

# Greg cheats grim reaper

ONE Friday in October last year, Greg Hale was working in the koala compound at Yanchep National Park when he began to feel extremely uncomfortable.

Climbing onto the tractor with great difficulty, he drove one kilometre to the vehicle shed where he managed to struggle into another vehicle and drive off to seek help.

Meanwhile, Wayne 'Duke' Calvert was working along the roadside, pruning the overhanging vegetation. Greg pulled up and commented, that he had strong chest pains and a tightening feeling across his chest that left him gasping for breath.

## Rendezvous

Fearing the worst, Duke took immediate action by radioing the Perth District office to arrange for an ambulance to rendezvous with them, as they drove south towards the Wanneroo Hospital, 25 minutes away.

With both vehicles heading towards each other, valuable time was gained which proved to be a life-saver.

by Annie Grieg

Greg was by now having symptoms of numbness, 'pins and needles' in the arms and legs, and chest pains that were becoming more intense by the minute.

Duke later said his first aid training helped him to stay level-headed and reassure Greg that everything would be fine.

"I remember feeling quite calm and confident that my first-aid training and knowledge would see us both through."

Apart from encouraging Greg to keep breathing deeply, Duke didn't need to use his first aid skills.

Wayne travelled in the ambulance with Greg, and after he was stabilised, he was transferred from Wanneroo Hospital to Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital for further testing.

## Almost fatal

Greg was diagnosed as having come dangerously close to a fatal heart attack.

He recuperated in hospital

where he remained under observation for two weeks. Surgeons later installed a pacemaker to stabilise Greg's heart beat.

Greg returned to work on December 9, six weeks after his brush with death.

He now believes 'that every day above ground is a bonus', and with a few lifestyle changes his future looks great.

## Knowledge no burden

Duke's swift action and level-headedness in the way he handled this emergency situation is most commendable, and serves to remind us that knowledge—particularly that of first aid—is never a burden.

Greg says he'll be eternally grateful that Duke was around in his hour of need.

He also, totally endorses Linda Gilbert's advice in this issue's How's Your Heart Health—by following it.

"I have much more energy now I'm eating more sensibly. The big surprise is that I actually enjoy eating healthy food, and that's something I definitely did not expect," Greg said.



A healthier and fitter Greg Hale (left) with his rescuer Wayne 'Duke' Calvert.  
Photo by Verna Costello





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