

October November 2004



*Seeking the Cure.
Providing the Care.*

Bi-monthly Swag

The Multiple Sclerosis
Society of the ACT Inc
Gloria McKerrrow House
117 Denison Street, Deakin ACT 2600
Phone: 02 6285 2999 Fax: 02 6281 0817
E-mail: info@ms.org.au
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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday 13 October 7 pm
Gloria McKerrrow House

Supper provided
(RSVP to Julie 6285 2999)



MS Society Christmas Lunch

with the
Kippax Singers

Friday December 10th

Sing a long 10:45am

Lunch 12 Noon

\$15.00

RSVP to Julie 6285 2999 by 6 December

Christmas Wishes



Xmas Raffle



Cake & Pudding Orders

Christmas Cards



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MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Robbie Costmeyer

Vale Admiral Alan Beaumont AC, RAN (Retd)

Our Immediate Past President (IPP), ADM Alan Beaumont, passed away on 21 September after a long struggle with cancer.

For almost three years (2000-2003), as President, he rendered outstanding service to the Society in the pursuit of its objects by gaining the confidence of members and providing wise counsel and encouragement to Board members, the CEO and the staff.

He has represented and promoted the Society with distinction and increased community awareness of multiple sclerosis through all levels of the community.

During his term the Board formulated a Strategic Plan and instituted Governance policies that clearly delineated between the responsibilities of the Board and the day-to-day operations that are the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer and the staff.

He played a significant role in the advancement of Multiple Sclerosis Australia, which Graham Tribe, its President has sincerely appreciated.

He accepted the nomination of President at a crucial time in the Society's history and, notwithstanding illness, continued to provide advice and wisdom in his continued role of Board member and Immediate Past President.

Members will vote at the AGM on 13th October whether to grant him the posthumous honour of Life membership.

Vale James de Beregnny Wall

James was the Society's first CEO from 1985 to 1990 and he really gave the Society a wonderful kick start. I never knew James but from his eulogy read out at his funeral on 10th September he sounded like a wonderful man. The Society was

represented at the funeral by several members and me.

Advocacy

The official launch of the MS Research Australia's \$30m capital raising campaign and the Parliamentary Friends of MS Group was attended by the Prime Minister on 11th August. The Government pledged \$250,000 towards the appeal.

Betty Cuthbert had flown over from Perth to be there and she was a great draw card, with lots of politicians, camera crew and other media in attendance. She was allowed onto the floor of the House during question time and both Mr Howard and Mr Latham paid tribute to her.

Annual General Meeting

The audited final financial outcome at the end of June was a surplus of \$71,953, which was a very pleasing result. The annual report and AGM Notice of Meeting was sent to all financial members on 17th September and I encourage you all to read about the great work the Society is doing on your behalf.

Your attendance at the AGM on 13th October would be greatly appreciated. Attendees will vote on an amended Rules and Constitution, the nomination of three new Life members and to hear Dr Rex Simmons give a report on the results of the recent Economic Impact of MS survey.

Life Membership Committee

The Board at their August meeting agreed to set up a Life membership committee to develop selection criteria guidelines and to make recommendations to the Board, on an annual basis, for a nomination(s) to be put to members at the next AGM. Three Life members plus the President will form the Committee.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Multiple Sclerosis Society of the ACT Incorporated will be held at Gloria McKerrow House at **7 pm on Wednesday 13th October 2004**.

At the AGM members of the Society will elect the Board of the Society, vote on accepting up to three new Life members and vote to accept an amended Rules and Constitution. Dr Rex Simmons will give an address on the results of the recent AMSLS survey on the economic impact of MS. Light supper will be served.

Nominations have been received for the office of:

- **President** • **Vice-President** • **Treasurer** • **Secretary**, and
- **Six Ordinary Members**

The Board has been operating with 10 members for the past two years thus no additional nominations are actively being sought. The amended Rules and Constitution proposes a reduction from 12 to 10 Board members to formalize this reduced Board size. However, if a member still wishes to nominate for the Board at the AGM, the current Constitution allows for that.

NOMINATIONS FOR ELECTION TO THE BOARD

Candidates for election to the Board must be financial members of the Society and be nominated by two other financial members of the Society.

A valid nomination for election to the Board must:

- include the information detailed in the nomination form (available from the Society);
- be signed by the nominating members and the Nominee;
- be accompanied by a brief (200 words maximum) statement describing the Nominee's qualifications and suitability for election to the Board

It is highly recommended that members seeking election to the Board familiarise themselves with the Society's Constitution and the Board's Governance Policies. Copies of both those documents can be obtained or viewed at the Society's office during business hours.

Ian Rodgers
Secretary

CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP FEES

Robbie Costmeyer, CEO

On 26 August 2004 a meeting of the Board agreed to recommend to the Annual General Meeting on 13th October 2004 certain amendments regarding membership subscriptions. Currently, annual memberships (both Individual and Family) are set at \$20.00. The AGM will be asked to approve Corporate Memberships for \$100, Family Memberships for \$25.00

(to correct an administrative oversight and to allow two votes at an AGM) while Individual Membership remains at \$20.00 per annum.

Depending at what time of year a new membership is sought, it is proposed that the fee for the remainder of the year would now be determined on a pro-rata monthly basis.

ADVOCACY WITH GOVERNMENT

Robbie Costmeyer, CEO

Most of our client's personal advocacy needs may be ably dealt with by the Outreach Team but there will be occasions where some lobbying of local, Territory or Federal government will be required. This will be handled

by the CEO in most instances with the assistance of either Mary Webb or Sharon Eacott. If the Society can assist you in advocating issues pertaining to people with MS please contact the Society on 6285 2999.

DISCOUNTS ON PURCHASING AIR CONDITIONERS

Robbie Costmeyer CEO

For those intending to purchase air conditioning this summer the Society has arranged a significant discount at Harvey Norman Woden. We recommend that you first ask for free, no obligation, advice from an expert on the best unit for your particular situation. Harvey Norman have recommended Mr Michael Scrivener of M&R Air. He can be contacted on 02 6294 1945 or Mobile 0413 948 799.

Secondly, you should request from Harvey Norman Woden a quotation to supply the recommended unit. By advising the staff that you are members of the MS Society (showing them a MS Society photo identity card would be ideal) you may expect a

Significant discount.

M&R Air is able to quote for installation as well. Michael Scrivener has generously offered a 15-20% discount for our members, so please identify yourself as such when you ask for a quote.

For those who specifically want a Daikin air conditioner, the sole supplier in the ACT is 'Air Conditioning and Heating Centre' in Fyshwick. Pam Bunker (6280 6488) from that organisation offered a 2% discount to our members on purchases of up to \$5000 for the supply and installation of a 2.5HP wall-mounted system.

WANT TO AVOID THE RUSH ON ELECTION DAY?

Sharon Eacott, Member

The date has finally been set and the country has swung into election mode at last. In the space of a few short weeks we will yet again be heading to the polls and those of us who live in the ACT will get to do so twice! Lucky you!!! Well...maybe not.

Many of us find the ritual of voting to be far more exhausting than it ought to be. A day that starts out well can quickly degenerate into an ordeal that you wouldn't wish on your worst enemy.

What if you didn't have to do the whole election day trauma? Wouldn't it be nice to avoid the heat, pushy campaign staffers, crowds, queues and trip hazards? Sound good to you? Well it can be done - and in a very painless way.

If you are already on the electoral roll, then you can register as a General Postal Voter on the grounds that you "are an elector who because of serious illness or infirmity is unable to travel from [your] place of living to a polling place."

This language can seem a little confronting at first, as you may feel perfectly capable of traveling – today. However, who can tell when they are

likely to have a bad day and is it a risk you are willing to take? Remembering that there are hefty fines for not voting, the peace of mind that comes from having ballot papers posted to you automatically for ALL future elections helps to make it all worthwhile.

In addition, the same form can be used by "an elector who is unable to attend a polling place to vote because [they are] caring for a seriously ill or infirm person who is not in a hospital." That means your significant others and less stress all around.

The form entitled: *Application for Registration as a General Postal Voter* is available from Post Offices and the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC). It is also available online at: <http://www.aec.gov.au/content/what/enrolment/forms/federal.pdf>

Those of you who live within the ACT will find that this form will also register you as a General Postal Voter for ACT elections as well.

The AEC may be contacted directly on 13 23 26 if you would like to have the form mailed out to you. They are also there to answer any queries you may have.

COFFEE MORNING

Friday, October 15th at 10:00am

Make new acquaintances
Catch up with old friends

RSVP to Julie at reception 6285 2999

A small plate to share would be appreciated.

THE ACCESS CITY HOTLINE...DID YOU KNOW?

Sue Donaldson, Outreach Officer

The Access City Hotline is an information/referral service to assist in removing physical and sensory access barriers. These barriers may include getting into or moving within buildings, negotiating paths, kerbs and roadways, and reading or understanding signs or directions.

Anyone who needs help to overcome an access barrier can call 6257 3077 on Monday – Friday for assistance. For hearing or speech difficulties

please phone The National Relay Service on 133 677 and quote 6257 3077.

The Hotline officer can refer you to the appropriate government area, business or community organisation for you to follow up the issue. Alternatively the Hotline officer can refer you to an advocacy agency if you would prefer, or refer the complaint directly to the appropriate authority and inform you of progress.

COOLING VEST AND HAT FOR TRIAL

Sue Donaldson, Outreach Officer

Recently a company called Coolweave provided the MS Society with a vest, base ball cap and hard hat liner all of which have cooling properties to enable members to trial the garments. The products use a three layer evaporative cooling fabric that uses a person's body heat and tap water to improve the body's natural cooling process.

The inner lining conducts heat and moisture from the body into the fibrous core where it can evaporate. The fibrous core contains hydrophilic fibres (that attract water), and hydrophobic fibres (that repel water), and the outer layer is quick drying and breathable.

The fabric is activated by soaking the garment in water for five to fifteen minutes which activates the cooling

process. The hydrophilic fibres charge with water and the hydrophobic fibres evenly distribute and surround the charged fibres with air which creates an ideal environment for evaporation.

The cooling effects may continue for up to eight hours depending upon the degree of garment contact, environmental conditions, the wearer's activity, and type of outer clothing being worn. The vest may be worn over or under clothes.

These garments can be washed repeatedly, do not swell up or become overly heavy. Further detail can be obtained by visiting the website www.coolweave.com.au, or by contacting the Outreach Team, particularly if you would like to trial one of the garments.

CALLING ALL TRAVELLERS – BARRIER FREE TOURISM: THE DEVILS PLAYGROUND!!

Six accommodation houses throughout Tasmania have been opened and are trading under the banner of The Devils Playground. They offer self catered accommodation for guests including those with a physical disability or mobility problem. Whilst the Devils Playground aims to provide truly accessible accommodation and touring facilities backpackers, coach travellers and seniors are also welcome. Every property will provide a 'five-star

backpacker' level of accommodation to suit different ages and budgets, and will allow all guests to mix in all areas of the facilities providing complete interaction.

For more information you can email info@thedevilsplayground.com.au, or visit their website www.thedevilsplayground.com.au or phone Kerry Winberg on 03 6343 3119

NEED A HAND? CALL HANDYHELP

Sue Donaldson, Outreach Office

Did you know... Handyhelp can assist people to access tradesmen for essential home repairs when the work required goes beyond the scope of the volunteer handyman service. As a result of a successful pilot Handyhelp has received ongoing funds to arrange and coordinate contractors and/or assist to meet the costs of the tradesman's work.

When Handyhelp receives a referral for tradesmen they will:

- negotiate with clients as to the cost contribution and repayment terms;

- help to arrange and coordinate contractors
- pay the contractor account and invoice the client the agreed amount

Priority is given to HACC clients without family support or advocates to do this negotiation. Clients must be either home owners/occupiers or public or private tenants where the repair work is a tenant responsibility.

For further further information call Lesley at Handyhelp on 6287 4999.

CHRISTMAS CAKES AND PUDDINGS

Place your Orders now
Ring Julie at reception 6285 2999

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MS CHRISTMAS CARDS

Beginning 5 October, MS Society Christmas Cards will go on sale from:

The MS Society of the ACT
117 Denison Street, Deakin
9:30am to 3:30pm
Monday - Friday

and from

The Combined Charities Christmas Card Shop,
The Canberra Museum and Gallery on London Circuit in Civic
10am-4pm Tuesday
Friday 5 October – 15 December

CHRISTMAS WISHES WESTFIELD BELCONNEN

Melissa Moore, Fundraising Manager

It's Christmas Wishes time again at Westfield Belconnen and the MS Society has joined the campaign in 2004. The campaign runs for 5 weeks, from Wednesday October 27 to Tuesday November 30. By registering with the campaign, customers can donate their wishes to the MS Society and we can redeem them for a number of rewards from the reward pool and raffle these items to raise additional funds for the Society.

Customers only need to show their shopping receipts to the Wishes Service area in Westfield Belconnen and they will receive 1 *wish* for every \$10 spent which they can then donate to the MS Society.

More details are included on the enclosed brochure or if you need to please call me on 6285 2999.

CANBERRA ANNUAL POKER RUN IS ON AGAIN

Melissa Moore, Fundraising Manager

Sunday 13 February 2005

When the Rebel Motorcycle Club held its Annual Poker Run last February the Club raised and donated \$5000.00 to the Society. All motorbike enthusiasts are invited to join in again this February 13th. If you own a motorbike or know someone who does, tell them about it and note it in your diary. Come along and have a great day! Participants in cars are welcome to join in; I was the one in the MINI Cooper this year. More details on the event will follow in the next Swag.

What is a Poker Run?

After paying the \$20.00 registration fee, you are given a playing card and upon arriving at each of the following four mystery locations you are given another playing card. The person with the best hand at the final location wins!!!!!! It's that simple and there are some great prizes on offer. Anyone can enter and all proceeds from the day will go to the Multiple Sclerosis Society of the ACT. If you have any questions please call me on 6285 2999.

MS Fun Run/Walk 2004

Melissa Moore, Fundraising Manager

The 13th annual Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Fun Run/Walk was held on Sunday 12th September 2004 in ideal conditions, blue sky, little wind, snow on the Brindabellas and a cool 12 degrees. This was a far cry from the 0 -10 degrees, very wet and windy conditions forecast on the previous Friday, thank goodness. This forecast had forced us to abandon the usual Vikings tent for the Lake Tuggeranong College canteen instead and this worked so well it may become a permanent feature of the event.



It was terrific to see the familiar face of Joan Brice this year. Joan came second in the Open Female Wheelchair category. Some of you may remember that Joan and her husband Bob started the event way

back in 1992. Thankfully the event has continued to today and this year we raised over \$25,000.00.

Thank you to all those who participated, especially those who sought sponsorship for participating. A big thank you must also go to our principal sponsors, the Rolfe Motor Group and the Burns Club. A full report including all the event sponsors, photos and results are on our website at www.ms.org.au. Please take the time to note our sponsors and support them when possible.



PARENTS GROUP

2nd Tuesday of each month. 9:30am – 12 noon

A group of mums have been meeting at the Society for several years now and while watching their children play they have chatted over coffee and shared and celebrated the usual delights of parenthood. Although

preschool starts for this group next year, the mums plan to continue with their monthly meeting. They will no doubt be lonely, so for all you parents (with or without little ones at home)- why not join us on Tuesday for a cuppa.

KEEPING YOUR MIND ACTIVE

Tony Sayer, Member

If you have retired from the workforce but want to keep your brain stimulated and alert, why not consider joining the University of the Third Age (U3A). U3A is not an academic institution but a not-for-profit organisation which offers low-cost educational opportunities for its members in a pleasant social environment. Members share their expertise in many fields while others just go for the love of it. The only costs involved are those to cover expenses such as the hire of rooms and, for some courses, photocopying. There are no formal requirements and no examinations or awards. For just a few dollars, you could learn about and discuss, for example, the art of painting; understanding film; current affairs; Jane Austen; natural climate change; the French Revolution; music appreciation; the history of philosophy; the weather; and personality and behaviour; or you could perhaps join

the U3A Recorder Ensemble or U3A Warrani Chorale - to name just a few of the many courses and activities available. From June to October each year there is a lunchtime seminar every Tuesday (cost \$1) with guest speakers drawn from academia, government, business, community organisations and retired experts. Topics this year have included: Reuniting the United Nations, Inequality in Australian Society, How Old is Too Old to Stay in the Workforce, Caring for Our Bodies, and Should Canberra Have Another Dam. Be warned though, U3A is very addictive. It's amazing how quickly your spare time disappears as you start enrolling in even a few of the many courses with alluring titles. The U3A office is located at the Hughes Community Centre and is open from 9:30 to 4:30 Mon-Fri. Phone 6281 6998.

THE GREEN THUMB CLUB

Brian Adams, Convenor

Spring has sprung and its time to pot up cuttings and the like. Do you want some therapy and companionship? Join us every 2nd Tuesday of the month for a couple of hours in the morning. Wheelchairs welcome. All proceeds of your efforts to the MS Society. Next gathering will be Tuesday October 12th. Please phone 6285 2999.



FOR SALE: available MID NOVEMBER

WHITE AGAPANTHAS (Tall variety) 20cm pots \$4. 10cm pots \$2.50

VOLUNTEERS MEMBERS

Julie Schelb, Volunteer Coordinator/Receptionist

VOLUNTEERS MORNING TEA

No ceremony! No fuss! We just really appreciate all the work you do for us and would like to say thanks. We'll do the work this time!!

Monday, 8 November at 10:30am

RSVP to Julie 6285 2999

Welcome REBECCA ROWE. Working towards the Queens Award for the Girls Brigade sixteen year old Rebecca will be a regular volunteer each Monday afternoon for the next six months. Candidates spend a minimum of 2 years working toward this aim and are assessed on self control, discipline focus, christian growth and maturity and federal and state knowledge as well as current, national and international issues. Rebecca's interest in the Society was motivated by previous involvement with MS Readathon.

Thanks MARG SWINDLEY -- Marg has recently sorted out the toy box and brought in some items and books for the Parents Group.

Welcome to new volunteers RODGER & ANNE HALL – Watch for the next SWAG when Rodger will assume the Editor's role.

Thanks PAM SIMS - Pam takes control of reception each Tuesday. We love her sense of humour – and her handwriting is better than Julie's!!

THE DREAM TEAM

Thanks Averill, Elizabeth, Tony, Marg, Nicole, Anne, Phillip, Margaret, and Janie for showing up when I had nothing for you to do!! Super volunteer Diana had worked overtime and completed the task the previous day! What a cheerful group you were!

Thanks to everyone who stuffed the Longitudinal Study envelopes for Dr Rex Simmons

Thank you to all the Mini Cooper raffle ticket sellers who assisted at Civic and Woden.

POSITIONS VACANT

Please ring Julie 6285 2999 if you can assist

Home Visit

Fisher – home business needs help with filing, day and time negotiable

Driver/coach

Hackett –L plater needs licensed driver to accompany her when practicing.

Computer training

He knows the basics – can you teach him a bit more?

BMW Raffle Ticket Sellers

People to assist with selling tickets at Civic and Woden. No hard selling, minding the cash box for a couple of

hours is all it takes. Can we put you on the roster?

Card Luncheon Hostess

1st Monday of each month. We currently have one hostess to prepare and serve the lunch. Can you assist from 11:00 to 1:00pm?

Short Notice Roster

For miscellaneous jobs (weekdays at the Society) including mail outs (collating and stuffing envelopes). Can you come in with only 1 or 2 days notice?