

# The New Link

St George Association  
For People with Physical Disabilities Incorporated

*"Capabilities Conquer Disabilities"*

Vol. 50 No.25

April 2007

## *Future Programmes*

Apr 7	Sat	10.30 am	Book Club	Belgreen
Apr 11	Wed	10.30 am	Wednesday Group	Belgreen
Apr 14	Sat		Campbelltown Arts Centre	Campbelltown
Apr 17	Tues	7.00 pm	Management Committee	Belgreen
Apr 24	Tues	7.30 pm	Wafa Zaim	Belgreen
Apr 28	Sat	10.00 am	Embroidery Group	Belgreen
May 5	Sat	10.30 am	Book Club	Belgreen
May 6	Sun	12 noon	Lunch	Five Dock
May 9	Wed	10.30 am	Wednesday Group	Belgreen
May 15	Tues	7.00 pm	Management Committee	Belgreen
May 22	Tues	7.30 pm	Royal Flying Dr. Service	Belgreen
May 26	Sat	10.00 am	Embroidery Group	Belgreen

## The Election

Well, we have survived another campaign and trying to sift through the "political speak" is always a challenge to really get to the core of the issues. Firstly, may I preface my comments by saying at this stage I have not seen any detail of what plans the government has on the agenda in relation to disability issues - unfortunately it rarely gets mentioned in the media. However, I did hear one interview on ABC radio where Virginia Trioli interviewed Assoc. Prof. Meg Smith (Community Psychologist) regarding mental health issues. It appeared that there were some positive plans to improve services and support for people with mental health problems - it is to be hoped that action speaks louder than words and the plans become reality.

In the area of physical disability I am not able to make any comments at this stage. I guess we have to keep raising the issues, lobbying, etc. etc. It was disappointing that a political forum that was planned to be held at Redfern Town Hall had to be cancelled due to the inability of the candidates to agree to be present at a given time and date. The message it sent me was that "disability" is not very high on the totem pole. However, let's be positive and keep up the fight. There is always the opportunity to meet with your local representative and put forward your concerns and issues.

*The Editor*

The Physical Disability Council of NSW (PDCN) has gathered information in relation to polling venues and apparently 87% of pre-polling premises are accessible, but **only 14%** of polling premises are accessible. This rather speaks volumes and certainly restricts many people with physical disabilities from accessing their local polling venue – thus becoming an invisible portion of the population. The fact is that people with disabilities have the same legal responsibilities as the rest of the community and should be given equal opportunity to cast their vote by going to their local polling venue.

You may think “well postal voting is an alternative”. For some people it may be absolutely necessary, but for the majority of people “physical access” is the requirement and the venues should be such.

The Association would be interested to know if any members have had any problems in this respect – these details could be conveyed to PDCN. Further, the Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) is collecting data about inaccessible polling booths and would be most interested in knowing of your experiences. Their address: Level 8 Piccadilly Tower 133 Castlereagh Street, Sydney 2000 or GPO Box 5218 Sydney 2001. Telephone 9284 9600 - Complaints info line 1300 656 419. *The Editor*

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***International News*** – People with Disability Australia (PWD) held a get-together on March 30, 2007 to mark an important milestone in international human rights the “Opening for Signature Ceremony” in relation to the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. All member nations and UN regional organisations were invited to sign these documents. A formal ceremony for the opening of the Convention for signature was held on the same day at UN Headquarters in New York.

It is pleasing to hear the Australian Government joined 81 governments across the world to become signatories to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 13 December 2006.

PWD are to be congratulated on their efforts in working towards this goal. From their website I have obtained some further information, which I detail below. As you can imagine the work involved (on an international basis) in adopting such a Convention is huge and there any more processes to follow.

PWD commends Senator Siewert in particular and thanks Senators of all political persuasions for their interest in and support for the Convention.

From signature to domestic law: the process from here

1. The first step is for the Australian Government to sign the Convention. When 20 countries have signed the Convention, it can become part of international law. But that does not mean it is part of any country’s domestic law. Signing is really a political rather than a legal act, allowing governments to show the international community that they accept the text.

*The fact that 81 countries have already signed takes the process that further step, which is really pleasing to know.*

2. After the Australian Government has signed the Convention, it is then tabled in both Houses of Parliament, reviewed by relevant bodies, and discussed with States and Territories. The documents are then referred to the Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on Treaties (JSCOT) for its scrutiny and review. The Government would also consult with the States and Territories through bodies such the Treaties Council, and the Commonwealth, States and Territories Standing Committee on Treaties. Clearly there is a role for advocacy by people with disability during these processes.

For further detail you can look at PWD’s website ([www.pwd.org.au](http://www.pwd.org.au))

Speaking of websites – I'm pleased to be able to let you know the Association now has a website [stgeorgeassociation.org](http://stgeorgeassociation.org) – this has been through the efforts of Peter Preneas, who has done the necessary work aided by the Association's Management Committee Member, Bob Tonazzi, who has co-ordinated the information flow. The Association sincerely thanks Peter for all his generosity in this respect, also thanks to Bob for the part he has played. We now need to spread the word so people can learn more about the Association. The Association would appreciate your feed-back. Have a look at the site and let's know your comments.

### *Membership Fees*

Another reminder membership renewal fees, are now due **due 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007**.

Full and Associate Membership for those not fully employed \$7.00

Full and Associate Membership for those fully employed \$14.00

Please forward your payment to the Association's Treasurer **Jenny Chin, 2 Salerwong Place, Ryde NSW 2212**.

**Notice - please do not send CASH in an envelope** – recently cash has been received and the envelope was obviously damaged and the coins had fallen out. Apart from the fact that Australian Post asks that people do not put cash in an envelope, it also means there is no guarantee that it is going to arrive safely.

The Association looks for your support and receipt of your membership renewal.

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### *Future Programmes*

#### **Book Club**

**Saturday April 7 and May 5**

**Belgreen 40-42 Chalmers St, Belmore  
10.30 a.m. – 3.00 p.m.**

Even though the April meeting falls on Easter Saturday, it was agreed to let this stand for those, who may like to come along.

Unfortunately I was unable to attend the March Book Club, but the group reports about some of the books they have been reading.

"The Miraculous Fever Tree: Malaria, Medicine and the Cure that Changed the World" by Fiammetta Rocco (2203) Harper Collins publishers. Fascinating description of how malaria and its cure were discovered. How it changed the awareness of diseases and the spread of colonization, both economic and military." Maura Outterside.

"Odd One Out" by Monica McInerney (2006) Penguin. It is a fascinating story of a young woman born into a Sydney family of artists and an academic father (a poet).

Sylvia is a competent office manager but has not an artistic bone in her body. She feels the odd one out. Sylvia's brother invites her to house-sit his Melbourne apartment and so begins her exploits and exploration of Melbourne. New friendships and "finding herself" thus making new decisions for her life back in Sydney. It is a sparkling and quirky story – a nice way to while away a lazy afternoon. Janet Malone.

"The Bridge Across Forever" by Richard Bach. Better known for his book "Jonathan Livingston Seagull" – "The Bridge Across Forever" tells the story of Richard Bach's search for his soul-mate. After experiencing the highs and lows of wealth, success, disasters and even betrayal he abandons his search and builds defences around himself only to find fate has bigger plans for his life and a whole new future opens up. Anne Buchanan.

Members and friends always welcome. Bring your lunch. Tea/coffee available.

Any further information please call Maura Outterside (Co-ordinator) **9718 5803**.

**Wednesday Group**

**10.30 a.m. April 11 and May 9**  
**Belgreen 40–42 Chalmers St, Belmore**

Members and friends are invited to gather together for the Wednesday Group.

I'm told the March meeting and pre-  
 "Easter" lunch went well. Thanks to all  
 those who made the day enjoyable.

For the next meetings bring your lunch and  
 tea/coffee is available at Belgreen.

Please contact **Daphne Berger** (Co-  
 ordinator) **9718 3678** for any enquiries.

**Saturday, April 14**

**Campbelltown Arts Centre**  
**Cnr Camden & Appin Roads,**  
**Campbelltown**

As mentioned in the last newsletter the  
 Centre is opened from 10.00 am until 4.00  
 pm – it sounds like a great complex and is  
 accessible.

The exhibition will be "Grounded; Art,  
 Activism, Environment", should be very  
 interesting. The Centre also has Japanese  
 Gardens and Sculpture Gardens. There is  
 a Café & Food Store, so this could be a  
 gathering point for members.

As far as "what time" - because of the  
 nature of an exhibition this is really  
 dependent upon the individual and what  
 time you wish to view the exhibits. I would  
 imagine those going would get there  
 between 11.00 am and noon – perhaps we  
 can say we could all meet at 12.30 pm at  
 the Café. You could then view the  
 exhibits before or after lunch.

We may even have an interstate visitor –  
 Nola Dunbar is hoping to be in Sydney  
 then and will try and meet up with us.  
 Look forward to seeing you there.

**Management Committee Meeting will be held -**

**7.00 p.m. Tuesday, March 20**  
**Belgreen 40- 42 Chalmers St, Belmore**

**7.30 p.m. Tuesday, April 24**  
**Belgreen 40- 42 Chalmers St, Belmore**

Wafa Zaim, from the United Muslim  
 Women Association Inc. will be the guest  
 speaker. You may recall Wafa was to  
 come previously, but was unable to make  
 it then and has offered to come on this  
 occasion.

We look forward to meeting her and  
 learning about her organisation.  
 Please come along and bring a friend.  
 Tea/coffee available.

**10.00 a.m. – 3.00 p.m.**

**Saturday April 21 and May 26**

**Embroidery Group**  
**Belgreen 40-42 Chalmers St, Belmore**

Unfortunately, the March Embroidery  
 Group had to be cancelled due to a few of  
 the regular members not being able to be  
 present – so we have to catch up for the  
 April get-together.

Coralie Lewin (Co-ordinator) will be there  
 and able to assist members with their  
 work. We hope it will not be too much  
 longer before one of our regular members,  
 Elizabeth McDonald, is able to join with us  
 again. Elizabeth has had a very difficult  
 time since her fall and it has just not been  
 possible for her to attend her regular  
 activities. We send our best wishes  
 Elizabeth and look forward to seeing you  
 ASAP!!

Again an invitation is extended for  
 members to come along. Bring your lunch  
 – tea/coffee available.

**Sunday, May 6**

**The Brasserie Canada Bay Club,**  
**4 William Street, Five Dock 12 noon**

We visited this Club many years ago and it  
 has been suggested we pay another visit!

The meals are quite affordable and the  
 venue is accessible with parking  
 provisions. You can drive under the left  
 hand side of the 1<sup>st</sup> floor where there are  
 disability parking spots, with more parking  
 at the rear of the building. There are also  
 accessible toilet facilities.

If you are coming it would help to know -  
 we can then try and book a table.

**Please call Patricia Byrne 9150 5512** so your name can be included on the list.

**7.30 p.m. Tuesday, April 24  
Belgreen 40- 42 Chalmers St, Belmore**

A speaker from the Royal Flying Doctor Service will be attending. More details in the next newsletter.

### *Advanced Notice*

The Association is planning to hold its Annual General Meeting on **Saturday July 21, 2007**. You will recall for many years now the AGM has been held in June, however it is often difficult to get all the financial reports back from the auditor in time for the meeting. Hence the decision to change the date – so please make a note in your diary.

If there is any issue you wish to have included on the Agenda please forward to me (Secretary – Patricia Byrne) well in advance of the meeting as the agenda has to be posted 3 weeks prior to the meeting.

### *Program Report*

**Michael Storey** presented a most interesting evening in February talking about researching your family history. He has spent countless hours working on his own family and brought along the albums he has prepared, which included some wonderful documents. He described the process and spoke about the amount of information that is available through a variety of sources. It was great to catch up with him again – he is a very informative speaker and made the evening most enjoyable.

Unfortunately, I was unable to attend the **Picnic**, at Quarantine Reserve Abbotsford in March. I'm told there was only a small gathering – but a happy time was had. It's a very good location and hopefully next time more people will be able to attend.

**Ruchir Sodhani** from Australian Plant Society Sutherland Group attended the March meeting and spoke about the CD which they have developed entitled

“Coastal Plants of the Royal National Park” with the aim of promoting appreciation, conservation and cultivation of native plants. It covers how to identify plants – provides detailed descriptions and photographs of the plants – maps of the locality – directions on how to use the CD.

It was really a most interesting evening. The amount of work contributed by the members of this particular group is just amazing – hours and hours!

If anyone is interested in obtaining a copy of the CD you can contact Ruchir by ringing 9522 2935 – or writing to him at 18a The Esplanade, Sylvania Heights 2224. The cost of the CD is \$10.00 and I guess there would be postage.

### *Fund Raising*

There is a stall planned for Miranda once again at the Congregational Church, Kiara Road South. As far as I know it will be held on Saturday May 5. If you have any enquiries please give Betty Alwin a call.

Let's hope the weather is kind to us!

Betty's bowling club ladies recently sent materials/laces along to the Association, as well as more lovely goods from her friend Nancy Mapledoran. Bob Tonazzi also donated a bundle of face washers that will certainly get put to good use. Many thanks to all for the support – it all helps to swell the stall goods and benefit the Association.

### *Other News*

On March 22 **The Lions Club of Oatley** celebrated their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, which was marked by a dinner at Roslyn Gardens, Peakhurst where approximately 200 people wined and dined. Peter/Janet Meagher, Maura Outterside and myself represented the Association.

Once again, we were made most welcome and it was great to see some faces from years ago – Lions members, who had moved on or away all gathered for this special occasion.

Congratulations to the Lions – the Association certainly acknowledges the work they do in the community and appreciates the friendship and support given by their members to St. George Association.

Rosemary Gray recently passed on to me some information about a “Burn Rubber Burn” program being run at Police & Community Youth Clubs in some locations in partnership with other authorities and organisations. The exercise program has been developed for individuals with a spinal cord injury. (Apparently other disabilities have also been included). It is a circuit based exercise program incorporating resistance and cardiovascular training, focusing on health and wellbeing.

Vision: To provide financially and physically accessible exercise facilities for individuals with spinal cord injury, empowering them to maintain a health lifestyle.

One of the locations is at Daceyville, another at Campbelltown. You may have one in your area.

If you wish to make enquiries please contact Simone Robinson, Di Francesco on 9382 5623.

### *Personal Pats*

Pat Davies and Jane Cruise have just returned from a holiday in Melbourne – they had a great time. It was Pat’s first visit to Melbourne and she was really quite impressed, finding the access in the city very good. They even had a ride on the tram to St. Kilda. By the sounds of things a good time was had!

Connie Micalizzi has also been holidaying – she went on a cruise with a friend, so I will have to get detail from her when she returns. Hopefully next issue I can report.

### *Independent Living magazine*

I think the editorial in the Independent Living magazine volume 23 is worth

reading – “There are several terms used to describe housing suited to people with a disability: adaptable, accessible, adjustable and visitable. They are often used interchangeably even though they mean different things.

To overcome this confusion the term “universal housing” is now being used. However, this does not necessarily mean the concepts of universal design are being employed; rather it is becoming a euphemism for “disability housing”. This is of great concern to the universal design movement, which is seeking to create and promote mainstream designs, not designs for marginalised groups.

Universal design is the design of products and environments to be useable by all people to the greatest extent possible, without the need for specialised designs. It means designing inclusively for everyone for the whole of their lifecycle. Universal design offers real hope for inclusiveness. If the principles of universal design were subverted by a focus on disability, the designer mindset will not change – we will still get specialised designs for a niche group. This will continue the social marginalisation the disability sector is seeking to eliminate.

Jane Bringolf, Executive Director, ILC NSW.”

Some of the new products reported in the magazine. **Bath One Travel** – portable shower chair dismantles to a compact unit.

**Bump Gate** automatic gate opening kit – can be fitted to weldmesh and bar gates. The gate automatically opens when a vehicle nudges the bump rail and arms and automatically closes after the vehicle passes through.

**Newline Profinish Shower Base** – wheelchair accessible. This hobless shower base is made from high density polyurethane components. It has a manufactured two degree slope. As it fits straight to the existing floor, no structural modifications are required. The base is compatible with both vinyl and tiles.

**Ragalluf Swimwear** – chlorine, heat & UV resistant. the swimsuits are made from 100% nylon fabric that is chlorine resistant.

**Robomow** – automatic lawnmower self operated. This compact lawnmower is battery powered with inbuilt sensors. A perimeter wire is initially laid around the area to be cut.

The mower detects the wire and only cuts the grass within the designated area.

**Shoeaid** – provides shoe on/off assistance. This is a hand held heavy duty plastic moulded device. It has a shoe horn at one end and two “V” shaped prongs at the other end.

## *Happy Easter!*

I would like to take the opportunity of wishing you the blessings of Easter and hope you are able to share this special time with family and friends. For those who may be on their own my thoughts are with you.

*The Editor*

### **Management Committee 2006 –2007**

**All Correspondence: Hon Secretary 6a Oatley St., KINGSGROVE NSW 2208**

**All Financial matters to: Hon Treasurer 2 Salerwong Place, RYDE NSW 2112**

**President** Pat Davies 02 9153 0729  
**Hon Secretary/Editor:** Patricia Byrne 02 9150 5512  
**Email [patriciabyrne@optusnet.com.au](mailto:patriciabyrne@optusnet.com.au)**

**Hon Treasurer:** Jenny Chin 02 9888 5234  
**Vice President** Peter Meagher 02 9520 3521  
**Asst Secretary:** Rosemary Gray 02 9820 1308

Betty Alwin	02 9579 4600	Daphne Berger	02 9718 3678
Janet Malone	02 9787 1042	Betty Hill	02 9750 8461
Connie Micalizzi	02 9567 6423	Maura Outterside	02 9718 5803
Bob Tonazzi	02 9311 2555		

**Welfare Officer:** Elizabeth McDonald 02 9747 6268

**Belgreen Meeting Room (at meeting times only) 02 9759 9061**

