



NEWSLETTER

Editor: Gillian Thomas

P.O. Box 888, KENSINGTON 2033

EDITOR'S CORNER

This is the final Newsletter for the year. I'm sorry it's a bit briefer than usual, but the late effects of polio are taking their toll on me at the moment. There's still lots of goodies though. There are details below of our pre-Christmas Seminar to be held on Saturday 14th December. We have also been receiving a lot of publicity recently and are only just managing now to crawl out from under the mountain of mail requesting further information. There are also two more profiles of Committee members in this issue, together with details of two clinics now available for post polios.

FELDENKRAIS : AWARENESS THROUGH MOVEMENT

The Network is holding a seminar on this topic on Saturday 14th December. A therapist from the Feldenkrais Foundation will be speaking and demonstrating the techniques associated with this body awareness program. There will be an opportunity for questions and discussion after the presentation. A new member from Miranda would love to attend, but she needs transport. If you can help, please phone Rae (337 6315) for further details.

SEMINAR: AWARENESS THROUGH MOVEMENT

Date	: Saturday, 14th December 1991
Time	: 1.00 p.m. - 3.30 p.m.
Place	: Paraquad, 33-35 Burlington Road, Homebush.
Lunch	: 12.00 - 1.00 p.m. Please bring your own lunch. Tea and coffee will be provided.
Afternoon Tea	: 3.30 p.m. Members are asked to bring a plate for a Christmas Afternoon Tea
RSVP	: Phone Rae on (02) 337 6315 or write to The Secretary, P O Box 888, KENSINGTON NSW 2033 by Wednesday, 11th December.

MULTI-MEDIA PERSONALITIES!

Many members will be aware of the recent spate of publicity given the Network. We were very fortunate to have Dr James Wright publicise the Network through his newspaper column. However, we had no idea that his column is syndicated across Australia! At the same time, the Sydney Morning Herald published a front page article featuring our President (who also did a radio interview), and Professor Richard Jones of the Prince Henry Hospital Rehabilitation Centre had an article on the late effects of polio published in the Australian Medical Journal (together with a letter from one of our members describing "what it's really like"). As if this wasn't enough, "A Current Affair" also interviewed Committee members for a segment on the syndrome; this went to air in September.

Well, you can imagine the result of all this: an absolute avalanche of mail, all within the space of a few weeks. We have received over 700 letters to date, and new enquiries are still being received at a rate of about six every day. Committee members have worked valiantly in their spare time to get information kits out. I hope we were able to give help and encouragement to all who made enquiries. We now have a large number of new members - if you are one of them, welcome. We hope to see you at the next seminar on 14th December. We are very hopeful that all this publicity and heightened public awareness will lead to research and medical help for post polios.

We are also negotiating with the ABC to have an episode focusing on polio on "GP". We hope it will go to air in April next year. We are trying to organise similar programs on "Country Practice" and "The Flying Doctors". Further details on these in the next Newsletter.

COMMITTEE PROFILES

NOLA BUCK : When Gillian asked for volunteers for a Committee Profile, I thought it my duty to offer, but what could I say, as my life has been pretty much the average person's.

I am the Publicity Officer of the Post-Polio Network (NSW) Inc. I was born in 1935 and contracted polio in December 1937. At that time my parents lived in Broadford, Victoria, and only two of us contracted the disease in the town. Health authorities thought I could have been exposed to the virus via a travelling salesman who came to the door selling calendars. My mother, now in her mid 80s, still has the offending calendar!

I spent about four years in hospital and convalescent homes and have very little memory of that time. Most of what I know has been gleaned from my mother. Quite recently, at my request, my mother wrote about this period of my life, and expressed the helplessness parents experienced through lack of information from the hospital about the

progress of their child. At least today there is communication between medical people and the patients or their relatives.

When I arrived home, aged six and unable to walk, my mother continued my exercises and she can recall quite vividly the day I first walked. We polio people owe so much to the perseverance of our parents, don't we?

School years were spent at normal schools, and they were happy years. I never really felt disabled. At cricket I had a runner, and I also enjoyed swimming. After working as a shorthand-typist for about ten years, I went overseas on a three-year working holiday. This was an absolutely marvellous time and was one of the highlights of my life. I hitch-hiked around the U.K., with a friend bought a Ford Popular and toured Europe, and later, by myself, toured Scandinavia. It took a lot of persuasion from the folks at home to get me to come back!

I married at age thirty-four and now have four children, three girls and a boy. All are still students, two in tertiary education and two at school. In many ways I've had a great life, so far! I've travelled nearly all round Australia on camping holidays (I met my husband on a camping trip from Adelaide to Perth) and feel that these trips have given me an appreciation of my own country and a desire to preserve its flora and fauna, within reason. I am a committed conservationist and believe that now Australia is expected to support several millions of people, we should try to co-exist with nature, rather than crush it.

I am interested in politics, am currently involved in P & F at school, help in a church Care Group for elderly and disabled people in our Parish, am President of a Church Women's Group, and enjoy music (especially opera), reading, and listening to the radio.

It's been a pleasure talking to so many of you over the 'phone in my role as Publicity Officer, and I hope that as we work together we can achieve acknowledgement of what we have (the late effects of polio), and hopefully an answer as to why it is happening, and how to manage it.

JANET MALONE : Hello to all my fellow members! I have been on the Management Committee for eighteen months now and have been the Minutes Secretary for twelve months which at times is a daunting task, but I enjoy every moment of it.

I have been married for twenty-seven years, have three daughters and one son-in-law, and work as a secretary in a Real Estate office. My pastimes include reading, embroidery/cross-stitch, the theatre, and travelling (when funds permit).

I contracted polio at the age of five, was paralysed from the neck down, and diagnosed to be "a vegetable for life"! I spent eight months in hospital before being discharged as a walking patient, with my right leg in a caliper and with a weak upper left arm. At the age of ten and after surgery, I was able to dispose of my caliper. For many years I led a "normal life", able to dance, hike and play tennis.

In the early 1970s, I noticed weakness in my hands, and from then on, steadily, other muscles of my body deteriorated, especially in my legs and arms. Fatigue is at times overwhelming, and swallowing has become more difficult. For other than short distances, I now need the aid of a walking stick.

I hope to continue working for the Network for a long time, and look forward to meeting you all at some time along the way.

COMING EVENTS

Our first Seminar for next year will be held on Saturday 7th March 1992 at Paraquad, 33-35 Burlington Road, Homebush. At this stage, we are hoping to focus on Occupational Therapy. More details later.

CLINICS

Two clinics have now been established as a result of Seminars the Network has held. Details are given below.

PODIATRY TRAINING CLINIC - BUILDING D - SYDNEY TECHNICAL COLLEGE
(HARRIS STREET ENTRANCE, ULTIMO) PHONE: (02) 217-3003

The Clinic has received a great response to its invitation for members to have their feet and lower limbs assessed and, where necessary, treatment given. Existing footwear and supports and the need for special shoes and/or supports will also be assessed. All members are urged to attend. Disabled parking is available (enquire when making your appointment). Don't forget to mention you have had polio.

SLEEP CLINIC - ROYAL PRINCE ALFRED HOSPITAL
CONTACT: AMANDA PIPER PHONE: (02) 516-8876

The Sleep Clinic has made its services available to Post-Polios for research into sleep disorders and breathing problems. Several members have attended the Clinic for assessment, with a number now receiving further treatment and/or help with breathing aids. The feeling of relief that this help is available is tremendous. Assessments are conducted on Wednesday and Friday nights. An overnight stay in hospital is necessary. NO referral is necessary - just ring Amanda for an appointment.

* * * * * MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL MEMBERS
* * * * * AND ALL BEST WISHES FOR A
* * * * * HAPPY, HEALTHY AND PROSPEROUS 1992
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