an 'ethics approved' research project. An undergraduate palliative care elective for undergraduate nurses at the Australian Catholic University Melbourne Campus began in 2011/12.

In addition to all of these, Banksia's Learning Centre also ran educational workshops for aged care facilities and health professional groups. A particularly exciting time began when Japan became connected to Banksia's Learning Centre. The Melbourne Language Centre approached Banksia, asking if they were interested in accepting Japanese nurses as part of the Language Centre's program. This program helps Japanese nurses improve their English skills by organising for them to stay in Australia for up to six months, while also spending time at a local health care agency. Visits from Japanese health care workers (social workers, nurses, doctors and aged care administrators) took place during 2004/5, increasing Banksia's reputation as a palliative care educator. The growing success of the Learning Centre also resulted in travel taking place in the opposite direction.

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017

In June 2005 both Banksia's Learning Centre Director Julie Paul and Executive Officer Alan Johns travelled to Japan for 10 days to promote Banksia as an education provider. In March/April 2006 they visited Japan once more in response to invitations to present workshops in Tokyo and Nara, as well as networking with Japanese health care providers.

Alan Johns also visited Beijing and Shanghai in China. In 2006 a pharmaceutical company funded Julie Paul, on behalf of Banksia to present to Nurses in Kuala Lumpur.



Pictured front row Julie Paul, Alan Johns and Dr. Koh Kawagoe with Pallium Staff and volunteers 2005

Pallium Home Care in Tokyo and Banksia signed a formal sister-relationship in November, 2006. In October 2009, Banksia formed a another Sister Relationship with Hospice Hawaii where a formal presentation and signing took place in Tokyo, Japan, in the presence of our other Sister Organisation, Pallium.

In October / November 2010 Banksia Staff were fortunate to visit Japan due to receiving a prestigious Australian Japan Foundation (AJF) Grant which is a part of the Department Foreign Affairs & Trade (DFAT). Staff from Banksia, being Gillian Jackson Massage Therapist, Kate Hewitt Social Worker, Andrea Davy Manager Clinical Services and Julie Paul Executive Officer, spent one week with Banksias' Sister Organisation, "Pallium" in Tokyo and Japanese nursing homes. (Pictured below are Banksia Staff with Japanese colleagues) In the week prior Julie Paul conducted lectures in Nara, Osaka, Nagoya and Kobe prefectures.

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017



“Nineteen Grants were awarded by the AJF and BPCS was one of two recipients in the category of Economics and Trade. We received the second highest monetary value of the total nineteen grants awarded across all categories. The Grant of \$36,168 was awarded for, “Fostering Australian Palliative Care Partnerships in Japan”. (Julie Paul - Banksia Newsletter)

*To be awarded two AJF grants was very special for Banksia.*

At present the Banksia Learning Centre offers courses and workshops to hospitals, health centres, schools and funeral homes. Topics covered include palliative care, approaches to pain relief and symptom management, and end of life care. The Learning Centre also runs the Palliative Care Resource Nurse Course for Registered Nurses Division 1 and 2, a palliative care course recognised by the University of Melbourne.

## Coming Together...Reaching Out Community Liaison

Dr Taffy Jones, founder of Banksia, said in his 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary speech,

*'I believed that it was most important that the Service was seen as community based.'* (Jones 2014).

However, at the time when he was appointed as the Director of Medical Services at the Austin Hospital and saw the need for a palliative care service, there was little understanding both at the hospital and in the community of what such a service could offer. Taffy began an energetic campaign to speak to individuals and address service clubs in order to educate them about palliative care, to fire up enthusiasm for the idea, and to ensure that Banksia became a community-based service.

Members of the first Steering Committee were volunteers from the community. The Committees of Management that followed them also came from the community, and volunteers from the community have always helped with client support and administrative tasks. Banksia continually consults different communities in its catchment area before making decisions about policies and services. Local businesses and groups from the community support Banksia with donations and assistance.

In the early days of Banksia's history, members of the first Committees of Management enthusiastically continued to help spread Taffy Jones's message about Banksia's future role in the community, and inspired people to offer support by volunteering their time or donating money to get Banksia off the ground. Later, in 1998/9 for example, service clubs invited staff from Banksia to speak at their meetings; this proved to be a great way to generate interest in volunteering and led to 'sizeable donations'. (BPSC Annual report 1998/9).

In 1998 to 2000 Alan Johns explored many options for Banksia to relocate. However the choices were limited. In 2000 Banksia moved to 450 Lower Heidelberg Road Ivanhoe and enjoyed a much more modern environment than Eltham. Funding was always an issue to be conscious of.

History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017



(Banksia Premises 450 Upper Heidelberg Road. Ivanhoe)

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017



(Julie Paul, Martin Sacks, Karen Code and Lisa McCune pictured at a Banksia Auction Fundraising Event)

In 2002 a grant from the Department of Health Service made it possible for Banksia, working in partnership with Melbourne City Mission Palliative Care, to produce a video called Palliative Care for All People which was launched during National Palliative Care Awareness Week. It was released to the community in the 10 most commonly used languages spoken in the North Metropolitan region.

In 2005 volunteer Tim Paul retired from the police force and came to work at Banksia part time as Community Liaison Coordinator. His extensive list of roles included fundraising, recruiting volunteers, acknowledging donations, submitting grants, media interaction, community liaison, presentations, patron liaison, compiling newsletters, internet site development and overseeing major events. A successful method of fundraising was the Auction/Dinner evenings organised by Julie and Tim Paul and a group of hardworking helpers, which, by 2003, had raised over \$160,000 total clear profit over twelve years. In 2005 Tim Paul was awarded Life Membership in recognition of his voluntary work.

Banksia realised in 2007 that there was 'a strong need to continue marketing Banksia within the community'. (BPSC Annual Report 2006/7).

In 2007 a Diamond Creek family chose to create awareness with a bike ride and to highlight palliative care is for people of all ages, including infants and children. This was a wonderful gesture.



## Bike ride for Banksia

“Banksia Palliative Care were terrifically supportive of us,” says Louise Haufeger. The Diamond Creek mother lost a child to cancer six years ago and has nothing but praise for Banksia’s help during the ordeal. It’s no wonder then, that the keen cyclist and her two children (pictured), Mia Siemonsma, 9, and Luke, 10, will be behind a riding fundraiser for the service on October 14. The palliative care service is 80 per cent government funded and relies on fundraising to fill in the gap. The bike ride begins at 10am at the canoe launching ramp car park in Westerfolds Park and covers 10km along the Yarra Trail. Entry is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children or \$20 for a family. The palliative care service also welcomes fundraising volunteers. For details, call 9497 2100.

In 2007 Banksia employed a social worker, Sue Fisher specifically to complete a culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) project. The project was fully funded by the Department of Health Services. “A great deal of professional development resources and guidelines were also developed, including Brochures describing Banksia’s services in 13 Community languages. A model of culturally inclusive palliative care was developed through the establishment of Banksia’s Multicultural Reference Group, Information in languages other than

English is now routinely offered to clients and families whenever appropriate.” (ECCV Magazine Golden Years Summer Edition No.12)

In the next few years’ presentations to local community groups about palliative care and health promotion raised awareness and interest in Banksia. An example of community engagement is 16 presentations to local groups and four general palliative care awareness activities in the years 2010/11.

In 2008 Banksia held a concert to raise awareness and were supported by well-known female performer Marcie Jones. The event was held at the Rosanna Uniting Church, Arden Crescent Concert Series Hall. 2008 was the last of the Auction nights. Other charities had begun similar events and the cost of venue and meals had become exorbitant.

Catch one of Australia’s top female performers at a concert and you can also do your part for palliative care. **MARK SMITH** reports.

# Concert coup for carers

## CONCERT

**W**HITTLESEA residents have a rare chance to catch one of the country’s most iconic female performers next month in an intimate concert experience for charity.

Marcie Jones will headline a community awareness concert to raise funds for Banksia Palliative Care. The singer has donated her time for the concert.

It is a generous departure from the big stage for the artist whose hit group Marcie and the Cookies toured internationally in the late 1960s and early ’70s with acts such as The Seekers, The Monkees, Cliff Richard and Tom Jones.

In 2006 she was nominated for Best Female Vocalist in the Australian Country Music Awards.

Jones will perform a mixture of classic hits and new material for the show, including the popular tracks *I Would If I Could* and *Gonna Get Married*.

She will be joined by local musicians and special guests.

Banksia Palliative Care community development manager Timothy Paul said it was a wonderful chance for people to show their support for an organisation that was often overlooked until people needed its services.

Banksia Palliative Care provides free support to more than 500 children and adults in Whittlesea, Banyule and Nillumbik who are

## BOX OFFICE

**WHAT:** Marcie Jones at the Banksia Palliative care community awareness concert.

**WHEN:** Friday, August 15, at 7pm.

**WHERE:** Rosanna Uniting Church Concert Hall, 21-23 Arden Cres., Rosanna.

**COST:** \$5 adults, \$12 family.

**BOOKINGS:** 9497 2100.

living with a progressive terminal illness at home.

It also provides support for carers and their families.

Mr Paul said securing Jones for the concert was the second coup for the service in three months. In May, former *Neighbours* star Krista Wendy became the first female patron for the service when she nominated it as her own charity to promote.

Home-based palliative care is estimated to be one fifth of the cost of hospital-based care.

Athur’s Greek resident Glenda Anderson recommended people get behind the service after it helped her care for her father, diagnosed with asbestos-related cancer earlier this year. She said the service’s nurses “were wonderful”.



Marcie Jones is giving her time for charity.

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017

Accountability of expending government and public funds has always been at the forefront for Banksia. Core government funding has increased over the years. There is a reliance on donations, grants and sponsorships to be able to provide optimum services. Fiscal responsibility is a core component of accountability and Banksia has achieved great results whilst never owning its premises outright. Banksia has always leased premises throughout its history. From The Royal District Nurses offices in Diamond Creek, to the Offices above the “door sales” shop in Susan Street, Eltham, to the modern office premises in Upper Heidelberg Road, Ivanhoe and to now its current premises, being converted offices in Lower Heidelberg Road, Heidelberg.

The number of staff continued to grow to meet demand and by 2010 Banksia was in desperate need of larger premises. This task was assigned to Julie and Tim Paul. With the guidance of Committee Member Damian Neylon, and some open minded owners of the building, they were able to achieve their vision of converting what was a derelict old Freemasons Hall, which had also become a knitting mill, into its current state.

In 2010 the then Health Minister and now Premier (2017) Daniel Andrews, officially opened Banksia’s premises and praised Banksia telling the Heidelberg Leader Newspaper,

*“Community based palliative care is so important, it’s about compassion providing nurture to those in need and the difference that makes. But it’s very challenging work in the broad sense, it’s not easy.” (Heidelberg Leader 23 November 2010)*



(472 Lower Heidelberg Road Heidelberg)

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017



*“Our new home is progressing well. The painting is near finalisation. The lights are being installed and the carpet is to be laid soon. To be able to have street visibility will be a major advantage. The building itself is iconic in the area and its façade has heritage status. It is expected the renovations will be completed by 30 September and we can move in. We look forward to having an open day later in the year, to invite all persons interested in their local community palliative care service.” (Julie Paul Executive Officer Banksia Newsletter)*

In 2011 the ABC broadcasted a radio program live from Banksia celebrating National Palliative Care Week. Pictured is Odette Waanders CEO Palliative Care Victoria speaking at the event.



## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017

In order to increase public understanding of palliative care and promote Banksia's services, the Community Liaison Coordinator has made extensive use of different media. Since 2009/10, staff members have also appeared on local radio shows, Plenty Valley FM and Inner FM, and there is a monthly palliative care segment highlighting Banksia's role in the community. On 14 June 2012 Tim Paul (Community Liaison Coordinator) was invited to take part in The Conversation Hour with John Faine on ABC 774 Radio. The program generated phone calls, emails and comments, and successfully widened Banksia's visibility in the community.

In 2011 Banksia celebrated National Cultural and Diversity Week with guests from the Macedonian community. Pictured special Guests Slobodanka Trajkovski and Father Gavril, pictured centre of front row with Banksia Staff.



Banksia has continued to evolve and be at the forefront of addressing community needs. To maintain the impetus of previous projects, Banksia has continued to develop relationships with multicultural groups as part of its health promotion strategy. In 2011/12 Banksia partnered with the Macedonian and Somalian communities to learn their cultural traditions on end of life care. The two communities also reviewed Banksia's Home Care Support Kit for cultural appropriateness.

In 2011 funding was obtained from the State Government for four syringe drivers at a cost of \$2,700 each. Banksia created a public campaign and by September 2010 another nine syringe drivers were funded by the community, being two from each of the City of Banyule Community fund, Freemasons Lodges, local Rotary Clubs and private individuals.

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017

This is a great example of the community partnerships Banksia has created over the years. Julie Paul EO, explained,

*“These syringe drivers provide a vehicle for good symptom control and often enable patients to remain in their own home, or in an Aged Care Facility. The successful appeal allowed Banksia to distribute the syringe drivers on loan for free throughout the community.”*

Since 2011/12 Banksia has made a concerted effort to better understand the needs of the Aboriginal communities in the area. On Harmony Day, the Victorian Aboriginal Culturally Community Health Organisation, Inc. (VACCHO) ran an education session at Banksia to give staff a better understanding of Aboriginal culture and palliative care in their communities. Banksia worked hard to establish links with other Aboriginal health care organisations. The Community Liaison Coordinator spoke on a panel on an Aboriginal radio station 3KND 1503 AM during Palliative Care Week.

In 2012 Banksia was successful in receiving a grant under the National Palliative Care Equipment Loans Scheme Commonwealth Government Grant that is managed by the Department of Health and Ageing. Banksia's funding is for the purchase of equipment to improve the quality of life and independence of clients. Banksia purchased the following items: 10 Hospital Beds complete with cot sides and self-help poles, 10 convoluted foam mattresses, 7 digital air mattresses, 7 bed side commodes with padded arms, 2 electric lift recliners with twin motors and 10 transporter shower commodes with padded seats. This equipment was loaned free of charge to clients on Banksia's program. Banksia has continued to receive successful grants, including those from the Bendigo Community Bank of East Ivanhoe and Heidelberg to fund the technology for presentations in meeting rooms and soundproofing.

A 'wonderful partnership' with the Patchwork Gallery Quilt Group developed in 2012/13. (BPCS Annual report 2012/13). The members of the group design and make quilts for clients. They also design and make Banksia's beautiful annual memorial quilts which decorate many of the rooms in the Banksia Heidelberg office. The group also promotes palliative care in their communities and, each year, donates money raised from their quilt show.

In 2013/14 liaison took place with the Italian and Greek communities of Whittlesea, and Banksia was able to enable a large section of the community aware of the palliative care services it provides. In 2013/14, Tim Paul and Nerida Morton (Learning Centre Coordinator) took part in the Culturally Responsible Palliative Care Project conducted by Palliative Care Victoria. Banksia also trained peer educators from the Italian, Chinese, Vietnamese, Turkish and Maltese communities.

*The Community Liaison Coordinator conducted 10 presentations to Greek community groups and another 8 to Italian community groups, with a total attendance of approximately 800 community members. The results of surveys with the audiences showed less than 5 per cent of community members knew of Banksia's services prior to the presentations. However after the presentations 90 per cent of respondents were now comfortable to contact Banksia either directly or via their Doctor or religious leader. (Banksia Newsletter)*

The Italian and Greek Communities were chosen as they represented the highest number of multicultural clients for Banksia. Most of the group participants were non-English speaking, whilst most of their committee members were bilingual and able to assist in overcoming language barriers. The general Banksia brochure translated into both languages. Banksia partnered with staff from the Office of Lily D'Ambrosio MP, State Member for Mill Park who kindly provided introductions to the groups and assisted with interpreting. A community partnership with the Eltham Rural Group funded these resources.

Pictured is Jim Vavladellis of the Mill Park Elderly Greek Senior Citizens Association.



To celebrate 2014 National Palliative Care Week, Banksia held a morning tea which included a book launch, at Banksia's premises. Seventy five people attended from a wide spectrum of the community, including representatives of State and Local Government, multi-cultural groups, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, community and hospital palliative care services, Royal District Nursing Service, businesses, volunteer groups and community service groups such as Lions, Rotary, Freemasons and the Eltham Rural Group. The book launch was very appropriate for this year's theme, "Let's Work Together, Palliative Care Everyone's Business".

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017

To emphasise the theme, Terry Wallace a resident in Banksia's catchment area, and high profile former VFL champion footballer, coach and media commentator, was one of the guest speakers. The major presenter was the author of, "The Third Chair" a past carer, Iris Crook, who reflected on her experience as a carer and family perspective. Iris wrote The Third Chair from diary entries of her role as a daughter, coping with the challenges of her mother's terminal illness and her role as a carer.

The relationship with VACCHO and the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service has continued. In June 2014 Banksia received a Victorian Government Department of Health grant to employ an Aboriginal person to work with Banksia to conduct training for staff and volunteers, and to ensure that the practices are culturally sensitive. Banksia was one of 3 organisations in Victoria chosen to be recipients from Victoria Health State Government of a grant liaising with the Victoria Aboriginal Palliative Care Collaborative (VAPCC). Banksia worked closely with VAPCC Project Manager, Steven Kirkbright. Belinda Stevens Director of Workforce and Wellbeing, at (VACCHO), Victoria Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation and Jason King Chief Executive Officer of (VAHS), Victoria Aboriginal Health Service who provided guidance and enthusiasm as members of the Advisory Group.

Banksia adopted its brochure to reflect Aboriginal culture as advised by Cherie Waight of VACCHO. Cherie was a driving force behind the liaison with Banksia. Sadly, Cherie died in 2015 and on behalf of Banksia, Julie and Tim Paul attended Cherie's Funeral in Shepparton. Cherie was a great inspiration. (2017 Tim Paul Community Liaison Coordinator)

In 2015 Carleen Miller reflected on her role with Banksia.

*"My name is Carleen Miller and I am a proud Taunurung descendant of John Franklin of the Yilam Buluk clan from Yea and Kilmore area in the Goulburn Valley Region of Victoria. More recently I have been fortunate enough to be appointed to the position of Aboriginal Project Worker for Banksia. This position is part of the Victorian Aboriginal Palliative Care Collaborative and overseen by an Advisory Committee. During my six months with Banksia I have attempted to walk alongside staff and volunteers to facilitate shared understanding of the cultural needs of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people who are on a palliative approach to care journey. After networking and consulting with relevant community organisations and personnel I have developed Best Practice Guidelines for delivering culturally safe palliative care to people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait origin living with a progressive terminal illness. I have provided education and resources to staff to assist them to deliver culturally safe palliative care to community. Progressing this further will assist BPCS to partner with Aboriginal community and support sustainability of project objectives and outcomes".*  
(Banksia Newsletter)

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017

Pictured right on the right is Carleen Miller holding a “dilly bag” presented to her by Deb Layt, representing the volunteers of the Patchwork Gallery Quilt Group who volunteered their time and resources to sew the dilly bags.



Banksia developed a “dilly bag” with contents relevant to Aboriginal culture to be given to clients and carers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin at their admission to Banksia’s program. This was a unique initiative and received very positive feedback from clients and staff.

In 2015 a Banksia Client Lawrie Carter and his carer, wife Linda Carter agreed to participate in a DVD to create awareness of community palliative care. The DVD appears on the home page of Banksia’s website and also on YouTube.

Banksia is very appreciative of the kindness of Lawrie and his family. It is an emotional DVD video providing an insight into the challenges of living with a progressive terminal illness and Lawrie and Linda were able to express to others their feelings and experiences during their journey. The DVD is an excellent education tool for public presentations. It is an example of the wonderful supporters, many who have been clients and carers, who have participated in print and electronic media and events to help create awareness of community palliative care over Banksia’s 27 year history. (Tim Paul 2017)



(Lawrie and Linda Carter 2014)

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017

In 2016 due to remaining VAPCC grant funding, Banksia was able to purchase two Aboriginal Paintings by Terori Hareko Hamios. These paintings are displayed in the ground floor hallway and the main meeting room upstairs. The paintings were specifically painted to relevant themes of Banksia's work.



Pictured above Artwork, 'Our journey, our resting Place'

The Artist Terori, explained the meaning of the painting, 'Our journey, our resting Place', "For community and families, having a family member on their palliative care journey or dreaming journey is both stressful and emotional. It is heart breaking and the loss is felt not just by the family but by the community. This painting acknowledges the importance of connecting to community and the sharing of knowledge."



Pictured above Artwork, 'Caring for Community, Knowledge and Wellbeing'

The artist Terori explained the meaning of the painting, 'Caring for Community, Knowledge and Wellbeing', "This painting is an acknowledgement of the wonderful journey that Banksia is on, in creating a culturally welcoming service that acknowledges traditional knowledge and works with community to make sure that community is engaged and involved very step of the way in their 'dreaming' journey."

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017

In 2016 Banksia was awarded a Banyule Watsonia RSL Trust Fund Grant to extend its community engagement program. Community groups to be included were of Chinese, Macedonian, Indian and Somalian cultures. On the 7 June, Banksia held an awareness session with the Whittlesea Chinese Association (WCA). The following comment highlights the need for inclusiveness policies with different ethnicity groups. A respected WCA Life Member, Mr. Zhou, 87 years of age, made the following remarks via a mandarin interpreter;

*“My wife died of cancer in hospital, had I known about home palliative care I would have cared for my wife at home. It is important for Chinese people to know they can get help to keep their family at home.” (Banksia Newsletter)*

*“The WCA members showed great interest in the type of support which can be provided. Working together will assist us to ensure we are providing culturally appropriate palliative care.*

*(Julie Paul EO, Banksia Newsletter, pictured below are WCA members participating in the awareness session and performing a tai chi dance)*



Banksia has continued the project throughout 2017 and has had guest lecturers from Indian, Somalian, Macedonian and Chinese present to staff and volunteers. These groups were strategically chosen due to their population growth in the north east. Following on from the dilly bag initiative in 2014 with the Aboriginal culture, welcome packs were developed to suit different cultures. Again the aim is to create a feeling of cultural safety and for the patient and carer to possibly view Banksia staff as being culturally sensitive to their needs. (Tim Paul Community Liaison Coordinator 2017)

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017



Pictured above from left are Abdiaziz Farar from the Somali Islamic Council of Victoria, Claudia Wilson administration officer and volunteer Lorraine Taylor



Pictured above is an example of a welcome pack bag made by the Patchwork Gallery Quilt Group. Made in green material as agreed with the Chinese Cancer Society Victoria, showing contents of a wulu (calabash) pen, notebook. Information items also inserted.



Pictured above is a Macedonian Welcome Pack showing contents selected specifically for cultural safety, in liaison with Macedonian community organisations and religious leaders.



Pictured left are examples of Banksia's brochures illustrating Macedonian flag and Somali Kaaba for praying.

The Victoria Multicultural Affairs Minister Robin Scott MP and the Chairperson of Ethnic and Communities Council of Victoria Eddie Micallef, both kindly provided their full support of Banksia's welcome pack project by providing open letters of support. (Tim Paul Community Liaison Coordinator 2017)

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017



4 September 2017

Dear Resident,

Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria (ECCV) is the peak policy advocacy body for Victoria's ethnic and multicultural communities in Victoria, with a membership of 220 organisations and individuals.

ECCV supports the initiative of an inclusive multicultural policy at Banksia Palliative Care Service. These welcome packs are a symbol of Banksia's desire for you to feel culturally safe in your new environment.

ECCV understands that this is a challenging time in your life, and our thoughts and best wishes are with you and your family.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eddie Micallef', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Eddie Micallef  
Chairperson

**Patron**  
The Right Hon Malcolm Fraser AC, CH,  
former Prime Minister of Australia

**Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria**  
Statewide Resources Centre  
150 Palmerston Street, Carlton VIC 3053  
ABN 65071572705 | Incorporations Number A0027904K

T: (03) 9349 4122  
F: (03) 9349 4967  
E: [eccv@eccv.org.au](mailto:eccv@eccv.org.au)  
[www.eccv.org.au](http://www.eccv.org.au)

History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017



**Robin Scott**MP

Minister for Finance  
Minister for Multicultural Affairs

Level 5, 1 Macarthur Street  
Melbourne, Victoria 3002 Australia  
Telephone: +613 96511044  
DX210759

D17/283374

**28 SEP 2017**

Dear resident

The Victorian Government supports every Victorian to stay connected to their culture and community at all stages of life and we are committed to working with organisations to ensure services are accessible and responsive to their language, religious and cultural needs.

I am therefore pleased to support Banksia Palliative Care Service in their approach to providing culturally appropriate services and support to Victorians and trust that you and your family will find some comfort and familiarity in this welcome pack.

In providing culturally-sensitive care for its residents, the Service has also committed to working closely with local multicultural organisations to help you and other residents retain vital connections with the community.

I hope this pack goes some way to helping you feel safe and supported in your new environment, and I send my heartfelt best wishes at this difficult time.

Yours sincerely

**Robin Scott** MP  
Minister for Multicultural Affairs

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017

A community partnership was formed in 2017 with four lovely children who took it upon themselves to create awareness of Banksia, by making some “fairy lanterns” for fundraising.

“Our Community Liaison Coordinator was contacted by Amy Burgess of Whittlesea, asking whether the children could fundraise for Banksia. Amy and her sister Clair Holmes each have two children who wished to help make a difference for others, whilst honouring the memory of Arthur “Ardy” Acott. I was very touched by the children known as “Ardy’s Angels” due to their genuine kindness to create an everlasting memory of one of their close family friends, Arthur “Ardy” Acott, who was recently cared for by Banksia.

*To me, they exemplify the meaning of community engagement and we are extremely appreciative of them, their proud parents and their network of friends who have supported their efforts. The Whittlesea Leader kindly published a story about them. This publicity will hopefully lead to more people in the City of Whittlesea knowing about the free specialist services Banksia offers”. (Julie Paul Banksia Newsletter)*



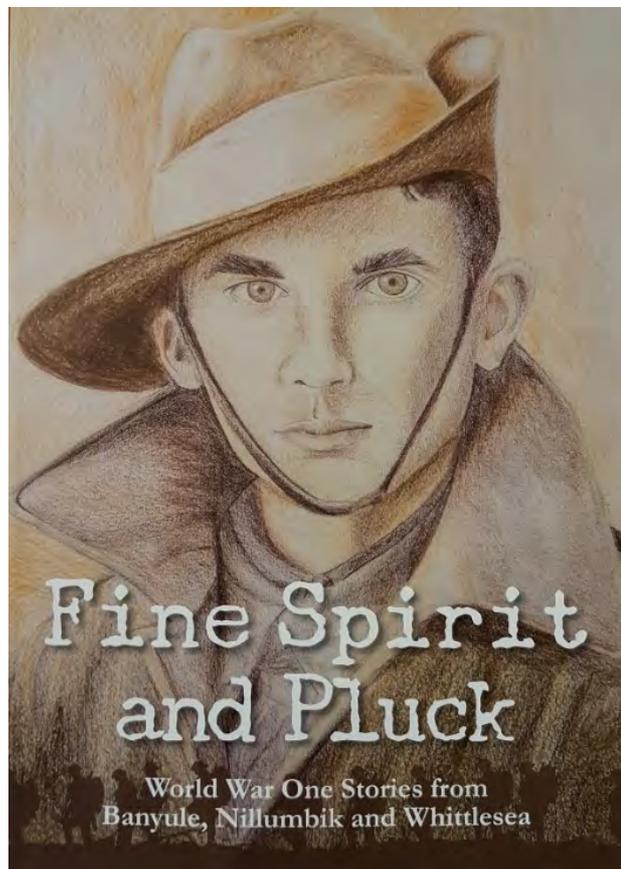
In 2017 The Health Minister Jill Hennessy utilised Banksia as a platform to announce a State Government increase in funding for Palliative Care Service. The Minister with State MP Anthony Carbines mixed with Banksia patients, carers, staff, volunteers and supporters. Ardy’s angels are pictured with State Health Minister Jill Hennessy and MP Anthony Carbines and right with fairy lanterns.

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017

Below Jill Hennessy MP with Banksia client Kim Walker, her partner and carer Ben Cook and Anthony Carbines. Pictured below right is Jill Hennessy and Anthony Carbines with Banksia staff and volunteers.



In 2017 Banksia strengthened its community partnership with the Watsonia RSL. Banksia has been able to extend the multicultural program welcome pack initiative to now include items for current and former service persons. The Watsonia RSL have totally funded the items. One of the items in the welcome pack is a book on World War 1 veterans from the municipalities of Banyule, Nillumbik and Whittlesea.



An article appeared in the Heidelberg Leader newspaper on 16 October 2017 highlighting the welcome packs and the community partnership developed between Banksia and the RSL.

# Gifts pay tribute to sacrifices made

## RSL partners with nurses to deliver care packs to veterans

### Jayitri Smiles

PALLIATIVE care nurses will enter the homes of army veterans in Melbourne's north with a personalised gift pack to show they care.

Ex and current service people who are treated at home by the Banksia Palliative Care Service will soon start receiving welcome gifts that honour their sacrifices for Australia.

Nurses will hand deliver the packs, which contain an RSL bag, Anzac biscuits, mugs and medal stands, during their first home visit.

President of the Watsonia

RSL sub-branch Jeff Mawkes said the partnership with Banksia helps veterans feel recognised for their service and culturally safe in staff hands.

"We obviously have a lot of old Diggers who end up in this situation . . . it's important that the family and patient knows we respect what they've done for the country."

Patriotic funds from the Watsonia RSL sub-branch are being used to collect the items for the Diggers who live in Whittlesea, Banyule and Nillumbik.

The idea stems from simi-

lar packs that have been tailored to Indian, Somalian, Macedonian and Chinese families in the region.

Banksia community liaison co-ordinator Tim Paul said the personalised touch often acts as an icebreaker.

"You've got people in a very challenging time of their lives and this is one way to make them know you care," he said.

Nurses are looking forward to expanding the service into more diverse communities in Melbourne's north as the program increases in popularity.

Details: 9455 0822.



The project received support from Jenny Macklin Federal MP for the electorate of Jaga Jaga, who provided a Certificate of Appreciation on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia for clients, to go in each welcome pack.

## **‘More Than I Have Given’ The Volunteers**

Over the past 27 years, volunteers have played a very important part in Banksia’s developing history. In the first frustrating years when the wait for funding from government seemed to stretch on interminably, volunteers kept the idea of a palliative care service alive in the community and prodded the bureaucracy into action. Ever since the money finally appeared and the Service could begin, there has always been a group of volunteers at Banksia generously giving their time and skills to help with client support, administration and public relations. It seems only fitting that Banyule City Council awarded Banksia a ‘Community Group Volunteer Award’ in May 2015. Volunteer Maria Walsh was named City of Banyule citizen of the year.

The numbers of volunteers has waxed and waned over the years. This can be seen as the inevitable result of having many volunteers over retirement age, making them sometimes vulnerable to ill health and also to catching the travel bug. However, many loyal volunteers have spent years devoting their time to supporting the work Banksia does. In September 1994 there were 19 volunteers; in 1997, 26; in 2000, over 40 with more in the process of completing their training.

Pam Hickingbotham became the first Coordinator of Volunteers in 1993, combining it with her role as Social Worker. Monthly training for volunteers took place during the day and in the evenings, and these monthly meetings provided not only education, but also ‘group encouragement, support and de-briefing opportunities’. (BPCS Annual report 1994/5). Volunteers also helped with information stalls at the Eltham Festival, the Heidelberg Festival and Diamond Creek Town Fair. In the year 1994/5, Volunteer Support Workers provided a total of 956 hours of documented client work. Pam Hickingbotham wrote in a report that year, ‘I thank them for their joy, enthusiasm and their willingness to have a go at anything I suggest!’ (BPCS Annual report 1994/5).

Over the years those volunteers in Client Support have carried out a variety of roles, which were listed in 1997 as ‘companionship, support, respite, providing a friendly, unbiased ear, confidentiality, transport to appointments, errands, small domestic tasks and client advocacy’ (BPCS Annual report 1996/7). Administration Support Volunteers performed tasks listed as ‘administration support, cataloguing and cleaning nursing patient aids, public relations, library maintenance, correspondence and group work.’ Other annual reports have mentioned more specific tasks performed by volunteers. A retired hairdresser offered to do haircuts and manicures for clients. Another volunteer drove a client to the hospital for treatment three days a week before going to his own job. In 1998/9, seven volunteers undertook five weeks of intensive training so that they could offer additional bereavement telephone support to families of clients.

In 2002 Julie Paul formed a group of past carers, and they at first were known as “The Friends of Banksia”. They gave their voluntary services to Fundraising and later emphasising community awareness activities as part of health promotion. They ran a stall in Main Street Greensborough for many years. Sadly the group disbanded as the carers became more elderly.

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017



Pictured from rear left, fellow inaugural “friends of banksia”, who became awareness support volunteers, Denise Edwards, Bev Allan Joan O’Loughlin, and Jean Sing celebrating Jeans 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

One of Julie Paul’s aims was to diversify the ethnicity backgrounds of our volunteers. In 2011 Banksia Volunteer, Lei Chen proudly became an Australian citizen at a ceremony held at the City of Whittlesea Lei is of Chinese descent and was a very active volunteer.



Pictured from left, daughter Yufeng, niece Jie, Mayor City of Whittlesea Rex Griffin, a proud Lei and her husband Zheng.



One of Banksia’s former long serving respected volunteers, Alby Collis pictured with Actor Bud Tingwell celebrating the 2007 National Volunteer Week. Two true gentlemen.

Training of volunteers at Banksia has always been considered essential. Organised by the Volunteer Coordinator, topics have included a range of palliative care subjects ‘which are presented in such a way as to promote the personal growth of the participants whilst at the same time preparing volunteers for the responsibility of working as part of the Banksia multi-disciplinary team.’ (BPCS Annual report 1999/2000).

In response to the training, one volunteer wrote:

*‘Some of the material was confrontational to me; however that was when I learned the most’. (BPCS Annual report 2009/10).*

In 2009/10 the Banksia Volunteer Reference Group (which represents all Banksia’s volunteers) reviewed the training program and discussed ways of increasing the role of volunteers at Banksia. Julie Paul EO stated:

*“A Volunteer Reference Group has been developed to increase the profile and opportunity for volunteers within Banksia. During late 2009, early 2010 the group reviewed volunteer training. This resulted in a new and improved training program for all volunteers regardless of their role. We currently have 11 new volunteers who will participate in the new training modules starting in April.”  
(Banksia Newsletter)*

In 2013/14 Banksia gave focus to improving the clinical program for Client Support Volunteers. Clinical supervision ensures that the Coordinator has meetings with volunteers more frequently at specific times in the volunteer-client link, and enables the volunteers to discuss ideas and strategies, share information and reflect on their role and their own well-being. The Coordinator also contacts the client or carer to make sure that the volunteer can meet client-carer needs and respond to changes in circumstance if required.

For the volunteers the work they do brings great satisfaction and reward. A Client Support Volunteer explained it in this way:

*‘I feel so blessed to have shared these last eight months with the most amazing family. To walk someone’s final journey in life makes you stop and appreciate each day.’ (BPCS Annual report 2011/12).*

Beverly, another Client Support Volunteer, said:

*‘I really look forward to my time with clients. It is a privilege clients extend to me by allowing me into their lives... Volunteering has given me more than I have given.’ (BPCS Annual report 2011/12).*

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017

In 2015 The City of Banyule made the following comments about Banksia for the awards;

“The service has a rich history of volunteers doing remarkable things. Providing specialist home-based palliative care and practical support to children and adults with a progressive terminal illness, volunteers work in client or administrative support. As volunteers in health, they undertake much additional training and work two to four hours a week or fortnight. Often clients and carers feel isolated and volunteers provide comfort and care in a range of ways from reading books, playing music, listening, watching movies, having great conversations and reminiscing. The volunteers are deeply committed to their volunteer work and they provide care and support at a very difficult and sensitive time to our clients and carers.” (Banksia Newsletter)



Pictured above are some of Banksia’s devoted volunteers accepting their Community Recognition Award from the City of Banyule. From left; representing the team of Banksia Volunteers, are Mary Mazurczuk, Pam Quinton-Randall, guest entertainer Brian Nankervis, City of Banyule Mayor Craig Langdon, Banksia Coordinator of Volunteers Monique Balfour and Margaret Rentoul. Also in 2015 Banksia volunteer Maria Welsh was named City of Banyule Citizen of the Year. Banksia’s Volunteer Coordinator Monique Balfour was glowing in her praise of Maria. Pictured below from left, Volunteer Coordinator Monique Balfour, Maria Welsh and Banksia’s Executive Officer Julie Paul, celebrating the receipt of Maria’s reward and of the Volunteers overall team award.

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017



“Maria contributes to the community in so many ways and has been an active volunteer for a range of causes, including five years as a client support volunteer with Banksia Palliative Care Service. She is also a volunteer facilitator of a bereavement support group, does fundraising activities, organises social activities in an aged care facility, and is a member of the Banksia Volunteer Reference Group. Maria has a philosophical approach to volunteering, seeing it as an important part of contributing, building and supporting community. I have seen the way Maria has worked with clients in a palliative care setting and she shows incredible compassion, empathy and thoughtfulness.” (Monique Balfour Coordinator Volunteers Banksia Newsletter)

## Celebrating 27 Years

Our 2014 Annual General Meeting was a great way to commence celebrating Banksia's 25th Anniversary of serving the communities within the municipalities of Banyule, Nillumbik and Whittlesea. Banksia was honoured to have one of its original Steering Committee Members, Dr. Taffy Jones as Guest Speaker and also present in the audience two other original Steering Committee members Ann Francis (Life Member) and Katherine Kingsbury. Unfortunately one of our much respected Life Members John Shilliday, who had a significant role in our formation, was unable to attend. It was great to see Banksia's first Executive Officer Alan Johns (1992 - 2007) and former Committee of Management member Cliff Picton in the audience. In the spirit of community engagement students from Ivanhoe Girls Grammar provided background music and were of great assistance to organisers.

Dr. Taffy Jones, former Medical Director at the Austin Hospital, provided a very entertaining overview of the history of Banksia's humble beginnings. Dr. Jones spoke about the need for Banksia to remain independent of larger institutions and was pleased Banksia had maintained its community organisation identity.

Banksia's then President Paul Oppy announced that one of our long serving Committee of Management members, Damian Neylon was resigning after 20 years distinguished voluntary service. Damian had provided Banksia professional guidance on many matters. John Richardson had also served on the committee providing HR advice during the same period. John is still a serving member of the Committee of Management. Damian and John were presented with 20 year plaques acknowledging their significant milestones.

The AGM creates an opportunity to publically thank our staff and volunteers for their work during the year. It allowed Banksia to acknowledge the many individuals, community and business groups and individuals, who have supported Banksia.

There has been wonderful support from many community groups, including annual support for many years from private individuals who wish to remain anonymous. There are too many supporters to list but there are some organisations who have been loyal annual supporters who have been very kind to Banksia. A sincere apology to any organisation omitted.

Throughout Banksia's history it has appreciated strong support from the Heidelberg Warringal Lions Club and the many Lions and Rotary service clubs across the region, Greensborough Bowling Club, Rosanna Uniting Church, Arden Crescent Concert Series, Old England and Barkly's Hotels Heidelberg, Eltham Rural Group, Freemasons Victoria and their Lodges, William Angliss Charitable Foundation, City of Banyule and Whittlesea Community Grants, Parkview Ladies Golf Club, Watsonia RSL, Bendigo Community Banks of East Ivanhoe and Heidelberg, Mitre 10 Heidelberg, the Patchwork Gallery Quilt Group and the Country Women's Association's CWA's, are all organisations where the community and Banksia have benefited from their kindness.

## History of Banksia Palliative Care Service - 1989 to 2017



Pictured are some of our wonderful volunteers attending the 25 year celebrations. From front left Margaret Rentoul, Maria Walsh and from rear left Lorraine Taylor, Bev Boulter, and Volunteer Coordinator Monique Balfour.

Pictured right is Dr. Taffy Jones presenting at the 2014 AGM

One of the profound statements Dr. Jones made was when he cited a quote in part by Leo Rosten:

*“There is a myth to which many of us are addicted that the purpose of life is to be happy. I know of nothing more demeaning than this narcotic pursuit of fun. Where was it ever written that life can always be easy or free of conflict or of pain. The purpose of life is not to be happy but to matter, to be productive, to be useful, and to have it make some difference that we lived at all”*



Dr. Jones concluded,

*“Well Banksia Palliative Care Service has certainly mattered and made a huge difference for the better in countless peoples’ lives so congratulations and I wish you every success for the future. 25 years is a wonderful achievement.”*

On a sad note, Julie Paul Executive Officer of 10 years and employed at Banksia for 25 years, officially resigns from the organisation on 31 October. Julie gave notice of her resignation in June.

Thank you to all individuals and organisations who have contributed in some way to Banksia Palliative Care Service over the past 27 years.

On a very pleasing note to end this overview of Banksia’s History, we are honoured to announce that in November 2017, Dr. Taffy Jones will be awarded Life Membership at Banksia’s Annual General Meeting. On behalf of everyone associated with Banksia, our very best wishes go to “Taffy” and his family.

## REFERENCES

- Banksia Palliative Care Service 1995. Agenda of AGM, 27 September 1995.
- Banksia Palliative Care Service 1993 – 2013/14. Annual reports, 1993-2013/14.
- Banksia Palliative Care Service 1989. Minutes of Steering Committee.
- Banksia Palliative Care Service 1989. Newsletter No. 1.
- Banksia Palliative Care Service Newsletters 2007 to 2017
- Jones, M 2014. Banksia Palliative Care Service – 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration speech.
- Newspaper Articles 1992 -2017 across region
- Nillumbik Women’s Network and Nillumbik Shire Council 2010. Celebrating Nillumbik women 2010
- Office of the Health Services Commissioner 2009. Annual report 2009.
- Sdrinis, S 2008. In profile: Dr Michael (Taffy) Jones. RACMA The Quarterly Vol. 41 No. 3, September 2008
- Shilliday, John 2015. Email to Julie Paul. August, 2015.
- Success Works Inc. 1995. Nursing needs assessment.
- ‘Volunteers are the Foundation of Hospice’ Awards 1997. Nomination form for Mr John Shilliday.
- Woodruff, R 1989. Letter

# NOTES



**Banksia Palliative Care Service Inc.**

**Address: 472 Lower Heidelberg Road, Heidelberg,**

**Victoria, Australia 3084**

**Phone: 613 94550822**

**Website: [www.banksiapalliative.com.au](http://www.banksiapalliative.com.au)**