



Pam Van Omme of Stirling is a Parkinson's WA Volunteer and a member of the Parkinson's Research Committee. Credit: David Baylis/Community News

Parkinson's WA volunteers for 16 years to bring joy

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PAMELA Van Omme has spent 16 years volunteering her time to Parkinson's WA with one goal in mind: to bring "a pocket of pleasure" to those suffering.

It was "a bit of a knock" for Mrs Van Omme when her husband Tony was diagnosed with Parkinson's at 53.

"When he was first diagnosed the first thing I did was go to the library and read everything I could possibly read about Parkinson's and rang the association immediately and asked how I could help and what I could do there," she said.

Mrs Van Omme, of Stirling, has volunteered with Parkinson's WA since her husband's diagnosis, but her biggest feat was launching the Young Onset Parkinson's support group initiative in 2006.

“I was initially keen to start a group for people aged under 55, men and women, and the youngest was diagnosed at 28,” she said.

“We first met in a coffee shop, six or eight interested people, and we decided we would meet on a Sunday afternoon and did so for eight years.”

Although she decided to hit pause on leading the group in 2013, she didn’t stop volunteering her time and became the Western Suburbs Parkinson’s support group leader.

“I organise for speakers to come to our meetings, we have the Parkinson’s nurse visit once a year and she tells us any updates we should know, and Curtin University students visit and advise us of their PhD studies and talk on topics like deep brain stimulation,” she said.

Mrs Van Omme said volunteering was one way for her and her husband to accept their circumstances and move forward.