

April 2022 Newsletter

Our mission is to provide a supportive and informative environment for people with lung conditions and their carers.

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NEXT MEETING: Thursday 12th May 2022
10:15 am - 12 noon
Weston Creek Labor Club
Teesdale Close, Stirling ACT 2611

You are welcome to stay for lunch at the club afterwards.

April Meeting – Helen Cotter

Numbers were down a bit for this meeting, but it was good to see a couple of new members. Marilyn did a check of who was here and who wasn't – and whether we knew how the absent members were. Val S went round taking a video of the members for Esther who is in hospital. Some members did a special hullo for Esther on the video. We wish her well – and miss her at the meetings.

Marina gave a summary of the results of the last meeting where we discussed what we liked about Lung Life and how we think it could be improved. We thought we were a fabulous group – friendly, supportive, providing companionship and time with people who have the same issues. We liked the social activities and would like to do more. We would, however, like to see more new members and to increase our advocacy in the community spreading the word about the issues we deal with.



This colourful piece of art is found in Colbinabbin. 'Where's that?' you may ask. Well head down the Hume into Victoria and turn off at Violet Town. Then head west through Rushworth towards Bendigo. You can't miss it. Artist: Tim Bowtell. Photo taken by John Morley.

The members then threw around ideas about what's available in the community to connect with – organisations such as Lung Foundation Australia (LFA), Health Care Consumers Association (HCCA), Self Help Organisations United Together (SHOUT) and Council on the Ageing (COTA).

LFA have a national committee for chronic conditions – Kaye and Caroline are both on it. The committee held a zoom meeting recently where it looked at strengthening their peer support. LFA has a chronic care nurse you can phone if you are having a bad time, or any concerns and they can talk you through it.

HCCA has a worthwhile course for consumer reps which gives you knowledge about the health and medical system which is of benefit to all participants. HCCA also provides speakers on a variety of topics.

COTA also provides speakers and has its annual Expo Day where all sorts of community, government and private organisations have their stands to promote their organisation – Lung Life is a part of that. COVID-19 stopped this for the last couple of years but it's on again this year.

Pam talked about our tradition of being guinea pigs for the student physios and doctors so they can meet real life people with lung conditions.

Members brought up:

- The importance of exercise through organisations like COTA, Arthritis ACT, Chifley Gym, and Stellar at Woden
- The importance of good nutrition
- How pharmacists can provide a medication review – in your own home – where they explain your medications to you - one in six people are hospitalised because of errors in medication.

Lyn Morley talked about the recent meeting of the DORSS committee. This committee deals with oxygen and CPAP – that's continuous positive airway pressure - provision in the ACT. Lyn told us that Phillips had recalled some CPAP machines which were dangerous and needed to be replaced. There are still about 400 people in ACT awaiting the replacement machines. There is also an issue with portable oxygen concentrators (POCs) with many ACT residents still using the oxygen cylinders.

From all these good ideas and examples, we went on to talk about possible speakers for Lung Life meetings. Marina is organising a committee to talk about this issue and prioritise the talks. If you have any suggestions for speakers, feel free to contact Marina on the Lung Life email.

Audio Books – from information supplied by Chris Moyle

Audio books can be a good choice for older readers. Here are some reasons why:

Your vision may be not what it used to be

- If your vision is impaired, listening to a book can be a relaxing way to enjoy them.

They can be good 'company'

- Many people may feel lonely at times. This can be especially true of those living alone.
- Listening to an audio book can ease loneliness as you get lost in a story.

They can help relieve boredom

- They can help make life more interesting.
- You can do mundane tasks while absorbed in a book.

They may trigger nostalgia

- Listening to one of your favourite stories can take you back in time.
- Research has shown that nostalgia can benefit people with dementia.

They are easy to handle

- You don't have to hold the book making them easier for people with an illness or injury.

They can provide mental stimulation and promote better mental health

- People who regularly do mentally stimulating activities tend to have better thinking skills in their later years.
- A study of older adults listening to audio books showed reduced symptoms of depression, anxiety, aggression, phobia, and obsessive-compulsive disorder.

They can help expand your knowledge

- Listening to a non-fiction book is a good way to learn something new.

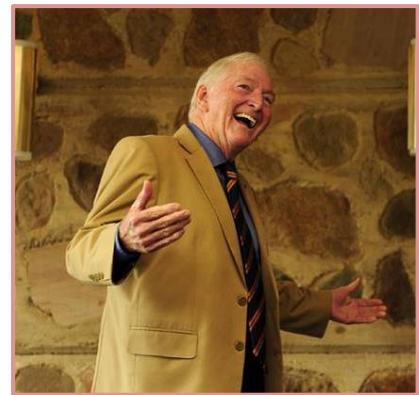
Who did you know before they were famous?

Your editor knew someone...

You may recall that in the last edition of our newsletter there was a quiz question:

'The book *The Power of One* was the first novel written by Australian author Bryce _____ .

You may have known that the answer to this question was 'Courtenay', i.e. Bryce Courtenay.



Prior to becoming a well known author Bryce Courtenay was an advertising executive. His award winning advertising campaigns included *Louie the Fly* and the *Milkybar Kid*. In those days Bryce was also a runner and - like your editor - he was a member of the newly formed Sydney Striders running club. Training with the Striders involved arriving at a designated start point at around 6am on a Sunday morning, and you would always know that Bryce had arrived if you saw his shiny Porsche parked amongst the Holdens and Fords.

For most of us the 42 km marathon was as far as we might attempt but a number of members, Bryce included, wanted to go further. This group would run in events like the 80km Sydney to Wollongong, and for well heeled types like Bryce, travel internationally to compete. The ultimate event for these ultra-marathoners is the Comrades Marathon in South Africa, an event of about 90km between Pietermaritzburg and Durban. As daunting as this event might sound it attracts many thousands of enthusiastic competitors and is now capped at 25,000 participants.

You may or may not know that Bryce called Canberra home in the final years of his life. He died in 2012. You can read tributes from the Canberra Times by various well known Canberrans at <https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/6163170/canberra-remembers-gentle-but-great-courtenay/>. The photo of Bryce in his later years is from that article.

So who did you know before they were famous? I'm sure the other readers would love to know.



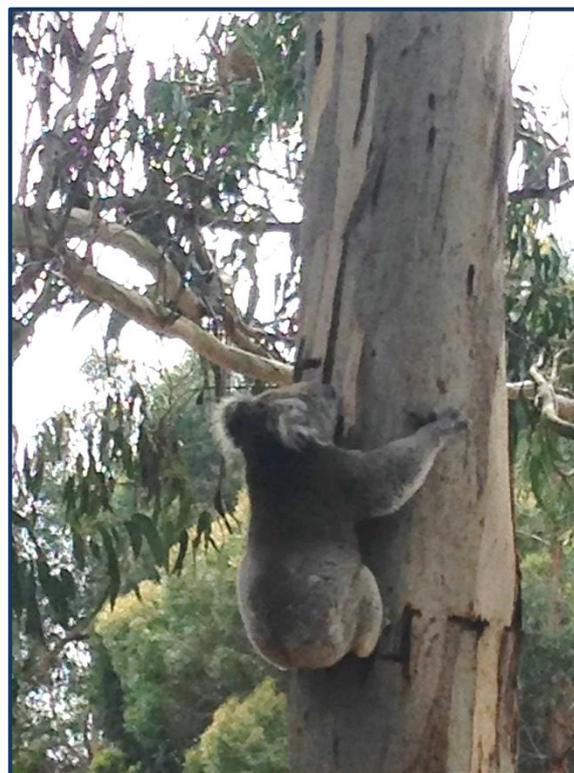
Eucalyptus Compound for Pulmonary Fibrosis – Chris Moyle

Hang in there – help is on the horizon

*Editor: This article is about University of Melbourne-led research into **flavonoid pinocembrin** – it sounds complicated but keep reading as Chris will explain it to you.*

Flavonoid pinocembrin is derived from the leaf structure of a particular species of **Australian eucalyptus trees**, and it has antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, anti-microbial and anti-cancer properties.

Researchers from the University of Melbourne, Monash University, Swinburne University of Technology, and industry partner, Gretals Australia set out to test the anti-inflammatory and anti-fibrosis properties of pinocembrin in 10 sheep, to see whether the compound could be effective at treating lung fibrosis. In the study the fibrosis was induced in two localised lung segments in each of the sheep. One of the segments was treated with 7mg of pinocembrin once weekly for four weeks, while the other segment was left untreated.



This one knew about the benefits of eucalyptus leaves long before we did - snapped by your editor.

Co-lead author on the study, Dr Habamu Derseh, from the Melbourne Veterinary School at the University of Melbourne said the results were ‘striking’. They found that pinocembrin improved lung function, reduced lung inflammation, and decreased overall pathology scores compared to damaged lungs that were untreated.

‘We saw striking anti-inflammatory effects and modest anti-fibrotic remodelling after four weeks of administering pinocembrin.’

The chemical for this trial was isolated from the leaves of eucalyptus saplings at the University of Melbourne’s Dookie campus. Following this success, preparation was made for human trials in 2022, with the **Yarralumla Nursery in Canberra** becoming involved and propagating these eucalyptus trees.

On January 19, 2022, the host of ABC Canberra’s Drive program Anna Vidot spoke to Alistair Cumming, CEO of Gretals Australia, about how this research could change the nature of lung disease treatment in humans. Alistair stated that the research results of the anti-inflammatory and anti-fibrotic properties of flavonoid pinocembrin are exciting and far better than expected.

Trees are also grown around Benalla in Victoria, in specific soil types, and some trees are ready for harvest. There are 18,000 of these trees in the ground in six different locations to avoid the threat of fire in any one area.

The time frame according to University of Melbourne experts is 18-24 months to when it can be used with humans. As a bonus it is also totally organic.

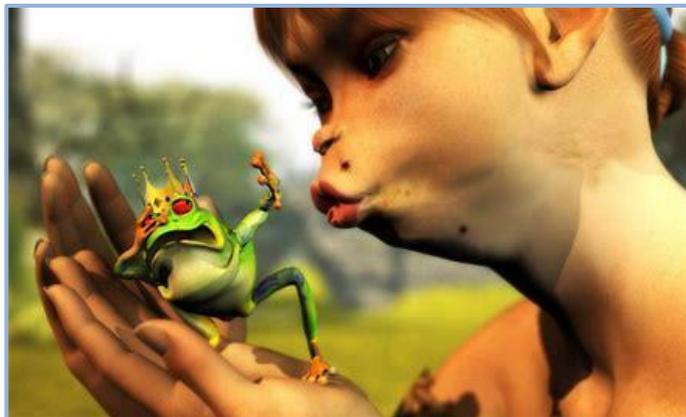
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Letters to the Editor – Chris Moyle

Regarding last month's newsletter, it's also worth noting that Judy Garland, the star of 'Wizard of Oz' also died young - at the age of 47 years. Her death wasn't reported as due to an asbestos-related illness, although this could have developed if she'd lived longer.

The kidney article reminded me that I am one of the 1 in 750 who has only one kidney. It was diagnosed a few years ago and is congenital and has grown to a larger than normal size. My GP remarked that I was the second one that day who'd presented with only one kidney.

It was interesting to learn about beryllium. I worked with a scientifically minded man who liked to give people nicknames. Beryl was Beryllium and Breda, a fiery Irishwoman, was Breda Reactor - related to nuclear energy and atomic bombs. As his Christian and surnames both began with the letter P, we named him P2 (pronounced P squared). Chris apparently didn't lend itself to a suitable name. But one day when I had a face full of cold sores, he asked, 'Have you been kissing frogs?'



After receiving this interesting and amusing follow up to the March edition, your editor replied to Chris thanking her, and Chris responded with another entertaining letter.

Glad you like my letter. I know I'm aging as I keep talking about the past. Beryl isn't a common name these days and Beryl was an interesting woman. She and P2, a Navy man, used to spend a fair amount of time every day discussing the Canberra Times cryptic crosswords. Breda came to work with me for a short time and we didn't get on. I had trouble getting her to write out the stationery list. She took it home to try to sort it out, then said flickering lights upset her so next day at work she had an epileptic fit. I and the first aid officer called an ambulance, and she was angry about that. She'd complain to P2 about me - said, 'You'd have to be Jesus to work with Chris' and then the boss had her moved to another area.

I didn't see her again until I went into Mullangarrie home to recuperate after lung problems in hospital in 2018. And there, at my table, was Breda. Luckily -???- she was getting dementia and she never recognised me as her old foe. We ended up on friendly terms.

Beryl died a while ago after she tripped over the cat and ended up in hospital with complications. P2 may have got a divorce as he'd refer to his wife as 'old boot face'.

My immediate boss was a big, loud man who frequently used the 'f' word and had girlie magazines in his work cupboard, and one up on his wall. P2 called him 'the big round mound of sound'.

Sounds like Chris had much to amuse her at work, and you never can predict what might be your final act. Your editor had never considered tripping over a cat to be a possibility.



Lung Life Support Team (alphabetical order) – by Helen Cotter

With **Marina Siemionow** now our new coordinator, here are the other members who help to keep Lung Life running smoothly and doing those extra yards in Lung Life's interest.

Chris Moyle: Chris (pictured top right) is the Treasurer, the keeper of all the Lung Life photos and archival material, and part of the editorial team for the newsletter. As Treasurer, she sends a \$50 donation to Lung Foundation Australia when a Lung Life member dies. As part of the editorial team, Chris writes articles for the newsletter and helps proofread it.



Don Neal: Don is part of the editorial team for the newsletter. He does the final check of it before it goes out. Don also puts it up on Facebook and our web page. You won't see Don at meetings as he has moved to Cowra and works from there.

Geoff Cox: Geoff (pictured centre) is the newsletter editor, urging for articles from anyone, writing his own and juggling the organisation of the newsletter. He sends it to the chronic care nurse (currently Xia). Years ago, the chronic care nurses offered to print it and send it to people who do not have email – for which we are eternally grateful. The rest get it by email. The newsletter goes to almost 100 people.



Helen Cotter: Helen (pictured bottom right) is the Assistant Treasurer and is part of the editorial team for the newsletter, writing articles and proofreading the newsletter before it goes out. She is also responsible for lending out the portable oxygen concentrator (POC) to those that may need it.



Lyn Morley: Lyn, our current past coordinator, is the representative on the DORRS committee which is responsible for oxygen delivery in the ACT.

Pam Gaston: is the go-to person when Lung Life needs to send out get well or thank you cards etc. You contact her if you know a card is needed.

Pam Harris: Pam (pictured below) wears many hats. She is generally the coordinator for Lung Life's social activities – especially the lunches, including the mid-winter and end-of-year lunches. As well, she is the contact for the physio and medico sessions where we go and be guinea pigs for the students. Pam is also the contact for the Seniors Expo – where we usually have a stand – and for World COPD Day.



Note: Pam Harris has indicated that she would like an assistant for her role. You may like to volunteer to help her out.

Should need to contact any of the above but don't have their contact details feel free to contact Geoff or Marina whose email addresses and phone numbers are on page 1 of every newsletter, and they will be able to help.