

Committee: Liz Telford (*President*), Martin Grillo (*Vice President*), Bernard Peasley (*Secretary*), Geoff Dean (*Treasurer*), Ron Bell (*Support Group Liason*), Angela Bruzzese, Maree Jongkryg, Jill Pickering, Bob Slater, Peter Willcocks

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From the President

Community awareness and education has been top of the agenda in this past month, with the visit to Melbourne by Ramesh Ferris, global polio eradication, education and rehabilitation campaigner from Canada, and the Parliamentary Roundtable Discussion on Post Polio. Apart from our Forum at Disabled Motorists Association, polio was discussed by GPs at the General Practice Division Victoria Polio Education evening, at Disability Sport and Recreation (formally Wheelchair Sports), at Rotary Carlton, at GlaxoSmithKline and on Life Matters which is broadcast nationally. These events were organised jointly by Polio Australia and PPV.



As PPV President I was invited to represent Victorian polio survivors at the Roundtable Discussion. Being chosen to participate in this Polio Inquiry indicates an acknowledgement of PPV as a key organisation in Victoria. I was pleased to be able to voice the concerns of PPV members, many who attended in the gallery and sent me comments before the meeting, and some by text during it! Thank you to all who provided me with examples and comments which I drew on throughout the discussion. We will continue to push for polio specific services, good support, full access to the community, educated health professionals and whatever else the polio population tells us is needed for our good health and living. Your support as members is vital to us. (*Liz is seated, front right.*)

Polio Australia Mass Canberra Gathering

Post Polio Victoria calls for Member Support for Canberra - Wednesday 31 October 2012

The Mass Canberra MP Lobby Plan As part of Polio Australia's overall strategy to apply to the Federal Government for funds to develop its vision *that all polio survivors in Australia have access to appropriate health care and the support required to maintain independence and make informed lifestyle choices*, it is **calling for as many polio survivors as possible to be at Parliament House on Wednesday 31 October 2012**. This is a culmination of two years lobbying Canberra which has seen progress from a general ignorance about Post Polio to the recent Federal Parliamentary Roundtable.

Costs are often an issue, plus capacity to travel and time available, but please give travelling to Canberra a thought. If there are enough interested, PPV may explore the possibility of organising a bus.

Please give this mass gathering and MP lobbying day high priority.
Contact Jill Pickering on (03) 9428-4709 or pickjill@hotmail.com

PPV Represents Victoria at Post Polio Parliamentary Roundtable Discussion

(Standing Committee on Health and Ageing Inquiry into Polio Public Roundtable Discussion on the Late Effects of Polio/PPS)

Representing PPV, Liz Telford was one of the ten witnesses to address the standing committee. Many PPV members attended in the gallery, showing their interest and solidarity. This added weight to our presentation to the Committee. Other witnesses were from Polio Australia-Gillian Thomas, Mary-ann Liethof, Brett Howard (SA) Dr. Margaret Peel (Qld), Arthur Dobson (Tas), John Tierney (PA Patron), also Mark Booth (First Assistant Secretary, Department of Health and Ageing, Dr. Stephen de Graaff and Blaise Doran (PSV). The Polio Australia presentation which started the day was excellent and the committee members seemed very interested and engaged, which remained the case for the three sessions. The financial, physical and emotional costs of LEOP/PPS were discussed and we gave many examples of these. Some of the feedback received at the end of sessions from people in the gallery was how they felt relieved to have their stories heard at that level. One person told Liz that she felt quite proud to be a part of the polio community that day and that she never thought she would feel that way about having polio! The PA committee are to be congratulated on achieving this Roundtable meeting which saw a panel of MPs completely focussed on the needs of polio survivors for five hours and then producing a paper. The evidence was Hansard recorded so will be available to all to read.

This is just a beginning, and there may not be any obvious immediate outcomes but the process itself has already been of benefit in many ways. We have Hansard recorded evidence to use in our on going advocacy and a report of this Inquiry will be produced by the Standing Committee and available on the web from http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House_of_Representatives_Committees?url=haa/leop%20pps/index.htm

Post polio syndrome not recognised by doctors

The following is a report by Gemma Collins in **6 minutes of interesting stuff for doctors today**. **6minutes** is a daily pdf newsletter sent to Australian GPs and other healthcare professionals.

“GPs have not received enough training to diagnose and manage Australians experiencing the late effects of polio which is leading to patients being stuck on a “diagnosis roundabout for years”, Parliament has heard. Polio survivors told a roundtable meeting held by the Committee on Health and Ageing that patients with the late effects of polio and postpolio syndrome were having to wait more than six years to be diagnosed because of a lack of awareness of the condition. Coordinator at Polio Services Victoria, Ian (Blaise) Doran, told the committee he had heard complaints from patients that their GP didn’t believe them when they told them about their condition and that “GPs didn’t believe in post-polio syndrome”. He said it was understandable that doctors could not be taught everything and therefore they have to find the information themselves and in a six minute consultation they perhaps go “for the best fit”. Mr Doran said post-polio health problems were occurring in patients who had been infected with polio in the 1950 and also among migrants from countries such as Pakistan where polio is still present. The hearing heard suggestions that training modules be created about the condition as well as an early diagnostic tool.”

Queensland Health and Wellness Retreat PPV member special offer

Earlier this year, PPV members received a special offer for a fully sponsored place at the forth coming Retreat. Post Polio Victoria is pleased to announce that with the financial support of the **Blackburn North Lions Club**, Pauline Corrigan from Traralgon Victoria will travel to Queensland to participate in the 2012 Polio Australia Health and Wellness Retreat. She has not attended a retreat before and is really looking forward to attending. Pauline has given much to the community with a long history of support for disability groups, the Traralgon Polio Support Group and the CFA, so it is great that she will get the chance to benefit from the retreat.