



asbestoswise

Newsletter September 2015

News from the President

Well, it's been a very busy and at the same time exciting few months since our last newsletter.

During August we welcomed a new Committee of Management member. Kate Holmes is a Melbourne palliative care nurse and will no doubt provide vital insight for the work of our organisation.

Unfortunately we said goodbye to our Office Manager Anne Farrugia in July and Jordan Barling our Campaigns Manager left in June to pursue her career in Law. We thank both of them for their commitment to Asbestoswise and its stakeholders. With these positions becoming vacant we have taken the opportunity to review the roles and structure at Asbestoswise to better position ourselves for the future.

In August our new Executive Officer, Margherita Riccioni started. Margherita has over 10 years of

experience in the non-for profit sector covering roles in fundraising, service development, project management, national information resources and managing functions such as HR, IT, Quality, Property and Finance.

As you read this newsletter our new Administration and Information Officer, Mary-Beth O'Brien will have commenced her first week at Asbestoswise. Mary-Beth will be managing the day-to-day office functions, answering enquiries and updating website content.

During August we also hosted a Stand at the Herald Sun Home Show (a article featuring this event is part of this newsletter). If all that wasn't enough we also moved our office during August to a smaller space (still within Ross House) as a cost saving measure.

Kate Holmes: new Committee member

Kate has been a registered nurse working in both the private and public sectors for 29 years and considers herself fortunate to have worked in the palliative care field for the past 19 years - both in the UK and Australia. She is currently working as a Palliative Care Clinical Nurse Consultant in a Melbourne public hospital. Whilst palliative care is

her vocation, she is keen to highlight that "end of life" care is her passion. Kate is a strong believer that mesothelioma sufferers should have access to palliative care support services as soon as possible following diagnosis.

Kate's insights and experience will be vital in helping to inform Asbestoswise's service provision.

Christopher Hughes: new Committee member

Chris Hughes has been active in the Union field for over 30 years as a workplace Delegate, Health and Safety Representative and Union educator first with the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union (AMWU) and now with the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU). On a day to day basis, Chris is involved in the development and delivery of a range of courses, seminars and workshops in the area of workplace representative

skills and Occupational Health and Safety. This role has brought him into contact with the deadly effects of Asbestos. It has also consolidated his passion for the need to advocate for its removal, educate people to prevent new victims and support and advocate for current sufferers and their families. Chris became a Committee member this year after being a member of Asbestoswise for a few years.

Support & Bereavement Groups - Update

One of the coldest winters for a long time saw a drop in attendance at our meetings this year. A special thanks goes to Pat and John from Seymour who have braved the weather and travelled down each month.

Our thoughts are with our group members Lorna and Tom (and their families), both of whom are not feeling well at present. We wish them all the best.

Mesothelioma nurse Sara McLaughlin-Barrett was a guest speaker at our August meeting. She was very informative and has offered to come along to our meetings in the future – thanks Sara.

Julie Tucker also attended the August meeting. Julie is currently working on her PhD at the Centre

for Social Impact at Swinburne University. Julie and her team are looking at working in close collaboration with organisations like Asbestoswise and individuals with extensive experience and knowledge of the real impact of asbestos-related disease. The aim is to develop a secure online peer support community (for sufferers of asbestos related disease and their carers, both past and present). Julie is keen for the community to help design something of relevance and value to them. In the September we welcomed a new member to our support group – Keith.

Upcoming Group Meetings

In October will be joined by a guest speaker to talk about the practice of Mindfulness and its benefits in healing and recovery.

A reminder that the Asbestoswise Support Group meets on the 3rd Wednesday of each month and the Bereaved Group meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month.

Both these groups meet at the **South Melbourne Community Centre** – corner of Park Street and Ferrars Place. If you would like to attend either of these groups, please ensure that you contact Shirley Bare (Group Facilitator) on 0418 904 847.

Annual fundraising Appeal

Asbestoswise runs an annual fundraising Tax Appeal seeking financial donations to support its vital information and support services. The 2015 Appeal was launched in June and raised just over \$4,000 in donations, compared to \$1,400 we raised during the 2014 Appeal. We would like to

encourage our newsletter readers to add Asbestoswise to the list of preferred charities they support as we approach the holiday season. If you'd like to make a financial donation, please visit our website at www.asbestoswise.com.au. All donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible.

The Herald Sun Home Show 2015

As part of its on-going commitment to raise awareness about the dangers of exposure to asbestos within a residential setting, Asbestoswise has again invested time and resources in a Stand at the Herald Sun Home Show in Melbourne. This annual event attracts up to 40,000 visitors – the vast majority of whom are actively planning to renovate their homes. Strategically, this is the single largest audience for Asbestoswise throughout the year. A huge thanks goes out to the volunteers that supported us over the 4 days including representatives from our partners, committee of management and staff. First the first time we were able to improve the quality of technical advice offered with volunteer representatives from both hygienists and removalist firms.

We would like to thank the Asbestos Safety & Eradication Agency (ASEA) who provided Asbestoswise with a grant to fund the cost of hosting our Stand.

We estimate that in excess of 1000 people visited our Stand. The most common enquiry was about how to identify asbestos in the home.

Information resources that we handed out included: pictorial representation of where asbestos is likely to be found in a home, lists of hygienists and licensed removalists, details of local tips licenced to

take asbestos waste and ASEA leaflet with details of how to register any likely exposure.

During the Home Show event, Asbestoswise also undertook a survey of 380 visitors to gauge their knowledge and behaviour in relation to asbestos.

A report is currently being prepared by Asbestoswise for submission ASEA. Insights from the survey and discussions with visitors will help inform an update of our website and the development of other information resources in the near future.

We look forward to another very successful Home Show event in 2016 and welcome interest from volunteers to help out at the Stand.



2015 Annual Commemoration Service

The Asbestoswise Annual Commemoration Service is scheduled for Friday November 27th in the Deakin Edge Theatre at Federation Square Melbourne. The service will take place between 11am – 12 noon.

This event is being organised by Shirley Bare our Support Group Facilitator and provides a unique opportunity for sufferers, carers, extended family, friends etc, to celebrate the lives of those affected by asbestos related diseases.

We are delighted to advise that our guest speaker for this event is Mary Duffy who is the Nurse Co-ordinator of Lung Services at the Peter MacCullum

hospital.



Partner Profile: Clean & Gone

Clean and Gone is a Melbourne-based asbestos removal and demolition company employing 50 staff. They hold an unlimited Class A asbestos removal licence and a demolition licence and their OHS management system for commercial and residential asbestos removal, remediation and abatement is certified to AS4801: 2001. They are also an EPA Accredited Agent.

Clean and Gone are experienced in residential, commercial and industrial projects. They take pride in the quality of their services and have a systemised approach to safety, quality and environmental management.

Clean and Gone services include:

- Asbestos sample testing
- Friable and non-friable asbestos removal from residential, commercial and industrial properties
- Grinding services for asbestos containing blackjack glue
- Clean-ups for asbestos dust contamination
- Asbestos contaminated soil remediation

Clean and Gone partner with Asbestoswise by volunteering their time to increase awareness about asbestos at events like the Home Show and by supporting the Asbestoswise Information Line.

What's happening in the world of asbestos?

Did you know that Asbestoswise sends out a regular email comprehensively detailing what's happening in the world of asbestos at a local, state, national and international level? Typical information "snippets" covered by this publication includes: research, reports, medical /treatment updates,

upcoming conferences, court rulings, identification of asbestos in consumer products or public buildings, advocacy updates and much more. If you would like to receive this publication, please contact us by email at info@asbestoswise.com.au.

The Dusted Community Research Project: discovering new ways of supporting men and women affected by ARD.

Asbestoswise is currently working together with a team of researchers from Swinburne University on the "Dusted Community (Phase 2) Project". The research has been designed to explore the support needs of men and women affected by asbestos-related disease and the potential of an online community space to help meet some of those needs.

The Project is based upon the principles of "Co-Design" namely, that people have valuable knowledge and experience and should be actively involved in designing the services they need. Four Co-Design workshops have been planned with the first two taking place at Swinburne's Design Factory. Workshop participants identified the

essential features of a community space for people affected by asbestos-related disease, asked who might belong to such a community and started to explore the lived experience of asbestos-related disease. It has been a creative, enjoyable and very conversation-filled journey.

The remaining two workshops will be held on October 8 and October 22 and will explore how knowledge and experience might be shared and what an online community might look like. If you are interested in participating in either workshop please contact Julie Tucker, one of the members of the Swinburne research team for further details. Julie's email is jtucker@swin.edu.au.

Our View on

The latest report from the **Australian Mesothelioma Registry** makes for disturbing reading. The Registry has been notified of 641 mesothelioma cases in the 2014 calendar year. This figure is expected to increase with late notifications. Based on previous experience, there could be a further 100 cases. Sadly this is in line with epidemiology research, which highlights an increasing burden of disease through to 2020 and possibly beyond.

This situation emphasises the importance of providing treatment and care for those affected with an asbestos related disease (ARD) and the need for preventative measures to ensure that Australia's reputation as having the highest per capita rate of mesothelioma in the world does not continue into the future. Asbestoswise calls on the Australian federal and state governments to implement an effective national strategy to deal with this catastrophe and prevent further disease. At the heart of this national strategy must be the prioritised removal of asbestos from the Australian built environment and an increased awareness amongst families of the risks involved in home renovation. For the full **Mesothelioma in Australian 2014** report visit www.mesothelioma-

australia.com.

Further to this, it is interesting to note that an initial report following an Australian National University investigation into the toxic legacy of Mr Fluffy has found mesothelioma cases have increased in Canberra over the past three decades.



We'd love to hear from you

We'd love to hear your ideas for any future content for the Asbestoswise quarterly Newsletter. What would you like to see featured in these future

Newsletters? Share your thoughts with by emailing us at www.ceo@asbestoswise.com.au

