

April 2023 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 11th May 2023
10:15 am – 12:00 noon
Weston Creek Labor Club
Teesdale Close, Stirling ACT 2611

You are welcome to enjoy a bistro lunch with the group after the meeting.

April Meeting (13 April 2023) – Val Siemionow

Nine members attended the April meeting. We received apologies from Jenny Pannell, Kay Powell, Marilyn Allen, Karen Anabel, Collette Mommer, George Watts, and John and Lynn Morley.

Zoster Virus: We briefly discussed the zoster virus (shingles) vaccines, their availability, cost, and efficacy. The members present concluded that its benefits made it worth publicising to other group members.



Pam and Chris G were two of the nine members who attended the April meeting.

Publicity for Lung Life:

A journalist, James Day, has asked whether he could write an article on the Canberra Lung Life Support Group. We liked the idea and our Coordinator, Marina, will follow up with him to progress the proposal.

Editor: James Day is a cadet reporter for Region Media who publish RiotACT and About Regional.

A humorous aside: Somehow the discussion moved to Arnold Schwarzenegger's phrase *'I'll be back'*. Several imitations were offered before *'We got back'* on track.

Need for a renewed focus on education: Pam raised the issue of the currency of our Lung Life educational materials (pamphlets, brochures etc.). Some of the material used as handouts at seniors' expos etc. were past their use by date and in need of renewal.

Pam has contacted Lung Foundation Australia and they have forwarded electronic updates of the materials to her; however, we have to arrange and pay for our own printing. It was agreed that Marina (pictured right) would contact a number of printers, get quotes from them, and report back to a future meeting.

The group overall felt that there should be a greater focus on the spreading of contemporary research findings and outcomes related to lung health.

Transport as an issue for members: Our discussion then moved on to the issue of transport. Some Lung Life members no longer drive and need to rely on other members and/or public transport to be able to attend meetings and lunches.



The issue of the ACT's free bus services (for the aged/infirm etc.) was raised with several members querying the nature of the services that are available to them and how they could be accessed. Marina agreed to follow up, and her findings can be reported in the newsletter and at an upcoming meeting.

The need for a 'Social Secretary' or 'Buddy System': Given the number of members who are no longer able to attend the monthly meetings, we then discussed the need for a 'social secretary' for the Lung Life group. The social secretary's role would encompass a follow up with, and updating of, members who are no longer able to come to our monthly meetings.

An alternate idea of establishing a 'buddy system' across our membership was raised and appeared to be a more supported option to having a 'social secretary'. This matter will be discussed again at a future meeting when hopefully there will be more members in attendance.

Need for a future presentation by COTA: Members briefly discussed COTA (Council of the Ageing) and considered that there would be value in having a COTA representative do a presentation to the Lung Life Group on what they do, what services they provide, what benefits they offer, and on how our members can access their services. Marina will follow this up as she finalises this year's guest speaker program.

Richard White: Pam advised that she received a significant donation to Lung Life from Richard White. The group wishes to extend a formal 'thank you' and acknowledgement to Richard for his generosity. It was thought the donation could be put towards the cost of updating our pamphlets and brochures.

Certificate of Appreciation: We discussed the formal use of a 'Certificate of Appreciation' to be given to guest speakers. We looked at several versions and decided to go with a combination of Karen's 'Palm Leaf' graphic design but with the text and type face from the other options that featured stylised images of human lungs. Printing options are yet to be considered and arranged.

Val Dempsey's Road Trip: Val Dempsey joined the group to say 'farewell' as she would be away for the next four months on a combination of family visits, holidays and a continuation of her work promoting first aid training for learner drivers that she initiated as the Senior Australian of the Year for 2022.

Val wished us all the best for the duration and sends her regards to all the members who were unable to attend the meeting. The group congratulated her, wished her well, and looks forward to hearing of her experiences when she returns in September.

Lung Life Pens: We discussed the issue of Lung Life pens as a handout item at expos etc. This idea was well supported, and it was agreed that we need to follow up on options, and cost. This led to further discussion on the printing of new pamphlets and brochures.

Chris Gray will follow up on quotes for the pens and report back to the group for its consideration.

Wood Fires in Canberra: The use of wood fires in Canberra was discussed by the group. This matter had been raised by Maureen Bell prior to our meeting. We discussed three key questions:

Q1: Do we, as a group, have a position on wood fires?

A1: Yes. The group does not support the use of wood fires for heating in Canberra.

Q2: Do we have a designated spokesperson on this issue?

A2: Yes. Helen Cotter has been our spokesperson on this matter.

Q3: Should we promulgate our position to other people and organisations?

A3: The consensus was 'yes'. Marina will follow up with Helen to discuss future action on this matter and report back to the group.

Lunch: A number of options were canvassed for our next lunch on Friday, 28 April 2023. The time and venue will be advised to members via e-mail.

May and June Newsletters

Your editor is planning a road trip. First stop Dubbo then heading west to South Australia – whoever named it South Australia must have been geographically challenged. Anyway your editor will be away for a number of weeks in both May and June, consequently the next newsletter you receive will be a joint May/June edition which will come out at the end of June.

A final word on Val Dempsey – Chris Moyle

If you read the October 2022 newsletter you may recall that Val Dempsey (pictured right at the March lunch) had an unexpected encounter with the US President Joe Biden. Well that is, she bumped into him in the Cathedral at the conclusion of the Royal funeral, and she didn't miss the opportunity to say hello. *'Brim lifted, looking up and without missing a beat, Val said, "G'day, Mister President, and how are you?" To which **Joe Biden** assured her he was fine.'*



Now if Val had met Mr Biden before he became President it could have been a different story. He had a penchant for hugging and kissing women he met, but in the run-up to the election this habit was being scrutinized as the Me Too movement exposed sexual harassment and assault.

Jill Biden explained in a book she wrote that her husband comes from a family of huggers. But after public complaints from six women saying Biden's touching and kissing made them feel uncomfortable, Jill was firm with Joe: 'You need to change, FAST.' It seems he did just that, so no hugs for Val.

Reference: '*Peril*' by Bob Woodward and Robert Costa.

Happiness

Here are Seven Ways to Help Manifest Our Inner Happiness:

1. Become as healthy as you can be.

This requires discipline in eating, drinking and our personal daily behaviours. Become gradually aware of the relationship between what you eat and drink and how you feel. Avoid taking drugs daily which alter your mood or energy levels. These include alcohol, tea, coffee, cigarettes, recreational drugs and stimulants.

2. Avoid soldiering on.

Don't habitually push yourself. Question any tendencies you might have towards perfectionism, as this leads to a chronic feeling of unfulfillment.

3. Walk, run, swim, garden, row, dance, ride, climb, lift, bend, skip, jump.

Do whatever you like doing but move regularly.

4. Get adequate sleep and rest.

5. Have quiet time daily.

Meditating, praying, just being still and quiet.

6. Develop goodwill toward others.

Wish the best for them, compliment people sincerely for something you admire and encourage people. Apart from being the right thing to do, it also adds to your own inner peace and happiness: 'The fragrance of the rose lingers on the hand that gives it'.

7. Accept the fact that the only thing you have total control over is your attitude.

Everything else is never 100% under your own control. Understanding and accepting this is like lifting a weight off your shoulders.

Dr Greg Fitzgerald says 'We allow our happiness to flourish when we first honour our own basic needs. This requires some thought and reflection, which is best done in silence, stillness, and solitude'.

Reference: Dr Greg Fitzgerald, Osteopath. '*True Natural Health*' magazine, Summer 2022-23

To find out more about Dr Fitzgerald and his work go to: <https://www.healthforlife.com.au/>

Information supplied by **Chris Moyle**



Photograph by Val Siemionow at the March Lunch in Yarralumla

Arboretum 'Discovery Tour' now available every Wednesday to Sunday

Maureen Bell has let us know that the Arboretum is now offering guided bus tours. Ngala Tours provides the opportunity for visitors to gain insights and learn more about the forests and gardens at the Arboretum and to enjoy the spectacular views offered at the lookouts.

The word Ngala (pronounced Naa-la) means 'any tree' in Ngunnawal language. The Arboretum was kindly given permission by the Traditional Custodians to use this word. With over 44,000 trees within the grounds it is an interesting place to visit, and the bus allows for easy access.

Duration: 40 minutes

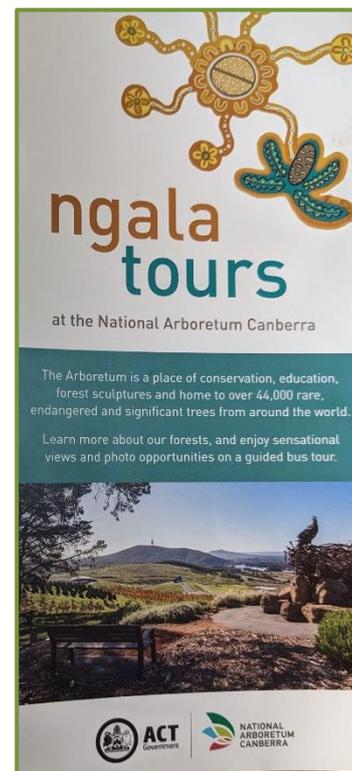
Wednesday to Friday, Departs: 1:00 pm

Saturdays, Sundays & public holidays, Departs: 1:00 pm and 2:30 pm (Note the 2:30 pm tour does not appear too always run. Check when you book).

Bookings close 50 minutes prior to departure. You can book online or at the Information Desk in the Village Centre. Their phone number is: 02 6207 8484.

<https://www.nationalarboretum.act.gov.au/visit/whats-on/everyday-events/ngala-tours>

Food for thought: Maybe a group from Lung Life may like to go together.



Companion Card – Helen Cotter

Do you need assistance so that you can go to the pictures – or to any other event? And you have to buy two tickets? A companion card enables you to go to these places – without having to pay for a second ticket.

To be eligible, you must:

- Be a permanent resident of Australia, living in the ACT.
- Show you have a significant, permanent disability.
- Show that you would be unable to attend most community venues or activities without care support.
- Show that this need is lifelong.

To apply, you need to:

- Fill out the application form.
- Have the information verified by a health professional.
- Have two passport photos, signed by the health professional.
- Send the completed application form and photos to:

ACT Companion Card Program

Access Canberra

GPO Box 158 CANBERRA ACT 2601



For more information or assistance in completing this form contact ACT Companion Card Program Access Canberra.

Phone: (02) 6205 4333 National Relay Service: 133 677

Email: companioncard@act.gov.au Website: www.companioncard.act.gov.au

Pulmonary Fibrosis

Pulmonary Fibrosis (PF) is a type of rare but debilitating lung disease that causes the tissue (interstitium) around the air sacs (alveoli) within the lungs to become thickened and scarred – this is called fibrosis.

This scarring makes the lungs stiff which makes it increasingly difficult to breathe deeply. This stops the efficient delivery of oxygen into the bloodstream where it is needed to be transported to the rest of the body.

There are many types of PF. Some people with PF may already have features of other associated conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis or scleroderma. Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis (IPF) is a specific disease where the underlying cause is unknown.

For individuals with PF it is important for a healthcare team to identify the underlying type of PF, to help determine the most appropriate treatment options for the condition.

<https://lungfoundation.com.au/patients-carers/living-with-a-lung-disease/pf/overview/>

*The following information was sent to the Editor by **Maureen Bell**. It spotlights research on Pulmonary Fibrosis* **For those who are reading the newsletter on your computer you can access a webinar** (click ‘Access recording’ below) which provides an overview and panel discussion on the latest research projects in PF, including genetic research, drug development and clinical trials.

[Access recording](#)

You may wish to join multiple webinars across the Live Well Breathe Better series to benefit from the valuable information shared in each topic that can relate to many people living with a lung condition.

To learn more and to register for upcoming webinars, click **[here](#)**.

Pulmonary fibrosis Australasian Clinical Trials (PACT) Network

The Pulmonary Fibrosis Australasian Clinical Trials (PACT) Network is a collaboration of specialists who are working with Lung Foundation Australia to support clinical trials that will improve outcomes for patients with pulmonary fibrosis. To learn more about PACT, search for current clinical trials, or sign up to become a member and stay up to date, visit the website here:

[Homepage - PACT \(lungfoundation.com.au\)](http://lungfoundation.com.au)

Centre of Research Excellence in Pulmonary Fibrosis (CRE-PF)

Funded by the Australian National Health and Medical Research Council, the CRE-PF conducts a nationally coordinated, clinically focused research program to address the urgent need for more effective, personalised approaches to identify and better manage pulmonary fibrosis. To learn more, visit the website here: **[Centre of Research Excellence in Pulmonary Fibrosis \(cre-pf.org.au\)](http://cre-pf.org.au)**