Season's Greetings

Well, I hope all our members and their families and friends enjoy a safe, healthy and happy festive season and our prospects bode well for the coming year.

During the next couple of months I want you to give some thought to how you can do your bit for your Association, particularly in standing for office. All positions are open and we urgently need someone to stand as Treasurer, Secretary and Welfare Officer. John Chaloner has agreed to stay on as Speech Aids Co-ordinator and hospital visitor for another year but would gladly stand aside or job share with someone who wants to try their hand at it.

I will stay on as Editor for a year or two if required but would like someone else to have a go at it as I am still working full time and sometimes find it difficult to produce ‘Still talking’ some months. This is one reason why I want to go online and try and set up an interactive newsletter and self-help group that could be self perpetuating even if the newsletter itself ceases to be produced one day. So consider standing for a position and ensure your Association stays alive.

A.T. Krasnodebski
MINUTES


APOLOGIES - L Walton, W Byfield, J Berghammer, J Knight.

THE PRESIDENT Brian Gardner in the chair opened the meeting at 11 am. Minutes of last meeting as appeared in the bulletin were taken as read.

Moved Pat Halliburton, seconded John Chaloner.

SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT - November 2002

2002 CHRISTMAS PARTY

To date (November 19) only nine members have reserved tickets for the Christmas party planned for Saturday 30th November. With their guests a total of 22 tickets have been sought. We will discuss this subject at the meeting on 20th November.

RAFFLE

Seventy four members have returned their raffle ticket butts and as these are due back by 20th November it looks as if our income from the raffle will be less than in other years.

DONATIONS

The committee thanks the following members for their generous donations received this month:

- Mrs Jo Nowland of Padstow
- Mr Ken Ford of Scone
- Mr V Jones of Guildford
- Mr R F Ewings of Harrington
- Mr E A Smith of Chatswood
- Mr A Cowgill of Bundanoon
- Ms J Heidke of O'Connor
- Mr L Bolt of Ashfield
- Mrs C Barron of Point Claire
- Mr D Keighery of Wollstonecraft

MEMBERSHIP

There has not been a great movement in our membership list in the last few weeks. We welcome the following new members and hope to see them at one of our, or one of our branch meetings soon.

- Mr L Grist of Chatswood
- Mr G Joseph of Corrimal
- Mr Eric Morris of Richmond

The incorrect address labels produced by the Cancer Council last month resulted in the despatch of some thirty newsletters to deceased members or members whose names had been deleted from the current list for other reasons. In addition as a result of a clerical error one member was shown as being deceased in the November newsletter. Our Welfare Officer contacted the member as soon as the error was found and apologized to him accordingly.

We have had the computer lists corrected and formally apologize for all the unfortunate and regrettable errors.

We have also been informed that Jack Darby of Glendon and Stan Morley of Penrith are not as well as we would hope. Our thoughts are with them, may they feel better soon. Eric Smith who has been ill is now fine and we hope he continues well.

Several members have kindly sent us Christmas cards and we thank them for their thoughts. In return may we wish all members and their families a HAPPY FESTIVE SEASON AND A HEALTHY AND TROUBLE FREE 2003

CORRESPONDENCE

1. Australia Post - check on our Print-post publication.
2. Alfred Draper, Eubalong - sub, raffle money, order for material...
3. Mrs L Barron of Point Claire - Christmas card with sub, raffle money and donation.
4. Newsletter for Jack Fletcher returned 'left address'.
5. W Byfield of Bateau Bay - unable to attend November meeting.
6. Mrs J Frank of Lithgow - Christmas card.
7. Mrs P King of Mayfield - thank you letter.
8. Ken Harrison of Griffith - sub, raffle and wishes for a Happy Christmas.
9. Newsletters from Victoria, New Zealand, South Australia and Tasmania.
10. Mrs D Cowgill of Bundanoon - sub, raffle, donation and Happy Christmas wishes.
11. Mr Eric Smith - unable to attend Christmas party but wishing all a Merry Christmas.
12. Mrs H A Davis of Batemans Bay - moving to Morang South in Victoria in December.
15. Mr N Porter of Surry Hills - wallet and Nu-vois stolen (being investigated by Voice Aids Co-ordinator).
16. John Chaloner - copies of letters to Police Dept. about using hand-held speech aids while driving.
17. Cancer Society of Australia - minutes of 2002 Laryngeal meeting.
18. Subs and raffle butts from many members.
19. Much advertising material.

INCOME & EXPENDITURE TO 18th NOVEMBER 2002

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Moved Faith Green, seconded Russell Green
MINUTES CONTINUED...

SPEECH AIDS CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

The last couple of months have been very quiet on the loan speech aid and battery sales front - hence the non-appearance of my reports.

During recent months I have received donations of speech aids and related equipment from the family of the late Laurie Houlton of Port Macquarie (via Harry & Ada Stone) and from Thelma Frank of Lithgow. We thank them for their generosity - these items will be used to help our needy members.

Recently your Association members were again involved in the training of speech pathology students. For the last 3 years we have helped out Julia McLean (the head SP at St George Hospital) and Helen Brake (the head SP at St Vincent's Hospital) when they have lectured 2nd year speech pathology students at the College of Health Sciences at Lidcombe.

This year at 10am James O'Meara and Alan Lovering (both Blom Singer users) were there for Julia and Helen to demonstrate the changing of a prothesis. At 11am Lilah Walton and I turned up. I gave a short talk on being a 'Visitor' and the importance of a pre-op visit to laryngectomy patients and answered a few questions. Lilah then gave a run down of the Associations' activities.

As I say each year when I report these sessions - if we can get them young and acquainted Speech Pathologists with the needs of a laryngectomee we'll hopefully make the lives of future larys a bit easier.

I have decided to nominate for another year as Speech Aids Co-ordinator but I suspect 2003 will be my last year. I strongly urge members to consider nominating for a committee position - it doesn't take that much time and is very rewarding.

I may have a small par in the short Dec/Jan newsletter but in the meantime I wish you all a happy, healthy, safe Xmas and New Year.

GENERAL BUSINESS - President reported receiving four Christmas party invitations. Western Districts, Lismore, St Vincent's Hospital and Hunter Valley.

All arrangements are still in place for the Christmas party although the numbers are down slightly.

Discussion took place about the findings of American experts currently visiting Australia. Contrary to the complaints of hotels and clubs, the total banning of smoking in them in some US States has led to an increase in revenue. In California, where this has been done, the incidence of lung cancer has also declined.

Fred Daniel demonstrated a device he bought at Tandy which incorporates a microphone and amplifies the voice.

Patricia Lamont reported hearing a warning on their way to the meeting regarding packages and luggage left unattended. All people in public places were warned to be vigilant because of terrorist threats.

President mentioned election of Committee positions will take place at Annual General Meeting in February and asked that members consider nominating.

Des Nicholson visited a new laryngectomy at Richmond who was having difficulty speaking. Once again there seems to be a lack of communication between hospital staff although on the whole the Speech Pathologists are very aware of the help a fellow laryngectomy can offer a new patient. There is a network of hospital visitors ready and willing to assist as well as hospital packs that contain information.

St Vincent, Prince of Wales and RPA are some of those where the Speech Therapists maintain contact with former patients.

Patricia Lamont reported success with grape seed oil as a lubricant for an irritated throat.

Annual General will be February 19th, 2003.

Meeting closed at noon and the usual delicious luncheon was enjoyed by all.

WESTERN DISTRICTS NEWS - NOVEMBER 2002

Arrangements have been finalized for the Christmas party at the Dundas R.U. Club on Tuesday 3rd December.

Members intending to come should contact Pat Dawson (9874 6866) before this date.

The bus tour of the Northern beaches on 19th November was enjoyed by all who attended.

The last meeting for 2002 was well attended and we were very happy to see a bearded Eric Smith return after months of illness.

Stan Morley is still very ill in Westmead.

Harvey Plonges died this month at Toukley.

The next meeting on Tuesday 11th February, 2003 will be the Annual General Meeting at which the executive and committee members will be elected. Members are asked to consider nominating for a position.

WHO'S TOBACCO FREE INITIATIVE

The World Health Organisation's October negotiating session of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control closed without agreement. Gro Harlem Brundtland is hopeful that a treaty will be ready for signing by May 2003. Brazilian Da Seixa Correa who is chairing negotiations will probably draw up a watered down text to send to delegates before the final round in February. The US, Japan and Germany are still being obstructive although more than 100 countries support a complete ban on tobacco advertising, which along with a steep hike in the price of cigarettes are the two most effective measures to curb smoking and prevent young people from taking it up.
CHEMOTHERAPY AND TEETH

Further to the recent article on radiotherapy and teeth, I thought it might be useful to do a small piece on how chemotherapy can affect your mouth and teeth.

Make sure that your dentist is aware of the ramifications that undergoing chemotherapy has on your teeth, check with your oncologist about any queries that you or your dentist has.

The chemotherapy cycle can place a lot of stress on the mucous membranes, or skin inside your mouth, and cause mucositis which is soreness or even blistering of the mucous membranes.

To try and avoid problems with mucositis you should have your mouth and teeth in the healthiest possible condition before commencing chemotherapy and maintain your mouth and teeth as cleanly as possible during treatment. Avoid spicy or abrasive foods or alcohol and drink plenty of water to keep your fluids up and moisten the tissues in your mouth.

The dentist or oncologist can prescribe a numbing agent if your mucositis is particularly bad. If you need dental treatment during chemotherapy, check with the oncologist in case your white blood count and clotting factors are at low levels.

As with radiation, the more care you take of your teeth before, during and after chemotherapy the longer they should last after the treatment finishes.

BERT CULLING MBE

Bert Culling, President of the UK, NALC, (the National Association of Laryngectomee Clubs) was awarded an MBE in this year’s Queens Birthday honours list.

Bert is a Geordie who was born in South Shields, County Durham in 1936. He spent his working life in the ship repair industry on Tyneside.

Bert has been a laryngectomee since 1987 and President of NALC since 1999 in which capacity he has since worked tirelessly on behalf of UK laryngectomees.

Apparently, his youngest daughter Patricia lives with her husband and two children somewhere in Australia.

VALE

We have been advised of the deaths of the following members:

Mr David Robinson of Coolamon
Mrs J L York of Singleton
Mr Jack Morgan of Robina, QLD
Mr Ian Weinre of Frazer
Mr Harvey Plonges of Burr Point
Mr Steve Rutter of Keilo

We express our sincere condolences to their families and friends.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting for the Laryngectomee Association of NSW will be held on Wednesday, 19th February, at the Uniting Church Hall, Carrington Avenue, Strathfield at 11 am.

There is parking on site and it is also a short walk from the Railway Station.

The meeting will be followed by a light luncheon.

Laryngectomees, Friends, Families, Professionals all WELCOME.
OUR THAI VISITORS

The President and founder of the Laryngectomy Association of Thailand (L.A.T.) is Karoon Trakulphadetkrai. After being a smoker for twenty years he got cancer of the larynx necessitating a total laryngectomy in 1986.

At that time there was no follow up rehabilitation for laryngectomees and writing or sign language was their sole method of communication. Karoon was fortunate in receiving a scholarship to study oesophageal speech in Japan. On his return he formed the L.A.T. in 1989 with an initial fifty members as a self-help support group concentrating on teaching each other oesophageal speech.

Today the L.A.T. has around 1,500 members with 18 branches around Thailand. Their headquarters in Bangkok is at Siriraj Hospital where they meet each Wednesday for support and to improve their oesophageal speech. They have 14 volunteer oesophageal speech instructors who travel the country giving instruction and encouragement to Thai laryngectomees.

Siriraj Hospital is over on the Thonburi side of the Chao Phraya River opposite the Grand Palace. Should you ever happen to be in Thailand and were experiencing some sort of difficulty it could be a good place to start in trying to get help. The L.A.T. is located in the otolaryngology department on the 5th floor of the O.P.D. Building in room 536.

At our October meeting we received a visit from a delegation of Thai laryngectomees consisting of Karoon and his associates Thavee Phanprateep and Sophon Eamkeo. They are interested in meeting Australian laryngectomees and learning about rehabilitation and methods of speech employed in this country and exchanging ideas and information that could be to our mutual benefit. At the end of the meeting Karoon made an address to those in attendance:

Ladies and Gentlemen, distinguished members of the Laryngectomy Association of NSW.

I am pleased and honoured to have the opportunity to visit your Association today. I have heard from Mr Antoni that there are up to 2,000 laryngectomees in Australia, which I think is quite similar to the number of patients in Thailand as there are around 1,500 members of our

Continued on Page 6....
Continued from Page 5....

**Laryngectomee Association.**

with those in the main hospitals in Bangkok where the laryngectomee operations are performed under the supervision of ENT physicians. Speech Therapists as well as laryngectomees who can speak through esophageal speech run support and esophageal speech instruction groups.

I am pleased to have the occasion to visit the NSW Association today, so as to establish the cooperation and relationship between the Laryngectomee Associations of both countries. Our aim is to pool our experiences and exchange visits between both countries as well as share our activities in the years ahead.

I do hope that NSW laryngectomees will visit the Laryngectomee Association in Thailand. We are looking forward in anticipation of your visit in the near future.

Thank you very much.

**Karoon Trakulphadetkrai**  
President, Laryngectomees Association In Thailand.

There were three guys talking in the pub. Two of them are talking about the amount of control they had over their wives, while the third remained quiet.

After a while one of the first two turned to the third and said, 'Well, what about you? What sort of control do you have over your wife?'

The third fellow says, 'I'll tell you. Just the other night my wife came to me on her hands and knees.'

The first two guys were amazed. 'Wow! What happened then?' they asked.

The third man took a healthy swallow of his beer, sighed and uttered, 'She said, 'Get out from under that bed and fight like a man.'

---

**Humour**

Do you know what would have happened if there had been three wise women instead of three wise men?

They would have asked directions, arrived on time, helped deliver the baby, cleaned the stable, made a casserole and brought practical gifts.

A woman went to the Post Office to buy stamps for her Christmas cards.

"What denomination?" asked the clerk.

"Oh, good heavens! Have we come to this?" said the woman. "Well, give me 50 Protestant and 50 Catholic ones."
THINGS TO DO

Enclosed with this newsletter are the raffle tickets that were mentioned last month. The tickets are a dollar each and the money and butts should be returned to the Secretary by, preferably, the November 20 meeting as the raffle will be drawn at the Christmas Party.

Please also note, the membership renewal and committee nomination form is on the back of this issue. I ask that those interested in receiving their copy of 'Still talking' by email to clearly circle the YES answer when renewing their subs. It will depend on the response whether we will begin sending an email copy of the newsletter. I also encourage all of you to stand for positions in the Association, every position is vacant.

Julia Maclean is looking for Blom-Singer prosthesis users from the St George area who are able to volunteer to show trainee Speech Pathologists how to change their valves. They will be required from 9am to 11.30am on Sunday December 1st and also on future occasions if possible. If you are interested in helping out please call Julia on 9350 1111 Pager 217, or 9350 2837.

We were honoured with a visit of a delegation from the Laryngectomee Association of Thailand at the October meeting. More about that in the December newsletter.

Sadly I must report that Lilah’s son Glen died on Saturday, 19th October. Our thoughts are with her.

A.T.Krasnodebski

WHO TO CONTACT

FOR BLOM-SINGER SUPPLIES - David Smith, 27 Bellevue Pde, North Curl Curl 2099, Phone 02-9938-1539. Ask for David personally.

FOR SPEECH AIDS, BATTERIES PARTS AND ADVICE ON REPAIRS - John Chaloner, 111 Station Street, Petersham 2049, Phone 02-9560-2952

FOR STOMA COVERS, SHOWER SHIELDS, STOMA COVER MATERIAL AND WELFARE MATTERS - Des Nicholson, PO Box 58, Richmond, NSW 2753. Phone 02-4578-1415

FOR ACCOMMODATION ASSISTANCE WHEN NEEDING OUT-PATIENT TREATMENT AWAY FROM HOME - Cancer Council of NSW, 153 Dowling Street, WOOLLOOMOOO, PO Box 572. Phone 02-9334-1900. Fax: 02-9357-2676

Or contact the Social Worker at the hospital you will be attending.
MINUTES

MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER MEETING OF THE
LARYNGECTOMEE ASSOCIATION OF NSW, HELD IN
THE UNITING CHURCH HALL, STRATHFIELD ON
WEDNESDAY 16th OCTOBER 2002.

PRESENT - J Nicholson, D Newby, L Bolt, B Gardner,
N Bluett, R Green, D Lamont, J Berghammer, J O'Meara,
A Krasnodebaki, P Halliburton, A English, J Nowland,
H Stone, M Radi, A Stone, C Gardner, D Nicholson,
F Green, M Halliburton, M English, T Phanprateep,
S Eamkeo, K Trakulphadetkrai

APOLOGIES - L Walton, P Rodgers, P Lamont, J Bluett,
M Silver

THE PRESIDENT Brian Gardner opened the meeting at
11 am. The President welcomed our visitors from the
Laryngectomee Association of Thailand. The minutes for
the September meeting as appeared in the newsletter
were taken as read.

Moved Pat Halliburton, seconded Harry Stone.

Due to family crisis there was no Welfare Officers report.
Des Nicholson requested that all enquiries be channelled
to her.

SECRETARY/TREASURER’S REPORT - October 2002

INCORRECT LISTING BY CANCER COUNCIL

Due to a change in staff at the NSW Cancer Council, the
Newsletter listing provided to our Editor for the October
2002 Newsletter was incorrect - in fact it was a listing of
members almost two years old. As a result some 30
newsletters were posted to deceased members. Where
possible we have advised the next of kin the reason for
the error and that the Cancer Council will correct the
mistake in time for the next posting of the Newsletter.

Many new members will have missed out on the October
Newsletter but those members will be advised of the
reason in the November ‘Still talking’.

MEMBERSHIP

There have not been many changes in our membership
list in the past month. I have welcomed the following new
members and I hope they may be able to attend one of
our, or one of our branch meetings:

Mr John Holland of Pennant Hills
Mr John Supple of Lalor Park

DONATIONS

The family and friends of the late Mr K B Gilbert kindly
donated $170.00 to our Association and his friends at the
Goulburn Workers Club Mixed Darts have sent us
$100.00. Mrs Jo Nowland has again sent us a donation of
$30.00 and we thank her for this assistance.

CHRISTMAS PARTY AND ANNUAL RAFFLE

Tickets for this year’s raffle will be sent to you with the
next Newsletter and we do hope you will be able to
support us again. Forms for the Christmas Party will also
be in this Newsletter. If you can attend, please complete
the form and send it to me as soon as you can. The party
will be held on 30th November at the Kirribilli RSL Club.

INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2002 TO 15th OCTOBER

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Moved Jo Nowland, seconded Harry Stone

GENERAL BUSINESS - Harry Stone demonstrated a
device to increase volume for those having trouble in this
area. Purchased from Dick Smith, it consists of a small
microphone and battery booster. The cost is $120 and the
batteries last 100 hours.

A notice appears on the front page of the newsletter
regarding volunteers who are prosthesis users to assist
speech therapists in the inserting and changing of the
prosthesis. Assistance can be given with transport and a
new prosthesis will be provided.

Christmas Party. This is to be held at Kirribilli R.S.L. in
the same area in the Bistro as last year. Cost is $20 a head
for members and $25 for non-members. A vote was taken
and it was carried that there be no raffle this year. A lucky
door prize will be given however. The main raffle will be
drawn at the Christmas Party.

Janet Berghammer suggested that members who were
concerned about Lilah Walton to send her a card. The
address is on the front page.

Brian Gardner mentioned members who are ill. Stan
Morley and Eric Smith. Our sympathies are with them.

The leader of the Thai delegation, Karoon, gave an
address which will be reprinted in full in the December
newsletter. He also presented a gift from Thailand to our
President.

Next meeting will be November 20th and Doctor Dave
Vievers will be our guest speaker.

Meeting closed at 12noon and all adjourned to lunch.

WESTERN DISTRICTS NEWS - OCTOBER 2002

Coming events:

Tuesday 19th November. Bus outing to St. Albans district,
leaving the Masonic Club, Parramatta at 9AM.

Tuesday 3rd December. Christmas party at Dundas
Valley Rugby Union Football Club at 35 Quarry Road,
Dundas, commencing at 12 Noon. Cost $20 per head.

Stan Morley is still in Westmead awaiting another
operation. We hope all goes well for Stan.

Harvey Ploengs has been transferred to a nursing home
at Toukley.

The proceeds of this month’s raffle ($85) were donated to
the Farmers Hand Appeal.
RADIOThERAPY AND TEETH

Radiotherapy in the head and neck area can play havoc with your teeth with xerostomia or dry mouth being the most common side effect. Your salivary glands are highly susceptible to radiation and if they are affected their full function, generally, will not return.

To counteract xerostomia a number of medications, gels, sugarless chewing gum and sugarless lollies are available. Probably the best approach is to have frequent sips of plain water throughout the day to maintain the moisture inside the mouth. Severe xerostomia can cause cavities which start at the gumline and strangle the teeth.

Saliva serves a number of functions for your teeth:

1) it washes the teeth, removing food particles, sugars and starches

2) it contains antibodies and enzymes that kill or prevent cavity forming bacteria

3) it works as a neutralizer for acids produced by plaque bacteria.

Prior to radiotherapy a careful dental examination must be undertaken to determine if any teeth need to be extracted. Any poor or doubtful teeth should be extracted then two to three weeks must elapse after an extraction, especially in the lower jaw, before starting radiotherapy.

To prevent cavities in any remaining teeth, daily fluoride treatment should be employed for the rest of the patient's life even if some salivary function returns.

Should you ever require a tooth extraction, DO NOT let your dentist perform the extraction without first consulting your radiation oncologist. One possible complication of radiotherapy can be osteoradioneerosis which causes disruptions in the blood supply where a tooth extraction could destroy the jaw bone which would then not heal.

Any tooth extraction or other surgery would need to be preceded with hyperbaric oxygen treatment. This increases the blood supply and allows for more successful healing.

To conclude, scrupulous care of your mouth and teeth, before, during and after radiotherapy should help maintain your teeth long after radiation. Make sure that any dentist you see understands the ramifications of your condition and remember that these considerations will prevail for the rest of your life.

PERKS OF BEING OVER 50

- In a hostage situation you are likely to be released first.
- People call at 9pm and ask, "Did I wake you?"
- People no longer view you as a hypochondriac.
- You can eat dinner at 4pm.
- You can live without sex but not without glasses.
- You get into heated arguments about pension plans.
- You have a party and the neighbours don't even realise it.
- Your investment in health insurance is finally beginning to pay off.
- Your secrets are safe with your friends because they can't remember them either.
- Your supply of brain cells is finally down to a manageable size.
- You can't remember where you read this list.
CHRISTMAS PARTY
2002

To: The Treasurer, Laryngectomee Association
PO Box 58, Richmond, 2753
Please reserve me.....tickets for our Annual
Christmas Party at Kirribilli Ex-Services Club,
11-23 Harbour View Crescent, LAVENDER BAY,
Saturday 30th November 2002, 12 noon - 3.00pm.

I enclose $20.00 for each laryngectomee and/or
partner and $25.00 for each non-laryngectomee.

TOTAL ENCLOSED..........................

NAME........................................

SIGNATURE...................................

ADDRESS....................................

MY GUESTS WILL BE..........................

........................................

........................................

........................................

NORTHERN RIVERS BRANCH

Another good roll up at our luncheon meeting held at
'Maggie Moore's' on
Tuesday, 15th October.
Twelve persons were present with an apology from
Frank and Nora Corcoran.

Frank is currently in Brisbane
receiving treatment, we wish
him all the best and hope to
see him soon.

All present had signed a
petition that was circulated in
relation to the establishment
of a radiation unit in Lismore
which our local member Ian
Causley has tabled in
Parliament. This would make
things a lot easier as now we
have to travel to Brisbane or
Sydney causing a financial
strain to all.

It was decided to go ahead
with our usual Christmas
raffle. 1st prize a Christmas
Hamper, 2nd prize, Christmas
Cake and Wine.

Our Christmas Party will be
held on Tuesday, December
10th at 'Maggie Moore's'.

VALE

Unfortunately I have to report that the following
members have died and we extend our
cordialness to their
family and friends.

Mr K B Gilbert
of Goulburn

Mr Leonard Bromley
of Engadine

Mr Doug Woodward
of Gunnedah

Mr F Cassidy
of Westmead

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting for the Laryngectomee Association of NSW
will be held on Wednesday, 20th November, at the Uniting Church
Hall, Carrington Avenue, Strathfield, at 11 am.
There is parking on site and it is also a short walk from the Railway
Station.
The meeting will be followed by a light luncheon.
Laryngectomees, Friends, Families, Professionals all WELCOME.
WOMEN AND SMOKING

Women smokers are prone to a wide range of smoking related illnesses, the most serious one being lung cancer. Smoking is also a cause of cancers of the larynx and oesophagus, bladder, liver, cervix, pancreas and kidney. It is also a major cause of coronary heart disease, stroke, infertility, depression, menopausal problems and spontaneous abortion. Postmenopausal women who smoke also have lower bone density than those who do not smoke. Women smokers have an increased risk of health problems related to pregnancy such as premature birth and low birth weight.

According to an international study, teenagers become addicted to nicotine within weeks of starting to smoke and girls are more vulnerable to addiction than boys. A study conducted by the University of Massachusetts found it took teenage girls an average of three weeks from when they started smoking occasionally to become addicted. It takes boys about six months according to the study. Until now scientists have assumed that addiction only begins when a teenager is smoking at least ten cigarettes a day but the study shows that addiction starts much earlier because the adolescent brain is still developing and is therefore much more vulnerable.

Anne Jones, Director of Action on Smoking and Health, asks "How much passive smoke does a child have to be exposed to before they are more likely to become smokers themselves?"

Girls who start smoking are more likely to have friends or parents who smoke. They tend to be rebellious and have less interest in school. They believe that smoking can control weight and negative moods, they have a positive image of smokers and have little knowledge of the dangers of smoking. Girls who start smoking also tend to have weaker attachments to parents and family and have stronger attachments to peers and friends.

Women who continue to smoke and find it difficult to stop tend to have lower levels of education and employment than women who are successful in giving up smoking. Research shows that women are more easily addicted to smoking than men.

Women who stop smoking greatly reduce their risk of dying prematurely and research shows that people of all ages can improve their health by quitting smoking. David Hill, director of the Cancer Council of Victoria, said "Half of the people who ever smoked give up by the time they are 40 so it is not right to say that once kids have started to use tobacco it is too late". He said that therefore it makes more sense to concentrate on helping people to stop smoking than trying to prevent teenagers from starting.

humour

A woman rushes home, bursting through the front door of her house yelling to her husband 'Pack your bags honey, I just won the lottery! All 25 million of it......Wooooh Hoo!!

'Woo Hoo.. That's great sweetie!' he replies. 'Do I pack for the beach or for the golf course?'

'I don't care', she said, 'Just clear off!!'

A man walks into a doctor's office and says, 'Doc, I can't stop singing the 'Green, Green Grass of Home'.

'Sounds like you have Tom Jones syndrome.'

'Is it common?'

'Well, it's not unusual.'
THE LARYNGECTOMEE ASSOCIATION OF NSW

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 11am, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19th 2003

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

At the Annual General meeting of the Laryngectomee Association of NSW, to be held on Wednesday, February 19th, 2003 all offices and committee positions will be declared vacant. Under the constitution of the Association nominations for these positions must be made IN WRITING, prior to the meeting, BY FINANCIAL MEMBERS of the Association. The nomination must carry the signatures of the nominee, the nominator and seconder, and be lodged with the Secretary of the Laryngectomee Association of NSW, PO Box 58, RICHMOND, NSW 2753, by 31st January 2003.

The following offices are to be filled:-

President    Vice-Presidents (2)    Secretary    Treasurer
Assistant Sec/Treas.    Welfare Officer    Speech Aids Co-Ordinator
Publicity Officer    Newsletter Editor    Committee Members (2)

.................................................................

A NOMINATION FORM

LARYNGECTOMEE ASSOCIATION NSW, COMMITTEE 2002
(PLEASE USE BLOCK LETTERS)

I........................................................................................................

(Note: - You may nominate yourself for any position)

Nominate..............................................................................................

For the position of.............................................................................. Of LANSW

Signed.................................................................................................(nominator)

Signed.................................................................................................(nominee)

Signed.................................................................................................(seconder) Date........................

.................................................................

ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE 1st JANUARY 2003

PLEASE RETURN THIS SECTION TO:- Mr John Nicholson
Treasurer LANSW
PO Box 58
RICHMOND 2753

I ENCLOSE MY CHEQUE/MONEY ORDER FOR $20.00 BEING FOR RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP OF THE LARYNGECTOMEE ASSOCIATION OF NSW FOR 2003

NAME....................................................................................................

ADDRESS...........................................................................................

................................................................................................. POSTCODE.............

Do you attend Branch meetings?........................... Which Branch?.................................

Please indicate if you are prepared to receive ‘Still talking’ by email...........YES / NO

6
WHO'S FCTC

The World Health Organization’s member states will be meeting in Geneva from 14th to 25th October for the last negotiating session prior to the adoption of a Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in May 2003.

The obstructionist US delegates will hopefully be brought into line despite the Bush administration being under the influence of Big Tobacco. The fact that the illicit trade in tobacco products, affecting the profits of the tobacco companies as well as the health of the young and poor, is part of the negotiation, should encourage a spirit of compromise.

It was the intention to send out raffle tickets with the October newsletter, however, at the time of going to printing they haven’t been organised. If you don’t receive raffle tickets with this newsletter, they will be posted with the November newsletter.

The details regarding the annual Christmas party have yet to be finalised, so you will have to act fairly swiftly in deciding whether you are attending when the information is placed in the November newsletter.

A.T. Krasnodebski
MINUTES


APOLOGIES - L Walton, J Chalonier, P Rodgers, John Gifford, Alan Jones.

PRESIDENT Brian Gardiner in chair, opened the meeting at 11 am. Minutes of August Meeting as appeared in newsletter were taken as read. No business arising from minutes.

Moved Pat Halliburton seconded Janet Berghammer.

I apologise for missing the last two meetings. One was a long-standing commitment that I had to attend. However, in my defense, one of them, the Grafton Cup Race Carnival, was a late change of date. The Queensland Racing Clubs decided to change their winter carnival dates, being the senior club they took precedent - so Grafton went back a week. The August date was an impromptu commitment, again out of my control.

Lilah's absence today is a rare occurrence. She most probably wouldn't tell you but her son, Glen, had a heart attack last weekend. It goes without saying that Lilah is worried and concerned. Glen, if you should happen to read this newsletter, our thoughts and best wishes for a speedy recovery are with you and, in passing, HAPPY BIRTHDAY. Glen's done a Bradman and scored his first 50.

I know it is only September but I want to get in early and provoke your thoughts for the Annual General Meeting in February. Although our Secretary/Treasurer won't agree with me I still feel a bit guilty for persuading him to stand the last two years Election of Officers. We all know that this year has not been his best - healthwise. I am sure that 'she who must be obeyed' will have definite views on his future, and rightly so.

Then there is the indestructible Lilah Walton. We all know she won't retire, however, we have to create the position of Assistant Welfare Officer so she can train and foster whoever is unlucky enough to accept the job.

Advice has been received from Dave Smith, our Association Supply Officer, who has been doing a great job for many years, which has taken a lot of his time, not to mention often his own money, that Pacific Medical has ceased to be the Australian distributor for the Bivona prosthesis. As at this date they have not been available for about a month. Dave has asked me to tell you not to panic yet. For those who do use the Bivona's, he is negotiating with his personal contacts for another distributor.

Last Wednesday, although not an official representative, I accompanied Lilah, who was our spokesperson, to the Annual Laryngeal Conference. Amongst a number of items discussed, lengthy debate was given to the proposed making of a video from Victoria, I was left a bit perplexed following a suggestion that we and all of the other State Associations consider rejoining the I.A.L. (International Association of Laryngectomees) based in the USA. We were members a number of years ago but we voted not to renew same.

It's time for the Annual Raffle - the prizes as always being magnificent woodwork prepared by Jack Darby. Tickets are about to be distributed. No doubt, as always, it will be eagerly supported.

1st PRIZE WALL CLOCK
2nd PRIZE DESK CLOCK
3rd PRIZE SALT AND PEPPER MILL
4th PRIZE DIP AND BISCUIT PLATTER
5th PRIZE WOOD AND TILE TRIVET

During July Julie MacLean, assisted by a number of fellow Speechies, ran a course for Authorised Hospital Visitors. I, on behalf of the Association, congratulate those who had the devotion to attend and it would be remiss of me not to express a huge vote of thanks to all the Speechies involved. I shudder to think where we Larry's would be without your dedication and continued support. THANK YOU.

Early in the month I had a telephone call from Lilah Woodward of Gunnedah to tell me that her husband, Doug, a long-standing member, has passed away some 18 months ago and she no longer wished to receive the monthly Newsletter. I apologise for any inconvenience or heartache our ignorance may have caused. Anybody else who may be in the same position and would like to stop receipt of the Newsletter please do not hesitate to contact us.

It has been three or four years since Carol and I had the opportunity of visiting the Country branches. The Calendar says there is no reason why we can't do it late November, early December. Could the Country Secretaries let us know if there will be any chance of meeting dates for that time, especially for the Christmas meetings?

The President.

SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT - September 2002

We managed to lose my report for August at the last meeting so I may be duplicating some items from that report in this month's report.

MEMBERSHIP

The following new members have joined our Association in the past few weeks and, on behalf of our committee, I have welcomed them:

Mr N Mullavey of Dubbo
Mr A Jones of Castle Hill
Mr W Brinkmann of Kilaben Bay
Mr W Peebles of Wingham
Mr George Joseph of Corrimal
MINUTES CONTINUED...

Our newsletters to David Robinson of Coolamon and Mr C J Duncan of Barraba have been returned endorsed ‘Left Address’ so if anyone knows their new address would they please let me know it.

Our Welfare Officer, Lilah Walton, is absent today as she is visiting her son, Glen, who has suffered a couple of heart attacks in the last few weeks. Glen will be operated on at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital later this week and we will keep in contact with Lilah.

Lilah attended the National Laryngeal Conference in Sydney last week and she will report on that conference at our next meeting.

The Secretary’s report for this month is small because I had to spend another couple of weeks in hospital - this time with a bout of pneumonia. Time to retire!!!!!!

WELFARE OFFICER’S REPORT - Last Wednesday Brian Gardner and myself attended the National Laryngeal Cancer Support Committee. I attended as NSW delegate and Brian came to give me support. Laurie Wright, Executive Officer of the Cancer Council of Australia, shall be sending John Nicholson a copy of the minutes of the meeting. The Cancer Council is shifting to Camperdown on October.

A lady rang me wanting info on having a tracheo. I had Janet Berghammer speak to her. Janet will give us the results.

John Nicholson has been in hospital with pneumonia again. John Gifford, one of our members, has been in hospital to have his leg amputated. Because he didn’t get any of us know he didn’t have a visit from anyone of us but Brian Gardner has visited him at home. Hurry and get well John and come to our Christmas party.

Speaking of the party I had a menu and price list sent. The new caterers want $45 per head, which I have told them is too much and they are getting back to me. As info comes I will relay it.

Margaret Patterson the Speech Pathologist at RNS Hosp would like to contact the 19 year old lary from Canberra. If anybody knows him they would ask him to ring Margaret. Thanks.

To all, trust you are well.

Moved Carol Gardener seconded Faith Green.

GENERAL BUSINESS - Raffle tickets for annual raffle to go out with October newsletter.

The President made an appeal for members to consider nominating for committee positions. John Nicholson, after doing a sterling job is to retire, and a replacement must be found.

Christmas Party. To be held at Kirribilli Club on Saturday November 30th. There is some problem with the quote for catering but Brian Gardener is to approach the club and decide on the menu.

Congratulations were extended to both the members who did the hospital visits course and the speech therapists who trained them. Caitlan was pleased to accept Janet Berghammer’s offer to attend Westmead when required.

Hospital visitors were asked to fill out forms as Stats can then be kept on visits. Tony expressed concern that we don’t know how many laryngectomy are receiving visits. This once again comes down to a lack of communication between the hospitals and the Association.

A request was made as to the existence of a child laryngectomy. There is a 5 year old who is having difficulty coping and if anyone knows of such a person could they contact the Association?

Tony Krasnodebski showed a plastic face cover that can be used when giving mouth to stoma resuscitation to a laryngectomy, without mucous being a problem. These are available from the St. John’s Ambulance at a cost of $4.50 and a key ring model for $5.90.

Janet Berghammer asked about I.D. for hospital visitors. A card is available and will be given to new visitors. The question of free parking varies in different hospitals but can generally be arranged on application to the speech therapist.

Next meeting is October 16th. The meeting closed at 12 noon and a light lunch was enjoyed by all.

WESTERN DISTRICTS NEWS - SEPTEMBER 2002

Once again a very enjoyable time was had by all who attended the barbeque at Woronora Dam with the Illawarra Group on Tuesday 3rd September.

A bus has been booked for 19th November to visit St. Albans District. The Christmas party has been booked at the Dundas Valley Rugby Union Football Club at 35 Quarry Road Dundas for 12 noon on Tuesday 3rd December. The cost is $20 a head.

To Harvey Ploenges and Stan Morfey who are in hospital we send our regards and best wishes for speedy recoveries.

VALE BONNY DUN 14.10.11 - 8.8.02

Bonny Dun was our oldest member who from the time, Gordon her husband, became a larynx was one of our hard working ladies.

Bonny was our Treasurer, which in the early years was how to make it go around and then Secretary, who resigned every year and with no nominations was talked back in "But only until we find somebody to take over", which happened 15 years later.

The trips to Bowral, Bonny in her V.W., Elsie Coleman (1st President’s wife) and myself to an annual meeting of an Association who presented us with a cheque and stoma covers. On return trips the three of us planned what we would do with the money, which usually went on stationery and stamps. The 2 day street stalls at The Rocks where the ladies slaved and the men went on charity pub crawls, great days, great people, wonderful memories.

Like all who knew Bonny, like myself, will miss her but treasure the memories. To her daughter Jennifer, grandchildren, great grandchildren and sisters Betty and Peggy we all send our very deepest heartfelt sympathy. May God rest her soul.
PROSTHETIC RESEARCH

The W.M. Keck Foundation Neural Prosthesis Research Center is working towards improvements in prosthetic devices for laryngectomees.

When laryngectomy occurs the laryngeal nerves are usually healthy and functioning at the time of surgery and research is being conducted into using the signals from these nerves to control prosthetic speech aids.

One approach will be to redirect the nerves into neck muscles to control a voice source like the electrolarynx (EL). Another approach is to grow the regenerating nerve endings through an implanted sieve of microelectrode arrays, whereby the bioelectrical activity of individual axons can be detected, multiplexed, and radio-transmitted to a computer-neural interfaced voice prosthesis.

They are also looking into ways to improve the existing EL to try and make it more closely approximate the sound of a normal voice. They have identified three components of the EL which they hope to improve; 1) the voice sourcing module. 2) the signal processing module to enhance alaryngeal speech. 3) the control module that uses physiological signals to modulate the voicing source.

By taking a modular approach to their research, it is hoped that advances in one area can be put into practice without having to wait until the entire system has been fully developed.

It is good to see that a lot of research is taking place around the world to try to improve the lives of laryngectomees.

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NORTHERN RIVERS BRANCH

Finally after a long delay due to treatment etc. I (John Basso - Ed.) am back on my feet and did organise a luncheon meeting. This was held at "Maggie Moores" on Tuesday, July 2nd. This was very well attended with fifteen present and five apologies.

We welcomed two new members, Richard and Heather Hellyar of Alstonville. They made a donation of twenty dollars to our branch, and this was much appreciated.

Everybody present had a good time and all were happy with the way the branch is progressing, both socially and business wise.

The next luncheon meeting was to be held in September.

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NEXT MEETING

The next meeting for the Laryngectomee Association of NSW will be held on Wednesday, 16th October, at the Uniting Church Hall, Carrington Avenue, Strathfield at 11 am.

There is parking on site and it is also a short walk from the Railway Station.

The meeting will be followed by a light luncheon.

Laryngectomees, Friends, Families, Professionals all WELCOME.

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VALE

We have been so sad to hear the following news:

Mr M Stobie of Ballina
Mr John Whiting of Chester Hill
Mrs Bonny Dun of Strathfield

have died and we would like to pass on to their relatives and friends our sincere condolences.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Continued from last month

Grief: Psychiatrist Elizabeth Kubler-Ross describes a five stage grieving process, and becoming a laryngectomee represents one or more losses we have to work through. The five stages are: Shock and Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression and Acceptance. When you reach acceptance you are ready to get on with your life.

Laryngectomee: A person with a permanent stoma resulting from a laryngectomy operation.

Laryngectomy: This is the surgery to remove all or part of the larynx or voice box with a stoma being created in the front of the neck. A partial laryngectomy preserves the voice as only part of the voice box is removed and the stoma is only temporary. With a total laryngectomy the whole of the voice box is removed and the stoma is permanent.

Larynx: This is the voice box, located between the pharynx and trachea and is used in speech, breathing and swallowing.

Lymph Glands: Small, bean shaped organs in the lymphatic system which contain cells that can trap cancer cells and bacteria being transported in the lymph fluid.

Oncology: Is the field of medicine concerning cancer. Medical oncology is the treatment of cancer with chemotherapy. Surgical oncology covers biopsy, staging and the resection of tumours. Radiation oncology is the treatment of cancers with radiotherapy.

Prosthesis: A prosthesis is any artificial replacement of a body part and can be temporary or permanent. In laryngectomees we usually refer to a voice prosthesis, which is a one-way valve connecting the airway to the oesophagus which supplies air for producing a voice.

Radiotherapy: Use of high-energy rays to destroy cancer cells, stopping them from growing and dividing. Radiotherapy can be by machine or by implants of radioactive material in or near the tumour. Side effects include tiredness, skin reactions, loss of appetite etc. Most laryngectomees receive radiotherapy around the neck area after surgery.

Reflux: Gastroesophageal reflux disease or GERD is where acid from the stomach is regurgitated back up the oesophagus, sometimes reaching the throat. This causes coughing attacks from the burning sensation that is created, damage can occur to the lining of the oesophagus. There are many proprietary medicines to combat GERD, slippery elm powder can also be effective.

Stent: A stent is a tube that is used to keep a passageway in the body open, for example in keeping the fistula between the airway and oesophagus open when there is no prosthesis in place.

Stoma: Any opening into the body from outside that is created by a surgeon. In our case it is the entry for the direct airway to the lungs.

Sweet Spot: Refers to the one or two locations on the neck or cheek that most effectively transfers the speech signal of an electronic artificial larynx into the pharynx and mouth for speech.

TEP: Tracheoesophageal puncture. This is the fistula between the airway and the oesophagus, where the prosthesis sits.

Cont’d on Page 6
Cont’d from Page 5

Thyroid: Often removed in total laryngectomy, the thyroid is located around the trachea below the larynx. Hormones that regulate growth and metabolism are made and stored in the thyroid, controlling heart rate, blood pressure, body temperature and the rate food is converted to energy. The correct dosage of thyroid hormone replacement tablets must be taken each day after thyroidectomy.

Tracheostomy: This is the surgical operation that creates the stoma in your windpipe when the larynx is removed. They are also performed to create a temporary airway in an emergency.

Vapourisers: A vapouriser is useful in helping to keep your stoma and airway from drying out, particularly in winter. Radiators and heaters can make for a dry environment, a bowl of water placed near the heater can maintain humidity.

Vitamin C: An essential nutrient found in fruits and vegetables that must be replenished daily. Vitamin C or Ascorbic Acid helps produce collagen, a protein needed to develop and maintain healthy teeth, bones, gums, cartilage, vertebrae discs, joint linings, skin and blood vessels. It also promotes healing of wounds, fights infection, dilates blood vessels, regulates cholesterol levels, aids iron absorption among numerous other things that keep you healthy.

Vitamin E: An antioxidant vitamin that binds oxygen free radicals which cause tissue damage. Vitamin E deficiency can cause anaemia. Research is being conducted into the role of Vitamin E in preventing heart disease and cancer of the lung and prostate.

Xerostomia: From the Greek meaning 'dry mouth'. Associated with hypothyroidism and radiation, xerostomia results from inadequate function of the salivary glands and can lead to increased tooth decay and thrush. There are a number of proprietary products that combat xerostomia.

humour

A preacher of the old school was describing the events of Judgment Day and, of course, he used Biblical phraseology whenever he could.

"Oh, my friends," he intoned, "imagine the suffering of the sinners as they find themselves cast into the outer darkness, removed from the presence of the Lord and given to eternal flames. My friends, at such a time there will be weeping, wailing and a great gnashing of teeth!"

At this point, one of the elders of the congregation interrupted to say, "But Reverend, what if one of those hopeless sinners has no teeth?"

The preacher crashed his fist on the pulpit. "My friends, the Lord is not put out by details. Rest assured...teeth will be provided!"

The room was full of pregnant women and their partners, and the class was in full swing. The instructor was teaching the women how to breathe properly, along with informing the men how to give the necessary assurances at this stage of the plan.

The teacher then announced, "Ladies, exercise is good for you. Walking is especially beneficial. And, Gentlemen, it wouldn't hurt you to take the time to go walking with your partner!"

A man in the middle of the group raised his hand.

"Is it all right if she carries a golf bag while we walk?"

The Italian government is considering installing a clock in the Leaning Tower of Pisa. The reason? What good is it to have the inclination if you don't have the time?
In 1985 a volunteer for the American Cancer Society, Dr Gordy Klatt, put on his jogging gear and headed for the local oval after a good friend died of cancer. Twenty-four hours and 81 miles later, Dr Klatt had raised an amazing $27,000 in sponsored donations for the American Cancer Society.

Relay for Life is now a world-renowned fundraising event, held at 3,000 locations in the USA alone and raising nearly $400 million for cancer research in the past year. Relays are now held in New Zealand, Canada and Ireland. Australia’s first Relay for Life was held in Melbourne in May 1999 with all other states and territories now picking up the baton and staging Relays.

The Cancer Council New South Wales held its first Relay for Life in November 2000 in the Macarthur region in Western Sydney raising $100,000. We plan to stage around 25 Relays in NSW in the next 12 months and aim to raise $2 million for vital research and cancer program.

Spring into Relay 2002

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<td>31 August-1 September</td>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>The Crest Athletic Centre, Bass Hill</td>
<td>9334 1413</td>
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<td>21-22 September</td>
<td>Willoughby City</td>
<td>Chatswood Athletic Field</td>
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<td>Dubbo</td>
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<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>University of Newcastle</td>
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<td>Maclean</td>
<td>Maclean Showground</td>
<td>6681 1933</td>
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<td>12-13 October</td>
<td>Coffs Harbour</td>
<td>Advocate Park</td>
<td>6651 5732</td>
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<td>Sydney</td>
<td>Lyne Park, Rose Bay</td>
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<td>Macarthur</td>
<td>Campbelltown Sports Stadium</td>
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<td>Armidale</td>
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<td>Central Coast</td>
<td>Mingara Athletics Centre</td>
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<td>Lismore</td>
<td>Oakes Oval</td>
<td>6681 1933</td>
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<td>Hunter River</td>
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<td>2-3 November</td>
<td>Hills</td>
<td>Castle Hill Showground</td>
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<td>Eastern Beaches</td>
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<td>16-17 November</td>
<td>Wollongong</td>
<td>Beaton Park</td>
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Disclaimer
The details in this calendar were current in July 2002 but may change at short notice. For the very latest information, please contact your nearest Cancer Council office, ring 1300 65 65 85 or visit www.cancercouncil.com.au

Interested in the grand totals from every Relay? Visit www.cancercouncil.com.au
Get Relay Smart

There's a lot to understand about how Relay for Life works - use these tips and guidelines for a fun, relaxing, and successful Relay

Where do I get more information?

Each Relay is different, so talk with your Team Captain about what to bring and what needs to be done. Your Relay Committee will arrange information sessions for Relay teams. Come along and meet other team members and the Relay committee. Check our website www.cancercouncil.com.au for meeting details.

How many people in a team?

We recommend between 10-15 people in a team. If there are fewer than 10, it's hard to keep someone on the track for 24 hours. A team with more than 15 members is hard to manage. We suggest larger groups split into two teams with different captains.

Late registrations

It's never too late to join in. Friends and individuals can register on the day. You can join in the Survivors Walk and Candlelight Ceremony, or just visit the Relay without being on a team.

Children are welcome

Children are welcome to take part or just come along to Relay. Children's teams must include at least 4 adults. Adult team members must directly supervise children for the entire event, including the Candlelight Ceremony. Prams can be pushed around the track as part of Relay for Life.

Have Fun and Win

Dress up and help make your Relay colourful and fun and be in the running for an award or prize donated by a local business - for best-dressed team, best decorated campsite, highest fundraising and most laps by team and individuals.

Clothes for all weather

Think smart and bring clothes for day and night, cold, and warm. Pack a 'brolly' and raincoat just in case. For added fun, give your team a name and dress up.

Slip slop slap and wrap

Be Sun Smart and cover up from the sun with a hat, sunglasses and shirt. BYO sunscreen or use ours for free.

Food fest

Keep those energy levels high with plenty of cancer smart fresh food and drink; buy it there or visit nearby cafes and supermarkets. Your committee will provide a healthy Sunday breakfast.

Coming or going and shall I camp?

You don't have to sleep at the venue. Come and go as you please during the 24 hours. If you want to spend the night at the venue you are welcome to pitch a tent for the entire 24 hours. Large tents with large tent pegs may not be allowed. Please camp only in designated areas to avoid damage to underground water pipes. Cars, caravans, campervans or trailers are not allowed on the track or sports field.
FACE SHIELDS

Further to the piece in the May issue of 'Still talking' on resuscitation, I have discovered that the St John's Ambulance Brigade at 6 Hunt Street, Surry Hills stock a 'Resusci Face Shield' which is made in Norway by a company called Laerdal.

The 'Resusci Face Shield' is a small sheet of material which has a group of one-way air holes in the centre. The victim is laid on his back and the face shield is placed, correct side up, over the neck with the air holes directly over the stoma. The normal resuscitation procedure then takes place, remembering to keep the nose and mouth covered. The 'Resusci Face Shield' is of course suitable for non-laryngectiones as well as laryngectiones.

The face shields come in either a vacuum sealed packet or in a little velcro sealed bag on a key ring. If I remember, I will bring them to the next meeting so you can see what they are.

Well, winter should be behind us now and the weather should gradually improve from here on in. It couldn’t have been too bad a winter as I don’t recall experiencing any difficulties with my stoma or with my breathing. I hope you find plenty of interest in this month’s newsletter.

A.T. Krasnodebski

WHO TO CONTACT

FOR SPEECH AIDS, BATTERIES PARTS AND ADVICE ON REPAIRS - John Chaloner, 111 Station St., Petersham 2049. Phone 02-9560-2852
FOR STOMA COVERS, SHOWER SHIELDS, STOMA COVER MATERIAL AND WELFARE MATTERS - Lilah Walton, 23 Baker St., KENSINGTON 2033. Phone 02-9663-2550

FOR ACCOMMODATION ASSISTANCE WHEN NEEDING OUT-PATIENT TREATMENT AWAY FROM HOME - Cancer Council of NSW, 153 Dowling Street, WOOLLOOMOOLOO, PO Box 572. Phone 02-9334-1500. Fax: 02-9357-2878
Or contact the Social Worker at the hospital you will be attending.
MINUTES


APOLOGIES - Bonny Dun, Faith & Russell Green, Brian & Carol Gardner, Tony Krasnodebski, Clarissa & John Chaloner.

VICE-PRESIDENT Noel Bluett in the chair opened the meeting at 11am. Minutes of the previous meeting as appeared in the newsletter were taken as read. No business arising from the Minutes.

Moved Pat Halliburton, seconded Leo Bolt.

SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT - August 2002

(Unfortunately, the Secretary/Treasurer Report has somehow been lost so there is no report for August. The list of new members and anything else of importance will appear in the October newsletter, there being no further slips ups of course.)

WELFARE OFFICER’S REPORT - Congratulations to all the Speechies who conducted a new training course for hospital visitors. It’s great having another nine to relieve the pressure on John Chaloner and Brian Gardener and more hospital areas are covered. If any Speechie wants the name and address of visitors please ring me. Thank you Allan Ryan, Fred and Shirley Daniel, Derrick and Dorothy Roper, George and Kathy Payne, Russell and Faith Green, Peter Dixon, Ron and Peggy Fazakerley, Jim O'Meara and Janet Berghammer for volunteering assurance to Larry-to-Be’s that there is help if needed.

I was lucky to win second prize of $50 Woolworth gift voucher in Western Districts Raffle only to have an employee tell me I must purchase goods to the full value of the voucher even when I did not require anything else. I have written to Woolworth’s Head Office and also to the Manager of the store I had the altercation with so if I don’t answer my phone if you ring try Long Bay.

Have made a booking for our Christmas Party at the Kirribilli Club on 30th November 2002. Anybody with suggestions for another venue come to the meeting and discuss it.

The Laryngeal meeting is being held on the 11th September, 2002, and I am the New South Wales Rep. Don’t have me sitting with no subject we (New South Wales) want discussed, please write to John Nicholson and he can have everything ready for me to table. Had a thank you card from Stan Morley but he has to go back for more examinations or is it because he loves the attention he receives. Fred Daniel is having more tests plus Eric Smith and Sid Lowe. If anybody else isn’t feeling well, we all wish you a speedy recovery. By the way, Jane Nicholson (John’s daughter) and Julia McLean ran in the City to Surf and finished. Congratulations girls.

Sadly, I have to report the death of two of our members - Ron Fuller of Caringbah and Ron Rutter of Mollymook.

Ron Rutter died from flu complications. To both families we send our heartfelt sympathy.

Moved Janet Berghammer, seconded Margaret Silver.

GENERAL BUSINESS - John Nicholson reported on a video being made by the Victorian Association. This is to replace present video “Lost for Words”. Each State Association has been asked to make a donation. However, after some discussion, it was decided that as our present stock of videos is rarely requested for use, further expenditure is unwarranted. Noel Bluett pointed out that as our income at the moment is static and patient supplies are a continuing expense, it was decided to check speech therapists as to whether they would use the video.

Noel Bluett asked if any members were currently in hospital with respiratory ailments they contact Lilah Walton. Lilah reported families should ring Welfare Officer if help required.

As there was no more general business the meeting closed at 11.45 a.m. and members enjoyed a social lunch.

The next meeting will be held at Strathfield on September 18th, 2002.

WESTERN DISTRICTS NEWS - AUGUST 2002

At the August meeting the treasurer announced that a very generous donation had been received from the estate of Bill Byrne. Bill was a staunch supporter of the Branch and this last act of generosity was typical of this great friend.

A barbecue at Woronora with the Illawarra group has been organized for Tuesday 3rd September.

Last years venue having closed Helen and Pat with the help of members are seeking a suitable place for the Christmas function.

Peg and Ron Fazakerley, Dot and Derrick Roper, Fred Daniel and Janet Berghammer have all completed the course conducted by speech pathologists at St. George Hospital and are now accredited hospital visitors.

CENTRAL WEST REPORT - Two Central West Speechies after attending a training program in Melbourne which focussed on delivering laryngeectomee centred education to ambulance personnel took it upon themselves to present the information to the ambulance services in the Central West.

They heard that ambulance stations from Lithgow, Bathurst, Orange, Wellington, Dubbo, Bourke and Gilgandra were having a five day training course in Gilgandra. When contacted, they agreed to allow an hour during their training for the laryngeectomee presentation to be made.

Speech Therapist Anna Brennan and Laryngeectomee Murray Robbins traveled to Gilgandra wondering about
An evaluation was filled out by all participants which elicited really positive comments, especially having Murray at the inservice in the role of a dummy. It was surprising how unaware they were about the function of a voice prosthesis, one particular participant commenting that he would have assumed it was a foreign object and removed it from the airway.

They also believed that this education should be a compulsory part of their training and it is understood that Speech Therapists have been asked to attend their next training program.

FLOAT TUBES

If you do a search for 'float tubes' on the internet a whole swag of American suppliers and manufacturers pop up. They appear to be very popular amongst fly fishermen and are used on rivers, lakes and even the ocean. Yet enquiries along Kent Street in fishing and camping supply shops only resulted in finding a pair of thigh high waders.

To picture the way that float tubes are constructed you have to imagine an inflatable chair but where the seat should be you step into a pair of leggings or waders. Holding the floats around your waist you walk into the water past your waistline until you float with your chest, neck and head remaining safely above the water. Behind the head is an inflatable pillow that can be blown up or left flat. There are also compartments for storage. Other float tubes are constructed like small boats which you do sit in.

How you move yourself around in the water, especially if it is a bit choppy, I don't know. I suppose you move your legs and paddle with your hands or maybe a little paddle. You have straps over your shoulders to hold yourself firmly within the contraption so it should be difficult to tip yourself over. However having said that, I would not like to venture into the ocean or any waterways where powered boats are used as a wake or a wave could tip you over.

These devices certainly look to have the potential to help laryngectomees get safely back into the water. Some American laryngectomees are already using them. If anyone reading this knows of an outlet in the Sydney area that stocks float tubes, let me know and I'll go and test drive one.

I think this could be a case of, if you are determined enough not to let your laryngectomy get in the way of your pursuing your inclinations, a way will present itself to allow you to do that. So enjoy yourself.
TEP REPUNCTURE

The TEP has been around for almost 20 years and many patients have punctures that may indeed be that old. I have noticed over the years that punctures sometimes have a lifespan of their own and occasionally need to be re-done when they fail to work effectively and become difficult to maintain.

I have my own thoughts as to why the punctures might wear out. First, occluding the stoma with a finger constantly moves the prosthesis in its tract. This can cause granulation tissue to develop, both on the stoma side and on the esophageal side of the fistula. This granulation can make the prosthesis difficult to insert and properly maintain and can lead to decreased voicing. Acid reflux and the bacteria associated with saliva and sputum also enhance granulation formation. Along the same line, I have seen several fistulas actually migrate up and out of the stoma so that they become completely ineffective. My only explanation for this is the continued manipulation over the years pushing the tract and the prosthesis up and out of the stoma. Lastly, I can recall two patients who developed swallowing difficulty from an erosion of the esophagus caused by the tip of the speech prosthesis.

So what do we do when the granulation tissues gets too bad, the fistula migrates out of the stoma, or an erosion develops in the esophagus causing difficulty with swallowing? The first thing we do is stop using the prosthesis for a while and give the area a chance to settle down. In the case of laryngeal granulation tissue we will replace the prosthesis with a small catheter and deal with the granulations. This may involve removal with a LASER or cautery and then several week of healing before replacing the prosthesis. This applies only to granulation in the trachea.

The problem in the esophagus is a little different matter. For esophageal problems like granulation or erosion and for fistulas that migrate out of the stoma we often have to completely disregard the current fistula, let it close and come back in a month or so for a re-puncture. This lets everything heal and creates a more controlled situation for a better placement. Usually the fistula will close once the prosthesis is removed, but it may be necessary to close the tract with an outpatient procedure before the repeat puncture can be done.

After the repuncture, we basically start over with resizing as the tract matures.

Glenn E. Peters, M.D.,
F.A.C.S.
Director,
Division of Otolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery
University of Alabama
Birmingham, Birmingham, Alabama, USA

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting for the Laryngectomee Association of NSW will be held on Wednesday, 18th September, at the Uniting Church Hall, Carrington Avenue, Strathfield, at 11 am.

There is parking on site and it is also a short walk from the Railway Station.

The meeting will be followed by a light luncheon. Laryngectomees, Friends, Families, Professionals all WELCOME.

VALE

Regrettably, I have to report that the following members have passed away and we certainly extend our sincere condolences to their families and friends.

Mr Ronald J Rutter of Mollymook
Mr Ronald Fuller of Caringbah
GLOSSARY OF TERMS

I thought it might be a good idea to have a glossary of laryngectomee terms that should be especially useful for a new or prospective laryngectomee. This list is in no way complete, I will run a few more terms next month and will then keep them permanently on www.stilltalking.org.au in the TIPS section. If you spot any errors or omissions, please write in or email me and I will make the appropriate correction. If there is an additional term that you consider should be on the list, please send it in with a one or two sentence description and I will include it on the website.

Artificial Larynx (AL): An Artificial Larynx works by electronically or pneumatically producing a tone that substitutes for the vocal chords. The Artificial Larynx produces a voice that would not otherwise be there. There are a large number of electronic Artificial Larynxes but a more restricted range of pneumatic ones.

Biopsy: Taking a sample of tissue for examination to determine whether or not cancer cells are present.

Calcium: Calcium is not only essential for healthy bones but also aids muscle contraction, heart action, vitamin B-12 absorption and blood clotting. Hypocalcemia (low calcium) can affect the nervous system and cause spasms, muscle cramps, abdominal cramps etc. Calcium deficiency can lead to poor mineralisation of bones, osteoporosis etc. Foods containing calcium include dairy products, broccoli, spinach, salmon, oysters, tofu etc. The ideal daily intake of calcium is 1,000 to 1,300 milligrams. Over 2,500 milligrams per day can lead to hypercalcemia and associated problems.

Cancer: A group of different and distinctive diseases. Cancer refers to cells which grow abnormally in an uncontrolled fashion. Any tissue in the body can be involved and there can be many different forms of cancer in each area of the body.

Candida: Variety of thrush that colonises voice prostheses causing them to leak. Controlled by soaking prosthesis in hydrogen peroxide or Milton, coating flange of fresh prosthesis with Nystatin gel, gargling with Nystatin drops, using slippery elm powder and eating acidophilus yoghurt. Avoid consuming yeasty food and drinks.

Chemotherapy: Anticancer drugs can be given into a vein, muscle or orally. Chemotherapy is usually given in cycles i.e. a period of treatment followed by a period of recovery. Side effects can include loss of appetite, vomiting, hair loss and mouth sores. The side effects tend to go away after treatment stops. In younger people, chemotherapy can result in a loss of fertility.

Depression: Depression often goes undiagnosed and untreated. Emotional reactions including depression are experienced by most people who are diagnosed with cancer. Depression is readily treatable with medications, counseling, or a combination of both. See your family doctor, psychiatrist or psychologist for diagnosis, referral, and/or treatment.

Fistula: A fistula is an abnormal passageway in the body. For laryngectomees we are usually referring to the hole running from the stoma to the oesophagus in which a voice prosthesis sits.

Granulation: Is the part of the healing process where rough pink tissue, which contains new connective tissue and capillaries, form around the edge of a wound. Granulation is normal and desirable.

I will continue G to Z in next month's 'Still Talking'. Any additions to A to G will appear on the website on the TIPS page.
60 MINUTE BACKDOWN

Australian actor Russell Crowe was recently interviewed on the TV show 60 Minutes.

During the interview, Crowe, who apparently is a chain smoker, was smoking. Many viewers complained that the show was encouraging people to smoke.

60 Minutes apologised to viewers (on Sunday 22nd July) saying that they weren't encouraging smoking at all and said that Crowe was filmed smoking simply because he is a chain smoker. They showed a part of the interview, this time with Crowe's mouth and cigarette blanked out, and then showed Yul Brynner, who died from throat cancer, saying "Whatever you do, don't smoke." They said that they agreed with his advice.

The irony is that a few years ago Crowe appeared in the movie 'The Insider' where he played the role of a whistleblower against Big Tobacco.

humour

Growing old is mandatory; growing up is optional
At age 4 success is not wetting your pants
At age 12 success is having friends
At age 16 success is having a driving license
At age 20 success is having sex
At age 35 success is having money
At age 50 success is having money
At age 60 success is having sex
At age 70 success is having a driving license
At age 75 success is having friends
At age 80 success is not wetting your pants.

A man went into a pet shop to purchase a pet. The shopkeeper talked him into buying a parrot with a vocabulary of 6000 words. Two days later the man returned saying he had not heard a word from the bird.

The shopkeeper said what he needed was a double domed 2 door cage. The man purchased the cage, but two days later he's back again. The parrot had still not said a word.

The shopkeeper suggests a double perch for the cage. So the man bought it. Two days he's back again, the parrot has still not spoken.

The shopkeeper suggests a mirror so that when he sees his reflection he will talk, so he buys it.

The shopkeeper was sweeping his footpath outside his shop a month later and on the opposite side of the road he saw the man who had bought the parrot and he called out to him and asked how was the bird.

The man replied he was dead. The shopkeeper couldn't believe he was dead and asked whether he was talking before he died.

The man said he hadn't spoken a word until just before he died and that was "Doesn't that pet shop sell bird seed?"

A nearsighted minister glanced at the note that Mrs. Jones had sent to him by an usher.

The note read: "Bill Jones having gone to sea, his wife desires the prayers of the congregation for his safety."

Failing to observe the punctuation, he startled his audience by announcing: "Bill Jones, having gone to see his wife, desires the prayers of the congregation for his safety."

Dear Abby:

My forty-year-old son has been paying a psychiatrist $60 an hour every week for two-and-a-half years. He must be crazy.

I was married by a judge. I should have asked for a jury.

-- George Burns
NOT MUCH NEWS

It of a short newsletter this month, not a lot happening or at least not much happening that’s coming to my attention. I hope the next two or three will be more interesting.

In October we will be getting a visit from the Laryngectomee Association of Thailand with their President attending our monthly meeting at Strathfield, could prove very informative and with Thailand being such a popular holiday destination it could be useful to have a contact in Bangkok were you to run into difficulties as a laryngectomee on holiday in Thailand.

As a prosthesis user, each morning I secure the strap of the prosthesis with a piece of surgical tape. I’ve used a few brands, 3M, Likeskin and a couple of others. I have come to the conclusion that Likeskin is far and away the best; they all stick down as well as each other but Likeskin comes off better than all the others. It comes off in one piece and doesn’t leave adhesive behind that has to be cleaned off afterwards. For example, drying the neck with a tissue after removing Likeskin is a straightforward operation, whereas after all the other tapes the tissue sticks to my neck.

August is usually the cold and windy month so remember to keep your neck covered and warm whenever you venture out.

A.T.Krasnodebski


APOLOGIES - John & Des Nicholson, Brian & Carol Gardner, Bonny Dun, Don Newby, Pat Rogers.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT Noel Bluett in the chair opened the meeting at 11am, in the absence of Brian Gardner, and welcomed a new member, Leo Bolt. The Minutes of the June meeting as appeared in the newsletter were taken as read.

Moved Faith Green, seconded Russell Green.

SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT - July 2002
(Read by Lilah Walton)

Once again I have to apologise for my non-attendance at this meeting. I have had a minor heart attack and have been told to take it easy for a while. Will be back as soon as possible.

MEMBERSHIP

Only two new members this month and I extend, on behalf of our committee, a warm welcome to;

Mr Arthur English of Greenacre
Mr R.H. Strike of Balmain

We do hope that they will be able to join us at one of our monthly meetings.

DEPARTMENT OF FAIR TRADING

This Department has advised that the Government recognises that Associations undertake a variety of activities with differing levels of risk and that Associations themselves are the best judge of their insurance needs. Accordingly, effective May 10, 2002, the Associations Incorporation legislation no longer requires Associations to have public liability insurance to become or remain incorporated.

Our committee will discuss this matter shortly and contact the branches of the actions we recommend be taken in the future.

TELSTRA AGED & DISABILITY SERVICE CENTRE

This centre is now located at Burwood so I have asked them to consider giving our members an up-to-date brief on their services. I have suggested that they attend our August meeting and they will call me back as soon as possible on that visit.

Moved Pat Halliburton, seconded Lilah Walton

John Nicholson was wished a speedy recovery from his continuing poor health.

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR 1 JANUARY 2002 TO 16 JULY 2002

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Moved Sid Lowe, seconded Alex Szanyi.

WELFARE OFFICER'S REPORT - Lilah reported a quiet month but kept busy making stoma covers and posting hospital packs.

GENERAL BUSINESS - Tony Krasnodebski reported that he had been in contact with the President and founder of the laryngectomy group of Thailand, Karoon Trakulpadetkrai, who will be coming to Sydney in October. He has been invited to attend and hopefully to address our October meeting.

Lilah has been nominated as a delegate to the National Laryngeal Support Group meeting and will be accompanied by Margaret Silver.

Lilah has also sent copies of the cookbook for larys and some tattoos/stickers to the meeting of hospital visitors so they can make those they visit aware of what is available. The tattoos/stickers were generously donated by Dr Eric Blom of the USA and are available through Lilah to members. They are designed to be worn during surgery or hospital stays as there are a surprising number of health professionals who do not know that a laryngectomy is a neck breather and not a mouth breather. This can lead to worrying complications.

With no further business the meeting closed at 12pm and a light lunch and some social chatter was enjoyed by all.

WESTERN DISTRICTS NEWS - JULY 2002

The annual fund raising raffle was drawn at the July meeting. The winners were:

First ($100 money order) Stan Morley of Penrith
Second ($50 money order) Lilah Walton of Kensington
Third ($25 money order) E Hutchins of Eastwood Bowling Club

We thank everyone for buying tickets.

Stan Morley is recovering well after his recent operation at Westmead and no doubt will be cheered by his raffle win.

Fred Daniel has returned to hospital for further treatment. We hope all goes well for Fred and we will soon see him back at our meetings.
TRANSPLANT RESEARCH

While trawling the internet for information concerning anything happening on the laryngectomy front, I came across a snippet that a Professor Birchall in England was looking into the possibility of larynx transplants. So I sent an email to him at Bristol University at Martin.Birchall@bristol.ac.uk and asked him if he would let me know what he was up to for our newsletter, and this is what he wrote:

‘A voice for the future’

Complete loss of laryngeal function can be devastating. Despite recent advances in the rehabilitation of laryngectomees and the superb adjustment made by many persons in this predicament, quality of life can be severely affected. Attempts to provide a replacement voice have variably succeeded and attempts to produce an artificial larynx have so far failed. Meanwhile, advances have occurred in surgery, immunology and transplantation sciences. This raises the possibility of providing a complete replacement larynx for those requiring laryngectomy. There are many problems still to be overcome, but the success of Marshall Strome's first laryngeal transplant in 1998 has provided considerable encouragement.

The Laryngeal Research Group at Bristol University is addressing several of these problems. In particular we are constructing a detailed map of the immune functions of the larynx. Apart from helping us address transplantation, this map is already suggesting ways in which we might in the future fight laryngeal cancer and asthma. Secondly, we are using nerve growth factors to persuade laryngeal nerves to grow back together again quicker and more accurately.

We hope to be in a position to translate this work into man in five to six years’ time. Even if the programme does not succeed in this aim, we will still have learnt enough to make great strides in treatment of other serious airway diseases.

Martin Birchall
Professor of Laryngology
University of Bristol

LARYNGECTOMEE SUPPLIES, available from Lilah Walton:

Stoma Material; $7 per metre.
Shower Shields; $30 each.
Stoma Covers; $4 each.

These are prices for members, postage is extra.
MOB BOSS JOHN GOTTI DIES OF THROAT CANCER

John J. Gotti, nicknamed "The Teflon Don" for the authorities' long-time inability to get any charges to "stick" to him, died June 10 at a federal prison hospital in Springfield, Missouri. He was 61 at the time of his death. The cause of death was listed as complications from the throat cancer that had plagued him for the last four years.

John Gotti had seized control of the notorious Gambino crime family when he engineered the assassination of his predecessor, Paul Castellano, in 1985. At the height of his power, he fancied himself as a modern-day Robin Hood, perhaps having taken his own hype too seriously. Where most crime bosses shunned publicity, Gotti reveled in it, as would an egoistic movie star. He strutted in public adorned in $2000 double-breasted suits with $400 hand-painted ties, swilling $1000 a bottle brandy, and thought nothing of losing $250,000 on the dice tables.

Eventually the teflon wore off, and it was while serving a life sentence for crimes that included assassination, that Gotti was diagnosed as having a malignant tumor on his neck. He had the tumor surgically removed in 1998, and for a while was considered cancer free, when the disease aggressively returned in 2000. This time Gotti and his medical team opted to fight the disease via chemotherapy. When it became obvious that it was to no avail, the treatment was discontinued in October, 2001, and his doctors announced that Gotti had less than a year to live.

The surgery that Gotti underwent in 1998 didn't include a laryngectomy. It's been said that he was given that option, but was reluctant to undergo such an operation. Precise details regarding his treatment are hard to come by. It seems that after decades of relishing publicity, during his last days Gotti and his family had been very private concerning his struggle with cancer.

This article was taken from the July issue of 'CAL VOICE'.
WORLD CUP FEVER

It's a wonder I managed to put this issue together as I seem to have spent all my spare time watching the World Cup with all the surprises and upsets that have occurred this past month. Especially the amazing run of South Korea. My choice, Argentina, of course got knocked out in the first round.

People attending meetings are requested to print their names in block capitals when recording their attendance in a book or on a sheet of paper. It can be a bit tricky deciphering names that have been signed off in a normal signature.

Canberra Hospital Support Group have notified us that their future meetings will be on the first Thursday of every third month. (See the Monthly Meetings box, to the left). The next couple of social lunches will be Thursday, July 18 at the Hellenic Club and Thursday, October 18 at the Yamba Sports Club, both starting at 12 noon.

Something for you to bear in mind towards the end of the year. When I send out the membership renewals in November I will canvass how many people would like to receive their newsletter by email in the Adobe Acrobat format and you can tick yes or no with your subscription renewal.

A.T.Krasnodebski

WHO TO CONTACT

FOR SPEECH AIDS, BATTERIES PARTS AND ADVICE ON REPAIRS - John Chaloner, 111 Station Street, Petersham 2049. Phone 02-9560-2652
FOR STOMA COVERS, SHOWER SHIELDS, STOMA COVER MATERIAL AND WELFARE MATTERS - Lilah Walton, 23 Baker Street, KENSINGTON 2033. Phone 02-9663-2550
FOR ACCOMMODATION ASSISTANCE WHEN NEEDING OUT-PATIENT TREATMENT AWAY FROM HOME - Cancer Council of NSW, 153 Dowling Street, WOOLLOOMOOO, PO Box 572. Phone 02-9354-1800. Fax: 02-9357-2676
Or contact the Social Worker at the hospital you will be attending.
MINUTES

MINUTES OF THE JUNE MEETING OF THE
LARYNGECTOMIC ASSOCIATION OF NSW, HELD IN
THE UNITING CHURCH HALL, STRATHFIELD ON
WEDNESDAY 19TH JUNE 2002.

PRESENT - B Gardner, J Nicholson, D Newby, G Cecconi
P Halliburton, A English, D Lamont, J Nowland, F Daniel,
P Rodgers, N Bluett, A Szanyi, J Berghammer, R Green,
J Chaloner, C Gardner, D Nicholson, M Halliburton,
L Cecconi, M English, P Lamont, S Daniel, Helene,
N Hannon, L Walton.

APOLOGIES - Josephine Bluett, Faith Green, Joe Perz,
Tony Krasnodebski, Margaret Silver, Bonnie Dun.

THE PRESIDENT opened the meeting at 11am thanking
all those attending on such a cold and wet day. The
indomitable Lilah Walton was welcomed back. New mem-
bers Arthur and Margaret English were welcomed by the
meeting. The minutes of the previous meeting as
appeared in the newsletter, were taken as read.

Moved Lilah Walton, seconded Noel Bluett.

SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT - June 2002

NEWSLETTER

I do not know whether our Newsletter Editor, Tony
Krasnodebski, has informed you that he has arranged for
the printing of the last two Newsletters at no cost to our
Association. This effort has saved our Association some
$500.00 and I would like to thank Tony for this effort.
Naturally, we hope he can keep this going in the future.

Perhaps there are some members who do not know that
the NSW Cancer Council supports our Association in
many ways and one is their contribution to us of some
$250.00 per month as partial reimbursement for the
printing and postage for our Newsletter. Perhaps Tony
would mention this in forthcoming Newsletters.

MEMBERSHIP

As at today there are still 27 members who have not paid
their subscriptions for 2002 and in view of the number of
times we have asked for payment, by now, we have no
alternative but to cancel their membership. This of course
means they will cease receiving the Newsletter this
month.

On behalf of the committee I have welcomed the following
new members - we hope they will be able to join us at
one of our, or one of our branches, meetings in the future:

Mr Frank Loprete of Cabramatta
Mr Tin Long Wong of Thornleigh
Mr T G Armstrong of Mollymook
Mr L Osvat of Chatswood

PACIFIC MEDICAL

Pacific Medical, Melbourne has advised that they are now
able to supply the PROVOX Hands Free HME. This
automatic tracheostoma valve is combined with a heat
and moisture exchanger. I would suggest that we have
our Speech Aids Co-ordinator, John Chaloner, evaluate
this product and advise us accordingly of its usefulness
etc.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. Pacific Medical. Advertising material.
4. Speech Department, Canberra Hospital. Amended
dates etc for their meetings and social gatherings.
6. Mr Derrick Roper. Advising change of address and of
delay taken by Monarch Medical in repairing his Servox.
(One loaned to Derrick by John Chaloner to help out).
7. John Chaloner. Details of batteries etc supplied to
members.
8. Mr Ken Harrigan of Griffith. Seeking info on shower
shield etc that he ordered some weeks ago. (2nd lot
forwarded as original parcel obviously lost in transit).
10. Mr P Griffith of Hay. Order for cord for Cooper Rand.
11. University of NSW. Advertising courses.
12. Newsletters from UK, NZ, Victoria, Queensland,
Taiwan and South Australia.
13. Mrs L Brown, Tottenham. Thanking Lilah for material.
14. Monica Marshall of Gorokan & Frank McGee of
Dubbo. Subs.
15. Directory of Australian Associations. Seeking update
on our Association.
16. Australian Cancer Council. Advising of approach from
Victorian Head and Neck Interest Group for development
of a video resource for laryngectomees, carers and
speech pathologists. Video to replace ‘Lost for Words’.
Asking us to support proposal by encouraging Cancer
Council of NSW to support the proposal. Total cost will be
about $30,000.
17. Thelma Frank of Lithgow. Will return Servox when
her unit is returned from repairers.

Moved Pat Halliburton, seconded Pat Rodgers.

WELLFARE OFFICER’S REPORT - Very little to report
since coming out of hospital. . I seem to be going to
different doctors as yet no Brain Doctors (could this be a
message?)

Because when people ring wanting supplies I always ask
if they are members (because of the prices), this month I
had two people who said yes and when I went to the
mailing list I found their names were not on it so have
been unable, with no address, to send the supplies.
Please make sure (John Nicholson can tell you) whether
you are currently financial.

Trust you are all wearing your Winter stoma covers now
we are having these cold windy days. Sid Lowe has been
in hospital trust he is feeling better, and anybody else
who is not 100%. Lilah.

Moved Carol Gardner, seconded Fred Daniel.
GENERAL BUSINESS - Speech Aids Co-ordinator John Chaloner presented no report as it was a quiet month.

There is talk of a possible branch at Bathurst and the President is to investigate the matter with the Speech Therapist there.

Fred Daniel reported he had been contacted re an interview for the hospital visitors course. Janet Berghammer, one of our few lady members, reported she is still waiting to hear about hers, with the course starting on the 19th July.

A lively discussion took place re accidents with voice prosthesis. The main point that came out of it was always to carry a spare with you and also a dilator of some type. Also to remain calm and seek help.

The next meeting is on Wednesday 17th July, 11am.

The meeting closed at 11.45 and a light lunch including many types of cakes from the ladies present was enjoyed by all.

WESTERN DISTRICTS NEWS - JUNE 2002

On Tuesday, 21st May, in company with the Illawarra group we had a most enjoyable barbecue at Woronora Dam. Playing a game of "Trivial Pursuit" proved very popular and was even more so when the winners were a mixed team of Illawarra and Western Districts members.

We were surprised to hear Illawarra's thoughts of disbanding because of not being able to obtain public liability insurance. We hope that by following the advice given by N S W President Brian Gardiner they will be able to continue as a group.

At the June meeting Fred Daniel was welcomed back after his recent stay in hospital.

The raffle tickets are steadily being returned and members are reminded that they should be back by the July meeting.

President Stan Morley has to return to Westmead for a major operation on 19th June. We hope that everything goes well for Stan.

VIETNAM LARYNGECTOMEE HUMANITARIAN PROJECT

In April 2000 Larry Hammer, an American Speech Pathologist, went to Vietnam. His aim was to find out what rehabilitation services were available to laryngectomees in that country. Assisted by Vietnamese physicians, he visited major hospitals and surgery centres in Hanoi and Da Nang. There he met patients who had had their laryngectomies very recently and others who had been laryngectomees for several years.

Those laryngectomees who were literate used writing to communicate while others had to rely on hand gestures. Physicians and administrators knew very little about electro-larynxes and prostheses but they were keen to learn. He demonstrated these as well as esophageal speech. However the main problem was and still is a lack of funds as Vietnam is an economically poor country.

The project soon became successful. A website was set up, the project's goals were made known to medical suppliers, many donations were made and a trip to Vietnam to distribute equipment and material was organised. Equipment and material donated included electronic speech aids, books, posters, stoma covers, educational pamphlets, videos, and prostheses. Tracheoesophageal punctures, allowing the use of a voice prosthesis, began to be performed for the first time. Support to the organisation from individuals and businesses has been in the form of material products and financial assistance.

The Vietnam Laryngectomee Humanitarian Project is obviously a very important cause for laryngectomees in Vietnam. If you are interested in learning more about this project, you can obtain further details by visiting www.vietnamlarynx.org.
SOME TEP PROBLEMS

Your TEP is in a real dynamic piece of anatomy. The site constantly moves with swallowing and breathing. The area is manipulated with your finger or thumb when you use your prosthesis. In addition, there is the issue of constant bacterial and fungal soilage from the organisms that live normally in your saliva and sputum all of the time. So with all this going on, it is no small wonder that things happen to the fistula (puncture) which can affect your ability to successfully use it.

The most common problem that we see with the TEP is failure to properly seat the prosthesis in the fistula. The inner flange does not engage the inside of the esophagus so the tract closes over it on the inside, the esophageal side, even though it looks like everything is fine on the outside. If caught early enough we can often re-establish the opening in the office.

Otherwise, we have go back to the operating room for a re-puncture. So always check your ability to make a voice a few times after changing your prosthesis. If this changes several hours later you are likely dealing with a mal-positioned prosthesis. Try to reposition it yourself and even use your dilator if you are comfortable with it. If you are still having trouble, contact your MD or speech pathologist for help right away.

Because there is constant motion and intermittent manipulation, the position and angle of the tract can change over time. We have seen fistulas that actually migrate up and out of the stoma! The tract can change its angle and many times ends up pointing upwards towards your mouth. Changes in the angle usually lead to leakage through the prosthesis and the fistula. Although it may be possible to "re-train" the angle of the fistula by using a red rubber catheter taped on the top side of your stoma, these problems usually require a re-puncture to achieve optimal results.

The last issue I would like to address is the problem of granulation tissue developing around the fistula. This almost always happens on the tracheal side and is caused by manipulation, irritation, and bacterial contamination. It can hamper your ability to accurately place and position your prosthesis and can be a source of bothersome bleeding. This problem is generally handled with local excision in the office using a small hand-held laser or cautery.

Checking your TEP should be a routine part of your follow up cancer surveillance each time you go to your head and neck surgeon. You should also periodically check it for problems as things that are caught early generally have simple solutions and do not require trips back to the OR for repeat puncture.

Next Meeting

The next meeting for the Laryngectomee Association of NSW will be held on Wednesday, 17th July, at the Uniting Church Hall, Carrington Avenue, Strathfield, at 11 am.

There is parking on site and it is also a short walk from the Railway Station.

The meeting will be followed by a light luncheon.

Laryngectomees, Friends, Families, Professionals all WELCOME.

Glenn E. Peters, M.D., F.A.C.S.
Director, Division of Otolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery
University of Alabama at Birmingham,
Birmingham, Alabama, USA
Snooker ace, Geoffrey Miller, was born in Marrickville in 1941 and lived in Ramsgate for most of his working life, which was spent as a letterpress and lithographic printer working for Containers Ltd. before moving to Penrith after his laryngectomy in September, 1988.

Geoff took up snooker when he was twelve years of age, around about the same time that he took up smoking. At that time, even doctors used to say that smoking was good for relieving stress and an aid to concentration, plus of course, snooker rooms tended to be smoky places anyway. He remains a bit resentful that he was brain-washed and hoodwinked by the tobacco companies and even the medical profession in leading him to believe that smoking was the thing to do and was unlikely to do him any harm, the opposite in fact. He has come to realise that life is not like a game of tennis. You don’t get a second serve.

Snooker has been a big passion in Geoff’s life and from the 1950’s to 1980’s he has won 11 State Titles, plus an Australian Open Title in 1986. He has traveled overseas to participate in championships such as the World Titles in New Zealand in 1986, the Pre-World Titles in Bangkok in 1987 and an invitational tournament in Hong Kong shortly before being diagnosed with larynx cancer. One achievement in the game, which is unique to Geoff, is that he is the only player who has recorded the highest break in each of the State Title, Australian Open and World Title in different years, no-one has yet duplicated this feat.

His promising career in snooker, on the verge of moving to the UK to break into the World Championship and TV snooker circuit, was brought to an abrupt halt when he had to undergo his laryngectomy in September, 1988. Geoff still plays snooker and spends a couple of days a week at City Tatts playing with his friends and sometimes coaching members who want to take up or improve their game.

Geoff speaks with a Bivona prosthesis. He has a recurring problem with bleeding in his airway. Each day he coughs up a tiny plug and the bleeding begins and continues throughout the day, stopping at night and then starts with coughing up the small plug again in the morning. He has taken Barium Meal and Ultrasound etc. to no avail, no-one as yet has been able to pinpoint the problem. No wonder he remains dirty on the tobacco industry that covered up the ill effects that their products caused from the 1950’s and before.
DO YOU HAVE A.A.A.D.D.?

They have finally found a diagnosis for my condition, A.A.A.D.D. - Age Activated Attention Deficit Disorder.

This is how it goes:-

I decide to wash the car, I start toward the garage and notice the mail on the table. OK, I'm going to wash the car. But first I'm going to go through the mail. I lay the car keys down on the desk, discard the junk mail and notice the trash can is full. OK, I'll just put the bills on the desk and take the trash out. But while I'm near my desk I may as well pay these bills and get them out of the way. Now where is my chequebook? Oops! There's only one cheque left. My extra cheques are in my desk. Oh, there's the coke I was drinking. I'm going to look for those cheques, but first I need to put my coke away from the computer, maybe I will pop it into the fridge to keep cool for a while. I head toward the kitchen and my flowers catch my eye, they need some water. I set the coke on the counter and uh oh! There are my glasses. I was looking for them all morning. I'd better put them away first. I fill a container with water and head for the flower pot Aaaaaaagh! Someone left the remote control in the kitchen, we'll never think to look for it there tonight when we want to watch television so I'd better put it in the family room.

I splash some water into the pot and onto the floor, throw the remote onto a soft cushion on the sofa and head back down the hall trying to figure out what I was going to do.

End of day:- The car isn't washed, the bills are unpaid, the coke is sitting on the kitchen counter, the flowers are half watered, the chequebook still only has one cheque in it and I can't seem to find my car keys! When I try to figure out how come nothing got done today. I'm baffled because I KNOW I WAS BUSY ALL DAY LONG!!! I realize this is a serious condition and I'll get help, BUT FIRST I think I'll check who I asked for help. BUT I CAN'T REMEMBER WHO IT WAS!!!!

'Take a bunch of flowers home for your wife, sir,' urged the street vendor.

'I haven't got a wife,' replied the young man.

'Then buy a bunch for your sweetheart.'

I don't have a sweetheart, either.

'Well then, buy a couple of bunches to celebrate your good luck!'

This guy says to his friend, 'You'll never believe what happened last night.'

His pal says, 'Well then, tell me what happened.'

The guy says, 'Last night the doorbell rang, and when I opened the door, there was my ex-mother-in-law on the front porch.'

She said, 'Can I stay here for a few days?'

I said, 'Of course, you can,' and shut the door.

Heard in court:

Q: What was the first thing your husband said when he woke up that morning?

A: He said, 'Where am I, Cathy?'

Q: And why did that upset you?

A: My name is Susan.

LARYNGECTOMEE SUPPLIES, available from Lilah Walton:

Stoma Material; $7 per metre.
Shower Shields; $30 each.
Stoma Covers; $4 each.

These are prices for members, postage is extra.
Hands to the Pump?

As has been predicted for a number of years, the Association's reliance on a few individuals to carry the bulk of the work for our organisation leaves it open to disruption if one of them, or as is the case this month, two of them fall ill.

Both John Nicholson and Lilah Walton had health problems this past month which prevented them performing their functions for the Association. It would be good if a couple of people out there could understudy these positions with a view to taking them over next year. Any takers?

On a lighter note, in last month's 'Sydney Morning Herald', Column 8, a person wrote in about an anti-smoking advertisement that he had seen during a trip to India.

A beautiful, young and very modern Indian woman, in a flash convertible, drives past a youngish male hitch-hiker. She checks him out in the rear vision mirror and sees him light up a cigarette. She drives back and picks him up, and they drive off, to the caption: Women have no fear of men who smoke. They know they're impotent.

A.T. Krasnodedbski

WHO TO CONTACT


FOR SPEECH AIDS, BATTERIES PARTS AND ADVICE ON REPAIRS - John Chaloner, 111 Station St, Petersham 2049. Phone 02-9560-2852.

FOR STOMA COVERS, SHOWER SHIELDS, STOMA COVER MATERIAL AND WELFARE MATTERS - Lilah Walton, 23 Baker Street, KENSINGTON 2033. Phone 02-9663-2550.

FOR ACCOMMODATION ASSISTANCE WHEN NEEDING OUT-PATIENT TREATMENT AWAY FROM HOME - Cancer Council of NSW, 153 Dowling Street, WOOLLOOMOO, PO Box 572. Phone 02-9334-1900. Fax: 02-9357-2676.

Or contact the Social Worker at the hospital you will be attending.
MINUTES


APOLOGIES - Des and John Nicholson, Lilah Walton, Fred Daniel, Russ and Faith Green, Pat and David Lamont, Margaret Silver, Sid Lowe.

THE PRESIDENT Brian Gardner opened the meeting at 11 am, with John Chaloner assisting.

SPEECH AIDS CO-ORDINATOR’S REPORT - MAY 2002
Not much call for loan aids or battery sales this month.

I happen to be on holidays this week so I'm glad I could make it to the May meeting - as I usually work on Wednesdays I normally don't make the meetings. I've brought along the Communicative Medical ToneAire Mk I and ToneAire Mk II pneumolarynx speech aids for a brief demonstration of their use. The Mk II is a great improvement on the Mk I and, with some adapting, I think it will be almost as good as the Memacon DSP8 pneumolarynx (which is no longer in production). As they requested I have made an audio tape of myself using my DSP8, and the ToneAire MkIs I & II and sent it to Communicative Medical in Spokane. They need to compare the voice people achieve with their aid so they can make improvements.

I'll demonstrate the Mk II to the speech pathologists whenever I can as I think it would be a good aid for new larys to get an initial voice since it's very simple to use and to master. The voice is not as good though as that produced with a prosthesis.

As approved at a previous meeting, and mentioned in the newsletter, we have purchased one Cooper Rand 9Volt adapter back, so we still have a Cooper Rand to lend out if required and I have sent our old TruTone electrolylarynx away for repairs.

I'm due to be on holidays again when our June meeting is on so hope to see you there.

Moved Don Newby seconded Pat Halliburton.

GENERAL BUSINESS - With Lilah Walton and John Nicholson both ill there was no Welfare Officers report or Secretary Treasurers report.

Owing to the death of Bruce Darlington there was a vacancy on the committee and Pat Rogers was nominated for the position. He was nominated by Brian Gardiner and seconded by John Chaloner.

The hospital course was discussed and the course which starts in July will have a selection panel which includes both representatives from the Speech Therapists and the Laryngectomee Association.

Tony Krasnodedski spoke of an article he saw on the Internet regarding the length of time that could elapse between the changing of the voice prosthesis. A lively discussion took place with the general consensus being it would depend on the prosthesis leaking or not.

With no further business the meeting closed at 11.30 and luncheon followed.

The next meeting will be held at the same venue on June 19th 2002.

WESTERN DISTRICTS NEWS - MAY 2002
At the May meeting we welcomed back Daphne Fogarty and Ada and Harry Stone, returning after recent illnesses.

A minute's silence was held in commemoration of Bruce Darlington, a well respected member of Head Office and Western Districts groups, who worked in many capacities to help fellow laryngectomees.

In hospital since the April meeting have been Eric Smith and Fred Daniel, we hope both will be well again soon.

Ticket butts for the raffle are coming in steadily indicating that it will be highly successful. Remember that tickets are due in by the July 9th.

Special thanks are due to Marilyn Ploenges for the many prizes she has given for our monthly raffle.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
Dear Tony

Fred Daniel rang in to say he had had an emergency trip to hospital but was now OK, but couldn't make the meeting, where his usual positive participation was missed (and his wonderful rock cakes at our luncheon).

Pat Lamont reported she and David would be absent, David had required some hospital treatment but was thankful it was not a throat problem - perhaps you might have been able to stand for a position David !!

Brian and I visited our indomitable welfare officer on Thursday, who chose to recover at home. I thought the saying was "You can't keep a good man down" - What about Lilah? Although she admits to having treated some phone callers with Terseness, Liver and Crankiness and not her usual TLC, we enjoyed some Teacake, Laughs and Conversation with her. We had intended calling in for a brief morning tea but that turned into lunch (made by Lilah) and we left some 3 hours later.

If ever anyone needed an excuse to criticise insurance companies Lilah should be at the front of the queue, suing for "personal pain and suffering", having in mind how long she has had to endure the wrangle over restoration to normal of her home after the storm damage which occurred years ago. She should apply for a part on "Survivor"! .................. Carol Gardner
TOBACCO INDUSTRY FEELS THE HEAT

I would love to be a fly on the wall in the board-rooms of Big Tobacco these days. It must seem that everything is closing in on them, with pressure being exerted on every front, any new sales gimmick that they come up with is confronted and condemned by such a diverse range of groups and individuals that they don't know which way to turn.

That's the good news. The bad news is that the absolute number of smokers worldwide is still increasing especially in underdeveloped countries where a new generation of young smokers is being targeted. Dr Gro Harlem Brundtland of the World Health Organisation says that eight people die every minute due to tobacco, about 4.2 million people every year, constituting the single largest preventable cause of cause world wide. A staggering 1.2 million of those deaths occur in Europe. As tobacco consumption increases all over the world, especially among young people and people in developing countries, it will kill 10 million people a year by the late 2020's. Not to worry, at least in Australia we seem to have them on the back foot.

In April, Mrs Rolah McCabe was awarded $700,000 for pain and suffering, loss of enjoyment of life, medical and home care expenses, and loss of earnings by a Melbourne court. The most interesting aspect of this breakthrough case was that the judge ruled that the British American Tobacco Australian Services' destruction and warehousing of documents prevented Mrs McCabe from getting a fair hearing and she didn't have to prove that the company was negligent. The company, of course, is appealing the verdict but the case has shown that there are chinks in Big Tobacco's armour and with lawyers such as Slater & Gordon constantly chipping away, the gaps will widen and the whole dirty edifice will crumble in on itself.

The movement towards smoking bans in restaurants, bars, night-clubs, hotels and cafes is moving forward, particularly in Norway where a nationwide ban could be made law by 2004. Norway is already the strictest on smoking and their policies could be copied by other European countries. Here in Australia state and territory governments are moving to ban smoking in enclosed public places following recent lawsuits. The $455,000 award to a Wollongong bar worker for injuries caused by passive smoking has demonstrated the risk to pubs and clubs in being sued. However, in some ways it would be unfortunate to stop smoking in the front bars of pubs as there has to be somewhere for the 'diehard' smokers who can't quit to socialise with their mates. For a few more years anyway.

Philip Morris has threatened Canada with action under the North American Free Trade Agreement and the World Trade Organisation agreements after Canada proposed health regulations to prohibit the use of the use of the terms 'light' and 'mild' on tobacco packaging. Philip Morris claims that the terms do not indicate any health benefits, only drawing attention to taste differences to consumers. Even if no further action is taken, the prospect of such

This article continued on Page 4.
a challenge could deter other governments, less resolute in implementing tobacco control measures and more vulnerable to legal threats, from enacting similar tobacco control regulations to Canada.

At the same time the ACCC is looking at a case in Oregon, USA where Philip Morris had to pay $150 million after being convicted of giving the misleading impression that low tar cigarettes were safer than normal ones. Unfortunately, it may be that there is no Australian equivalent of the law under which that decision was handed down. The ACCC is still inquiring into the destruction of crucial documents by an Australian tobacco company plus activities under price fixing and merger laws, while enforcing mandatory health warnings on cigarette packaging.

If the foregoing is anything to go on, the beginning of the end for the international tobacco industry should be close at hand by now. Hardly a day goes by without a story appearing in the newspapers or on TV about payments to individuals for injuries and suffering caused by using Big Tobacco’s unregulated deadly products. Documentaries appear regularly on TV’s investigative or news programs. So hopefully, before this century is out, laryngectomies necessitated by smoking will be a thing of the past.

and friends will relate to any problems and provide a comfortable environment which encourages communication.

In addition, a laryngectomee support group is the best place for a new laryngectomee to receive information, exchange ideas and discuss problems with people who have been through the whole laryngectomy experience. Hospital professionals give general advice and information immediately before and after laryngectomy to a person in a fairly traumatic situation and a lot can go in one ear and out the other, also, ongoing problems may not become apparent until months after the operation and any associated radiotherapy.

The laryngectomee support group, possibly more importantly, is the place where spouses can meet other spouses of laryngectomees to share frustrations and personal experiences that might seem like difficulties that only they, in all the world, are confronted with.

Our Association attempts to reach as many patients who undergo laryngectomy in New South Wales as possible, in order to let them know that support groups exist, their aims, purpose, when and where they meet along with contact numbers. Then, obviously, it is up to the new laryngectomee to make the effort to attend their most accessible support group to find out what benefits it can offer them and hopefully they can give their input in helping others.

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**SUPPORT GROUPS**

After laryngectomy a person is confronted with a whole new way of life, no matter how much everything may seem to remain the same.

The laryngectomee may become antisocial from experiencing difficulty in talking in group situations, in a noisy environment or where he feels he is breaking the flow of conversations through his difficulty with speaking. A laryngectomee support group is the ideal place to practice socializing where other laryngectomees and their family
NO-TOBACCO DAY

May 31st is World No Tobacco Day. The World Health Organisation says tobacco is a communicated disease - communicated through advertising and sponsorship. Perhaps the most pernicious form of that marketing pitch is to be found in stadia and sports arenas worldwide, with Big Tobacco pumping millions of dollars each year into sponsoring sports events.

In countries where direct tobacco advertising is banned by law, sponsorship of sports amounts to a cynical manipulation of national laws. It is estimated that tobacco companies achieve the equivalent of $150 million in TV advertising every year in the US through their sponsorship of motor sports events alone.

Sport is a celebration of life. Sports inspire healthy living, healthy competition and fun. Tobacco products on the other hand, do not celebrate life - they cause disease and death. Tobacco kills more than 4 million people every year, and is estimated to kill 8.4 million people every year by 2020.

I was dismayed to read in the minutes that Bruce Darlington has died, I know he has been ill recently but was not aware how seriously. Unassuming, but always friendly and helpful he has been a stalwart of the Association for all the time I have been a member and I, for one, shall miss him.

A.T. Krasnodebski

WHO TO CONTACT

FOR SPEECH AIDS, BATTERIES PARTS AND ADVICE ON REPAIRS - John Chaloner, 111 Station Street, Petersham 2049. Phone 02-9560-2652.
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Or contact the Social Worker at the hospital you will be attending.
MINUTES


THE PRESIDENT being absent, Noel Bluett was in the Chair and opened the meeting at 11am on an overcast and humid day. Minutes from the March meeting were accepted.

Moved Lilah Walton, seconded Faith Green.

SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT - April 2002

MEMBERSHIP

Four new members in the past month and we extend to all our hope that they will make use of the facilities our Association can offer. The new members are:

Ms Heather Harvey of Charmhaven
Mr W Hodgson of Revesby
Mr Keith Hodge of Wagga Wagga
Ms Thelma Frank of Lithgow

Since my report last month some 33 members have paid their subscriptions for 2002 and we appreciate such payment. There are still some 31 members who are unfinancial as at April 14 and it would be appreciated if those members could pay their sub for 2002 by the end of April.

CALCULATORS

The Mini-Calculators (not computers as shown in the last newsletter) are available from the supplier at $5.99 each but as we said in the newsletter the Association has to purchase 50 of them to obtain them at price. Only one member has asked me to obtain some so we are unable to order them from Adler Business Gifts.

TV APPEARANCE

Tony Krasnodebski starred in the ABC TV production on the problems of smoking and those that saw this segment would have been impressed with Tony's acting ability. Well done Tony.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. The Dawson family of Eastwood. Thank you card.
6. Mrs E E Watts of Marrickville. Payment of sub and advising cancer has spread to her lungs.
7. Mrs P King of Mayfield. Sub for 2002 and submitting resignation due to being unable to travel to meetings. Will continue newsletter for 2002 as she may care to keep up with our activities.
8. Newsletters from UK and South Australia.
9. Various other payments of subs also received.

Moved Alex Szanyi, seconded Fred Daniel.

WELFARE OFFICER'S REPORT - For all those waiting on white stoma material, it has arrived. For those waiting on stoma covers you will have to wait a week or two from me but maybe Des Nicholson will have time to make some.

Brian Gardner sent me 'Kirribili Club' magazine re the alterations/additions to the club. I rang and spoke to Michael who informed me it won't affect our Christmas party venue if we decide to have it there.

Julia, our St George Speecie leaves on Monday 22nd April to spend 10 days with Dr Blom in America to further her expertise on larys, or who knows perhaps Julia can teach Dr Blom??

John Chalonor was kind enough to visit a trachea patient that required a visit. Thanks John.

With great sorrow I have to report the death of Bruce Darlington. For 21 years Bruce was a lary, one time our treasurer and a great hospital visitor, also a very loyal friend. To Beryl his wife, Kerry and Elizabeth his daughters (and our ticket sellers at the Christmas party) and his grandchildren, I know with me you extend to them all our deepest heartfelt sympathy.

Trust everyone is 'lapping up' this beautiful autumn weather, but get your winter stoma covers ready!!! Only a phone call away if you want me. Lilah

Moved Fred Daniel, seconded Pat Rodgers.

GENERAL BUSINESS - A minute’s silence and then Lilah said a prayer for our dear friend, Bruce Darlington, who passed away this month. Bruce had been a member for 21 years and was one of our most respected and tireless Hospital workers. We send our sympathy to his wife Beryl, his two daughters and their families. He will be sorely missed.

Noel welcomed our new member Janet Berghammer.

Meeting closed 11.30am. Next meeting is Wednesday, 15th May 2002.

WESTERN DISTRICTS NEWS - APRIL 2002

Back after his long illness Stan and Helen Morley were welcomed at the April meeting. New member Fred Daniels and wife Shirley, was also a welcome visitor to our meeting.

The twice-yearly Newsletter will be sent out this month and will contain ten tickets for our annual raffle. Prizes are as follows.

First Prize - $100 Big W Gift Voucher
Second Prize - $50 Big W Gift Voucher
MINUTES CONTINUED...

Third Prize - $25 Big W Gift Voucher

The raffle will be drawn at our July meeting. We hope that again members will give their generous support to this our chief fundraiser for the year.

Stan Morley reported that Caitlin Reimer has been appointed in place of Rosemary Champion, as head of Speech Pathology at Westmead Hospital. We congratulate her on her appointment and know that she will be a worthy replacement for the retired Rosemary.

RESUSCITATION

I have been having a look at the question of laryngectomee resuscitation. For those with internet access, WebWhispers did an article on the lack of knowledge of resuscitation techniques in the laryngectomee community at http://www.webwhispers.org/news/dec2000.htm.

The straightforward emergency resuscitation of a laryngectomee by a non-laryngectomee would be with the mouth-to-stoma method. In mouth-to-stoma rescue breathing, the laryngectomee’s mouth and nose must be closed during the delivery of breaths because the air can flow upward into the upper airway through the larynx as well as downward into the lungs. You can close the victim’s mouth and nose with one hand. Determine breathing by looking at, listening to, and feeling at the stoma. Keep the victim’s head and neck level.

If you want to be prepared for emergencies, there are a large number of resuscitation devices that are shown on the internet, though I’m not sure how many are available in Australia. There are bellows operated devices that deliver normal air or devices to which an oxygen canister is attached to deliver 100% oxygen. The main requirement from the laryngectomee point of view is that the mask fits as tightly and securely over the stoma as possible which could make a child or infant mask more appropriate. The wider the range of masks a supplier has, the better.

I haven’t identified which suppliers stock resuscitation equipment but if you are interested in acquiring one I suggest you trawl through the Medical Supplies section of the Yellow Pages. Medical Industries of Redfern could be a place to start as I have determined that they stock resuscitators and you can establish the correct jargon and terminology to continue your search.

Should anyone follow this up. Please get back to me about products, price, usability and any problems encountered.

HEALTH TIPS

The April issue of Good Medicine magazine says that fresh herbs are an abundant source of anti-oxidants and could have potential anti-cancer benefits when supplementing a balanced diet. Fresh herbs and spices are healthier and contain higher anti-oxidant levels compared to processed ones. But consuming too much of any food product can carry health risks so herbs should be used in moderation.

It also says that because Australian soils are often selenium deficient, anybody who has had cancer, has cancer or has a family history of cancer should take a multi mineral that contains selenium. Studies have confirmed that selenium helps the body to resist cancers. It is widely believed that 200 mcg a day contributes to the body’s anti-oxidant defence. To get 200 mcg a day, eat a tuna steak, two pieces of bread, a good handful of cashew nuts and a few Brazil nuts or take a supplement. But be careful because more than 300 mcg can be toxic.
CARROT SOUP

Carrots, like other yellow vegetables are highly nutritious and are supposedly helpful in fighting cancer. This soup is very simple to prepare and easy to eat.

INGREDIENTS

1 kilo carrots
1 small onion
2 sticks celery
2 or 3 chicken stock cubes
1 small carton thickened cream
3 level teaspoons cinnamon powder
1 level teaspoon dried basil
1 level teaspoon dried oregano
approx 2 litres water
salt and pepper
1 bay leaf

Peel and chop carrots into small pieces. Put carrots into a medium size saucepan and cover with water. Bring to the boil and then reduce heat. Cover and simmer carrots until they are tender.

Drain off water. Mash carrots with a fork or potato masher.

Add approximately two litres of water (more or less water according to how thick you prefer your soup)

Chop onion and celery finely.

Add onion, celery, stock cubes, herbs, spices and bay leaf.

Cover and simmer for 30 to 45 minutes.

Season with salt and pepper.

Remove bay leaf and serve soup in small bowls with one tablespoon of cream on top. Dust with extra cinnamon.

RUN THAT PAST ME AGAIN??

Durham (NC), US, Herald-Sun in April reported that some of the cash paid by the tobacco industry in a lawsuit over health care costs is now being used to help build a tobacco processing plant near Rocky Mount.

The grant, meant to lure the plant and its 1,100 jobs to rural Nash County, to some is simply beneficial economic development. But others say the grant is an "absurd" irony because it supports the very product the lawsuit targeted.

The company processes raw tobacco and sells it to cigarette companies.

VALE

Regrettfully, I have to report that two of our members passed away this month:

Mrs Y Reeder
of Londonderry

Mr Bruce Darlington
of Armcliffe

We extend our sincere condolences to their family and friends.
STOMACH GAS AND ACID REFLUX

Two conditions which may develop or worsen following the removal of the larynx are increased stomach gas, which can produce uncomfortable pressure and belching; and an increase in stomach acid reflux, which causes the sensation of "heartburn" or acid taste, and may be severe enough to require medical attention. Patients who are fitted with the TEP prosthesis often develop more problems with stomach gas than those who use the artificial larynx for several reasons.

If you are able to look into the opening of the prosthesis while it is in place, sometimes you can see the valve opening inadvertently during quiet breathing. You may also be able to hear a "click" with each breath when the prosthesis valve opens and shuts. Small amounts of air may be entering the oesophagus with each breath and move downward into the stomach, coming back up later as a belch. The solution to this problem is to go to a higher resistance prosthesis that isn't as susceptible to the changing air pressures. Because of design differences, the Provox prosthesis does not cause this problem to the same degree as the standard InHealth and Bivona low pressure/low resistance prostheses and the InHealth Indwelling devices. So, one approach to reducing air moving down into the stomach of laryngectomies who use the TEP prosthesis is changing the type of prosthesis.

Another problem that can cause stomach gas is related to the surgery itself and how the throat was reconstructed after the larynx was removed. Prior to surgery, there is a more or less concentric valve (sphincter) at the junction of the lower pharynx with the oesophagus that helps to keep the entrance of the oesophagus closed. The sphincter relaxes during the swallow to open the oesophagus for the passage of food or liquid. The fact that it is ordinarily closed helps prevent stomach acid from gurgling back up into the oesophagus and throat. If the surgery left this area without much of a protective sphincter then the laryngectomee may not only suffer from acid gurgling back up into the oesophagus and throat (known as "gastroesophageal reflux disease" or GERD), but also swallow a considerable amount of air. Try eating slowly so as not to swallow so much air. The recommendations for diet modification, head of the bed elevation, etc., can alleviate mild gastric reflux. A chronic or severe acid reflux condition can require medication for effective control.

An additional problem can be related to almost the opposite extreme, where the reconstructed throat offers too much resistance to the air column moving upwards as it exits the prosthesis for speech production. As a consequence of the operation, scar tissue formation, or radiation, the pharynx or upper oesophagus can be too narrow or constricted, in some cases to the extent that solid food is not easily swallowed. In some instances the muscles have too much tone (hypertonicity), or go into spasm (cramping). If there is increased tone or spasm, the voice is strained and requires extra effort, or there may be intermittent breaks in the voice where no sound comes out at all. As the air exits the prosthesis into the pharynx-oesophagus, it can't easily exit upwards through the mouth (because of the narrowed area or the hypertonicity) and instead moves down to the stomach. If the patient is pushing to make the TEP speech louder, it can exacerbate the problem.

This article continued on Page 6.
Continued from previous page.

For this reason it is important to try to speak effortlessly and use gentle pressure of the finger for stoma occlusion. The pressure for occlusion should eliminate stoma air leakage around your finger or heat-and-moisture exchange device, but not so tight that the entrance to the prosthesis is blocked or that the oesophagus is kinked.

Determining the cause of the problem often takes some detective work. The sound of the voice can give some clues. If the voice is weak and breathy, almost a whisper, it may be related to a "loose throat". But if the voice sounds tight or strained or high pitched, it may be due to a "tight throat". Laryngectomees who are in the beginning stages of learning oesophageal speech may also experience excess stomach gas and frequent belching as they learn to trap air and release it with the muscles of the throat. This is particularly true if the laryngectomee develops a "double pump" to initiate the intake of air into the oesophagus. As speech proficiency develops, this problem decreases significantly. While excessive stomach gas and acid reflux are not uncommon conditions for many laryngectomees, help in addressing these problems is available from your physician and speech pathologist.

This article by Carla DeLassus Gress from the February edition of 'Headlines'.

humour

Three ministers got together for coffee one day and found that all their churches had bat infestation problems.

'I got so mad,' said one, 'I took a rifle and fired at them. It made holes in the ceiling, but did nothing to the bats.'

'I tried trapping them alive,' said the second. 'Then I drove 100 kilometres before releasing them, but they beat me back to the church.'

'I haven't had any problems,' said the third. 'I baptised and confirmed them,' he said, 'I haven't seen them since.'

Light travels faster than sound. This is why some people appear bright until you hear them speak.
ACCC ON THE CASE

Apparently the Australian Competition & Consumer Commission is investigating the possibility of chasing the tobacco companies to try and recover some of the health costs that are mounting up due to smoking, similar to the huge American multi-billion dollar payout. See also the item on page 4 detailing a Spanish attempt to make the tobacco industry shoulder its responsibilities.

I have had a look at the ACCC website and didn’t find any reference to it but there is supposed to be something coming out on the subject early next month. In the meantime the ‘7.30 Report’ on ABC did a segment on Wednesday, 20th March, featuring yours truly and Sydney University researcher Professor Simon Chapman, on the topic. Hopefully, they will monitor the situation and there will be a follow up story on what the ACCC plans to do. So keep watching the ‘7.30 Report’.

In the next couple of months we will be carrying information on hospital visitor courses that will be run this year. Anyone interested in becoming a hospital visitor should be looking out for the ad., which Brian Gardner is organising. An ideal opportunity to help others in a similar boat to yourself, when you complete the course successfully.

A.T.Krasnodebski

WHO TO CONTACT

FOR BLOM-SINGER SUPPLIES - David Smith, 27 Bellevue Pde, North Curl Curl 2099. Phone 02-9939-1539. Ask for David personally

FOR SPEECH AIDS, BATTERIES PARTS AND ADVICE ON REPAIRS - John Chaloner, 111 Station Street, Petersham 2049. Phone 02-9560-2852

FOR STOMA COVERS, SHOWER SHIELDS, STOMA COVER MATERIAL AND WELFARE MATTERS - Lilah Walton, 23 Baker Street, KENSINGTON 2033. Phone 02-9563-2550

For accommodation assistance when needing out-patient treatment away from home - Cancer Council of NSW, 153 Dowling Street, WOOLLOOMOO, PO Box 572. Phone 02-9334-1900. Fax: 02-9357-2676

Or contact the Social Worker at the hospital you will be attending.
MINUTES


APOLOGIES - Bruce Darlington, John Gifford, Pat Rogers, Don Newby, Sid Lowe, Clarissa & John Chaloner.

THE PRESIDENT Brian Gardner in the chair opened the meeting at 11 am. Minutes of the February meeting as appeared in the newsletter taken as read.

Moved Des Nicholson, seconded Pat Halliburton.

SECRETARY/TREASURER’S REPORT - March 2002

MEMBERSHIP
As at today there are still 77 members who have not paid their subscriptions for 2002. I have sent to each of those members a letter advising that they are unfinancial and asking that they pay their subs by 30th April, 2002.

Only two new members in the last month and we welcome them to our Association. They are:
Mr G Ceconi of Sans Souci
Mr Ken Harrington of Griffith

TV REPRESENTATION
ABC TV telephoned me earlier this month to see if I or one of our members could assist them in the production of a short movie they would be presenting in conjunction with ASH. I suggested they contact Tony Krasnodebski as he lives in Sydney and has an association with ASH.

PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE
No doubt you have read or heard of the problems being faced by many organisations, including the RSL, as a result of the increased premiums on public liability. I have asked our brokers to reduce our Public Liability cover to the minimum amount required by the Department of Fair Trading. They have said this will be done and when done we should receive a refund of over $200.

MINI - COMPUTERS
Adler Business Gifts has sent me a sample of their Mini Robotic Flip Top Computer. Measurements are 5cm x 8cm and they are available, with imprinted lid, for $5.99 each. The minimum order is fifty units. We will keep the sample for the Christmas Draw.

CORRESPONDENCE
2. Jane Reynolds. Sub for Jack Darby and advising that Jack is not well.
3. Vic Bellotti of Woy Woy. Sub and wishing all well for Easter.
4. Newsletters from Victoria, South Australia & Tasmania.
5. Renewal notice from Australia Post for our PO Box.
6. IDEAS Tumut. Advising that their expo will be held at Albury on 24/25 May, 2002.
8. Mrs Jo Nowland. Donation of $30.00.
9. Mr Russ Ewings of Harrington. Thanking Lilah for her visit to see him at Concord.
10. Mrs J Berghammer of Bradbury. Thanking Lilah for material and payment for postage etc.

Moved Lilah Walton, seconded Carol Gardner.

WELFARE OFFICER’S REPORT - For those who are waiting on shower shields, your waiting is over, they have arrived. Both John Nicholson and myself have them. Still $30 per member.

Jack Darby once again has made our ‘Guessing Competition’ prizes. Tickets will be $1 each and a book of 10 shall be sent with ‘Still Talking’ in a few months time. Thank you Jack, trust you are feeling better.

I have been asked by a Speecchie to see if any Larry would like to volunteer to visit people who have had tongue cancer. Please contact me if you feel you would like to help others. Sid Lowe was kind enough to visit a lady at her home and everything went super. Unfortunately Sid has problems and is unable to visit. Maybe later.

John Gifford volunteered to go to St George Hospital to allow Julie to show nursing staff how to change the prosthesis. I think this is great because I receive so many complaints saying some nursing staff at hospitals are not experienced and have difficulty changing it. Thanks John.

We have a lot on our ‘Not 100%’ list. To all of you we wish you a speedy recovery and looking forward to seeing you at our meetings soon. Happy, Holy Easter everybody.
Lilah.

Moved Brian Gardner, seconded Mary Halliburton.

GENERAL BUSINESS - Brian Gardner reported that he is to attend a meeting at Royal North Shore regarding a new hospital visitors course. Two venues are being considered, St George Hospital and Westmead. The applicants will be screened by a selection panel and the courses will start after June.

Lilah Walton reported on a letter received from Sid Lowe regarding a visit to a lady who had surgery on her tongue and face. She had been quite traumatized by this but very much appreciated the visit by Sid. He also thanked Lilah for giving him the opportunity to help someone.

The President reported his inability to attend the next meeting. V P Noel Bluett will officiate in his absence.

The meeting was shortened because work on site made hearing difficult and the heat was oppressive as well.

Meeting closed for lunch. Next meeting 17th April, 2002
MINUTES CONTINUED . . .

WESTERN DISTRICTS NEWS - MARCH 2002

In Stan Morley's absence, due to ill health, new Vice President Ron Carlin chaired our meeting on Tuesday 12th March. We welcomed new member Fred Daniel.

As there were fewer members than usual present, the raffle was deferred until the next meeting.

The date of the postponed barbecue with the Illawarra group was confirmed as Tuesday 21st May, 2002.

Home from hospital and recuperating are Stan Morley, Eric Smith and Daphne Fogarty. We hope to see them at our meetings soon.

Regarding the letter from Grahame Roberts and his problem with wind. I swear by slippery elm in combating acid reflux and thereby, candida. However I don’t know if it's efficacy in controlling wind.

Any suggestions? Home remedy or something from the chemist that has been found to work. Write in to me at my Bondi PO Box or to the Secretary and I will run it in the newsletter and we will see what kind of feedback it might generate.

I've also been commissioned to find out about resuscitation techniques for use on laryngectomies, more about that another time.

THIRD WORLD VOICE PROSTHESSES

Back in August 2000 Margaret Patterson wrote about the plight of laryngectomies in Papua New Guinea and difficulties they faced in either learning oesophageal speech or getting access to a voice prosthesis, this predicament undoubtedly obtains throughout the Third World. Well, the International Association of Laryngectomies (IAL) in the U.S. is seeking a small grant to develop a cheap, rudimentary voice aid for use in the poorer countries of the world.

A potential solution is an inexpensive pneumatic type artificial larynx. These use air from the stoma to vibrate a reed or rubber membrane. That sound is then conveyed to the mouth via a tube into the back of the mouth where it is modified to make speech.

The idea is to use a baby bottle nipple as the base to go over the stoma with a tube connecting it to the mouth. Vibrating membranes made out of rubber such as in a balloon was considered, but presents the problem of providing replacements since they wear out. Another solution would be a vibrating reed such as Al St Germaine used to create the prototype pneumatic device which ultimately became the Tokyo artificial larynx. He used the reed from a party noise-maker.

Finding a durable reed of the right diameter was the challenge. Tom Lennox, an engineer by training, suggested the reeds in a pitch pipe used to tune stringed instruments. He had made up a number of pneumatic artificial larynx's using them, which he had previously sent to Mexico.

The IAL has taken on this project to help Third World laryngectomies to speak. It is seeking a small feasibility grant to work on two solutions - the inexpensive artificial larynx, and a method of providing basic instruction in oesophageal speech via a graphics-only approach on video or CD.

Good on them.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

Re the item on Candida - I had a bad experience with it - one of the valves started to leak after 5 days - I went through a lot of discomfort and many valves before I found the reason.

I was prescribed a lozenge called FUNGLIN which saved the day for me - I have had no trouble since, with the valves lasting from 4 to 6 months before they die of old age. I remove and replace the valve at about 4 weekly intervals and clean it in running water before replacement - the procedure takes about 5 minutes.

I eat and drink what I like and have had no problems for the last 4 - 5 years. I hope this may interest some readers.

Yours faithfully

Grahame Roberts

PS I am interested in the mention of Reflux and slippery elm powder, I suffer a lot from wind and belching, could this treatment help me?
SPANISH COURT BATTLE

On February 22nd the 'Sydney Morning Herald' ran a piece from the 'Guardian' about a court battle commencing in Andalucia, Spain.

The Government of Andalucia is the first European government body to sue the tobacco giants for the cost of treating smoking-related diseases. It spent $A550 million last year, 8.5% of its health bill, treating sickness caused by smoking and wants to emulate 50 State health authorities in the U.S. that got $A443 billion out of the tobacco companies in 1998.

The region's health chief said that tobacco kills more people than alcohol, heroin, cocaine, weapons, homicides, suicides and traffic put together. About 35% of the region's 7 million inhabitants smoke.

The case is expected to go all the way to the highest court as it would start an avalanche of similar cases throughout Europe if successful. The representatives of the five tobacco companies involved were confident that the Spanish claim would fail.

Watch this space.

LARYNGECTOMEE SUPPLIES, available from Lilah Walton:
Stoma Material; $7 per metre.
Shower Shields; $30 each.
Stoma Covers; $4 each.
These are prices for members, postage is extra.

VALE

Regretfully I have to report that the following members have died:

Mr A. Mahoney
of Gateshead West
Mrs L. Krivans
of Highlands

We extend our sincere condolences to the families and friends of these departed members.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting for the Laryngectomee Association of NSW will be held on Wednesday, 17th April, at the Uniting Church Hall, Carrington Avenue, Strathfield, at 11 am.

There is parking on site and it is also a short walk from the Railway Station.

The meeting will be followed by a light luncheon.

Laryngectomees, Friends, Families, Professionals all WELCOME.
COVER YOUR STOMA

It is very important from a health standpoint for laryngectomees to cover their stomas at all times. While there is contradictory advice from equally knowledgeable medical experts on many issues facing laryngectomees, this is not one of them. The consensus of expert medical opinion overwhelmingly supports the wearing of stoma covers. The reason is found in an understanding of how the laryngectomy operation changed our anatomies.

The laryngectomy operation bypassed the entire upper half of the respiratory system. It did this by bringing the trachea tube which used to connect our lungs with our throats, mouths and noses directly to the outside via a surgically created hole, the stoma. We thus lost the breathing function of the upper half of the breathing system.

Our noses, mouths, and throats served a number of important purposes in breathing. They served to perform these functions for incoming air: (1) filter it, (2) humidify and help retain moisture from exhaled air to reuse, (3) warm it, and (4) provide resistance so that our lungs fully inflated.

Prior to the laryngectomy, air would enter through the twin nostrils in an upward direction. The first line of defense in filtering out dirt particles was nose hair. Incoming air was also forced against the curved part of the nasal cavity where it encountered turbinates, or flesh covered bony structures in the nose. Covered with sticky mucous, these trapped more impurities from the air, warmed the air, and provided resistance to incoming air. The air also picked up water vapor from their mucus linings.

The back of the nose and mouth and upper part of the esophagus provided still more filtering, warming, humidifying and resistance as the air traveled downwards. By the time the air reached the lungs, it had almost 100% relative humidity, or was holding all the moisture it could hold. Additionally, the temperature was now close to the body temperature of 98 degrees. When we exhaled, the air coming from our lungs would deposit most of the moisture in it back into the mucus lining for reuse. After laryngectomy, we lose virtually all of this moisture in exhaled air through the stoma unless we cover it.

Stoma covers help to replace functions previously carried out by the nose and mouth in:

a) Filtering airborne dirt particles, bacteria, viral and other biological agents from entering the lungs via the stoma.

b) Retaining some of the moisture from the lungs which would otherwise be lost in exhaled breath.

c) Keeping some warmth from escaping in exhaled air.

d) Restoring some resistance to inhaled and exhaled breath which is helpful in retaining better lung function.

***There are a great many potential negative consequences for not wearing a stoma cover including:

1) Increased danger of respiratory illnesses including pneumonia

2) Greater mucous production

3) Increased coughing

4) Greater possibility of potentially life threatening mucous plugs

5) Chapped irritation from the stoma wall drying out

6) More crusting and potential blockage of airflow through the stoma

7) An enhanced potential for dehydration from the loss of humidity in exhaled breath

8) Reduced lung function from the loss of resistance

If you do not presently wear a stoma cover you may find it easiest to begin with an open weave knit or crocheted stoma cover, and gradually work up to a closer weave, foam cover, or HME (heat/moisture exchange) filter. Although the research is not complete, the HMEs are probably superior in providing for all of the previous functions of the nose in filtering, humidifying, heating, air and providing resistance for improved lung function.
Three riggers were having smoko, way up on a high-rise building site. The Aussie takes out his sandwiches and declares, "Vegemite again, every day it’s Vegemite sandwiches. If I get Vegemite again tomorrow I’m going to jump off this building".

The Pommie rigger opens his sandwiches. "Not cheese slices again," he yells, "If I get the same tomorrow, I’ll be jumping off the building too".

The Irishman bites into his sandwich and groans, "Jam, all I ever get is jam sandwiches. I’ll jump too if I get jam sandwiches again tomorrow".

Next day they are sitting up in the sky opening their sandwiches. The Aussie opens his sandwiches, takes a bite, discovers he has Vegemite again and hurls himself off the building. The Pommie opens his and jumps to his death after tasting his usual cheese slices. The Irishman chomps a piece out of his sandwich, finds it’s jam yet again and follows his workmates to his death.

At the funeral, the wife of the Irishman said, "I just don’t understand it, he always made his own sandwiches".

Bronski joined the American Air Force and was making his first parachute jump. The instructor said: ‘When you jump out of the plane, shout - Geronimo! and pull the ripcord.’

When Bronski woke up in the hospital a few days later, the first thing he asked was: ‘What was the name of that Indian again?’

A famous Viking explorer returned home from a voyage and found his name missing from the town register. His wife insisted on complaining to the local civic official, who apologised profusely saying, ‘I must have taken Leif off my census.’

A man was leaving a cafe with his morning coffee when he noticed a most unusual funeral procession approaching the nearby cemetery. A long black hearse was followed by a second long black hearse about 50 feet behind.

Behind the second hearse was a solitary man walking a pit bull on a leash.

Behind him were 200 men walking single file. The man couldn’t stand the curiosity. He respectfully approached the man walking the dog and said, ‘I am so sorry for your loss, and I know now is a bad time to disturb you,’ but I’ve never seen a funeral like this. Whose funeral is it?’

The man replied, ‘Well, the first hearse is for my wife.’

‘What happened to her?’

The man replied, ‘My dog attacked and killed her.’

He inquired further, ‘Well who is in the second hearse?’

The man answered, ‘My mother-in-law. She was trying to help my wife when the dog turned on her.’

A poignant and thoughtful moment of silence passed between the two men.

‘Can I borrow the dog?’

‘Get in line.’

For weeks, a six year old lad kept telling his teacher about the baby brother or sister that was expected at his house. One day the mother let boy feel the movements of the unborn child. The six year old was obviously impressed, but made no comment. Furthermore, he stopped telling his teacher about the impending event. The teacher finally sat the boy on her lap and said, ‘Tom, whatever has become of that baby brother or sister you were expecting at home?’

Tommy burst into tears and confessed, ‘I think mummy ate it!’
MORE OF THE SAME

The usual suspects have been voted in again unopposed for the committee to represent the Association. John Chaloner has given notice that he will be unable to continue next year as the Speech Aids Co-ordinator. I wouldn’t mind someone taking over the newsletter for a while either as I am in full time employment also, and it does get a bit onerous at times when I have a lot of other stuff happening at the same time. Maybe, year on year off might suit someone?

Our ex-President, Alan Dawson, lost a son to cancer in January and our current President, Brian Gardner, attended the funeral service. His observations are printed on the back page. A terrible blow for Alan and his wife Pat.

The winter Olympics have slipped by almost without notice even with Australia’s best result ever. A far cry from the Sydney Olympics with all the hoo-ha. Unfortunately the whole Olympic movement seems to be increasingly corrupted by money and politics. We’re not setting much of an example to future generations are we?

Anyway, I shouldn’t complain, my health is reasonable, I’m living in the lucky country, I’m in full-time employment, I guess I am just enjoying the luxury of being able to sit back and complain. Have a happy Easter at the end of this month. Drive safely.

A.T. Krasnodebski


APOLOGIES - Faith & Russell Green, Bonny Dun, Josephine Bluett, Pat Rogers, Bruce Darlington, Clarissa Chaloner.

THE PRESIDENT Brian Gardner opened the meeting at 11 am.

MINUTES of 2001 General Meeting as appeared in the Newsletter were taken as read.

Moved Lilah Walton, seconded John Chaloner.

NOMINATIONS: Brian Gardner - President, Noel Bluett - Vice President, John Nicholson - Secretary/Treasurer, John Chaloner - Speech Aids Co-Ordinator, Lilah Walton - Welfare Officer, Tony Krasnodebski - Editor, Mary Halliburton - Minute Secretary. All nominations were accepted unopposed.

FINANCIAL report was read and accepted.

Moved Pat Halliburton, seconded Brian Gardner.

JOHN CHALONER presented a report that office bearers of the Association are to sign forms on behalf of the Association required by Chief Secretary's Dopt and Dept Fair Trading. There being no further business the President closed the Annual General Meeting.


PRESENT - As above.

APOLOGIES - As above.

THE PRESIDENT Brian Gardner recommended the minutes of the last monthly meeting be taken as read.

Moved Alan Dawson, seconded Pat Dawson.

SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT - February 2002

MEMBERSHIP

On behalf of the committee I wish to welcome the following new members:

Mr F A Daniel of Plumpton
Mr John Reilly of Tuggerah
Mr B Hodges of Villawood
Mr R J Horton of Warren
Mr Leo F Bolt of Ashfield
Mr David Southan of Mascot
Mr Gaetano Cecconi of Sans Souci

SUBSCRIPTIONS

At the end of our last financial year (31 Dec 01) there were 116 MEMBERS WHO HAD NOT PAID THEIR SUBS FOR 2002. Since that date 29 members have paid, so there are still some 87 members who are unf 1 financial. Non payment by the due date meant that we were some $2320.00 short on the income for last year. Early payment by those who are unf inancial would be appreciated.

HOSPITAL PATIENTS

Both Bruce Darlington and Stan Morley have been in hospital for some time and we certainly hope that they will soon be well and back in circulation. Perhaps our Welfare Officer has a recent report on their condition.

PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE

Members will be aware that it is a government requirement that we carry a public liability insurance cover for at least five million dollars. Last year that insurance premium was $667.00 but this year will be $841.00. Our Accountant informs me that all insurance companies have increased their premiums.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. Newsletters from other State associations.
3. Mrs J Berghammer of Bradbury. Seeking stoma cover material.
5. Ken Harrigan of Griffith. Seeking copy of 'You Can Say That Again'.
6. Mrs Carol Sylva. Advising that Mr Ross Ewings from Harrington was in Concord Hospital and would like to be visited by other laryngectomees.
7. NSW Health. Advising of vacancies for board members on Health Service Boards.
8. Adler Business Gifts. advertising pens ($5.84 each) minimum order 50 pens.
10. Alan Searle of Arncliffe. Payment for brushes.
11. Tilda Communications. A/c for Web Hosting for 6 months. $198.00.
12. Speech Pathology Australia. Copy of letter to Health Dept. seeking review of PADP conditions for voice prosthesis and general limitations on funding for disabled people.

Moved Noel Bluett, seconded Margaret Silver.

WELFARE OFFICER'S REPORT - Only seems like a few years ago I was thinking of how slow the months were going before my 21st birthday party, now these years seem to fly by. At any rate another year is here and I trust it has started off being a good year for all.

I haven't heard of any members suffering home loss although I know of a few of you had to leave your homes,
to return when the fires were out. I hope with the new helicopters we never experience fire damage like that again.

The Christmas party at Kirribilli was a very happy time and it's great seeing old friends and families. We missed some regulars who couldn't attend.

Our Hospital Visitors, Brian Gardner and John Chaloner, have been very busy visiting new larys. Brian did RPA, POW and Westmead in one day. Let's hope the 'cure' is not far off. Don't forget to assist. All donations should be sent to Cancer Research.

Pat and Alan Dawson's eldest son, Colin, died last month. Judging by the attendance at his funeral, which Brian Gardner and I attended, he was a very popular person. I know everyone from the Laryngectomee Association extend to Colin's wife, daughter and the Dawson family our heartfelt sympathy.

Trish Blunt from the TV programme 'All Saints' rang me re. a 'new laryngectomee' who will be featured in a future episode, but had to be taught how to use an electrolarynx, kindly lent by Pacific Medical. Kevin Cassidy (larry) was kind enough to go to ATN7 at Epping and teach him then supervise the shooting. I also sent a stoma cover; can't have a lary without a stoma cover!!! Episode should be on in May but will let you know later.

We have Bonny Dun, Josefine Bluest, Jean Case, Bruce Darlington, Stan Morley, Ross Ewings, Jack Darby and Brian Gardner on our 'not so well list. Anybody else who is not sparking on all cylinders our best wishes and trust it won't be long before you're all 100%.

Moved Margaret Silver, seconded John Gifford.

**SPEECH AIDS CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT - FEB 2002**

Things are very quiet so far this calendar year.

I've been testing the Communicative Medical ToneAire MkIIl pneumo larynx speech aid. It's certainly an improvement on the Mk I and provides pretty good tonal range. I'm about to make a tape to send to them in the U.S. so the manufacturers can compare it with their Mk I and the Memacon DSP-81. I hope to get to the April Strathfield meeting and will bring the various aids along for a demonstration.

I still feel it would be a useful aid for Speech Pathologists for getting initial voice with new laryngectomees because of its simplicity and ease of use.

If any speeches are interested please call me to arrange a demo!

As you'll see in General Business I have Committee approval to convert one of our loan Cooper Rand aids to the latest 9volt battery configuration. This will enable us to still have one available for loan since the original type batteries are no longer being made.

You'll see that following the AGM Lilah is still our Welfare Officer and John Nicholson has agreed to remain as Secretary/Treasurer for a few months 'til we can find replacements for his two roles. I give notice now that I will probably not stand for Speech Aid Co-ordinator for 2003 (but will attempt to find someone to carry on).

There was much discussion at the AGM about finding office bearers for your Association. Yes - we are getting some members of a younger age but that just means they probably return to work and so don't have the time to devote to Association matters. We aren't alone in finding it difficult to get new faces on our committee - I understand Queensland and Victoria are in the same boat - as are many other voluntary organisations - for a variety of reasons.

I urge you all to consider how you could help yourself, and others, by maintaining a vibrant Laryngectomee Association. The tasks need not be onerous and if we can get enough people to job-share the roles it will be even easier.

Lilah Walton and John (& Des) Nicholson have given years of wonderful service to the Association - they deserve their retirement!

**GENERAL BUSINESS** - Noel Bluett raised concerns of gradual eroding of funds but Brian Gardner said that the society exists to help laryngectomees. Des Nicholson expressed concern at the aging of members and the lack of young volunteers. Tony Krasnodebski pointed out that most of the younger members were still working and could access their information on the internet. This of course does not take into account the companionship and friendship in belonging to the Association.

Alan Dawson read a letter that accompanied a donation in memory of his son Colin. He suggested that if people wished, future donations be directed to the Cancer Research to help fund ways of eradicating the disease.

Timothy Rahr was to be a speaker at the meeting but as his company are not going ahead with the importation of the appliance they thought would interest the group, he cancelled. However we thank him and the company for the very welcome cheque of $100 which he enclosed.

Once more the issue of non-payment of subs. was raised by John Chaloner. A slip will be enclosed with the next newsletter to remind people of this. Brian Gardner will approach the Cancer Council to run a short course for laryngectomee hospital visitors.

Meeting closed 12am. Next meeting March 20th.

**WESTERN DISTRICTS NEWS - FEBRUARY 2002**

At the AGM on Tuesday 12th the office bearers for 2002 were elected as follows: President, Stan Morely; Treasurer, Alan Dawson; Secretary, Pat Halliburton; Assistant Secretary, Mary Halliburton; Minute Secretary, Pat Dawson; Social Secretaries, Helen Morely and Pat Dawson; Vice President, Ron Carlson; Welfare Officer, Eric Smith; Committee Members, Kevin Kelly, Peg and Ron Fazzakerley.

The barbecue with Illawarra on 5th March has been postponed until 21st May due to the bus being unavailable on the 5th.

Stan Morley is in hospital and expects to be home soon. Eric Smith is home from hospital after a long stay over Christmas and New Year.

The President has received notification of the deaths of two of our members, Peter Young and Djuro Bucko.
CANDIDA

This item has appeared before, in August 2000, and there is nothing new to add at this time, however, new laryngectomees using a voice prosthesis could find the information useful.

Candida is the yeast infection which colonises the voice prosthesis and eventually causes leakage of liquid into the windpipe and/or makes voice production difficult.

There are a number of strategies you can adopt to eliminate or at least control candida. Take Nilstat "Nystatin" oral drops; an eyedropper comes with the bottle, swill an eyedropper full around your mouth, and gargle, for at least four minutes before swallowing. Use as often as you consider necessary, personally I use it once a day before going to bed. Apparently there are also Nilstat lozenges but I don’t know anything about them.

When changing your prosthesis, coat the inside of the internal flange of the fresh prosthesis with Daktarin Oral Gel before insertion.

The removed prosthesis should be thoroughly CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE

NORTHERN RIVERS BRANCH

Our Christmas party was held at ‘Maggie Moore’s' on Tuesday the 11th of December, (see photo below).

The Christmas raffle was drawn and the first prize, consisting of a Christmas Hamper, was won by Charlie Scotcher. The second prize, a Christmas Cake, was won by Katie Gillespie, a Speech Therapist from St Vincents Hospital. Proceeds from the raffle will go towards the purchase of a printer for our computer.

It is with sad regret that we announce the loss of one of our members, Roy Ramage. Our condolences go to his wife Gertie.

There might be a slight delay before we have our next luncheon meeting, due to the fact that John Basso is off to the Royal Brisbane Hospital to undergo surgery and radium treatment.

Back Row: Nora Cocoran, Charlie Scotcher, John Basso, Jenny Basso, Jenny Basso, Rachel Payne, Jim Flick, Dulcie Flick, Peter Ackersdyke.
Front Row: Frank Cocoran, John Pollard, Betty Pollard, Mary Ackersdyke.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting for the Laryngectomee Association of NSW will be held on Wednesday, 20th March, at the Uniting Church Hall, Carrington Avenue, Strathfield, at 11 am.

There is parking on site and it is also a short walk from the Railway Station.

The meeting will be followed by a light luncheon.

Laryngectomees, Friends, Families, Professionals all WELCOME.

VALE

We would like to pass on our sincere condolences to the families and friends of the following deceased members.

Mrs B Cullen of Castle Hill
Mrs G Maguire of St Georges Basin
Dottle; I came across that word in a book recently and had to look it up in the dictionary. It is the remaining fragments of tobacco in a pipe after it has been smoked. The word has probably fallen into disuse because pipe smoking has become such an unfashionable pastime in these days of segregated smoking.

Pipe and cigar smoking harks back to a more leisurely age, although cigar smoking is apparently making a renaissance to some extent, according to various reports. To take your tobacco from a tin or packet, rub it, fill a pipe and tamp it down to the required density whereby it will draw freely when smoked, but not too quickly, would take at least two or three minutes, and that is assuming that the pipe did not need cleaning before use. Whereas taking a tailor-made cigarette from it's pack, ready for instant use, takes a matter of seconds.

With smoking bans in place in most workplaces and many public areas, having a smoke is a bit like taking any other drugs. Hanging around with other addicts, furtively getting a quick hit of nicotine in some secluded corner is not conducive to preparing a pipe, especially in inclement weather. The trouble with addiction is that it's extremely difficult to stop the habit regardless of the barriers and inconveniences placed in the way. It's a wonder that chewing tobacco and snuff hasn't made a comeback, though I imagine there would be a fair bit of resistance to spittoons appearing beside desks in offices.

The first time that I smoked a pipe was when I was in primary school. The pipe was good because cigarette butts could be smoked down completely and if an adult that knew you happened along, the pipe could be placed in a pocket, still alight, and two empty hands were on view so the adult would not become suspicious. It paid to be in a hurry, as getting into a conversation could result in the pipe starting to burn your leg. The tobacco that I bought to smoke in the pipe was called "Black Beauty Shag", which was a name to conjure with. I think it was actually cigarette rolling tobacco as it was ready rubbed, but of a pretty poor quality up against "Golden Virginia" and "Old Holborn". Not that it mattered too much as it was frequently cut with cigarette butts and even leaves off trees. I seem to recall that beech leaves weren't too bad for smoking.

Apparently, the term "pipe" for a smoking utensil, was coined by an Englishman named John Florio. I imagine that he would have been in North America at the time as that is where tobacco came from and the Red Indians used to smoke pipes made of a certain type of rock called "pipe-stone". Maybe that's why most pipes were made of clay originally, before various woods were brought into play.

Pipe smoking can turn out to be a very complicated pastime, with a pipe for each blend of tobacco, jars or pouches of the various blends and all the other smoking paraphernalia. A pipe has to be broken in to each mixture being used by the smoker and there could be up to six mixtures in favour. Strong ones for smoking outdoors especially when it's cold, mild ones to start the day or smoking outside in warmer weather and aromatic ones for a leisurely smoke in the evening in front of the fire.

Still, I suppose none of that concerns us any more, does it?
drinking beer or eating cakes drink water or lemon juice to rinse your mouth. A good idea is to keep a jug of water containing slices of lemon in your fridge.

Reflux can also encourage candida growth, slippery elm powder mixed into a little milk or a number of proprietary remedies can be used to combat this.

Acidophilus yoghurt is a good way to finish a meal with a view to attacking candida, Jala and Attiki have a good range at the supermarket.

Two hunters in the bush got completely lost, wandered around for a while, then one of the hunters said 'If we fire three shots into the air and stand still somebody will come and rescue us'. 'Good idea' said the other hunter. They did this and waited an hour, nothing happened. So they decided to fire another three. Once again they waited and nothing seemed to be happening and one hunter turned to the other and said 'No one seems to be coming and we only have three arrows left'!!!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

VALE COLIN ROSS DAWSON

Early this year on the 29th of January together with Lilah Walton, Stan and Helen Morley and other members of your Association I represented our group at the funeral service of Colin Ross Dawson, the eldest son of Pat and Alan Dawson. Funerals in their own right are often a release for relatives, especially after a long or protracted illness. However, there seems to be a special or more critical impact when the departed is one of your children. Such was the case for Pat and Alan.

It was something I had never done before - attended the funeral service of a person I had never met. I attended initially as a mark of my great respect and admiration for the Dawsons. I was tremendously impressed and moved by what was to follow. The eulogies given by Colin's brother and sister were intense, extremely descriptive and given with deep emotion and feeling.

Driving home I had time to reflect on what I had seen and heard. I honestly felt as though Colin had been a close and personal mate of mine. He truly must have been a wonderful man and an adoring son. I felt Pat and Alan's loss more deeply. I honestly felt a better person for attending the service.

"Where does love go when it leaves us
Now that Colin has died.
Back to the heart where it came from,
Or does it form tears in our eyes."

The President - Brian Gardner
HAPPY NEW YEAR

Another festive season out of the way. I find it harder and harder to keep up the pace with all the eating and drinking. Especially the drinking. I hope all our readers enjoyed themselves and feel refreshed to tackle another year.

The annual general meeting is this month and all positions fall vacant so if you feel able to perform any function for the Association you are encouraged to apply on the form from the November newsletter and attend the meeting.

There will be a guest speaker at the meeting, a Mr Timothy Raha of Precise Medical Supplies who will be telling us about the Medasil Humistom Stoma Button. This device can be worn with a voice prosthesis and doesn’t require adhesives. Like similar products it helps reduce mucus production and the incidence of chest infections while the airflow resistance can improve breathing capacity.

What about all those fires over Christmas and new year? I hope none of our membership was adversely affected with either property damage or health problems. It would have been terrible to have been an asthmatic or suffer other respiratory ailments in all that smoke and heat I would imagine.

Anyway, I wish you all good luck and the very best of health in the year 2002.

A.T. Krasnodebski
ANTI-SMOKING AD

With the December newsletter I circulated a request to laryngectomees living within the Sydney metropolitan area to volunteer to appear in an anti-smoking advert on television, what with being the year of the volunteer and everything.

What transpired was that the production people were looking at our website www.stilltalking.org.au and decided that they wanted me to appear in the advertisement and asked me if I could oblige. Well, after my spiel about how people should try and do their bit I felt obligated to assist even though it necessitated taking an afternoon off work for the innumerable takes it required before I appeared half suitable for the ad.

I didn’t actually see the finished product but was told by people who recognised me, that it appeared on Channel 9 on New Year’s Eve and on a few subsequent occasions. Apparently, they might run it again next year also. Let’s hope it encouraged someone to quit smoking as a new year’s resolution.

THE LOST CHORD CLUB

The Australian Women’s Weekly of August 15, 1979 ran a story on Mrs Margaret King and the Lost Chord Club of NSW.

Margaret was 37 years old when she had her laryngectomy in 1960. She said it was a shock but she learnt to speak reasonably quickly as she was still fairly young and adaptable. A housewife and mother of two grown-up children and volunteer worker at Royal North Shore Hospital, Margaret was one of about 300 members of the NSW Lost Chord Club, an organization for laryngectomees formed in 1958.

Back in those days there weren’t any voice prostheses around and there was no mention in the article of an electrolarynx so speech therapists had their time cut out teaching laryngectomees to speak oesophageally through the ‘controlled belch or burp’. The sound then being articulated into words with tongue, lips, teeth and palate as with normal speakers.

With the help of Lost Chord Club members, new laryngectomees were helped to begin to communicate and with understanding and encouragement they took the first step: belief that in the future they would be able to speak. Many laryngectomees found adjustment in a family situation hard and the initial difficulties of learning to speak a barrier. They felt isolated. Lost Chord Clubs encouraged families to join regular meetings and activities so both patient and family found support.

Other members who received a mention in the article were the president, Ray Beness who had his surgery in 1958 and joined the club three months after it’s formation. Also Stan Purcell, vice-president, who had been a laryngectomee for 13 years in 1979 and learnt to speak within six weeks. He said it was a case of having to as he had to get back to work and couldn’t hold down his job without speaking.

This is the foundation of our current Laryngectomee Association of NSW, so I guess we owe a debt of gratitude to Margaret King and the other members of the Lost Chord Club for their pioneering efforts for which we are reaping the benefits in the 21st Century.

Thanks to Lilah for showing me this article.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting for the Laryngectomee Association of NSW will be held on Wednesday, 20th February, at the Uniting Church Hall, Carrington Avenue, Strathfield, at 11 am.

There is parking on site and it is also a short walk from the Railway Station.

The meeting will be followed by a light luncheon. Laryngectomees, Friends, Families, Professionals all WELCOME.
Speech Aids Co-ordinators' Report
- January 2002

I've had nil response to my mention in the November newsletter of the problems with batteries for the Cooper Rand speech aid, which is a good thing - it means our members who use that type of aid have already upgraded their unit to the 9volt battery.

Monarch Medical from Brisbane have kindly donated two speech aids to our Association. We thank them very much for this gesture.

I have just received from Communicative Medical in the US their ToneAire Mk II pneumo-larynx speech aid for evaluation. I'll report more next month.

In 2001 your Association supplied to members, at a reduced price, 33 batteries for the Servox speech aid. We also lent out a speech aid 14 times, being a Servox 10 times and a Nu-Vois 4 times.

ARTIFICIAL LARYNX

A large number of laryngectomees use an electronic artificial larynx device for communication. These devices are placed against the neck or cheek to generate a tone that is used for speech.

There are a number of variables that determine the success in using an artificial larynx and the major one is finding the "Sweet Spot", that one particular spot that makes all the difference.

The Speech Pathologist's job is to find the Sweet Spot, the one or two locations that most effectively transfers the speech signal into the pharynx and mouth for speech. Failure to make proper placement will result in unintelligibility, excessive noise, poor signal transfer and a frustrating lack of clear communication.

After surgery the Sweet Spot may be hard to find and changing position. This is mostly due to edema in the head and neck region, which can last for weeks or even months after the operation. Because of these changes it is good to recheck for optimal placement.

When a Sweet Spot is found, the patient should practise to consistently and automatically place the device. Using a mirror and/or marking the spot can be helpful in achieving the objective. Ear training and audio-recording could also assist in consistently locating the Sweet Spot.

FANCY A CUPPA?

Lilah Walton sent me a clipping from the "Sun-Herald" of December 16, 2001 that said women who drink many cups of piping hot tea are in danger of developing throat cancer.

Researchers in Scotland questioned 159 women suffering from squamous cell carcinoma, the most common form of throat cancer, and inferred from the study that the risk is three times greater for women who drink boiling hot tea than those who drink it warm.

The study published in the "British Journal Of Cancer" claims the burning effect of hot tea passing through the oesophagus may explain relatively high throat cancer rates among women.

No mention was made of coffee or other drinks served hot, but I imagine care should be taken in drinking anything made with a boiling liquid.

LARYNGECTOMEES SUPPLIES, available from Lilah Walton:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stoma Material</td>
<td>$7 per metre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shower Shields</td>
<td>$30 each.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stoma Covers</td>
<td>$4 each.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These are prices for members, postage is extra.
Three turtles, Joe, Steve, and Raymond, decide to go on a picnic. So Joe packs the picnic basket with cookies, bottled sodas, and sandwiches. The trouble is, the picnic site is 10 miles away, so the turtles take 10 whole days to get there. By the time they do arrive, everyone's exhausted.

Joe takes the stuff out of the basket, one by one. He takes out the sodas and says, 'Alright, Steve, gimme the bottle opener.' 'I didn't bring the bottle opener,' Steve says. 'I thought you packed it.'

Joe gets worried. He turns to Raymond. 'Raymond, do you have the bottle opener?' Naturally, Raymond doesn't have it, so the turtles are stuck ten miles away from home without soda. Joe & Steve beg Raymond to turn back home and retrieve it, but Raymond flatly refuses, knowing that they'll eat everything by the time he gets back. After about two hours, the turtles manage to convince Raymond to go, swearing on their great-grand turtles' graves that they won't touch the food.

So, Raymond sets off down the road, slow and steadily. Twenty days pass, but no Raymond. Joe and Steve are hungry and puzzled,

but a promise is a promise.

Another day passes, and still no Raymond, but a promise is a promise. After three more days pass without Raymond in sight, Steve starts getting restless. 'I NEED FOOD!' he says with a hint of dementia in his voice.

'NO!' Joe retorts. 'We promised.' Five more days pass. Joe realizes that Raymond probably skipped out to the diner down the road, so the two turtles weakly lift the lid, get a sandwich, and open their mouths to eat.

But then, right at that instant, Raymond pops out from behind a rock, and says, 'I knew it!, I'm not bloody going.'

A thief broke into the local police station and stole all the lavatory equipment. A spokesperson was quoted as saying, 'We have absolutely nothing to go on.'

A man asked his wife, "What would you most like for your birthday?"

She said, "I'd love to be ten again."

On the morning of her birthday, he got her up bright and early and off they went to a theme park.

He put her on every ride in the park-the Death Slide, The Screaming Loop, the Wall of Fear. Everything there was, she had a go.

She staggered out of the theme park five hours later, her head reeling and her stomach upside down.

Into McDonald's they went, where she was given a Double Big Mac with extra fries and a strawberry shake.

Then off to a theater to see Star Wars-more burgers, popcorn, cola and sweets. At last she staggered home with her husband and collapsed into bed.

Her husband leaned over and asked, "Well, dear, what was it like being ten again?"

One eye opened and she groaned, "Actually I meant dress size."

Evidence has been found that William Tell and his family were avid bowlers. However, all the league records were unfortunately destroyed in a fire. Thus we'll never know for whom the Tells bowled.

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