



Ian Ashby – Post-Heart Transplant – Now 75!

After 21 years of marriage and eight children I had a heart attack when I was 45 years old, I modified my lifestyle with exercise, and then continued in good health until my heart began to fail when I was 59. I was subsequently listed for heart transplant and the call came after three months.

I was always positive and determined that I would be one of the longest living transplants—very difficult at my age!

My new heart struggled in the first three weeks, keeping me in intensive care for ten days. An auxiliary pump was inserted through my groin to assist the new heart, which kept going in and out of A/F for some weeks.

After five years things began to go wrong. I was diagnosed with lymphoma, was treated with chemotherapy, and also had my spleen removed. One thing led to another:- Blood clots in my lung, staph infections, aspergillosis, two hip replacements, and more recently another lymphoma treated with radiation therapy. Then five months ago I developed a clot in my thigh which necessitated by-pass surgery to my leg.

Through all this I have never had any rejection – “great heart” - and have remained positive throughout.

Having played sport and continually exercised most of my life, I am about to go to Adelaide to compete in the 75-79 year age group in the Australian Masters Squash Championships.

Since my transplant I have welcomed ten more grandchildren, and now we have seventeen in total. My wife has been my wonderful support during all this time. Without her constant encouragement and assistance over fifty-one years of marriage, I would not be here! (Thank you to Ian, and his wife Geraldine, for contributing this piece. Geraldine says: “He is a truly inspirational man – never say die! Hope this may help some who are struggling.” – Ed.)