

DonateLife BOOK OF LIFE





Australian Government
Organ and Tissue Authority

Foreword

By Yael Cass, CEO of the Organ and Tissue Authority

The DonateLife Book of Life is an important resource for all Australians.

This inspiring collection of more than 300 stories is written by people whose lives have been changed through organ and tissue donation. In sharing their stories, we are compelled to think about the importance of becoming an organ and tissue donor.

Since its launch during DonateLife Week in February 2011, the DonateLife Book of Life has travelled across the country and featured in schools, libraries, workplaces and community events.

Through the generosity of more than 300 Australians, we can read about those Australians who tragically lost their lives and in doing so gave the ultimate gift of organ and tissue donation.

We can read the stories of those who have benefited from the gift of a transplant, as well as those who as living donors have helped a friend or family member.

We can be inspired by the dedicated people who work in the organ and tissue donation and transplantation sector.

As you read these inspiring stories, I hope that you are motivated to decide and register your donation decision on the Australian Organ Donor Register and, most importantly, to discuss your donation decision with your loved ones. It is a conversation that can one day save lives.

I thank all who so generously choose to share their story and in doing so help this wonderful growing collection of stories continue to inspire us all.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Yael Cass".

Yael Cass
Chief Executive Officer
Organ and Tissue Authority

**Do you know the
donation decision
of your loved ones?**



Amanda's story

At the age of 20 I was in the prime of my life. I had my health, I had freedom and I was invincible.

I came down with a bad cold and I was sent home from work with the sweats and a barking cough. On the way home I dropped by a local doctor, who assured me it was a chest infection and I began a course of antibiotics.

Within three days I could not walk more than 100 metres, I was so tired and this cough would not give up! I went to my regular doctor, who ordered a chest x-ray. The doctor called me and asked that I immediately come back. I had a collapsed lung, litres of fluid on both lungs, pneumonia and a severe case of viral cardiomyopathy (myocarditis).

I was rushed to a private hospital where every test possible was run. I was told I was critically ill and may not make it and to call in my family and friends as soon as possible.

For three days the cardiologist came in and the results were never good. My kidneys went into failure, my liver was flooded and my digestive track was shutting down. I was emergency transferred to the closest transplant hospital and then straight into the ICU.

The specialists were amazing through the scariest time in my life. Things were going well, my body was responding to the drugs and I was out onto the ward.

This unfortunately did not last as my heart could not handle it. I went into cardiac arrest and was rushed back into ICU and then to surgery to have a

ventricular assist device put in place. I was only on the transplant list for four months though it felt like an eternity.

My thoughts and well wishes are with all the people and families still awaiting their gift.

My deepest thanks go to my donor and family. Thank you will never be enough.

The staff at hospital had my life in their hands and at any given point would drop what they were doing to answer any of my concerns. They will never know the depth of my gratitude.

Amanda



Amanda.

**Any day is a good day
to talk about organ
and tissue donation.**



Adam's liver transplant

My son Adam needed a liver transplant otherwise he wouldn't have made it to school age.

On day three after his birth the pediatrician sent him to another hospital and that's when they realised that he had Ornithine Transcarbamylase Deficiency (OTCD) which resulted in liver damage that was very serious.

We waited for over a year to hear about a liver transplant and in that time we had numerous hospital stays and Adam's condition continued to progressively get worse.

He finally had his liver transplant and we stayed close to the hospital for a further three months in case of rejection. We finally returned home after 10 months away from friends and family.

My son was 17 months old when he had his liver transplant. He is now 12 years old and still going strong. We have been so lucky to be trouble free all this time.

We still go every six months for checkups and for blood to be taken for testing.

It's because of another family's decision to donate, that my son is here today. There are no words that can ever describe that feeling. We are forever grateful to our special donor family who made the right decision.

To know what they had to go through to do this—it is the worse decision any parent would ever have to make. They now know that part of their special little man is still living on inside my little man.

We keep in touch through letters to our special donor family. We always will.

Tricia



Adam.

Discover the facts
Decide about becoming
an organ and tissue donor and
Discuss your decision with
the people close to you.



My little brother, my big hero

It was my husband's 31st birthday and our kids (two and four years of age) were fast asleep. My hubby and I had just finished packing away a load of washing and were climbing into bed when his phone rang. It was a phone call I will never forget—a phone call I wish we never had to receive.

A family friend had driven home past my parents house and saw three police cars; one each at their neighbour's and one at my parents house. My parents were five hours away in Mildura on a week's holiday and had been there for two days.

The phone call was to tell us my 18 year old brother had been in a car accident. She didn't know how bad he was, but he was being airlifted to the Alfred Hospital and we had to get there asap.

We were within five minutes from the hospital when my mum rang and told me there was no hope for him, but to get there and wait with him till she arrived with dad.

That night went forever. It was 3.30am before we made the heart-wrenching decision to risk leaving him to go home, get some rest and return later on and decide what to do.

My parents, husband, uncle and I returned later on that morning, still in shock, but after discussing my brother's situation with the doctor it was decided there was just no hope and we had to say good-bye.

My brother is my hero because at 18 years old he became an organ and tissue donor. His gift of several organs has improved the lives of so many and his tissue is being kept for future use.

He was a beautiful person in life and a beautiful person in the after-life.

Kristy



My big hero.

**Register your donation
decision on the Australian
Organ Donor Register and
make sure your loved
ones know your decision.**



From giving through life to giving life

Our Mum has always been a remarkable woman who endured a life of hardship and torment, whilst teaching us six kids to be honest caring and empathetic toward all others.

She was always such a hard working person, struggling to raise us on little to no money. When we had visitors and resources were scarce, our code word was FGW (family goes without). If there was enough for six then there was enough for seven and we each just relinquished a little of what we had in order to share.

Every thing that we had growing up, was a sacrifice that mum had made in order to provide for us, and her example taught us to be generous towards others.

Mums inner strength, wisdom, generosity, fortitude, education, tenacity and love, touched all who knew her.

Unfortunately we lost Mum on the day after her 61st Birthday, when we as a family decided to turn off the machines that were keeping her alive. She had suffered a major heart attack and had lost all of her brain function.

We all knew her wishes because she had always made it very clear to us, that in this circumstance she would not like to stick around in a lifeless body attached to machines. She had also told us that she was a staunch supporter of organ donation, 'they're no good to me when I'm gone' she would say.

In the days before we decided to turn off mums life support, we met with the doctors treating her and with the organ donor people. They were just so amazing

in their compassion for us, but more importantly, in their compassion and respect for mum.

The whole process, although heart wrenching and difficult for us, was made that little bit easier to deal with by these wonderful people and we will forever be thankful to them for this.

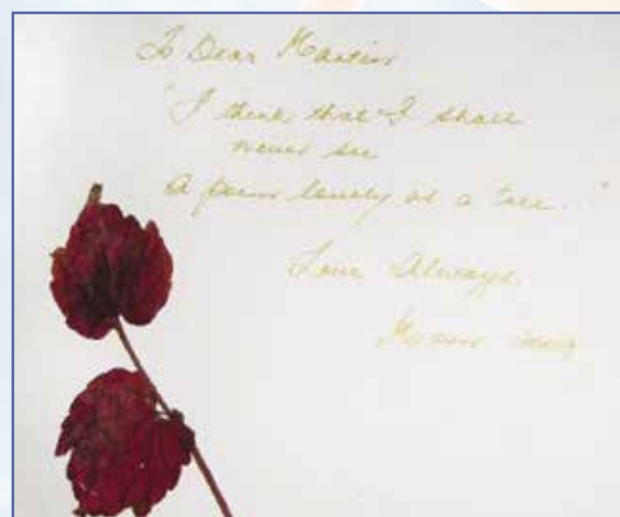
The support didn't stop. We received letters from them giving us information and support, and were updated on how mums final gift of organ donation was helping others. In total, mums organs lived on and saved the lives of three people—a fact that fills me with joy and I'm certain that mum is of the same mindset.

Mum gave so much of herself while she was alive and continued to give even after she died.

I love her and miss her so much, but just knowing that there are three other families out there who get to have their loved ones for a bit longer means the world to me.

More people should be organ donors!

Martin



**Australia is a world
leader for successful
transplant outcomes.**



Donald

Donald died at the age of 30—one day before his 31st birthday. He was fit, happy and had the world at his feet. His death was the result of a traffic accident.

Donald had a good life, making friends wherever he went. He travelled the world for over six years with his friend Travis. They worked in a summer camp in Maine, USA, taught snowboarding in Whistler, Canada, worked on cruise ships in the Caribbean and Alaska and he had many other jobs in the United Kingdom and South America.

He loved to play Australian Rules football and ride his bike. He rode through much of Europe with a group of friends. He took pleasure in everything he did and in the people he met.

He had recently returned to Australia and had started work as a Project Officer. He had just signed up to purchase a property and begin the next phase of his life.

His head injury was such that there was no hope of survival. Nothing prepares you for that news.

Donald had always been a loving and caring person and so he had told us that he wished to be an organ and tissue donor should the occasion arise.

His generosity meant that seven people's lives were saved or drastically improved by receiving his organs. Donald's heart, lungs, liver, left and right kidney and pancreas were all donated. His corneas were also donated.

As his parents it does give us some comfort to know that Donald has helped others to a better life.

"Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take but by the moments that take our breath away."

David and Joy



Donald.

**Do the people close
to you know your
donation decision?**



Matthew's story

Matthew may have been an imposing figure of a man, six foot one inch, broad shoulders and a full head of 'floppy' dark hair. He was often gruff and intimidating while fighting for the underdog in his role of union official, but anyone who knew him well, knew he was a big softy inside. He had a massive heart and a huge capacity to give and receive love.

Funny, personable, goofy, talented, caring and an all-round good guy. We'd been childhood sweethearts, then married for 17 years. He was the very proud father of a daughter and a son, coaching children in Auskick football and pursuing a career he loved and was passionate about, when at the age of 38 he suffered a sudden and fatal brain aneurysm.

Always the fighter, he hung on to life for three days before the doctors shut off his ventilator. There had been no indication of health issues and no warnings to heed. The aneurysm could have been there since birth, or it could have developed recently—no-one knew the answer to why this exceptional man had died.

Ironically, just the evening before his aneurysm, in response to my emotional reaction to a television program depicting the death of a young husband, we discussed our own views on organ donation. It was agreed that if there was no hope of survival we would both offer all we could to try and save someone else.

This made my decision easier when approached by the hospital regarding organ donation—and so seven people

got the chance for continued life due to Matthew's gift of himself.

His family received comfort knowing that his death had not been in vain and that thanks to him, several people (somewhere) were experiencing the joy of renewed life. Those people share a bond with Matthew's family and everyone else he touched during his short life. We all carry a piece of Matthew with us forever.

Nobody wants to think that tragedy will strike, but please if you take nothing else away from Matthew's story, hold your loved ones a little closer tonight and make them aware of what your wishes are.

If you do want to donate your organs, register and make that decision easier for those left behind. We can debate forever about whether there is a heaven and never come up with a definitive answer, but I can tell you absolutely that there is life after death—organ donation is proof of that.



Matthew.

Jenny

**The majority of
Australians support
organ and tissue donation.**



Judy's story

My husband Ian and I have shared many challenges in our 58 years together, but our double-sided experience of organ donation has sparked a new passion—to promote organ donation as a wonderful gift of life.

When we lost our son Dave in a tragic accident, we didn't hesitate when we were asked about the possibility of organ donation. We knew Dave was incredibly fit and healthy and it was the right thing to do.

In a twist of fate, 12 years after Dave's kidney donation, I needed a new kidney. A kidney infection at five months of age had left me with ongoing health issues, which worsened after I had children. By 1997, I was on dialysis three times a week. A donor kidney was my only hope for a second chance at life.

The minute I went on dialysis, I packed my bags in the hope that one day a kidney would come. Thirteen months later, it did. Within five months, I had a new life and my family was amazed at my new energy levels.

It changed my life completely. I can eat almost anything I like and I have put on some weight. I know that the kidney has grown as well.

With our unique insight into the positive outcomes for both donor families and organ recipients, we urge people to consider donation, and to speak with family and friends about organ donation.

Judy and Ian



Ian and Judy.

**Around 1,500 people are on
official transplant waiting
lists at any one time.**



The three gifts

‘We are going to the beach tomorrow, I can’t wait—I’m dying for a swim ...’

She died the next day whilst swimming in the sea at Glenelg, South Australia. It has been the most tragic and desperate time of my life, but through her death she gave me three gifts.

My last conversation with Mum went like this: ‘Wow Mum you’re going to Australia on your own, you are so brave, I hate flying. I could never go on a plane for that long!’

She replied: ‘I do not really like flying and I am not brave, it’s just I am not afraid of dying, it’s a win-win situation. I get to take some risks and have fun all at the same time!’

This was my first gift.

Since receiving this gift I have travelled to so many wonderful places in the world, taken life a little less seriously and I now love my life and take great pleasure in being alive.

When I was sorting through her personal effects, I noticed how many anti-ageing products she had bought over the years and couldn’t stop thinking that at 63 she had never really become old – it made me think that this was such a waste of worries.

This was my second gift.

Rejoice in growing older! I love my wrinkles, it shows the world how full of laughter my life has been. I let my hair go naturally grey. I no longer waste worries on ‘doing my roots’ and I know that each day I am alive is a wonderful day.

Mum emailed me from Australia to tell me all about her holiday. I was really busy and



Jacqueline (mum).

thought I would reply the next day to tell her my news and end with a kiss and I love you.

Mum died the next day. I never sent her a kiss or told her that I loved her.

This was my third gift.

From that moment on I have been free with my affection. I never wait to tell someone they are loved and special I do it there and then. I make the time for the really important things in life.

I often heard Mum say ‘Waste not, want not’ which suited her so well. She was the most resourceful woman that I have ever known, she had the most amazing way of using up the left overs and scraps to make something wonderful, whether it was a meal, something to drink or even something to wear. She loved growing, making and mending things. So when we were asked about organ donation it was not a difficult decision to make.

‘Waste not, want not’ was her final gift to the world.

Thanks Mum.
Joanne

PS: I love you X

**One organ and tissue donor
can save or enhance the
lives of 10 or more people.**



Marilyn

The phone rang at 9.35 am to notify my wife Marilyn that a kidney had become available and that it had been allocated to her. It gave her the gift of life.

Marilyn had been waiting for over five years for an organ to become available, along with other Australians who watch as the list continues to grow.

Twelve months have passed and with the help of the wonderful medical team supporting her, she is doing great. She now lives a normal life and has so many happy moments to look forward to.

Lives were saved from that one donor and the family that chose to save lives in the memory of their loved one.

The good news is, Marilyn is doing remarkably well.

If we can play a part in spreading the word on how important it is to DONATE LIFE, then we have played our part.

We will continue to provide information and support anyone who needs questions answered.

It is truly a remarkable gift to save a life.

Thank you to the transplant staff for the great job they do, along with the different organisations and other medical teams that support organ and tissue donation.

Ernest



**The most important thing
that helps a family's decision
is their knowing the donation
decision of their loved ones.**



T is for ...

T is for thank you, time, treatment, transplant and trams ... trams?

Forget Freud, I'm thinking Stevie Wonder, rhythm and lyrics to *Higher Ground*. *I'm so glad that I know more than I knew then ... gonna keep on tryin' ... 'til I reach my highest ground.*

Skirting along Hobart's silvery dock-side tram tracks to regular pathology testing. Syncopated steps to the distinctive sound and smell of Melbourne's trams.

Staying for six weeks treatment and recovery.

World keep on turnin' ... cause it won't be too long.

Fellow travellers and gowned drivers rattling and swaying together en route, stops and connections ... testing ... monitoring ... dialysis ... transplant waiting list ... doors swinging into theatre ... or the end of the line.

The ultimate journey, a one way ticket to the terminus with a capital 'T'. Buzzers and bells, snagging cannulae snaking along the grips above: The 'T' signal flashes ... *Hang on ... we're going around the corner!*

Shouldering each other's hopes and dreams of renal therapy. Faces cinematically flicker by.

Lovingly supportive family and friends past and present. Patients and pioneers of medical technology.

Hosts of hospital staff, hovering around and alongside. Our trust in their skill and compassion, so many to show our appreciation and thanks for their time and talent.

I'm so glad he let me try it again ... 'cause my last time on earth I lived a ...

Humming along beside me is my brother Richard, my wonderful living donor. He's been studying the tram time-table.

Enduring the testing and waiting, experiencing what Charles Morgan so beautifully expressed, *One cannot shut one's eyes to things not seen with eyes.*

We sense our Dad's loving spirit giving us strength.

Our stop approaches. A future bright and renewing filled with energy and joy!

Alighting the tram with Richard, this humbling journey allows us time to reflect and wish our fellow travellers well.

We turn together to meet our family waiting for us on higher ground.

I'm so glad ...

Heather



Richard and Heather on Admission 2011/Pre-emptive Renal Transplant.

Photo: Ruth Nicholls

**Do you know the
donation decision
of your loved ones?**



My second chance

I was diagnosed with a rare auto immune illness at the age of 14.

The doctors did not know much about my illness, it was all trial and error when it came to medication.

I've been battling the illness for 11 years. This year my health turned for the worst and I was in hospital frequently.

I got a call to say that they found a possible donor and I was transplanted the next day.

My surgery was successful and I am currently recovering well and looking forward to starting my new life.

My thanks go to my liver team and donor family who have given me a second chance at life.

Dajana



Dajana

**Most religions support
organ and tissue
donation for transplantation.**



Mhar

In March 2010 Ross woke up one morning and said he needed to see a doctor—which surprised me as he would never admit to being sick. Tests revealed that Ross had extensive emphysema. A year later Ross's condition had deteriorated and he was on supplementary oxygen 24 hours a day/seven days a week.

Ross needed lots of care and encouragement but he was very determined.

It was the worst possible time of my life. Ross's health deteriorated and he was listed on the transplant waiting list.

We had two false alarms but he finally received his transplant.

The day after his surgery, Ross's ventilator was removed and he was finally breathing on his own with his new set of lungs. I called this a 'Gift of Life'.

Ross had his first walk that afternoon and his first solid meal early that evening. He was still in ICU but was talkative with his usual sense of humour. He was in high spirits and on his way to recovery. No more COPD, no more oxygen tubes, no more struggling to breathe!!



Mhar and Ross.

Ross

Being diagnosed with COPD really 'sucks'. Before this, I felt on top of the world, happy, healthy, fantastic work, a wonderful partner and two young girls we were fostering in the Philippines.

One night I had problems breathing and I felt like I was drowning. Our GP recognised I was suffering from COPD or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

After I was placed on the transplant waiting list, I had two false alarms and once made it as far as pre-op before it was decided that the lungs would not be suitable.

One night I felt really bad, but just after midnight we had another call. We were at the hospital at 1.30 am and I was operated on by 11.30 am. The procedure went well and was much shorter than expected. I woke up the next day in ICU and I could BREATHE!

Mhar was there every day. The lung transplant team attributed my rapid recovery to the adherence of the COPD Management Plan and the support from Mhar.

Most times the COPD plan and the medication will allow sufferers to maintain a decent quality of life. A lung transplant is the last resort and it is to be remembered the new lungs are only 'on loan' – a gift from the donor and donor family.

**If you want to donate life,
discuss it today, OK?**



Stephania's story

Valasia is familiar with the life-saving benefits that transplantation makes to people's lives. Her youngest daughter, Stephania, was put on the liver transplant waiting list when she was one year old, waiting 20 months before a liver became available.

"As a little girl Stephania was in and out of hospital and was not able to walk, play or laugh like other children. This was difficult to watch and all we wanted was for our little girl to be able to lead a normal life like other children.

"I find it difficult to put into words what it is like being on the transplant waiting list, waiting for the telephone call that would transform Stephania's life. This experience was not something that only affected Stephania; it affected our whole family.

"It was at midnight that we finally received the call. Nothing can prepare you for the call, and as we drove to the hospital we experienced mixed emotions. Crying tears of absolute joy for Stephania who was finally getting a new liver, and tears of grief for someone else's family who had just lost their loved one.

"Today Stephania is thriving and is a perfect example of what organ donation can do. Receiving a liver transplant has transformed her life and we know this is due to the generous act of the donor

family who agreed to donate life in a traumatic time.

"I speak as a Greek Orthodox and while I can't speak for everyone, I urge you to help educate our children and communities about organ and tissue donation. Please talk to your loved ones about your donation decision so that more Australian lives, like Stephania's, can be transformed through organ and tissue donation. It's time that people understand that religion is not a barrier to becoming an organ and tissue donor".

Valasia



(L-R) Chris and Valasia pictured with their daughters, Natalia and Stephania, at the launch of the 'DonateLife ... the greatest gift' campaign.

**Donors and recipients
vary in age from
infants to the elderly.**



My living non-direct kidney donation story

I donated my left kidney. My commitment to donate a kidney was just a natural and normal thing for me to do. I didn't know anyone who was in need of a kidney so the only option was to seek a non-directed or altruistic donation.

Within a very short time I made contact with a man who was living about an hour's drive from a hospital. This hospital was going to change my life and the life of a man who had been on kidney dialysis for about two years. After sending a blood sample I found that I was a match with the potential recipient and a booking was made for the kidney transplant.

The hospital staff were absolutely wonderful, providing me with lasting memories. I was truly ready to give this gift of life and now aware that my kidney wasn't going to a stranger anymore but a new friend.

A date for surgery was set. My surgery went well and I remember how happy the recipient looked with his new gift.

Now I can afford to look back and think of the good memories. A wonderful man and his wife now have a new life of hope, good health and the knowledge that it is possible for a stranger to love another stranger.

When you believe in something powerful in your life and you know it is legal and ethical then nothing should stop you. This is a dream come true for me. Every person is valued in one

shape or form and my life is much richer because of my decision to donate.

Good luck and good health to all those who live in hope for someone to enter their lives and make a difference.

Anthony



Anthony.

**Ask and know
your loved one's
donation decision.**



Patrick's story

Dad fell ill exactly three years to the day prior to his death.

Dad was transferred to hospital when he became sick and was told that his lung disease was totally unpredictable. He was then referred to specialists at a transplant clinic.

The clinic started evaluation tests for Dad to have a lung transplant. He endured many tests during that week, including a lung function test. He couldn't give a proper reading as his breathing had deteriorated so much in that last month.

Dad was due to go back home in the afternoon, when that morning at 10 am the doctor came in to say there was a 30% chance a lung was on the way that would suit him.

At 6 pm that day they operated and Dad was transplanted with a left lung.

Dad was given a second chance in life, receiving his transplant within only hours. We knew he wasn't ready!

He survived to see his three grandchildren who bought him so much happiness and amusement. He showed us all an enormous amount of strength and courage as he fought for life.

Most of all he showed us miracles really do happen.

Unfortunately Dad's health deteriorated and he passed away with his two children by his bed-side.

Rhani



Pat.

**Organ and tissue donation
for transplantation is based
on the concept of altruism.**



David (Dave)

David (Dave) was born six weeks prematurely on 23 November 1960 the youngest of two sons to Judy and Ian. He grew up to be strong-willed and intelligent with many friends and interests including restoring VWs and surfing.

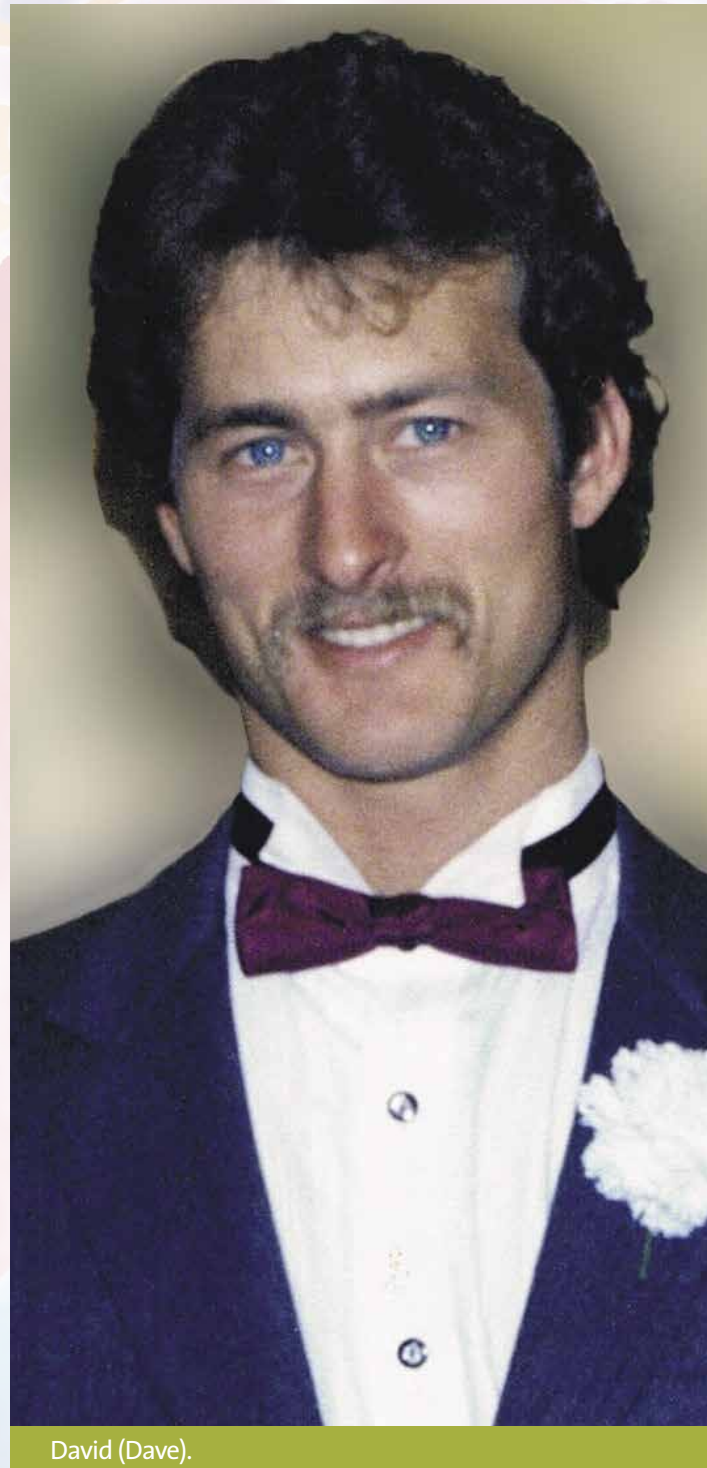
After finishing school he started an electrical apprenticeship and was about to be made a partner in the business for which he worked. He was super fit, funny, happy, clever, difficult, a joker and honest. He had just purchased his own home and was about to get engaged.

When driving to work he was hit by a vehicle that had been driven through a red light. He sustained major injuries and sadly passed away after being on life support for 32 hours.

We have been contacted by and spent time with the recipient of one of Dave's kidneys, who lives interstate, becoming firm friends of him and his family. It has helped us to know that out of a terrible tragedy some good has happened through organ donation.

He remains unforgettable.

Judy and Ian



David (Dave).

**Each year around
1,700 corneal transplants
are performed to give
the gift of sight.**



Paul's long and winding road

I have been through liver transplantation twice and am alive today because of the generous gifts of livers from people who have passed away and their families.

At the age of 21, and otherwise in good health, I felt liver pains. My form of hepatitis was treated with medication for 16 years until liver transplantation was the only option.

The hospital stay was long, complicated, uncertain and stressful, but there was so much help at hand to help me through it—far more than I would have imagined. (It is common for recipients to be completely overwhelmed by the kindness of the hospital staff.) The medical team were brilliant.

The liver kept me healthy until recently, when I required another and was placed on the national transplant waiting list. This time I was sicker going into transplant but the process was a lot smoother.

My wife (Anne) and I have a daughter, Emma, who is now 18. Anne and Emma have been tremendous support. I am extremely thankful for the donation which has enabled me to help in raising Emma from the age of eight to her starting university this year. I have also been able to support my mother following my father's death.

We are so grateful to the families who agreed to donate. To my donor families, thank you from the bottom of my heart. It is a great display of humanity to allow

the organs to save other lives when your loved one has passed away so tragically.

One of my important days is the annual Tree Planting Ceremony at Lake Monger, which is very emotional, but is a time for reflection on the loss of others, their generosity and the wonder of the whole process. I also think of those who were less fortunate than me and for whom there was not an available organ at the time.

I would also like to thank the community as a whole for supporting organ donation and saving our lives, both as a policy and through taxpayer funding.

I am very optimistic about the future.

Paul



Paul.

**If you want to donate life,
discuss it today, OK?**



An angel somewhere

The tragic life experience that deeply affected our family started for us one Christmas. Leading up to this we were a happy loving family. My husband and I, the proud parents of three wonderful healthy children: Todd, Lisa and Drew.

Our youngest was Drew. A very active loving son, but oh so mischievous. As his older brother and sister went off to school, Drew, lonely for a playmate found an imaginary friend he called Timmy, who was always with him.

One day Drew came to me and said 'Mummy something terrible has happened, Timmy is dead.' I was so upset for him and Drew was heartbroken.

Years passed and Drew grew into a very busy man with not a lot of time to spare, but such a caring man with lots of friends.

Unknown to us, tragedy was lurking not far away and at Christmas Drew was taken from us in a freak motor vehicle accident. His loss shattered our lives forever and we still struggle with this.

From our heartbreak though, came the miracle of a chance at life for a desperately ill baby.

The wonders of organ donation are a blessing. I believe Drew's imaginary friend was his guardian angel who watched over him when he was so lonely as a child, but was never far away from him in his 22 years of life.

Drew was and will always be our angel.

Jill



Drew.

**Organ and tissue donation
for transplantation is based
on the concept of altruism.**



Pip's gift

I lost my little sister, Phillipa (Pip) a few years ago. Pip was killed in a farm accident—she was just 19.

Pip and I had registered to become organ donors a few years earlier. By doing this we made a terribly devastating time a little bit easier for my parents.

Knowing that Pip had helped change or save the lives of at least three people made the unimaginable grief easier to bear.

Pip was a gentle soul and she loved helping others.

Thankfully, one of the recipients from Pip's donation contacted my mother and



this really helped us all with the healing process.

Please discuss organ donation with your loved ones—you never know what the future may bring.

Claire



Pip.

**Do you know the
donation decision
of your loved ones?**





Australian Government
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Alternative format

The DonatLife Book of Life is available electronically on the Authority's website at www.donatlife.gov.au