



Peter, left, with his RDNS nurse, Janie.

Together we're helping Peter soldier on

Peter Luck has lived a long and fruitful life. At 92, he has a treasure trove of experiences, a lifetime of memories, anecdotes and well-informed opinions.

Born in 1919 in London, like so many young men of his generation, Peter joined the British Army, serving from 1939 to 1948 and was stationed in France, Norway and Africa.

War leaves all sorts of legacies on those who serve. One of Peter's was a series of painful leg ulcers that have plagued him ever since. But Peter pursued life with vigour and in 1960 he, his wife and 5 children relocated from England to Frankston to start a new life. He worked in various roles for a company that made carpets from goat hair and had a 2 year stint in Wagga Wagga as the product buyer for southern NSW.

But throughout it all, Peter's wounds continued to hamper him until eventually he came into the care of RDNS.

It was then, in 2004, that things began to improve, and whilst his issues remain on-going, these days he has a good quality of life and a high degree of independence thanks to the expert assistance of RDNS' specialist Wound Care Consultant, Janie.

"Over the course of the 7 years we have been seeing Peter, we have treated over 27 different wounds, thankfully all with great success. However, I think if we didn't have our wound clinic and we hadn't been able to care for him, Peter certainly wouldn't be living at home with the same level of independence," Janie explains.

And independence is something that Peter values greatly. "I have lived by myself for the past 27 years. I am independent; have always been

independent and I want to remain independent. With the help of RDNS I can stay at home, which is most important to me," Peter says with a smile.

With his mobility becoming an issue these days, Janie has arranged for a carer to transport Peter to the clinic for his weekly visits.

The clinic provides a range of specialised wound care for clients and has the added flexibility of clients being able to schedule visits, rather than being seen at home. Many clients enjoy a combination of having care provided at the wound clinic and at home as best suits their needs. Janie explains that as well as the wound care she has provided to Peter, her role has also included linking him into other specialist services to maintain his treasured independence.

"We have arranged for a carer to help with his shopping, cleaning and transport and have organised for a podiatrist to make special shoes. We've also arranged for an orthopaedic surgeon to see Peter as an outpatient to assist with care," explains Janie.

These extra services enable Peter to remain at home, with his independence intact. And for that, Peter reserves a special mention for RDNS and Janie.

"RDNS are like my family. I have seen them so often over so many years – they mean so much to me," Peter says. "The part they play doesn't impinge on my life and it takes the pressure off my own family. They don't have to worry so much, and of course they have their own lives and families to look after. I am very grateful."

The Rosebud Wound Care Clinic that has been so important to Peter was equipped entirely through donor support.

Thank you

RDNS is most grateful for the assistance provided by all our donors and friends. In particular we would like to acknowledge the contributions of our major supporters:

Estate of Mary Alice Allan
Jack Brockhoff Foundation
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Marian & E.H. Flack Trust
Estate of the Late Glen W.A. Griffiths
Department of Health & Ageing
Clive Johnson Trust
Alfred E.G. Lavey Trust
Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation
Estate of Lucy Lyons
Estate of Patricia Mahoney
Mr Roger May
Mrs Merna Olver
Ian Potter Foundation
Estate of Garton Alfred Thurgood
Estate of Lester J.V. Watts
Estate of Dorothy Alice Witchell

Home and Community Care (HACC) services provided by RDNS are jointly funded by the Victorian and Australian Governments.

From reaching out to inspiring giving



Sandra Topp, right, with fellow BreaCan volunteer.

Former RDNS nurse, Sandra Topp, has been recognised by the Victorian Minister for Mental Health, Women's Affairs and Community Services, The Hon. Mary Wooldridge, for her invaluable work as part of a team of peer-support volunteers for BreaCan, a service for women with breast and gynaecological cancers.

During the 1970s, Sandra was one of RDNS' Breast Care Nurses. Her role was to visit women in hospitals post surgery.

"I would give the women information about prostheses and generally support them during a time of grief and physical discomfort, often wondering, 'what on earth is happening to these women after they are discharged?'" Sandra said.

"It was a very different time then with little in the way of support services. I had also on occasions seen women in their homes with appalling scars from mutilating surgery of earlier years wearing little bags of birdseed in their bra as a form of prosthesis".

Over 20 years later in 2000, Sandra was diagnosed with breast cancer. Sandra was now the one in need of care and support.

"Nursing someone with breast cancer and then having it yourself is very, very different. When I found a large lump I knew straight away my life was going to change," Sandra said.

"When I was diagnosed I thought I could cope. Then the wheels fell off. I would have lived on BreaCan's doorstep if it had been around when I was diagnosed and going through treatment," Sandra said.

Sometime after treatment which included surgery and chemotherapy, Sandra wanted to move forward but also wanted to be a volunteer in the community. She saw a BreaCan advertisement and was accepted to train as a peer-support volunteer.

Sandra said, "Volunteering with BreaCan, after my own diagnosis, gave me a better understanding of the needs of the women we see. On-going training, providing updates of new treatments available, has helped me to understand my own cancer better and keeps me alert".

BreaCan provides support services, information sessions and many other services. Call 1300 781 500 (local call cost) or visit BreaCan, Ground Floor, Queen Victoria Women's Centre, 210 Lonsdale St, Melbourne.

For more detailed information about BreaCan visit www.breacan.org.au



Thank you for caring

What your donations achieved 2010-11

2010–11 was a challenging year for all organisations who rely on community donations to carry out their work. With catastrophic natural disasters affecting so many people both in Australia and overseas, and the volatility of the financial markets, the capacity for people to make donations to charities such as RDNS was, in many cases, reduced.

Yet, despite these factors RDNS was able to raise \$3,353,053, an increase of 33% on the fundraising achieved in the previous year. This tells us we have some very loyal and special supporters, and to you, as one of our wonderful donors, our most heartfelt thanks for your gifts. We are thrilled with this result, and all it will achieve, and we hope that as someone who has contributed to this outcome, you also share our delight.

At RDNS we treat each donation as precious and strongly believe that each donor has the right to know how RDNS has used their donation. All the funds raised in 2010–11 were used to either help us care for our clients or improve the care we provide. Specifically, your support helped us to:

- purchase specialised clinical equipment, such as bladder scanners and dopplers, to improve client care;
- continue the Wound Fund that subsidises the cost of expensive wound products for financially disadvantaged clients;

- purchase six cars for our nurses;
- undertake research related to medication management of clients with dementia, to identify ways to improve the care we provide;
- provide food, nutritional support and medical consumables to our homeless clients;
- purchase training aids to improve our nurses' clinical skills;
- make available more clinical nurse education; and
- **most importantly, your donations helped us employ 48 additional nurses, resulting in 92,160 extra visits to clients.**

As you can see, your wonderful support has directly impacted on many important aspects of our work. Quite simply, we would not be able to provide the care we do without the generosity of people like you. You are truly a partner in our work, and I hope you share with us the pleasure of helping those in need in the community.

All the staff at RDNS, and particularly our nurses, thank you most sincerely for all you do for us. Thank you also on behalf of our clients, particularly those we would not have been able to care for were it not for your support.



Your donations have enabled us to establish the Food and Nutritional Support Program, providing food, meal vouchers and nutritional support to our homeless clients, to help them regain their health.

Your donation has allowed us to continue the Wound Fund, which subsidises the cost of wound products for our needy clients. These items are often expensive and if not used, can delay the healing process and cause unnecessary pain.



Your donations to RDNS have allowed us to purchase a number of dopplers for our nurses.

These essential pieces of clinical equipment, for which RDNS does not receive government funding to purchase, help our nurse assess blood circulation in the leg and determine the best wound care. They have become invaluable 'tools of the trade.'



Help in managing hearing loss

Communication is an important part of our lives. For people with a hearing loss, listening on the telephone with background noise or hearing the television can be difficult. But help is now at hand with the new Managing Your Hearing Loss course from Vichear.

The course comprises 4 x 2 hour sessions over 4 weeks and covers topics such as:

- effective communication strategies;
- information on hearing;
- conversation strategies;
- telephone tactics;
- information on hearing management;
- speech reading (lip reading); and
- assisted listening devices.

The cost for the course is \$50, or \$25 for pensioners and healthcare card holders, and participants can bring along a friend or family member for only \$5 extra. No referral is necessary and all notes and materials are provided by Vichear.

To book your place contact Vichear on 1300 30 20 31 or email them on info@hearservice.com.au

Constantly in pursuit of the well-healed

Wound management comprises a significant component of the work RDNS nurses undertake. The ageing population, combined with the impact of chronic disease, means that the need for wound management expertise will continue to increase over the coming decades.

Although the impact of wounds is well known at RDNS, the scope of the problem is not as well understood in the wider community. It is estimated that well over 270,000 Australians have a chronic wound, something that can severely impact on their quality of life.

Wound care is a dynamic field of nursing which is continually evolving with the ongoing investigation of the molecular aspects of healing, new technologies and treatments and new models of care.

With change happening on so many fronts, it is a constant challenge for our nurses to remain abreast of the new evidence and current best practice, and find appropriate ways to best incorporate this into day-to-day practice.

To ensure these new developments are continually integrated into practice, the RDNS Wound Management Clinical Leadership Group (CLG) has been established to promote evidence-based practice at RDNS and undertake a range of activities that helps our nurses stay on top of new developments.

The CLG contributes to, and supports, the implementation of clinical guidelines; reviews journal literature; ensures policies and procedures are up-to-date and investigates and responds to queries regarding complex wound management issues.

The group also advises on appropriate product selection via an online product register which promotes clinically effective and cost-effective wound dressings.

With the financial support of the RDNS donor community the Wound Management CLG has also been instrumental in introducing new equipment, such as dopplers, that enables our nurses to better diagnose and treat wounds.

The combined effort of the CLG, educators, researchers and our donor community has resulted in an environment which supports best practice in wound management at RDNS and one which is most conducive to positive client outcomes. **If you would like to support RDNS wound care efforts, please find a donation coupon on page 7.**

Thank you for caring



Stephen Muggleton

RDNS welcomes new CEO

In July RDNS farewelled its Chief Executive Officer, Dan Romanis, who will be known to many readers.

After 17 years of leadership at RDNS, Dan has moved on to pursue fresh career opportunities, leaving behind an organisation much strengthened by his leadership and strong community spirit.

Stepping into the role is new CEO Stephen Muggleton. Steve comes to us from Blue Care in Queensland (a similar organisation to RDNS) where he had been Executive Director for eight years. Prior to his time at Blue Care Steve had a long and distinguished career within the healthcare sector. We welcome Steve and look forward to working with him.

Her clients think Lisa's just fantastic

Providing ongoing assistance for a young boy requiring daily bladder care is no easy task, but RDNS nurse Lisa Tohovitis takes it all in her stride.

Ever since she did the initial assessment of six year old Elliot's needs over 12 months ago, Lisa has been there to help him every step of the way.

At the time of his assessment and early care little Elliot was in kindergarten. But he is now a big school boy and has started prep at his local primary school. Lisa continues to provide care to Elliot at school, a situation which is potentially difficult and awkward.

But with skill, discretion and calm professionalism, she has been able to provide daily bladder care to Elliot without any of his little friends even being aware of her presence.

Lisa's care allows Elliot, who must undergo 4 hourly catheter care,

to feel normal and respected. Importantly, she also goes to great lengths to safeguard Elliot's privacy to ensure he has a stress free time through those all important early days at school.

Lisa's outstanding care for Elliot led his parents to nominate her for the 2011 RDNS Nurse of the Year – Client's Choice Award. In their nomination they highlighted a reduction in their anxiety and the utmost trust and confidence in Lisa's skill and the advice she offered. They stated that she is "not one to blow her own trumpet" but "... someone who deserves praise and recognition for dealing with a client in a delicate age group with complex needs that go beyond just physical."

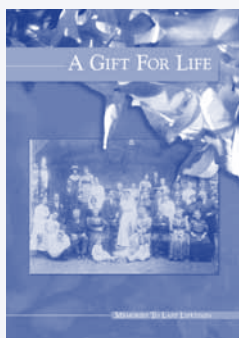
The nomination concludes with the words: "We think she is fantastic!"

The judging panel for the award unanimously agreed that Lisa Tohovitis be the proud recipient of the RDNS Nurse of the Year – Client's Choice Award 2011, winning a trophy, certificate, and a cash prize.

In presenting the award, the judges made it clear that choosing a winner from the 193 nominations received from RDNS clients was a daunting task as amongst the nominations were many stories of tremendous compassion, perseverance, determination and humility.



A gift for life



RDNS cares for many elderly people. We get to know them and often hear amazing stories

about their lives. A book titled, *A Gift For Life*, has just been published and if you or someone in your family has a story to tell, this is the perfect gift.

It helps you write your life story by guiding you through a number of questions. You write directly into the book and can write as much or as little as you like. There are empty pages for photographs and memorabilia or perhaps your favourite recipes. When completed, someone's life story is nicely bundled in a book form, which makes a wonderful lasting legacy. In compiling the life story, we hope it will stimulate conversations and laughs within the family, and pass on important information for future generations.

Gift For Life costs \$34.50 plus postage and handling. You can order your book by contacting Ida Moore–van Selow.

Mail PO Box 592,
Diamond Creek 3089
Phone 0402 749 572 or
Email ida@agiftforlife.org

If you tell Ida that you heard about the book in RDNS HouseCall, she will make a small donation to RDNS on your behalf to.

RDNS health tip

Don't neglect the part that drives it all.

When we exercise most of us work at maintaining or improving the function of our heart, lungs, muscles or joints. Rarely do we give any thought to the bit that drives them all – the brain. Yet maintaining brain health is important, particularly as you age.

By following healthy lifestyle habits you can protect yourself from age-related changes to your thinking and memory. It is also possible to delay or prevent some forms of dementia. You can keep your mind active through reading, writing letters, quizzes, crosswords and board games, using a computer or learning a new language. Keeping up hobbies and enjoying cultural activities such as going to plays and concerts all help. Regular exercise, a balanced diet, regular health checks and maintaining a social life help keep your brain ticking over as it should.

Time travelling with RDNS



RDNS' rich, colourful and often deeply–moving history has been brought to life in a dynamic, new online museum.

'RDNS Reflections' chronicles the story of RDNS, honouring and remembering the thousands of nurses, along with their clients, their families, friends and descendants who have helped to write the incredible story of RDNS since it started in the back lanes of inner Melbourne in 1885.

Current and past nursing staff have participated in interviews that form the basis of 'RDNS Reflections'.

This is an exciting new development that at last puts together an accurate chronicle of our history in one easily accessible place. Developing the museum has involved many people, but it would never have been possible without the generous financial support of the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust and the support of the Danks Foundation, Lava Web Creations and the Public Records Office of Victoria.

Please explore our new comprehensive online museum by visiting the following website **www.rdnsreflections.com.au**

Depending on your internet connection speed, 'RDNS Reflections' may take a little time to load, but please be patient – it's worth the short wait!

Thank you for caring

Cartoons are the go for medication training

Last year, RDNS nurses provided medication management support to over 7,000 clients and in doing so made an incredible 600,000 home visits.

Medication management support involves the nurse:

- assessing the ability of a client and their carer to manage their medication independently;
- working with clients and carers to ensure the right equipment, systems and strategies are in place to be able to safely manage their medicines as independently as possible; or
- if independence is not possible, providing ongoing, safe and effective medication support visits to enable clients to remain at home.

Given the large number of clients now receiving medication management support from RDNS nurses and the significant responsibility that comes with this, nurses need to continuously develop and update their knowledge on the subject.

The RDNS Helen Macpherson Smith Institute of Community Health's Clinical Development team is supporting our nurses to do this through the development of a new computer based e-Learning Medication Management program. The program is designed to help nurses provide the best possible medication management to clients by teaching the latest approaches and sharing the most up-to-date knowledge and technologies.

The e-Learning program includes a variety of interactive learning activities involving animations and the use of graphic caricatures of an RDNS nurse and a client to enable nurses to develop and



apply assessment and problem-solving skills to simulated care scenarios.

Launched in August, the new e-Learning program can be accessed by nurses from their mobile computers and allows them to complete this important professional development activity at a time that best suits their busy schedules.

HELP THE NURSES BE THERE WHEN NEEDED

Yes, I want to become a regular donor to RDNS and help employ more nurses. My monthly gift is to be:

\$10 a month \$20 a month \$35 a month \$50 a month Other \$_____ a month

OR I prefer to make a one-off donation in aid of this appeal:

\$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 Other \$_____

I would like to make my donation by:

Direct debit from my bank account (Please send me details)

Visa MasterCard Amex Cheque or money order (one-off donations only)

_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|

Signature _____ Expiry date ____/____/____

Cardholder name _____

Name _____

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Suburb _____ State _____ P/code _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Please send me information on how I can help RDNS in my Will

I do not require a receipt

Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible

31 Alma Road, St Kilda
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To donate by phone, call (03) 9536 5222 or you can donate securely online at www.rdns.com.au

2011 RDNS Christmas cards



The 2011 RDNS Christmas card catalogue has arrived and it is full of quality cards at an affordable price, with options sure to suit all tastes.

You can view the catalogue online by visiting our website at www.rdns.com.au and following the Christmas card link from the homepage. Alternatively, call the RDNS Fundraising Office on (03) 9536 5222 and we will send you a copy. RDNS Gift Cards are also available again this year. These are the 'gifts that keep on giving' as you purchase nursing care for RDNS clients or help the homeless as an alternative to a conventional gift. Details of how the program works, and the cards available, are on the RDNS website under the 'How You Can Help Us' tab as well as in the Christmas card catalogue.

All cards can be purchased by mail order, over the counter at RDNS Head Office, 31 Alma Road, St Kilda, Victoria and at any one of the Charity Card Shops listed at right (Christmas cards only):

- **Banyule Information & Support Services**
101 Burgundy Street, Heidelberg, VIC 3084
- **Box Hill Lions Club Combined Charities Christmas Card Shop**
Town Hall Hub, 27 Bank Street, Box Hill, VIC 3129
- **Camberwell Charities Christmas Card Shop (CAMCARE)**
19 Fairholm Grove, Camberwell, VIC 3124
- **Essendon Charity Christmas Card Shop (Orana Family Services)**
Essendon Uniting Church, 132 Keilor Rd, North Essendon, VIC 3041
- **Mountview Uniting Church (Centre 81)**
81 East Doncaster Rd, Mitcham, VIC 3132
- **Monash Community Information & Support Charity Christmas Card Shop**
6 Holskamp Street, Mount Waverley, VIC 3149
- **Mornington Community Information & Support Charity Christmas Shop**
320 Main Street, Mornington, VIC 3931



Christmas is coming and we need your help

Christmas card sales are a valuable source of revenue for RDNS but this is only because of the effort of our wonderful volunteers!

The 2011 card collection has now arrived at our Head Office and we need help with folding, labelling and packing the cards for mail order sales and distribution.

If you have a few hours to spare between now and mid-December, and can come to our Head Office at 31 Alma Road in St Kilda, Victoria we would love to hear from you. Our Head Office is just a minute's walk from a tram stop in St Kilda Road and parking is available.

If you would like to join the great group of Christmas card volunteers please call Julie Cocks at RDNS on (03) 9536 5222