

31 August 2018



Dear Members and Friends

Greetings to you and I hope you have successfully managed the unusual rainy Winter season. As in previous years it gives me great pleasure to announce the forthcoming events for the remainder of this calendar year 2018.

ADSA Walk for Research and Awareness 2018 ADSA Walk for Medical Research and Asbestos Awareness will start on Monday 10 September 2018 at Wave Rock, more details on the last page.

Asbestos Awareness Week 19 November to 23 November 2018 The main purpose of the Awareness Week is to provide the Western Australian community with information on the risks associated with asbestos exposure and advice on medical treatments of asbestos caused diseases. More information on Asbestos Awareness will be available in the Christmas newsletter in November this year.

Ecumenical Memorial Service 2018 The Ecumenical Memorial Service will again be held at the Redemptorist Monastery, Vincent Street, North Perth on 23 November this year commencing at 9:30am. The Memorial Photograph Presentation of our passed members will be available again. Families wishing to include a photo, please send it by email to reception@asbestosdiseases.org.au or deliver in person to ADSA office in Osborne Park.

ADSA Christmas Picnic 2018 Sunday 2nd December 2018 will be held at our usual place, Whiteman Park, on Sunday 2 December. As in previous years a roast lunch prepared by our gourmet chef will be provided plus Christmas sweets. Band entertainment, Kidz in Sport for the junior brigade and Santa is already preparing for his attendance.

1. THE ASBESTOS COMPENSATION BILL 2013

Asbestos Compensation Bill 2013, Provisional Damages and Benefits to Disabled Relative. It is our understanding that the Hon John Quigley, Attorney General, has received the likely liability to the Insurance Commission of Western Australia (ICWA) of claims relating to Provisional Damages and a Disabled Relative. However to date our organisation has not been advised of the ICWA liability. We are hoping that something might be happening before Christmas.

2. MESOTHELIOMA RESEARCH FUNDING

Over the years ICWA was providing valuable funding to the National Centre for Asbestos Diseases (NCARD) for medical research into asbestos diseases, particularly malignant mesothelioma, however due to lack of funds in general the former State Government cut the grant to approximately \$365,000 for the next three years. The Asbestos Diseases Society members are immensely disappointed and have expressed their feelings in no uncertain terms requesting that our organisation write to the Labor Government to provide funds. **The Asbestos Diseases Society Chief Operating Officer, Melita Markey, wrote to the Director-General of the Health Department of WA seeking his support for an interim funding solution for NCARD. Melita mentioned in her correspondence that sadly Western Australia has the highest incidence of malignant mesothelioma numbers in Australia and in the world per capita of population and will continue to rise unabated.** The Asbestos Diseases Society members and friends are hoping that an interim funding solution can be found before December 2018 to meet the shortfall of \$365,000 so we can maintain our world renowned researchers. Most of the WA researchers have over 20 years of knowledge and experience each in mesothelioma cancer and it would be devastating to lose any of the highly sought-after researchers who no doubt could be researching anywhere in the world but they are true Australians wishing to do the right thing here. To date our researchers have some very promising treatment trials led by Professor Nowak, the new Director of NCARD. These were announced in June this year at the Chicago Oncology conference with a resounding success. It is also important to note that in addition to other funding to NCARD the Asbestos Diseases Society of Australia members have fund raised to provide a \$360,000 full PhD scholarship for a clinician/scientist at UWA. It is a somewhat disappointing arrangement from our perspective that victims and their families are funding medical research for injuries which could have been prevented by the State of Western Australia years ago. Any member wishing to write to the Government please do so.



3. PROFESSOR ANNA NOWAK - LATEST UPDATE ON MESOTHELIOMA RESEARCH

The Executive Officer of our organisation, Rose Marie Vojakovic, sought information from Professor Anna Nowak as to the progress of clinical trials. Professor Nowak replied to Rose Marie as follows: “Clinical trials at our centre have recently gone a little too quiet for my liking. We have recently completed enrolling all patients to the FRAME study, which was testing a tablet anti-cancer agent called AZD4547 in people who had previously had standard chemotherapy for mesothelioma. With the study complete, our current focus is on quickly analysing the results in time to report them at the upcoming Clinical Oncology Society of Australia (COSA) annual scientific meeting, a national oncology conference which is being held in Perth in November. Speaking of the COSA conference, one of the two cancer types being focussed on this year is mesothelioma. We will be fortunate to have two fantastic international visitors, mesothelioma surgeon Mr John Edwards, and medical oncologist/clinician scientist Professor Dean Fennell, both from the UK, as speakers at COSA and also visitors to NCARD. Both are long-standing friends and colleagues of our team, so it will be wonderful to host them in WA. Professor Ken Takahashi from Sydney will also be visiting to speak on asbestos and mesothelioma, and Dr Sonja Klebe from South Australia, an international expert on mesothelioma pathology, will be taking part in a ‘debate’ on diagnosing mesothelioma with our own Dr Mandy Segal, also a world expert on mesothelioma pathology. Drs Klebe and Segal are always ‘behind the scenes’; pathologists are incredibly important people for our clinical trials, confirming that the diagnosis is correct and providing samples for laboratory testing.

In other clinical trial news, we are working hard on two follow-ons from the DREAM clinical trial, our study of combination chemo-immunotherapy. Firstly, because the results have been exciting, we are working with national and international groups with the goal of starting a larger confirmatory clinical trial, known as ‘DREAM3R’. Because around 600 people with mesothelioma would need to participate in this trial, the costs are not small and the logistics are not simple. However, we are making progress, and we would announce confirmed funding and plans if we succeed in making this happen. Secondly, we continue to apply for funding opportunities to complete the important laboratory work on samples patients on the DREAM study have donated for further research. With success rates around 15-20% for most schemes, we are still awaiting our outcomes for 2018 applications. Finally, even though we don’t have any open trials specifically for mesothelioma at this time, we do hope to have one open for people with ‘sarcomatoid’ type mesothelioma in the near future. We are also able to arrange for people with mesothelioma who have previously been treated with chemotherapy to be considered for trials at Linear Clinical Research, which is on-site at SCGH and often has suitable studies. In the meantime, our laboratory work continues to underpin and focus our next generation of ideas; we continue to work hard on the next breakthrough.” Dear members and friends, as you will observe our researchers are indeed excelling themselves to provide excellent service to unfortunate members and friends suffering from mesothelioma and other asbestos diseases.

4. FUNDRAISING GOLF TOURNAMENT

Sunday February 17th 2019 Meadow Springs Golf Club

Our Vice President Dave Hall has been very busy and his efforts have yielded a great prize for the Hole-In-One prize - a magnificent La Vista Bella caravan. In addition, there will be many other prizes upon conclusion of the tournament and a BBQ lunch. The rules are Ambrose Four and I would most strongly suggest that you register your team as soon as possible as there is a limit of only 20 teams. You can ring our office on 1800 646 690 between 9am - 5pm or call Dave Hall on 0428 817 151 if you need any further information. Also I would strongly recommend that you ring directly the magnificent donor Jim at Rockingham RV who has donated the magnificent La Vista Bella caravan as the Hole-In-One prize. As you will observe in part of the newsletter, the funds for the medical research are scarce and we are concerned that our researchers may be head-hunted by some other research institutions either overseas or in Australia. Therefore our organisation must raise funds from whatever sources to maintain the lifesaving research which is one of the best in the world and we believe that even mesothelioma cancers will be successfully treated within a few years, subject to sufficient funding. Rockingham RV contact number is 9528 1151.



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5. CHRISTMAS FUNDRAISING RAFFLE

The Christmas Raffle is about to be launched and will be drawn on the 12 December 2018. It would be greatly appreciated if members and friends could share at least a book of 10 tickets. All our fundraising either Walk, Raffle or Golf is specifically for the asbestos diseases medical research. Last year our organisation committed itself to sponsor a PhD Scholarship in Mesothelioma for Dr Melvin Chin, in his capacity as a research expert with a distinguished career attending Cambridge University, completed a BA in Pharmacology with first class honours and a medical degree with subsequent Masters, to be part of the magnificent team of asbestos researchers under Professor Anna Nowak. Our organisation is sponsoring Dr Melvin Chin in the sum of \$360,000 and for this very reason, we are very keen to be even more bold to acquire an additional researcher to Dr Melvin Chin to bolster Professor Anna Nowak’s team to find a cure for mesothelioma. Due to our commitments to medical research our Christmas Raffle will increase from \$2.00 to \$2.50 per ticket.

6. BLUE MURDER AT WITTENOOM

The late Mr Lang Hancock commenced blue asbestos surface mining at Yampire Gorge in 1937 by using mainly indigenous Banjima people. The blue asbestos fibres were manually bagged and taken to Roebourne to be loaded onto ships for the United Kingdom market. With the onset of the Second World War in 1939, the asbestos market opportunity arose with the demand for larger quantities of blue asbestos fibres. In 1943 Mr Hancock sold the majority share to CSR Limited (ABA became a subsidiary of the parent company CSR). Mr Hancock remained the manager of the mining and milling of the asbestos until 1948 and CSR appeared to be unhappy because the operations of the milling were so filthy and CSR took over management of the mine and mill. In 1946 the Yampire Gorge mine was closed and Wittenoom Gorge mine was opened. The mine consisted of a number of stopes (tunnels) and a milling operation (crushing the host rock to extract asbestos fibre). The miners had to crawl in the hot dark stopes bent almost double, as many stopes were not more than a metre high, and choking with dust. Working conditions in the mill were even worse than the mine. The ore from the mine was taken to the mill by an open conveyor belt to be ground down and fibre extracted. The men worked in clouds of dust for hours on end needing floodlights to see even at midday. Since we know now there is no minimum safe level of exposure to asbestos, a minute in such concentration is enough to cause lung cancer or mesothelioma. The Asbestos Diseases Society is led to believe that CSR knew that asbestosis and lung cancer were the extremely likely result of working in conditions such as those it permitted in Wittenoom. Their knowledge was established in the Victorian and Western Australian courts through the judgments of asbestos-caused injury litigation. By 1988 a Supreme Court jury found that CSR had been “recklessly indifferent” to the safety of its workers and that ABA knowingly allowed the processing of asbestos to continue even though the dangers of asbestos fibre inhalation were known as early as 1926. For the duration of the mining operation until the closure of the mine on 31 December 1966 there were more than 20,000 persons living in Wittenoom including more than 4,000 children being born in Wittenoom or arriving with their parents. In addition there were many visitors regularly arriving to walk through the gorges and indeed inhale quite a bit of asbestos dust. To our understanding there were a number of indigenous people who did not count at all and were even excluded from the census. We are led to believe conservatively that more than 4,000 people who lived and worked at Wittenoom, including a number of wives and children including a host of indigenous people have died of asbestos diseases. It is predicted that more than 60,000 men, women and children will die in Australia by 2035 from work at Wittenoom and James Hardies or passive exposure to asbestos, i.e. domestic renovation or demolition. Regrettably it is very likely the numbers of asbestos diseases casualties will be larger than the number of Australian diggers killed during World War One. Several months ago former Wittenoom residents who have had substantial losses of their loved ones through exposure at Wittenoom discussed creating a plaque of remembrance of the brave men, women and children who have lost their lives. The plaque of remembrance was unveiled at Solidarity Park on 18 August 2018 with the support of Unions WA.



REMEMBRANCE PLAQUE UNVEILING AT SOLIDARITY PARK SATURDAY 18 AUGUST 2018

7. ADSA WALK FOR RESEARCH AND AWARENESS 2018

The ADSA Walk 2018, 9 September 2018 to 14 September 2018, starts from Wave Rock near Hyden on Monday 10 September 2018. Please support the ADSA Walk Team by following our progress on the ADSA Walk website adsawalk.org.au where we will be making daily posts of photos and stories about our adventures on the road. Be part of the walk up to Parliament House on Friday 14 September 2018 starting from the front of the Wellington Street Train Station in Perth at 9:45am or be there to welcome home the ADSA Walk Team at Solidarity Park behind Parliament House at 11am. For more information call 1800 646 690 or 08 9344 4077 or email info@adsawalk.org.au

ADSA WALK AROUND TOWN 2018 - HARVEY WEDNESDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER 2018 11AM TO 2PM



Registration at the Harvey CRC on Gibbs Street opposite the Harvey Primary School from 10am

The ADSA Walk Around Town 2018 is in Harvey on Wednesday 12th September 2018 from 11am to 2pm. This is a 1km loop starting on Gibbs Street at the Harvey Community Resource Centre and includes Young Street, Uduc Road, and Hayward Street. Join us for this important fund raiser for mesothelioma medical research or please take the time to encourage our Walk Teams on the day. Information about asbestos will be available and our dedicated volunteers will be there to answer questions at the Harvey CRC. Prizes for the most laps between 11am and 2pm and most feet on the ground for teams. For more information visit adsawalk.org.au or please call 1800 646 690.

8. PERIODIC EXAMINATIONS OF PERSONS EXPOSED TO ASBESTOS

The most important part of the periodical examinations is to detect early onset of malignant asbestos diseases, lung cancer and malignant mesothelioma. Early detection of lung cancer can lead to successful outcomes and remissions. Malignant mesothelioma still remains a lethal disease, however when detected at an early stage, can be treated with a multidisciplinary approach leading to reasonable longevity of survival. Regrettably, a large number of our members and friends who have had previous occupational or domestic exposure to asbestos appear to be complacent and are not taking advantage of the opportunity of periodical examinations made available by our organisation. Dr Deleuil is available at our Osborne Park office for medical check-ups and referrals every Tuesday and Thursday from 10:00am. To make an appointment to consult Dr Deleuil please call our office on 9344 4077 or country members and friends can call our toll free number 1800 646 690.

For now, my very best wishes and kindest regards,

Robert Vojakovic AM JP
PRESIDENT

