

# Still talking

Dedicated to the welfare of Laryngectomees and those with similar vocal disorders

## TIME TO BOOK YOUR SEAT AT THE CHRISTMAS PARTY

ALL CORRESPONDENCE : The Secretary, The Laryngectomee Association of NSW, PO Box 380, BELROSE, NSW 2085 Fax & Phone 02 9451 7926 Email: lansw@bigpond.com

No 225

The Laryngectomee Association of NSW<sup>©</sup>

NOVEMBER 2011

Print Post No. PP 255003/05133

### OFFICE BEARERS 2011

**PRESIDENT:** Brian Gardner, 4 Merelyn Road, BELROSE, 2085. 02 9452 2858

**VICE PRESIDENT (1):** Russell Green, 17/765 Princes Hwy, BLAKEHURST, 2221. 02 9547 3669

**VICE PRESIDENT (2):** Peter McGregor, 21/39 Cook Rd, CENTENNIAL PARK, 2021. 0419 421 324

**TREASURER/WELFARE OFFICER:** Carol Gardner, PO Box 380, BELROSE, 2085.  
Fax & Phone - 02 9451 7926. Email - lansw@bigpond.com

**ASSISTANT WELFARE OFFICER & Hospital Packs:** Bruce Hodges, 31 Clack Rd, CHESTER HILL, 2162. 0404 400 842

**SPEECH AIDS COORDINATOR:** John Chaloner, PO Box 31, SUMMER HILL, 2130. 02 9560 2852

**EDITOR:** A.T.Krasnodebski, PO Box 232, BONDI, 2026.  
02 9130 2560. Email - antoni.krasnodebski@deewr.gov.au

### WHO TO CONTACT

**BLOM SINGER SUPPLIES:** David Smith, 27 Bellevue Pde, NORTH CURL CURL, 2099.  
02 9939 1539 Ask for David personally.

**SPEECH AIDS, BATTERIES, ADVICE ON REPAIRS:** John Chaloner, PO Box 31, SUMMER HILL, 2130. 02 9560 2852

**SHOWER SHIELDS, STOMA COVER MATERIAL AND WELFARE MATTERS:** Carol Gardner, PO Box 380, BELROSE, 2085.  
Fax & Phone 02 9451 7926

**ACCOMMODATION ASSISTANCE WHEN NEEDING OUT-PATIENT TREATMENT AWAY FROM HOME:** Cancer Council of NSW, 153 Dowling Street, WOOLLOOMOOLOO, 2011 (PO Box 572, Kings Cross, 1340) Phone 02 9334 1900 Fax 02 9357 2676. Or contact Social Worker at the hospital you will be attending.

### WEBSITES

**ASSOCIATION WEB PAGE:** [www.stilltalking.org](http://www.stilltalking.org)

**INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LARYNGECTOMEES:** [www.theial.com/ial](http://www.theial.com/ial)

**WEB WHISPERS:** [www.webwhispers.org](http://www.webwhispers.org)

### **NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 16 November, 2011  
at the Sydney Mechanics Institute  
280 Pitt Street, SYDNEY. 11 am.

The meeting will be followed by light refreshments.

Laryngectomees, Friends, Families,  
Professionals all WELCOME.

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### MONTHLY MEETINGS

**NSW Association:** 3rd Wednesday of month Sydney Mechanics Institute, 280 Pitt St, SYDNEY, 2000 at 11am.

**NEW ENGLAND:** Meets 2pm 1st Wed. December Conference Room, Rehab Unit, Tamworth Base Hosp. 02 6767 8369

**NEWCASTLE:** 3rd Tues. Monthly Mayfield Bowling Club, Ingall St, Mayfield. Contact John Lovett 02 4954 8308

**NORTHERN RIVERS:** 4 times annually at rotating venues. Contact Speech Pathology Lismore Base Hospital 02 6620 2157

**ALBURY:** Meets alternate months from Feb. Contact Norma Teasdale 02 6021 1749

**CANBERRA:** Wed 24/8/11 - 10:30, Wed 7/12/11 - 10:30  
Canberra Hospital 02 6244 2230.

**SOUTHERN DISTRICTS:** Last Wed of month 11am. Thomas Rachael Moore Education Centre, Liverpool Hospital. Contact Pres. George Petkovic 0432 077 095

**MID NORTH COAST:** Port Macquarie Community Health Centre. Last Wednesday of March, June, Sept, & 1st Wed Dec. Contact David McClymont - President 02 6559 8383

**CENTRAL COAST:** Meet at Central Coast Leagues Club. Contact Speech Pathology Department (Gosford Hospital) 02 4320 3634 or Bill Byfield 0402 045 048.

**COFFS/CLARENCE:** Coffs Harbour Health Campus, Shearwater Lodge. Meets 4 times annually. Contact Melissa Parish (SP) 02 6656 7606

# MINUTES

## MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING HELD 19th OCTOBER 2011 – LARYNGECTOMEE ASSOCIATION of NSW at SMSA, 280 PITT STREET, SYDNEY at 11am

**PRESENT:** Brian Gardner, Russell Green, Ruth Gray, Colin Phelan, Barry Bunker, Bruce Hodges, Bob Nash, Peter Tierney, John Czadrik, John Pyle, Greg Joss, Peter McGregor, Antoni Krasnodebski, Carol Gardner, Charm Nash, Glenda Tierney.

**APOLOGIES:** Ray Chappelow, Victor Stumbles, John Chaloner, Pat Bunker, Patricia Lamont., Pat Dawson.

**THE PRESIDENT** opened the meeting and requested that the Minutes of the meeting of 21st September 2011 as presented in the October 2011 Newsletter be accepted as read. There were no matters arising therefrom.

Resolved. Ruth Gray/Peter Tierney.

### SECRETARY/TREASURER REPORT

#### CORRESPONDENCE

Email copy of email sent by John Chaloner to Chris at LMA Pacmed, thanking them and MPM (especially Cheri) in the U.S., for the repair and refurbishment of 6 Nu-Vois speech aids at no charge.

Email from Pauline Dooley (Speech Therapist) thanking the Association, especially Peter McGregor, who attended her lecture to speech pathology students at Macquarie University on Thursday 6/10/11. "The students asked many inciteful questions, those I certainly would not have been able to answer, and Peter brought the anatomy and physiology of laryngectomy 'to life'!"

Thank you card from Hunter Valley Region Branch of L.A. of NSW Inc. Secretary, John Lovett, "On behalf of all our members many thanks for this contribution (i.e. donation \$3,000) which will enable us to continue to support our laryngectomees."

Email and parcel of donated goods from David Ho, husband of the late Daphne Ho of Wattle Park, S.A., thanking the Association for past assistance and support.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** (Carol Gardner) from 22nd September 2011 to 19th October 2011.

ADELAIDE BANK		EXPENDITURE	
Opening Balance	7567	Donation to Hunter Valley Branch (L.A.)	3000
Interest/Income	26		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7593</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3000</b>

BALANCE AS AT 19/10/11 = \$4593

IOOF (PSI) as at 14/10/11 = \$27941

COMMONWEALTH BANK Term Deposit = \$415,000 @ 6.2% maturing 4/1/2012

COMMONWEALTH BANK		EXPENDITURE	
Opening Balance	2218	Catering	66
Cancer Council NSW	170	Phone/Internet	87
Sales	154	Postage	197

Members' Subs	30	Stationery/Office	21
Donations	10	Patient Supplies	115
		Rent (Aug)	33
		Travel (5 months)	606
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1125</b>

BALANCE AS AT 19/10/11 = \$1457

Resolved Bob Nash/Peter McGregor

No progress to report regarding the funds (frozen in Colonial First State Mortgage Income Fund) in the IOOF (PSI) investment. Many thanks to Bob Nash for his input re results he obtained for a personal investment, which he was finally able to redeem after much perserverence from CFMIF. Armed with this info IOOF will again be contacted in order to get some/all of these funds for the Association to use more beneficially.

### WELFARE REPORT: (Carol Gardner)

#### NEW MEMBERS:

Raymond BROWNLIE of Claymore,  
Kevin BELCHER of Robertson,  
Christopher CREAL of Glen William.

#### VALE:

Mr Leslie BRILL of Ganmain,  
Mrs Daphne HO of Wattle Park, SA,  
"Bob" SHIRLEY of Paddington,  
John McENEARNEY of Killcare,  
David GREEN of Barden Ridge,  
George JOSEPH of Corrimal, whose daughter Rita FINLAY contacted and informed us about the loss of a much loved and loving Dad and Grandfather and husband to Mary. Rita wrote an article and sent photos of George and family for our Newsletter a year or so ago and wants to continue being a member and staying in touch with the Association supporting others. Condolences have been sent to families and friends. I would like to add as an encouragement to our "new" and "old" laryngectomees that the deaths of some of our members (perhaps a majority even) have not been related to their throat cancer or laryngectomy, but other causes that will catch up with all of us at some time (sometimes far too early for many).

Best wishes to Bill Byfield - still having his nose "re-modelled" - how vain, Bill! Special love and hugs to Andrew Frampton, wife Mandy and their three lovely children going through some tough times at present. It would be wonderful if the SEACHANGE from Young to Shellharbour could work some miracles for you. Someone please remind me again NOT to whinge about minor ailments/problems!!

### GENERAL BUSINESS:

No accounts are sent out for annual membership subs. Please pay the required \$10 for 2012 when form appears in this or next Newsletter and MAKE SURE your name is sent by the Commonwealth Bank (or yourself). Some members are already ahead with their payment.

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## MINUTES CONTINUED . . .

*Cont'd from Page 2*

John Pyle advised that he also had attended tutorials for a large number of students held at Macquarie University recently at the invitation of Rachelle Robinson (nee Simpson) Speech Pathologist from P.O.W. The more the graduating students can learn about laryngectomees and their specific needs the better, particularly for those doing their early years in country areas, where unfortunately some of our members have had problems. See later item, which we

will be handing on to more knowledgeable people than ourselves.

A number of Christmas Party acceptances are strating to come through - RSVP date 21/11/2011!!

The meeting closed at 12.15pm. Lunch, tea and coffee followed.

NEXT MEETING - 11.00am - 16th November 2011 at SMSA, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

*Dear Sir,*

*I wonder if any of our rural "lary's" have trouble getting their indwelling prostheses changed?*

*My operation was performed in August three years ago. At the time I was told I was to have the prosthesis changed 3 monthly. When I came home I was told a change should last for 6 months. I have been visiting "Lourdes Hospital" in Dubbo to visit the Speech Pathologist as an out-patient.*

*Recently my Community Health Nurse rang for an appointment on my behalf, she was told that "Lourdes" were no longer taking out-patients. She was referred to Dubbo Base Hospital where the Speechie there said that she was sorry but she hadn't done her training in that area yet, but hoped to complete her course in September.*

*So we were referred back to my Head and Neck Specialist. He said he would do it for me, even though it had been 5 years since he had been required to do so. As he does not bulk bill the replacing procedure plus my normal appointment was costed as over \$500.00. As I did not have the fee he was very good in allowing me just to pay the gap.*

*He told me that the only other thing he could do would be to refer me back to St Vincent's Hospital. This would entail the cost of travelling over 6 hours to Sydney and return. Plus accommodation for at least one night. Then fares to and from the hospital, plus meals.*

*I know I am not the only "lary" in the bush and I would like to know if they are also having problems in obtaining services.*

*Sorry to moan, as I am lucky and I thank God I am living. A lot of people are worse off than I.*

*Thank you.*

*Name and Address Supplied*

"Doctor, I'd like you to evaluate my 13 year-old son."

"OK: He's most likely suffering from a transient psychosis with an intermittent rage disorder, punctuated by episodic radical mood swings, but his prognosis is good for full recovery."

"How can you say that without even meeting him?"

"I thought you said he's 13?"

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

Further to me advising you of the HME 7240 Provox cassettes that I received on the 16/6/2011 and the 7673 Provox Lary button I received on the 30/6/2011 after ringing Enable, I have received further information from my Speech Pathologist regarding the HME 7240 Provox cassette.

Virginia, my Speech Pathologist, attended a meeting last week and was advised that Enable are waiting for the HME 7240 cassettes to be approved by the government so they can supply all concerned. So it appears from what Virginia mentioned I was very lucky to receive the cassettes.

However, all the other products, voice prostheses, lary buttons, tube holders etc. appear to be okay to be ordered except for the cassettes.

I still suggest for our people to contact Enable regarding their order if there has been a delay. The reason being, I contacted Enable today, 20/9/2011, regarding my order for 7668 tube holders that was placed on 20/7/2011 and was advised that they are waiting for funding and should be able to supply the tube holders very soon.

Kind regards

Bob Nash

(Apologies to Bob for printing the wrong letter last month.)

## 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 laryngectomees 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

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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 laryngectomy 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 pharyngo-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.

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 laryngectomy 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.***

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## humour

Gary Ayres noticed that his star player, Wayne Carey, had so many women hanging around that he couldn't possibly handle all of them. So one day after practice, Ayres asked Wayne, "Just what the hell is your secret with the

women?"

So Carey replies, "Well, Coach, whenever I'm about to have sex, I always whip it out and bang it on the dresser like a hammer. That numbs it and I can screw 'em forever!"

Ayres decided that this was a good idea so one day he

left training early. When he got home he heard his wife in the shower. Seeing a window of opportunity, he tore off his clothes and started banging it on the dresser.

His wife stuck her head out of the shower and said, "Is that you Wayne?"

**THE LARYNGECTOMEE ASSOCIATION OF NSW**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 11am, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15th 2012**

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

At the Annual General meeting of the Laryngectomee Association of NSW, to be held on Wednesday, February 15th, 2012 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 Acting Secretary of the Laryngectomee Association of NSW, PO Box 380, BELROSE, NSW 2085, by **31st January 2012**.

The following offices are to be filled:-

- President**                  **Vice-Presidents (2)**                  **Secretary**                  **Treasurer**
- Welfare Officer**                  **Speech Aids Co-Ordinator**                  **Newsletter Editor**
- Minutes Secretary**    **Committee Members (2)**

**NOMINATION FORM**

**LARYNGECTOMEE ASSOCIATION NSW, COMMITTEE 2012**  
(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.....

**RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP**

**NAME**.....**PHONE**.....  
**ADDRESS**.....**POSTCODE**.....  
**SIGNATURE**.....

**Annual subscription is \$10.00**

Please post this form to The Treasurer, LANSW, PO Box 380, BELROSE NSW 2085.

Payment can be made by cheque or money order or by depositing funds into any Commonwealth Bank to account of L.A. of N.S.W. – BSB 062 595 A/C No. 00905579. PLEASE ensure Bank transmits your name otherwise notify the Treasurer of your payment.

Payment by internet banking does not require this form to be sent but please include your name on transfer otherwise your membership will not be credited.

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