

Purpose

Journal of the



**Amputees
Federation**
of New Zealand
Incorporated

July 2016

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infosydney@ossur.com

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**Editor
Lorraine Peacock QSM
213a Bay View Road
St Clair, Dunedin 9012
Phone (03) 455-6347**

**Email
info@af.org.nz**

**Website
www.af.org.nz**

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*The opinions expressed in this
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unless stated as such.*

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AMPUTEES FEDERATION OF NEW ZEALAND INCORPORATED

The National Executive

President

Mr John Ealand
Blenheim

Vice President

Mr Mark Bruce
Christchurch

National Coordinator And Editor of *Purpose*

Mrs Lorraine Peacock QSM
213a Bay View Road
St Clair
Dunedin 9012
Phone (03) 455-6347
Mobile 027 4221298
Fax (03) 455-9547
Email *coordinator@af.org.nz*

Committee

Mr Wally Garrett
New Plymouth

Mr Geoff Hansen
Hastings

Mr David Johnston
Invercargill

Miss Claudia Teague
Auckland

Nominees to the NZ Artificial Limb Service

(Appointment pending)
Ms Paula Tesoriero

Hon Solicitor

Mr Lindsay Trotman LL.M(Hons)
Palmerston North

Federation's Website
www.af.org.nz

EDITORIAL

In March 1965, the then President of the NZ Civilian Amputees Association, Mr Bert Rogers, introduced the Association's first issue of a national journal - *Conquest*. In his message to readers he said "*Our Association is based upon common interests - an association of persons who all have something in common and therefore have many interests which coincide. In order to promote such interests, it is necessary to convince others who have no real conception of the problems - physical, psychological and financial - which an amputee must overcome. This is obviously an important area in which our Association operates and a national journal can play an important role in establishing cohesion between affiliated Associations: unity is strength.*"

However, for various reasons (mainly financial), the regular publication of *Conquest* wasn't without difficulties and publication ceased in the mid 1970s, to be finally replaced by the new national magazine *Purpose* in July 1980. Since then it has gone from being a photocopied black and white leaflet to the more upmarket publication of today.

The Federation believes that now is as good a time as any to review what you - our readers - think of *Purpose* and to this end we invite you to complete the survey on page 11, either on this hard copy or by linking to our *website* www.af.org.nz We would love to have your views on whether *Purpose* can be improved and if so in what way.

Also included in this issue is a report on another successful National Conference and Give it a Go! event - both of which continue to go from strength to strength.

In the next issue of *Purpose* we will be able to report on the successes of our paralympians at Rio. No doubt the Games will produce some remarkable achievements and once again we'll be left wondering as to what limits the human body can be pushed. Well done to all those who will stretch themselves to their limits, even though the reward of a medal may not be the outcome. Remember that it is your own determination and the goals you set for yourself which count; reaching those personal goals is the ultimate outcome.

Lorraine Peacock

NEWS FROM THE REGIONS

Auckland & Northland - A combined effort at Bunnings in Mt Roskill in May (Jack on the grill, Janis on serviettes and bread, Warren as chief butcher, Claudia and Bill as super duper onion slicers, and myself on the counter) resulted in 425 sausages being processed, with many coming back for seconds. Things are gradually taking shape within our Society: we accepted an offer to host the 2017 National Conference, our newsletter has been well received, and good networking contacts have been established with agencies and new amputees. *(Helen Kocks, Secretary)*

Hawke's Bay/East Coast - A warm welcome to Geoff Hansen who was elected to the Committee of the National Executive at the recent conference. We look forward to your input.

Taranaki - We are finally organising a fishing trip up north - to Coromandel Town. We will spend a couple of nights in this wonderful area and head out on Saturday morning 19 November to the mussel farms. Wally is really keen, Barbara a little apprehensive but is assured we will have plenty of 'sea legs' on board. For those who love fishing like Tom and Bevan, not to mention myself, it's time for the ultimate trip. Needless to say the likes of Margaret B and Tracey will kill the shops and taste the best coffees. Yep, the ones in wheelchairs, like Chris - supported by Ann, are also coming because this vessel is especially designed and caters for the likes of us. The owners are Tom who is a bilateral amputee and his lovely wife Lorraine who will assist us on board the vessel. We may not fill the total amount of spaces available so it is on a first-in basis after we have our guys on board. For further information contact Bevan at 191lincoln@g.mail.com or me. *(Christine Windle, Secretary)*

Manawatu - The AGM held in March saw 17 members present and a keen and enthusiastic committee elected. Four members were funded to attend the conference in Christchurch and the Canterbury/Westland Society must be congratulated on their organisation. The next member function will be a luncheon at the Woolshed Café in Sanson on Saturday 9 July - conveniently midway between Wanganui and Palmerston North. *(John Maher, Secretary)*

Greater Wellington Region - Eight Wellington members attended the fabulous Annual Conference in April hosted by Canterbury & Westland. Rob is still trialing a new prototype swim leg in conjunction with Victoria University and the NZALS. We have an opportunity to watch the Royal NZ Ballet rehearse their up-coming show "Giselle"

scheduled in August. Our President Kate Horan is in her final preparations for the Rio Paralympics. And on behalf of the Amputees Federation Mary and I will be attending the farewell of outgoing Governor General and our Patron the Rt Hon Sir Jerry Mataparae at Government House on 5 July. (*Ken Te Tau, Vice President*)

Canterbury & Westland - After the successful hosting of the conference, things have been rather quiet as we move towards the shortest day. C/W enjoyed the hosting experience and would like to thank all delegates for their participation as well as their numerous sponsors. We are looking forward to a vineyard tour set for September with one of our sponsors. It is with regret that we have to advise the passing of one of our life members, Ray Boundy, who was a tireless advocate for amputees over many years. (*Mark Bruce, President*)

Otago & Southland - Patron Chris Birks (and newly elected Vice Patron to the Federation) gave an interesting talk at the AGM in March. Eleven members attended the National Conference when President David Johnston was elected to the Executive. (*Lorraine Peacock, Coordinator*)

Newsletters of Regional Societies are available on the Federation's website (www.af.org.nz), along with other useful information.

**SUPPORT YOUR REGIONAL AMPUTEE SOCIETY
IT SUPPORTS YOU!**

PUBLICATIONS available (no cost) from the National Coordinator or Regional Society Secretaries

A New Challenge - Advice for New Amputees (a 32 page booklet)

An Ongoing Challenge - A 60 page publication which covers a wide range of topics and includes personal profiles of 11 amputees.

A Challenge with Purpose - A History of the first 50 years of the Amputees Federation of NZ Incorporated (275 pages)

The Amputee Society of Otago & Southland Inc. - The first 60 years (146 pages)

Little Jellybean by Margot & Anton Wuts - for child amputees, their parents and families (24 pages)

GOOD LUCK to our budding Paralympians on their way to Rio - Rory McSweeney, Anna Grimaldi, Holly Robinson, Liam Malone, Sophie Pascoe, Cameron Leslie, Kate Horan, Byron Raubenheimer, Nikita Howarth, Bryall McPherson and Greg Reid.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2016

The Canterbury/Westland Society proved to be excellent hosts for this year's Conference held at the Sudima Hotel in Christchurch and the Opening on Friday evening 15 April provided an opportunity for the 90+ attendees to renew and make new acquaintances. This was followed by the AGM, during which a new Executive was elected (refer page 2) and a remit from the Taranaki Society was considered which urged that the Federation be proactive in supporting an alternative system of osseointegration (OPRA) to that currently carried out in New Zealand (ILP). The Federation believes that amputee consumers should be given a choice of procedures rather than being seen to favour one system over another and it was left to the incoming Executive to approach the appropriate authorities advocating that amputees be provided with a choice of systems. This has been done and replies are at present awaited to follow-up letters to the MOH and ACC, the results of which will be reported to members in due course.

Guest speakers during the weekend included Dr Kate Barnard



(Rehabilitation Physician) and it was good to learn that the Artificial Limb Service is working towards having more rehabilitation trained doctors appointed to Limb Centres (there are currently only two in NZ). Contributors to a session on Prosthetic Services in NZ included the Limb Service, Shore Orthotics, Orthopro and ACC, and an inspiring talk "Triumph Beyond Life's Tragedies: Beyond Amputation" by John Baye (a BK amputee and Patient & Family Outreach Coordinator at the Southeast Louisiana Veteran's Hospital in New Orleans) completed a productive and stimulating weekend.

One of the highlights of the weekend was the launch of **Little Jellybean**, a book written by Margot and Anton Wuts of Hawke's Bay, especially for child amputees and their parents. The following is an abbreviated synopsis from the book:

Trixie was diagnosed with Distal Arthrognosis in utero, and from birth

suffered through many procedures to try and correct the deformities in both of her feet. With no resolution in sight, and other parts of her body being adversely affected by the lack of improvement, amputation was considered. The medical professionals agreed that it would be the best chance of her having an active and hopefully pain-free life.....

Little Jellybean was financed by the NZALS and promises to be an invaluable resource for the parents in particular of young children who have had or are contemplating amputation.

Give it a Go! was undoubtedly the highlight of the weekend for the 15 youths who took part in this now well established event, with 15 youths taking part in horse riding, jet boating and a high wire course. One of these was Matt Bryson who shared his thoughts for our website page:

This was my second year of taking part in GIAG. What a fantastic weekend it was! The first year was a little difficult for me because I was still coming to terms with what had happened to me. Meeting new faces and old faces again made the experience something special. On one of the obstacle courses, I was stuck. I was about 10 meters up in the air. I didn't want to fall. I wanted to complete the course but I had used up all my energy, I had no more inside of me. I was sweating. Ahead of me was my amputee mate encouraging me. He gave me the encouragement I needed to soldier on. It made me realize even when life gets tough, you can still move forward with guidance and determination.

Thank you GIAG for making this happen. Thank you GIAG for bringing us together from all over NZ.

*Our sincere thanks go to our Conference and GIAG sponsors -
Ossur, Otto Bock, Invacare, ACC,
Pub Charity, NZ Community Trust, Lion Foundation*

INTRODUCING MORGAN JONES

(Morgan was a first time participant in GIAG this year. Our thanks to the C/W Society for permission to reprint excerpts from their newsletter)

In 1994 when he was 6 years old, Morgan was taking the train north from Christchurch to Picton with his father and was involved in a serious accident when the safety rail on a carriage broke causing him to fall from the train. He sustained serious injuries to his head as well as his leg which resulted in him losing his sight and having to have his right leg amputated below the knee. Morgan says that he does

not remember much about the accident itself and up to that point in his life, he has fond memories of a happy & carefree childhood. Obviously, he experienced a huge amount of trauma but says that he felt that he retained his easy going attitude to life and hopes he didn't complain too much.

Morgan attended Hoon Hay school and, after his accident Elmwood Primary which had a Visual Resource Centre. Cashmere High was his secondary school and he then moved on to Canterbury University to undertake a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology. His grandfather, who was a dedicated conservationist, inspired him to do the degree and he graduated in 2013. He is currently looking for a role that would suit his skills but has done varied jobs including working for Landcare



Research and voluntary work. In March of this year, Morgan also completed a certificate in Medical terminology.

Around 2 years ago, Morgan convinced his family that he could move out of the family home to live independently in a brand new townhouse. His guide dog and very good "friend" Jessie lives with him, and a flatmate. He said that he has enjoyed the experience and the challenges that it has provided, although he admits to not being a very good cook due to his inability to measure ingredients. Swimming is also a challenge, along with showering when not in his own environment.

Morgan said he likes people who are considerate, empathetic, easy going and especially people who realise that because he is unable to approach them, they make an effort to engage with him. His family is important to him as they assist with some of the challenges he faces in his daily living but he also enjoys his new found independence. Morgan recalls that as a child he was extremely interested in trains along with nature and

wildlife and remembers collecting insects. He grew up thinking that he would like to be involved in sustaining the environment as he has very pleasant memories of holidays in the Marlborough Sounds. Without a doubt, he says that going to University was a huge risk for him as he worried about his ability to cope with the studies but in the end everything turned out well. Moving out of the family home to start living independently was also a risk for him but he is pleased that he took on the challenge.

Morgan was part of the GIAG programme that ran alongside the Federation's conference and said that he thoroughly enjoyed the experience of jet-boating, horse riding and the high ropes course which was a huge challenge for him. Participating with other young people was not only a huge bonus but great fun and Morgan has made some new friends with whom he is in contact.

TRAVEL TIPS FOR AMPUTEES

(cont. from the last issue of Purpose)

Cruise Ships

Most ocean cruise liners accommodate passengers with a disability and provide wheelchair accessible cabins in all classes. As accessible features may vary from one cruise line to another be sure to investigate your options with the cruise operator or your travel agent in advance.

A few points to consider include:

- The number of accessible cabins is limited, you will need to book in early to secure accessible accommodation.
- Some of the larger cruise liners are huge. This may prove difficult for passengers with mobility issues. Consider a wheelchair and/or mobility aids for the cruise to make it easier to get around the vessel and enjoy all the facilities on offer.
- Before departure, contact your cruise operator to find out whether a doctor will be available.
- While cruise liners can offer facilities for passengers with disabilities, the same cannot be guaranteed for all ports. Disembarking at some locations may prove difficult and not all shore excursions are suitable for people with mobility issues. Again, check with the cruise operator in advance.

Readers are encouraged to share their travel experiences - send these to the Editor and include a photo (please limit article to 400 words maximum)

ENJOY YOUR HOLIDAY!

(Excerpts reprinted from inMotion - with thanks)

For many, particularly people living with a disability, "leisure" is a foreign concept. Leisure implies the ability to temporarily retreat from the everyday grind of work and obligations. Holidays offer such an opportunity, at least in theory - a time reserved to attend to family ties and friendships that can become neglected or even strained through life's daily struggles. Holidays can be a lot of fun but the potential for stress can be intimidating. However, with a little planning you should be able to lighten your load. Doing what you can to make life easier, less stressful and more enjoyable is worth it to keep the focus on what's more important - spending time with family and friends. The following suggestions and solutions may help reduce your anxiety.

- Don't be afraid to speak openly to your family and friends about your concerns - you might be surprised at the solutions they come up with.
- Ask if they can get a shower chair for you or a raised toilet seat if that will make your stay more comfortable.
- Make a list of everything you'll need to take with you, e.g. extra liners and socks, skin creams etc.
- Take a folding wheelchair with you for shopping trips or sightseeing. If you don't have one, think about renting one at your destination. The same applies to navigating the airport.

Most importantly, pack a smile and a good attitude! Enjoy your family and friends and have a wonderful holiday. Don't be afraid to ask for assistance; most people are very eager to help!

AMPUTEE & DISABILITY GOLF

2016 Tournament - Christchurch - 6-8 November
For further information email Wayne Eder weder@xtra.co.nz

A REQUEST FOR SPONSORS

If you know of anyone who would be prepared to advertise in *Purpose* and thus support a worthwhile cause, please ask them to contact us at info@af.org.nz

SURVEY

Our *Purpose* journal has been published, in various forms, since 1965. We would like to hear from our readers on what articles you find of interest and how the journal can be improved. Please take a few moments to complete this survey form and return it to the National Coordinator, 213a Bay View Road, St Clair, Dunedin 9012. You can also complete it on-line at www.af.org.nz.

1. How useful is the content of *Purpose* to you?

Very useful Somewhat useful Not useful

2. In thinking about *Purpose*, do you read

All articles Most articles Only articles of interest to me

3. What stories are you most interested in (please rank in order of preference, with 1 being most interesting and 7 of least interest)

- Personal stories about other amputees
- Prosthetic updates and changes in technology
- Events and activities
- Health care and managing amputation
- Phantom Pain information and news
- International articles
- Advocacy

4. Are there any ways you think we can improve *Purpose*?

.....
.....

5. Please tell us your age group

18-30 31-50 51-70 71+

6. What is your gender?

Male Female

7. In what region of New Zealand do you live?

.....

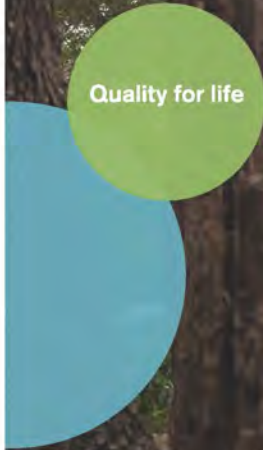
THANK YOU FOR TAKING PART IN THIS SURVEY

AFFILIATED AMPUTEE SOCIETIES

Region	Secretary/Contact Person
Auckland & Northland	Helen Kocks P O Box 36-170 <i>anamputeesociety@gmail.com</i> Auckland 0748 Mobile 02108614545
Canterbury & Westland	Eileen Popplewell P O Box 26-148 <i>ceallaigh4@xtra.co.nz</i> Christchurch 8148 Phone (03) 349-9415
Hawke's Bay/East Coast	Geoff Hansen 809A Ferguson St <i>burnoff@xtra.co.nz</i> Hastings 4122 Phone (06) 870-3357
Manawatu	John Maher 46A Bennett St <i>jmaher@orcon.net.nz</i> Palmerston Nth 4412 Phone (06) 354-7023
Nelson & Marlborough	Claire West 5 Cape View <i>jcjcape@slingshot.co.nz</i> Nelson 7010 Phone (03) 545-1410
Otago & Southland	Lorraine Peacock 213A Bay View Rd St Clair <i>lorrstan@xtra.co.nz</i> Dunedin 9012 Phone (03) 455-6347
Taranaki	Christine Windle 238 Egmont St <i>christinewindle@xtra.co.nz</i> Patea 4520 Phone (06) 273-6088
Waikato, Bay of Plenty & Districts	Ruthie Coltrane P O Box 15-130 Dinsdale <i>ruthie.coltrane@gmail.com</i> Hamilton 3243 Mobile 0273664540
Greater Wellington Region	Ken Te Tau 27 Waiho Tce Elsdon <i>tetau@paradise.net.nz</i> Porirua 5022 Mobile 0274876599

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Remember that you're not the first person to have lost a limb - many others have passed along the same route and achieved conspicuous success.

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