

**AMPUTEES FEDERATION OF
NEW ZEALAND INCORPORATED**

PURPOSE

**Newsletter of the
Amputees Federation of New Zealand Incorporated**



NOVEMBER 2011

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NZ Artificial Limb Board**

Mrs Kerry Wilfred-Riley
Ms Paula Tesoriero

Hon Solicitor

Mr Lindsay Trotman LL.M(Hons)
Palmerston North

Federation Website
www.af.org.nz

EDITORIAL

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No. 94 – November 2011

As I write this, the outcome of the Rugby World Cup 2011 is known and we are a happy nation! Indeed, as I was doing my weekly shop at the supermarket this Labour Day morning, people were chatting cheerily and whistling as they went about their business. And I couldn't help but think how different it probably would have been if the All Blacks had lost - no doubt there would have been plenty of gloom and long faces to be seen. This led me to thinking further about those (albeit a small minority) who will just be thankful that the hype is over, that life can return to normal, and that everyone can move on.

Moving on! That's what we as a Federation are doing as we come to the end of another year.

One of the highlights of this year has been the establishment of a new Society in the Capital. The Amputee Society of the Greater Wellington Region became affiliated to the Federation in August and is now registered as an Incorporated Society. The Society has an enthusiastic and motivated committee, keen to provide a much needed service to amputees in the Wellington region.

Another significant step forward has been our move to join Facebook, the social network used mainly by younger folk (although some of us not-so-young have been unable to escape its clutches!). We are hopeful that the Federation's Facebook page will prove to be an effective outreach to those whom we strive to serve.

And then there's next year's National Conference in Napier in March. Following the initiative of two of our young members, a "Give it a Go! Focus on Youth" programme will be held in conjunction with the main conference, with activities such as rafting on the Mohaka River, Sailing and Horse Riding taking place over the weekend. We are excited with the expectation that this could well become an annual event and lead to our young amputees becoming more involved in their local Societies and the Federation. The programme and a registration form for the conference is on pages 5-8 in this issue of *Purpose* - do give some serious thought to joining us. (Programmes and registration forms for 15-30 year olds have been distributed separately).

Until next time, take care, and the Peace and Blessings of Christmas be with you and yours.

Lorraine Peacock

**JOIN US ON FACEBOOK - GO TO OUR WEBSITE www.af.org.nz
and click on our name to LIKE us!**

NEWS FROM THE REGIONS

Auckland & Northland - Rugby World Cup and bad weather contributed to the lack of numbers attending the Cake and Coffee social afternoon on Sunday 2 October. The committee is hoping for a more favourable gathering at a Christmas Barbecue to be held on Sunday 4 December. The visit to Whangarei has been cancelled due to a change of dates for Limb Centre visits to the Whangarei Base Hospital and will be looked into again in the New Year.

Waikato, Bay of Plenty & Districts - A newsy Newsletter in October included a list of creative pursuits suggested by Field Officer Kerry and a worthwhile contribution being made to the Hamilton Health & Disability Expo.

Hawke's Bay/East Coast - Everyone's looking forward to next year's conference at the Crown Hotel in Napier. Get in early to register (see page 7).

Taranaki - Chief Executive of the Limb Board, Mervyn Monk, was the guest speaker at their August meeting and was interested to hear of some of their concerns.

Manawatu - A guest at their November meeting is to talk about his trip to India and the usual Christmas luncheon will be held in December.

Greater Wellington Region - This is a new Society and a new Committee which is motivated about providing a first-class service to amputees, their families and support groups. We're looking forward to receiving progress reports.

Nelson & Marlborough - Monthly meetings for new amputees, support people and other amputees who are interested, are soon to get under way. David Phillips, an acupuncturist, will be speaking at their Christmas dinner at the Monaco Resort on 26 November and President Amy Hindley will also introduce herself.

Canterbury & Westland - Orthopaedic Surgeon John McKie will be guest speaker at a Christmas luncheon at the Hornby Working Men's Club on 27 November.

Otago & Southland - Coming events include the inaugural "Quadrant Multisport Champions Series" on 6 November (clay target shooting, ten pin bowling, pool and mini golf); a meeting and dinner in Invercargill on 12 November; golf at Matura on 13 November; and a Christmas barbecue on 11 December. It all sounds very busy! Visitors to the deep south are welcome to take part.

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

**SUPPORT YOUR DISTRICT AMPUTEE SOCIETY
IT SUPPORTS YOU**

From time to time, articles of interest from inMotion, the journal published by the Amputee Coalition of America, are reprinted in Purpose. In the latest issue, I was impressed with the reality of the inspirational statements made by Bill Dupes who has given permission to reprint excerpts from his Editorial.

FINDING YOUR OWN PATHWAY TO THRIVING

F *Over every mountain there is a path, although it may not be seen from the valley*
- Theodore Roethke

Whether you are born with a limb difference or lose a limb to an injury or disease, how you deal with it will largely determine the quality of life you will have. It is truly remarkable to see how differently people adapt to their situations. Each person chooses his or her path to recovery and thriving in life, with its own set of unique twists, turns, setbacks and triumphs. But why do some people who have lost a limb spiral downward, while others survive the loss, rebuild their lives, and, ultimately, even reach a high level of success in their personal and professional lives?

Although fear and pain are unpleasant experiences, they are healthy devices that protect us from danger, alerting us to be careful and to avoid doing something that may cause harm. However, when fear of the unknown causes new experiences to be avoided, we stop growing. The more a feared situation is avoided, the scarier it becomes. Alternately, each time we do something we fear and experience success, it becomes easier. But confronting and challenging fear is one of the most difficult tasks anyone can face.

Rehabilitation after an amputation can be filled with many frightening challenges. For example, learning to trust and rely on a prosthetic limb can be a traumatic experience. Finding the courage to do what you fear can help you attain levels of ability never considered possible. You can expect to try, fail and try again in the process of relearning skills, discovering new abilities and confronting limits. Most people will consider giving up. But keep in mind that the fight to reclaim your life is worth it. Be patient with the process. Be compassionate toward yourself. Be curious about your limits. Laugh at your failed attempts. Don't compare your progress to someone else's. But, most importantly, don't ever give up!

If you work with courage, patience and curiosity, in spite of pain and fear, in spite of setbacks and unexpected outcomes, you can creatively find a way to live fully and joyfully. And thrive.

OUR THANKS to the NZ Lottery Grants Board, Pub Charity, and the Southern Victorian Trust for their recent grants. Without such assistance, our functioning and support to District Amputee Societies would be greatly restricted.

COSMETIC OPTIONS

C (Adapted from an article in *Amputee Journal Aust*, with input for the NZ amputee from Mark McDowall, Manager of the Dunedin Limb Centre)

“Wearing a prosthesis can present enough day-to-day irritations and niggles that the last thing needed is to attract other people’s attention to the damn thing” says the opening sentence of the Australian article. However, it has to be said that many young amputees in particular don’t give a “damn” what it looks like and in fact are proud to display their singularity. For those slightly more reserved, there are cosmetic options.

The most commonly used option is the soft cover with stockings - these are the standard method in Australia. It consists of a lightweight foam block which is shaped to match the profile of the anatomical limb. This is then covered with a stocking. For everyday use they are quite durable and as the stocking is easy to change they can be maintained easily. However, they do not stand up to rough use and will tear if snagged.

A robust option for NZ patients is the laminated outer shell - this provides a load bearing function as well as cosmetic finish. The lamination can take hard knocks and scratches inflicted upon it from the most active amputees. One drawback of the laminated shell is it can reduce the function ability of the ankle due to the lack of flexibility.

Another option provided by some NZ Limb Centres is super skin. This is a rubber latex spray-on membrane that provides water resistance and limited colour matching to soft cover limbs. Super skin is an add-on option over stockings but once again this product can be torn or break down over time, requiring it to be reapplied.

So, as can be seen, there are a number of cosmetic appearance finishes to prosthetic limbs that can be considered. Make sure you talk to your fitter and discuss all options that are available for your prosthesis and applicable to your lifestyle.

NEW APPOINTMENTS
We are pleased to advise the appointment of Paula Tesoriero to the **NZ Artificial Limb Board**. Paula replaces Lorraine Peacock who recently completed a 7 year term.
We are pleased also to advise that the Governor General, The Right Honourable Sir Jerry Mateparae GNZM, QSO, has agreed to be the **Patron** of our Federation during his term of office.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR and any other contributions to *Purpose* are very welcome. If you have anything to share with readers, please send it to the Editor at 213a Bay View Road, St Clair, Dunedin, fax to (03) 455-9547, or email to lorrstan@xtra.co.nz



NATIONAL CONFERENCE

**Crown Hotel
NAPIER**

23-25 MARCH 2012

Grab a Cheap Air Fare and
Join us for a Weekend of

FRIENDSHIP AND FUN

Interesting Speakers Arranged
Plus a Morning of Sightseeing

SEND IN YOUR REGISTRATION NOW!
(see pages 7/8)

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Friday Evening 23 March

Official Opening
Meet and Greet

Saturday 24 March

Morning

National Council Meeting

Afternoon

“Shall we Stay or Shall we Go?”

*David Guest, Manager, Information & Policy and
Professional Advice, Enable New Zealand*

“What’s Happening in the ALB?”

NZ Artificial Limb Board

Evening

Conference Dinner

Impromptu Entertainment with our Young Amps

Sunday 25 March

Morning

Bus Tour - enjoy some scenic & cultural delights of
the Bay, concluding with lunch at the Crown Hotel



REGISTRATION FORM

Complete and return, together with registration payment,
by Saturday 11 February 2012

Name(s)

Address

.....

Phone No.

Email

ACCOMMODATION (\$178.25 per night)

Required for nights of

Number of People

(Please indicate if an accessible unit is required)

MEALS

Payment for the following meals is required with registration. All other meals, including accommodation, will be charged to the rooms of those staying in the hotel.

Saturday Lunch	\$20.00
Saturday Dinner	\$45.00
Sunday Lunch	\$20.00

(All prices include GST)

To:

The National Coordinator
Amputees Federation of New Zealand Inc.
213a Bay View Road
St Clair
Dunedin 9012

Enclosed is cheque for \$ to cover the following:

Saturday Lunch

..... (number of people) at \$20 per person \$

Saturday Dinner

..... (number of people) at \$45 per person \$

Sunday Lunch

..... (number of people) at \$20 per person \$

Total Payment enclosed \$

(Please make cheque payable to the Amputees Federation of NZ Inc.)
Alternatively, payment can be made by Direct Credit to
031355 0301026 00 (please identify with your name)

**SEND IN YOUR REGISTRATION
BY SATURDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2012**

Your Registration Form will be returned to you, together with a receipt

NZ ARTIFICIAL LIMB BOARD UPDATE

from the desk of Mervyn Monk, Chief Executive

2011 has been little different from my past two years with the Limb Board, and so much of what I have to report is a continuation of the same - but with one significant difference. We have not received our normal CPI equivalent funding increase from ACC this financial year and the funding increase we have received from Health (which meets only about 60% of our funding) is considerably less than CPI. This is as indicated by Government and looks set to be the norm for at least the next three years, which will raise some very challenging questions for us all going forward.

For the past several years now NZALB has been reviewing its level of efficiency, clinical compliance and its adherence to its own operating policies. This in turn has lead to an increasing emphasis on staff development and operating efficiencies. Our need to provide all amputees with the most appropriate and cost effectively limb has never been more critical, and the ability of our staff to deliver the appropriate service increasingly more demanding, with newer technologies and increasing amputee expectation, especially with regard to specialised recreational limbs and the more recent generation of consumables such as the (not inexpensive) Silicon Liners.

Limb Centre staff are committed to the continuation of the very best service they can provide to each and every one of you, but staff are now being asked to ensure your need to visit the Centre is well planned in advance with minimal need for you to have a series of follow-up visits because, either components were not available (or not ordered in advance), and/or the reason for your visit is not advised or clearly understood. You can all assist in this endeavour by contacting the Centre in advance of your planned visit and providing as much detail as you can of what you expect might be required. I am very aware that a number of you already do just this but there are still some amputees who overlook the importance of this detail in advance of their visit. Of course there will still be the need for visits to the Limb Centre at short notice because of some breakage or other mishape; such visits are simply unavoidable and expected.

I was pleased to be invited to meet with the Taranaki amputees in late August and hear first hand of some of their concerns and their interest in attracting more amputees to their group. Clearly it is in the interest of us all that both District Amputee Societies and the national Amputee Federation is strongly supported by members - in particular new and younger amputees. In this regard the Limb Board is currently looking to improve and enhance our website and online access to information relevant to the needs of amputees. As always, it is the prime focus of the staff and the Limb Board that we continue to meet the needs of amputees as best we can. Your continued support in endeavouring to achieve this objective is much appreciated.

AN INSPIRATION!

AIntroducing **CHRIS ROSS** - one of the prime movers in our Give it a Go! Focus on Youth weekend of activities in Napier.

I grew up as a wee fella at a country school called Westmere Primary, just outside Wanganui. I had a good bunch of friends, many of whom I still keep in contact with. It wasn't until I hit secondary school that I realised that I was different - having



only one arm. The other thing that I quickly realised was that I didn't have a cool story to tell - no shark attack, or hide and seek limb accident here, plain old "I was born this way". However, this did not stop me from making stories up, or throwing my arm over my shoulder to scare the old ladies in Woolworths (now Countdown for you young guns).

(Photo Paralympics NZ)

As with most people who have a disability, secondary school would have to be one of the hardest times for me, with the name calling and other things associated with having only one arm. Luckily, this is where the humour, friends and humility come into it, and it wasn't too bad. I recently read an article that was given to me profiling another athlete with one arm (which is why I was asked to write this), and they went on and on about the bullying they received. However, I believe you should always look at the positives and not let those instances define who you are.

People often come up to me and say "Chris how do you munge so well having just one arm?", so I tell them "it's all because of my great good looks, charm and charisma - oh and humour". One of my earliest teachers once wrote on my personal quality sheet "you approach life with a great deal of grace, humility and humour". I myself am not too sure about the grace part but I would agree with the humility part. Why am I discussing humour and humility? It is because I think that these are two attributes that people with disabilities quite often possess. Humility or self-worth is so important. I frequently see people with disabilities focus too much on the impairment that has caused their disabling factor within society, and this gets them down. I firmly believe that with an increase in self-worth and humour this can change. I once always tried to hide my arm, thought of myself as an outcast, different, ugly, and removed, wondering why everyone always stared at me. I thought it must be because of my hand, and yes it it was, but I feel not for the reasons that many of us with disabilities believe it to be.

I always believed that people looked at my arm because it was ugly, gone, and that others believed having an impairment was not acceptable in society, that people thought I was gross. It wasn't really until I was walking along the beach one day and saw a dog with three legs, as happy as Larry, running around, having a good time and interacting with other dogs and people, that it dawned on me: I was staring at the dog, not because I thought it was ugly or an outcast, but because it was different and coping with its impairment. This is how I feel many people look at those with an amputation or disability, and that we should not try and hide those impairments which make us unique. We are different, yes, but when you come to accept your impairment, things seem a whole lot brighter, and I believe you too can be as happy as Larry. An important fact that you should remember is that 1 in 5 people experience a disability, yet most are hidden, therefore the fact that we as amputees have 'visible' impairments, should not restrict us in any way.

I do not see myself as an inspiration; sure there are moments when people say to me, "you're an inspiration to us all", but I feel that what I have achieved anyone else with an amputation can also achieve. The things that you need are commitment, dedication and dreams, and these are qualities everyone has - you just have to have the desire to find them and believe that you can do anything. You should judge your successes not only on what you have achieved, but what you have given up in order to achieve them, as it is often the case that following a dream can be life-changing.

One day in 2009 a letter arrived from my Amputee Society looking for anyone interested in competing at the Paralympics, or who thought they had a chance, through Paralympics New Zealand and their Xcellerate to Xcellence programme. Being the hugely confident person that I am, I didn't want to; I never thought that I could make it. Unfortunately for me (some would say fortunately) my girlfriend convinced me to sign up. To cut a long story short, I am now currently a member of the NZ Paracycling Team, and after my first World Champs which were held in Italy (awesome field trip) I am 13th in the world for the 1000m time trial on the track (Velodrome) - I thought, not bad for less than two years on a bike, as I did not ride beforehand. I think one of the main messages that I want to get across to anyone who is interested in getting into sport or the Paralympics is that there is no better day than today. Further, having a disability should not stop you from doing anything: do not hide your impairment, embrace it. For all you young guys out there, having one arm or leg is actually quite an ice breaker, use it to your advantage. Some people can be harsh, I agree, however most people are just interested, just like I found myself staring at the three-legged dog. Everyone is unique: do not conceal who you are, enjoy and live your life to the fullest!

(Chris (23) is a University student at present based in Dunedin but will soon be moving to Auckland to further his training)

RECENT SWIMMING ACHIEVEMENTS

Congratulations to Sophie Pascoe who won Gold and set 2 new World Records in the 100m Butterfly S10 and the 200m Medley SM10 at the 2011 Pan Pacific Para-Swimming Championships, held in Canada in August.

(Photo Paralympics NZ)



On 11 October, Italian distance swimmer, Salvatore Cimmino, became the first amputee to successfully swim Cook Strait. Salvatore had his right leg amputated at the age of 15 due to cancer and began swimming later in life for therapeutic reasons before turning



it into a passion for raising disability awareness. In his quest to promote disability awareness, the 47-year-old has already swum the English Channel as well as completing swims in Israel, Italy, Mexico and Canada. Despite his successful crossing of Cook Strait, Cimmino cannot be considered for the record books because he wore a special wetsuit to keep him warm. The wetsuit increased his buoyancy and speed. Cimmino was accompanied on his swim by two support vessels and four support staff who monitored tides, winds and water temperatures, which hovered around 12 degrees Celsius.

(Photo NZ Herald)

AN UPDATE FROM CHRISTCHURCH

from Ava Thomas, Secretary of the Canterbury/Westland Society)

News from the shaky city is that we are still being shaken most weeks. There is progress in the Eastern suburbs but it is very slow. On a brighter note, whilst there is still no decision on replacing or rebuilding QE11 for Eastern suburbs residents the brand new "Graham Condon Centre" has opened in Papanui. This complex has been seen as many by a one stop shop for those with a disability, however the architects do not appear to have acted on advice provided. Ramps into the 25m pool and spa pool have 2 steps at the bottom and several other inaccessible issues have been spotted by the South Island's only "Barrier Free Auditor". When will they actually listen and take note BEFORE building any complex!

AFFILIATED DISTRICT SOCIETIES

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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.
IF YOU WISH TO DO THE SAME,
YOU ARE MORE THAN HALF-WAY THERE -
THE REMAINDER IS AS EASY OR AS
DIFFICULT AS YOU MAKE IT.**