

February 2024 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 14 March 2024
10:15 am – 12:00 noon
Weston Creek Labor Club
Teesdale Close, Stirling ACT 2611

Speaker: A representative from The Council of the Ageing (COTA) will talk about what services it provides

From the Guest Editor

Welcome to the February newsletter. We're sorry to hear that Geoff unfortunately is still not well so we have a guest editor this month. We've had a strange few weeks with the Lung Life email being hacked with all the angst and extra work that it has caused Marina. She is hoping we can get the old one back but it'll be a couple of weeks before she knows. Note her new address above if you want to contact Lung Life.

As well, sadly, two members of Lung life died recently. You'll find out more about them below. Please remember we welcome all your contributions – on health matters or on holidays (with photos). Send them to me or to Marina – details above.

February Meeting

Today's meeting was a planning meeting so there was lots of discussion about what we think we would need to do, how we're going to do it and who's going to do it. But first we introduced ourselves and our condition to the other members and to new members – all 18 of us.

Then we moved to finances. Karen Anable is now the new Treasurer with Marina Siemionow as Assistant Treasurer. Chris Moyle presented her final Treasurer's report before handing everything over to Karen. We thanked Chris for the 13 years she'd been Treasurer along with Helen Cotter as Assistant Treasurer. We discussed how best we could use the money in our account. One suggestion was that we needed to promote ourselves more in order to retain numbers, to build numbers and to spread the word about lung health issues



throughout the community. We set up a small group to investigate that further. Some members suggested that we seek grants to help out with printing our brochures and developing more publicity so another small group was formed to look into what grants were available in Canberra and to prepare submissions. Both these Working Groups will report back regularly to the meeting on progress.

We had general discussion where members raised issues that concerned them. One issue was LFA and how it was going. Marina is on a Peer Group Support network that zooms monthly so was able to provide feedback about LFA's support for Peer groups ie groups like ours.

We moved on to looking at the various **roles in this group** and who does them.

- Marina Siemionow of course is the **Coordinator** and is on various other relevant committees such as the Peer Support Group mentioned earlier and the Chronic Conditions Network - run by HCCA involving health services across Canberra
- **Scribe** (meeting notes): Helen Cotter
- **Newsletter**: Geoff Cox with Helen Cotter currently guest editor
sub-editors: Chris Moyle; Helen Cotter; Don Neal; Marina Siemionow
- Sympathy, get well etc **cards** – Margaret Geaghan
- **Events Coordinator**: Chris Gray
- **Social Coordinator**: Marilyn Allan
- **Publicity Group** for advocacy for our group and for lung conditions in the ACT: Colette Mommer; Val Dempsey; Caroline Scowcroft; Val Dempsey; Caroline Polak Scowcroft
- **Grants Group** for researching available grants and submitting proposals for financial assistance, Karen Anable, Marina Siemionow and Colette Mommer

Events coming up:

- ✚ **February – Friday 23** – lunch at Yarralumla Oak's Brasserie 12 noon
 - ✚ **March – Saturday 16** – Government House Open Day where we have a stand. Check out their website if you want to tour the house: [Visiting Government House | Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia](#)
 - ✚ **March – Friday 22** – lunch at George Harcourt Inn at Gold Creek 12 noon. *Note that this is **not** the last Friday of the month when we usually have our lunch. The last Friday is Good Friday, the beginning of Easter.*
 - ✚ **September – Wednesday 25** – Seniors Expo
 - ✚ **November – Wednesday 20** – World COPD Day
- In between will be our monthly lunches organised at meetings.

Final Two Points

The UC Physio department is looking for 20 volunteers to assist in giving their students some experience with real people sometime in April – it's not finalised yet. It will be over two weeks, an hour each week. The first week will be an assessment of your condition; the second will be exercises designed to suit your condition. For more information, contact Marina.

Lastly, we briefly discussed speakers for the year so keep a lookout for some interesting speakers. We then broke for lunch, exhausted after all that thinking and discussing.

Vale Lyn Morley (1952-2024)

Helen Cotter

In the space of a week, we had the funerals of two members of Lung Life. This second funeral service was for Lyn, a past Coordinator of Lung Life. Lyn was a committed member of the Salvation Army and the service was run by the Salvation Army at Tuggeranong. Lyn was also a wife, a mother, a mother-in-law and a grandmother.



Lyn was the oldest of 5 children, 4 girls and a boy – where she developed her ability to organize and look after others. When married, she and John cared for and fostered many children over the years, giving them a better life than they could have had otherwise. They remember her for her quiet, calm personality that enabled her to manage some stressful moments.

About 9 years ago, Lyn developed pulmonary fibrosis which progressed slowly but then a rapid decline meant she needed to move onto oxygen therapy. The Salvation Army gave her a lot of both physical and spiritual help, something she needed in her bleakest moments.

Lyn became Coordinator of Lung Life in 2016 and did a wonderful job – ably assisted by husband John. She ran the meetings and did all the behind-the-scenes jobs that all coordinators do. As well, she coordinated the formal event celebrating Lung Life's 22 years in March 2020 where we had about 50 people for lunch at the Labor Club with celebratory speeches and video presentations.

Finally, she did a brilliant job keeping Lung Life together once Covid struck and we could no longer have meetings. As soon as we were allowed to, Lyn organized lunches at various places - lunches that were well attended and heartily enjoyed. As her illness progressed, she found it too much and finally had to retire.

Lyn will be remembered as a very caring person – quietly getting on with what needed to be done. Quite a few members of Lung Life were at the service to farewell Lyn - along with many others. She had been an important part of Lung Life and we will miss her.

Vale Jan Hunt (1946-2024)

Helen Cotter

Funerals are wonderful things. You learn so much about the deceased that you wish you'd known before they died. So it was with Jan. She had done so many wonderful things throughout her life that she will be missed by many.

Jan was born and brought up in the Bathurst area in a family of eight children. She moved to Parkes to do her nursing training, nursing there for many years. It was at Parkes that she met Terry. One year later they were married and went on to have 5 daughters. Later on a little boy joined the family. As well as bringing up these six children, Jan and Terry went on to care for other children. They cared for about 150 children over a thirty year period.



In 1991 Jan took up a position at Mary Mead Residential and later at the Ted Noffs Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation Centre until she retired. She loved looking after vulnerable people. Jan also loved family so it was obviously extremely pleasing to her that her family produced 19 grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren. She loved the excitement of Christmas and developed a fabulous collection of Christmas lights on their house which many Canberrans came to look at – which enabled them to collect money to donate to the SIDS foundation.

Two years ago she became very sick and was more or less housebound. In mid-January, she developed a complication that affected her lungs and took her to hospital. There she died, surrounded by her family. Both a sad event and a welcome relief.

Jan hadn't been to Lung Life for quite a few years. Those of us who have been around for a while remember her as a cheerful, helpful person, volunteering to beautifully write our name tags for us – but more vividly, we remember her as part of a Ukelele group that came and entertained us at a meeting, playing well known popular old songs. Jan was like one of the songs – You are My Sunshine. Vale Jan Hunt.

Retirement of Dr Mark Hurwitz



Late last year, patients of respiratory specialist Dr Mark Hurwitz said goodbye to him and wished him well in his retirement. He was a much-loved doctor with a lovely compassionate manner, always up to date with the latest treatments.

Mark was very supportive of Lung Life right from the beginning in 1998 when it was being set up. We received a \$200 donation from Boehringer Ingelheim, thanks to his speaking to them about the group. This enabled the group to meet wider publicity about its existence. Later, he often came as a speaker at our meetings, giving us the

latest respiratory health news, and very ably answering the minefield of our questions about our health and our treatments. These meetings were always well attended. When Lung foundation Australia (LFA) began their annual Education Day Seminars at Southern Cross Club, Woden to a wider audience of about 60 people, Dr Hurwitz spoke at a few of them, often giving complex information in an understandable way.

Dr Hurwitz was highly regarded by his patients and all of us at Lung Life. We will remember him as a very kind and competent person with a caring and friendly approach. We wish him well in his retirement.

A Visit to Sydney to see the Kandinsky

Marina Siemionow

Earlier this month my youngest daughter (of three) Toniya and I caught the train to Sydney, where we met one of my sisters, Barbara who had flown in from Adelaide. Our plan was to spend a few days together, dine out at some luscious restaurants, see a few sights and specifically visit the Vasily Kandinsky Exhibition at the Art gallery of NSW and the Ramses & The Gold of The Pharaohs at the Australian Museum.



In an attempt to beat the crowds, we'd pre-booked tickets and the audio tours for the exhibitions. On our first evening in Sydney we got ready for our visits by taking our phones out to follow the instructions that we were incessantly receiving. Thankfully, Toniya, who is very adept at using today's technology, was available as our coach.

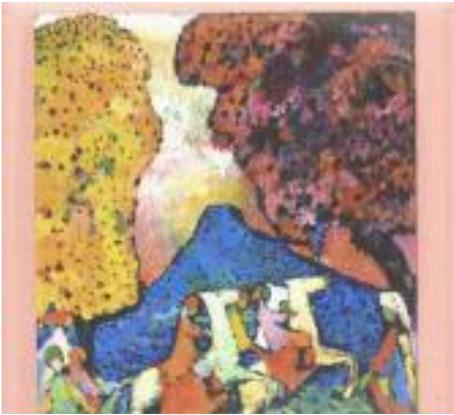
We started downloading apps, saving tickets to electronic wallets, checking that the barcodes were easily accessible, testing that our personal headphones were paired and connected to the phones and working. Even Toniya struggled to overcome the incompatibility issues we faced, between the Ticketmaster technology, Barbara's Apple technology and my older model Samsung. After a total of six hours (between us) of fiddling around we thought we had worked it all out, and before going to bed put all our phones and headphones onto the chargers. We were ready.



Entry into the Kandinsky Exhibition

For our first day in Sydney we were booked into the Art Gallery to the Exhibition showcasing the life and work of one of the most influential European modernists, Vasily Kandinsky. With phones in hand, barcodes accessible we entered the Gallery. Barcodes were scanned and we easily gained entry. We were thrilled. Then came the audio tour which could only be accessed by scanning a barcode with one's own phone. My phone was too old and didn't have the capability. I was eventually offered a website through which I could access the audio tour. It was worth the effort, as the exhibition relied on the audio tour to tell Kandinsky's life story which turned out to be vital to understanding the development of his painting style over his life.

For two and half hours I was totally absorbed in the life, experiences, art, philosophy, spirituality of Kandinsky from 1866 to 1944. As I learned about the man I was also taken through the kaleidoscope of events that occurred in Europe over that period. I marvelled at a man well educated over a range of disciplines, a professional, worldly, well-travelled, caught up in the folklore and culture of his birthplace, Russia. A man who gave up everything to spend a life struggling to make sense of a new form of art - how to express ideas and emotions on paper through painting.



One of Kandinsky's first attempts at Impressionism 1908



Another early piece painted in 1910

He did not begin painting until he was thirty years old and gave up a career in teaching Law and Economics at the University to follow his passion. His paintings were influenced by music as much as science and philosophy. His art was based on ideas and thoughts rather than objects and things. He wanted people to think about his work to appreciate the symmetry and harmony in his paintings the placement of colour on the canvas the relationship of the forms on the canvas.

Over his lifetime he managed to change people's ideas of what art was and how to appreciate it. Towards the end of his life he even managed to live off the income he made from his art.



I think I was more amazed at the man and what he was attempting to do with his art rather than the art itself. He was a man that collaborated with others and was able to influence those around him. He could explain his art to others so they could understand it. I fell in love with one of his later paintings.

My favourite, painted in Paris in 1940 - one of his last.