

# GPSG NEWS

## INFORMATION FOR POLIO SURVIVORS IN THE GEELONG REGION AND BEYOND

OCTOBER 2019 EDITION

**Next Meeting:**  
7th Oct 10:30am

**In The Chair:**  
Sharyn M.

Meetings are usually held on the 1st Monday of every month Main Conference Room, McKellar Centre, Nth Geelong (first left past main Reception Desk) just before The Hub Cafe



### THIS MONTH

MARION KOSSECK 14TH

JENNIFER MCGREGOR 21ST

DENISE STANFORD-BULLER

28TH



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## Polio Returns to the Philippines - 2nd case now



### Philippines confirms 2nd polio case after declaring outbreak

Fri., Sept. 20, 2019, 2:16 p.m.

By Jim Gomez  
Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines – Philippine health officials on Friday confirmed a second case of polio in a 5-year-old child a day after declaring the country's first outbreak in nearly two decades, and announced plans for a massive immunization program.

Health Secretary Francisco

Duque III (pictured 2nd left) said authorities confirmed the new case in a boy from Laguna province south of Manila after samples were found positive for the polio virus.

Health officials declared a new outbreak Thursday after confirming the disease in a 3-year-old girl in southern Lanao del Sur province. They said the polio virus has also been detected in sewage in Manila and in waterways in the southern Davao region, prompting plans for an immunization drive starting next month that is likely to include tens of thousands of children under age 5.

At least 95% of children that age need to be vaccinated to halt the spread of polio in the Philippines, according to the

World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund, which expressed deep concern over the disease's re-emergence in the country and pledged to support the government in immunizing children and strengthening surveillance.

The boy afflicted with polio in Laguna experienced the onset of paralysis late last month but has been discharged from a hospital, is able to walk and is being closely monitored for residual symptoms, health officials said.

**Editor's Note:** *This new outbreak of polio in the Philippines is vaccine derived (CVDPV), not wild poliovirus and occurs in very low vaccinated areas and is quite rare.*

## Convenor's Corner

It's October already and Christmas is making an appearance in the shops with Christmas decorations and trees. I don't know about anyone else, but I feel that Christmas comes around too quickly. I no sooner put my tree and decorations away and in no time at all its time to get them out again.

For those of you who were not able to make last month's meeting you missed an interesting time. Gary spoke to us about travelling on a cruise ship and did a very good talk considering he had to contend with a very loud fire alarm which wouldn't stop.

Gary had more luck with his talk recently at a Rotary Fund Raiser for continued polio vaccinations in the third world. For those of

us who went to it we watched an early screening of a film called "Ride Like a Girl" which was the story of Michelle Payne and her very famous win in the Melbourne Cup on the horse Prince of Penzance. The story showed how determination pushed this young woman to keep going through many setbacks and very serious injuries. I would highly recommend everyone to go and see it.

Next month we are learning all about volunteering in the Geelong and greater area with Helen Hunter.

Looking forward to seeing you all at the next meeting,

Cheers,

Sharyn

## From the Editor's Desk

Greetings all...and welcome to our October edition.

That oh so famous poet Anonymous once wrote:

Ahh...Spring has sprung

The Grass is ris

I wonder where the boidies is?

But for many of us at this time of year that last line should read:

I sure know where the HAY FEVER is!

Yes it's hay fever season and there's plenty of it around. Usually I take a tablet but this year I'm finding nasal spray is working best for me. Do you suffer from allergies at this time and how do you cope with them? I'd be interested to know (as would our readers, I'm sure) so drop me a line.

Recently I ran into one of our members in the street. Whilst we were chatting, he told me how difficult he found our past winter here in Geelong, how cold and uncomfortable he'd been. It got me thinking. Is it our ageing or our disability that is causing many of us to really feel the cold these days? Then I thought back to when I was much younger and how my late parents retired to

Queensland many years ago for the improved weather. It strikes me that the older we get the more we feel the temperature extremes and having had polio certainly doesn't make it any better!

Like most polio survivors I like to keep busy. Actually, it seems I'm busier now than when I worked full time. Grand kids, family, friends, social participation, volunteering with Polio Australia, holidays, newsletters, etc. all take up plenty of my time but one extra thing I've taken on in the last year is **Rotary**. I joined because I wanted to give back to the community in some way and I've certainly been able to do that this past 12 months. **Rotary** has 1.2 million members all around the world in 35,000 clubs. It's a great way to meet new friends whilst at the same time helping out in your local community. And of course, **Rotary** has been fighting for over 30 years to help eradicate polio from our planet. Rotary provides me with the opportunity to visit different clubs all around Australia and beyond to talk about polio and how we survivors have been impacted by it both physically and emotionally. Read more about that on Page 4 with Josette's story – **Me and My Polio** Til next month!

Cheers Gary

## SCAM ALERT



Polio Australia ▶ Polio Australia

Published by Rachel Ingram [?] · 30 mins ·

We were recently contacted by a member of the public about a potential scam to do with polio. Someone came to the home of an elderly lady in Geelong a few weeks ago, saying he was raising money for "polio victims", involving a monthly donation. They did not leave behind any information about the organisation or the donations.

This is NOT related to Polio Australia, or our state networks. We don't believe this is Rotary either. If you are ever unsure, please contact us on (03) 9016 7678 or email [office@polioaustralia.org.au](mailto:office@polioaustralia.org.au)



## Registered yet?

The Australian Polio Register was established by **Polio Australia** in October 2010 to gather information on the numbers of polio survivors living in Australia today, whether or not they contracted polio in this country. To make the Australian Polio Register truly reflective of the unmet need for polio services throughout Australia, we urge every Australian polio survivor to join the **Polio Register**. *Our strength lies in our numbers* – please help us to get you the services you need by adding your polio details to the Register. You can register online or by downloading and completing a paper copy. [www.australianpolioregister.org.au](http://www.australianpolioregister.org.au)

**Australian Polio Register**  
*Have you added your polio details?*

## Have You Heard?

*News from WA:*

Their oldest living WA polio survivor at the moment is Sheelah Taylor who is 105.

Her daughter Barbara tells us she lives with her, walks up the lane and lifts 1kg dumbbell weights every day.

Sheelah still volunteers on the tables at the local Senior Citz one morning a week. She has been a volunteer there for 48 years now.

*Well done Sheelah! -Ed.*



*"What was the decision making process that led to hiring a cat?"*

**COMING UP at our October & November meetings**

**Helen Hunter - 'Something You Love'**

**October is National Polio Awareness Month.**

Many Australians who had polio in the last century are now living with [Late Effects of Polio](#).

Polio survivors may be unaware that progressive physical changes relate to their early polio infection. It can also be difficult to find GPs and other health professionals who know about the Late Effects of Polio.

**"We're Still Here!"** is the catch cry of Australia's polio survivors, and spreading the word is vital in ensuring people are informed, and that they receive the support needed to manage their condition.

Symptoms of the Late Effects of Polio vary from person to person and can generally be described as a neuromuscular condition.

Common 'new' symptoms can include:

- ☑ New muscle weakness and atrophy
- ☑ Increased fatigue
- ☑ Joint and muscle pain
- ☑ Breathing, sleep and swallowing problems

Common 'old' problems – relating to years of the body accommodating residual physical weakness – can include:

- ☑ Scoliosis and kyphosis
- ☑ Arthritis and osteoporosis

- ☑ Bursitis in hips and shoulders
- ☑ Carpal tunnel syndrome

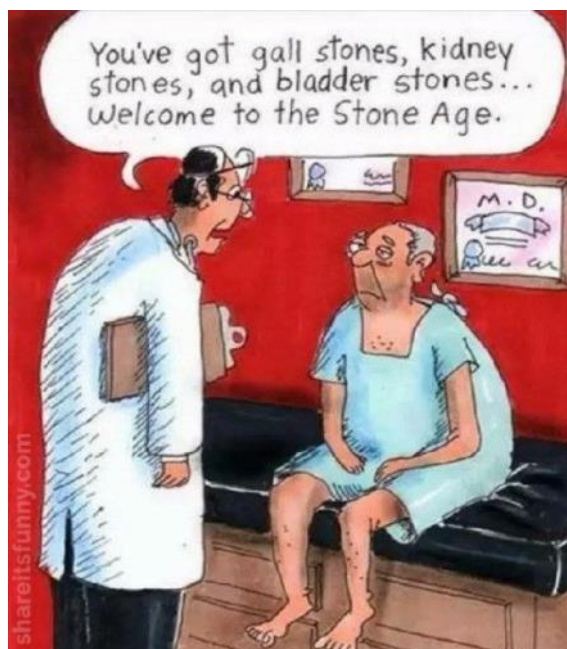
**Polio Australia** is the peak national body supporting polio survivors living in Australia by providing a range of **FREE** programs, including:

- ☑ [Clinical Practice Workshops](#) for health professionals;
- ☑ [Information Sessions](#) for polio survivors, their families, and the community;
- ☑ [Fact Sheets](#) on more than 30 polio-related topics;
- ☑ [Health Professionals Register](#), where you can search for a practitioner in your area;
- ☑ [Australian Polio Register](#), where you can provide your polio details;
- ☑ [Polio Oz News](#), quarterly e-zine;
- ☑ [Social Media](#) links;
- ☑ [Systemic Advocacy](#);

And more . . .

As a not-for-profit charity, Polio Australia relies heavily on tax-deductible donations to fund these services.

**Please help us to support the post-polio community because "We're Still Here!"**



**"30 years is all it takes!"**

A married couple in their early 60s were out celebrating their 35th wedding anniversary in a quiet, romantic little restaurant. Suddenly, a tiny yet beautiful fairy appeared on their table and said, "For being such an exemplary married couple and for being faithful to each other for all this time, I will grant you each a wish." "Ooh, I want to travel around the world with my darling husband," said the wife. The fairy moved her magic wand and – abracadabra! – two tickets for the new Queen Mary 2 luxury liner appeared in her hands. Now it was the husband's turn. He thought for a moment and then said: "Well, this is all very romantic, but an opportunity like this only occurs once in a lifetime, so I'm sorry my love, but my wish is to have a wife who is 30 years younger than me". The wife and the fairy were deeply disappointed, but a wish is a wish ... So the fairy made a circle with her magic wand and –abracadabra! – the husband was instantly 92 years old.

## My Spoken Word Piece - Me and My Polio

**M**y name is Josette. I am a polio survivor from Birmingham. I grew up in the rural town of Clarendon, Jamaica. My grandparents raised me because my parents, like many others, left Jamaica to seek a new life in the UK.

At the age of two, I contracted polio. It left me with a paralysed right leg and most of my childhood was spent in and out of hospital.

When I was 11, I joined my parents in the UK. Initially, I attended a special school and remember feeling frustrated with the slow pace of learning. Later, I went to a comprehensive school and eventually got a job as a shorthand typist. After many years of work, I retired early because of increasing fatigue and muscular pain.

For many years, I've performed spoken word poetry a few times a month.

But I've never written anything about how polio has affected me. When I was asked to share my story, I set pen to paper to write. Thoughts and memories came flooding back and words spewed out on the pages.

After reciting my spoken word, I was deeply moved and felt myself becoming quite tearful. The process of writing and performing helped me finally come to terms with how polio has affected me – physically, mentally and emotionally – throughout my life.

In June, I performed my spoken word to Khalid Mahmood, MP for

Perry Barr. He has now joined more than 100 other Polio Champions in committing to advocate, within Parliament, for global polio eradication efforts.

No child, anywhere in the world, deserves to suffer from polio when we have an effective vaccine to prevent it.



An excerpt from Me & My Polio

“Many months and years spent in hospital environments  
Eyes peering out In Iron lungs resembling archaic deep-sea diving machines

Stealing away childhood years of carefree play  
Just as the steely iron lungs kept many breathing  
Poliomyelitis left its mark on us”

Online readers can see more from Josette here:[http://bit.ly/me\\_mypolio](http://bit.ly/me_mypolio)

## Tall Tales But True

A regular and much-valued contributor to this Newsletter is our very own much loved Jan McDonald who, for as long as I have known Jan, has been what most of us would call a 'Bushy'.

Recently Jan sent me two old photos from yesteryear and told me of the time a kangaroo came knocking on her front door out on the farm. Jan couldn't believe it at first so quickly got her camera by which time the roo had moved back a little from the door. Like they say a picture tells a thousand words!!



Also pictured is Jan's husband Phillip driving Clydesdales

**Disclaimer:** The aims and objects of the Geelong Polio Support Group is to gather and disseminate information on Post-Polio Syndrome and Late Effects of Polio, to support each other in any way we can. This newsletter is written for interest and information only. Information of a medical nature in this newsletter is not authorised in any way. Please contact a medical professional before adopting or acting upon anything contained herein. The writer of this newsletter accepts no responsibility for the authenticity of services and does not warrant they are either accurate or true. We do not purport to be medically qualified. Consult your doctor before trying any medication or new form of exercise. Please give relevant information to your doctor and help them to help us. We do not en-