“I believe that life’s a journey. My family and Parkinson’s Victoria are with me on my life’s journey.”

Col, aged 84, diagnosed 9 October 2017

When Col was told by his doctor that he had Parkinson’s, he was not surprised. Receiving this diagnosis was just another part of his wonderful and remarkable life journey.

This is Col’s story.

“It was about four years ago when I noticed a tremble in my left arm. **I was sure it was Parkinson’s.** But my doctor told me there were other things that could be causing the trembling.

Fast forward a year later and my doctor confirmed I have Parkinson’s. **From my own observations, I had diagnosed myself a year before he did!**

So, what was my reaction when I was told?

Well, in 2009 I had a quadruple bypass. Then a few years later I was treated for prostate cancer. So being told I had Parkinson’s was just another part of my life journey.

And life is an interesting journey. I believe it’s important to live and enjoy each day. Don’t worry about what’s next or in the future. You can’t control that.

But you can do things like learn about your condition. I’ve always had an inquisitive mind when it comes to health matters. Whether it’s a newspaper clipping or an article in a magazine, I’ll read it. If it’s a seminar, I’ll be in the first row right in front of the presenter, so I don’t miss a single word.

It’s this desire to understand and manage my health, that led me to contacting Parkinson’s Victoria.

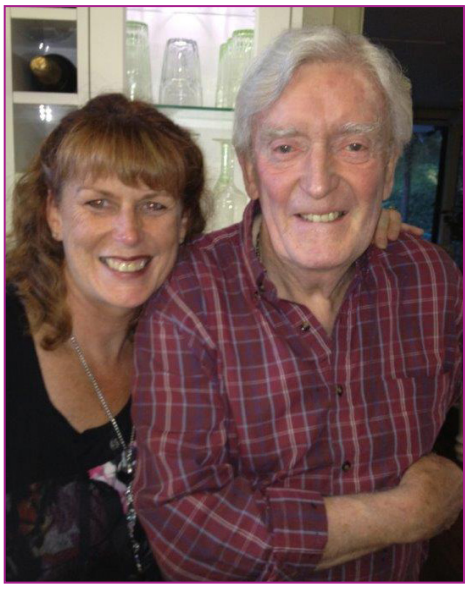
Let me explain my diagnosis first. My Parkinson's is mild at the moment, but nearly everything I do is affected by it. Simple things like doing up or undoing buttons on a shirt can be a problem.

I had a beautiful swirly signature. But a year or so ago, I could no longer sign my name. I'm struggling to write now! I shake a lot in my left hand. And when I write with my right hand, I may be half-way doing something nice and neat and then my hand twitches! Scribble all over. One thing that upsets me is spelling words. I can look at a word like **"WHEN"** and start to spell it - "W", "H"... what comes next? Or sitting in the car for 15 minutes and then trying to get out. My legs are stiff and I find it very difficult to move.

Parkinson's Victoria has been absolutely brilliant, fantastic and helpful. They give me the information I need to understand this condition and invite me to their seminars...

Although I went to the first seminar on my own, the second seminar I brought with me 6 ears! Those 6 ears belong to the three most beautiful and important women in my life – my partner, my daughter and my daughter-in-law.

My loved ones worry more about anything that happens to me than I do! But there's no point worrying - worrying won't help you in any way.



I then decided to go on my own to one of the seminars. I had already gotten out of the car and began walking but I realised I didn't want to be looking after my sunglasses. So, I put the sunglasses in the car, walked back out on the road when...

I lost my balance, fell over and hit my head on very rough bitumen on the road.

I thought what am I going to do? If I fall on the ground, I can't get up! Luckily, I fell between my car and the car behind mine. So, I used them as a support to push myself up.

Well, blood was running down me as I walked into Parkinson's Victoria. Thankfully, their nurse came over and dressed my wounds. Then another wonderful staff member got me a lovely cup of coffee and scones with jam and cream. I was one very happy man.

The outstanding thing is the excellent service, the warmth and friendliness of everybody at Parkinson's Victoria. I can't thank the team highly enough or express clearly enough the service that you get from Parkinson's Victoria. I think they're absolutely fantastic.

Anyone who has Parkinson's will benefit from contacting the Parkinson's Victoria team. You just can't get too much knowledge about Parkinson's. That's why I go to every seminar they hold. And I'll probably continue to go as long as I live. They are just so good."

Col is one of 27,000 Victorians diagnosed with Parkinson's. Support, advice and information can make a significant and positive difference to them, their families and carers.

Please show your support and donate today. You will be making a life-changing difference.

Visit: www.parkinsonsvic.org.au/winterappeal2020
Call: 03 8809 0400
Mail: PO Box 239, Surrey Hills VIC 3127

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