

# GPSG NEWS



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

JULY 2020 EDITION

**Next Meeting:**  
To Be Advised



**In The Chair:**  
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Meetings are usually held on the 1st Monday of every month Main Conference Room, McKellar Centre, Nth Geelong.

**Suspended Until Further Notice due to COVID19**

### Contact Us

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## Covid-19 Continues To STOP Our Meetings

### Convenor's Corner

It has been a very quiet and sad time over the last couple months since our last newsletter in May (no newsletter in June because our Ed. was ill).

The quietness of course comes from us being made to go into lockdown because of Covid 19 and sad because we have lost a very special member from our group.

As most of you know **John Curtis** passed away in hospital on the 8th June. He had been battling cancer for some time and then suffered a heart attack. His funeral was held on the 17th June.

I was able to watch it online (for those on computer watch here: <https://youtu.be/6LiFYssNNIQ>) and I was very impressed with what the men from his fire brigade had to say about him.

He was a very well liked man who had lots of friends not just in the fire department but also in the community as a whole.

One gentleman made reference to

the 8 points in the star that firemen wear on their hats.

**Tact**

**Loyalty**

**Dexterity**

**Observation**

**Sympathy**

**Explicitness**

**Gallantry**

**Perseverance**

John had all these traits and he will be greatly missed by many people.

On a different note I decided to goggle out of fun how many people in modern history have achieved success even after contracting polio. As you can imagine the list was exhaustive - we are a very creative lot of people.

The list below is just a few of people who have achieved success in the creative industries. Many others have gone on to become doctors, politicians, scientists and many other interesting positions in life. See if you recognise any of these?

Lionel Barrymore-actor

James Drury-actor (The Virginian)

Lord Snowden -photographer

(Princess Margarets husband)

Marjorie Lawrence-opera singer

Mia Farrow-actress

Owen Roizman-cinematographer

Tenley Albright-gold mentalist figure skating

Bill CeDell Davis-Jazz guitarist

Dinah Shore-actress

Donald Sutherland-actor

Elizabeth Twistington Higgins-ballet dancer

Frida Kahlo-artist

Ida Lupino-actress

Joni Mitchell-singer

John Laws -radio announcer

I am looking forward to seeing our group all again at our next meeting at this point date unknown.

Till then -

Cheers,

*Sharyn*



### June/July Celebs.

NEIL WINTER 3RD JUNE

ARTHUR KOSTOV 4TH JUNE

DON PATRICK 9TH JUNE

FLORA READ 21ST JUNE

MAXINE McOWN 30TH JUNE

JAN McDONALD 6TH JULY

HEATHER SPALL 8TH JULY

STEWART GUTHRIE 26TH JULY

DARYL SMALL 26TH JULY



## ONE STEP CLOSER

The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared South Sudan free of the poliovirus.

"South Sudan's complete documentation for wild polio virus free status has been accepted. With this feat, WHO's Africa Region is set to be declared wild poliovirus free 2020," the WHO South Sudan office posted on its official Facebook page Thursday evening.

The UN health agency said South Sudan's complete documentation for wild polio virus free status was accepted by the Africa Regional Certification Commission (ARCC), an independent body that is mandated to certify the Africa Region to have eradicated poliovirus.

In January, a delegation of the ARCC visited South Sudan to verify the accuracy and depth of the country's surveillance system and the implementation of the polio eradication program.

During the visit, the team thoroughly reviewed the complete national documentation prepared by the South Sudanese government and it accepted the east African country to be certified polio free, WHO said.

# From The Editor's Desk

Hello everyone!

Sorry! No newsletter last month due to some health problems but now we push on with a 'lighter' edition this month.

We were looking at getting back into face to face meetings soon however with an increase in cases of the virus lately in Victoria it is just way too risky (plus restrictions still forbid) for us to meet in a group...just yet. However as you may well know, new technology in the form of video meetings is now all the rage. In fact my Rotary Club has been meeting online every week via ZOOM since the lockdown and will continue to do so until it's safe to do otherwise.

For those of you (with or without a computer) who would be interested in being part of a 'virtual' meeting of the Geelong Polio Support Group once a month, please contact me by phone or email. These 'virtual' meetings can be arranged quite simply and are very easy for you to join even if you have zero computer skills and you can also *join in over the phone without the need for a computer*. Also there is NO CHARGE and no time restrictions so we can talk all day!!

Till then - stay safe, stay well!

*Sary*

## Polio and COVID-19

Opinion | 23 June 2020

By Rotarian Steve Lewis

Rotary International in 1985 initiated a mass polio immunization project in the Philippines. That effort demonstrated that the polio virus could be stopped via mass immunizations — targeted immunizations when outbreaks inevitably developed and ongoing monitoring and testing of people and environments.

Rotary launched the PolioPlus program in 1987, with the goal of eradicating polio worldwide. In the first year, Rotary raised \$215 million from Rotarians worldwide to support the project. Rotary was soon joined by the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and in more recent years the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has become a major funding partner.

Governments from around the world have also contributed significantly

cantly to the ongoing program, realizing that polio is a worldwide problem that knows no boundaries.

When PolioPlus was launched, more than 350,000 cases of paralytic polio in 125 countries were being reported annually worldwide. Since inception, 2.5 billion children have been immunized thanks to the cooperation of 200 countries and 20 million volunteers.

But the job is not yet done. Only two countries continue to see the scourge of the wild polio virus. In Afghanistan, 29 cases of wild polio virus were identified in 2019 and 146 cases in Pakistan. While Nigeria has now been polio free for nearly three years, Afghanistan and Pakistan have suffered increases in wild polio virus cases over prior years due to ongoing conflict, lack of basic personal hygiene education and partisan political issues.

The WHO has been a partner with Rotary International in the eradication effort and Rotary has relied on WHO to identify strains of the wild

polio virus, cases of vaccine derived polio, infection locations and their staff helps to organize local ministries of health in doing targeted immunizations to stop further spread during an outbreak. Over the next four to six months the polio program is offering its tools, workforce, and extensive surveillance network to support countries as they respond to COVID-19.

Polio or any other virus is easily transmitted, and some say "... it is just a short walk or an airplane ride away." That is precisely why polio has been so hard to eradicate and why COVID-19 will be equally difficult. We have learned much from the PolioPlus journey that needs to be applied to COVID-19. The fight will be long, arduous, and we need to be prepared to fight it to the finish.

We need both the World Health Organization and our international allies in this fight. We need to share information with candor, and we must rely on our friends around the world to help beat COVID-19. We

cannot continue to burn our international relationships as if they are just another trivial part of a transaction. The continued good health and wellbeing of our country depends on our doing the right things in the right way. We simply cannot abandon the expertise of the World Health Organization as any such action by our United States leadership would be a huge mistake.

The highly trained men and women of WHO are people we can count on to help defeat COVID-19 — we know this because of what they have done to help eradicate polio. We need to help them as much as we need them to help us.

*Steve Lewis is a 25-year member and past president of the Rotary Club of Carson City, a past Rotary District Governor who currently serves Rotary International as a "Regional Rotary Foundation Coordinator."*

## From Polio Australia: Looking for a support group?

In the recent survey of polio survivors' interactions with medical professionals, many people indicated that they were interested in joining

a support group but weren't aware of one in their area.

If you're not yet a member of your state network, please visit:

[www.polioaustralia.org.au/support-and-services](http://www.polioaustralia.org.au/support-and-services)

and click on your state on the map.

This will take you to the contact details of your state network.

Give them a call to enquire about membership and find out if there's a

support group near you.

And hey, if there isn't, why not consider starting one?

Get in touch with your state network to find out how.

## GOOD READ: Fleeing Polio On Wings Like The Eagle

Barbara Ker-Mann is the author of **Fleeing Polio on Wings like the Eagle**.

Barbara had polio at the age of three and was the first in the Wairarapa (New Zealand) 1936 epidemic to catch polio so has lived her life dealing with the effects. Her

memoir reveals how she drew inspiration from Isaiah 40, Verses 30,31 which she heard read in church at age 4.

As a long term survivor of polio, there is a life filled with many and various activities from learning violin at age 10 to visiting

the Kitami Institute for Solar Research, Hokkaido, Japan, alone, in an endeavour to learn more about useful solar technology for New Zealand.

Between times, Barbara has published novels and poetry, done a Master of Music degree, and been an AAUW International Fellow studying with Shinichi

Suzuki in Matsumoto. Her husband died in 1995 but their 4 children and grandchildren live fulfilled lives in various countries.

Barbara's memoir, **Fleeing Polio on Wings like the Eagle**, was published by Balboa Press AU— [www.balboapress.com.au](http://www.balboapress.com.au) — where it is available for purchase online.