

THE JOURNAL of SHHH AUSTRALIA INC.
Self Help for Hard of Hearing People

hearing matters

August 2009

SHHH Australia Inc
1334 Pacific Highway
Turramurra NSW



Dr Stuart Down

Winner of 2009 Libby Harricks Achievement Award

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Dr Stuart Down, hearing impaired sports physician

**DEADLINE FOR
NEXT ISSUE:
5th October 2009**



Remember, hearing help is available wherever you see this symbol.

SHHH Mission

SHHH Australia Inc. is a voluntary organisation giving services and support to hearing impaired people throughout Australia who communicate orally.

SHHH Australia

- Operates two Hearing Information Centres
- Produces **hearing matters** as a quarterly newsletter for members and subscribers
- Supports and encourages local SHHH Groups
- Maintains an extensive information service with a series of Information Sheets on aspects of hearing loss and its management
- Provides speakers as part of its extensive Outreach Program
- Administers a Hearing Aid Bank in conjunction with the Audiology Department of Macquarie University in Sydney and other participating providers
- Acts as an advocate to government, industry and other organisations to make them more aware of issues concerning hearing loss

SHHH Buddy System Trial

Are you interested in making contact with other SHHH members in

your area?

We are trialling a system where SHHH will match members in their area to catch up for a coffee, conversation or social outings.

If you would like to participate in this trial send your contact details to the SHHH office (see page 15) by post, fax, or email.

Cicada Technology Day

**Sunday, 16th August 2009
11 am to 3 pm**

At SCIC, Old Gladesville Hospital
Punt Road (off Victoria Road)
Gladesville, Sydney

The following organisations will be providing information:

SHHH

Cicada

Better Hearing

Phonak

Printacall

Sausage Sizzle \$2 a person

Soft drinks, tea, coffee and slice available

Do you like exploring? Then combine a visit to the Cicada Technology Day, with the fantastic Gladesville Hospital Walk. Explore the historic buildings, Banjo Patterson cottage, Bedlam Bay and look out for ghosts. A short walk from the SCIC, and a heap of fun! A basic map is at http://www.huntershill.com.au/hunters_walking_pop_hospital.htm The SCIC is near the Clock Tower on the map.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

One of the issues facing our organisation is adapting to the social changes in our consumer base. There are plenty of hearing impaired people in Australia, millions in fact, but only a handful are sufficiently motivated to do something good about their hearing. Some things were good in the past, like SHHH Groups, but have not grabbed the attention of baby boomers or youngsters. Others like computers and SMS are very popular with hearing impaired people of all ages. Last year we surveyed members to see what people thought and Dr Gitte Keidser has kindly provided a helpful analysis of the information. Unfortunately the sample size was small and may not be fully representative. So if you didn't respond to the survey or have some bright ideas you'd like to share, please send your thoughts to the SHHH office.

Although computing is not for everyone, there are plenty of SHHH members in their 70's or beyond tapping on the keys. The hard part is getting started and we have some practical suggestions from Chris Danckwerts and a story on this page about Barry Collins and Margaret Roser helping seniors learn computing in a friendly environment.

Younger members have a lot of ideas and I often apologise that we have not been able to take up many of them due to lack of resources. So if you think something should be done, ask yourself if you are the person who should be doing it! Have a talk to Pauline Reidy, our office administrator. Pauline is great at knowing how to get things done.

Richard Brading
President SHHH Australia Inc.

You're Never Too Old to Learn Computing

For the past 2 years SHHH member Barry Collins (72), along with his partner Margaret Roser (67), have run a successful computer education course aimed at senior citizens at Meriton Street Community Centre in St. George's Basin.

"In the first class we had one computer," said Margaret, who began using computers on a regular basis 8 years ago. "We sat them around in a group and I worked the computer and I said, 'right, you get out here, you get out here.'"

Since its inception, the course has rapidly expanded, its popularity growing via word of mouth in the local community. Through the generosity of donations, there are now over half a dozen desktop computers available for the course along with four laptops.



Seniors learning computing

"Members just have to join seniors, which only costs \$7 a year," said Barry.

Across the 10 weeks, Margaret gives students an introduction to basic computing terminology, along with software such as Microsoft Word and the fundamentals of internet and email use.

While the course is running each week, Barry also conducts a discussion group for those who have already completed the course and want to continue learning. To assist with the teaching, Margaret has developed very comprehensive fact sheets that are far more useful to seniors than traditional instruction guides as they are written by people their own age who think of computers in a similar way.

"I mean, you couldn't teach your grandparents because you wouldn't think of computers on the same level," said Margaret. "I wasn't taught email or anything, but it gave me enough confidence to know I wasn't going to break the computer."

Margaret had previously taken a course that introduced her to the basics of computing, but felt that the course structure was not ideal for seniors. The pair believe that this has something to do with the ever-increasing popularity of their programme – all four 2009 programmes have been booked out.

"We've had quite a few of our people that went to TAFE, but they found that they hadn't gained as much as they hoped, because TAFE of course is teaching with the idea of teaching for the workforce," said Barry.

While not everybody who attends the course is able to grasp the new concepts, the pair estimate a success rate of about 70%, which according to Barry, "brings them back into modern lifestyle," allowing them to enjoy the benefits.

Dr Stuart Down – Winner of the 2009 Libby Harricks Achievement Award

Stuart at school

Stuart started losing his hearing at six years old and is now classified as having profound sensori-neural deafness. He was a capable student, assisted by the visiting teacher scheme, and excellent at sports, representing his school in cricket, tennis and hockey (despite not hearing the referee's whistle!), and in having to endure teasing from fellow students. He was involved in Cubs and later was a Patrol Leader in Scouts.

Medical training

Stuart gained a high V.C.E. score after being awarded a school prize as the top student in French. He gained a place in the medical course at Monash University, which was challenged during his first year by the then Dean of the Medical Faculty, who informed Stuart that they did not accommodate students with disabilities! His place was secured after discussions with the University's Equal Opportunity Officer and he graduated with honours in 1998. Since then he worked initially at Box Hill Hospital and over the past five years he trained as a specialist in sports medicine in Melbourne and at the Australian Institute of Sport (A.I.S.) in Canberra. He was awarded the Gold Medal for top student in 2008, when he graduated as a Fellow in the Australasian College of Sports Physicians.

Sports Physician

In 2005, Stuart was Senior Doctor at Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre at the Deaflympics, overseeing sports as diverse as wrestling, water polo and badminton. In 2006, he was Senior Doctor for Weightlifting at the Melbourne Commonwealth Games, while later that year he was Senior Doctor in Canberra for the World Champions Hockey Championship for Women. Over recent years, as sole doctor, he was accompanied Junior Australian teams in hockey to Europe and S.E. Asia and the A.I.S. soccer team to South America.

Stuart inspires all who meet him with his competence, his warm gregarious nature and his refusal to allow his disability to interfere with his life goals. He has achieved much against the odds.

Stuart's response

I would like to start by thanking Richard Brading & SHHH Australia for inviting me to be here today. I am truly honoured to be receiving this year's Libby Harricks Achievement Award.

I suppose I had best thank my ever-thoughtful mother in nominating me. It was indeed a pleasant surprise to open a letter last month, inviting me to come here to receive an award I had not heard of, let alone been aware that my mother had in fact nominated me!

On that note, and perhaps on a more personal level, I would like to pass heart-felt thanks to both of my parents for their unwavering love and support to both my sister – who is also profoundly hearing impaired – and I. It would be very fair to say neither my sister nor I would be where we are in life today, without the patience & undying commitment shown by our parents, towards ensuring we could aspire to achieve our chosen paths in life.

The course I have taken, from secondary school through to where I now stand as a fully qualified Sports Physician, has been very much facilitated by the excellent support services in place at all levels. This has included visiting teachers at both primary and secondary school and the disability liaison staff at university. I am also eternally grateful for the

assistance from my audiologist in Melbourne – Moh Dadafarin – whose patience, explanation and attention to detail has been nothing short of magnificent.

I recall well, my Disability Liaison Officer at Monash University in Melbourne, thumping the table with a face that read “woman on a mission” upon learning of resistance I faced in trying to initiate special consideration as a hearing impaired undergraduate medical student. Indeed she conquered the then Dean of Medicine, and paved the way for me – the first hearing impaired graduate of Monash University Medical School – with the provision of note-taking services and special consideration in examinations, the latter being continued through to my post-graduate specialist medical examinations. I have since learned of two further hearing impaired undergraduate medical students since I graduated in 1998.

This just highlights the importance of such services and the good fortune we have in Australia, of being blessed with such assistance from the numerous specialists, organisations and support groups. My sister Elena has worked with the deaf & hearing impaired in India and China and currently works with AusAid, and says such services are unheard of in so many other countries.

On that note I would finally like to thank my sister Elena – not just for coming here from Canberra to see me receive this award, but for providing me with inspiration. She may not be aware, but in seeing her carve her way through all and sundry before her over the past 20 years, she has constantly provided me with inspiration and hope - to achieve greater things, and most of all, to not be overcome by the frustrations & social isolation that hampers so many of us with hearing impairment.



Stuart receiving 2009 Libby Harricks Award



Stuart with AIS Hockey Team in Brussels, Belgium, 2007



Stuart with AIS Hockey Team staff in Malaysia, 2006



Stuart at 2006 Commonwealth Games with Ben Turner, Gold Medal weightlifter

How to access the SHHH website, even if you don't have a computer!

Chris Danckwerts

SHHH's website is a very useful resource for members to tap into. It's packed with all kinds of news, articles and information resources, not to mention links to other useful websites. SHHH also has a Google on-line discussion forum in which participants can ask questions and share experiences. We at SHHH want to encourage all members to become familiar with these resources - even if you don't have a computer! So, how can this be done? Let's look at the kind of difficulties you might be facing.

Don't know how to use a computer?

It's not so long ago that computers were the exclusive preserve of experts, and incomprehensible to ordinary people. Those time have now changed. Computers are becoming easier to use all the time, and there are any number of places where excellent introductory courses are offered.

For example, if you're a senior you may be surprised to know that there are several hundred seniors' computer clubs that have sprung up all over Australia. These are squarely aimed at those who have never touched a computer in their lives. Many of these clubs offer courses ranging from beginner level upwards, including how to use the internet. Usually, these courses are offered for a very nominal fee. Ask someone you know with a computer to print out the full list of these clubs from the website of ASCCA, the Australian Seniors' Computer Club Association. Contact ASCCA on <http://www.ascca.org.au/> or phone (02)9286-3871.

Alternatively you may find that your local library or community college may offer courses that suit you. Courses offered by TAFE colleges or private colleges tend to be vocation-oriented (and more intensive and expensive).

Finally, if you'd rather learn at your own pace on a home computer, there are plenty of good teach-yourself books around. This approach works much better if you have a knowledgeable friend or relative that you can call on to help you with any difficulties.

Don't have a computer?

Whether or not you know how to use one, it is always preferable to have your own home computer. If you would like to have one, and don't mind a pre-loved model, then ask around among your family and friends. People are always upgrading their home computers and many would love to think of their older machine going to a happy, loving home just like yours! They might even offer to set it up for you.

On the other hand, if you'd rather have a new one then you could go to stores like Harvey Norman, or you could look at a mail order firm such as Dell. Whichever way you go, unless you are confident of making the right choice from all the options available, then this when a computer-literate friend is essential to guide your selection.

If, however, you decide that you wouldn't use the computer enough to justify getting one of your own, or if perhaps you don't have the space at home, then there are plenty of places where you can just drop in, use the computer for a few minutes or longer, and only need your loose change to pay for your session. Internet cafes and libraries that provide this service are everywhere, as they also provide a service for travellers. Another alternative that you may be able to use is the home computer of an obliging friend or relative.

Can't find the SHHH website?

Once you have access to a computer and know how to reach the internet then all you need now is the SHHH website address. It's <http://www.shhhaust.org>. And once you're into this website it's an easy step from there to the SHHH Google group. So, away you go!

Results of Member Questionnaire 2008

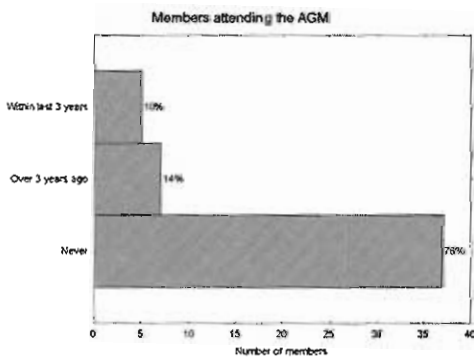
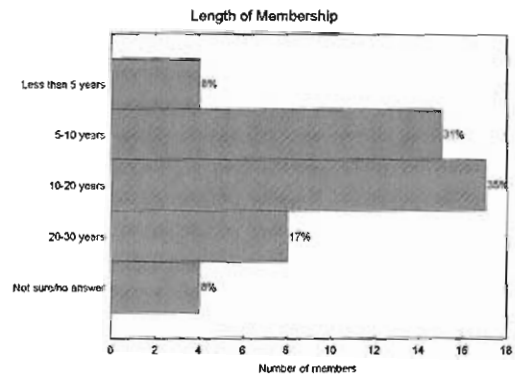
as interpreted by Gitte Keidser

The response rate was at 10% (50/500 members) rather low, which means that it is uncertain whether the outcomes of the survey can be considered representative of SHHH members as a whole.

Note: It is clear from the replies to question 3 that those who filled in the questionnaire were all hearing-impaired members. If the numbers of corporate members and supportive members without hearing impairment are known then a new (higher) response rate could be calculated, though I would only be confident that the responses to the questionnaire would be representative of those who really need SHHH if the equivalent response rate was at least 50%.

Question 1: Length of membership

More than 50% of respondents have been members for more than 10 years and only 8% of respondents had joined SHHH within the last 5 years. If the respondents were representative of the members as a whole, this distribution would suggest that the members are aging and that it has been difficult to attract new members in the past 5 years.



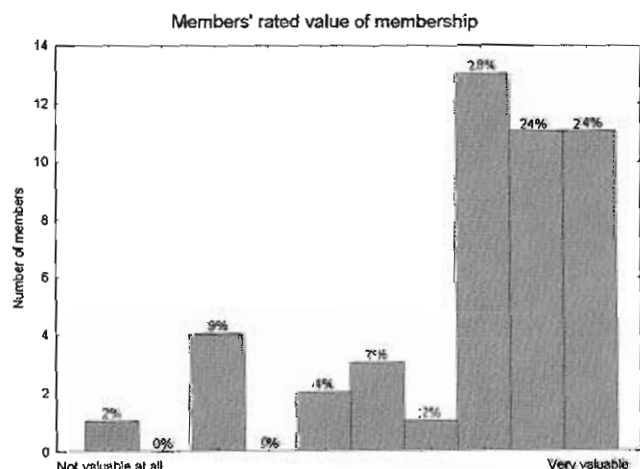
Question 6: AGM attendants

The low percentage of respondents who have attended a SHHH AGM is partly due to many members living too far away from the venue. A few comments suggest that it may be worth while alternating between different venues (within Sydney), or to select a more centrally located venue (near CBD) to allow a larger proportion of members to attend from time to time. No one had specific suggestions for how to make the AGM better.

Note: It would have been interesting to have had the postcode of the respondents...

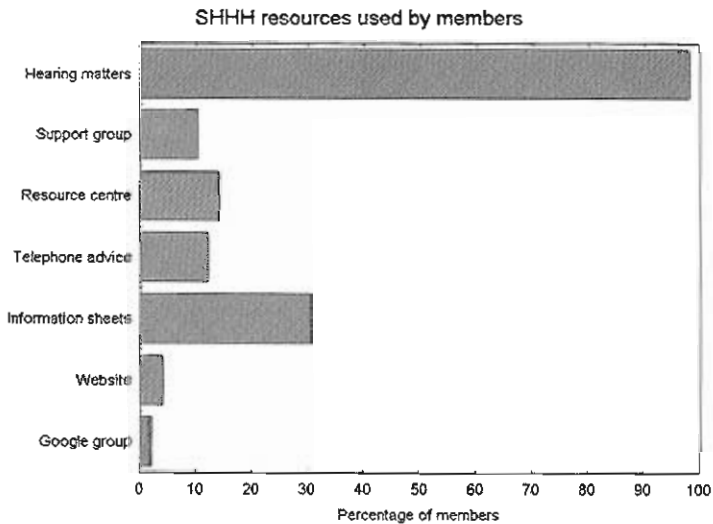
Questions 7 and 8: Value of SHHH membership

Over 75% of the respondents rated the value of their SHHH membership 8 or above (this may coincide with the request for comments if the value of the membership was thought to be less than 8....). Comments suggest that those who rate the value of the membership low would like more contact with other members, but live too far away to attend meetings (such members could be encouraged to participate in the Google group, hence a prominent article in Hearing Matters to inform members how etc is justified). Members also suggested a 'Can we help Q and A' section in the Hearing Matters and would also like more stories about members' personal experiences.



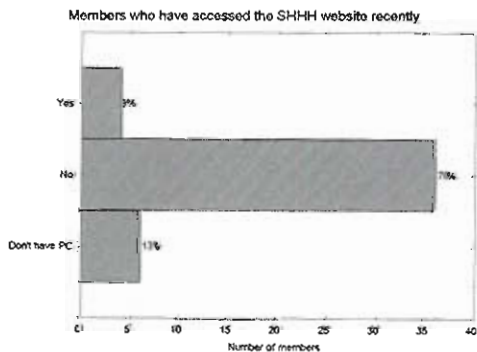
Question 4: SHHH resources used

As Hearing Matters is received with each membership, it is not surprising that this is the most used resource; however, comments from many of the respondents also suggest that the magazine is a very important resource to members. Among the respondents, the next important resource is the information sheets. The low rate of use of the support group and resource centre is partly due to members living too far away to access them.



Question 5: Accessed the SHHH web-site

Only 9% of respondents had accessed the SHHH website recently. The (very) few respondents who commented on the information on the website thought it was sufficient. A handful of respondents appeared to have no knowledge about the website. Although it was a small number, I believe there is scope for a prominent article in Hearing Matters that tells members what sort of information can be accessed on the website, explains what technology is required to access the website and the Google group with a comprehensive guide to how both are accessed. I also believe it is worth making members aware that for those who don't have a PC the website can be accessed from public computers at, for example, libraries, or from the grandchildren's PC ;-)



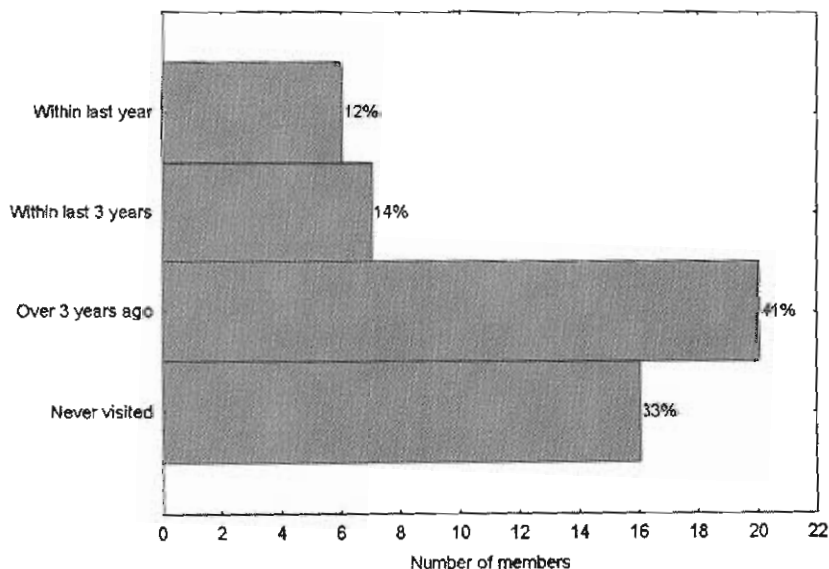
Question 9: Hearing Matters by mail or e-mail

Among the respondents, 85% wished to receive the Hearing Matters as paper copy by mail.

Questions 10 and 11: Last visit to SHHH

Among the respondents about one third had never visited a SHHH information centre. Among those who had, less than half had visited the centre within the last 3 years. Again, the proximity to a centre and the aging members are some likely reasons for the low rate of respondents that had visited a centre recently. Even though only 18% of respondents expressed an interest in visiting a SHHH centre if it was open outside standard working hours, this percentage is high enough (2 out of every 10 respondents) that I would encourage SHHH to consider opening the centre one or two evenings over a 12 months period (note this should be advertised as widely as possible) to see who are turning up. Who knows, new volunteers, or board members, may be recruited from this group, especially if they get a chance to meet current volunteers and board members during such an event.

When did the members last visit a SHHH centre?



Question 12: Suggestions for making SHHH better:

Suggestions vary from 'encourage younger members to join', 'SHHH committee to visit branches', 'more personal contact', 'target teenagers', 'attract younger members', and 'publicise more, and more widely'. Generally, these comments point toward members wanting more and younger members, presumably with the aim of opening up more active centres around the country. In addition, there were many praises to Hearing Matters among the comments here!

Libby Harricks Memorial Oration

The 2009 Libby Harricks oration was held during The General Practitioner Conference & Exhibition at Olympic Park, Homebush. The Orator was Prof. Graeme Clark and was titled "The Bionic Ear: From an Idea to a Reality".

In his fascinating talk Professor Clark described his struggle to develop his idea despite lack of funds for his research and the scepticism of his peers. At one stage he was so desperate for funds he set up a table on the street in the Melbourne business district asking for donations whilst his secretary did the



same at a market. (She collected more!)

His journey started at the age of 11 when he saw the difficulties his hearing impaired pharmacist father had with hearing clients in his shop. In 1965 the then Dr Clarke had an idea of using direct electrical stimulation of the cochlear and in 1966 he left his ENT practice to start his research which involved fundamental studies in the physics of sound as well as the medical issues involved.

In 1978 he made the first implant on a patient and success was demonstrated

when the patient recognised the playing of God Save the Queen and then Waltzing Matilda. In 1979 he made his second implant on another patient. His team then proceeded to develop the processor from a laboratory model to a portable device and ultimately to a commercial success by the Cochlear company.

During the oration Prof. Clarke showed a number of videos of various patients as their implants were switched on. The most impressive was the joy on the faces of young children who had been deaf since birth when they heard their first sounds in 1985.

Finally Prof. Clarke talked

briefly of the future development possibility of using carbon nanotubes to significantly increase the number of electrodes which could allow the hearing of high fidelity music through the bionic ear.

This was an excellent oration which has been reproduced on a USB stick which members can view at SHHH Turrumurra.

My only disappointment was that so few GPs out of the several hundred at the conference turned up to hear the lecture. We have still a long way to go to get across our message of the importance of hearing loss!

Gordon Howard

Library News

I would like to introduce myself. My name is Annette Danckwerts and I take care of library matters for SHHH.

We have a number of books on hearing matters and an extensive number of Australian and overseas magazines at the SHHH office in Turrumurra. The books can be borrowed by placing your name in the library record book. Over time I will review them in Hearing Matters. Our latest addition is 'Deaf Sentence' by David Lodge which was kindly donated by a SHHH member. This book was reviewed in February's Hearing Matters and is highly recommended.

The magazines can be accessed during the time the office is

open and again over the coming months I will outline the major ones we subscribe to. These magazines are very informative with much information on the latest technology and research.

I look forward to keeping in touch with you.

Annette Danckwerts



New Insurance for Hearing Aids

Silvia Regos established her Hearing Insurance business in May 2009 after Joseph, a close family friend, lost his expensive and much loved hearing aid while gardening. Silvia was astonished to hear that Joseph's home insurance policy did not cover the loss as it was deemed 'accidental'.

Options to insure hearing aids include:

Home contents insurance cover

Although hearing aids can be insured through a home contents policy the policy typically does not cover accidental loss or damage, when outside the home or travelling.

Manufacturers insurance

Some hearing aid manufacturers provide a 'Loss and Damage' warranty which is bundled with many hearing aids. Typically, this warranty is limited to 12 months, has a high excess and is the client can only make one claim.

Hearing Insurance

"Our solution allows clients to reduce their excess, extend their cover up to 3 years and make multiple claims on the same policy," says Regos. Hearing Insurance offers:

- Excess ranging from \$100 to \$250
- Cover for accidental loss & damage
- Australia-wide cover
- International cover for trips up to 28 days
- 48 hours claims turnaround
- Underwritten by Chubb

The cost of an insurance premium depends on the value of the hearing aids and the term of the policy. Typically, an annual premium is less than 5% of the value of the hearing aids. Discounts are available for 2 and 3 year policies.

An added benefit of insurance for hearing aids is that, much like hearing aids, the cost of the policy qualifies as a rebatable medical expense for tax purposes.

More information is available online at www.hearinginsurance.com.au
You can contact Silvia on 1800 792 449 or silvia@hearinginsurance.com.au

Cheers!

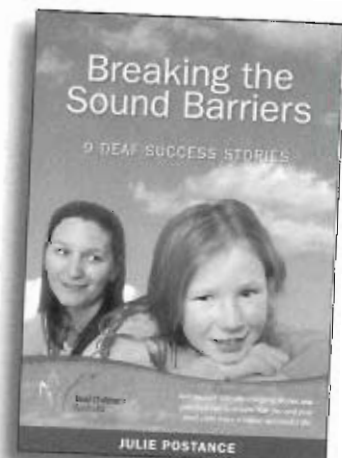


*Anyone
seen
my
hearing
aid?*

BREAKING THE SOUND BARRIERS: 9 DEAF SUCCESS STORIES

Deaf Children Australia has published this new book aimed at families of newly diagnosed deaf and hard of hearing children. "Breaking the Sound Barriers: 9 deaf success stories" is a collection of real life stories captures the struggles and successes of nine remarkable deaf adults and parents of deaf children. Each explores what helped and what hindered them and offers advice to other parents of deaf children.

In Australia, 95% of deaf and hard of hearing children are born to hearing families, who have little or no experience of deafness. Many parents report struggling with issues such as connecting with other families with a deaf child and how to cope when their child complains of feeling isolated or being bullied due to communication barriers.



Each story in the book offers a candid insight into the world of deafness – the highs and lows, the joys and the tears. Five parents describe their personal experiences in dealing with the diagnosis and embracing the challenges of raising a deaf child in a hearing world. Five deaf adults describe their own journey with hearing loss and paint an honest picture of the struggles and barriers they have encountered being deaf in a hearing world.

"This book has done a lot to alleviate my anxiety about the future of my child," says Gloria, mother to eight year old Adam (deaf).

To order a copy of this book (\$24.95 plus postage) contact Julie Postance at Deaf Children Australia on (03) 9539 5362 or jpostance@deafchildren.org.au.

News From Queensland

Peter Lindley

Trains

Queensland Rail (now QR) have undertaken to progressively introduce visual electronic information signage in all new, and some older passenger carriages. These visual consoles will provide information regarding the upcoming destination of each rail station.

In addition, they will also enable information, such as train delays or emergency situations to be displayed in conjunction with flashing signage, to draw passenger's attention to the message. The information displayed on the consoles will be of sufficient size to make them easily readable and will be visible from all sections of the carriage.

Buses

I attended the Busway Reference Group meeting earlier this year and raised these concerns:

- * The International symbol for Deafness has been installed, indicating access, but no advice is given as to where to stand so that you are in the operative area of the system;
- * No information has been provided for hearing aid use with a T switch, especially when announcements are made, as the T switch cannot be engaged all the time;
- * The system should include a flashing light which would indicate to hearing aid wearers when to use the T switch, as well as written signs advising of the relevant procedures in an emergency;
- * Any announcements need clear, not too rapid speech for fully effective use of the loop system.

4th World Congress on Mental Health & Deafness – to be held in Brisbane in October 2009.

There is a need for the mental health and hearing health issues of post lingually deafened, and hearing impaired people to be included in the deliberations of the Congress.

Police

I have had discussions with the Queensland Police Service regarding their Disability Services Plan, emphasising the need for police officers to understand the implications and consequences of hearing loss, in order to minimize misunderstanding between the police and the hearing impaired public.

Redlands Disability Network.

Over the years we have encouraged Redlands Council to provide loop systems within Council facilities. To date, loop counter systems have been installed at the Redlands City Council service counters at Cleveland and Capalaba and the public galleries of the Council chambers where debates take place. There has also been a system installed in the main auditorium of the new Performing Arts complex. However, two foyer areas unfortunately have not been included.

Disability Discrimination Complaint.

Last year, a number of hearing impaired people in Brisbane, including my wife Jill and myself, made a Disability Discrimination complaint against a public facility, regarding lack of access for deaf or hearing impaired people. The complaint was handled by Deafness Forum, who facilitated communication between the complainants, the Australian Human Rights Commission and the respondents. The assistance provided by Deafness Forum was invaluable.

I am happy to be able to state that a satisfactory resolution has been reached, with the Respondents agreeing to provide the access requested within a reasonable time frame. As an example of the spirit of cooperation provided by the Respondents, they also undertook to take our complaint into an area of their premises for which they were not responsible with a positive outcome.

University of Queensland

I continue to have the opportunity to participate in the program for 1st year medical students, regarding the implications and consequences of post lingual hearing loss, as part of the program of the School of Population Health. It is positively received and the latest session on 2nd April was no exception.

T Switches

I continue to be concerned about the failure of some hearing health professionals to adequately inform their clients of the benefits of this technology. For many people, the best way of learning is to provide a trial of the technology at the time of hearing aid provision, so that consumers can experience the benefits. Unfortunately, many hearing aid users are not aware of the considerable communication benefits of their T switch.



Peter and Mitzi

Breaking the Sound Barrier

Kate Locke

I attended the Sydney Film Festival on Friday night last week to trial the new Rear Window Captioning technology, provided by Accessible Arts - I took my sister, and we saw "Cheri".

It was a surprise - I had expected something different (thought we'd all be corralled into a little room by ourselves watching the movie through a big window!) - but it worked quite well.

I was also very surprised, (and disappointed) to find that I was the only deaf person there using the technology - everyone else was blind. (What is wrong with us deaf people? We clamour for changes, and then no one turns up to try it out when it's offered!! gah!)

Anyway - so, we were seated way up the back, and on my chair was a small tinted panel in the shape of a long rectangle, with rounded edges, but only about a handspan in width. And this was attached to the chair with a very squeaky adjustable arm.

Before the movie started, they asked us to adjust the panel to suit my line of sight - and then I realised that it literally was just reflecting the words from a small screen set up on the wall behind us!!

The screen had the captions appear backwards when you turned around to look at the screen on the back wall - it was red chunky text that is a bit like the ones you see showing numbers at the Deli in the supermarket - just slightly smaller.

Couldn't believe it... I thought it was going to be really bad - but then when the lights went down, the captions became very clear, and after a few (very squeaky) adjustments, I was able to watch the movie quite well, with the captions sitting just below by line of eye-sight - so the captions didn't appear to be on the screen of the cinema at all.

So it actually worked really well!

The only bad things were a couple of times my sister moved, and bumped my arm rest, which led to the adjustable arm being whacked out of place, and then of course required more squeaky adjustments, with us sniggering away up the back like a couple of schoolgirls.

Also, when people walked behind us, along the walkway, as they passed the captioning equipment, they blocked it momentarily - but this only happened very rarely - so not a big problem.

And we had to sit waaaaaaaaay up the back of the cinema - but luckily my eyesight is pretty good, so it didn't worry me - but might be an issue for others with sight-problems.

The best thing about it was I was watching this movie in a cinema with all these other people with normal hearing - and for once I didn't feel like the rest of the audience was sniggering at some of the captions that appeared, or annoyed by them. So that was a big plus.

Overall, I would say this technology is pretty cool, and will change the way cinemas operate - if they decide to bring them in. And I hope they do!!



The SHHH Digest



Thank you Ku-ring-gai Council

SHHH would like to gratefully acknowledge Ku-ring-gai Council's support for a recent grant which enabled us to upgrade our computer technology

Another world first for National Acoustic Laboratories

The Listening in Spatialized Noise – Sentences Test (LiSN-S) is a world first and will be used internationally to assess the ability of children to understand speech when noise is arriving from different directions.

LiSN-S will detect hearing problems in children that are not picked up by standard hearing tests. This is a great outcome for children who are affected by auditory processing disorder, which is particularly detrimental to learning in the classroom.

LiSN-S was developed by Dr Sharon Cameron and Professor Harvey Dillon at NAL, and licensed to Phonak for international distribution.

According to Prof Dillon, Research Director at NAL, understanding speech in competing noise is a problem commonly experienced by children with auditory processing disorders.

"Research has shown that children with auditory processing disorder have difficulty processing differences in the timing and loudness of signals arriving at the two ears in order to separate targeted sounds from background noise," he said. "

By measuring a child's speech understanding when noises arrive from different directions, clinicians can simulate real-life situations like noisy classrooms, in which hearing can be challenging for some children."

Congratulations Gordon Howard!

Gordon was the recipient of a Community Award from the Ku-ring-gai Lions Club in recognition of his services to the hearing impaired.



"Gordon Howard presented his Community Service Award by Brendan Nelson."

Hearing Awareness Week 2009

Hearing Awareness Week 2009 will be held on 23-29 August. For details of events go to <http://www.hearingawarenessweek.org.au>.

LIP READING COMPUTER IDENTIFIES LANGUAGE New Scientist 29/4/09

Scientists have found that the sequences of lip shapes and lip motions vary strongly with the language we speak. A computer developed at the University of East Anglia in the UK used a facial recognition system to track how people's lips moved and the sequences of shapes they formed, and used statistical analysis to learn which sequences were telltale signs of a particular language being spoken. The scientists found that they were easily able to tell one language from another, even in people who spoke very fast. They found frequent 'lip-rounding' among French speakers and more prominent tongue movements among Arabic speakers. Scientists are still trying to develop a computer that will be able to interpret the content of what is being said. As well as assisting the hearing impaired, this would be useful for police wanting to know what people in CCTV are saying.

BACTERIOPHAGES EAT BACTERIA New Scientist 23/4/09

A bacteriophage is a form of virus that eats bacteria. Scientists have found a bacteriophage that eats *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, a nasty bacteria that causes ear infections, with associated pain, pus secretion and inflammation. The bacteriophage breaks down the biofilm, a layer of sugars and proteins that make *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* resistant to antibiotics. Trials of a product called Biophage-PA have been promising for patients with severe ear infections, although there are concerns that the bacteria might develop a resistance to bacteriophages.

ELIZABETH (BETTY) HEATH

Betty Heath was the mother of the late Libby Harricks. She passed away on 23rd June aged 91 years. SHHH extends sympathy to David Harricks and the Heath Family.

The SHHH Notice Board

SHHH Hearing Information Centres

Turrumurra

Room 25, Hillview Community Centre
1334 Pacific Highway, Turrumurra NSW 2074
Phone & TTY (02)9144 7586
Fax (02) 9144 3936
OPEN: Tue, Thur, Fri 10 am to 3 pm

Canterbury

Canterbury Hospital Outpatients Department
Phone 9787 1088

Goulburn

SHHH assists at the QUOTA Resource Centre. Contact Alena Ward on (02) 4827 3913 for an appointment.

SHHH Support Groups

Local SHHH groups are currently meeting in Baulkham Hills, Chatswood and Newcastle. Contact the SHHH office on (02) 9144 7586 for meeting details of all SHHH Groups.

Google SHHH Support Group

This internet group provides interesting discussion on hearing matters, help for those seeking general advice, passing on the odd (tasteful!) joke, social interaction and a place to have the chance to vent your frustrations with the system. Constructive comments and criticism are most welcome. It is the members' site and relies upon members corresponding by email to an "open forum" of members. Members will endeavour to answer any questions or give advice when it is sought. Please note this is not a "chat room" and does not require much time to participate. Members choose whether to receive emails or read postings on the website.

The URL to locate the Group Home Page is:
<http://groups.google.com/group/SHHHgroups>.

Alternatively, log onto the SHHH website www.shhhaust.org and click on the "links" icon, scroll down and click on the link.

Emails can be sent to the group at SHHHgroups@googlegroups.com
To join and participate in the group, you may prefer to send your name and email address to Barry Collins at barcoll@exemail.com.au who has kindly set up and organised the Group.

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All donations to SHHH Australia over \$2 are tax deductible.

BEQUESTS

If you wish to make a bequest to SHHH please contact our office on 91447586.

THE BACK PAGE

THE WISDOM OF YOGI BERRA

Yogi Berra was a famous baseballer, playing for the New York Yankees. Berra, who quit school in the eighth grade, has a tendency toward malapropism and fracturing the English language in highly provocative, interesting ways. Simultaneously denying and confirming his reputation, Berra once stated, "I didn't really say everything I said." Here are some of his most notorious sayings:

"This is like déjà vu all over again."

"You can observe a lot by just watching"

"Always go to other people's funerals; otherwise they won't come to yours."

"I knew I was going to take the wrong train, so I left early"

"If you don't know where you are going, you will wind up somewhere else"

"If you can't imitate him, don't copy him"

"You better cut the pizza in four pieces because I'm not hungry enough to eat six"

"Baseball is 90% mental – the other half is physical"

"It was impossible to get a conversation going; everybody was talking too much"

"A nickel isn't worth a dime today"

"Nobody goes there anymore; it's too crowded"

"It gets late early out there"

When Yogi's wife asked "Yogi, you are from St Louis, we live in New Jersey, and you played ball in New York. If you go before I do, where would you like me to have you buried?", Yogi replied "Surprise me"

"Do you mean now?", when asked for the time

"I take a two hour nap, from one o'clock to four."

"If you come to a fork in the road, take it" (giving directions to his home – either way went there)

"You give 100 percent in the first half of the game, and if that isn't enough in the second half you give what's left"

"I made a wrong mistake"

"If the fans don't come out to the ball park, you can't stop them"

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