

STORIES OF LOVE AND LIFE AT STEDMAN COMMUNITY HOSPICE

# INSIGHT

FALL 2018

terry  
**BATESON**

...a legacy of  
compassion,  
dignity & grace

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A message from the President and CEO  
of St. Joseph's Lifecare Foundation

Since our last newsletter in the spring, much has happened here at the Foundation for which we are grateful. Thanks to an outstanding committee of dedicated women and the generosity of the community, we hosted the annual Handbags for Hospice event, started by Judy Porter six years ago, which was the most successful edition to date. The event saw unprecedented support from local businesses and individuals wanting to give back to an organization that helped them and a loved one get through some of the most difficult days of their lives.

We were also impacted by some considerable losses, having said goodbye to two dedicated community builders. In July, we mourned the death of Vyr Sisson, an Honorary Director of the Foundation Board who had served as a tireless volunteer of

St. Joseph's for more than three decades.

In August, we said farewell to Terry Bateson, whose compassion, grace and kindness served as an example for all who knew him.

Both of these exceptional individuals spent their final days with us at Stedman Community Hospice, where we provided comfort and care for them and their families. Their touching stories are included within the pages of this edition of *INSIGHT*.

Death is that final, natural part of life that is often uncomfortable to talk about and not always easy to accept.

As much as we wish it were otherwise, death is not a matter of if, but when. As we enter the season of hope, we ask that you consider extending us the privilege of continuing to assist families through those difficult days with your financial contribution.

Through the Friends of Terry Bateson Fund, all dollars donated through our Monthly Giving Program will be matched. In addition, those who are already members of the Monthly Giving Club who increase their donation, will also see their donation matched. We are very grateful to the individuals who have contributed to the Fund in memory of their beloved friend and colleague.

Thank you all for your tremendous contributions in support of the Hospice. Your support is critical to help us ensure that no patients or families ever get a bill for the care they so desperately need and deserve. For this, we are forever grateful.



## **Friends of Terry Bateson Fund** WILL SEE YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS DOUBLE

Thanks to a number of generous donors, now when you join our Monthly Giving Program, your contribution will be doubled.

Already a Monthly Giving Club member?  
Increase your monthly gift and that will be matched too!

Joining the Monthly Giving Club is easy and convenient, and it lessens the impact on year-end expenses. For as little as \$15 per month, you will help even more people in need throughout the year.

**See the enclosed donor card for details or donate online at [sjlc.ca](http://sjlc.ca)**  
• Donors of \$100 or greater will receive a beautiful pewter ornament •

# HOSPICE VOLUNTEER **NORMA SCHRITT**

HONoured WITH JUNE CALLWOOD AWARD



Pictured here from Stedman Community Hospice (L-R) are:  
**Cheryl Moore** - Executive Director, **Cheryl Ann Corner** - Volunteer Coordinator,  
**Norma Schritt** - June Callwood Award Recipient and Volunteer,  
**Bev Hall** - Day Wellness Coordinator and **Lynne Leach** - Horticultural Therapist.

Norma Schritt, a dedicated Stedman Community Hospice volunteer was recently honoured with the June Callwood Award of Distinction by Hospice Palliative Care Ontario. The award, established in 1994, acknowledges and thanks outstanding hospice volunteers throughout Ontario who consistently extend themselves beyond the usual requirements of the volunteer role, demonstrating selfless service, generosity of spirit, compassion, and a commitment to excellence as volunteers.

Norma is seen in every part of the Hospice – in “every nook and cranny” as we say. She is part of the gardening team, helps in residence, and is always eager to mop a floor, do the dishes, and assist where needed. Norma will do whatever it takes to make the Hospice a home for the families we serve.

Norma joins a distinguished list of Stedman Community Hospice volunteers to receive the June Callwood Award. Previous recipients are Lynn Haig, Ruth Janiec, Geke Nolden, John Campbell, Elaine White, Sylvia McIver, Helene Brinman, Bill Chenoweth, John & Chris Quinlan, Debora Kortlandt, Martina Hamelin, Chris Nechelpu, and Ruth Gratton.

Our congratulations to Norma on this worthy achievement!

## SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR **LEADERSHIP TEAM**

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# terry BATESON

A legacy of compassion,  
dignity & grace



True to form, Terry Bateson left this world as he lived his days, putting family and friends first, and seeking to diminish his own importance. The easygoing dad and accomplished accountant wanted a 'non-funeral,' a simple gathering of those who were important in his life – "a little food, a little wine." This was the quiet directive he issued to his daughters, Quinn Bateson-Hotte and Melanie (Mel) Robinson.

"And only three photos," he said.

Little was not to be. As the lines of family and friends formed outside the Brantford Golf and Country Club, it quickly became clear that little wasn't going to happen for a man who had touched many lives in such a big way.

All told, over 1200 people attended the celebration of life. Many were work colleagues and lifelong friends from Millards Chartered Accountants, the accounting firm where Terry had worked for 57 years before retiring as a senior partner in 2011.

His daughters say Terry had a way of making everyone feel special, so everyone felt close to him.

"We never knew how busy Dad was or how many people he knew," says Quinn. "Even during tax season, he came home for dinner every night."

Quinn and Mel describe their dad as the 'go-to' guy in their family, the wise man you could always go to when in doubt or in need of advice.

The role of wise parent became ever more important when in 2009, Lynne, Terry's wife of 33 years, was diagnosed with early onset Alzheimer's Disease.

She suffered an Alzheimer's-related seizure on Christmas Eve of 2014, and entered St. Joseph's long-term care facility in March of 2015. She was only 54.

"Our father was devastated. He adored our mother. They were so much in love. She's not gone but she's not here," says Mel, through tears.

Quinn, who followed in her father's footsteps and became a CPA, says her father had a strong sense of community, and he instilled this in his children.

"While many of us give to those organizations that we're involved with, Dad wasn't like that. He would give to any organization he felt was doing good work, regardless of his level of involvement."

Olga Consorti, Foundation CEO, recalls a time when Terry stopped by her office with a donation for the Stedman Community Hospice.

"He remarked that although he probably would never use it himself, many people will, and that was important to him," says Consorti.

Stedman Community Hospice was indeed where Terry Bateson spent his final days, on the same grounds where his beloved wife resides across the courtyard at St. Joseph's Lifecare Centre's long-term care facility.

Terry was diagnosed with liver cancer in July. The tumour was aggressive and the cancer advanced. He was given three to six months to live, but a week after diagnosis, he quickly declined, and moved in with his daughter Quinn, a mother of two, who was on maternity leave from Millards.



The family accessed the Hospice's Community Outreach program, and a homecare worker came and stayed overnight.

"The most challenging thing was deciding when to go to the Hospice. Caregivers feel so guilty when they become tired and know in their hearts that the level of care needed is beyond what they can do. It really helped when someone in the health care field said "It's time," said Quinn.

"By the time we arrived at the Hospice, it was a relief," said Mel. "I had been really worried about Quinn, with a new baby and looking after Dad."

"I cried all morning," said Quinn, "but within the first day of arriving, he told us 'I'm really content here.'"

*"Everyone at the Hospice was so good to us. We were overwhelmed by kindness."*

"He loved that there was a bird feeder at every window. The attention to detail was impressive," said Mel. I remember Dad asking what times the meals were served and staff responded, "It's whatever you want, and whenever you feel like having it," and would serve him a beautiful home-cooked meal at his wish. His weakness was plain vanilla ice cream, and we smiled when the staff told us that he awakened at 2 a.m. and enjoyed a bowl of ice cream."

"In addition to taking care of his health and meals, the Hospice staff managed his visitation schedule. With so many people wanting to see him, it was a big load off us. The volunteers were very good to not overwhelm

him with visitors and managed it beautifully," says Mel.

Both daughters say that prior to entering the Hospice grounds, they suffered much trepidation for taking their father away from the comforts of home, and putting him into what they thought would be an institutional setting.

"The one piece of advice I would give everyone, is to take a tour of the Hospice. If I had known what it was like, I wouldn't have been so reserved," Quinn remarked.

"When you go, you feel like you don't want to leave. It was so homey. At first, I wondered why aren't they wearing nursing clothes? Then I realized they want it to feel like home."

"The place, the people and the care he received there, it's hard to put into words," said Mel.

"You don't really realize how many people you impact with your donation. It's not only a blessing for those who are dying, it impacts entire families at a time in their lives when support is most needed. It says a lot about Brantford that the community has built this incredible place. It's pretty fantastic," she continued.

"He reached a point where he didn't want to see anyone anymore. That's when we knew he was near the end, because he would have powered through if he was well enough," says Quinn.

He died at the Hospice on August 23rd, just as he lived his life, with dignity and grace.

Terry Bateson's life was one built on integrity, empathy and philanthropy. His substantial legacy extends well beyond his four children and five grandchildren. His generosity of spirit lives in the hearts of the many people he affected and the community he helped to build.



Terry's daughters Quinn Bateson-Hotte and Melanie Robinson are photographed here with treasured family mementos of their father.



Photographed here are two of Terry's grandchildren, Remy and Wyatt.



Terry and his wife Lynne, vacationing in Manzanillo, Mexico in 2006.

# cheryl MOORE

Hospice Pioneer Retiring



We're set to celebrate  
the outstanding  
achievements of  
Executive Director  
Cheryl Moore  
who will finish her  
prestigious career by  
December 31, 2018.

As the first Hospice Executive Director to lead the development of the province's 5th Residential Hospice in Ontario, Cheryl has dedicated her life to her career which started with her nursing degree in 1976. Her first job was working at Toronto General and North York General Hospitals in Labour and Delivery. Eventually she did community nursing through the VON, which led her to the Brantford General Hospital Cancer Clinic from 1994-2004.

This experience strengthened Cheryl's conviction to advocate on behalf of cancer patients and their families. When the opportunity came for the creation of the community's only Hospice, Cheryl knew that was where she needed to be.

"To have been able to be part of making a dream I had so many years ago about creating a Hospice come true has been such a gift to me. What a wonderful way to end my nursing career!" said Cheryl.

In addition to the outpouring of thanks and gratitude that Cheryl has received from the thousands of patients and families she has journeyed with since starting her Hospice career in 2004, she has also been recognized on the national stage as a leader in Hospice care. In 2008, the Canadian Nurses Association named the Hospice as one of three national winners of its employer recognition award acknowledging those who have encouraged continuing education in the workplace.

In 2012, Cheryl was honoured to win Cancer Care Ontario's Human Touch Award where she was recognized for providing exceptional and compassionate patient care. Most recently, Cheryl was very moved to receive the Dorothy Ley Award of Excellence in Hospice Palliative Care for her dedicated work to advance Palliative Care.

When asked to reflect on her career, Cheryl noted, "I have been blessed with two wonderful families, my biological family and my hospice family. I thank them both for allowing me to do what I love to do." She added, "I am so grateful to every staff, volunteer, family and patient, my father being one this past year, that I have had the privilege to learn from. You have been my greatest teachers and for this, I thank you!"

St. Joseph's Lifecare Centre's Board Chair, Vince Bucci remarked, "We are truly grateful to Cheryl for her visionary work and the tremendous enthusiasm that she put forth to open our community's only Hospice. Her commitment has been extraordinary and we thank Cheryl for her passion and dedication."



# vyrt SISSON

## A Community Builder's Contributions Come Full Circle

The fact that Vyrť Sisson wasn't born or raised in Brantford didn't stop him from giving his all to the organizations he served here. Arriving in Brantford in 1979 as the manager of Canada Permanent Trust (now TD Canada Trust), Vyrť wasted no time in reaching out to community groups to volunteer his services, working with organizations that include the Brant Community Foundation, Brantwood Community Services, the Rotary Club of Brantford, the Probus Club of Brantford, Glenhyrst Art Gallery, Enterprise Brant, St. Joseph's Hospital and St. Joseph's Lifecare Foundation, to name but a few.

To simply state that Vyrť Sisson was involved with St. Joseph's would be an understatement. His volunteer career spanned decades, first as Treasurer of St. Joseph's Hospital Board, and later President of St. Joseph's Hospital Foundation. At the time of his death in July, at age 85, he was an Honorary Director of St. Joseph's Lifecare Foundation Board and lived his last days at Stedman Community Hospice, located on the St. Joe's site.

Until his arrival at the Hospice, he was being cared for by Barbara, his wife of almost 21 years.

While Barbara did her best to care for her ailing husband, the time came when the petite woman, in her mid-70's could no longer physically manage. Suffering from cancer, he had become quite weak and developed mobility issues in his last few weeks.

"He started to go downhill rapidly in December of 2017," says Barbara. "He got to a point he was so weak. He had lost his lower body strength, and one evening, couldn't rise out of the chair to go to bed. By 3 a.m., he finally made it to bed."

"The Outreach Team from the Hospice had come to visit him and advised me to call when it became too much to manage. About a week later, I made the call, and a few days later, a bed became available at the Hospice."

"I couldn't believe the release I felt when I got here. The combination of the wonderful treatment and the level of competence of the staff, you can just turn it over to them," says Barbara.

"Of course, I was there with him, but the worry of caring for his medical needs was gone. You know that they know what they are doing, and they do it in such a kind and patient way."

Barbara, like her husband, served on the Foundation board, and contributes financially to the Foundation through the Monthly Giving Program.

*"Seeing it from the other side, as a patient, as a caregiver, was something completely different."*

"It gave me a whole new appreciation for where my contribution was going," she shared.

Joanne Lewis, Executive Director of the Brant Community Foundation, describes Vyrť Sisson as a mentor who was generous with his knowledge, ideas, and insight.

Barbara Sisson had arranged with Joanne and her husband Dave to join her at the Hospice during Vyrť's final hours, and Joanne was present when her friend died.

"His care and comfort during his final hours were the focus of the staff, and that brings such a calmness and peace of mind to what is about to happen for family and loved ones," says Joanne.

"We are so blessed to have the Hospice. The family is made to feel so welcome and at home. The level of care provided, allows you to use the time as it should be used with the person you love. Such a blessing."



Vyrť Sisson and his wife Barbara at the Mayor's Gala in 2005.



# programs & SERVICES

In addition to our 24-hour In-Hospice Residential Care, Day Wellness and Horticultural Therapy programs, other highlights include:

## **Bereavement & Grief Support for Children**

In addition to one-on-one bereavement sessions, the program offers a series of Day Camps that we tie into the local school system's Professional Activity days so there is no disruption in routine or lost time from school. An added advantage is that single parents don't have to worry about daycare expenses for the day.

The full day consists of games, activities, crafts and discussions, designed to help children express their feelings through play therapy and learn to cope with the changes in their lives. At Christmastime the children are invited back for a special holiday program.

## **Community Outreach Services**

This program offers a quick response team of dedicated medical professionals visiting patients in their homes to provide pain and symptom management. The program also assists families who are in crisis due to overwhelming responsibilities and stress associated with caring for a loved one with a terminal illness.

For more information, please contact  
Stedman Community Hospice at 519-751-7096, ext 2500.

## **NOT IF BUT WHEN... WE ARE HERE FOR YOU!**

Each year, thousands of people rely upon the programs and services of Stedman Community Hospice.

We are tremendously thankful for your generosity to St. Joseph's Lifecare Foundation, the official fundraising organization for Stedman Community Hospice.

Together, we will continue to offer our unrivalled programs and services to every family in need.

Because of the giving spirit of donors like you, the families of Terry and Vyrť and everyone else we've had the privilege of caring for will never receive a bill from the Hospice.

## THANK YOU

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