

# Autumn 2023

# NEWSLETTER

# adss

Asbestos Disease  
Support Society

Asbestos Disease Support Society  
Silicosis Support Network

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[inquiries@silicosissupport.org.au](mailto:inquiries@silicosissupport.org.au)

  
**Silicosis**  
Support Network



DO YOU KNOW  
BEING AN  
**ADSS & SSN  
MEMBER**

There is free assistance through the provision of:

**Information on asbestos & silica related diseases**

**Support from our social worker**

**Clinical support from the registered nurse**

**Medical aids on loan**

**Community morning tea groups and support groups**

**Nutritional advice**

**Occupational therapy assessment**

**Quarterly Newsletter**

**Legal consultation with our preferred lawyers experienced  
in asbestos and silica compensation.**

**Call the Society if you would like to  
discuss any of these services**

**1800 776 412**



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ADSS Staff and Directors would like to wish you a happy and safe Easter Holiday.



# In Loving Memory

Mervyn Sumpton

Lee Graydon

Ray Armstrong

Egire Kaialac

Terrence Collins

Gregory Trevor

Hugh Donnelly Craig

Nancy Mary Cole

William James Dimmick

Jeffrey Breadsell

Terrence Anthony Quinn

## The Star

*A light went out on Earth for me  
The day we said goodbye  
And on that day a star was born,  
The brightest in the sky  
Reaching through the darkness  
With its rays of purest white  
Lighting up the Heavens  
As it once lit up my life  
With beams of love to heal  
The broken heart you left behind  
Where always in my memory  
Your lovely star will shine*



# General Managers Report

LEE MCCALLUM



Welcome to 2023! What a year we have lined up here at the Society, and it has already kicked off with some intensity.

## Health Initiatives

One of the exciting things we have become involved with is The Tradie Health Institute. This is an initiative from The Common Good who are the charity partners with the Prince Charles Hospital. The Common Good are launching The Tradie Health Institute – which is a research centre designed specifically with tradie's in mind to try and keep them happy and healthy.

Bianca Neve (Deputy Chair of the Society) took me along for a tour of the research lab when she was initially invited. Bianca and I were thoroughly impressed with their tour and thought it would be great for the ADSS team and Directors to go along.

Kerrie, Kay, Rhonda, Amanda and myself, along with Emma from Turner Freeman Lawyers, then attended the Prince Charles Hospital for the research lab tour. We all agreed that in the lab is where the magic definitely happens, with some of the world's best surgeon's, researchers and scientists are leading the way in finding a treatment for silicosis. It was very interesting to see the workings of the lab, and exciting to hear the advancements that they have already made and how they are doing it.

Following this, Pat Cini, Trevor Torrens and Tamaryn Caldwell went along to the next lab tour and found it very informative and echoed our sentiments about the research.

We are excited to be asked to assist The Common Good officially launch the Tradie Health Institute in June 2023. It also means that we get the opportunity to collaborate and showcase all the good work that the Society does and continues to do.



## Media

As you may have seen on the news, and around the media generally, is the fight against silicosis. We have had a member become a TV star on "The Project" – which has a national audience doing a short news piece, and The Project are currently discussing a story with another member.

The Project and I conducted an interview about the dangers of silica, engineered stone and how preventable silicosis is. This was an exciting step for the Society as we had the opportunity to discuss silicosis, the dangers of dust and how we assist our members.

As you are all aware, all dust is dangerous and that is very much the message we want out into households to make people aware of the dangers and prevent it happening to them!



# General Managers Report

LEE MCCALLUM



## Conferences

Kay and Kerrie attended the Lung Foundation Australia's national conference on the Gold Coast where we had an information stall. I attended for a short time but was on school pick-up duties so couldn't stay all day unfortunately. Amanda attended some of the information seminars which spoke about targeted lung cancer screening programs, new treatments and therapies that are on the horizon, specialist lung cancer nursing and working in vulnerable communities and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

The Lung Foundations National Conference was Australia's largest multi-disciplinary thoracic oncology conference which brought health care professionals from all over Australia to the Gold Coast for the conference.

It was a great conference, with lots of medical professionals stopping to chat with Kerrie and Kay about the work the Society does and taking away information. We also connected with some other organisations who perform some great work, such as lung screening, and look forward to exploring how we can assist each other moving forward.

As an office we also celebrated International Women's Day by attending a fundraising lunch for the "Small steps 4 Hannah" which is a foundation started after Hannah and her three children whose lives were tragically cut short as a result of domestic violence. This foundation does great work and has recently successfully advocated for a change to domestic violence laws by having "coercive control" recognised as a form of domestic violence.

This year's theme for International Women's Day was "Embrace Equity". Equity isn't just a nice-to-have, it's a must-have.

A focus on gender equity needs to be part of every society's DNA.

And it's critical to understand the difference between equity and equality.

The aim of the IWD 2023 #EmbraceEquity campaign theme is to get the world talking about Why equal opportunities aren't enough. People start from different places, so true inclusion and belonging require equitable action.

All IWD activity is valid, that's what makes IWD inclusive.



# General Managers Report

LEE MCCALLUM



## Society At Work

I have also had my first Information Seminar and Morning Tea forum which I presented alongside Thady and Trevor (yes he can't stay away even in retirement)! It was a great turnout and I am looking forward to bringing this presentation to you all around Queensland.

We spoke about asbestos and silicosis, the dangers, the current treatments, but more importantly, we discussed "all dust in dangerous". A very informative seminar that I won't tell you much about in here – I would rather see you at them!

Kerrie has done a wonderful job in booking the Information Seminar and Morning Tea's – all of which are now booked! So we are travelling around and hope to see as many of you as possible at these wonderful seminars. If you are unsure of when one is coming to your area, or close by, please give us a call and we can let you know.

## Bringing awareness to the next generation

In March, I attended The Australian Industry Trade College in Ipswich to help educate the next generation of tradies on the dangers of asbestos, silicosis and dust.

The Australian Industry Trade College is the leading senior school (years 10, 11 & 12) for students who are wanting a "work-ready" education. These students have the opportunity to learn and experience a wide range of trades, with many often ending up with apprenticeships prior to leaving school.

As the purpose of the College is designed to have young people "work ready", it is a great opportunity to educate them on the very real and present dangers in the workforce.

It is a wonderful program, with a great opportunity to teach young people entering the workforce, and predominately in the construction industry, the dangers of asbestos, silica and dust. We want to continue to reinforce the message that all dust is dangerous!

During the presentation, the young people, who were at the commencement of their journey through the College, had the opportunity to ask lots of questions about the dangers of asbestos, dust, what to look for with asbestos. Importantly, their takeaway learning was that these diseases are entirely preventable with the correct safety equipment and procedures in place.



## Thank you for your donations

The Society would like to thank all those that have made a donation to the Society since the last Newsletter. We consider ourselves to be incredibly lucky to have such generous donations and supporters. Without your generosity we would not be able to provide the services we do, which include the medical aids loans scheme, social worker, clinical nurse and morning tea forums to name a few. We would like to recognise the following donations over \$500.00.

- Ross and Lynette Melville
- John and Elizabeth Wilson
- CFMEU Members
- Turner Freeman Lawyers
- Corvex
- FreshVend
- Vend2Go
- Friends of Halcyon Referral Program

Look forward to our next update,

**Lee**



## ALL DUST IS DANGEROUS

The first Information Seminar of the year was recently held at Toowoomba on 22 February 2023.

A key message of the seminar was that “All Dust is Dangerous”. This has been a topic of discussion recently at many Society functions and, it is important to reiterate the significance of this statement and how it relates to investigation of dust related lung disease in the last 25 years or so.

The focus since the 1990s in terms of work related lung disease has of course been on asbestos. The diagnosis of mesothelioma and other asbestos diseases started to dramatically increase in the late 1980s and this led to the formation of the Dust Diseases Tribunal of New South Wales which is still the only specialist Court in Australia dealing with dust related Court claims.

When that Tribunal was founded in 1989 though its jurisdiction at the time, and this remains the case, was not confined to asbestos related diseases. In fact, many different types of dust related disease were included in the jurisdiction and in addition to asbestos disease these include:-

- Silicosis.
- Talcosis – caused by talc inhalation.
- Farmers’ lung – caused by mouldy hay or straw.
- Bagassosis – caused by bagasse, the residue of the sugar milling process.
- Coal dust disease.
- Byssinosis – caused by cotton dust.

Therefore even in 1989 it was known that there were many different types of dust related conditions that could arise from the workplace and the list given above is not exhaustive of the jurisdiction of the Dust Diseases Tribunal or of occupational lung disease. Welding fumes have also been found to be particularly toxic.

However because of the focus on asbestos related disease and the tragic vast number of cases that have been diagnosed since, asbestos exposure has been focussed on and other dusts and fumes perhaps overlooked.

It has been the recent tragic emergence of silicosis from engineered stone that has refocussed attention not just on silica but on other dust and fumes and their relationship to lung disease of various types.

The quote “All Dust is Dangerous” comes from a textbook on occupational lung disease that is decades old but is possibly even more relevant today than it was then, given the availability of vast numbers of different types of products with often poorly understood importance of materials and substances used in them.

A focus of the Society moving forward will be ongoing education about avoiding any type of dust and fume exposure in the workplace.

There is probably an under diagnosis of non-asbestos related lung disease. A failure to diagnose often leads to a failure to take precautions to protect against these exposures. The recent diagnosis of silicosis amongst young stonemasons from engineered stone is an illustration of this – if not for the rapid onset of this disease there may not by now have been any attempts to curtail the high levels of dust exposure and the resulting current discussion of the banning of engineered stone.

For information about Dust Diseases generally please contact the Society.





# Do you know?

TAMARYN CALDWELL FROM TURNER FREEMAN LAWYERS



Hi All,

My name is Tamaryn Caldwell, Partner of Turner Freeman. Some of you may already know me from assisting you with your compensation claim for your asbestos disease. That is my career passion – assisting people suffering from asbestos and silica related disease to recover compensation. I thoroughly love my work and my clients. I have been working in the area of dust diseases litigation since 2007, when I joined Turner Freeman fresh out of university. I was admitted as a lawyer in 2008 and since then, I have only practiced in the area of dust diseases which has allowed me to build up specialised knowledge and skill in this niche area of law. I was based at our Brisbane office until 2015 when I moved to our newly opened branch office in North Lakes. Although I have been practicing in dust diseases for a long time, I still learn something new about asbestos virtually every week. It is unbelievable just how widely it was used throughout Australia and in some very unusual applications. Dust diseases is an evolving area of law and as many of you are aware, we are now seeing the wide-ranging effects of silica exposure and diseases it can cause, which are not only limited to lung diseases. It certainly is a very interesting and rewarding area of law to work in, and I am very lucky to be part of the Turner Freeman Team!

A bit about me personally – I was born and grew up in Johannesburg, South Africa. Thankfully my parents decided to take the plunge and make the move over to Australia in 2001 for a new beginning and a safer life for us. I had started my law degree in South Africa, but stopped it when we moved to Australia. I lived in Sydney initially, where I studied a double degree in law and business management. In 2007 I moved to Brisbane. I am a mum of two beautiful, energetic and happy children. My 10-year old son is a little soccer crazed and my 11-year old daughter loves all the pretty things in life. My husband is a civil engineer. We have a busy lifestyle, juggling work, school, sports and other commitments, but we try to make it work as best we can. We enjoy downtime with each other, exploring the outdoors, getting away for mini-breaks and especially relaxing at the beach. Friday night Thai dinner and movies is a big favourite in our house.

- 1. What is one of your career highlights?** I have had many highlights in my career over the years, but what leaves me feeling most satisfied is when a good result is reached for my client. Every time a client is happy with an outcome, is a highlight for me. Also, at times a client's exposure to asbestos is not always apparent straight away or easily identified, and a lot of digging and investigative work spanning back decades is needed, and finding information on a source of exposure that can lead to a claim is also a great feeling.
- 2. What is on your bucket list you haven't yet ticked off?** As a family, we would love to do some overseas travel and a common thread between us is a trip to Paris.
- 3. Favourite food?** I love all food! Thai and sushi is a big hit.
- 4. How much vegemite goes on toast?** Hmm, a bit more butter than vegemite. Growing up in South Africa, our equivalent spread was Bovril, it has a bit more of a hearty bite than Vegemite.
- 5. Where do you store your tomato sauce?** Pantry or Fridge? Fridge, definitely. My kids love it nice and cool on their hot food.



# Get to know our Corporate Sponsor

## XVEND VENDING SOLUTIONS

### What is Xvend Vending Solutions about?

We are a local family owned and operated business that is passionate about providing unattended convenience solutions for clients in need of snack, drink & meal options for their staff and customers. I (Lara) tried building my own vending machines when I was in the metal fabrication industry building trailers and truck bodies in the early 2000's. I have always had a love and fascination for vending and the idea of providing small unattended convenience stores to many locations. Vending was always an industry I wanted to pursue.

Fast forward to 2019 and I was looking for a new business to purchase and overhaul once my 3rd child had started school. Stephen and I purchased Xvend in 2019 and haven't looked back. We pride ourselves on delivering a high level of service to the unattended industry along with specialising in the construction industry. With our joint experience in different areas of manufacturing and construction we understand the restraints and specific needs of the industry.



### Why are you a corporate sponsor?

We love being able to give back to the fields and industries we work in wherever we can. ADSS was a perfect fit. When I meet the team at ADSS, heard their stories and felt their passion for helping those affected by asbestos disease and silicosis I knew we had found the perfect organisation to regularly donate to and support so they can provide much needed support to those affected by asbestos related lung diseases.

### What exciting projects you have/will be working on?

We do enjoy taking on sites with specific and tricky needs. The construction industry covers both these issues so we are always looking for newer & quick ways to provide hydration, snacks and meals to difficult sites where there are issues like poor reception due to the build and servicing a volume of staff. We come up with innovative ideas and services to make their lunch breaks more enjoyable and catered to. We are looking forward to the major construction that is happening in SE QLD as we approach the 2032 olympics and find this an exciting time.

We are also constantly growing our fleet and enjoy the challenge of employing and training more staff in our industry.



# Society Social Worker

RHONDA WHEATLEY



Welcome to Autumn 2023, no doubt this year will be full of ups and downs, celebrations, and challenges for all of us. For our members living with lung disease, it is constantly bringing new challenges and changes to their day-to-day function. Why is it that some people can deal with major change and life stressors, while others struggle? One reason can be their level of resilience. What is resilience, why is it so important, and how to can we build on it? Hopefully this article sheds some light on these questions.

Resilience refers to both the process and the outcome of successfully adapting to difficult or challenging life experiences, according to the definition from the American Psychological Association (APA). It's having the mental, emotional, and behavioural flexibility and ability to adjust to both internal and external demands.

It's important to note that being resilient requires a skill set that you can work on and grow over time. Building resilience takes time, strength, and help from people around you; you'll likely experience setbacks along the way. It depends on personal behaviours and skills (like self-esteem and communication skills), as well as external things (like social support and resources available to you).

Being resilient does not mean that people don't experience stress, emotional upheaval, and suffering. Demonstrating resilience includes working through emotional pain and suffering.

Resilience is important because it's needed to process and overcome hardship. Those lacking resilience can get easily overwhelmed and may turn to unhealthy coping mechanisms. Resilient people tap into their strengths and support systems to overcome challenges and work through their problems.

Developing resilience is both complex and personal. It involves a combination of inner strengths and outer resources, and there isn't a universal formula for becoming more resilient.



*The lotus flower embodies resilience, as dark rain from dark clouds slides easily off its petals and it opens itself to the sunshine that follows.*

## Resilience Factors



### What does the research say about why resilience is important?

Resilience is what gives people the emotional strength to cope with trauma, adversity, and hardship. Resilient people utilize their resources, strengths, and skills to overcome challenges and work through setbacks.

A combination of factors contributes to building resilience, and there isn't a simple to-do list to work through adversity. According to resilience theory, other factors that help build resilience include:

**Social support:** Research shows that one's supportive social systems, which can include immediate or extended family, community, friends, and organizations, foster one's resilience in times of crisis or trauma and support resilience in the individual.

**Self-esteem:** A positive sense of self and confidence in one's strengths can stave off feelings of helplessness in the face of adversity. A study published in November 2020 in *Frontiers in Psychology* found that self-esteem and resilience were closely related.

**Coping skills:** Coping and problem-solving skills help empower a person to work through adversity and overcome hardship. Research finds that using positive coping skills (like optimism and sharing) can help bolster resilience more than non-productive coping skills.

# Society Social Worker

RHONDA WHEATLEY



**Communication skills:** being able to communicate clearly and effectively helps people seek support, gather resources, and act. Research shows that those who are able to interact with, show empathy toward, and inspire confidence and trust in others tend to be more resilient.

Emotional regulation: the capacity to manage potentially overwhelming emotions (or seek assistance to work through them) helps people maintain focus when overcoming a challenge and has been linked to improved resilience.

Resilience isn't something people tap into only during overwhelming moments of adversity, according to research on resilience theory. It builds as people encounter all kinds of stressors every day.

You can build your resilience by:

- knowing your strengths and keeping them in mind.
- building your self-esteem — have confidence in your abilities and the positive things in life.
- build healthy relationships.

- knowing when to ask for help.
- managing stress and anxiety levels.
- working on problem solving skills and coping strategies.
- spend time and mental energy on issues you can control and influence, while letting go of things that are outside of your control.

The information about resilience and adapting to difficult life challenges is from the websites below.

<https://www.everydayhealth.com/wellness/resilience/>

<https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/resilience>

<https://www.newcastlefinancialgroup.com.au/blog/5-ways-to-build-resilience/>

<https://afsa.org/enhancing-resilience>

If you would like further information or talk through coping strategies, please call me

**1800 776 412** or **3252 7852.**

**Rhonda Wheatley**

# Society Clinical Nurse

AMANDA HOBBS



Hello! I knew when I walked through the doors on my first day here at ADSS that I was walking into something special. Since day one I have not been disappointed. I know that many of you are very fond of Karen and I have been left with big shoes to fill.

I am hoping to build upon the great work that Karen has done here at ADSS. Working in collaboration with Lee and the team, our year has started off busy with Morning Tea's already commencing.

A little bit about myself; I grew up in Mackay and was raised in and around the cane farms of Eton. I attended the local schools and then went onto the local university. My family still live around the Mackay region, with both of my brothers being nurses at the local hospital.

My partner is an electrician by trade, working in Brisbane now, but still with strong links to the mining industry. He has spent most of his 19 year working career in Moranbah and Emerald.

My nursing career has taken me to Melbourne, Canberra, Bega, Brisbane, Augathella, Charleville, Moranbah, Bundaberg and back to Mackay. I have worked in Medical imaging, acute care, paediatrics, general practice, emergency, medical/surgical,

palliative care, women's health, community nursing and clinical education. My passion is chronic disease and rehabilitation which is why I feel drawn to this role at ADSS.

I am currently studying through James Cook University a post graduate degree in Chronic Disease and Rehabilitation. As you can imagine I am quite excited about the grant that was announced for those person's living with dust related diseases such as Silicosis. From the Commonwealth Government of Health, over the next 3 years, we are not quite sure where this funding will take us in terms of research, but I will do my best to keep you all up to date.

I am looking forward to speaking (and meeting) our members in the coming year. Please do not hesitate to pick up the phone and speak with me, I am here to help you navigate the impacts of dust disease and to talk through any of your concerns you may have about upcoming treatment.

I look forward to hearing meeting and speaking with you.

**Amanda Hobbs**

# On the National Front

**ASBESTOS SCARE CLOSES BRISBANE PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
MATTY HOLDSWORTH – THE COURIER MAIL, FEBRUARY 15, 2023



## **A heritage-listed Brisbane state school had to be closed after asbestos was uncovered in debris during excavation works.**

A heritage-listed Brisbane state school in an up-market suburb had to be closed at the weekend after asbestos was uncovered in debris during excavation works.

The asbestos was found at Ashgrove State School on Thursday, February 9 in construction works for an outdoor learning area, understood to be in proximity of classrooms.

A Department of Education spokeswoman said asbestos could be commonly found in Queensland schools built prior to the 1990s.

Asbestos was removed from nearly 200 state schools in Queensland across the 2020-21 financial year, not including the century-old Ashgrove State School, at a cost of more than \$13m.

The Education Department did not respond to questions regarding the debris being close to classrooms but said the material was “disposed of in line with asbestos protocols and the school community had been informed”.

“The site was fenced off and restricted for student and public access, and a hygienist undertook the removal process which occurred on a weekend outside school hours,” the spokeswoman said.

“These precautions were put in place to ensure that all students and staff were kept safely away from the construction site and to minimise the risk of asbestos fibres becoming airborne”.

The spokeswoman said the incident was managed in accordance with the department’s asbestos management plan.

Principal Anita Bond told parents and caregivers over email last week that the entire school would be closed for the removal.

“Access to this area was already restricted and will continue to be secured until it is removed,” Ms Bond.

“Work in the outdoor learning area will recommence once the asbestos is removed.”



*Asbestos was confirmed to have been found in debris at Ashgrove State School last week.*

# On the National Front

**CURTIN UNIVERSITY STUDY PREDICTS WORKPLACE SILICA EXPOSURE  
COULD CAUSE 10,000 AUSTRALIANS TO DEVELOP LUNG CANCER**  
ABC RADIO PERTH BY ALICIA BRIDGES



*Silicosis is an incurable condition caused by exposure to silica dust. (ABC News)*

The co-author of a new study that predicts up to 10,000 Australians will develop lung cancer from workplace exposure to silica dust says the use of artificial stone for kitchen benchtops should be banned.

## **Key points:**

- Curtin University researchers predict 10,000 Australians will get lung cancer from silica dust based on current workplace exposure
- Engineered stone used for kitchen benchtops is one of the most potent sources of exposure
- Affected workers are calling for “urgent” action from the federal government to improve regulation and reduce workplace exposure

Lin Fritschi, a professor at the Curtin University School of Population, said silica dust — the most potent source of which is artificial stone — is a dangerous product and banning it would save the lives of construction workers.

“This is a terrible disease,” Ms Fritschi told ABC Radio Perth host Nadia Mitsopoulos.

“It’s a fast-moving scarring of the lungs that eventually leads to death. There’s no cure.”

Ms Fritschi and her colleagues at Curtin University used modelling to predict future cases based on the current level of workplace exposure to silica. The harmful dust is found in many building products including sand, soil,

stone, concrete, bricks, glass and mortar.

The study is yet to be peer-reviewed.

“Our modelling predicts more than 10,000 Australians will develop lung cancer and up to 103,000 workers will be diagnosed with silicosis,” the study’s lead researcher Renee Carey said.

Almost 500 Australians are living with silicosis, and almost all were diagnosed within the past three years and linked to stonemasonry, according to a report by the National Dust Disease Taskforce.

Clinicians and unions recently said the number of cases currently in the community was likely to be much higher because many workers were yet to be diagnosed.

## **Rising cases linked to popularity of stone**

According to the taskforce report, the significant rise in case numbers since 2018 has occurred in tandem with a resurgence in the popularity of engineered stone for kitchen benchtops.

In 2020, a Perth father became the first person in Western Australia to launch legal action over silicosis. He sued the four companies he had worked for over lost income, pain and suffering, and future medical expenses.

More recently, workers in various industries have called on the new Labor government to “urgently” introduce tougher national regulations to reduce the harm associated with working with silica dust.

# On the National Front

## CURTIN UNIVERSITY STUDY PREDICTS WORKPLACE SILICA EXPOSURE COULD CAUSE 10,000 AUSTRALIANS TO DEVELOP LUNG CANCER ABC RADIO PERTH BY ALICIA BRIDGES

In its final report, the National Dust Disease Taskforce recommended starting the process to ban importation of “some or all” engineered stone products by July, 2024.

Ms Fritschi said the ban should instead be implemented by 2024, rather than starting the process to ban it at that time.

If a ban was put into effect, the Curtin research estimated almost 100 lung cancers and 1,000 silicosis cases could be prevented.

*“While a complete ban of engineered stone would be the best option, it is possible to reduce the health impacts of working with engineered stone by various methods,” she said.*

### **Calls for regulation**

Consistent use of high-quality respiratory protection was one key method of managing the risk, Ms Fritschi said.

Experts have already been calling for Safe Work Australia to reduce the maximum allowable dust exposure limit, and for local and state governments to enact laws that better protect workers.

The National Dust Disease Taskforce report made a series of other recommendations.

Key recommendations included providing better support for affected workers, more frequent screening assessments and the creation of a national governance system and register of cases.

Federal Workplace Relations Minister Tony Burke told the ABC last month the government “holds issues of workplace safety very close to its heart”.

“In opposition, I met with people who had contracted silicosis at work — the current standards had clearly failed them,” Mr Burke said.

“I’ll have more to say later, but this is an issue I’ll be pursuing with my state counterparts.”

Curtin University said its modelling involves computer simulation and mathematical models using existing “real-world” measurements.



Tony Kotlin, who has been diagnosed with the incurable lung disease silicosis, worked in the underground mining industry for 33 years (Pic: ABC News)

## BRAZIL SINKS AIRCRAFT CARRIER IN ATLANTIC DESPITE PRESENCE OF ASBESTOS AND TOXIC MATERIALS

SAT 4 FEB 2023



### **Environmental activists had sought to halt the planned scuttling of the warship, warning that it could pollute the marine food chain**

Brazil has sunk a decommissioned aircraft carrier despite environmental groups claiming the former French ship was packed with toxic materials.

The “planned and controlled sinking occurred late in the afternoon” on Friday, 350km off the Brazilian coast in the Atlantic Ocean, in an area with an approximate depth of 5,000 meters (16,000 feet), the navy said in a statement.

The decision to scuttle the six-decade-old São Paulo, announced Thursday, came after Brazilian authorities had tried in vain to find a port willing to welcome it.

Though defence officials said they would sink the vessel in the “safest area”, environmentalists criticised the decision, saying the aircraft carrier contained tons of asbestos, heavy metals and other toxic materials that could leach into the water and pollute the marine food chain.

The Basel Action Network called on the Brazilian president, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva – who vowed to reverse surging environmental destruction when he took office last month – to immediately halt the “dangerous” plan.

The group issued a joint statement with Greenpeace and Sea Shepherd on Friday, accusing Brazil of having violated “three international treaties” on the environment by sinking the ship, which the NGOs said could cause “incalculable” damage to marine life and coastal communities.

Other “environmentally responsible measures could have been adopted, but once again, the importance of protecting the oceans, which are vital for the life of the planet, was treated with negligence”, said Leandro Ramos, director of programs for Greenpeace Brazil.

Brazilian authorities insisted it was better to sink the ship on purpose rather than allow it to sink spontaneously on its own.

The navy said it had chosen a spot for sinking that considered “the security of navigation and the environment” and “the mitigation of the impacts on public health, fishing activities and ecosystems”.

A judge overruled a last-minute legal bid to stop the operation, saying that an “unplanned” scuttling could be even worse for the environment than the “controlled” sinking, local media reported.

He called the situation “tragic and regrettable”.

Built in the late 1950s in France – whose navy sailed it for 37 years as the Foch – the aircraft carrier took part in France’s first nuclear tests in the Pacific in the 1960s, and was deployed in Africa, the Middle East and the former Yugoslavia from the 1970s to 1990s.

Brazil bought the 266-metre aircraft carrier for \$12m in 2000.

A fire broke out onboard in 2005, accelerating the ageing ship’s decline.

Last year, Brazil authorised Turkish firm Sok Denizcilik to dismantle the São Paulo for scrap metal. But in August, just as a tugboat was about to tow it into the Mediterranean Sea, Turkish environmental authorities blocked the plan.

Brazil then brought the aircraft carrier back but did not allow it into port, citing the “high risk” to the environment.



# Around the World

## J&J SUBSIDIARY CLAIMS KEY TALC RESEARCH IS FRAUDULENT

REBECCA TRAGER 7 FEBRUARY 2023

SENIOR US CORRESPONDENT, CHEMISTRY WORLD

### **Complaint alleges study that helped link talc to cancer contained false information**

Johnson & Johnson's (J&J) US subsidiary, LTL Management, has filed a legal complaint claiming that research describing a link between mesothelioma and cosmetic talc is fraudulent and should be retracted and/or corrected.

LTL was formed in 2021 to assume J&J's liabilities in talc litigation, covering thousands of lawsuits asserting Johnsons Baby Powder and other talc products caused plaintiffs' cancers. LTL promptly filed for bankruptcy protection in an effort to limit that liability as the litigation continues.

In mid-December, LTL filed a complaint against Jacqueline Moline, lead researcher of a 2019 study describing '33 cases of malignant mesothelioma among individuals with no known asbestos exposure other than cosmetic talcum powder'.

But LTL alleges that this claim is false, because at least one of the study subjects had admitted being exposed to other sources of asbestos – at a textile factory – and had sought compensation relating to that exposure. LTL further suggests Moline either knew the claim was false, or disregarded evidence contradicting it. The firm accuses Moline of 'repeatedly and widely' publishing disparaging statements about talc powder products, including Johnson's Baby Powder.

Meanwhile, J&J is withdrawing all talc-based products worldwide, replacing them with formulations based on cornstarch that are already sold in many countries. In part, J&J has attributed this decision to the ongoing talc litigation.

The managing editor of the Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, Stacieann Yuhasz, told Retraction Watch that the journal 'has received a letter to the editor regarding the Moline publication, and Dr. Moline has notified JOEM that a response will be submitted late January.'



Source: © Justin Sullivan/Getty Images

*J&J has withdrawn all talc-based powders worldwide, replacing them with cornstarch formulations, in part due to US cancer litigation*

# Members Spotlight



## TREVOR BALLANGARRY

Hi All!

For the first 2 years of my life I lived with Mum and Dad. My father was a fettle on the railways, and he was sent to Sydney and I went to the Bowraville Mission when I was around 2 years old. Here I lived with my Aunties, Uncles and Granny Florence Ballangarry. I really treasure this time as I learnt all about my culture, and learning from an early age ensured I knew the importance and I look back fondly.

When I was around five (5) years old, I went back to live with my parents at Browns Crossing. I started school at Eungai Creek. During the mid 50's, Dad was sent to Clyde railway camp, and we all moved there as a family. I cannot remember what grade I was in, recall it was the early years of schooling, but I just wouldn't go to school. Mum and Dad ended up sending me to my Aunt and Uncle who lived on a dairy farm, and I went back to school and onto Macksville High School.

I returned to Sydney when I was about 16 years old. In Sydney I met my wife, Janice - and we are still happily married today. Janice and I married on the 22nd December 1967. We didn't want a big fanfare wedding, we caught the train to the Sydney registry, married, and went back home on the train.

Janice and I moved back to Nambucca Valley, but in early 1972 we moved to Archerfield, Queensland. Initially working in pubs and clubs as a bouncer, although I'm not real tall back in those days I was pretty handy with my fists.

After moving to Queensland, I got into the water and sewerage industry, which I always wanted to do. Initially working for Max Watt Constructions, then onto Brisbane City Council. I then moved to Redcliffe City Council which became Moreton Bay City Council. I worked 37.5 years in local government.

After 45 years in Queensland, Janice and I decided to return "home" to Nambucca Valley. We purchased just under 20 acres in Yarranbella NSW, where we live today. Our little patch of paradise was originally a dairy farm, which the old dairy and silo still stand today, and we live under Whip Mountain.

Janice and I have raised three (3) very amazing sons', who are all doing very well for themselves, and we are extremely proud of them.

My asbestos exposure happened when working for local government in and around plumbing pipes that were cut with a quick cut saw and no water. This resulted in lots of dust. Workplace Health and Safety wasn't a thing until around 2005-2006, and by that time the "horse had bolted".

Around Easter 2021, I was walking to the barn to do some work on the little slasher and couldn't catch my breath, struggling for around 30 minutes. I spent 13 days in Coffs Harbour Hospital having fluid drained from my lung and I was diagnosed with Mesothelioma.

Originally, I was told I had 6 months life expectancy. I thought to myself "No! I am doing this on my terms". I have learnt that I need to listen to my body. I eat well, still drink alcohol on occasion when Janice and I go to the club and rest when I am tired. I keep myself occupied - I don't sit and brood about it.

I have also learnt to share the emotional load. I initially didn't tell Janice as I didn't want to worry her. I have now learnt that this was the wrong thing to do.

With Janice's support, I ran for local council election in March 2021 - and won. I am up for re-election in March 2024 and will be running again (with Janice's blessing of course). This keeps me occupied and motivated.

Janice and I are extremely happy. We take each day as it comes and are currently renovating our home. I have stuck to my digs, and I am still here today. I have completed five (5) sessions of radiation therapy, am passing fluid naturally after having the drain removed and have started the Astra Zenica trial - which is a two (2) year trial. I am living life, with this disease, on my terms. Janice and I enjoy our life and look forward to what tomorrow holds.



# Get to know our Directors

## BIANCA NEVE



Following a personal experience with Mesothelioma, Bianca first became involved with the Asbestos Disease Support Society in 2008 as a member. Since that time, Bianca was elected as a pro-bono director of the Asbestos Disease Support Society in 2015, and has been the Deputy Chair of the Society Board since 2019.

Bianca is also a pro-bono director and Chair of the Board, at Danger Sun Overhead, a not-for-profit focused on bringing awareness to sun exposure in the workplace.

Bianca has broad ranging experience with asbestos and silica exposure, ranging from working in large mid-tier law firms that had dust speciality teams, to working in the construction industry co-ordinating the delivery of asbestos and silica exposure training on large major multi-company project builds around the Brisbane CBD.

1. **What is one of your career highlights?** I have been privileged to have had a few to date but I would probably have to say the most significant was working in the legal system for almost 20 years looking after those who have been unfairly disadvantaged whether it was through sustaining a workplace injury, an asbestos / dust related disease or being unfairly treated at work requiring some employment law support.
2. **What is on your bucket list you haven't yet ticked off?** A Winter experience in Canada dog sledding and ice fishing in a shanty!
3. **Favourite food?** Ooooo so many! Probably Thai and a Fergburger from Queenstown NZ. Do yourself a favour and go and try one – you won't look back!
4. **How much vegemite goes on toast?** Very lightly and right to the corners!
5. **Where do you store your tomato sauce?** Pantry or Fridge? Definitely the pantry but well shaken!



# Get to know our Directors

## GARRY ROGERS

Hi!

I am one of the Director's of ADSS and truly enjoy being part of the Society. I am currently semi-retired (I couldn't quite take the jump into full retirement) after 25 years as an Organiser representing workers for the CEPU. I currently work part time as a Facility Maintenance Coordinator which keeps me out of trouble and helps fund my growing bucket list of things I want to tick off once I take the leap into full retirement.

I spent six (6) years with the Telecommunications Union and then 19 years with the ETU. Whilst with the ETC I regularly assisted members with asbestos and silica matters.

I have been campaigning about the dangers of dust, asbestos in particular, for over 10 years, and been involved with ADSS for the past six (6) years. I wanted to be involved with ADSS as I have seen the harm that dust fibres cause to people and believe that ADSS delivers a very high level of support to those affected by dust diseases. It is my way of also giving back, and being involved to continue to raise awareness of the dangers of asbestos and other dust related diseases.

Now for the all-important questions from ADSS to Garry:

1. **What is one of your career highlights?** I have so many career highlights and they all involve workers collectively taking action to improve both their individual situation and industry they work in. The one that stands out for me most is the day the ETU members at the OIGlass factory voted to strike indefinitely for better wages and conditions. It was a 17 week strike with a picket line at the South Brisbane factory, and the multinational company capitulated on our claims. As the Organiser in charge of that dispute, every day I saw the members and the community that supported them strengthen their resolve and I learnt so much from everyone on that picket.
2. **What is on your bucket list you haven't yet ticked off?** The big thing on the bucket list that, I have not done yet, is to walk the Camino de Santiago trail from France into Spain. I believe it is a humbling test of individual endurance and great way to see that part of Europe.
3. **Favourite food?** My favourite food is Asian cuisine. Everything from Vietnamese spicy beef noodle soup to Thai Chiang Mai noodle (Khao Soi).
4. **How much vegemite goes on toast?** My Vegemite must be spread thick and to each edge and corner or the slice of toast.
5. **Where do you store your Aussie made tomato sauce? Pantry or Fridge?** In the pantry next to the BBQ sauce!

# Kerrie's Korner

KERRIE WILLIAMS



Welcome to my little section of the newsletter. Here I will list our upcoming events, share some photos and you will learn a little bit about the ADSS Staff.

Our Coffee Catch up groups are continuing to grow. We have welcomed new members to our outings as well as welcomed back our regulars. It has been lovely getting to know you all and we look forward to future catchups over coffee and cake.

We currently have 8 coffee catch up groups that meet up throughout the year.

**Bundaberg:** Wednesday, 5 April, 3 May and 7 June

**Chermside:** Thursday, 6 April & 1 June

**Hervey Bay:** Wednesday, 12 April & 14 June

**Sunnybank:** Friday, 14 April, 12 May & 9 June

**Rockhampton:** Thursday, 13 April, 18 May & 15 June

**Ipswich:** Tuesday, 26 April, 23 May & 27 June

**Sunshine Coast:** Wednesday, 22 March & 28 June

**Gold Coast:** Thursday 27 April & 27 July

**Please call the Society for further details or to RSVP to any of our events: 1800 776 412**

## Q & A by the coffee machine with Rhonda:

**What three words would you use to describe your role?** Counsellor, advocate and help with navigating complex systems. (Sorry not 3 words!)

**What do you like most about your job?** Talking with adss members and providing individualised support as needed.

**What is your motto or personal mantra?** Embrace change and the new project.

**Given a chance, who would you like to be for a day?** My grandmother.

**If you could witness any historical event, what would you want to see?** Paris Peace Treaties, 1947

**What's your favourite line from a movie?** A spoon full of sugar makes the medicine go down.

**If you could meet anyone in the world dead or alive, who would it be and why?** My grandmother, who died in 1930. To learn from this amazing feminist, teacher, and mother of 7!

**Favourite travel spot?** Dharamshala, India

**What book did you last read?** Small Miracles by Ann Booth

**What did you want to be when growing up?** Veterinarian



# 2023 ADSS | T/F MORNING TEA EVENTS

Redlands RSL - 29 March  
Ballina RSL - 11 April  
Maroochydore RSL - 19 April  
Kingaroy RSL - 9 May  
Kedron Wavell (Chermside) - 17 May  
Beaudesert RSL - 7 June  
Warwick RSL - 13 June  
Brothers Leagues (Cairns) - 26 June  
Townsville RSL - 27 June  
Magpies Sporting Club (Mackay) - 28 June  
Rockhampton Leagues Club - 29 June  
Gladstone Events Centre - 11 July  
Bundaberg Sports Club - 12 July  
Hervey Bay Boat Club - 13 July  
Pavilion Conference Centre (Gympie) - 14 July  
Diggers Services Club (Logan) - 26 July  
Norths Leagues Club (Kallangur) - 7 August  
Currumbin RSL - 17 August  
Brothers Leagues (Ipswich) - 5 September

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Come along and join as a community for morning tea and presentations by ADSS and Turner Freeman Lawyers on asbestos, silica and other dust related diseases.

Please call the Society on **1800 776 412** to RSVP or for further information on any of our events.



# The Society at Work



7.12.22 - Bundaberg Xmas Lunch



7.12.22 - Bundaberg Xmas Lunch



9.12.22 - CFMEU Christmas Toy Drive



12.12.22 - Summer Newsletter Mail Out



14.12.22 - Hervey Bay Xmas Lunch



16.12.22 - ADSS Last Day of 2022



16.12.22 - Trevors Last Day



12.1.23 - PCH Lab Tour



1.2.23 - Bundaberg Coffee Group



19.1.23 - Rockhampton Coffee Group

# The Society at Work



2.2.23 - Chermside Coffee Group



8.2.23 - Hervey Bay Coffee Group



10.2.23 - Sunnybank Coffee Group



15.2.23 - Rockhampton Coffee Group



15.2.23 - Christine Grange -  
Rockhampton Facilitator



22.2.23 - Toowoomba  
Morning Tea Event



28.2.23 - Ipswich Coffee Group



12.3.23 - International  
Womens Day Fun Run



14.3.23 Gold Coast  
Morning Tea Event



16.3.23 Rockhampton Coffee Group

# Support Those Who Support The Society



Thanks to QLD Health for providing funding to ADSS to help carry on our services.

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The contact details for all our corporate sponsors and corporate members are available by ringing the ADSS office on 1800 776 412

### DONATE NOW

ADSS is an endorsed charity (ABN 29 150 479 514).

Donations of \$2.00 or more are tax deductible.

*We thank all members for their ongoing support.*

