



RESTORING HOPE PARKINSON'S THERAPY

A charitable organization on the Sunshine Coast with a mission to retain the voice of those affected by Parkinson's, an important part of maintaining quality of life

BY CARRIE BROOKS

Australia's beautiful Sunshine Coast is home to Restoring Hope Parkinson's Therapy, a not-for-profit organization and registered charity helping to support the lives of people impacted by Parkinson's Disease.

Many of you will be aware that Parkinson's is a debilitating condition affecting the brain, causing symptoms such as shaking and stiffness of joints that gets worse as the disease progresses. Other symptoms include issues with speech, sleep, fatigue and more. The reasons behind the symptoms are not clearly understood and there is currently no cure.

One of the main ways in which Restoring Hope Parkinson's Therapy can assist people living with Parkinson's is with intensive speech therapy, aiming to preserve the voices and quality of life of those living with Parkinson's for as long as possible. Their evidence-



based speech therapy program aims to address the speech, voice and swallowing issues, as well as cognitive deficits, that are part of having Parkinson's. They also offer education about Parkinson's to individuals and the wider community. Of course, programs like this require funding and the charity regularly organizes events with this in mind.

So where do teddy bears fit in? Well, since 2020, experienced teddy

bear artist Lorraine Dippelsmann has been making bespoke bears to be sold at auction and raise much needed funds for the charity's speech therapy program.

In May this year, Lorraine handcrafted seven special and unique bears for the 2024 collection. Each one is fully jointed, made of mohair and they all have glass eyes; they also have their own little critter friend to keep them company.

These special bears are auctioned throughout each year at the various events organized by Restoring Hope Parkinson's Therapy and also online. Before the 2025 collection and auction dates are announced, you can still make a donation via the charity's website or facebook page www.facebook.com/rhpththerapy where you will find details of all the auctions and fundraising events. They and the people they help will be extremely grateful.