

Spring 2023
NEWSLETTER

adss

Asbestos Disease
Support Society

Asbestos Disease Support Society
Silicosis Support Network

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1800 776 412 | inquiries@adss.org.au

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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Annual General Meeting

November 30

Broncos Leagues Club
Darcey Mitchell Room
9am for a prompt 9.30am start

In Loving Memory

In loving memory

Colin Murray Brown

Ken Bucknall

David Dewar

Donald John Alexander West

David John Lemcke

Ronald William Lousick

Alan John Jennions

Brenda Jesse

Lester Caterer

Graham Hayes

Delma Archer

Owen Bargwanna

Aubrey (Jim) Joseph Lee

Alistair McDonald Hunter

Edward Hudson

David (John) Stone



General Managers Report



JOHN SHENFIELD

I will start this report by introducing myself.

I was the General Manger of The Building Industry Redundancy Trust (BERT) and Construction Income Protection Ltd (CIPL) until recently.

Both those organisations have an ongoing history of providing tangible financial support to ADSS as well as moral support and goodwill. As a result, I have a decent appreciation of the outstanding work performed by ADSS and its volunteers.

When the Directors suggested I come aboard, I had no hesitation. In truth I feel honoured to play a role in such a worthwhile charity.

I have been with ADSS for all of 2 weeks and am still finding my feet. The wonderful team of Kerrie, Kay and Rhonda have made me feel very welcome, as have the Directors. I have not met many of the Members and Volunteers yet but I plan to do so over next period – they play such an important role in the success of ADSS.

Annual Charity Race Day

The Annual Charity Race Day continues to be successful both as an event to fly the ADSS flag and as a money maker for us.



This year we raised \$163,000 dollars!! A significant amount of income

We enjoyed a wonderful turnout from members of the construction and allied industries and a great day was had by all.

Thanks to all of those who worked so hard to make the event such a success.

In this regard I must single out the indefatigable Bud Neiland for his special efforts.

Long may the ADSS Race Day continue.



Winners of the raffle were:

First Prize

Sponsors: Canberra Tradesmen's Union Club Ltd, FTF Pty Ltd, Total Tools

Trailer plus various goods

Ticket number: 212

Winner: Damien O'Brien

Second Prize

Sponsors: Turner Freeman Lawyers

\$1,500 Flight Centre Travel Voucher

Ticket number: 291

Winner: Paul (Mort) Williams

Third Prize

Sponsors: Turner Freeman Lawyers

\$1,000 Various Gift Cards

Ticket number: 1478

Winner: Joel Harton



General Managers Report



JOHN SHENFIELD

ACTU Health Work Conference

Andrew Ramsay attended the Heathy Work Conference organised by ACTU, as our representative.

He delivered an address to the conference outlining the goals and achievements of ADSS and was well received.



Marty Branigan, Owner / Manager, BOQ Winston Glades presenting a cheque to ADSS from the recent Charity Golf Day.

Union Aid Abroad (APHEDA) has a programme to eradicate asbestos mining and use of asbestos products overseas particularly in Third World countries.

They interviewed Andrew with the purpose of their learning about ADSS and its contribution to the cause.

Thanks for these efforts, Andrew.

We remain frustrated in our efforts to ban or at least modify the "10 square metre" rule. Andrew and Geoff had a meeting with QLD government officials who exhibited little enthusiasm for change.

We will not be giving up on this one and the battle will continue.

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. Without your kind financial support, the Society would not be in a position to provide the services, advocate on your behalf or lobby Government for improvement in asbestos related matters. We would like to recognise the following donations over \$500:

Turner Freeman Lawyers

CFMEU Members

FreshVend

Fernanda Moffat

Andrew Bungey

Helen Knox

HazSure Pty Ltd

Branigan Investments PL (BOQ Winston Gardens)

Voctec (Aust) Pty Ltd

Euro Precast (Qld) Pty Ltd

De Martin & Gasparini

A-Tech Australia Pty Ltd

Reo-Tek Pty Ltd

Polyseal Waterproofing QLD

A generous bequest from The Late Bill Dimmick

Best Wishes

John Shenfield

General Manager



Get to know our Corporate Sponsor

HYPE PROMOTIONS



Hype Promotions is a Queensland owned and operated boutique promotional product company, connecting with your customers since 2013, providing a personalised service to accommodate your unique promotional marketing needs. We have been providing ADSS since our inception with their uniforms and merchandise seen at events and morning teas.

Hype offer nationwide delivery servicing metropolitan and regional areas all over Australia. We specialise in an extensive range of quality corporate gifts, promotional merchandise, sporting and corporate apparel using all the latest branding techniques to suit every application.

Products are made both here in Australia and offshore with local production and warehousing enables us to provide quick turnarounds and accommodate urgent and last minute requests. For bespoke products we can source these from our offshore partners with competitive pricing.



Fred & Jo Madgen

OUR MISSION

In all that we love to do, you and your brand are important to us and complete satisfaction is our intent as we aim to curate an easy and great experience when dealing with us.

We aim to offer our clients an honest, professional and reliable service, delivered on TIME.

We aim to use only the best quality products from our valued suppliers.

We aim to build lasting business relationships about being mutually beneficial to one another – just ask ADSS for a referral.

With over 40 years combined experience in the industry let the masters in quality Branded Apparel & Promotional Products create a lasting impression for your Brand.

Please feel free to contact Fred or Jo Madgen to discuss any future projects – 07 3192 9855 or email

sales@hypepromotions.com.au

www.hypepromotions.com.au





WHAT DO I DO IF I AM CONCERNED ABOUT DUST EXPOSURE?

Members of ADSS and I are often contacted by persons who have been exposed to dust – be it asbestos dust, silica dust, or some other form of harmful dust often in the workplace, asking “what do I do?” This is in the context of not yet being diagnosed with lung disease but being concerned.

The answer to the question depends upon the circumstances of the dust exposure. When did it occur? What type of dust was the person exposed to? What was the intensity or duration of the dust exposure?

There are a few key concepts that are important to understand in terms of the development of dust disease that provide answers to the above questions.

Latency period

A common misconception amongst persons exposed to harmful dust such as asbestos for example, is that disease can develop very quickly. The opposite is usually true. There is what is referred to as a latency period – the time between exposure to asbestos and other dust and development of lung disease.

For instance, in terms of development of mesothelioma – an asbestos cancer, the average period between first exposure and development of mesothelioma is 37 years. This explains why the epidemic of asbestos disease developed – large numbers of people could be exposed to asbestos for long periods of time, seemingly with no ill effect, and then quite suddenly after the latency period elapses, disease starts to appear.

More recently with high levels of silica exposure, such as engineered stone, latency periods have been shortened because of the intensity of the exposure.

However, when someone was exposed to dust does govern what needs to be done in terms of investigating whether there is a dust disease and what else should be done.

Certainly all dust exposure should cease. However, if the exposure was quite recent – in the last few years, it is unlikely that any chest x-ray or chest CT scan would show up any disease. It could be helpful for baseline to see what the state of the lungs are, but it is highly unlikely that there would be any signs of any lung disease.

For someone though exposed decades ago, then chest x-raying and chest CT scanning would be

very important – particularly if respiratory symptoms such as breathing problems are developing. It would be essential then to arrange some radiographic investigation and that is generally the advice given – see your GP and have a chest x-ray or ideally a chest CT scan, if appropriate.

Nature, Intensity and Duration of Dust Exposure

A common theme in seminars that have been conducted around the State in recent years is that “All Dust is Dangerous”. All dust exposure should be avoided, whatever it may be. Some dusts though are certainly more dangerous to the lungs than others. Asbestos and silica are obvious examples.

The other issue though is what is the extent or duration of the dust exposure. Was it intense over a short period, steady exposure over years of work, or a “one-off” exposure such as a home renovation?

Generally speaking, conditions such as asbestosis, silicosis, and other fibrotic lung disease – scarring of the lung tissue, are associated with prolonged exposure in the workplace over quite some time. Mesothelioma can result though from brief exposure.

If a person has had long term dust exposure in the workplace the investigations that need to be done, particularly if symptoms are developing, would include not just radiology but if disease is seen, lung function testing and referral to a Respiratory Physician. Obviously if there is ongoing dust exposure this should cease.

Intensity of exposure is also an important consideration. With engineered stone as noted above, there have been very recent intense levels of silica exposure (through cutting engineered stone that contains in excess of 95% silica) often with no precaution whatsoever, leading to very intense periods of dust exposure. This heavy burden of dust exposure in a short period of time has been proved to be extremely dangerous to the lungs and causative of, for instance, silicosis. If there have been short, sharp, and intense periods of dust exposure – particularly to high levels of silica or asbestos, immediate cessation of dust exposure and immediate investigation into the state of the lungs through radiology and lung function testing is paramount.

In addition, there have been some treatments developed, such as lung lavage – a lung washing, to

Our Legal Advisor



THADY BLUNDELL

try to rid the lungs of silica crystals. This treatment is being conducted at Prince Charles Hospital.

Conclusion

Therefore, the answer to the question “what do I do in respect of dust exposure?” depends on a variety of factors. Certainly all dust exposure should cease and be avoided. From there, depending upon symptoms and when the exposure occurred and the intensity of the exposure, other investigations can commence – usually starting with a simple chest x-ray.

Concern about dust exposure is something that members of the Society and I are frequently contacted about. Many, many thousands of persons have been exposed to harmful dusts in Queensland over the years. If you have concerns, contact the Society immediately for initial advice.



Society Social Worker

RHONDA WHEATLEY



Welcome Spring, the beautiful flowers, and the stunning Jacaranda trees.

This will be my final newsletter article as I am leaving ADSS, off on a new adventure. I will be part of the ever-increasing number of grey nomads. The Society's members have helped me realize the importance of 'Carpe diem: to seize the day', enjoying the time we have and thus my decision to travel Australia.



I would like to thank all members, their families, and friends for helping me understand occupational dust disease and its impact from a very personal perspective.

Initially two years ago my knowledge about asbestos and silica were minimal. Thanks to the support from Kay and Kerrie, I am now confident to explain the details and possible outcomes to members newly diagnosed, stakeholders as well as my family and friends. Kay and Kerrie have a wealth of skills and knowledge: expertise and understanding of occupational dust disease, prevention, and the large network of supportive agencies. They are an amazing team. It has been an absolute pleasure working with you both.

I would like to welcome John, ADSS new General Manager and thank him for steering the ship through some rough waters. It has been only a few weeks, but I am very glad to have been working with you.

I would also like to thank Thady and all the lawyers from Turner Freeman, who have an amazingly broad knowledge of dust diseases and the causes. I have spoken with numerous members who have been so grateful for the professionalism, kindness and respect shown by Turner Freeman, during what can be, a very difficult time in their lives.

I admit when I first started with ADSS I was a little wary of the CFMEU, this was completely unfounded! All the CFMEU staff have been very friendly and helpful – a big

shout out to Despina who always greets me with a smile in the mornings, Helen her predecessor, Bud for his ongoing enthusiasm and Paul who has been a huge support.

Part of my role involves working with other agencies. Thanks to Beth and all the staff at DOTS Allied Health, who have assisted members with both Occupational Therapy and Dietetic assessments, making a significant difference for members in their day-to-day lives. Also, to the Australian Lung Foundation, especially Lilanie and Elizabeth who have been working collaboratively with ADSS, in context of members who have been diagnosed with silicosis, raising awareness, and providing peer support.

I will miss working at ADSS, especially speaking with members, and hearing their life stories, full of laughter, achievements, resilience, and most of all their wisdom. It has been a privilege to provide the advocacy, counselling, and support to members and their families.

Many members would have heard me go on about mindfulness to give 'your heart and head a rest' so I thought a summary may be helpful. There have been numerous studies to the benefits of mindfulness, I have added some websites if you would like further information.



Society Social Worker

RHONDA WHEATLEY



Mindfulness exercises:

One Mindfulness practice is about being aware of your breath.

Realizing the changes within your abdominal area as your body receives and adapts to the inflow of air each time you inhale and exhale. Practicing box or square breathing can be helpful to relax, increase lung capacity and 'be in the moment'.

Focusing your attention on the food you are eating is another example of mindfulness.

Fully feeling and paying attention to its temperature, its crunchiness, the smell, or its flavour. Using all your senses, helps trick 'the monkey mind' into being in the present.

When you are walking, paying attention to how you are feeling and your immediate surroundings.

Are you carrying a heavy bag? Are you in a rush and your heart is beating faster than if you were calmly walking? Is the street quiet or noisy, empty, or filled up with people? What is the weather like, the warmth of the sun or a cool breeze? Mindful walking is about being grounded in the present, if possible, in bare feet adds to the sensory experience.

Here are a few websites that may be helpful:

<https://www.mindful.org/meditation/mindfulness-getting-started/>

<https://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/Looking-After-Yourself>

<https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/resources-support/wellbeing/improve-wellbeing/mindfulness-and-meditation/>

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



On the National Front

FAMILIES SEEK CLARITY ABOUT WITTENOOM CEMETERY ACCESS AFTER DEMOLITION OF ASBESTOS TOWN
TOM ROBINSON - ABC PILBARA, WED 10 MAY 2023



Tania Mlodawski's grave is among those people who want to keep visiting at Wittenoom.

Families whose loved ones are buried in the Wittenoom cemetery are demanding to know whether they will be able to visit the graves after the Western Australian asbestos ghost town is demolished.

The Pilbara town was the site of significant asbestos mining from the 1930s to 1966 and is being demolished by the state government to help deter people from visiting the highly contaminated site.

The cemetery will be left untouched, but it is not clear whether people connected to the town will be able to access the cemetery to pay respects to their deceased relatives.

Key points:

- Wittenoom will soon be demolished and buried, but families connected to the ghost town want access to relatives' graves
- All roads to the former town and nearby gorge are permanently closed
- The cemetery will be left untouched but the state government has not said how it plans to manage future access

Adelaide resident Belinda McNicol said her sister, Natasha Govier, was buried at the cemetery when she died shortly after birth in 1973.

She said her family had been left in the dark regarding how the cemetery would be managed and whether it would remain open for access after Wittenoom was demolished.



Demolition started recently, with all material to be buried onsite.



The Wittenoom area has been fenced off and authorities have warned people to stay away.

On the National Front

FAMILIES SEEK CLARITY ABOUT WITTENOOM CEMETERY ACCESS AFTER DEMOLITION OF ASBESTOS TOWN
TOM ROBINSON - ABC PILBARA, WED 10 MAY 2023



Wittenoom sits next to picturesque gorges and mountains in northern WA.

“There’s been no communication. How do you close down a town and a cemetery and not tell any of the family that it impacts?” Ms McNicol said.

Wittenoom was officially closed last year and the government has permanently closed all roads into town, and the nearby gorge, to undertake the demolition and warned any trespassers could be prosecuted.

The site is home to millions of tonnes of asbestos tailings, across more than 46,000 hectares, which was left by the mining industry.

Calls for communication

Photos posted on social media from the site show a makeshift sign displaying “cemetery parking”, with the person who made the post stating an area had been cleared for cars.

Ms McNicol said she wanted clarity from the government, and expected more consultation with families who had relatives buried at Wittenoom.

“What they’re doing is disgusting. And it makes it appear even more sneaky,” she said.

“The fact that they haven’t reached out to families is concerning.”

A Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) spokesperson said the cemetery remained “insitu and undisturbed”.

They did not answer questions about future access to the site or whether visitors to the cemetery would be

treated as trespassers after demolition was completed.

The spokesperson said people accessing or camping in areas near Wittenoom after being advised to move on could be subject to action by the department.

An ‘unfair’ situation

Roman Mlodawski’s sister Tania was born in Wittenoom but died shortly after birth and was buried there in 1958.

He described any measures to prevent people from visiting the cemetery as “very unfair”.

“I think it’d be absolutely ridiculous,” Mr Mlodawski said.

“That’s effectively denying your right to be with your deceased loved ones.”

Both Mr Mlodawski and Ms McNicol said they felt an ongoing connection to the town and hoped to visit the cemetery again soon.

But Ms McNicol said her family would struggle to find the cemetery after the town was demolished because over time it had blended into the surrounding bushland without any identifiable features.

“Obviously nobody cares for the cemetery anymore, and that’s fine,” she said.

“If they’re going to go in and knock down these other buildings, to deter people from going there and visiting there, then they need to clearly label where the cemetery is.”

On the National Front

HOME OWNERS URGE VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT TO HELP AS MR FLUFFY ASBESTOS FOUND IN HOUSES
MIKAELA ORTOLAN - ABC GOULBURN MURRAY, 20 JUL 2023



Aileen Munt was diagnosed with lung cancer two years ago. (ABC Goulburn Murray: Mikaela Ortolan)

Aileen Munt, 89, thought she was getting a “good deal” when a salesman knocked on her door in the late 1960s and offered to install new insulation on her roof.

“It was a lot cheaper than the batts at the time ... it was a new product, and you just blow it in,” she said.

“The more houses, the cheaper it would be for us, so we went ahead and had it put in.”

Decades later, she discovered it was a loose-fill asbestos insulation known as Mr Fluffy, which was commonly used across Canberra and parts of New South Wales until the 1970s.

At the time, little was known about the dangers of exposure to asbestos, but it’s since been found to have direct links to major health issues, including lung cancer.

Key points:

- **Mr Fluffy asbestos has been discovered in regional Victorian homes along the NSW border**
- **It’s a deadly loose-fill asbestos insulation commonly used in Canberra until the 70s**
- **Residents are calling for the Victorian government to introduce a similar scheme to the ACT and NSW**

“We just thought we were being very smart, but it wasn’t at all,” Ms Munt said.

Two years ago, after living in her Wodonga home all that time, she was diagnosed with lung cancer.

Coughing between words, Ms Munt, who continues to live on the property, said it was now getting harder for her to breathe.

“They said there’s nothing they can do now,” Ms Munt said.

“They’ve done everything they can.”



Aileen Munt hopes her house can be rid of the asbestos. (ABC Goulburn Murray: Mikaela Ortolan)

On the National Front

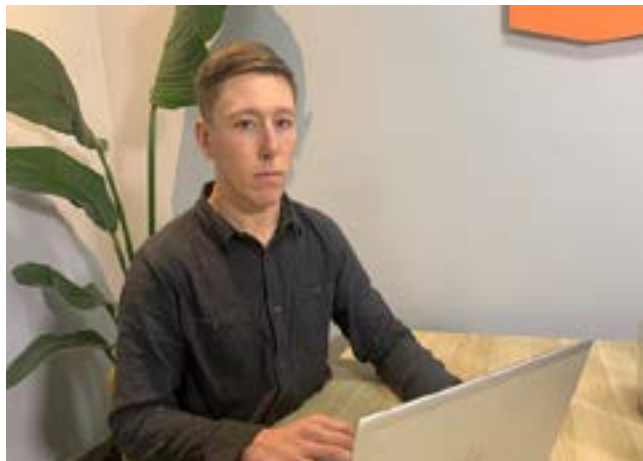
HOME OWNERS URGE VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT TO HELP AS MR FLUFFY ASBESTOS FOUND IN HOUSES
MIKAELA ORTOLAN - ABC GOULBURN MURRAY, 20 JUL 2023

More contaminated homes

John Humphrey and his partner Danielle became Ms Munt's neighbours when they bought their first home on the same street in 2020.

"We were really excited," he said.

"We went in and inspected it and said this is the place."



John Humphrey says it's scary knowing they had lived in a contaminated house. (ABC News: Barrie Pullen)

The young couple, in their 20s, said they did their due diligence before purchasing, including obtaining a building and pest inspection, but there were no issues flagged.

They lived in the property for more than a year before they had to relocate for work, and it's since been rented out.

But in May last year, when an electrician visited to fix some flickering lights, a shocking discovery was made.

"The electricians went up into the ceiling cavity and moved the existing batts," Mr Humphrey said.

"[They] uncovered the Mr Fluffy loose-fill asbestos insulation under the existing batts."



Loose-fill insulation in a roof space. (Supplied: Robson Environmental)



Loose-fill asbestos is considered the world's most dangerous asbestos product. (Supplied: WorkCover NSW)

Test results showed it contained several types of asbestos indicative of Mr Fluffy.

"Knowing that we had lived in that house and knowing that there were people currently living in it, who were exposed to that, it was just really shocking and a bit scary," Mr Humphrey said.

Financial pressures

The Humphreys had to evict their tenants due to the imminent health risks.

"We've had sampling and analysis done throughout the house, which indicated that these fibres are everywhere," he said.

"They're under the carpet. They're on the walls, in the cupboard, they're throughout the house."

The only safe option is to demolish the house under a negative pressure dome, but they're told that could cost at least \$100,000.

Not to mention rebuilding.

Mr Humphrey said the financial stress was debilitating.

"On top of paying rent where we currently live, we've been paying the mortgage every month, and repayments have doubled because of the interest rate rises," he said.

"This extra amount that we have to repay without having any rental income is really making life quite difficult for us.

The couple contacted several agencies, including the Victorian government, the local council and the Environment Protection Authority, but so far, no advice or support has been provided.

"Considering that 3 kilometres down the road in NSW, it's a public health crisis and houses have been torn down, and people have had to move out because of how dangerous it is, it's a pretty unrealistic response," Mr Humphrey said.

On the National Front

HOME OWNERS URGE VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT TO HELP AS MR FLUFFY ASBESTOS FOUND IN HOUSES
MIKAELA ORTOLAN - ABC GOULBURN MURRAY, 20 JUL 2023

Almost 40 houses contaminated by Mr Fluffy asbestos were demolished in Holbrook, just north of the border, in 2017.

Legally the couple can't sell the property without disclosing it contains the deadly fibres.

Lawyers have told the couple they would have to prove the previous owners were aware of the asbestos when it was sold to them in order to seek compensation.

But they said that given it was a deceased estate, that would be impossible.

Insurance also does not protect against asbestos, as many building materials contain it in some form.

Call for support

Both Ms Munt and her neighbour Mr Humphry are calling on the Victorian government to enforce an audit of properties in the area and introduce a scheme similar to those that exist in the ACT and NSW.

Felicity Prideaux, who is the administrator of the Mr Fluffy Full Disclosure Group, said without government help, she could not have removed the asbestos from her home in the ACT.

"It was absolutely too expensive. And the simple fact of the matter is, the government had a duty of care," she said.

"It's such a horribly toxic substance, and really the government does need to get in there and look at doing something to help the community," Ms Prideaux said.

Wodonga City Council said it did not oversee asbestos removal from private properties and it was not aware of any Victorian state government program to assist in the removal of Mr Fluffy.

The Victorian government said it was currently investigating the issue.



Felicity Prideaux says a dome was placed over her house so that it could be demolished safely. (Supplied: Felicity Prideaux)



Felicity Prideaux says a dome was placed over her house so that it could be demolished safely. (Supplied: Felicity Prideaux)

Did you know?

6 MOVIES YOU DIDN'T KNOW USED ASBESTOS, ENDANGERING CAST AND CREW

Few people know that asbestos, a hazardous mineral, was used extensively in the film industry and was present on the sets of many classic movies. Several films you've heard of, and many you haven't, used asbestos, which brought serious health risks to cast and crew.

Asbestos was used in construction and manufacturing due to its fire-resistant properties, and can still be found in older buildings today. It was only in recent years that its health risks became well-known.

Asbestos exposure causes many diseases, including mesothelioma and lung cancer. Although its use is now restricted, it is not banned in the U.S.

6 classic movies that used asbestos

Here are a few of the most recognizable films that used the toxic mineral on sets and in film equipment.

1. The Wizard of Oz (1939)

The iconic film "The Wizard of Oz" used asbestos in its set pieces and equipment. The fake snow in the poppy field scene, where Dorothy and her friends fall asleep, also contained asbestos. The crew created the snow by spraying a mixture of foam and chrysotile, a type of asbestos, over the set. "The Wizard of Oz" has been a beloved film for generations. Its use of asbestos was only the start of a worrying trend in Hollywood.

2. Citizen Kane (1941)

"Citizen Kane" is often regarded as one of the greatest films of all time. Lesser known is the use of asbestos in its snowy scenes. The child actor who portrayed a young Kane spent considerable time surrounded by asbestos. The dangers of asbestos were not as well-known then. Today, the reckless use of asbestos in these films make them harder to watch.

3. Holiday Inn (1942)

"Holiday Inn" is a classic musical starring Bing Crosby and Fred Astaire. The film is famous for winning an Academy Award for the song "White Christmas." The unfortunate reality is that asbestos was responsible for the magical holiday scenery. Asbestos snow was prevalent in several of the movie's winter scenes. It would also not be the last time Bing Crosby belted out holiday hits while asbestos floated in the air.

4. White Christmas (1954)

The musical "White Christmas" features Bing Crosby once again singing the titular song. The health risk from asbestos in this film came from the snowfall used in many of the musical scenes. By today's standards, watching the performers sing with asbestos in the air is scary. Although Crosby never suffered from his exposures, how the rest of the cast and crew fared is unclear.

5. Goldfinger (1964)

The James Bond film "Goldfinger" is famous for featuring a murder using gold paint. The film used asbestos boards in its set construction. Ronald Sharpe, a painter on the set, worked next to carpenters who would cut up the boards. As a painter, he did not receive personal protective equipment to avoid inhaling dust. He later developed mesothelioma and died at age 59. His widow, Barbara, sued his former employers for mesothelioma financial compensation.

6. Le Mans (1971)

"Le Mans" is a racing film featuring Steve McQueen as a race car driver in a dramatic auto race. As part of the props, asbestos lined the racing suits and helmets McQueen used in the movie. Asbestos in racing gear prevented the equipment from catching fire after an accident. After years of wearing racing suits and asbestos exposure in the U.S. Marine Corps, McQueen died in 1980 from mesothelioma.

Raising Awareness of Asbestos Health Risks

While the films on this list may be beloved classics, it's important to remember the human cost of their production. The use of asbestos in these films has had a lasting impact on the health of the cast and crew members who worked on them.

The toxic material was prominent in the film industry for decades. Its use often came without safety precautions or a grasp of its dangers to human health.

It wasn't until the 1970s that the health risks of asbestos exposure became public. Afterward, the use of the material in the film industry and other industries declined. However, the legacy of its use continues to affect the health of those exposed to it during its heyday in Hollywood.

The health risks of asbestos exposure are very real. We must continue to raise awareness about its dangers so that future generations can avoid the tragic consequences of its use.



Around the World

CONCRETE CRISIS: OFFICIALS THOUGHT ASBESTOS IN SCHOOLS WAS SAFE TOO – THE SAME MISTAKES HAVE BEEN MADE OVER RAAC

ADAM PAGE - LECTURER IN MODERN BRITISH HISTORY-UNIVERSITY OF LINCOLN, 11 SEP 2023

The decision to close some schools and erect emergency structural supports in others just days before the start of a new term appeared to come about suddenly. The announcement followed three recent failures of reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (Raac), in particular the collapse of a beam in late August at a primary school in Leicester.

The schools minister, Nick Gibbs, said: “Raac that had been considered to be a low risk actually turned out to be unsafe.”

This “low risk” status meant that, if these sudden failures had not happened, no immediate remedial action would have been required in the affected schools. These buildings were effectively classified as “safe enough” – until it became clear that Raac even considered “low risk” by officials could collapse at any moment.

Clearly, what is considered safe can change quickly, when there is new evidence (or new interpretations of evidence).

Asbestos and school safety

The UK saw a similar situation in the 1980s. Concerns then were not about crumbling concrete, but another major danger in thousands of schools: asbestos.

For local authorities and officials, as long as it was monitored and managed, the presence of asbestos was not considered a cause for concern. For parents, teachers and children, this wasn't good enough assurance.

Working with charities and campaigners, parents and teachers launched protests to challenge official declarations of the risks of asbestos in schools, and ensure their voices were heard in debates about what was considered safe.

Children and parents picketed schools, and parents and teachers organised into asbestos action groups. Some parents withheld their children from school, and in at least one case in the 1990s, as I found in archival research, were faced with legal action by the council.

One of the schools subject to these protests was a primary school in the London borough of Enfield. In response to parents' campaigning and a report by leading anti-asbestos campaigner Nancy Tait, the council took air samples to detect asbestos fibres within the school.



This primary school in Leicester is among the dozens that have affected by unsafe concrete. Jacob King/PA images

The data appeared to show that fibre levels were within the limits recommended by the health and safety executive at the time. But Tait challenged the assertion that this meant the school was safe.

She highlighted that these “official” limits were based on scientific reports that focused on asbestos factories, not schools or other public buildings where conditions were quite different. They also ignored the growing international consensus that there was no safe level of exposure to asbestos.

Reports, like the one cited by Enfield Borough Council, used statistical estimates of the likelihood of someone working in a factory for years or decades being diagnosed with an asbestos-related disease. The key assumption was that a certain amount of death and disease in such an industry was, essentially, inevitable. But when this was applied to schools or other non-industrial settings, that argument was far from convincing.

Raac and risk

As recently as 2022, the government has rejected recommendations by a parliamentary committee to commit to a 40-year deadline to remove all asbestos in schools. Central to this reasoning is the idea that there is an “acceptable” level of risk for asbestos exposure in schools. The government said that it “currently has a mature and comprehensive plan to managing legacy asbestos risks”.

The danger of the approach of managing – but not removing – risks can be seen in the rapidly spiralling Raac crisis. Like asbestos, a known problem with

Around the World

CONCRETE CRISIS: OFFICIALS THOUGHT ASBESTOS IN SCHOOLS WAS SAFE TOO – THE SAME MISTAKES HAVE BEEN MADE OVER RAAC

ADAM PAGE - LECTURER IN MODERN BRITISH HISTORY-UNIVERSITY OF LINCOLN, 11 SEP 2023

potentially devastating consequences was considered to be manageable until it was suddenly proven not to be.

Nancy Tait's report on the Enfield school included a wealth of evidence, including detailed summaries and reviews of technical literature on asbestos products. It also gave a voice to those directly affected, through the names and stories of 16 people who had died from mesothelioma after brief exposures to asbestos.

Putting names to the numbers is an important way to challenge ideas about managing acceptable risk. Campaigners like Tait, who were often affected by asbestos-related disease themselves (her husband died of mesothelioma), were instrumental in shifting public perceptions of asbestos and the eventual banning of asbestos in the UK in 1999.

The current Raac crisis presents the government with an opportunity to re-evaluate its approach to safety in schools and other public buildings. In addition to technical studies, new understandings of safety should be developed by engaging with affected communities – in this case, the thousands of families whose children are now displaced from their school buildings at short notice.



What is considered 'acceptable' risk is different for asbestos workers than for schoolchildren. Logtnest/Shutterstock

The Raac scandal lays bare the fallibility of expert evaluations, at significant risk to the public. What is considered safe one day can be considered critically dangerous the next. Continuing to rely on the management of risk only will not result in a safe environment in schools.

Key points:

- Some buildings in the UK were made with a type of concrete called RAAC that's now unsafe.
- The "crumbly concrete" was used in hundreds of schools and some have been shut over fears of collapses.
- The crisis has ignited a new debate about the government's past spending cuts.



Kerrie's Korner

KERRIE WILLIAMS



Hello Members,

As the year is slowing coming to an end and we have completed our community morning tea events for 2023, we would like to thank all those that attended. We held 22 Morning Tea events across QLD and Northern NSW, Cairns to Ballina, and out to Toowoomba and Kingaroy.

The numbers of attendees this year has been outstanding and a big thank you for all those that have come along. A total of 718 members and their guests attended these 22 events to hear our presentation on 'All Dust is Dangerous' by ADSS and Turner Freeman Lawyers. From these Morning teas with welcomed 62 new members who joined the Society. The Society currently has around 800 members which translates to a strong voice in our advocacy role – as the old adage goes – **“There is Strength in Numbers”**

Our Morning Tea events will continue next year, starting in Toowoomba mid-February. Invitations are forwarded approximately 4 weeks prior to the event, and a full list of the 2024 events will be published in the Autumn 2024 Newsletter. If you need to know before then of an event in your area, please call the Society.

Our Coffee Support Groups continue to grow in numbers and I'll provide those in the next newsletter. These groups are also starting to wind down for the end of the year with a majority to hold their Christmas lunches now only. If you would like to know more about these coffee catch up groups, please call the Society for further information. We currently have 9 coffee groups around the state, Bundaberg, Cairns, Chermshire, Gold Coast, Hervey Bay, Ipswich, Rockhampton, Sunnybank and Sunshine Coast.



Our Ecumenical Service will be held on Friday 24th November, 2023 at The Cathedral of St Stephen, Elizabeth Street Brisbane from 11am. This is an opportunity to remember all those who we have lost with an asbestos disease and those who are currently suffering from an asbestos disease. We will once again be having a Memorial Board at the Church Service, where you can place a paper butterfly inscribed with a loved one's name. If you are unable to attend the Service and would like a memorial butterfly on the Memorial Board, please get in touch with us and we will gladly name a butterfly in your loved ones honour.

Asbestos Awareness Week will be held from 20th November to 26th November 2023. The Society has arranged for various QLD Landmarks to be lit up blue in recognition of this week.

Brisbane City Hall, Story Bridge, Victoria Bridge & Reddacliff Place – Thursday 23rd November

Parliament House – Thursday 23rd and Friday 24th November

Queensland Country Bank Stadium, Townsville – Friday 24th November

Townsville Sign in Townsville – Monday 20th till Friday 24th November

If you are out and about on these days and see these landmarks lit up blue, please take a photo and send it to us, we would love to see them.

Please contact the Society for any information on any of our events.

E – inquiries@adss.org.au

P - 1800 776 412

Kerrie's Korner

KERRIE WILLIAMS



Q & A by the coffee machine with John:

What three words would you use to describe your role?

Facilitator, Encourager and Mentor

What do you like most about your job?

The people I work with

What is your motto or personal mantra?

Don't forget to laugh

Given a chance, who would you like to be for a day?

Boring, I know but I am happy being myself.

If you could witness any historical event, what would you want to see?

The end of WW1 when enemies emerged from their trenches and embraced

What is your favourite line from a movie?

"A man's got to know his limitations" 1973 Dirty Harry movie, Magnum Force

If you could meet anyone in the world dead or alive, who would it be and why?

Karl Marx, for a serious chat with a great thinker.

Favourite travel spot?

Canada, My daughters' home.

What book did you last read?

American Prometheus (Robert Oppenheimer Biography)

What did you want to be when growing up?

Full time surfer



The Society at Work



11.7.23 - Gladstone Morning Tea



12.7.23 - Bundaberg Morning Tea



13.7.23 - Hervey Bay Morning Tea



14.7.23 - Gympie Morning Tea



14.7.23 - Sunnybank Coffee Group



14.7.23 - Sunnybank Coffee Group



25.7.23 - Ipswich Coffee Group



26.7.23 - Logan Morning Tea



26.7.23 - Logan Morning Tea



2.8.23 - Bundaberg Coffee Group



3.8.23 - Chermiside Coffee Group



7.8.23 North Brisbane Morning Tea

The Society at Work



9.8.23 - Hervey Bay Coffee Group



11.8.23 Sunnybank Coffee Group



14.8.23 - Volunteering at the Ekka



17.8.23 - Gold Coast Morning Tea



17.8.23 - Rockhampton Coffee Group



22.8.23 - Ipswich Coffee Group



2.9.23 - Care Expo



13.9.23 - ADSS Charity Race Day



13.9.23 - ADSS Charity Race Day



21.9.23 - Rockhampton Coffee Group



26.9.23 Ipswich Coffee Group



27.9.23 - Sunshine Coast Coffee Group

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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

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Donations of \$2.00 or more are tax deductible.

We thank all members for their ongoing support.

