

March 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 April 2022
10:15 am - 12 noon
Weston Creek Labor Club
Teesdale Close, Stirling ACT 2611

The meeting will continue with developing ideas for the future.

A number of members – including Marina and her husband Val, along with Val Dempsey - have contracted COVID-19. Fortunately all the members that we are aware of have since recovered, but it is a timely reminder to follow the latest health advice and stay as safe as is possible.

As the editor of the newsletter it is always nice to hear positive comments. Your editor received a number of emails recently which indicated that readers enjoy the content of our publication. Thank you everyone.



Marina thanks Lyn on behalf of us all – see page 2.

Maureen Bell wrote that she looks forward to receiving the newsletter each month and she particularly loved Chris's story on her Fred Astaire effort. Caroline Polak Scowcroft thanked everyone who contributes to the newsletter and wrote that she always finds it of interest. Julie Hayes sent a very nice email to let us know that she too looks forward to receiving the newsletter each month. She unfortunately, due to deteriorating health, is no longer able to attend meetings. She would like to thank everyone for being such a supportive group, *'The social outlet you provide is great because there is no judgement in a group who understand our issues - you can cough and speak brokenly, and no one asks why!'*

March Meeting by Helen Cotter

Last month we had a ‘Get Together’ which went well. This month we returned to proper meetings. About 17 of us attended this meeting, run by our new Coordinator, Marina Siemionow.

Marina thanked Lyn Morley for the amazing job she did over the last five years, especially with the difficulties of COVID-19. During that time, Lyn managed to keep the group together – a terrific job. Marina presented Lyn with a gift from us as our thank you for her time and work as Coordinator. Marina also presented a gift to Lyn’s husband John and thanked him for his support to Lyn and to Lung Life.

Then we moved on to thinking and talking about Lung Life. Marina asked us to reflect on what we’ve been doing in Lung Life, and then, what we can do better. We had fun moving into small groups to talk about these issues, then finally presenting our ideas to the whole group. Commonly, what people spoke about was the companionship and friendship that Lung Life provided, as well as the critical support and education for the members. There were also quite a few ideas about things we could do better. Suggestions ranged from better support to members who are sick or need help, to greater advocacy in the community for both chronic lung conditions and for letting people know about Lung Life.

Marina asked us what social events we would like in the future. People mentioned picnics including ones involving the broader family, lunches, the buses at the Botanic Gardens and the Arboretum, and bus outings to further away places.

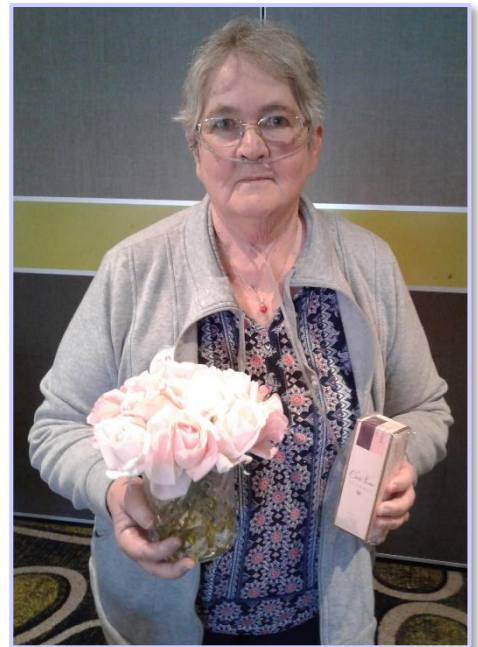
Marina plans to take these ideas away, summarise them and present her thoughts at the next meeting for discussion. We look forward to this discussion about Lung Life’s future. It was a good meeting and good to get back together again.

Get together at Ricardo’s Café

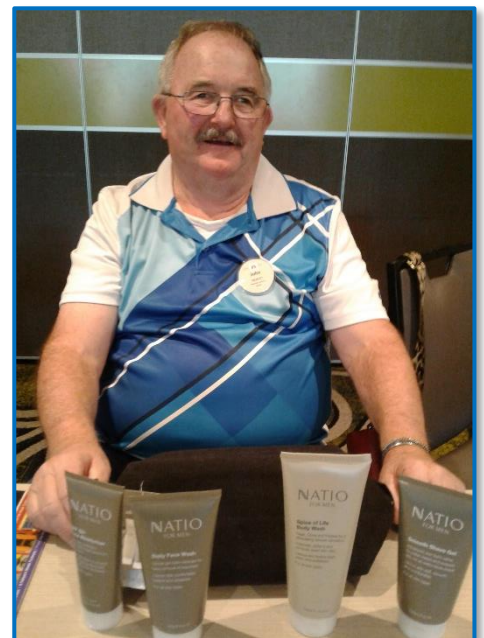
Around 15 members attended the get together in Jamison Plaza on Friday 25 February.

Pam Harris reported that it was an enjoyable occasion, with some people opting to eat lunch (hamburgers etc) and others like herself having coffee and cake – which were delicious.

Among those who attended were Maureen Bell and our ‘travelling man’ George Watts, along with a number of regulars.



Lyn with her lovely gifts



John all sorted with his gift of toiletries



Members were broken up into small groups at the meeting. John, Terry, Kaye, and Sue -‘the brains trust’



Marina Siemionow presents John Morley with his gift



The flowers presented to Lyn

A little more on our Senior Australian of the Year, Val Dempsey

During Val's four decade association with St John Ambulance she has helped create some key initiatives.

- 30 years ago after a bad batch of heroin circulated through Canberra, Val started Project Survival, teaching addicts to help others who had overdosed.
- Night Crew is another program that has helped thousands of late-night revellers affected by drugs and alcohol. Since its inception five years ago this initiative has helped thousands of partygoers get home safely. It has prevented sexual assaults, ambulance trips and police call outs.

In 2000 Val was diagnosed with a degenerative muscle disease called **myositis** which is a painful disease that weakens muscles.

'At one stage, I didn't think I was going to make it. I couldn't lift my head off the pillow or brush my teeth. It affects your grip, your ability to stand, and in my case, it's eating away at my lungs.'

Val is also caring for her husband who has cancer. Despite her own and her husband's health challenges Val has kept on contributing to the community.

'You only get one chance at life. If this disease is trying its darnedest to get the better of me then I won't let it.'

Reference: *City News* <https://citynews.com.au/2022/aunty-val-wants-1-platers-to-learn-first-aid-skills/>

'An old day passes, a new day arrives. The important thing is to make it meaningful: a meaningful friend - or a meaningful day.' - Dalai Lama



Movie production can be a dangerous business

Do you remember watching the 1939 movie classic the Wizard of Oz? Something you probably haven't considered is 'How did they create the effect of snow in the film? Well the answer is they used that 'all-purpose' material, asbestos. In the early to mid-1900s asbestos was used a lot as fake snow with dozens of brands like 'White Magic', 'Pure White' and 'Snow Drift'.

In one scene Judy Garland playing Dorothy wakes up in a snow covered poppy field which was 100% asbestos. The deadly material was also reportedly used on the scarecrow costume. A flame-proofing substance was made from asbestos to prevent it burning during scenes that involved fire. There is also a burning broom made from, you guessed it, asbestos – this prevented the broom from actually burning.

While it has not been officially confirmed that anyone passed away from this use of asbestos in the making of the movie its dangers are now well known. When asbestos dust is inhaled or ingested, the mineral fibres can possibly become trapped in the body. These trapped fibres can cause lung inflammation, scarring and even genetic damage. Mesothelioma is almost exclusively linked to asbestos exposure, along with other types of cancer and lung disease.

Thanks to Maureen Bell for alerting the editor to the original more detailed article in <https://movieweb.com/>.

Quiz

There are six topics in the quiz, similar to the categories which are in Trivial Pursuit; however, the questions do not come from that game. (Answers are on p.6)

Question 1 – Topic: **Literature**

The book *The Power of One* was the first novel written by Australian author Bryce _____?
(1 point)

Question 2 – Topic: **Entertainment**

Who were *The Two Ronnies*? (2 points, i.e. 1 point for each one)

Question 3 – Topic: **Geography** and **Sport**

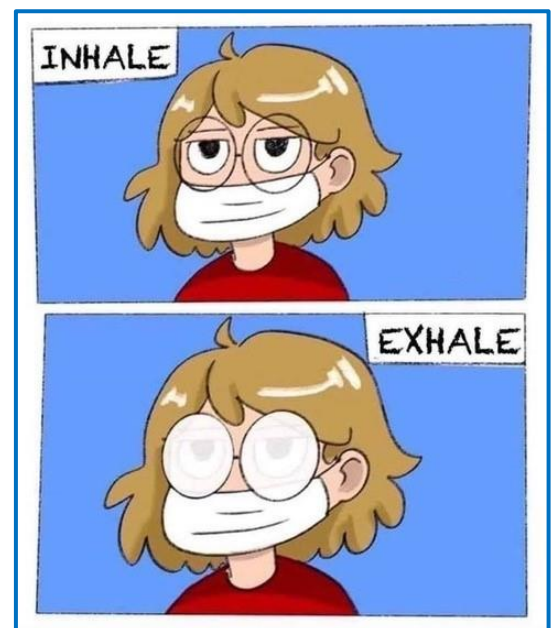
Three US cities have hosted the Summer Olympic Games. They are California's largest city, Georgia's capital, and a large centre in Missouri on the Mississippi River. Can you name the three cities? (3 points)

Question 4 – Topic: **Science**

The first four elements on the periodic table have the symbols: H, He, Li, and Be. Can you name these four elements? (4 points)

Question 5 – Topic: **History**

How is your knowledge of Royal Britain? Can you name the previous five monarchs who reigned prior to Queen Elizabeth II ascension to the throne? (5 points)
... and if that isn't challenging enough for the historians out there, can you add the years that they reigned? (5 bonus points if you know the dates)



Score out of 15? Score out of 20 with the bonus points? How did you go?

A bit of Irish History by Chris Moyle

Pádraic Ó Conaire was an Irish writer and journalist who wrote primarily in the Irish language. A pioneer in the [Gaelic revival](#) in the last century, he wrote 26 books, 473 stories, 237 essays and 6 plays. His acclaimed novel *Deoraíocht* (Exile) has been described by Irish author [Angela Bourke](#) as 'the earliest example of modernist fiction in Irish'.

Statue

A statue of Ó Conaire's was unveiled in 1935 by [Éamon de Valera](#) in [Eyre Square](#) in the heart of Galway City. It was popular with tourists until it was decapitated by four men in 1999. It was repaired at a cost of £50,000 and moved to Galway City Museum in 2004. A bronze replica of the statue was unveiled in Eyre Square in November 2017.



Pádraic Ó Conaire with a little camera shy friend

Timeline

- 1882** Ó Conaire was born in the Lobster Pot public house on the New Docks in [Galway](#).
- 1899** He emigrated to London in 1899 where he got a job with the Board of Education.
- 1914** Ó Conaire returned to Ireland in 1914, leaving his family in London.
- 1921** [The woman at the window and other stories](#) written by Pádraic Ó Conaire was first published in 1921.
- 1928** He died on a visit to Dublin in 1928 after complaining of internal pains while at the head office of the Gaelic League.

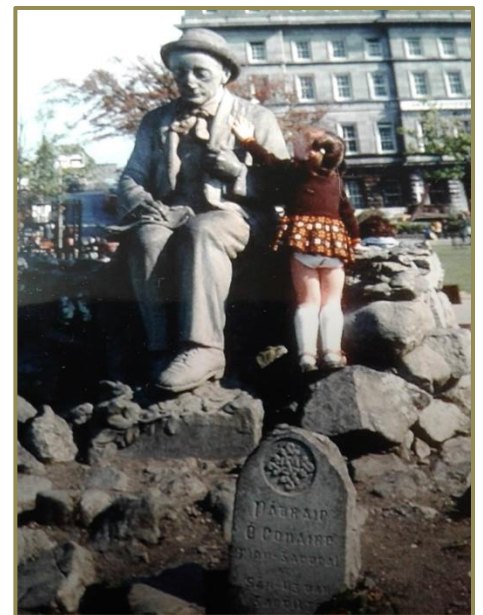
Reference:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/P%C3%A1draic_%C3%93_Conaire

Editor's note – nice to see Chris's photos from days way back, and no that isn't Chris climbing on the statue.

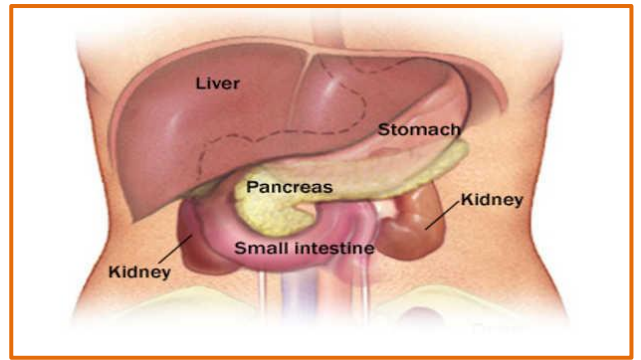
It is interesting to see how long people lived in previous times as they were without the benefits of modern medicine.

Pádraic Ó Conaire lived for 46 years. **Robert Burns**, who was written about in our January edition, was only 37 when he passed away. **Charles Dickens** lived a little longer, he was 58. Your editor has recently read Peter Fitzsimons's *James Cook* who met an untimely death in Hawaii at age 50, while his wife **Elizabeth** lived to the grand old age of 93, outliving not only her husband but all their children as well.



What do you know about your kidneys ?

This month we have some information on your kidneys another part of the body that plays a vital role in your health. Without healthy kidneys you would struggle to process toxins which would have a devastating impact on your well-being.



Where are your kidneys and what are they like? They:

- are in the middle of your back on either side of your spine. They are protected from injury by a layer of fat, along with lower ribs and back muscles.
- are bean shaped and about the size of an adult's fist.
- weigh about 150g – almost the weight of a snooker ball.

Kidney Facts

- Most people are born with two kidneys - 1 in 750 is born with one.
- One kidney can perform up to 75% of normal kidney function, enough to live a normal life.
- Each kidney is made up of about a million tiny filters.
- They filter blood – which enters by the renal artery and exits by the renal vein.

What your kidneys do

1. Clean your blood and circulate a fresh supply around your body 12 times an hour.
2. Process excess fluid and unwanted waste in your blood, resulting in one to two litres of urine daily.
3. Keep your blood pressure stable by telling the blood vessels in your body when to expand and contract.
4. Manage the body's production of vitamin D – this is done in conjunction with the skin and liver.

Potential kidney problems

- If the filtering stops working efficiently waste builds up in your body, resulting in kidney disease.
- 1 in 10 Australians have a kidney disease.
- You can lose up to 90% of kidney function before you feel sick.
- **A kidney health check** – blood, urine, and blood pressure – **is recommended every one to two years.**
- **Risk factors include** - diabetes, high blood pressure, aged over 60, family history, kidney injury, heart problems, being overweight, smoking, and Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent.

Reference: Kidney Health Australia, <https://kidney.org.au/>

Picture reference: <https://www.kiwikidsnews.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/liver.jpeg>

Answers to the Quiz

1. Bryce Courtenay
2. Ronnie Barker and Ronnie Corbett
3. Los Angeles, Atlanta, St Louis
4. Hydrogen, Helium, Lithium, Beryllium
5. Queen Victoria (1837- 1901), Edward VII (1901-1910), George V (1910-1936), Edward VIII (1936), George VI (1936-1952)

What exactly is beryllium used for? Well, apart from its use in high-speed aircraft, missiles, spacecraft, communication satellites and nuclear reactors, **beryllium is used in X-rays** - because of its transparency. So next time you are having a scan you will know that this element is playing its part in your well-being.