



CANBERRA
LUNG LIFE
SUPPORT GROUP

November 2019 Newsletter

Providing a supportive and informative environment for people with a variety of lung conditions and their carers.

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NEXT MEETING: Thursday 14 November 2019
10:15 am - 12 noon
Weston Creek Labor Club
Teesdale Close, Stirling ACT 2611

Guest Speaker: Val Dempsey, representing ACT Red Cross, will be speaking on the Topic: "The Role of the Red Cross". She will also be demonstrating CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation). There will be a Q&A afterwards.

Dates for your diary

Friday 31 October 2019	Lunch at Snapper, The Southern Cross Yacht Club, Yarralumla ACT
Wednesday 20 November 2019	World COPD Day
Thursday 12 December 2019	December CLLSG Meeting

October meeting

Helen Cotter

About 20 people came to our October 2019 "non speaker meeting". We dealt with business first; then various people talked about their lung conditions.

Esther Fitton

Lyn Morley, our Coordinator, read out a letter from Esther Fitton, thanking us for our get well cards and messages. About 5 weeks ago, Esther fell while out walking her dog, Schweppes. Unluckily for her, she had to wait 20 minutes until a passerby came to her aid. Luckily it was a responsible off duty policeman who took control of everything and Esther was soon in hospital and her dog, who had stayed by her side, was taken home to be picked up by her daughter.

Esther broke two ribs, her pelvis and had a high groin fracture. This necessitated the five weeks in hospital but she is home now and on the slow road to recovery. She needs to restrict her movements, yet make sure she exercises! The swimming pool seems to be the answer. We wish her all the best.

World COPD Day

We started to organise our event for World COPD Day on Wednesday 20 November. Last year we celebrated it on the lawns outside the Southern Cross Yacht Club, combining it with a fish'n chips social event. The weather, however, was so foul, that we packed up early. For details of this year's event look later in the Newsletter.

Xia Wang, our chronic care nurse, has already committed herself to giving the lung function tests at this event.

Christmas Lunch

Plans for our Christmas luncheon were also discussed. We decided that it will be held in early December. See later in the newsletter for the exact date, time and venue. Meanwhile we would like people to bring items for our Christmas hampers to our next meeting. Remember how good the hampers were last year.

Spring lunch Outing

We organised a **fish'n chips lunch** for **Thursday 31 October**, 12 noon at Yarralumla Yacht Club, although it may be good to get there earlier to snaffle tables.

If the weather is foul, we will have the fish'n chips instead at the Jamison Southern Cross Club. Lyn Morley will let us know if we are going to eat there; or you may contact her directly yourself if unsure.

POC available

There are two POCs available to our membership for a donation to the Canberra Lung Life Support Group. If you are interested contact Helen Cotter on 02 6281 2988 or cotterhe@hotmail.com and she'll give you all the details.

This information was followed by an interesting discussion on the ins and outs of oxygen, ACT oxygen provision, ACTEW's concession and the Federal Government's payment for oxygen users, and POCs.

Is there a safe level of Prednisone?

A lot of discussion followed this question. People had different doses prescribed, some larger amount than others; and some people had various side effects from the steroid. One suggestion was to talk to your pharmacist as they know your other medications and have fact sheets about the topic. And of course talk to your doctor.

Lung Life finances

Chris Moyle reported on our finances for the last year. Our money is spent on:

- paying for membership of groups such as HCCA
- paying for a stand at the Seniors Expo
- servicing the POC we lend out
- paying for members to attend Education Day.

There is a tradition of donating \$50 to Lung Foundation Australia when a member dies. This financial year we've donated money for Robyn Meaney, Lorna Rowlands, Tom Broers, Lauris Andrew, and Judy McCaw.

The money we received this financial year includes \$380 from the loan of the POCs and \$500 for the sale of a POC. We collected about \$600 from meetings and about \$200 from raffles. We also received donations from various individuals. So we have a healthy bank balance.

Then we moved onto talking about our conditions:

Barry talked about being in hospital last November for 30 days for a lung problem and recently for a heart problem caused by the lungs. He has eczema, asthma and COPD and believes they are all related.

Geoff has asbestosis which gives him pain when he breathes. He was a pipe fitter welder many years ago and dealt with asbestos insulation. He feels better in warmer weather so goes north in winter, caravanning around Australia.

John has Whipple Disease, diagnosed about 30 years ago. It affects the lungs and the whole body, including the eyes. John spent almost 2 years in hospital altogether. He was at one stage blind in both eyes but, with operations, now has partial vision in one eye.

Joe has chronic COPD. He used to smoke cigars and cigarillos, believing they didn't cause lung conditions like cigarettes but his lungs are now affected, especially by cold weather, humidity and windy weather. At one stage he had an inverted hiatus hernia which affected his breathing.

Lyn has COPD caused, not by smoking, but by mycoplasma infection, which can keep recurring.

Helen C has restricted breathing caused by scoliosis.

Helen R has COPD plus other things. Recently she has not been breathing as well as usual which has led to a couple of trips to the Emergency Department. After numerous tests and scans the decision is, finally, there is more to the breathlessness than just lungs. The Respiratory Physician has referred her to an Ear, Nose and Throat Specialist and her health care team are moving together toward a more holistic approach to her treatment. Who knows more about their bodies than we do so keep up the conversation until you are satisfied with the outcome of that conversation with your health professionals.

Chris M has bronchiectasis which is a widening of the bronchi. As a baby she was given medicine with mercury in it as a teething powder. This was later found to cause 'pink' disease, so named because your extremities go pink. A major issue with bronchiectasis is the build up of mucus every day which needs to be coughed up. As well, it's common to have infections in the lungs and Chris often needs antibiotics to control it.

Pam has had COPD for 18 years and now has about 18% lung function. She is on oxygen 24 hours a day and without it, her oxygen levels go down to the low 60s.

Lyn woke up in the middle of the night on her sixty-third birthday with pains in her chest and shortness of breath. In hospital, they identified a lung problem affecting the heart. Lyn has Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis (IPF). Her father, brother and sister all have all been diagnosed with Pulmonary Fibrosis, so it's a condition

that can run in the family.

Pulmonary Fibrosis causes scarring on the lungs which makes the lungs stick causing difficulty breathing.

We finished the meeting as usual with many of us adjourning to lunch at the club.

Spring Social Get Together

What: *Fish'n chips Luncheon*

Time: *12 noon*

When: *Thursday 31 October 2019*

Where: *Southern Cross Club*

- *Yarralumla - if weather is fine.*
- *Jamison - if weather is dicey.*

Lyn Morley will let us know the venue if the weather is uncertain so contact her on 02 6291 0626 or lung.life1@hotmail.com.

Continuing Our Series "Remembering our beginnings": Esther and Cecelia Chris Moyle

In February 1998 Esther Fitton and Cecelia Kent joined forces to run meetings to support people with lung conditions. These meetings were held at the Royals Rugby Club (now The Raiders Weston), and the women became firm friends in the process.

Esther's husband, Ray, had emphysema (now referred to as COPD), as did Cecelia. Esther met Ray as a young girl when her family moved from Yorkshire to Sydney, settling next door to Ray's family. Cecelia and Laurie met through a shared interest in ballroom dancing. Laurie was an accountant and assisted with the Group's financial matters.



Esther Fitton and Cecelia Kent at Xmas Lunch, 1998.

Esther said she and Cecelia had no background in conducting meetings and learnt as they went along. Money was tight at first and presents were wrapped in newspaper for a while.

These two women were warm and friendly and the meetings, often with a guest speaker, were informative and supportive. People who attended could discuss problems and ideas and felt less isolated. Esther often said "They're a nice bunch of people". So the meetings have continued through the years.

In 2004 Cecelia passed away. She was very proud of the fact that she had never missed a Lung Life meeting. Only in the final weeks of her life was she unable to attend. Her husband, Laurie, died in 2013 and Ray



Laurie, Esther and Ray at Mid Year Lunch, 2001.

Fitton passed away in 2012. Esther continued as Coordinator of the Group until 2005 before handing over to Laurelle Ellis. Esther continues helping out and attending meetings. She is a very special person in our Group.

Visit to ANU Medical Students Chris Moyle

On 12 September 2019 several of our members took free taxi rides (paid for by ANU) to visit first year medical students At the ANU Medical School at The Canberra Hospital. Some of us, too unwell to attend meetings, had made a special effort to see the students. Apart from the free transport we each received a \$30 Coles voucher.

I was in a room with a supervising doctor who worked in A&E, and only a few students, one absent in hospital with pneumonia. A young woman was elected to take my history, on a laptop, and I proceeded to answer questions for the next 90 minutes. As I told them, it's always good to have a captive audience listening to my health concerns, although I noticed one young man sitting with his eyes closed. I wasn't sure whether he was recovering from a big night out, just resting his eyes or, heaven forbid, BORED with my ramblings. But, at the end, the doctor led a small round of applause and invited me to return next year. She said it was good for students to realise how treatment for one illness in the body could cause side effects and problems in other bodily parts. It seemed like this was a worthwhile exercise and much could be gained from it.

A big thank you to Pam Harris, who very capably organises this event every year.

Christmas Lunch

Christmas Lunch
Wednesday 4 December 2019
Canberra Irish Club
Parkinson Street, Weston ACT 2611
12 noon for 12:30 pm
Cost: about \$30 for a two course meal.

Meanwhile...

Please bring items for our Christmas hampers to the next meeting on 14 November so our wonderful Christmas ELVES can turn them into beautiful hampers to be raffled at the Christmas Lunch.

World COPD Day (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease)

**Wednesday 20 November 2019
10:00 am – 2:00 pm
Cooleman Court - Weston ACT**

Canberra Lung Life Support Group will be having an information stand at the Cooleman Court Shopping Centre, Weston ACT on Wednesday 20 November 2019, to provide information about chronic lung conditions and the support available.

Xia, the chronic care nurse from The Canberra Hospital, will be on hand to provide a simple lung function test which gives an idea of how well your lungs are working.

World COPD Day is overseen in Australia by Lung Foundation Australia.

They assist local organisations and businesses to become involved and spread the word about COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder).

Many people have the condition but often do not realise it.

