



# Still Talking

*Next meeting Pg. 3*

*Dedicated to the welfare of Laryngectomees and those with similar vocal disorders. ALL CORRESPONDENCE :  
The Secretary, The Laryngectomee Association of NSW Inc PO Box 443 Woy Woy, NSW 2256*

Email: [lansw@stilltalking.org](mailto:lansw@stilltalking.org).

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The Laryngectomee Association of NSW Inc©

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## *Office Bearers*

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### **PRESIDENT:**

Les Byrnes, 82/79-87 Boyce Road,  
MAROUBRA, 2035.(02) 93440445.  
0401585287

penbyrnes23@gmail.com

### **VICE PRESIDENT,**

### **WEBSITE ADMINISTRATION:**

Greg Joss 61 Morrice Street, LANE  
COVE 2066 (02) 9427 0509

### **VICE PRESIDENT:**

Peter Tierney, 11Berrico Place,  
BANGOR, 2234 (02) 9543 0478

### **SECRETARY/TREASURER:**

Nigel Balm, PO Box 443 Woy Woy,  
NSW 2256 0449 155 766  
lansw@stilltalking.org.

### **WELFARE OFFICER: STOMA**

### **COVERS, SHOWER SHIELDS,**

### **Patient Packs & Welcome Packs:**

Yvonne Byrnes Unit 82/ 79-87/Boyce  
Rd Maroubra. 2035. Phones  
93440445/ 0423517737.

ybyrnes23@gmail .com

### **ASSISTANT WELFARE OFFICER**

Wally Bak 4 Swords Ave., Mt Druitt,  
2770 0432273957

wallybak@gmail.com

### **SPEECH AIDS COORDINATOR: BATTERIES FOR SERVOX, LOAN SPEECH AIDS, ADVICE ON REPAIRS**

Chris Barrett 8 Sacha Terrace Terrig-  
al NSW 2260 Ph: 0243851440 .

chrisbarrett1951@hotmail.com

### **EDITOR:**

George Southgate, 65 Church St  
Glen Innes 2370 Ph 0417174456

geocentric.gs@gmail.com

### **ACCOMMODATION ASSISTANCE WHEN NEEDED OUT-PATIENT TREATMENT AWAY FROM HOME:**

Cancer Council NSW, 153 Dowling  
St, WOOLLOOMOOLOO, 2011 (PO  
Box 572, Kings Cross, 1340), Phone:  
13 11 20. (Information & Support) Or  
contact Social Worker at hospital you  
will be attending.

[www.cancercouncil.com.au](http://www.cancercouncil.com.au)

### **ASSOCIATION WEBPAGE:**

[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)

**NSW ASSOCIATION:**

**Sydney and Regional Meetings**

**( please check with contacts, due to covid restrictions**

**Sydney:** 3rd Wednesday of month (Feb—Nov) Sydney Mechanics Institute, 280 Pitt

St. SYDNEY **Next meeting the AGM 16th June then the 21st July**

At 10.45 am.

Meetings will be followed by light refreshments. Laryngectomees, friends, families. Professionals all welcome Contact Nigel Balm 0449155766

**NEWCASTLE:**

3rd Tuesday monthly Mayfield Bowling Club, Ingall Street Mayfield start 12.30- 200.

Contact John Lovett 4954 8308

**NORTHERN RIVERS:**

Contact Speech Pathologist Allison Grady 6629 4523

6620 2157

**Albury:**

Kate everitt—Speech Pathology Manager,

Albury Wodonga Health 6058 4565

Email: [kate.everitt@awh.org.au](mailto:kate.everitt@awh.org.au)

**Mid North Coast:**

The Colonial rooms behind Saint Thomas Anglican Church Hay St Port Macquarie Last

Wednesday of March, June September and 1st of December 6580 1828 Wednesday

**Central Coast:**

3rd Thursday of the month Cancer Council Hub, the Hive, Erina Fair 10am—12 noon

Head and neck Cancer Nurse 43209823

Cancer Council 4336 4500 Facilitator Gary Marr 412262145 [gsm18@live.com.au](mailto:gsm18@live.com.au)

**Coffs/Clarence:**

Shearwater lodge, Coffs Health Campus 2pm every 3rd Thursday, Bi-monthly

Contact Melissa Parish 6656 7606

[melissa.parish@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:melissa.parish@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au)

# Laryngectomee Association of NSW Inc.

## Minutes of Meeting of 19 May 2021.

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The Meeting, held at Level 1, Sydney Mechanics School of Arts, Pitt St, Sydney, commenced at 11:02 am with the President, Les Byrnes occupying the Chair & welcoming members.

### **Attendance:**

### **Laryngectomees:**

Les Byrnes (President), Greg Joss (Vice President), Nigel Balm (Secretary/Treasurer), John Chaloner (Life Member), Anthoni Krasnodebski (Life Member),

**Video Link:** Wally Bak (Assistant Welfare Officer)

**Non-Laryngectomees:** Yvonne Byrnes (Welfare Officer), Cathy Edwards

**Apologies:** Frank Campbell, Vicky Pedras, Carol Gardner (Life Member)

### Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of the March LANSW Inc meeting were accepted as read and adopted.

The April Secretary, Treasurer and Welfare reports were accepted as read and adopted.

### **General Business:**

Les Byrnes presented the monthly Welfare report. Les provided an update of what we include in the member patient packs. Included in the wet pack is: an information booklet "You Can Say That Again", a car windscreen sticker and emergency card, a penlight set, tissue forceps, foam covers,

five adhesive removers and five skin barrier wipes, one mirror, two single-ply stoma covers, an emergency neck-breather seatbelt cover, one emergency wrist band.

Les asked John and Wally their opinions about the stoma covers they wore and confirmed they purchased them from the Laryngectomee Association of Victoria. Both agreed they were a good product and a suitable alternative for the stoma covers currently sold by LANSW. LANSW has stock in hand. When our inventory is limited, we will decide on an alternative supply.

Antoni asked if anyone knew the number of lary operations performed in recent months. No one knew for sure. A question was asked if those present had made hospital visits recently. Les had visited two patients at RPA. Wally stated that to his knowledge, Westmead Hospital had performed seven operations and requested two hospital visits.

Nigel presented a copy of the 2020 Annual Treasurer report and Financial Statement, prepared for the forthcoming AGM. He explained that he had prepared the 2020 Annual Financial statement using the Quickbooks report suite. The 2020 statement was compiled using the 2019

Annual Financial Statement, prepared by MTWO Accounting, as a template. He stated that the LANSW is a Tier 2 charity and does not require auditing. However, we are required to submit a Financial Report to the ACNC.

Wally remarked that he favoured employing an external accountant to verify our financial statement and ensure transparency. With four committee members having access to the bank accounts to ensure the appropriate use of the LANSW funds, The committee felt there is sufficient transparency. The committee voted to submit our in-house prepared Financial Statement to the ACNC and AGM.

Wally informed us that he attended the Newcastle Annual General Meeting last month. At the meeting, he agreed to join the Welfare Committee and act as the liaison officer between the LANSW Sydney and Newcastle division.

Nigel asked if any of the members present had suffered stenosis of the carotid artery post-radiation. Les told us he had a stent put in. Nigel raised the question as he recently had an ultrasound to monitor carotid stenosis and had read in several medical articles that some patients are at increased risk of carotid stenosis post-radiation. He was concerned that carotid stenosis might lead to a transient ischemic attack or stroke, especially as there was a history of cerebrovascular events in his family.

A general discussion on the rollout of Covid-19 vaccinations ended the meeting.

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 11:55 am

The next meeting (AGM) will held be on Wednesday, 16 June at Level 1, Sydney Mechanics' School of Art, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney, NSW 2000.

The next edition of Still Talking newsletter will be issued in early June.

My visit to St  
Vincent's ENT in  
the morning,  
before my  
Appointment.  
02/06/2021



## Secretary Report May 2021

### Incoming Correspondence:

Letter: Keith Anderson – membership fee

Letter: Joe Quagliata – membership fee

Letter: LAVIC Newsletter

Email: Victoria Gill (ATOS), following up on credit refund

Email: John Lovett (Newcastle division LANSW) – membership fee enquiry on behalf of Michael Twiss

Letter: Clarence Walters – membership fee

### Outgoing Correspondence:

Welcome Letter: Michael Bruce Kennedy

Welcome Letter: Steven Dean

Welcome Letter: Brian Bell

Welcome Letter: Se Hwan Kim

Email: advising Victoria Gill (ATOS) of LANSW bank details for credit refund

Email: John Lovett (Newcastle Division LANSW) advising Michael Twiss membership fee status

### Membership Renewals

Member Name	Paid up to	Fee Next Due
Cathy Edwards	2021	1 Jan 2022
Joe Quagliata	2021	1 Jan 2022
Keith Anderson	2024	1 Jan 2025
John Hill	2021	1 Jan 2022
Terrence Creer	2021	1 Jan 2022
Clarence Walters	2021	1 Jan 2022

### New Members

Member	Location	Fee Next Due
Steven Dean	Cessnock NSW	Awaiting joining fee
Se Hwan Kim	Ryde NSW	1 Jan 2022
Brian Bell	Ascot QLD	1 Jan 2022
Michael Bruce Kennedy	Spence ACT	1 Jan 2022

### Member Status

Financial	85
Pending	1
Arrears	179
Total	265

When thinking about Head/Neck Cancer and the need for a laryngectomy, even those with experience may consider smoking, alcohol, HPV, exposure to ultraviolet radiation, chronic acid reflux and environmental concerns as risk factors. One's first thought is probably not that a person's long time job could be the reason. Sadly, because of the dearth of safety rules years ago and a lack of understanding the damage this oversight could cause, patients for whom just doing one's job is a risk factor are increasingly being seen.

Bill's story is one of these. Working in the 1960's in an Indiana factory that produced shells for Vietnam, Bill spent years breathing in lead dust. Workers were not given, nor was it suggested at that time, that masks be worn. Each night after work, Bill would drive home to Kentucky with his clothes covered in dust. It was not unusual for him to cough up dust on a regular basis. This went on for years. Obviously, Bill was not the only one, nor was this the only profession in which a job could produce significant potential health concerns (consider the lung issues miners have long experienced for one). Due to the level of lead dust in his body in the 1960's, Bill reports he was unable to have x-rays done for years. Interestingly, Bill remained symptom free for years, even though siderosis (a lung disease) is not uncommon among those who have inhaled lead dust. Instead, during a 2008 routine visit with his primary care physician, that physician found something of concern in Bill's throat and referred him to ENT.

Bill saw a local ENT in 2008 and reports he was told his throat was "rock hard" and would need a biopsy of the seemingly cement-like substance in his throat. The biopsy came back as malignant but was contained to his throat. Bill reports he was told the cancer had most likely been there for years and was slow growing. The ENT reported the mass was so dense that the only way to remove it was to perform a total laryngectomy. The ENT told Bill he had never seen anything like this before. After discussion with his wife, and having been asymptomatic, Bill decided against surgery and to instead monitor the mass via scans done at intervals. However, in 2013 it became harder for him to breathe and he experienced significant weight loss. One night, Bill started to cough violently and was unable to breathe. 911 was called and he was admitted into the hospital. An ENT was consulted as an emergency but before the needed laryngectomy was performed, Bill sustained a heart attack. He was forced to have an emergency tracheotomy and was hospitalized for two weeks. Once well enough, a total laryngectomy was performed. A TEP was completed a week after the laryngectomy. Interestingly, throat cancer is not generally associated with breathing lead dust, making Bill's case unusual. Did the dust cause mutations in his cells leading to ones that were cancerous? Bill did not have common risk factors. He was not a smoker, no HPV was involved, alcohol was not considered an issue. However, the American Cancer Society (2020) does note that long and intense exposures to certain dusts, chemicals and fumes can increase the risk of laryngeal cancers.

In Bill's case, it was thought his history of breathing in lead dust could not be ruled out as a contributing cause for his cancer. One wonders if the cases of laryngeal cancer will continue to grow among the aging population who, through their workplaces, were exposed to risk factors not considered at the time. Luckily, Bill's outcome has been very positive. He never had to learn to use an artificial larynx. Bill went from writing to communicate to using a voice prosthesis. He says his biggest challenge is putting the base plates on without leaks due to having a deep stoma. He and his wife have adjusted to Bill's life as a laryngectomee very well. He continues to work doing house sitting and handyman jobs. Bill says, "having a laryngectomy is not the end of the world" and his life went on pretty close to how it was with a "new normal". He says at first it was scary but over time, he got used to it and has a good life. Bill's piece of advice is trust God, do not let fear overcome you and go into life fearless. You will make it and continue to have a good life

**This morning** at about 7:45, I was in a long line at a grocery store that opens at 8:00 for senior citizens only. A young man came from the parking lot and tried to cut in at the front of the line, but an old lady beat him back into the parking lot with her cane.

He returned and tried to cut in again but an old man punched him in the gut, then kicked him to the ground and rolled him away.

As he approached the line for the third time he said, "Look, if you don't let me unlock the damn door you're never going to get in there!"

**My wife** beamed at me with pride and said, "Wow! I never thought our son would go that far!" I said, "This catapult is amazing! Go get our daughter."

**Dad** can you explain to me what a solar eclipse is?

No sun

**What** is the opposite of a croissant? A happy uncle.

**A friend** of mine went bald years ago, but still carries around an old comb. He just can't part with it.

**The elderly** man was an eyewitness to the car shop crime scene. When the police asked him to tell them what happened, he told them what he'd seen.

"The guy with the beer belly grabbed a wrench from the toolbox!"

"What happened next?" the detective asked.

"Oh man, it was a gut-wrenching moment.

**A husband** and wife who work for the circus go to an adoption agency looking to adopt a child, but the social workers there raise doubts about their suitability. So the couple produces photos of their 50-foot motor home, which is clean and well maintained and equipped with a beautiful nursery. The social workers are satisfied by this but then raise concerns about the kind of education a child would receive while in the couple's care. The husband puts their mind at ease, saying,

"We've arranged for a full-time tutor who will teach the child all the usual subjects along with French, Mandarin, and computer skills." Next though, the social workers express concern about a child being raised in a circus environment. This time the wife explains, "Our nanny is a certified expert in paediatric care, welfare, and diet." The social workers are finally satisfied and ask the couple, "What age child are you hoping to adopt?" The husband says, "It doesn't really matter, as long as the kid fits in the cannon."

**Judge Ferris** slammed the gavel down trying to bring order in the courtroom.

Staring over the rims of her glasses, the judge frowned at the elderly man, Alan T. Book. "Mr Book, what do you have to say?" "About what, your honour?"

"How you managed to conceal your crime for sixty years?"

"Well judge, it's quite simple. No one suspected me. I didn't look like anyone who'd do such a thing. After all, you can't judge a Book by its cover.

**Nelson Love** sat at the diner counter and watched the waitress refill his coffee cup. The waitress unscrewed the lid on the saltshaker and the maple syrup dispenser. She turned from the counter to get the salt container and syrup container to refill them when Love reached for the saltshaker. She stood there watching in disbelief when he poured the salt into his cup of coffee. Love stirred the coffee with a spoon and then reached for the maple syrup dispenser grabbing it by the handle.

Before the waitress could stop him, Love had poured it into the coffee cup.

"What on earth?" One of the wait staff whispered beside her. "Did Nelson Love just put salt and pancake syrup in his coffee?"

"He sure did!" "Why did he do that?"

" 'Cause Love is blind."