

June 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 14th July 2022
10:15 am - 12 noon
Weston Creek Labor Club
Teesdale Close, Stirling ACT 2611

Guest speaker from ACT Police: How to Recognise and Deal with Scams

Esther Fitton (1939 – 2022) by Helen Cotter and Chris Moyle

It was sad to hear that Esther had died. She was always so bright and full of energy and fully involved with Lung Life – she will be missed.

Esther, along with husband Ray, was one of the founding members of Lung Life in 1998. She was a very significant member of our group being involved in organising activities right from the beginning and for a brief period being Coordinator - together with Cecilia and after Cecilia's death on her own (they are pictured right). She continued her involvement after Ray died of COPD many years ago.



Esther and Cecilia at the Christmas Lunch in 1998

Esther had been born and brought up in England but moved to Australia with her mother and brother John after her father died from an accident. The family lived in Hornsby, Sydney, right next door to her beloved future husband, Ray. During this time Esther trained as a draftsman's tracer, working at the Postmaster General's Drawing Office. In 1959 she married Ray and they began their family of three girls.

As Ray suffered from asthma they felt the drier atmosphere of Canberra would suit them better so in 1974 they moved to Canberra - into their house in Fisher which was Esther's home until 2020 when she moved into a villa in Goodwin Village, Monash.

Esther worked at Buttercup Bakeries for a while. As well as working, Esther always found time to support their children in school and sport and their other activities. She never sat still – always sewing clothes for the family and all their activities, including amazing costume outfits for various events. She created beautiful cards for birthdays and other events and raised money for charities. Esther cooked and helped friends and neighbours – and there were sundry other ways of helping others.



Esther with Ray on the COPD Walk in 2008

Somehow, Esther and Ray found time to travel all over Australia and many places overseas. In their later years they would 'winter over' in Harvey Bay until Ray became too sick to travel.

Esther and Ray were fully involved in Lung Life all this time (how did they manage it all!) and when Ray died in 2012 Esther continued her involvement. She was always there, helping in every activity that we held. For many years, Esther had a collection of Lung Foundation Australia and Lung Life items in her house and car boot - pamphlets, posters, the Lung Life standard - all necessary for Seniors Expo or World COPD Day, and off she'd go with them to the event.

Esther was especially famous for organising – along with a few others – the very special mid-winter and Christmas lunches where we had raffles and prizes and Christmas hampers. At our meetings she'd do a 'roll call', finding out who was absent, and making sure that someone would contact them to see how they were going. The support that Lung Life provided was very important to Esther.



Esther with Julie at the 2020 Christmas Lunch

Sadly, in 2021, Esther's health deteriorated, and she spent time in and out of hospital having blood transfusions. Eight months ago she developed scleroderma, an auto-immune disease, and spent those eight months in hospital undergoing treatment – until on 12 May, she died.

Esther was a lovely, warm, generous person. She was a real asset to Lung Life. It was sad to see such a positive vital person having to put up with so much at the end of her life – but I think she would say she had a good life. We will all miss her. *Editor: Esther enjoyed a joke here is one from her.*

80-year old Bessie bursts into the rec room at the retirement home.

She holds her clenched fist in the air and announces, 'Anyone who can guess what's in my hand can have sex with me tonight!'

An elderly gentleman in the rear shouts out 'An elephant?'

Bessie thinks for a minute and says, 'Close Enough'.

Meeting 9 June 2022 – Chris Moyle

Seventeen members braved the winter cold to attend the meeting. It seemed to be the month for birthdays, with Pam Harris, Chris Gray and Joe celebrating another year. A special congratulations went to Shirley Dillon, our only remaining Lung Life founding member, who turned 93 on 3 June.

Seniors Expo – Silver is Gold – 26 May

Several members attended and enjoyed looking at the variety of information on display across the many stalls. Maggie Beer was there, not cooking, but talking about her new project of improving meals in aged care homes.

A special thank you to Pam Harris for organising the event and putting in many hours on the day, and thanks to Barry and others who helped out.

Many people stopped at our stall with several wanting to give up the smoking habit. Shirley kept repeating, ‘stop smoking’, so hopefully the message might have sunk in. Some were interested in our support group and one of these, Alison, attended our meeting.

Esther’s Gift

Pam announced that Esther had left money for our Group to attend a lunch at the Burns Club – Esther’s favourite eatery. That lunch will be held on Friday 29 July. Please advise Pam Harris (Phone 02 6288 2053 or 0418 483 627) by 14 July if you would like to attend.

Discussion followed on future speakers and outings (see page 5 for the list of outings).

Finally Barry, microphone in hand, in best karaoke voice, closed with a rendition of Lionel Richie’s ‘Say You, Say Me’ and a more up-tempo ‘Blue Suede Shoes’.

Then, as Elvis had left the building, we left the meeting room to order lunch.

On the Road Again

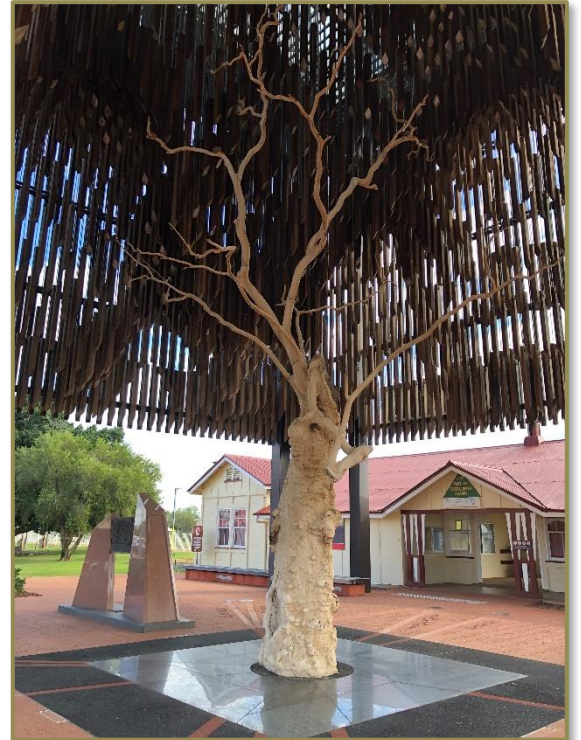
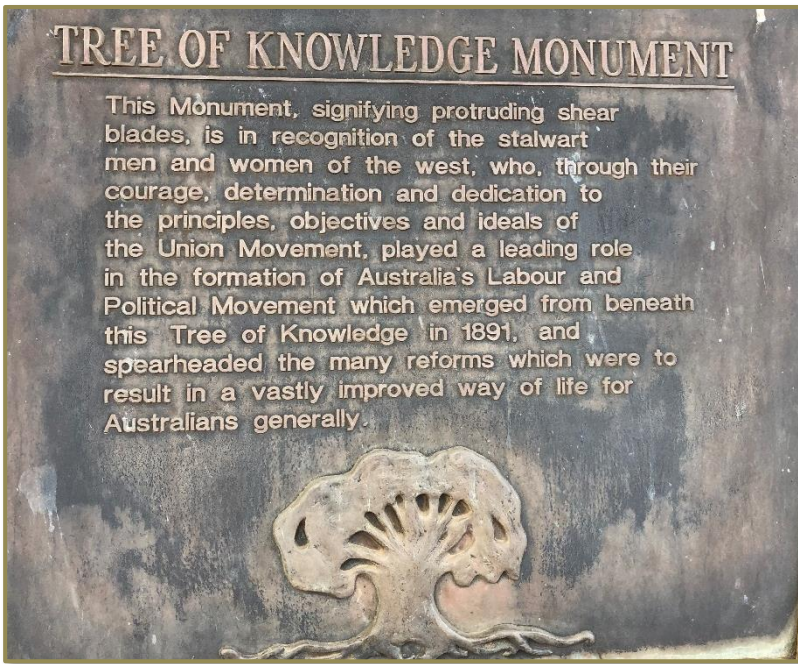
George has taken to the road again and has kept your editor informed of his whereabouts through a series of photos.

This picture was taken in **Barcaldine**, central Queensland, where the locals put on a miniature train weekend for George (*and the rest of the community*).



The pictures below are what Barcaldine is best known for, the Tree of Knowledge. It is a very significant place for the Australian Labor Party as the plaque below indicates. The tree was originally found outside the railway station; however, in May 2006 it was poisoned by an unknown culprit and did not survive. Fortunately, prior to its demise, cuttings were taken from the tree and propagated. The results produced the sapling you see below. It is now located outside Barcaldine's Australian Workers Heritage Centre.

Your editor feels fortunate to have seen the original tree when he travelled to Barcaldine on a road trip with his then young family in 2002...but that is another story.



For more information see:

<https://www.australianworkersheritagecentre.com.au/>

NEWS FLASH Val Dempsey, (second from the right) spotted on TV – Chris Moyle



Val Dempsey along with the other Australians of the Year had the privilege of speaking with Her Majesty the Queen via video link on the occasion of her Jubilee Celebrations.

Senior Australian of the Year Valmai Dempsey's years of volunteering with St John Ambulance Australia and push to get people who are driving vehicles to learn first aid won over the Queen in an instant.

'It sounds like a really sensible idea. It helps enormously if someone knows first aid,' the Queen responded.

'We had a dreadful moment in our family many years ago that has led me to believe that bystander first aid at the scene of an accident makes a massive difference,' Val said.

When asked how she felt at the end of the interview, Val said, 'That was far greater than any dream I've ever had. I feel so privileged.'

Reference: ABC News 4 June 2022 <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-06-04/queen-elizabeth-2022-australians-of-the-year-zoom-call/101120942>

More from George - Spotted on the road near Aramac, Queensland, a snake sculpture.



For Your Diary

Here is a list of planned events for the second half of the year (outside of our usual monthly meetings).

DAY and DATE	EVENT and TIME	LOCATION	ADDRESS/SUBURB
Friday 29 th July	'Esther's Gift' Celebratory Lunch 11:45am	Burns Club	Kett St, Kambah
Friday 26 th August	Lunch 12pm	TBA	
Wednesday 14 th September	Stall - COTA, Seniors, and Veterans Expo 10am – 4pm	EPIC	EPIC (Showground), Flemington Rd, Mitchell
Friday 23 rd September	Lunch 12pm	TBA	
Friday 28 th October	Tour and Lunch 10am	Botanic Gardens	Acton
Wednesday 16 th November	Stall, World COPD Awareness Day 10am - 4pm	Cooleman Court	Weston Creek
Friday 25 th November	Picnic Lunch 11am	TBA	
Friday 16 th December	Christmas Lunch 11:30am	TBA	

COPD: The Basics - Medications Chris Moyle

Flare-up medicines are for short-term use when you are experiencing a flare up. If taken early, they can reduce the severity and duration of a flare-up. Your doctor will tell you what medicines to take when your symptoms worsen and will write instructions in your COPD Action Plan.

Antibiotics will not help manage COPD on a day-to-day basis. They are prescribed if you have a flare-up due to infection. If the colour, amount and/or texture of your mucus (phlegm) changes, this can mean you have an infection. If you are prescribed antibiotic tablets by your doctor, make sure you take the tablets for as long as instructed, even if you start to feel better.

Oral Steroid tablets can be prescribed for a short period of time to help treat symptoms of a flare-up such as wheeze or breathlessness. Your doctor will normally prescribe a course for 5 – 10 days. It is also important that you take them at the time of day as instructed by your doctor. Do not stop taking steroid tablets suddenly without consulting a doctor.

Take your medicine as instructed

The medicines prescribed by your doctor are tailored to you and your symptoms. It is important to take your medicines as instructed even when you feel well. Do not be tempted to decide when and how much medicine you will take. This will reduce the effectiveness of your medicine and could make your COPD worse.

Learn how your medicines work. This will help you to understand why and when you need to take them. Ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist:

- What your medicine is for
- How the medicine works
- How to take the medicine
- When the best time to take it is
- How long the dose is effective
- What the possible side-effects of the medicine are and how you can avoid or reduce them
- Whether the medicine will cause problems with any other medicine you are taking
- To include all your medicines in your COPD Action Plan.

Up to 90% of people with COPD do not know how to use their inhaler device correctly. It is important for a trained health professional (such as your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist) to show you how to use your inhaler and assist you to get the technique right. Correct use of your inhaler device is important and will ensure you get the most benefit from your medicine.

Oxygen therapy

In severe stage COPD your oxygen levels can be low and home oxygen may be prescribed by your doctor or specialist. While oxygen therapy can help to reduce the damage to your vital organs, it is not prescribed to stop breathlessness. Some patients may need continuous oxygen while others may only require oxygen during physical activity like walking or exercising. While oxygen therapy may relieve breathlessness in some people, in many cases it does not.

Reference: [OYO180828_LFA_COPD_The_Basics_A5_v7_updated_website.pdf \(lungfoundation.com.au\)](#)