



Hawke's Bay and East Coast Amputee Society Inc

Affiliated to the Amputee Federation of New Zealand

Newsletter January / February 2014

Hi Friends

Happy New Year

I hope you all had a good break and enjoyed catching up with family and friends.

Since the last newsletter, we have had a good turn out to the Christmas meeting which was at the Fishing Club in Napier. I thought it may have been a bit small with so many things on but we were delighted. It was good to see some new amputees, great to meet you.

We have been fortunate to have received a grant from the Lotteries Board to fund a number of projects within the Hawke's Bay and East Coast Amputee Society. We will update members regarding these at the AGM on February 9th.

We are looking forward to another year of growth.

See you at the AGM, yours Joan Parker, president

AGM 2014

Date: February 9th 2014

1.00 pm Shared Lunch
(Please bring a plate of finger food to share)
1.30pm Meeting to start

At the Village Baptist Church Hall
147 Te Aute Rd
Havelock North

Anyone in need of transport, please let us know,
contact Geoff ph 8703357 or text 021 723609

Lifetime members and financial members are eligible to vote
so please attend to payment of outstanding subs if applicable

Conference 2014

In SUNNY NELSON

Friday 21st March till Sunday 23rd March
At the Trailways Hotel
Nelson

The conference will commence on Friday evening with the 68th National Council Meeting
A full programme will be offered on Saturday including the opportunity to enjoy
a range of local activities and a pirate themed dinner and dance in the evening.
For young amputees, the Give it a Go programme will be offered
for those who enjoy a taste of adventure

Registrations close Saturday 8th February

For more information, or to receive registration forms by email or post.
contact Diane at 06 8774294 or daisym@paradise.net.nz



Car Rally

February 15th, 1130 am

Meeting at the carpark cnr Frederick St and Grove Rd, Hastings

A fun journey with the objective of finding all of the landmarks using the shortest possible mileage.
Solving the puzzle could be thirsty work, so we'll end at a watering hole for a drink and a bite of lunch.

There will be fun prizes for the winning teams.

Up to four in each car, get a team together. Friends, family and guests welcome
East Coasters...we'd love to see you

To give us a clue regarding numbers, please contact Geoff or Diane

Geoff 06 8703357
021 723 609

Diane 06 8774294
021434833



Subscriptions

If you have already paid...thankyou
If not...Please post your \$10 cheque to
HB/ East Coast Amputee Society
PO Box 369 Hastings
Or pay online to
03 1518 0032642 00

Remember to include your details so we know
who the payment came from

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family and friends
to like us too



Member Profile: Miss Bea Wuts

By Diane Walsh

Bea Wuts is a busy, gorgeous 6 years old, who's learning to dance.

Bea was born with a rare condition called arthrogryposis which is defined as congenital contractures resulting from stiffened joints, shortened ligaments and muscle weakness. Bea's problems were detected at Mum Margot's early pregnancy scan. At first there was a suggestion that Margot's unborn baby had severe talipes as well as abnormal positioning of her hands. Margot and Anton Wuts set about finding out all they could, but because there was little definite information available they were given a progressively bleak picture of their little baby's future condition. Margot felt that during her pregnancy doctors would offer alarming speculation rather than admit that they simply didn't know the extent of the baby's abnormalities. When Bea was born in March of 2007, her parents were delighted to find that she was a beautiful baby girl, normal in every way apart from problems with her feet which had contracted and stiffened into abnormal positions. Margot comments that Bea had the most beautiful hands, with long fingers and smooth skin, only mildly affected by arthrogryposis.



At seven days of age, Bea's feet were put into casts, this was later followed by surgery and boots which Bea had to wear 23 hours a day. As time went by, due to her stiffened ankles and feet, Bea began walking on her tippy toes with her feet rotated, a gait that lead to severe pain in her feet and hips, also causing the risk of permanent damage to Bea's posture and skeletal development.

At two and a half, Bea underwent extensive and major reconstructive surgery on her feet and ankles, followed by three grueling months in plaster casts which held her feet in an aligned position. Margot and Anton endured weeks of little sleep, Bea's pain and distress were too much for one parent to manage overnight as Bea screamed non stop, sleeping only from exhaustion. After three traumatic months when the casts were removed, Bea's tender feet had to be forced into orthotic boots, despite the pain. At first, Bea's feet sat flat on the floor, but within three weeks they had rotated back to the same malposition and Bea's parents had to face the disappointment that the surgery had not worked. Further plans for surgery were suggested and it became clear that the surgery would need to be repeated regularly until Bea stopped growing at about sixteen years of age. Margot says it was then that she realized that if Bea was exposed to such relentless surgery, not only would she lose the chance of a normal, peaceful childhood, but the damage to her hips and other joints from inactivity and abnormal gait may ultimately lead to a wheelchair for Bea. Margot says that she felt respected and listened to by the medical and associated professionals who she and her family encountered. Bea however, reacted with terror when meeting her local surgeon after several painful experiences.

Eventually, Margot and Anton began considering amputation of Bea's feet as a way to give her the best chance of a normal life.

After discussing the idea with an Auckland surgeon, the Wellington Limb Service prosthetists and talking it over with Bea, the difficult decision was made. Margot is grateful that as a parent her ideas were seriously considered as valid in determining the future treatment of her child.

Bea, was a kindy girl, aged four, when she went off to Auckland for the amputations which started the exciting journey to new feet. A lot of creative planning and preparation went into ensuring that Bea understood the reality of having her feet removed. Following the amputation the surgeon reported that Bea's ankles were irreparably damaged, a powerful affirmation that Margot and Anton had reached the correct decision. Margot was nervous about Bea's reaction to seeing her stumps after the amputation, but when Bea first looked under the blankets she joyfully said with a gasp of relief, "Mum, I've got no feet"!

These days Bea has her new feet and experiences the happiness of pretty new shoes. Bea manages her prosthetic feet very well; she runs and jumps and dances, she's a whiz on the trampoline and enjoys a ride on her scooter. At home, Bea enjoys the freedom of walking on her stumps which have the sole skin of her original feet on them. She is pain free and loves to play with her big sister Maddy and little brother Arlo, as well as her friends. She's off to school now and enjoying the exciting childhood that a little girl deserves.

Water Fitness for Amputees

Society secretary, Colleen Kelly is currently working on a project which will offer a gentle aqua exercise and fitness programme especially formulated for amputees.

It is envisaged that in 2014, there will be two six week courses offered at a local, heated, aquatic centre.

The warm water and flotation equipment, provide the ideal environment for pleasurable exercise.

Negotiations are underway to secure the services of a qualified instructor and the assistance needed to ensure the safety and comfort of amputees participating.

As we all know, maintaining a healthy weight and muscle strength can be a problem for amputees, we look

forward to offering this free resource to members.

The project is a work in progress, but watch the next newsletter for dates.



This project has been made possible by funding from the NZ Lotteries Grant Board

Hikoi 4 Life

Community health is a big interest for the manager, Porky and the staff at the gym at 400 Maraekakaho Rd, Hastings. Porky invites anyone interested in improving their fitness to go and visit the gym, look around and get the feel of what's on offer. The first session will be free, but prices (detailed below) are very affordable at all times, the aim being a healthier community. Everyone is welcome, regardless of disability, fitness, size or shape. Amputees are encouraged, with exercise regimes adapted to each individual's needs. Wheelchairs aren't a problem, as you can still participate and gain the strength and fitness that comes from increased activity. Three times a week there is an exercise session for Kamatua, the elders among us :) Anyone can discuss their needs with Porky by making a time to visit when he is available, or just drop in to chat to the friendly staff.

400 Maraekakaho Rd, Hastings (cnr of Southhampton St)

06 8787825

5.30am till 8pm Monday to Friday

7.00am till 12md Saturday

\$20.00 per year

plus \$5 tag fee for swipe card to enter the gym

(this is a one-off and wont be charged again during your membership)

\$2.00 per session if aged less than 60

FREE if aged 60+

Casual sessions without membership \$5.00



Important Notice

Due to the Privacy Act, it can be difficult to learn of new amputees for our Field Officer, Geoff, to contact. While we appreciate that some will choose not to take up the offer of contact, some may also miss out because we don't know about them. If your hear of an amputee, before or after their surgery, or an amputee who would like a call, for whatever reason, please give them Geoff's number or, if they would prefer, give Geoff their contact details.

Geoff 021 723 609 or 06 8703357