



# Still Talking

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

**All correspondence to: The Secretary. Laryngectomy Association of NSW PO Box 58 Richmond. NSW 2753. Fax 02 4578 4412 Phone 02 4578 1415**

No 175

The Laryngectomy Association of N.S.W

April 07

## MONTHLY MEETINGS

**NEW ENGLAND:** 1st Wed. Feb. Apr. June. Aug. Oct. Dec. 2pm Conference Room. Rehab Unit Tamworth Base Hosp. 02 6767 8377

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

**ILLAWARA:** 3rd Wed. 2:30pm Warilla Medical Centre. Belfast St. Warilla.

**NORTHERN RIVERS:** 4 times annually – rotating. Contact J Basso. 184, Ballina Rd. Goonellabah 2480. Ph 02 66245192

**ALBURY:** Ph. 02 63232011 extn. 323

**CANBERRA:** 1st Thu. 11am. Mar. June. Sep. Dec. Canberra Hospital

**SOUTHERN DISTRICTS:** 4th Wed. 11am. Thomas Rachael Moore Education Centre. Liverpool Hospital. Ph. 02 96076708

**MID NORTH COAST** Port Macquarie Community Health Centre. Feb. May. Aug. Nov Contact Craig Suossari

## OFFICE BEARERS 2007

**President:** Brian Gardner  
4 Merelyn Road. Belrose 2085  
02 9452- 2858

**VICE PRESIDENT:** Russell Green  
17/765 Princess Hwy. Blakehurst 2221  
Ph. 95473669

**VICE PRESIDENT (2)** Peter McGregor  
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Email desnic@bigfoot.com.au

**MINUTE SECRETARY:** Maralyn Ploenges

**SPEECH AIDS COORDINATOR:** John Chaloner  
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02 99799-1154

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**EDITOR:** Colin Bolton 39 Harbourview Towers 122  
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## EDITORIAL

My second edition and I am not sure of the direction I should be taking, thus far I have made it fairly light hearted (I hope) along with an article directly associated with Laryngectomees and today we have a members contribution that I hope will be the start of many. If you have any feelings/ideas don't hesitate to let me know. Minutes and Reports are of course mandatory.

Attendance at the A.G.M was above average and it would be good to keep them at this level. This was followed with a better than usual attendance at the April meeting, thanks mainly to ex Western District members attending.

Has anyone secured overseas Travel Insurance who is a Laryngectomee – if so please contact editor

Congratulations to Antoni Krasnodebski: John Chaloner & Brian Gardner on being granted life membership of the association

*Colin Bolton*

## WHO TO CONTACT

**BLOM SINGER SUPPLIES:-** David Smith. 27 Bellvue Pde

North Curl Curl 2009. Ph 02 9939-1539 Ask for David personally

**SPEECH AIDS, BATTERIES PARTS AND ADVICE ON REPAIRS**

John Chaloner PO Box 31 Summer Hill. 2130 Ph 02 9799-1154

**STOMA COVERS, SHOWER SHIELDS, STOMA COVER MATERIAL AND**

**WELFARE MATTERS.** Brian or Carol Gardner, 4 Merelyn Rd. Belrose

2085 Ph 02 9452- 2858

**ACCOMMODATION ASSISTANCE WHEN NEEDING OUT PATIENT**

**TREATMENT WHEN AWAY FROM HOME:-** Cancer Council of NSW 153,

Dowling Street, Woolloomooloo. PO Box 572 Ph 02 9334-1900 Fax 02

9357-2676 Or contact social worker at the hospital you will be attending

**WELFARE OFFICER** Bruce Hodges 31 Clack Rd/ Chester Hill 2167

0404 400 842

Something you rarely hear at a lary support meeting : "That's easy for you to say!"

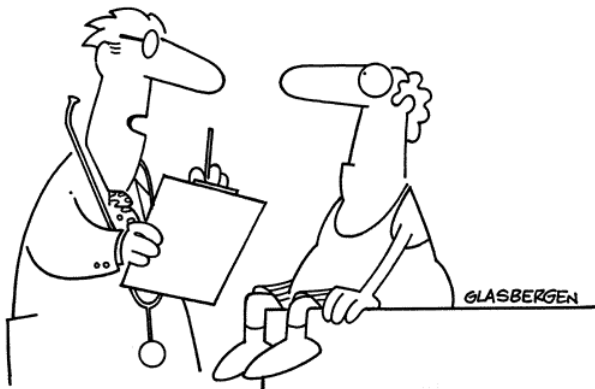
During a visit to the mental asylum, a visitor asked the Director what the criterion was that defined whether or not a patient should be institutionalized.

"Well," said the Director, "we fill up a bathtub, then we offer a teaspoon, a teacup and a bucket to the patient and ask him or her to empty the bathtub."

"Oh, I understand," said the visitor. "A normal person would use the bucket because it's bigger than the spoon or the teacup."

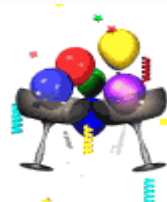
"No," said the Director. "A normal person would **SIMPLY PULL THE PLUG OUT!- WOULD YOU LIKE A SEAT NEAR THE WINDOW?**"

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www.glasbergen.com



"We can't find anything wrong with you, so we're going to treat you for Symptom Deficit Disorder."

## Congratulation & Best Wishes



**Rachelle Simpson** Speech Pathologist  
at Prince of Wales gets married  
April.27th

I did suggest we might get a Larry's  
choir together to sing at the wedding 😊

## Cookies Anyone?

At an airport one night with several long hours before her flight. She hunted for a book in the airport shop, Bought a bag of cookies and found a place to drop. She was engrossed in her book but happened to see, that the man sitting beside her, as bold as could be, grabbed a cookie or two from the bag in between them, which she tried to ignore to avoid a scene. So she munched the cookies and watched the clock, as the gutsy cookie thief diminished her stock she was getting more irritated as the minutes ticked by, thinking, "If I wasn't so nice, I would blacken his eye." With each cookie she took, he took one too, when only one was left, she wondered what he would do. With a smile on his face, and a nervous laugh he took the last cookie and broke it in half. he offered her half as he ate the other. She snatched it from him and thought... ooh brother! This guy has some nerve and he's also rude, Why he didn't even show any gratitude! She had never known when she had been so galled, And sighed with relief when her flight was called. She gathered her belongings and headed to the gate, refusing to look back at the thieving ingrate. She boarded the plane, and sank in her seat, Then she sought her book, which was almost complete. As she reached in her baggage, she gasped with surprise, There was her bag of cookies, in front of her eyes. If mine are here, she moaned in despair the others were his, and he tried to share. Too late to apologize, she realized with grief, That she was the rude one, the ingrate, the thief!

How many times have we absolutely known that something was a certain way, only to discover later that what we believed to be true ...was not? Always, Keep An Open Mind and An Open Heart, Because You Just Never Know When **"YOU MIGHT BE EATING SOMEONE ELSE'S COOKIES."** (David Blevins)

## ONE GOOD TURN DESERVES ANOTHER



ASTONISHED, I watched the man roller-skating toward me on the bicycle path. An owl, wings outstretched, clung to a leather patch on his shoulder. As they got closer, I could tell that the giant bird had lost part of one wing. The skater stopped for a breather. "Twice a day we go out so he can pretend he's flying," the man told me."I'm sure he would repay you if he could," I replied. "He already has," the skater said. "I used to weigh 25 pounds more and I smoked." With that, man and bird took off.

## Members Contribution By Jim Hunt

I became a Laryngectomee in late March 2006. Late in the previous year. Before it was known that I had to part with my larynx, my wife Margaret and I had planned a trip to Eastern Europe. A major feature was to be a cruise down the Rhine/Danube from West Germany to the Black Sea. The scheduled departure date was to be less than three months after the operation, so we began to think that we would abandon our plans. As we were both around the eighty mark, it seemed that the trip could be a little ambitious.

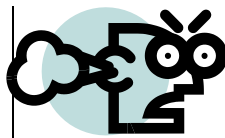
However, I made a good recovery, and my specialist, knowing that we had been looking forward to the trip, indicated that he thought we could proceed with our plans. I was still using a Nu-Vois kindly loaned by the Speech Therapy Department at Westmead Hospital. I must say that I was on a steep learning curve, but with the great help and skill of my Speech Therapist, I seemed to be making good progress. However, I think that both Margaret and I were resigned to the fact that she would probably have to do most of the talking to people such as airline and hotel staff, and that I would necessarily be the silent partner."

As it turned out, we found that this was not so, and I make this contribution to encourage others in our situation not to abandon their plans. I found, remarkably that, even though English was not necessarily their first language, tour guides, hotel staff, airline personnel and our companions on the trip were surprisingly good at understanding me. In cities such as Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade and Bucharest, I had minimal language difficulty. This may have been because contacts there necessarily had a lot of experience in dealing with folk from all over the world. So my advice is do not be discouraged and give it a go!!!"

One little postscript----your message does not always get through 100%. During our stay in Prague, I suggested to Margaret that we have a drink before lunch. I felt confident enough to do the ordering. Having ordered for Margaret, I said I would like a large glass of Dark Beer. The waiter said certainly, Sir a large glass of Drambuie: at After that, I tried even harder with my diction.

*Jim Hunt*

Many thanks for that Jim – now let us have some more contributions from members.



*A little different from the reception I got at a meeting I attended last week, a guy said hello shook hands and then followed up with "Don't try and talk Colin just relax" grrrrrrrr!!!!*

*A contribution from Carolyn Baron will be included in the next months Newsletter*

## Larry Trivia

*Have you ever wondered why prosthesis sizes are referred to as (size) French? **NO** neither had I really but I'm going to tell you anyway!*

It is a world wide standard for medical tubing outside diameter. Developed by a French physician in the 1800's, it is a measurement of tubing circumference. The theory being that non-round tubes of the same circumference will fit into the same incision in the skin or vessel. One French is approximately 1/3 of a millimetre or .013 inch

## This Month's Teaser

On moving into their new home James & Jane discovered that the builder had forgotten something. James popped down to the local DIY shop to inquire about the prices. Luckily the items are quite cheap at the shop. 7 cost \$1.00, 10 cost \$2.00 and 100 cost \$3.00. What had the builder forgotten and how much will 210 cost?

**Answer at the end of the newsletter**  
(no cheating)

### **Consumer Reports** - further proof that

**the human race is doomed through stupidity**

**On a Sears hairdryer** - Do not use while sleeping.

**On a bag of Chips** - You could be a winner! No purchase necessary. Details in-side.

**On a bar of Dial soap** - Directions: Use like regular soap.

**On packaging for a Rowenta iron** - Do not iron clothes on body.

**On Tesco's Tiramisu dessert** (printed on bottom of box) - Do not turn upside down.

**On Marks & Spencer Bread Pudding** - Product will be hot after heating.

**On Nytol sleep aid** - Warning: may cause drowsiness.

**On a Korean kitchen knife** - Warning: keep out of children

**On Sainsbury's peanuts** - Warning: contains nuts.

**On some Swanson frozen dinners** - Serving suggestion: defrost.

**On Boot's Children's Cough Medicine** - Do not drive car or operate machinery.

**On a string of Chinese-made Christmas lights** - For indoor or outdoor use only.

## FISTULAS - Glenn E. Peters, M.D. , F.A.C.S.

All right, let's talk about fistulae. By the strictest definition, a "fistula" is a connection between two epithelial surfaces. Epithelium is the lining of an organ or the covering of a body part such as the skin. The organs of most concern in the head and neck are the mouth, the throat, and the oesophagus. Therefore, a fistula in our area represents a connection between the mouth, throat, or esophagism and the skin of the neck.

What's the problem with a fistula? Well the most obvious problem is the leakage of saliva and anything else you swallow through the fistula onto the neck. The ramifications of this are obvious on social, convenience, and nutritional levels.

Nobody wants to go around draining onto your neck all the time. Also, if the fistula is near your stoma some of this stuff can go down into the lungs and possibly lead to pneumonia or a lung abscess. All of this leads up to the fact that we try to do everything we can to avoid a fistula.

What are the main causes of a fistula? At the time of surgery we try our best to close the inside of the throat and oesophagus to avoid a leak. We use antibiotics during and shortly after your surgery to cut down on the chance of infection. The main thing that leads to a fistula is poor wound healing. Things such as too much tension on the wound, a wound infection after surgery, poor nutrition, continued use of alcohol and tobacco, and prior radiation are the usual things that lead to problems with wound healing and the formation of a fistula.

So if a fistula develops, what can we do about it? The first thing we, as surgeons, do is to encourage it to drain into an area that will minimize the chances of infection in the rest of the neck and keep the drainage out of the stoma. Given enough time most fistulae will heal on their own without additional surgery. There is of course the hassle factor of dealing with external drainage and needing to use an alternative method of feeding such as a PEG during the healing phase. Surgical closure is reserved for those fistulae which do not close on their own and those that pose some danger particularly to the stoma and the lungs.

What are the long term side effects of a fistula? The most commonly encountered problem is a stricture or narrowing in the upper esophagus which may affect the ease of swallowing. Most patients that develop a fistula do not experience any long term problems.

***"....a "fistula" is a connection between two epithelial surfaces. a fistula in our area represents a connection between the mouth, throat, or oesophagus and the skin of the neck."***

Courtesy "Web Whispers" <http://www.webwhispers.org/>

### **Answer to poser:**

**The builder had forgotten the house numbers**

**The DIY shop charges \$1 per digit so 210 would cost \$3**

*Regret for the things we did can be tempered by time. It is regret for the things we did not do that will ravage the soul.*



*Smile, it makes people wonder what you're up to!*

**Next meeting 18<sup>th</sup> April  
At The Uniting Church Hall  
Carrington Avenue. Strathfield  
11 am Light lunch afterwards**



*That's All Folks*

# Laryngectomy Association of N.S.W

## MINUTES OF MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2007-03-2007

**In Attendance**     **Laryngectomees:** B Gardner (President) A Dawson. B Hodges. R Graham. C Bolton. W Singleton. A Krasnodebski. D Newby.  
**Non Laryngectomees:** C Gardner. M Ploenges. P Dawson. F Green. M Halliburton. W Bolton. P Lamont. B Singleton.

**Apologies:**         J Nicholson. N Gilder. J Chaloner. L Walton

**Minutes**             Resolved: Taken as read A Dawson/B Hodges

**Secretary/ Treasurer's Report** See overleaf

**Welfare Report**     Carol Gardner reported on attending a lunch to say farewell to members of the Western District Branch that has folded.  
Reported handing patient packs to Bruce Hodges for visiting  
Reported on a phone call from P Dixon re swabs doubling in price and asking if anyone has any suggestions re other suppliers and prices

**A.G.M**                 Resolved M Halliburton /C Gardner that the financial report of the A.G.M of the Association be approved. This was omitted from the minutes of the A.G.M

**Life Membership** Resolved: J Chaloner/A Dawson That the suggested life memberships of A Krasnodebski & J Chaloner be dealt with at this meeting.

Resolved: P Dawson/A Dawson that life membership also be granted to B Gardner

Resolved: C Bolton/A Dawson That the following Life Memberships be granted:

A Krasnodebski: J Chaloner & B Gardner be approved and a Certificate or Life Members badge be presented at the last meeting:

**General Business** A Dawson reported that a cheque re the balance of funds from Western Districts on their closure amounting to \$1824 has been sent to The Secretary/Treasurer J Nicholson. To be donated to The Chris Brien fund at R.P.A as a donation towards the proposed new clinic.

**Vote of Thanks**     Proposed by M Halliburton to C Gardner and P Dawson for all the work they have done and contributions made

**Correspondence**     From Rachelle Simpson. Speech Pathologist P of W hospital nominating C Bolton for visitor training and asking if there are any further volunteers to attend if and when one can be arranged.

**There being no further business the meeting closed at 12:10**  
**Next Meeting will be April 18<sup>th</sup> 2007**

## **SECRETARYS REPORT - 20TH MARCH2007**

Well despite a couple of weed of ill health and one of those in hospital, between us we have managed keep up with things and the books all balance.

1. Thankyou to all those who have paid their subs for this year and a special thankyou to those \*ho have added a donation.
2. New Members. We welcome:  
Ms Theresa Kessey of LIVERPOOL  
Mr Khalil Mouhanna of BEXLEY NORTH  
Mr Cecil Mcllwraith of AIRDES  
And remind them that the Association is there to support all members so for help, support and advice for you or your partner just ring any committee member who will point you in the right direction. For supplies check the box on the front of the newsletter.
3. Unfortunately we have had advice of tile deaths of the following members:  
Mr Hoss of SADLIER (joined 1997)  
Mr Ristevski of BASS HILL  
Mr McClureof BURKE  
Mr Richards of LAKEMBA.  
To their families and friends we extend our sincere condolences.
4. It is necessary that the audited Financial Statement for the year ending Dec.31st 2006 be accepted at this meeting. Mover's and seconder's names to be noted in tile minutes, with a note in tile minutes that this was omitted from the minutes of the Annual General Meeting
5. Des and I still wish to move that John Chaloner and Toni Krasnodebski be made life member of this Association in recognition of many years of work We hope that this motion will be supported by all members
6. We will be away for the next couple of weed all being well from today but no doubt all the mail will be waiting when we return, so if your receipts etc. are a bit late please bear with us.
7. We have received a substantial cheque from the Western Districts Brace: on the occasion of it disbanding. Perhaps we should consider using this money for a special project dear to the WD members. Perhaps something desired by the Speech Pathology Department or Head and Neck Ward of tile Westmead Hospital. To this could be attached a plaque remembering WD and the good work they did. Worth considering I think

John Nicholson