

The New Link

St George Association
For People with Physical Disabilities Incorporated

"Capabilities Conquer Disabilities"

Vol. 49 No.24

March 2007

Future Programmes

Mar 3	Sat	10.30 am	Book Club	Belgreen
Mar 14	Wed	10.30 am	Wednesday Group	Belgreen
Mar 11	Sun	3.00 pm	Picnic	Abbotsford
Mar 20	Tues	7.00 pm	Management Committee	Belgreen
Mar 24	Sat	10.00 am	Embroidery Group	Belgreen
Mar 27	Tues	7.30 pm	Ruchir Sodhani	Belgreen
Apr 7	Sat	10.30 am	Book Club	Belgreen
Apr 11	Wed	10.30 am	Wednesday Group	Belgreen
April 14	Sat		Campbelltown Arts Centre	Campbelltown
Apr 17	Tues	7.00 pm	Management Committee	Belgreen
Apr 24	Tues	7.30 pm	To be confirmed	Belgreen
Apr 28	Sat	10.00 am	Embroidery Group	Belgreen

The Political Scene

Once again we have a State Election looming! Regardless of your political persuasions it is an opportunity to raise with your local member and/or candidates, issues affecting the lives of people with disabilities. Approximately 20% of the population have a disability and, therefore, have a voice that should be heard by politicians. Unfortunately, the reality is that "disability" does not seem to be truly addressed.

Granted, over some years now, various services and support have been provided. During last year additional funding for disability services was announced by the Hon. John Della Bosca (Minister for Disability Services).

However, there are still huge gaps and whilst progress in some areas has been made, on the other hand we appear to slip backwards. Until proper planning for people with disabilities is included in all aspects of government and the non-government sector we will be faced with the barriers or lack of services that currently exist.

Now is a good time to contact your representative or candidates – speak to them, write a letter, ring their office – have your say!!

The Editor

The Physical Disability Council of NSW is in the process of preparing “kits” that will be distributed to sitting members and candidates, making particular mention of Program of Aids for Disabled People (PADP), Personal Assistance and Transport. These three issues affect a large number of people with disabilities and have been pursued by the ‘disability movement’ over many years. If you would like more detail you can use their website www.pcdnsw.org.au and obtain additional information.

The Department of Health has a new program “Transport for Health”. Since the 1st July 2006 the Isolated Patients Travel & Accommodation Assistance Scheme is now part of the Transport for Health program, which integrates all non emergency health related transport services through NSW Area Health Services into a single program.

The Association has a number of the hand-out leaflets regarding this program – if you are interested in obtaining one or more, please let contact either myself, or one of the management committee members.

Membership Fees

Membership renewal fees are due 1st April 2007. At the last Annual General Meeting it was resolved to increase Association membership fees. As you know it has been many, many years since fees were increased and following discussion it was unanimously agreed that an increase should be introduced. Therefore, fees as from 1st April will be as follows :

Full and Associate Membership for those not fully employed \$7.00

Full and Associate Membership for those fully employed \$14.00

The Association looks for your support in renewing your membership and asks that you forward payment to **Jenny Chin, 2 Salerwong Place, Ryde NSW 2212.**

Future Programmes

Book Club

Saturday March 3 and April 7.

Belgreen 40-42 Chalmers St, Belmore

10.30 a.m. – 3.00 p.m.

The February meeting was the first chance for the year to get together and discuss the various books that had been tackled over the festive season.

Janet Malone spoke about a few – “Down Our Street” by Lena Kennedy (1986). A true storyteller. This is a vivid look at the East End during and after World War II, the evacuation of children from London the Blitz and its aftermath. Well worth reading.

“Remembering Babylon” by David Malouf (1993). Set in the days of settlement in North Queensland. The story of a white man returning to ‘civilisation’ after 16 years with the aborigines since a very young boy. His inability to assimilate and the prejudices he faced in the community. I found it to be disjointed but beautifully descriptive – not an easy read. I would not recommend this book but should you get the opportunity to read it – go for it – you may like it.

“Heritage” by Judy Nunn. Set against the background of the Snowy Mountains Scheme construction, this book follows three migrants and their various lives and

circumstances in Europe, which brought them all to Cooma at the same time. Some surprising twists and turns in this story make this a most enjoyable book.

Anne Buchanan reported about "Seeking Robinson Crusoe" by Tim Severin (Macmillan). Tim sets out to trace the true story of Robinson Crusoe. His travels take him to islands where men were ship-wrecked or abandoned in the days of the pirates and buccaneers. He meets the descendants of Man Friday, the Miskito Indians, who live in the swamps of Nicaragua. He travels on a hundred year old sailing boat to a small uninhabited island off the coast of Venezuela to learn about 'white slave' Henry Pitman whose story had influenced Daniel Defoe's writings. This book is full of surprises and gives you a whole new perspective and insight into the story of Robinson Crusoe.

Maura Outterside – "The Wild Calling" by Quentin Chester (1998) New Holland.

Easy reading – "confessions of a hit-and-miss adventurer" which gives some hilarious insights into the city slickers and their wonder of the Aussie bush – and things we humans do!

Patricia Byrne – a couple of books. "Under the Tuscan Sun" which has previously been reviewed – a pleasant book and an opportunity to transport yourself to Tuscany, and enjoy what it has to offer.

"Write Home for Me" by Jean DeBelle Lamensdorf (Random House Australia 2006). She was a journalist and extremely interested in the Vietnam War, volunteering to work for the Red Cross she spent 12 months assisting the medical teams and providing non-medical welfare to the sick and wounded ANZAC forces.

A wonderful story about the human spirit – the battles endured by the servicemen – the tasks that faced the medical teams and how they managed to function. It was just an appalling situation. The struggles of the Vietnamese people. The description of the country – her word pictures are so well presented it really gives you a great

insight into what life was really like for all those involved.

As we have said previously – lots of topics get discussed so come along – you are most welcome. Bring your lunch. Tea/coffee available.

Any further information please call Maura Outterside (Co-ordinator) **9718 5803**.

**Sunday – Picnic, Quarantine Reserve
Spring Street, Abbotsford
March 11 - from 3.00 p.m.**

This is a very enjoyable and accessible venue so it is planned to have a late afternoon barbecue. The weather should be good and not too hot. So come along and "burn a sausage or two", or bring whatever other food you fancy and take in the atmosphere of this great spot.

**Wednesday Group
10.30 a.m. March 14 and April 11
Belgreen 40–42 Chalmers St, Belmore**

Members and friends are invited to gather together for the Wednesday Group.

It was decided for the March meeting to have an "Easter" lunch – please contact **Daphne Berger** (Co-ordinator) **9718 3678** regarding these arrangements.

Regular arrangements are to bring your lunch and tea/coffee is available at Belgreen.

Management Committee Meeting will be held -

**7.00 p.m. Tuesday, March 20
Belgreen 40- 42 Chalmers St, Belmore**

**10.00 a.m. – 3.00 p.m.
Saturday March 24 and April 21
Embroidery Group
Belgreen 40-42 Chalmers St, Belmore**

Coralie Lewin (Co-ordinator) provides some wonderful ideas and support in helping members create a variety of work. Members all agree this is a very enjoyable activity and an opportunity to improve your skills and learn something new.

Everyone can work at their own pace, at whatever they select. You are most welcome to attend, even if you just want to call in and see what is happening.

Bring your lunch – tea/coffee available.

**7.30 p.m. Tuesday, March 27
Belgreen 40- 42 Chalmers St, Belmore**

Mr. Ruchir Sodhani from Sutherland Flora & Fauna Association will have a CD presentation about native flowers and plants previously not identified in Royal National Park. This should be a most interesting evening – we look forward to seeing you there – bring a friend.

**Saturday, April 14
Campbelltown Arts Centre
Cnr Camden & Appin Roads,
Campbelltown**

The Centre is opened from 10.00 am until 4.00 pm – it sounds like a great complex and is accessible.

The exhibition at that time will be “Grounded; Art, Activism, Environment”, should be very interesting. The Centre also has Japanese Gardens and Sculpture Gardens. There is a Café & Food Store, so this could be a gathering point for members.

Program Report

LUNCH at Georges River 16 ft. Sailing Club, Dolls Point - a very pleasant day. Members enjoyed the location looking out over the bay and the sail craft added to the scene. Lunch was great – the company good, so what more do you need.

Fund Raising

The Craft Table at Belgreen is a regular fund raiser – members and visitors frequently make purchases, all contributing to Association funds. Many thanks to the great group of ladies who produce the fine selection of goods, and to the buyers for their support.

Other News

Janet Malone has stood down as Deputy Chair of Canterbury City Council Disability Access Committee and **Maura Outterside** has taken on the role. Well done Janet for your efforts and congratulations, Maura.

I (**Patricia Byrne**) have recently joined the Management Committee of the Physical Disability Council of NSW and look forward to being involved in the work of the Council.

Post-Polio Network of NSW Seminar to be held at Northcott Society, 1 Fennell Street, Parramatta on **March 3, 2007 at 1.00 p.m.** Guest speaker from Technical Aid for Disabled (TAD).

Canterbury Disability Access Committee is conducting a Public Forum **Thursday March 1, 2007 at 6.00 pm** inviting the public to raise any issue relating to disability access or the provision of disability. Refreshments will be served during the course of the evening. Please contact the Team Leader Community Development 9789 9472 for catering purposes if you are interested in attending.

Venue - Belmore Senior Citizens Centre, Building B 38 Redman Parade Belmore.

Howard Courtney from Kogarah Sailability, was named Kogarah Citizen of the Year. Howard has been one of the Association's guest speakers in the past, and we do offer him our best wishes and congratulations.

Further, congratulations to **Jan Steinfurth** for his recent OAM Award, announced on Australia Day. Jan has been a long time Associate Member of the Association. His efforts in the community have been great, in particular his involvement with the Hydrocephalus Support Association, the Scouting movement and his work with Hurstville City Uniting Church. Well done, Jan.

Personal Pars

It is with great sadness I advise the Association has lost another member – **Vilma Easey**, who died on 27th January.

Vilma was one of the founding members of St. George – in those days, The St. George District Fellowship. She had maintained her membership all these years and was always interested in keeping up with the news through The New Link.

She and her family lived at Hurstville and a few years ago she moved to Bowral and enjoyed life in the southern highlands.

Vilma took an active interest in a range of issues affecting people with disabilities, particularly physical access and was involved with her local access committee.

Unfortunately, over the last few years she had some serious health problems and life had been difficult for her. With the support of her family she was at home until a few days before she died.

Our sympathy and thoughts go to her husband, Bevan and children Scott, Melissa and their families.

The family had requested 'no flowers' and any donations could be made to Canassist Society of NSW 9 Loftus Road, Darling Point 2027. This organisation predominately assists people from rural NSW providing accommodation in Sydney for patients and their families whilst they are undergoing treatment in Sydney.

I have been in contact with our Welfare Officer, **Elizabeth McDonald** and things are slowly improving for her – she now has the plaster off her arm. However, her legs have to remain in splints until the 22nd March – still experiencing pain.

We can certainly all relate to the difficult time you must be having Elizabeth, if "best wishes" can do anything, we send heaps!!

A Greeting!

Thought you might enjoy this greeting that was passed on to me recently.

"To all my friends,

I wanted to send some sort of holiday greeting to my friends, but it is so difficult in today's world to know exactly what to say without offending someone. So we met with my solicitor yesterday, and on his advice we wish to say the following:

Please accept with no obligation, implied or implicit, my best wishes for an environmentally conscious, socially responsible, low stress, non-addictive, gender neutral celebration of the winter/summer solstice holiday, practised with the most enjoyable traditions of religious/secular persuasions and/or traditions of others, or their choice not to practice religious or secular traditions at all.

I also wish you a fiscally successful, personally fulfilling and medically uncomplicated recognition of the onset of the generally accepted calendar year 2007, but not without due respect for the calendars of choice of other cultures whose contributions to society have helped make our country great (not to imply that it is necessarily greater than any other country) and without regard to the race, creed, colour, age, physical ability, religious faith or sexual preference of the wishee.

By accepting this greeting, you are accepting these terms:

This greeting is subject to clarification or withdrawal. It is freely transferable with no alteration to the original greeting. It implies no promise by the wisher to actually implement any of the wishes for her/himself or others and is void where prohibited by law, and is revocable at the sole discretion of the wisher. This wish is warranted to perform as expected within the usual application of good tidings for a period of one year or until the issuance of

a subsequent holiday greeting, whichever comes first, and warranty is limited to replacement of this wish or issuance of a new wish at the sole discretion of the wisher.

A thought from Janet Malone :
"HUGS" – come in one size fits all.

Disclaimer: No trees were harmed in the sending of this message; however, a significant number of electrons were slightly inconvenienced."

Life can get complicated, can't it!!

Management Committee 2006 –2007

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Welfare Officer: Elizabeth McDonald 02 9747 6268

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