



## April 2020 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 9th July 2020 (to be confirmed)  
10:15 am - 12 noon  
Weston Creek Labor Club  
Teesdale Close, Stirling ACT 2611

There will be no meetings in May and June.

Owing to COVID-19 we have suspended our monthly meetings until at least July; however, the lockdown may continue past this date so we are not sure if we will need to extend our enforced break past this date.

The Lung Life Newsletter will continue to be published each month and **we welcome contributions from anyone**. **How have you been spending your time during the lockdown?** Please send a photograph and/or a few lines to the editor at [selaca@bigpond.net.au](mailto:selaca@bigpond.net.au). On page 5 we have our first three 'lockdown' contributions.

### **A word from our Coordinator, Lyn Morley**

Hello to all my Lung Life friends. It is a shame that this terrible virus stopped us from having our April meeting. I missed chatting to you all and of course having lunch with you. Geoff was going to tell us about his double lung transplant, but that will have to wait for the time when we are up and running again.

We were very fortunate to have our special celebration as it was the day before we were asked by Lung Foundation Australia to cease our meetings for three months. We had such a wonderful time that day with great presentations and a great MC. The food tasted as good as it looked also. At my table I had Nicole Freene who is known to many of us, Carol Mead CEO of SHOUT and Dick Bell and his wife from the Sleep Apnoea support group. The discussion over lunch was very interesting.

# More from our 22 Year Celebration held in March

We have more photos and interesting information about some of our invited guests in this edition of the newsletter, enjoy.



**The Bells, Carol Mead, Val Dempsey, Nicole Freene and Lyn Morley enjoying a conversation before lunch.**



**Pam Harris**



**Nicole Freene**

## **Nicole Freene**

It was very pleasing to have Nicole join us for our celebration, as she has spoken to our group previously, and along with Pam Harris she has organised the visits by Lung Life members to the University of Canberra.

These visits give the physiotherapy students hands on experience dealing with a person with a chronic illness. The visits are beneficial for both our members, who enjoy going there to discuss their issues, and the students who appreciate having real people to talk to and examine. The students also provide a very tasty morning or afternoon tea for their visitors.

Nicole has just stepped down from her position as a clinical assistant professor at the University of Canberra and we wish her well for the future.

## **Carol Mead**

We were pleased to have Carol in attendance at our celebration. Carol is the Chief Executive Officer of SHOUT (Self Help Organisations United Together), which is an umbrella organisation that assists self-help groups in the ACT.

Lung Life has been affiliated with SHOUT for many years, and a representative from their organisation spoke at our very first meeting. We have benefitted from their flow of information about other organisations and their activities. They are a great organisation that supports a variety of community groups.



**Ron Hamilton makes his point while Terry Hunt enjoys his meal and drink.**



**Kaye Powell and Claudia Creswell from HCCA listening to the presentation.**

### **Donna Azzopardi from Client Support Services**

Donna, who unfortunately was unable to attend our celebration, is the voice of the oxygen support scheme – the person on the phone. She has a delightful manner and is always a help to those who call her. She often has to deal with people who may be feeling stressed or who are unfamiliar with the scheme and having someone like her assisting them is both helpful and reassuring. Nothing seems to be too hard for her. We appreciated her very much.

### **Michael Keen from the Health Directorate**

Michael unfortunately also had to send his apologies as he was unable to attend our celebration. He was the Director of Client Support Services for many years. One of his many duties in this position was the provision of oxygen for those that required it.

For many years Lung Life has had a consumer representative on the oxygen committee, DORSS (Domiciliary Oxygen and Respiratory Support Scheme). We appreciate and acknowledge his support for the efficient delivery of oxygen to members of our community.

### **Alastair Walters from ANU**

Alastair is the Senior Clinical Skills Co-ordinator at ANU. Along with Pam Harris he is responsible for organising Lung Life members to meet with medical students. The students then have the opportunity to have some hands-on experience with people who have one or more chronic illnesses.

Just like the visits to UC to meet with the physiotherapy students, these visits are greatly beneficial for both the students and our members. We enjoy going there and the students appreciate the opportunity to meet with us.



## Helen Cotter by Chris Moyle

Respiratory physicians often send their patients to the six-week pulmonary rehabilitation course at Canberra Hospital. The course is run by physiotherapists and involves weekly lectures and exercise geared to the individual. Participants are encouraged to continue this exercise, with supervision, at the hospital's gym.

Helen Cotter was one of these patients. About eighteen months after her retirement from teaching Helen developed breathing difficulties caused by her long-term scoliosis. She doesn't have a lung disease as such but does now need supplemental oxygen for part of each day.

In 2008, at the hospital's gym, Helen met people who attended our group and was encouraged to come along to the meetings. Here she met up with Caroline Polak-Scowcroft, an old friend from their teaching days, and she assisted Caroline who was continuing as Coordinator after her husband's death. When Caroline left to go travelling and play more Scrabble Helen took over as Coordinator in 2011.

Helen organised the development of our green pamphlets and portable banner which goes with us to all expos and other events. In December 2009 she started the Lung Life newsletter. It had simple beginnings – four pages with a report on the World COPD Day Walk held in November with a photo, and a report on unveiling of a plaque. She was on the COPD Working Committee started by Beth Forbes, the chronic care nurse at Canberra Hospital. Helen is also the ACT representative on the COPD Patient Advisory Group (CPAG) teleconferences, and a representative on the Domiciliary Oxygen and Respiratory Support Scheme (DORSS) Committee.

In 2014 Helen retired to become a 'back bencher' and Margaret Geaghan and Carolyn Dalton stepped in to coordinate the Group. Unfortunately, both these ladies became ill and could not continue. We thank them for their support and wish them well.

Helen described her coordinating role as 'a challenging and worthwhile situation, working on meeting the needs of the support group and advocating in the community on behalf of people with lung conditions'.

Helen sets a great example of living an active life with a disability – going to exercise classes, yoga and Tai Chi, walking (albeit slowly) in the Botanic Gardens, socialising with friends and family and attending concerts, plays and talks.

She continues to attend meetings and is a guiding force in the group, always prepared to initiate new projects and follow through on them; she is conscientious, organised, and willing to help and encourage all our members.



**Helen Cotter with our banner in 2013**

## What have Lung Life members been doing during the lockdown?

### Lyn Morley

While in isolation, Lyn has been doing her diamond painting (a craft that is mix between cross stitch and paint by numbers) as well as reading. She has finally read the three books she received for Christmas, and there is watching TV of course. With John, she has started sorting files of old receipts and other papers and been shredding those that they no longer require.

John has been very good, doing the shopping and he even went to the shops one morning at 7am to get the necessary toilet paper, which is so difficult to get these days.

Life has certainly changed for us all. If any of you are feeling a bit lonely or want to talk to someone please give Lyn or someone else in our group a call. Lyn asks that we take care and stay safe.

### Barry Blight

Barry is a relatively new member to our group. Apart from doing some home exercises he has also found a way that he can still practise his golf shots while in isolation by using his backyard artificial tee off lawn, and plastic (air) golf balls. His backyard is of a reasonable size to practise pitch and putt style shots. He belongs to the Canberra International Pitch and Putt Club.

Barry is looking forward to resuming his attendance at meetings when this 'virus business' is over. He has not been attending meetings owing to hospitalisation, bushfire smoke and now this epidemic.

### Chris Moyle

After being told by her GP that she was 'very vulnerable', Chris decided to order in as much as possible. Her local Woolworths weren't answering their phone and may have stopped home deliveries. She can order fruit, vegetables, and bread etc. from Griffith shops, with a weekly home delivery. She pays by credit card over the phone. A few items are still required from the supermarket which a neighbour can fetch for her. Then there is the chemist; she phoned and discovered they can put all her scripts on file and deliver medicines to her front door. Great!

Last week Chris visited her GP for flu vaccine – very important at this time of the year. Firstly, staff were on a lunch break when she phoned to make the appointment. She has never known that to happen before, so she phoned again later. Instructions were many – phone us when you arrive from the carpark and stay in your car and wait for doctor to phone you back. Her GP did phone her back, again enquiring about any flu symptoms, then she was let into the locked surgery. The doctor wore a mask with a face shield over it. Staff also wore face shields with a higher glass screen installed around them. Her GP escorted Chris into her room and sat her a good distance away, sanitising her hands after she had administered the flu vaccine. It was quite a different experience – the new norm, Chris guesses.

Chris is taking the opportunity to exercise, walking more each day around the house and garden, doing over 7,000 steps on some days. Also, three times a week she is aiming to lift some weights and do stretching exercises. Lots of gardening needs to be done, though it will be important to watch out for the dead leaves. Last year she is sure she inhaled aspergillus fungus from sweeping them up. She was lucky this cleared up in her lungs without medication. It can certainly be problematic.

Another aim, if she gets around to it, is to learn the steps for Dancing Queen, from an on-line video. Chris hopes everybody is taking care of themselves.

**Don't forget, your contribution for an upcoming newsletter would be most welcome.**

## Pharmacies and COVID-19

University of Canberra Professor of Pharmacy, Mark Naunton said pharmacists were at the frontline of the coronavirus outbreak and were dealing daily with people acting irrationally, often from fear. He said it was concerning that several pharmacists in the United Kingdom had died as a result of contracting COVID-19. He said pharmacists were trained to deal with sick people and individuals with mental health issues, but anecdotally there was more abuse than usual at the moment. ‘Pharmacists are dealing with an inundation of requests, and when people don't understand things they can react differently. They don't always react in a logical way,’ he said.

Capital Chemist group business manager Andrew Topp said the situation had been ‘overwhelmingly difficult and relentless’. He said while ‘99.9 per cent of our customers have been absolutely brilliant’ there were those that behaved very badly. There were also people who didn’t know how to cope in this unfamiliar situation. Thirty-thousand times a month people come in with a cold to buy some Codral or cough medicine, all of which is entirely reasonable in normal circumstances, but it is not reasonable now. Please don't come into a pharmacy if you're sick. I don't know how you can be a citizen of the world and not know that you shouldn't come in and plonk yourself down and cough at [people].’

Andrew said most pharmacies, if they weren't already before the pandemic, were now offering contactless home delivery and phone advice. He said those who do come into stores need to understand it might take a bit longer to look after them.

**For Information on COVID-19, please go to the [ACT Health website](#) or the [Federal Health Department's website](#). You can also call the Coronavirus Health Information Line on **1800 020 080**. If you have serious symptoms, such as difficulty breathing, call triple zero (000).**

Reference: Canberra Times 5/4/20

**SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19, FLU AND COLD**

	DRY COUGH	FEVER	RUNNY NOSE	SORE THROAT	BREATH-LESSNESS	HEADACHE	BODY ACHES	SNEEZE	FATIGUE	DIARRHOEA
COVID -19										
FLU										
COLD										

FREQUENTLY   
 SOMETIMES   
 LITTLE   
 RARE   
 NOT

@SIOUXSIEW @XTOTL thespinoff.co.nz

SOURCE: WHO, CDC

CC-BY-SA

FOR THE LATEST INFO PLEASE SEE [who.int](http://who.int) or [health.govt.nz](http://health.govt.nz)

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<https://www.svhlunghealth.com.au/support/coronavirus-covid-19-resources/coronavirus-covid-19-resources>