

# Heartbeat Epworth

April / May 2025

# ZIPPERS

We are fundraising for the  
Heartbeat Epworth  
Brookes Academy  
Cardiac Nurse Research Grant



## THIS ISSUE:

- President's Message
- Heartbeat Epworth Scholarships
- Finding the Glimmers in Life
- Updates from our Coordinators
- Heart Health Matters: Do You Know Your Numbers?



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



Thanks to the generosity our members and supporters and the incredible work of our volunteers, at the end of the 2023-24 Financial Year Heartbeat Epworth donated \$83,000 to Epworth Medical Foundation (EMF). This donation finalised the funding of the 2023-24 Cardiac Equipment Campaign and was our first contribution (\$37,000) towards establishing the **Heartbeat Epworth Brookes Academy Cardiac Nurse Research Grant**. This endowment will enable Epworth cardiac nurses to undertake research into improving the treatment and care of cardiac patients now and into the future.

This year, \$113,000 is required to complete Heartbeat's share of the \$600K endowment to fund the Grant. The Epworth Medical Foundation will then contribute \$150K and an anonymous donor will match the Heartbeat and EMF contributions with another \$300K.

The Committee is very keen to finalise Heartbeat's share of the Grant by the end of 2024-25 Financial Year. As you will see on the cover of this issue of *Zippers* we have now raised \$90K towards this goal and our volunteers are working extremely hard to raise a large part of the balance required but, without a significant contribution from members to our 2025-26 Annual Appeal, we will fall short of achieving it. I will be writing to all members and donors in April to launch the Appeal and hope you will be able to make a donation before the end of June 2025. Every cent donated to the Appeal will go to the Heartbeat Epworth Brookes Academy Cardiac Nurse Research Grant. Donations over \$2 are tax deductible. Thank you in advance for your contribution.

On pages 3 and 4 of this issue of *Zippers* are extracts from the Final Reports of the 2024 Heartbeat Scholarship recipients and 'thank you' comments penned by the 2025 Heartbeat Scholarship recipients. It is very gratifying to hear what staff say about the opportunity that these Scholarships provide to them and the longer-term benefits for patients. Funding developmental opportunities for cardiac staff is the most important and lasting financial contribution Heartbeat has made as an organisation to the care and treatment of cardiac patients at Epworth. It is our greatest legacy.

Recruiting volunteers is an ongoing challenge, particularly for Margo and me. Our volunteers love working at Heartbeat but sometimes their health stops them from volunteering and they must be replaced; and, from time to time, we seek to expand our fundraising activities and volunteers must be recruited to do that work. If you are looking for a volunteering opportunity that will give you a lot of personal satisfaction and an opportunity to meet people, volunteering on our sales table at Richmond might be the opportunity you are looking for. Please give Margo a call on 0439 036 981 or email her at [margokel@bigpond.com](mailto:margokel@bigpond.com) for more information.

As I mentioned in the previous issue of *Zippers*, we were very pleased to recruit Liz Gibson to introduce Heartbeat to patients attending the Cardiac Rehab Programs at Epworth Camberwell. We are now seeking a cardiac patient volunteer to speak to patients attending the Cardiac Rehab Program at Richmond about their own cardiac event experience. This program runs over six weeks (some of you may have done it) and you will only need to speak to each group once, so there isn't a huge time commitment required. Heartbeat will provide you with any resources you need. Please give me a call on 0448 068 364 or email me at [bill.preston@epworth.org.au](mailto:bill.preston@epworth.org.au) if you are interested.

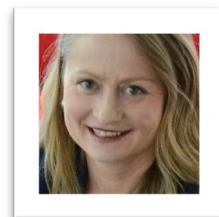
*Bill Preston* - President





## HEARTBEAT EPWORTH SCHOLARSHIPS

In this issue of *Zipper*s we wanted to emphasise to Heartbeat members and supporters the significant impact they make by their support for cardiac staff education through the Epworth Scholarships Program. We have reproduced below extracts from the end-of-year reflections of recipients of the 2024 Heartbeat Scholarships; on page 4 you can read the ‘thank you’ messages from recipients of the 2025 Heartbeat Scholarships.



Thank you to all Heartbeat members and supporters who have made these Scholarships possible.

### Extracts from 2024 Heartbeat Scholarship Recipients’ Final Reports

#### **Jo Kevill** (Heartbeat Epworth Cardiac Scholarship)

*I attended the European Society of Cardiology Conference in London in September 2024, where I had the opportunity to present the Cardiac Rehabilitation Ambassador initiative at Epworth Healthcare and highlight its impact on patient engagement and outcomes. This platform allowed me to showcase the Program to a global audience and gain valuable insights from international experts in the field. I am now collaborating with the University of Sydney to further develop and expand the Ambassador Program. This partnership will focus on enhancing patient engagement strategies and investigating the effectiveness of the Program in promoting cardiac rehabilitation participation among heart patients. Thank you, Heartbeat, for your unwavering support, dedication, and commitment to improving cardiac rehabilitation programs - your generosity is truly making a difference.*

#### **Tess Nolan** (Heartbeat Epworth Cardiac Scholarship)

*I had the privilege of attending the EuroPCR conference in Paris, France, in May 2024. The experience was both enriching and enlightening, providing a deeper understanding of global advancements in cardiac care. One of my primary goals moving forward is to encourage fellow nurses to apply for similar educational opportunities, particularly in interventional Cathlab care and procedures. By doing so, I aim to expand our collective knowledge and ensure we remain up to date with the latest evidence-based practices, equipment, and procedures in cardiac care. The Conference allowed me to significantly enhance my expertise in Cathlab interventional nursing, providing invaluable insights that I can apply to my practice. I am deeply grateful for the generosity of the scholarship that made it possible for me to attend the Euro.*

#### **Susannah Mahar** (Heartbeat Epworth Centenary Cardiac Scholarship)

*We successfully achieved our goal of acquiring new textbooks for our library and signed up for online learning subscriptions. This initiative has been highly valuable in fostering a culture of continuous learning within the echocardiography lab, enhancing both knowledge and expertise. It has also provided opportunities to engage with interesting case studies and lectures related to heart disease, enriching professional development. My goal is to continue fostering an environment where I can help my peers and promote high standards of Cardiac Sonography in the workplace. I would like to express my sincere gratitude for your continued support.*

#### **Tricia Pagkalinawan** (Heartbeat Epworth Centenary Cardiac Scholarship)

*Thanks to the generous scholarship, I had the opportunity to attend EuroPCR, the world-leading course in interventional cardiovascular medicine. Attending this prestigious event allowed me to connect with a global community of professionals, including interventional cardiologists, cardiac radiographers, nurses, and other allied health professionals. It provided a platform for collaboration, sharing diverse stories and breakthroughs, and offered practical insights that can transform patient care. I am now focused on completing my post-graduate studies in cardiac services to further enhance my expertise. I am truly grateful for your generosity ... this was a once-in-a-lifetime experience and I will always look back on it with fondness and appreciation.*



## **HEARTBEAT EPWORTH SCHOLARSHIPS (continued)**

**Nanci Thurston** (Heartbeat Epworth Centenary Cardiac Scholarship)

*Attending the TCT (Transcatheter Therapeutics) Conference in Washington, DC was an incredible experience. The conference was not just an event, but a driving force in advancing interventional cardiovascular medicine. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Heartbeat for this incredible opportunity. The conference was both informative and inspiring, showcasing cutting-edge research and groundbreaking clinical trials. It highlighted the expertise and leadership of Epworth cardiologists, and I feel privileged to have been part of this event. I am deeply honoured and thankful for this scholarship.*

**Michelle Thompson** (John Thurkle Heartbeat Cardiac Scholarship)

*I have successfully completed the first year of my Master of Nursing with two more years to go. This financial assistance has been invaluable and allows me to pursue further education and, with the knowledge gained, educate both staff and patients more effectively. I look forward to using my expanded knowledge to make a meaningful impact in my workplace. From the bottom of my heart, thank you so much for this scholarship opportunity.*

### **'Thank you' Messages from 2025 Heartbeat Scholarship Recipients**

**Rachel Fielding** (Heartbeat Epworth Cardiac Scholarship)

*I am very honoured to be awarded the Heartbeat Epworth Cardiac Scholarship to attend the European Society of Intensive Care Medicine 38th Annual Congress (2025) in Munich. Attendance at this Conference will enable me to enhance my knowledge in all aspects of intensive care and cardiac patient management in order to guide clinical practice for improved patient care and outcomes at Epworth. I would like to thank you for this amazing opportunity which would not have been possible without your kind generosity. Thank you, Rachel*

**Samra Hashmi** (Heartbeat Epworth Cardiac Scholarship)

*I am deeply honoured and grateful to receive this Scholarship. Your generosity and commitment are truly inspiring. The Scholarship will enable me to attend the 34<sup>th</sup> annual ECHO Conference run by the American Society of Echocardiography and will make a significant contribution to my learning experience. Much obliged, Samra*

**Mag Whelan** (Heartbeat Epworth Cardiac Scholarship)

*Thank you so much for offering me this Scholarship to attend the Melbourne Business School Leadership Program. I'm very excited to do this Program and am sincerely grateful for this opportunity. Thank you, Mag*

**Kawa Haji** (Heartbeat Epworth Centenary Scholarship)

*I am writing to express my heartfelt gratitude for your generous support. This Scholarship will allow me to attend the 2025 EuroPCR Conference hosted by the European Association of Percutaneous Cardiovascular Interventions in Paris and enable me to gain valuable knowledge and give back to the community in impactful ways. Regards, Kawa*

**Adele Spigelman** (Heartbeat Epworth Centenary Scholarship)

*I am honoured to receive the Heartbeat Epworth Centenary Scholarship. Your support will allow me to attend the 34<sup>th</sup> annual ECHO Conference in Hawaii run by the American Society of Echocardiography. Thank you again, Adele*

**Ma Femichelle Ayuban** (John Thurkle Heartbeat Cardiac Scholarship)

*Thank you for your generous support and for giving me this wonderful opportunity. I am so grateful for your continued support to staff education. This will help me achieve my goals in my department and gives me the ability to continue pursuing further education. Again, thank you very much for your unending support of Epworth Cardiac staff, Ma Femichelle*

*Dorani Lacey* - Grants & Scholarships Manager



## FINDING THE GLIMMERS IN LIFE



Growing up as a child the beach was an oasis for me, offering the purest form of fun. Time was spent building sandcastles and forts, chasing away gangs of seagulls while eating fish and chips by the water. The offering of an ice cream would be the ultimate prize to finish off a happy day.

I would now refer to each experience from this childhood memory as a precious 'Glimmer'. Many of us are aware of the term "trigger", where an event draws out difficult emotions. However, a Glimmer Event is a simple moment or experience that generates positive feelings of joy, calm or a sense of safety. These positive experiences can uplift your mood even during challenging times and may be found by getting out into nature, taking your dog for a walk, sharing a laugh with your best friend, or simply noticing the incredible colours and intricate design of a butterfly's wings.

To experience Glimmers, we need to intentionally seek them out. Finding the moments to allow this to happen, identifying the places where we can go to be nourished, find joy, happiness or contentment.

As an adult, I often seek these experiences through connecting with nature. This is one space where I find comfort. When life has felt more challenging, when my foundations are unsettled, I stand on the beach with my feet in the sand and create the space to breathe deeply. I take the time to pause and reflect as needed. What I love about nature is that it can appear in perfect harmonious balance at first, but it also offers imperfections. Visually, a piece of raw timber will display the trademarks of imperfections, knobby indentations and bumps. I find nature is imperfect but also strikingly beautiful, just as we are with our own emotional knobby bits and bumps, our own imperfections.

For me the natural world feels like a gift, helping me to experience these Glimmers when most needed. Harmony and peace can coexist in an imperfect environment. If we intentionally search for the positives - the 'Glimmers' - our souls can be nurtured and tended. A natural healing space for me may offer something for you too.

I also find these Glimmer moments within the walls of Epworth Richmond. Observing an elderly couple holding hands as they walk down the hallway, seeing the Heartbeat volunteers hard at work, or sharing carrots with our much loved therapy dog when she visits the Pastoral Care Office. These are all welcome Glimmers for me, connecting into joy and calm.

We can make a difference, a difference to our own lives and to others, particularly when someone may be struggling. Once you are alert to the power of Glimmers, these tiny moments will appear and can have a positive effect on your mental health.

Hope is not always a blazing fire, sometimes it's a quiet glimmer - just enough to keep you going.

What might be your unexpected Glimmer?

*Nicole Mollman* - Pastoral Care

**GLIMMERS**

<i>A glimmer is the exact opposite of a trigger</i>	<i>They make us feel a sense of joy, safety or peaceful</i>
<i>They help calm our nervous system</i>	<i>They help us move out of survival mode</i>

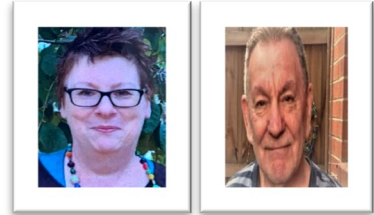
**What are some of your glimmers?**

@creatingwellbeingmelbourne



## UPDATES FROM OUR COORDINATORS

### NORTH WEST GROUP



Welcome to another *Zippers* report. We hope everyone is well and enjoying the beautiful Autumn weather. We've had a very interesting start to 2025! It started when, unfortunately, our first North West Group meeting for 2025 couldn't occur after Robert broke his ankle on Valentine's Day and was hospitalised for a couple of days. Our 19 March lunch also had to be cancelled as some members were unwell or unable to attend due to other commitments. Our April North West Group meeting was initially to be held on Sunday 20 April 20 but, as this date falls on Easter Sunday, it has been rescheduled for Sunday 13 April.

The good news is that we are back on track now - Robert is recovering well (thank you to those who made contact to wish him a speedy recovery) and we are looking forward to catching up with everyone at the meeting on 13 April!

As reported in our last *Zippers* report, we will hold a Christmas in July Lunch at the Windy Hill Bistro on Wednesday 16 July. This event will be a smaller version of our traditional Christmas Lunch in November, however, we will have some great prizes to win on the day and it will be lovely to catch up with everyone over a delicious lunch and to have some fun together. Stay tuned for further details!

Please also note that arrangements for our annual November Christmas lunch have yet to be confirmed and will be provided when they are known.

A schedule of 2025 NW Group events is listed below - please add them to your diaries!

### Schedule of 2025 North West Group Events

Date	Event	Time	Location
Sunday 13 April	Meeting	2:00pm	Uniting Church, Kent Road, Pascoe Vale
Wednesday 21 May	Lunch	12:00noon	To be confirmed
Sunday 15 June	Meeting	2:00pm	Uniting Church, Kent Road, Pascoe Vale
Wednesday 16 July	Christmas in July Lunch	12:00noon	Windy Hill Bistro, cnr Napier & Brewster St, Essendon
Sunday 17 August	Meeting	2:00pm	Uniting Church, Kent Road, Pascoe Vale
Wednesday 17 September	Lunch	12:00noon	To be confirmed
Sunday 19 October	Meeting	2:00pm	Uniting Church, Kent Road, Pascoe Vale
Saturday 15 November	Christmas Lunch	12:00noon	To be confirmed

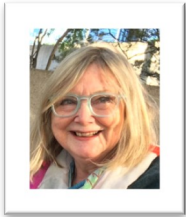
*Sharon Saitta* - North West Group Coordinator

*Robert Saitta* - North West Events Coordinator





**RICHMOND**



The Angliss Restaurant lunch on 18 March was a great success - the food and company were wonderful and we raised nearly \$600. There are two more Angliss Restaurant lunches this year and we can only accommodate a limited number of people each time (unfortunately we had to turn away a few people last time), so please respond as quickly as you can to the invitation we will be sending out in May for the next lunch on Tuesday 17 June.

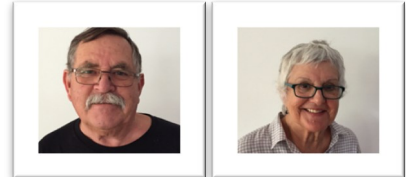
Our sales table at Richmond is now offering Mother’s Day Raffle tickets, a great range of cards and woollen beanies, and little hand-knitted jumpers that are a popular addition to our range BUT **we desperately need more volunteers to operate the sales table**. We offer free parking and lunch, and are happy to talk to you about how we can meet your volunteering preferences - for example, you might wish to bring along a friend to volunteer with you, or you may only be available to work a morning or afternoon. Please contact Margo on 0439 036 981 if you are able to help us.

The next morning tea is at 10.30am on Wednesday 9 April at The Montague Park Food Store, 406 Park Street, South Melbourne. All volunteers, members and friends are very welcome to join us. Please let us know if you are able to be there by contacting Margo on 0439 036 981 or Fay on 0411 875 402.

*Margo Kelly* - Richmond Coordinator



**SOUTH EASTERN GROUP**



Our first Epworth Eastern sales table for 2025 was on 3 March and we had a very successful day. Children’s jumpers, quilts and rugs were the best sellers. The next one is on Monday 14 April with similar items and Mother’s Day Raffle tickets for sale. There are two great hampers to be won in the Raffle! We’ll also be at Richmond on Thursday 17 April and 1 May. If you’re looking for knitted woollen Footy Beanies in your team’s colours, you can purchase them at both our Richmond and Eastern sales tables.

At the South Eastern Group meeting on Friday 9 May, there will be a refresher session on performing CPR/using a Defibrillator. Please contact Con on 0412 059 350 or [cclass@bigpond.net.au](mailto:cclass@bigpond.net.au) if you would like to attend.

**Schedule of 2025 South Eastern Group Meetings and Lunches (2nd Friday of each month)**

Event	Time	2025 Dates								
		Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Members’ Meeting Boardroom, Level 7 Epworth Eastern Nelson Road	10:30am	11/04	09/05	13/06	11/07	08/08	12/09	10/10	14/11	12/12
Members’ Lunch The Bistro Box Hill RSL 26 Nelson Road	11:45am	11/04	09/05	13/06	11/07	08/08	12/09	10/10	14/11	12/12

*Con Vlass* - South Eastern Group Coordinator

*Loula Vlass* - Epworth Eastern Sales Table Coordinator





## HEART HEALTH MATTERS: DO YOU KNOW YOUR NUMBERS?

‘Knowing your numbers’ is the starting point to looking after your heart and preventing heart problems in the future. It can empower us to make informed lifestyle choices such as adopting a healthier diet, increasing our physical activity, and managing stress optimally.



Next time you visit your doctor, ask them to give you a copy of your blood pressure reading and your cholesterol and HbA1C blood test results and compare them to the guidelines below. If they are not within these guidelines discuss what you can do with your doctor. This will often be a combination of lifestyle modification and possibly medications. You might also consider attending a cardiac rehabilitation program to support you in implementing these changes.

Blood pressure, cholesterol levels and diabetes risk can change over time – typically these numbers get higher as we get older. Reviewing these numbers regularly will ensure that your heart health is optimal and reduce the likelihood of a heart attack.

Measure	Guidelines Recommend	Your Current Numbers	Plan of Action
Blood Pressure	<130/80 <u>at rest</u>	?	If any of your current numbers sit outside the guideline recommendation, speak to your doctor about what you can do to improve them
Cholesterol			
Total Cholesterol:	<4	?	
HDL:	>1	?	
LDL:	<1.8	?	
Triglycerides	<2	?	
Diabetes: HbA1C	<7mmol/L	?	

*Jo Kevell & Ann Rickard* - Cardiac Rehabilitation Coordinators, Epworth Camberwell

## HEARTBEAT EPWORTH COMMITTEE 2024-25

<b>Bill Preston</b> President & Interim Secretary Mob: 0448 068 364 <a href="mailto:bill.preston@epworth.org.au">bill.preston@epworth.org.au</a>	<b>Kasi Nathan</b> Treasurer Mob: 0425 849 193 <a href="mailto:heartbeat@epworth.org.au">heartbeat@epworth.org.au</a>	<b>Justine Middleton</b> Assistant Treasurer Mob: 0401 992 985 <a href="mailto:Justine.Middleton@epworth.org.au">Justine.Middleton@epworth.org.au</a>	<b>Sharon Saitta</b> North West Coordinator Mob: 0417 506 760 <a href="mailto:s.saitta2607@gmail.com">s.saitta2607@gmail.com</a>
<b>Margo Kelly</b> Richmond Coordinator Mob: 0439 036 981 <a href="mailto:margokel@bigpond.com">margokel@bigpond.com</a>	<b>Con Vlass</b> South Eastern Coordinator Mob: 0412 059 350 <a href="mailto:cvglass@bigpond.net.au">cvglass@bigpond.net.au</a>	<b>Sylvia McGregor</b> Special Events / Raffle Presentations Mob: 0418 677 919 <a href="mailto:mcmgregorsylvia@yahoo.com.au">mcmgregorsylvia@yahoo.com.au</a>	<b>Fay Henderson</b> Entertainment Books / Special Events Mob: 0411 875 402 <a href="mailto:fayhenderson@icloud.com">fayhenderson@icloud.com</a>
<b>Loula Vlass</b> South Eastern Sales and Craft Contributions Mob: 0411 277 685 <a href="mailto:loulavlass@gmail.com">loulavlass@gmail.com</a>	<b>Shirley Chung</b> North West Fundraising Mob: 0408 128 822 <a href="mailto:spchung8@outlook.com">spchung8@outlook.com</a>	<b>Robert Saitta</b> North West Events Coordinator Mob: 0477 506 711 <a href="mailto:rbsaitta@bigpond.net.au">rbsaitta@bigpond.net.au</a>	<b>Sheila Ross</b> Interim Minutes Secretary (Standing Invitee)