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Amputee Society
Canterbury & Westland Inc

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MARCH/APRIL 2013

Quote of the Month:

In prosperity our friends know us;
in adversity we know our friends.

[John Churton Collins](#)

Editor's Message

Hello All and hope you had a nice Easter weekend. Our weather has sure been lovely for it and a good chance to get outside to garden, have some fun, and hunt for Easter eggs.

It has been a busy time since we last spoke. Our AGM was held in Feb. and some new officers installed, so a big welcome to them. Once again MANY of you said you were attending but then didn't show up but we still had to pay for your meal. PLEASE let Margaret know if you are not going to show up as this costs us money for nothing!!!!

Congratulations to Rod Boyce and Liz Rogers, who received Life Member honours. Both have been, and continue to be, valuable members of our Society and all their work is greatly appreciated.

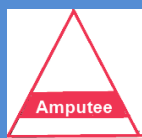
A number of us attended the National Convention in Wellington March 15th-17th. The topic in the main session was on Osteo-integration and was quite informative. More details will be in the next issue of the Purpose. It was also a pleasure to meet and hear from the younger contingent attending the Have a Go weekend and the Sat. nite function was so very enjoyable with everyone joining in---even dancing!!

A warm welcome to all our new members and please remember that we are all here for you. Our numbers and email addresses are on Page 8 and if you contact us, we are more than happy to help with anything and if you would like to get together just give us a call. It would be nice to start having coffee with anyone who would like to join us.

Once again I am asking for any of you to send me a profile of yourself and what it means to you and your family with you being an amputee. I'm sure many of you have interesting stories and we would love to hear them.

Until next time, please take care and remember to check your residual limb daily and if any problems let the Limb Centre know and attend to it right away.

Also---- PLEASE let us know if any of your contact details change, as it makes it easier to get info out to you. Be well and stay safe!



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Affiliated with Amputees Federation of NZ Inc.

President's Message

AMPUTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2012

SOCIETY OF CANTERBURY/WESTLAND INC

In March 2012, four members of the Society, Ava Thomas, Sue Lemieux, Rod Boyce and Mark Bruce, attended the Amputee Federation's annual conference held in Napier with Mark & Rod representing our Society as delegates at the Annual General Meeting. This weekend was both highly enjoyable and also extremely informative with excellent guest speakers involved. The 2013 conference is to be held in Wellington and hosted by the recently formed Greater Wellington Region committee. With the aid of financial support from Pub Charity, we are in position to send six members to this conference and I am sure that all involved will benefit from a weekend of education and enjoyment with other amputees from all over New Zealand. Those attending are Mark Bruce, Rod Boyce, Sue Lemieux, Rebecca Edmonds, Alan Dearden & Grahame Hewson.

Administrative activities have continued to be very well handled by all office holders throughout the year & I am both impressed and very thankful for everyone's combined input to the efficient running of our Society. I must make personal mention of the sterling efforts of our Treasurer Ava, Secretary Leigh, Visiting & Functions coordinator Margaret and newsletter Editor Sue, with assistance from Shazz & Heather. It must be said that everyone involved has contributed in some positive way and of this, I am sincerely grateful. A huge thank you to some people on the fringes who are neither amputees or committee members but have given freely of their time to assist in many ways, notably Melody & Shazz.

We have made a huge effort during the last year to vastly improve the awareness of the Society with not only the general public but also with many different health providers & agencies. Our updated and highly informative welcome packs can now be accessed through all CDHB hospitals in the appropriate contact areas, The Artificial Limb Centre, Surgeons rooms and Melrose Wheelchairs. Sue along with & other helpers set up an awareness stall at various venues throughout October and reported a successful response from the general public. Visiting & advocacy for amputees, prospective amputees and their families remains a focus for the Society and there has been a huge amount of contact throughout the year. If there are any members who would be prepared to make themselves available for visiting, please have a word with our visiting coordinator, Margaret.

During the last twelve months, the committee was able to approve some welfare grants to members who had applied for assistance. These grants took the form of firewood supplies, petrol vouchers to members in remote locations and disability support items. We have introduced internet banking during the year which has proved to be extremely successful in reducing costs and time input to maintain financial accountability.

President's Message (cont'd)

You will have noticed a different format for the newsletter in recent editions which was primarily bought about by the ever increasing costs of production by a professional printing house. With the assistance of Ang through Parafed Canterbury, we are now able to produce the newsletter for a third of the cost and I extend my thanks to Parafed Canterbury for their assistance. Postage is also a huge burden upon our limited finances and I would urge members to receive their newsletters by email if at all possible.

Our finances continue to be stretched due to a limited income and ever increasing expenditure costs but I am sincerely grateful to all who make prompt payment of subscriptions, made financial donations and to our most valued sponsors who are named on our newsletter. Associate membership to the Society is available and I would urge family members of amputees to take up this offer. An increased membership is not only evidence to the Federation & other Societies of a strong and healthy Canterbury/Westland Society but also provides us with more voting rights at conference should matters need to be addressed.

A personal thank you to our auditor Brian Smith who does a great job for the Society.

I would like to make mention of some members of the committee who will not be standing for re-election this year. Our Secretary, Leigh who has ever increasing work commitments and impending surgery, Malcolm Fleck who has been experiencing some health related issues and Marie Sadler who resigned during the year for personal reasons. I thank you all for your unselfish and positive contributions over the last twelve months.

In closing, I see our Society as being in great shape as we move forward and rest assured, your elected committee will work hard & in a positive manner to continue with the services provided to amputees and their families.

Mark Bruce President

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After the voting at the Annual General Meeting the new Executive Committee is:

President---Mark Bruce Vice President---Margaret Hunter

Secretary---Shazz Hanrahan Treasurer---Ava Thomas

Other Committee Members are: JoAnne Boereboom, Ed Jones, Graehame Hewson,

Kathy Barnes, Rebecca Edmonds, Sue Lemieux, Rod Boyce (Life Member)

Heather Plows (Life Member)

Save Your Remaining Leg – Be Alert to “Triggers

by Dr. Mark Hinkes, DP

FACT: Diabetes is the cause of about 80% of the 120,000 non-traumatic amputations performed annually in the United States.

FACT: Every 30 seconds, a limb is lost due to diabetes.

FACT: After a person with diabetes has a major amputation, there is a 50% chance that he or she will have the other limb amputated within two years.

The good news is that you don't have to be one of those statistics. But, you do have to commit to being extra vigilant in detecting problems early and taking appropriate action.

Toenail Issues-----Toenail problems are very common and can cause pain or functional disabilities for people with diabetes. If you've already had an amputation, your foot care professional should cut the toenails on the remaining foot. An ingrown toenail can be dangerous for people with diabetes. If a piece of your nail gets imbedded in the soft tissue adjacent to the nail, don't attempt to solve this problem on your own. A podiatrist can remove a portion of the side of the nail in a painless procedure under local anesthesia. You will need to wear a surgical shoe until the site heals.

Common Foot Problems---Inspect your feet daily, and contact a professional if you detect an unexplained foot odor, redness, warmth, pus, tenderness, pain, swelling, abnormal positioning, or if you have trouble putting weight on your foot. Fever, chills and high blood pressure combined with elevated blood sugars may mean an infection has spread; go to an Emergency Room immediately.

Wounds--- If you have diabetes, you have a greater risk for complications from wounds. Because diabetes decreases your blood flow and alters the function of your immune system, your injuries are slower to heal than those in someone who does not have the disease. There's no such thing as a "minor" wound to the foot when you have diabetes; even a small foot sore can turn into an ulcer that, if not properly treated, can lead to amputation. Any wound that doesn't heal in four weeks is cause for concern, as it may result in a worse outcome, including amputation.

If you have a wound: ■□Clean it with warm soapy water and dry it well. ■ Put an antibiotic cream on it immediately. ■□Cover it with light gauze and keep pressure off of it. ■□Don't wear closed shoes. See your foot care specialist or a local wound center within seven days at most if the wound hasn't responded to treatment.

Foot Ulcers-- Foot ulcers can be caused by painless or silent trauma from mechanical, chemical or thermal origin.

Most ulcers that lead to amputation can be prevented through daily foot inspection and care, regular visits to your physician and podiatrist, foot-care education, wearing proper shoes, and early recognition and treatment of any suspected trouble areas. A special infrared thermometer can be used to check your foot temperature once a day; a four-degree difference between one region of the foot compared to the other foot requires professional attention.

Infections---Foot infections in people with diabetes become more severe and take longer to cure than the same infections in people without diabetes. They account for the largest number of diabetes-related hospital admissions and are the most common non-traumatic cause of amputations. If you have a bacterial infection, it means that bacteria have penetrated your skin – the protective envelope that covers your body. A doctor can best determine the cause and appropriate treatment. By identifying the specific bacteria causing the problem, the most-effective antibiotic and method of delivery (oral, topical, intravenous, injection) can be prescribed.

Bone infections most often occur when bacteria gain access to the bone from a nearby soft tissue infection or foot ulcer. Early detection can limit the destruction of the bone and may resolve the infection with antibiotics rather than surgery.

If you notice whitish, inflamed, itchy and peeling skin on the foot, you may think you just have dry skin, but you may have a mold, yeast or fungal infection. Do not scratch this itch because the infection can spread to other parts of your body via your hands.

Practice Preventive Foot Health---- Inspecting your feet every day is the most cost-effective way to prevent foot issues and reduce your healthcare costs. Exercise, proper nutrition and smoking cessation, which are important in diabetes care in general, are also important in preventing amputations.

Dr. Mark Hinkes is chief of podiatry and director of podiatric medical education at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center/Tennessee Valley Healthcare System in Nashville, Tennessee, and author of *Keep the Legs You Stand On*, the first book on foot health for *people with diabetes that focuses on amputation prevention*. During his 30+ year career, Dr. Hinkes has also served as a consultant, clinical instructor, a lecturer and an author of peer-reviewed journal articles. In his leisure time, he enjoys gardening, traveling, and creating stained glass art.

Dr. Hinkes recently became a member of the AmputeeNews.com editorial board. For more information and to learn about Dr. Hinkes' book *Keep the Legs You Stand On*, please visit www.amputationprevention.com.

This information is provided for general educational purposes only and is not intended to replace the specific advice of your doctor or other healthcare professional. Contact your doctor or other healthcare professional immediately if you have an emergency.

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Here and There

National Convention-Wellington Mar.15-17



Our table with Graham, Rod,
Mark, Rebecca, Alan and Graehame



Sue and Graham



Our Reps--- Mark and Rod



Lorraine- Otago/ Southland

Lee- Waikato/BOP & Districts



Rod receiving his Life Member Badge and Certificate at
AGM February 24/2013. Presented by Mr. Mervyn Monk

A big Congratulations to Scott Martlew who reached the finals in the NZ Canoe Sprint and ICF Oceania Canoe Sprint Championships, for the under 23 Men's 200m and open Men's 200m. He was also part of the team that got 3rd in the K4 100m against the best including international medalists from the Olympics.

Scott was the only para-athlete competing and racing against all able bodied competitors. The event was held Feb 18th in Rotorua.

Treasurer's Report

Hello everyone. Hope all is well with you.

Firstly- 28 April 2013 we are going digital! I'm sure you have all seen the adverts. If you are not yet sorted for this, then we may be able to help you. There are government subsidies available if you fit the criteria but you need to act BEFORE the deadline date of 28 April to qualify!! Contact one of us on the committee for further details.

Secondly- PAID UP YET?? -If you belong to the TM Taxi Voucher Scheme and have not yet paid your annual TM Admin fee then you cannot receive any further voucher books until you have paid. Please contact me if you have any difficulty with this, and subs for 2013 are overdue now also. Please remit ASAP. Direct Deposit can be made to Westpac 0830 0264400.

Thanks, Ava phone 3821873 or email: avat@clear.net.nz

Web Sites

Amputee Society of Canterbury & Westland Inc.

www.amputeeinfo.co.nz

The Amputee Federation of NZ

www.af.org

Amputee Information

www.mossresourcenet.org

International Diabetes Federation

www.idf.org

Parafed Canterbury

www.parafedcanterbury.co.nz

Disability Awareness in Action

www.daa.org.uk

Amputee News

www.amputeenews.com

Disability Rights Commission

www.drc-gb.org

UN Programme on Disability

www.un.org/issues/m-disabl.asp

WEKA-NZ Disability Info

www.weka.govt.nz

Disabilities Information Service

314 Worcester Street, Christchurch

PO Box 32-074, Christchurch

(03) 366-6189

(03) 379-5939

9.00am - 4.30pm

Email: admin@aspirecanterbury.org.nz

Website: www.aspirecanterbury.org.nz

Amputee Coalition (USA)

www.amputee-coalition.org

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Rod Boyce Liz Rogers
Lorraine Wyse
Heather Plows
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Hydro Pool**



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