

AQA NEWS LINK

The Official Newsletter of A.Q.A. Victoria Ltd., & AQA Tasmania

April 2001



...Steve takes a ride
in a side-car



What A Ride...

Inside

- ▣ ***Programs***
- ▣ ***Aging Women With Spinal-Cord Injury***
- ▣ ***World Disabled Water-Ski Championships***
- ▣ ***Travel***
- ▣ ***Plus More...***



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Quadruplegic

Association

Victoria

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A.Q.A. NEWS LINK is the official newsletter of A.Q.A. Victoria Limited,

Australian Quadruplegic Association - Victoria, and is published bimonthly. NEWS LINK seeks to publish material of interest to people with physical disabilities and their families, professional workers and other individuals and organisations concerned with the welfare of those who are physically disabled.

ARTICLES and items of interest are welcome from any individual or organisation.

NEWS LINK reserves the right to edit all submissions as it sees fit. Published articles do not necessarily reflect the policies or opinions of A.Q.A. or its members.

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The Official Newsletter of AQA Victoria Ltd., & AQA Tasmania

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A.Q.A. NEWS LINK APRIL 2001

From the CEO

Thank you & enjoy

I would like to thank all those members who have responded to our reminders for renewal of their subscriptions and memberships. We have had a great response and obviously the newsletter is well read by many people. We hope you will continue to enjoy the newsletter and renew again next year. Please continue also to forward us information and stories of interest. It's your newsletter!

We currently have available limited copies of a guide called *Accessing Melbourne – a guide to Melbourne for people with a disability*. It contains information regarding parking,



city access maps, cafes and restaurants, entertainment spots and lots more. See column by Ian Williams on page 12 of this newsletter for more information. Well done Bruce Cameron from Easy Access Australia for another great guide.

Ian Bennett
Chief Executive Officer
ianbennett@aqavic.org.au

From the Editor

First of all, I'd like to thank Patsi Scott for generously donating her old wheelchair.

Although her wheelchair is in good condition, we will be rebuilding it within the next few weeks. Her wheelchair will then be going to someone overseas that desperately needs one. Hopefully we will let you know how things go with the new owner of the wheelchair in the next issue of News Link.

Wheelchair rugby has started again for this year. We have noticed a great improvement in the number of new players and spectators watching the game. The Paralympic Games has certainly highlighted and created huge interest, not just in the game of rugby, but all disabled sports.

In this issue, you will notice a few articles from some of our members. It is great having input from our members and we look forward to receiving more articles in the future. I'm sure that our members would like to know what each other is up to.

Finally, we have a request from a student completing her BA in Community Development. She would be grateful to hear from people with SCI who have recently been hospitalised to help her with her research project. See the article "Can You Help???" on this page for more information.

Nazim Erdem
News Link Editor
nazimerdem@aqavic.org.au



NOTICE

Mogo Wheelchairs Pty Ltd will cease production of new chairs from the 1st March, 2001. Repairs and Spare parts will continue to be carried out until the 30th June, 2001. As of 1st July, 2001, Mogo Wheelchairs will officially be closed.

AQA NEWS LINK Copy deadlines 2001

NEWS LINK is issued bi-monthly. The deadlines for AQA NEWS LINK 2001 are:

Issue	Deadline
June	31st May
August	31st July
October	30th September

Material received after that date will not necessarily be included.

CAN YOU HELP???

Joanne Le Mura, a final year student at Deakin University, is hoping to conduct a research project as part of her BA in Community Development.

The aim of the project is to give participants a platform to voice their experience, views and any recommendations they might choose to make about 'values of social justice'.

Participants must have a Spinal Cord Injury and have been hospitalised within the last six months. The research project seeks to answer the question "What are the experiences and views of people with spinal injuries and hospitalisation?"

If you're interested in volunteering your time for this project, contact Joanne (03)97239146, mobile 0416 101 448 or email tinkey@jeack.com.au.

Aging Women With Spinal-Cord Injury.

Plan for a Healthy Future
By Laura Mosqueda, M.D.

What women need to know about aging with spinal-cord injury.

Women with spinal-cord injury (SCI) need to prepare for the future when thinking about healthcare. Many individuals with SCI, as well as their physicians, operate in the "acute" mode – they deal with problems and issues as they arise. Not enough people make plans for a healthy future. Thanks to better healthcare self-advocacy, and improved social programs, women with SCI *must* plan to live into old age.

Thinking about the future means thinking about preventive health. This is important to *all* women regardless of disability status, but it is *very* important that women with SCI be aware of their special health concerns.

Several types of preventive healthcare exist. *Primary prevention* refers to ways that may stop you from getting a disease. An example of this is immunisation for influenza (flu shot). It is designed to actually *prevent* you from getting the flu.

Secondary prevention includes ways that may help doctors detect treatable diseases at an early stage – *before* they become a serious problem. An example of this is a mammogram, which will not prevent breast cancer but can detect it an early stage so it may be successfully treated.

IMMUNIZATIONS

It is important for everyone with SCI to remain up-to-date on immunizations, including annual flu shots and tetanus shots every ten years. It is also important for people with SCI to obtain shots for protection against a particular type of pneumonia, pneumococcal. Many physicians think this protection

is for people who are elderly or have lung disease, but individuals with SCI need to remind their doctors that they, too, are at risk for pneumonia. This is because of weakened respiratory function after injury.

PAP SMEARS

Pap smears are used to detect cervical cancer. They may even find changes in cells *before* they turn into cancer. Some women are at higher risk of developing cervical cancer – those who began having sexual intercourse at an early age and/or who have multiple sexual partners. These women should be screened every two years.

Women who are sexually active but not at high risk should be screened every three years if they have already had two or three normal smears. After age 65, further screening is not needed unless high-risk behavior such as multiple sexual partners continues. Females who have had hysterectomies (surgical removal of the uterus) do not need screening unless the surgery was performed due to cervical cancer.

Women with SCI may need to plan ahead for the Pap smears. Some doctors' offices and rehabilitation facilities may be accessible and have adjustable examination tables, but most offices are not easily accessible. Some are not accessible at all!

It can be a challenge for women with SCI to find an accessible office. They may encounter problems with transferring onto and off the examination table or find it difficult to maintain the proper position for the Pap smear.

Women can help by taking an active role in guiding the physician and office staff in the best methods for assisting with transfers, positioning,

and techniques for a more comfortable exam.

MAMMOGRAMS

It is important to make the same accessibility preparations when getting mammograms. Much controversy exists over the appropriate screening guidelines for these exams. Most agencies agree all women aged 50-69 should be screened once a year. Some doctors encourage women to have their first mammogram at age 40.

Consider these factors that may increase the risk of breast cancer:

- A history of the disease in a first-degree relative (mother or sister), particularly if the cancer developed before menopause
- Having no children or having the first child at an older age
- Certain types of benign (non-cancerous) breast disease visible on a mammogram

Some women with SCI have limited use of their hands. This can make breast self-examinations difficult. It is even more important that women with this problem have regular breast exams and mammograms as a routine part of a healthcare plan.

OSTEOPOROSIS

After age 30, all women will experience a gradual loss of bone density.

At the time of menopause, loss of bone density suddenly increases. This may cause some women to develop *osteoporosis*, a disease that thins and weakens bones to the point where they break easily – especially those in the hips, spine, and wrists.

continued on next page...

Hyperbaric Medicine

Reader finds pressure sore cure that suits him!

One member informed us that he found that the healing of his pressure sore was obtained by using "Hyperbaric Medicine". The treatment involves exposure to 'concentrated' oxygen and he had twenty-three, two hour sessions. Each was carried out on successive weekdays, and he was able to return to his work, two hours after each session.

What is it?

Hyperbaric Oxygen therapy is breathing 100% oxygen while you are in a pressurised room. 100% oxygen is breathed from a clear plastic hood or mask. Routine treatment generally lasts 2 hours, 5 times per week. The number of treatments depends on your condition.

Wound healing schedules often require 20 or more treatments.

How does it work?

The oxygen boost can stimulate damaged and healing tissue to recover more quickly. Healthy granulation tissue is stimulated and often collagen fibers mature and strengthen more rapidly.

But I'm a wheelchair user

Both of the services mentioned below are wheelchair accessible.

One of them has a room about seven feet wide, ten feet long and seven feet tall. There is a wide, walk-in door with space for eight chairs, wheelchairs or trolleys, but check when you enquire.

But note:

There are one or two requirements (like wearing cotton clothing) but these are all explained. There are sometimes minor after effects, like blurred vision for one to two hours.

COST

AQA was told that customers are charged the schedule fee for each visit, which is \$201.50. 85% of this is usually refunded through Medicare.

Pensioners are Bulk Billed, so there is no charge.

(There is no charge in the Alfred Hospital, as it's a public hospital.)

In Melbourne Hyperbaric medicine is available at:

• The Alfred Hospital

The Alfred Hyperbaric Service
Commercial Rd., Prahran, VIC. 3181,
Australia

Phone: 9276 2269

Fax: 9276 3052

E-mail: hyperbaric@alfred.org.au

• Vaucluse Hospital

Hyperbaric Medicine & Wound Care
Facility

82 Moreland Road, Brunswick
Victoria 3056 Australia

Phone: 9383 6505

Fax: 9384 1580

Email:

hyperbaricmart@bigpond.com

This is one member's experience, but readers are advised to check this out with their GP or other professionals.

...continued from previous page

Women with SCI need to be especially cautious in preventing and treating low bone-density. For the first few months following injury, a loss of bone density occurs in many parts of the skeleton. This is due in part to the body's inability to bear weight on some bones.

If a woman has SCI at age 25, what will happen when she turns 50 and experiences menopause? Another dramatic loss of bone may take place, putting women with SCI at an even higher risk of breaking bones.

Osteoporosis is related to a lack of estragon and may be prevented with hormone replacement therapy (HRT). The issue of HRT and osteoporosis prevention is something women with

SCI need to discuss with their doctors.

CONCLUSION

Women with SCI should develop partnerships with their doctors and plan for a healthy future. Remind your physician to treat healthcare issues that may be neglected in the acute setting.

Make sure to practice primary - and secondary-condition prevention by getting regular immunizations, Pap smears, and mammograms. And talk to your doctor about what you can do to reduce osteoporosis's effects.

Remember, better healthcare today can mean better health tomorrow.

Laura Mosqueda, M.D., is Geriatrics director and Clinical Family Medicine associate professor at the University of California-Irvine College of Medicine. She co-directs the Rehabilitation Research

and Training Center [RRTC] on Aging with a Disability, Rancho Los Amigos Medical Center (Downey, Calif.). This work was supported by the National Institute of Disability and Rehabilitation Research Department of Education grant #H133B980024.

This article appeared in *Pushin' On* (Winter 2000), the newsletter published by the Medical RRTC on Secondary Conditions of SCI, University of Alabama-Birmingham, USA.

Contact: www.spinalcorduab.edu.

(AQA Victoria was given permission to reprint this article.)

News Link NOTE:

As with all medical issues, which may be relevant to you, it is essential that you first discuss it with your medical GP.

BAILEY'S BIT!

By Kevin Bailey



Three Wheeled Scooter

Some time ago I was fortunate enough to take possession of a shiny, 3 wheel, electric buggy. While this move had been suggested by friends and family for some years, it was one that I had been loath to consider. I live at the edge of a smallish country town, where a round trip to the shops, friends or bowling club would be between three and five kms. When the need arose, I have pushed there in my normal chair or loaded/unloaded same in and out of the car. Because I am a natural conserver of energy (particularly my own), I felt that I would do no work at all if I had the suggested electric alternative.

When the opportunity arose, I still dithered about a decision until I made a more rational analysis of my current position. Most of my street chores were being done by friends – meaning that I still wasn't doing any work and local businesses didn't know that I was dealing with them. Spontaneous calling on friends was out of the question – the chance that they weren't home made the necessary effort too much. Another factor was that on occasion I have had some attention in the local paper and a lot of people in my community had never seen me. The bottom line was that I could go almost wherever I wanted – I just didn't want to go very far. With these things in mind I acquiesced to the 'gopher'.

I'm glad that I did!

It has meant everything that my family and friends hoped for me. It means that if I want some milk or bread, or just want to go out in the sun for a tour, I can just saddle up and take off. I go up to the street three or four times a week now and the locals are certainly more aware of me – and not just because they are in a state of panic that I might run over them, although an excursion can be quite time consuming with the social conversations along the way. I am able to just drop in and visit again, a pleasure that I had forgotten about.

There are potential downsides – I once again featured in the local paper; this time in the our Curly's gossip column. This of course necessitated the following response (bowls references are due to the fact that I am the local bowls scribe).

Prepared statement of Kevin Bailey, following report in Curly's Column of minor mishap, bearing in mind that real men don't go "bum up from goggomobiles".

I would firstly like to comment that if the same number of people read the bowls notes as would appear to read Curly's Column then our efforts to inform and entertain would certainly appear to be justified.

Some people will have seen me mounted on my three-legged electro-mechanical horse as I have traversed the local township. This trusty(?) steed gets a bit frisky when I leave it tethered and feeding from a powerpoint, so much so that a certain Cohuna Golf greenkeeper suggested that I should get a mate for it and take some of its' fizz away.

Anyway, I was quietly cantering down Railway Avenue the other day when it shied at something in the bush and I subsequently had the opportunity for some intimate conversation with the bitumen. I may have been talking there yet but for the good grace of a schoolteacher/scoutleader and his son who were able to dust off my mount and restore me to a position of some authority over it.

Apart from the loss of a little bark from my elbow and a severe dent to my dignity I was unscathed and fairly comfortable in keeping all knowledge of this "in house", especially when, seeking some sympathy from my children, I have found that they still haven't stopped laughing long enough to enquire of my wellbeing. Curly (bless him) had other ideas and I now know that there is considerable circulation of the Farmers Weekly.

All the best for now, Kevin.

You Asked a Question ???

NewsLink is starting a new column, this column is for you to ask questions that we print in NewsLink. The following issues we will print the solutions you and the information/peer support staff come up with.

An example: You want to go hang gliding and you want to know if this is possible. Your level of injury is C6 complete, and you want to know how people with a similar injury have overcome the obstacles to go Hang gliding?

Stay reading and we will answer this in the next issue.

To do this, we are going to need your assistance. Our Information/Peer support department is extremely clever,

but unfortunately we don't know everything (oh). This is where our readership comes in, someone out there has already done it so you can be the hero and inform us here at AQA Victoria so we can inform others.

Yes, I admit that I got the idea at a quiet moment at one of the country clinics when I started looking through those waiting room mag's and after answering the same question a no. of times.

Why haven't we done it before? Peter VB will find the answers so give him a question and see if we can find a solution to your problem.

So send in your questions (Post, Fax, e-mail, Phone) and in the next issue of NewsLink we print the solutions.

Baden Whitehead

What's new in PEER SUPPORT

By *Baden Whitehead*



My e-mail address:
badenwhitehead@aqavic.org.au

Spinal Clinics

We have had a very busy time with the country spinal clinics. Unfortunately, we missed getting to the Geelong clinic. Kevin Bailey attended the Bendigo clinic, I attended the Burnie and Launceston clinics. Kevin and I attended the Shepparton clinic together.

Spinal clinics are really valuable for that once a year check up. By taking the time to attend, you can assure yourself that no major health issues will sneak up on you.

At Shepparton, we had some patients and partners reminiscing about the old days – talking about Dr Cheshire, Herb Anderson and another staff person referred to as the B----. The patients and partners talked of the steep learning curve required by the partner and patient. We talked about the tears, the tricks played on

unsuspecting staff and patients alike, quads abusing para's etc. I had tears running down my cheeks. There was also much talk about equipment and other general information sharing making it more than just a medical check up.



Catching up, having a yarn, swapping stories - it all happened at the Shepparton Spinal Clinic

When in Tasmania, it was great to see how well recent patients were going. Two are doing traineeships, others are back at work. All are

getting on with life. This is when being a peer supporter is really rewarding - seeing people get on with what they choose to do.

Next country spinal Clinics are:

Warragul	15 th May
Bainsdale	16 th May
Mildura	20 th June

Our Paralympic champion Naz is now assisting me with visiting patients at the Royal Talbot - so we hope the saying "two people are better than one" is true.

Just a reminder to those of you who use Multi Purpose Taxi's, that you need to read Ian Williams's article about the change in booking arrangements.

Wheelchair Accessible Taxis in Melbourne

By Ian Williams

Prior to the 17th of April this year, to obtain an accessible taxi people had to call a driver they were aware of or call CBS (Central Booking Service).

Now that CBS is no longer operating, Silver Top Taxi Service and Black Cabs Combined have agreed to provide the service. It may seem to be an unusual move, but Silver and Black taxi services have established a link. This means that if you call Silver and they can't cover it, then the request goes straight through to Black to cover it. And if you call Black and they can't



cover it, your request goes through to Silver.

More than likely, this will improve the service as both of these taxi companies use GPS (Global Positioning System). This means that they can locate the vacant accessible taxi, which is nearest to you. We have been informed that it will not be necessary to book days before you wish to travel. We were told that this new operating system would work in a similar way to standard taxi bookings. Some may remember that booking days in advance with CBS did

not guarantee an accessible taxi getting to you. They would often leave announcing your request to only 30 minutes before you wanted it, which often resulted in a long wait.

The government stresses that this is only a "temporary" arrangement and that eventually they will have one company operating the system. This company could be one of the present companies or it could be a new booking agency. As to how long the "temporary" arrangement would last, then the representative said it would "possibly" be six months.

When you need a wheelchair accessible taxi in Melbourne, call:

- Black Cabs 9277-3877
- Silver Top Taxis 8413-7202

Steve and Me... ..or there but for the Grace of God

by Nuts
Robin Nuttall

Late last year I had a surprise phone call from a young motorcycling friend, Steve G, who lives in Geelong. "Have you still got your outfit? There's a bloke called Steve down here who used to ride but now he's a quadraplegic. Could we get him in the sidecar and take him for a run down the Ocean Road?", he said. "Sure thing! Let's organise a date", I replied.

So, one Saturday in December, after checking the weather at Ballarat and at Geelong, I left in sunshine on my Yamaha 1100 outfit, rode through a lot of fog, and arrived at North Geelong around 10 am in overcast but fine conditions. Wet weather would have meant cancelling out.

My friend Steve G. was already there with his Kwaka Ninja and the other Steve rolled out in his motorised chair. Wheelchair Steve is every inch a Harley man. Leather hat, earrings, wild mustache and beard, silver rings on each finger – the lot! But as I learned, he is also a great guy with a quirky sense of humour.

After a motorcycle accident and a subsequent series of strokes, he can now only move his right arm and his head, that's it. And he has spent the last 27 of his almost 50 years in that chair!

Boy, was he looking forward to this ride – as excited as a kid. Steve G. and I talked with him a bit, studied



Steve with a big smile on his face

the situation, then opened the cockpit of the sidecar and lifted him in, made him comfortable and buckled the seat belt I had fitted for the occasion and carefully - "Watch the earrings and ears!" - slid on a helmet. Black open face of course. Oh, and don't forget the urine bottle!

Out through the mad Saturday morning Geelong traffic with Steve G. doing wheelstands and the other Steve giving rebel yells in the relative quiet of the Anglesea road, where

we were able to maintain cruising speed. Visual checks with Steve get the thumbs up, but never the less we stop in Anglesea to check that he is travelling okay. Then on around the Ocean Road to Lorne. Lots of cars, but we were still able to work the outfit reasonably hard on some of the bends and just follow the queue on the rest.

We pulled into a disabled parking bay in front of the Arab Coffee Shop and displayed Steve's 'Disabled' card (which certainly looked strange on a bike), opened the cockpit, eased off the helmet - "Watch the ears ..." - and proceeded to have lunch, served kerbside with Steve G, his wife Sharon (who had joined us on her 250) and I sitting on the adjoining street seats. Lots of talk between us and other riders until Steve felt

nature's call. So we donned all the gear and rode down to the toilets.

The sidecar provided the necessary privacy, but you should have seen the looks I got when I walked into the Gents in full gear and emptied the bottle!

Less traffic and more fun on the ride back and then the task of removing the helmet - "Watch the ears!" - and lifting Steve out of my chair into his chair which Steve G. managed easily. And do you know - Steve wanted to thank me!

The ride back to Ballarat was spent in fairly serious navel gazing and passed quickly. As I said at the start, there but for the Grace of God...

Reprinted from *Riding On*, No. 70 March 2001
The Journal of the Ulysses Motor Cycle Club



Robin and Steve ready for the ride



Steve checking out his ride with Robin

NIGHT MOVES - by Peter Howden

A warm dark night, soft gentle breeze,
 The window is open, I begin to sneeze.
 I toss and turn, wriggle and shake,
 Legs bouncing around, you begin to wake.
 You hiss as you turn to yell "STOP MOVING ABOUT",
 I say I'm sorry, I'm trying to move and not fall out..
 One more time my legs go spastic,
 Flap flap flap like legs of elastic.
 The door flings open, we look to shout,
 Up jumps the cat, shit Charlies about.
 Eyes wide open, cannot sleep,
 Charlies moving, I pin him to the sheet.
 Look at the clock, it's four am,
 Look once more, still four am.
 I lay awake trying to sleep,
 1, 2, 3 counting sheep.
 4000 and five, 4000 and six,
 Alarm goes off, it's just past six.
 Time to get up, time to leave,
 Where's the cat, thru the door I do heave.
 What a night, I'm in a bad mood,
 Does give me the shakes, when the NIGHT MOVES.

*Here is a poem penned by
 AQA member Peter Howden.*

*I hadn't realised that we had
 such creative members that
 belonged to AQA Victoria.*

*I'm sure that Peter isn't the
 only creative person out there
 - If you have anything to
 contribute to your newsletter
 - be it poems, articles or
 things of interest - please
 send them in.*

Wheelchair Rugby



It's on again. 'Season one' of Wheelchair Rugby for the year 2001 began on Friday the 23rd of February. We are getting a bigger turnout at the stadium (spectators and players) because of the interest generated at the Sydney 2000 Paralympic games, and the success of the Australian Rugby team. There seems to be a greater awareness and understanding out there.

Like last year, we have got three teams competing. We have got more than enough players to make up four teams, but the level of intensity and the quality of the teams seem to be greater with the three teams. Usually, when we start a new season, the first couple of weeks of games are slow paced and the atmosphere is very relaxed. But the start of this season was different, everyone was playing as if they hadn't had a break for the

game. It was very good to see people had kept their fitness up - some had even improved their fitness.

On the 16th and 17th of March, the Victorian Rugby team (Melbourne Thunder) played the South Australian Sharks at the annual "3HA Border Clash" in a three game series in Hamilton. At the end of the series, Melbourne Thunder was three from three games - losses that is. Everybody had a fantastic time up there. We couldn't manage to win a game against the South Australian Sharks, but in every game we played, we got better. We lost the third game by only one point. I must also mention that we have a new sponsor in "Coloplast". The work that was done by Darren from Wheelchair Sports Victoria in promoting the series was very successful judging by the spectators and support that we had up

there. Even the Hawthorn and Geelong football team decided to play a practice match up there after finding out about our series.

If you are interested in watching, playing or helping out with Wheelchair Rugby, contact Darren at Wheelchair Sports Victoria on (03)9473 0133. We play three games every Friday night - starting at 7.00 p.m. - at the Whitehorse Aquatic and Leisure Centre in Box Hill.

Nazim Erdem

Late Breaking News

The Australian Paralympic Committee has announced the appointment of Terry Vinyard - who took the Australian team to a silver medal at the Sydney 2000 Paralympic Games as the full-time Head Coach for the Australia's Wheelchair Rugby program. Vinyard, considered to be the best Wheelchair Rugby coach in the world, will move to Australia from the United States in July to take up the position.

Tasmania Access

Bridport Resort

Over the road from the sea and close to shops, this resort is designed to be wheelchair friendly with access to all the facilities, heated indoor pool, spa and the a la carte restaurant. Although set on the side of a mildly sloping hill there are no steps in any of their paths, so depending on your strength you can access all facilities.



The Bridport resort

Assistance on the paths will probably be needed however as they have a gravel surface.

The unit that is designed for wheelchair users has a large bathroom with flat access, hand held shower, hand rails in the shower and beside the toilet. The bathroom would be suitable for commode users or self-transferring people.



The kids playground at Bridport

The rest of the unit is large/huge, being designed for a family or a group; two people could feel small in this accommodation. There are full kitchen facilities, two bedrooms, laundry, living area and a large balcony which is wheelchair accessible and has a barbecue.

Although quite expensive for a couple, the unit would be reasonable for a family or group.

Cradle Mountain

A wonderfully spectacular national park in central Tasmania. When you have paid your day entry, it is worth getting out of the car to have a look around the visitor centre and its displays and videos. There are reference books about the park and information officers are available to answer questions. There is also a park shop which has the usual range of tourist products.



A beautiful view of the area

Leading out of the visitor centre is a wonderful short board-walk suitable for wheelchair users. This board-walk meanders through a cool temperate rainforest and has spectacular close views of the Pencil Pine River waterfall. On this track, you really feel like you have stepped into another world.

All the toilets within the park have facilities for wheelchair users.



One of the accessible board-walk tracks through the area

Strahan Gordon River Cruises World Heritage Cruises Wanderer II

People in wheelchairs can access these boats via the gangway ramp and there is a toilet that is designed with wheelchair access in mind.

A problem that I encountered when moving from the outside viewing area to the cabin is that boats have a lip to stop any water spillage entering the cabin and, in this case, the toilet. This lip is required by maritime law and is about 200mm (8 in) high which makes access to the toilet impossible. Moving from outside into the cabin requires a lift, but if you contact the company before you travel, access can be organised. They have been aware of the problems associated with wheelchair access for some time, and have tried several ideas. They have now however designed a ramp for wheelchairs to go over the combing (lip) at each door way.



'Wanderer III' on one of its cruises

Bar this major hitch, the rest of the trip is fully accessible, including the stopover at Sarah Island, Tasmania's first and most brutal penal settlement. The island has a gravel path with a couple of hills that require a helping push, but it is well worth the effort to get a feel for this island's history.

There is also a wheelchair friendly forest board-walk at Heritage Landing on the Gordon River. Here, you wander through myrtle rainforest and even get to see a 2000 year old Huon pine. With lunch included and no rain I had a very interesting trip.

Baden Whitehead

Jan's Special Needs Travel

Jan has worked and cared for families with special needs for many years and now lives in Central Victoria, enjoying a country life.

Her holidays for groups of 10-12 people are tailored to suit individual needs. Her well planned itineraries (for a week or weekend stays) are jam-packed with fun.

Central Victoria offers many attractions, with its tranquil bush environment and native wildlife. It is an ideal getaway destination, only one hour's drive from Melbourne's Northern suburbs.

Enjoy camel rides, bushwalking, biking, yabbing, canoeing, bird-watching, fishing or just relaxing.



Jan Macdermid



Axton Ridge Farm Accommodation
The homestead has the capacity to sleep 10-12 people and consists of 5 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms.

The house is fully air-conditioned and has a large living area, which connects to the meals area and the kitchen.

The entertainment room contains a pool table, video, TV, and stereo.

The kitchen is fitted with a fan forced electric oven etc., a fridge/freezer and a microwave oven.

Shade verandahs are fitted to the front and rear of the house.

Axton Ridge Homestead provides disabled facilities with wheelchair access, shower chair and hoist for high dependency people.

Axton Ridge Homestead looks onto the Mt. Alexander Ranges and is located just above Axe Creek.

The homestead is situated 10 minutes from the Eppalock Weir, a

renowned water-skiing, fishing and swimming area.

Just below

Eppalock is the Axedale Golf Course, an extremely pretty course boasting 18 greens. It is also close to the townships of Axedale, Heathcote and the Greater City of Bendigo.

Many wineries and potteries are accessible within minutes. The township of Strathfieldsaye and shopping facilities are just down the road, and Bendigo, with a multitude of tourist facilities, is approximately 15 minutes away.



For more information:

Ph: (03) 5439 6377

Fax: (03) 5439 6353

Email: jan@janstravel.com.au

Web: www.janstravel.com.au

THE MASK AND THE SELF

Personal Development with the focus on living with a disability.

A unique opportunity for people with acquired or lifelong disabilities. In a series of 6 weekly sessions, participants will:

- In a small group
- Share their story
- Have an opportunity to express loss and grief in art-making
- Discover and express the lifegiving forces in their daily lives
- Express their sense of who they are in mask-making.

Previous experience with art is not required and activities will be adapted to the needs of participants.

Through art therapy you can:

- Release frustration
- Build self esteem
- Release pent-up trauma
- Increase self confidence and well being
- Resolve internal conflict
- Discover your creativity
- Find your inspiration
- Clarify your vision

VENUE: 316 Church St.,
Richmond

DATES: Monday's April 30th,
May 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th, June 4th

COST: \$180



ACCESSING MELBOURNE: The visitor information guide to Melbourne for people with disabilities

ATLAST! We now have a very good book containing much useful information showing what's available to Melburnians and visitors.

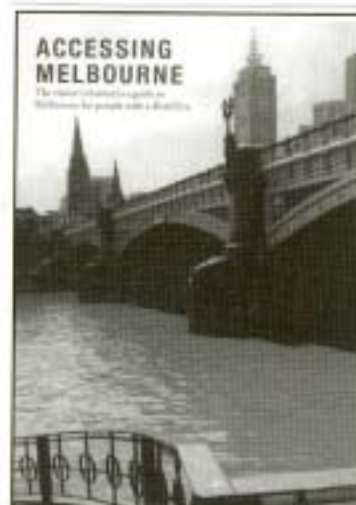
Bruce Cameron - who was responsible for the excellent book, "Easy Access in Australia" - published this book and the standard is just as high. He was able to gain assistance and financial support from the City of Melbourne, Access for All Abilities and the Department of Human services.

Places to visit, places to eat, places to stay, they are all covered in the book. Also included are access maps, parking information, arriving in Melbourne and information on CityLink. The areas of information

covered are far too numerous to mention, so it's best that you see for yourself. After reading it from cover to cover, I now know much more about the city and services for people with disabilities.

As with every book, one or two areas need to be updated, but this will happen in the next edition.

Oh, on the front cover are Melbourne and the Yarra. Now the colour of the river shown does support those who believe that this is the only river in the world, which flows up side down! But ignoring this, there is so much valuable information, facts and figures inside. It's a very good book to have. It's the size of an A5 sheet of paper, but opens to the size of an A4.



It's a compact size and is spiral bound.

PRICE: Free

AVAILABILITY: Contact AQA Victoria and we'll post one to you.

By Ian Williams

Women With Disabilities Program

The 'Women With Disabilities Program' organises activities and outings specially designed for women with disabilities in the community. The 'Women With Disabilities Support Group' is facilitated by Women's Health West and will meet every second Friday from 10.30am - 12.30pm.

Further information is available from Lindy Corbett at Women's Health West each Friday on (03)9689 9588.

The cost of activities is \$2 except for excursions to venues such as the museum where an entrance fee will be charged.

Except for excursions, sessions will be held at the Maribyrnong City Council Rooms, Community Services Department (ground floor), corner Napier and Hyde Street's, Footscray.

The following activities have been organised for women with disabilities:

Workshop: **Self Esteem**

Date: 4th May

Details: To have a healthy self esteem is important for your health. Hear Denise Whimpey, Education and Information Worker speak about this important health issue.

Workshop: **Art Therapy**

Date: 18th May

Details: Di Kearney, a trained art therapist, will be hosting this art therapy session.

Workshop: **Insomnia**

Date: 1st June

Details: Come and hear Jan Adams (Women's Health nurse Women's Health West), discuss 'Insomnia' and its effects in maintaining your health.



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droberts@accessis.com.au



Name: Peter Van Benthem

Age: 32

Disability & level: C5 complete

How did you acquire your disability? Motor bike accident, year 1999

Are you Married/single? I am married with one child

Do you have children? One baby boy

What is your living situation?

I live in Preston with family

Your Survival Tip for others?

Pre book your taxi early

What has been your most embarrassing moment since you have been using a wheelchair for mobility?

I was at a wedding and a person who was excited to see me gave me a big cuddle and hit my control accidentally and drove me through two tables. And we knocked over the wedding cake.

Your greatest achievement?

Being alive and enjoying it

What do you do with your time?

Get out and see things. See friends, eat good food and spoil my son

Why did you choose to live in the Country/City and what are the Draw backs/Positives?

I would like to live where the weather is better than Melbourne's cold

winter. But both me and my wife's family and friends live in Melbourne. Maybe the cold weather might make me move, but at the end of the day, living in Melbourne, where all my needs are close is the best for me.

Your best holiday spot and why?

U.S.A, Seattle, Bumpershoot. It is an event where 200 bands play music over 5 days.

What food do you like best?

I love to try all different foods

If money was no object what would you buy/do?

I would live all over the world. Chase sun, fun and food. Look after my family and friends.

Do you have an internet sight you would recommend?

NO

World Disabled Water-ski Championships



By Rebecca Cullen

World records were slashed at the four day World Disabled Water-ski Championships held at the Melton Reservoir - 22nd - 25th March 2001.

event behind the United Kingdom and the United States.

affected by the weather, delaying competition on Saturday and forcing the cancellation on Sunday.

Competitors from 15 countries took part in the championships, with eight world records falling.



Melton Reservoir was praised by competitors for its world class facilities.

Crowds were treated to spectacular displays of jump, slalom and trick



Australia managed to come away with seven individual gold medals in both men's and women's events, and a further three gold medals in the men's overall competition. Australia placed third in the team

skiing in nine different categories.

Skiers battled on in the rain through the preliminary rounds on Thursday - which was Melbourne's wettest day so far this year. The finals were

Reprinted from 'Melton Express Telegraph'



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With Luxury styling and all the features of a modern passenger car Swift's Conversion is a true **Recreation And Mobility Vehicle** offering easy access and a smooth ride, the RAMV features:

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Electric windows
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Finance arranged
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1 and 2 wheelchair positions
Power door and ramp with remote operation

Benefits

Independence for many disabled people is the ability to travel by car from place to place. The decision to choose the vehicle with which to do it is an important and personal one. Making the wrong decision can be both expensive and impractical. The Swift Motor Group can provide expert advice in helping you to make that choice. The benefits of choosing a Swift Motor Group vehicle conversion are;

Ease of access
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No light

Due to the current economic situation, the light at the end of the tunnel will be turned off until further notice. (From John V.)

Women

I know I'm not going to understand women. I'll never understand how you can take boiling hot wax, pour it onto your upper thigh, rip the hair out by the root, and still be afraid of a spider. (From John V.)

I. D.

A man went to get his driver's license renewed. The line inched along for almost an hour until the man finally got his license. He inspected his photo for a moment and commented to the clerk, "I was standing in line so long, I ended up looking pretty grouchy in this picture".

The clerk looked at his picture closely. "It's okay," he reassured the man. "That's how you're going to look when the cops pull you over anyway". (From John V.)

Two cows

Two cows were chatting over the fence between their fields. The first cow said, "I tell you, this mad-cow-disease is really pretty scary. They say it is spreading fast; I heard it hit some cows down on the Johnson Farm."

The other cow replied, "Hell, I ain't worried, it won't affect us ducks". (From John V.)

The Bible

A little boy opened the big family Bible. He was fascinated as he fingered through the old pages. Suddenly something fell out of the Bible.

He picked up the object and looked at it closely. What he saw was an old leaf that had been pressed in between the pages.

"Mamma, look what I found," the boy called out. "What have you got there, dear?" his mother asked.

With astonishment in the young boy's voice, he answered: "I think it's Adam's underwear". (From John V.)

The Roar

After eating an entire bull, a mountain lion felt so good he started roaring. He kept roaring and roaring until a hunter came along and shot him.

The moral: When you're full of bull, keep your mouth shut. (From John V.)

Never assume

A young executive was leaving the office at 6 p.m. when he found the CEO standing in front of a shredder with a piece of paper in his hand. "Listen," said the CEO, "This is a very sensitive and important document, and my secretary has left. Can you make this thing work?" "Certainly," said the young executive. He turned the machine on, inserted the paper, and pressed the start button. "Excellent, excellent!" said the CEO as his paper disappeared inside the machine. "I just need one copy."

Lesson learned: Never, never assume that your boss knows everything. (From John V.)

Dedicated nurses

A handsome young lad went into the hospital for some minor surgery and the day after the procedure, a friend stopped by to see how his mate was doing. The friend was amazed at the number of nurses who entered the room in short intervals with refreshments, offers to fluff his pillows, make the bed, give back rubs, etc. "Why all the attention?" the friend asked. "You look fine to me."

"I know!" grinned the patient. "But the nurses sorta formed a little fan club when they all heard that my circumcision required twenty-seven stitches."

Dumb things happen!

• Police in America arrested a 22-year-old man at an airport hotel after

he tried to pass two (counterfeit) \$16 bills.

• A man in Johannesburg, South Africa, shot his 49-year-old friend in the face, seriously wounding him, while the two practiced shooting beer cans off each other's head.

• A City Council put a ban on nuclear weapons, setting a \$500 fine for detonating one within city limits.

Talking numbers

What did the number 0 say to the number 8?

"Hey, nice belt!"

It's Japanese!

Hear about the new sushi bar that caters exclusively to lawyers?

It's called, Sosumi.

Rise n' shine

Marge was telling her friend Grace how she gets her son out of bed in the morning. "I just open his door and toss the cat on his bed. You see, he sleeps with his dog."

Making money

Three boys are in the schoolyard bragging about their fathers. The first boy says, "My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a poem, they give him \$50."

The second boy says, "That's nothing. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a song, they give him \$100."

Then little Johnny says, "I got you both beat. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a sermon, and it takes eight people to collect all the money!"

NOTE:

The jokes followed by with (From John V.) were kindly sent in by AQA Victoria member, John F. van Aken. Other jokes have been gathered from the Internet.

CLASSIFIEDS

For Sale

• Ford Falcon EF Gli Station Wagon 1995

Burgundy, 64000 kms, 4 speed automatic, with power steering and air conditioning. Fitted with a removable hand control – suitable for a person with a disability. Includes: tow bar, full set of new tyres, regular service history.

EXCELLENT CONDITION

12 months reg. Reg. No. NHP 437. PRICE: **\$17,500**
PHONE: **9587-2618 (Jake)** (0401/1)

• Motorised wheelchair - Quickie P 120

18 months old, with instruction manual, battery NEAR NEW, new tyres, all black frame & upholstery.

Seat width 45 cm, Back height 40 cm

PHONE: **Donna 9315-0796**

PRICE: **\$2,000** (approx \$4500 new) (0401/1)

• 'JAY 2' cushion, 17x17 .. VERY LITTLE USE.

PRICE: **\$250 ONO**

and

• RVS Page Turner as new

PRICE: **\$1,000 ONO**

PHONE: **Ron 5192 4461** (0800/3)

• **Mobility Seat** (swivel seat): A German built seat, which was installed in a VL Commodore by Freedom Access in Melbourne. The seat rotates and extends out of the car to allow easy and less traumatic transfer in and out of cars. Has head-rest with Velcro for head support attachments.

PRICE: **\$1500 ONO**

• **Covered Trailer:** Suit motorised wheel chair. Tailor built to size for wheelchair. Weather proof, checkerplate tailgate that acts as a ramp and is lockable. Stops lifting and worrying about wheelchair safety and condition.

PRICE: **\$1200**

RING: **Annette Barkley 5823-2086** (0201/2)

WANTED

• Second hand light weight wheelchair

Needs armrests, removable footplates.

To suit man of light weight. Average seat width – not wide

PRICE: Negotiable

PHONE: **9337-8247 (Pat)** (0401/1)

• Manual Wheelchair

16" lightweight rigid wheelchair.

PHONE: **5348-1230 Almut Beringer** (0401/1)

• Portable ramp

Light weight (aluminium or similar)

Any condition. Will pay reasonable price.

Contact: **Naz** at AQA Victoria

PHONE: **9489-0777** Mobile: **0418-535-188**

(0201/2)

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