



# Global Lyme & Invisible Illness Organisation

Shining a Global Light on Lyme & Invisible Illness

21<sup>st</sup> JULY 2016

MEDIA RELEASE

## RED SHOE DAY: A DAY OF REMEMBRANCE ~ JULY 25<sup>TH</sup>

The Global Lyme and Invisible Illness Community will be wearing Red Shoes and sharing their pictures and memories of friends and loved ones lost for the third year this July 25<sup>th</sup> ~ Red Shoe Day: A Day of Remembrance.

Red Shoe Day was founded by Global Lyme and Invisible Illness Organisation (GLiIo) in memory of Australian Lyme Patient, Theda Myint. The Inaugural Red Shoe Day was held on the 25th July 2014, and the day has quickly become established as an annual Remembrance Day to remember not only Theda, but all those lost to Lyme and other invisible illnesses – such as ME/CFS - around the world.

In the broad sense of the term, invisible illnesses are those that are generally 'invisible', not only from the outward appearance of the person, but also seemingly invisible to appropriate research, treatment and care of the thousands of people that are living with them. Many living with these illnesses are also 'invisible' to society, as their health is such that they are confined to their houses (and many to their beds) for months, even years.

As well as wearing their Red Shoes (or red socks, red ribbons, or lighting candles) and sharing the pictures online, people are also encouraged to share memories of those lost. "The day is not only to remember those that have passed, it is also to celebrate their lives, and to share the wonderful memories their time on this earth gave us", Karen Smith, Australian based co-founder of GLiIO said.

In the last two years, over a thousand people, from countries around the world - including Australia, United States, United Kingdom, Ireland, Belgium, Germany, Sweden, Mexico – have supported Red Shoe Day by wearing their Red Shoes and sharing pictures, memories and artistic tributes online, with some also coming together for social gatherings to share memories.

During the Inaugural Red Shoe Day, Dianne Rae shared a David Eagleman quote: "There are three deaths. The first is when the body ceases to function. The second is when the body is consigned to the grave. The third is that moment, sometime in the future, when your name is spoken for the last time." Karen notes that the Eagleman quote captured the essence of what Red Shoe Day is about, and GLiIO have since used the quote each year to spread awareness and promote the message, "May we all prolong the last and final death of friends and loved ones by always speaking their name".

Lisa Hilton, American based co-founder of GLiIO said, "Red Shoe Day is very important for many reasons, including giving the families and friends of loved ones lost a chance to come together again, and to know that their loved ones lives, as well as their fight for recognition, will always be remembered by many around the world". Lisa also hopes that Red Shoe Day can help bring to light the fact that, "while many people pass from complications of Lyme and Invisible Illness, many more lives are lost due to suicide. The lack of understanding, science and research into these conditions by some in the medical profession leave countless people living with these illnesses the feeling that there is no hope of regaining their health. This situation needs to change, and quickly".

Carol Adams, Theda Myint's Mum, and carer for 14 years writes: "Red Shoe Day means so much to me as one of her [Theda's] ambitions is still being fought for and she is remembered. Theda wanted to let the public know about Lyme. To bring it out in the open, how it destroyed lives and that those with it were treated very badly by the medical profession and by our government. Every time she was interviewed for a TV program she suffered repercussions but it was her only way of letting the world know what was happening to so many. I was very proud of who she was. Loved her, of course. But liked and admired her as a human being, loved her company, all these things are a bonus to a parent.

Every time someone posts about Theda, remembers her, helps me as she is still fighting and has made a difference and is still making a difference. I miss her with every breath I take and the pain is a physical ache in my chest that never goes away."

Global Lyme & Invisible Illness Organisation invites everyone to join them again this July 25<sup>th</sup> to remember those lives lost, and to share any memories or messages they may have with others. Whether that is a personal memory of an individual passed or a message of understanding and solidarity for friends, family and all those still fighting on for their health and awareness.

For ways to participate in Red Shoe Day: A Day of Remembrance go to the Facebook Event Page: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1174328975920726/>

or see GLiIO's website: <http://www.globallymeinvisibleillness.org/gliio-news/red-shoe-day-a-day-of-remembrance-2016>

To see photos and memories from previous years : <http://www.globallymeinvisibleillness.org/red-shoe-day--a-day-of-remembrance.html>

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