



**OVER 35 YEARS CARE AND  
SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY**

4th September 2014

Dear Members and Friends

As already previously mentioned in our July newsletter, our **Christmas Picnic** will be held at Whiteman Park, on Sunday 7 December 2014 commencing at 10:30am. Our original picnic place is at Mussel Pool between shelters Q and W. There will be a further Christmas newsletter in which you will find a map of Whiteman Park and the precise location of our picnic area.

### 1. MEDICAL RESEARCH

Over the last ten years the Asbestos Diseases Research in Western Australia has made significant advances to assist ever-increasing numbers of asbestos diseases sufferers, in particular the treatments for malignant mesothelioma and lung carcinoma. However regrettably, asbestos diseases research is poorly funded by both the State and Federal Governments. Our organisation is strongly committed to support asbestos diseases medical research and we are forever hopeful that the research will discover life-saving treatments. This year again our organisation has organised two fundraising events specifically focusing on fund raising for treatments for asbestos caused malignant mesothelioma.

Eminent Professor Anna Nowak has been very helpful in providing information on current treatments that are available for mesothelioma patients; "When people with mesothelioma need treatment, the worldwide 'first line' standard is still a combination of cisplatin and pemetrexed ('Alimta') chemotherapy, or carboplatin and pemetrexed in people who have some pre-existing health problems. Currently, some people can also participate in a clinical trial which combines standard cisplatin and pemetrexed chemotherapy with a new tablet which targets blood vessels in tumours, called Nintedanib. This is taken at home twice a day during chemotherapy treatment, and afterwards for as long as it is working.

Another clinical trial is available for people who have completed 4 to 6 cycles of cisplatin/carboplatin and pemetrexed treatment. This is a new anticancer tablet which is taken daily after the end of chemotherapy, with the goal of preventing tumour regrowth (or even leading to further shrinkage). Normally, after chemotherapy, people enter a period of observation, with regular CT scans but no treatment. People who are interested in participating in either of these clinical trials must have had a diagnosis by biopsy, rather than from fluid drainage only.

When someone who has completed a first chemotherapy for mesothelioma needs further treatment, there are a number of options available, although there is no clear 'standard' treatment. Depending on the situation, the same or similar chemotherapy as the first treatment may be restarted. A completely different chemotherapy may be used (examples are vinorelbine, gemcitabine). The third alternative is, again, participation in a clinical trial. The current clinical trial available in WA in this situation is testing the immunotherapy treatment tremelimumab. Tremelimumab is given every 4 weeks as an intravenous treatment, and works to speed up the body's own immune system, hopefully giving it more help to fight the cancer. **A biopsy diagnosis is not needed to participate in this trial.**

Other treatments are used when they are appropriate, including fluid drainage, radiotherapy to a specific troublesome area, pain relief, oxygen, and medication to help appetite or reduce night sweats."

### 2. FUNDRAISING GOLF DAY SUN 28 SEPTEMBER 2014 (MEADOW SPRINGS GOLF COURSE)

This will be our third year of the prestigious Golf Tournament at Meadow Springs and all funds raised will again be given to Professor Anna Nowak's research programs to provide valuable treatments to asbestos disease victims suffering from mesothelioma. Members and friends are cordially asked to support this life saving fundraising event



the **4 Ball Ambrose Golf Day at beautiful Meadow Springs Golf Course on Sunday 28th September 2014**. There is a unique opportunity for the participating golfers to receive a Nissan motor vehicle valued at \$30 000 simply by scoring a Hole in One, which in itself is less difficult when playing 4 Ball Ambrose.

**For more information or to receive a registration form please call ADSA Vice-President Dave Hall on 0428 817 151, email: [hallsafe@westnet.com.au](mailto:hallsafe@westnet.com.au) also please ring Meadow Springs Golf and Country Club on (08) 9581 6002 email: [functions@msgcc.com.au](mailto:functions@msgcc.com.au). Also our office can be called at any time to assist with any information relating to the 4 Ball Ambrose Golf Tournament on 1800 646 690.**

### **3. THE ADSA WALK FOR RESEARCH AND AWARENESS 2014 – ‘Rod Triplett Tribute Walk’**

The Fundraising Walk will commence on Monday 15 September 2014, starting at Pemberton, and the Walkers will arrive at the Western Australian Parliament House on Friday 19 September 2014 (the actual welcoming will be in Harvest Terrace at the back of Parliament House in Solidarity Park). It will be greatly appreciated to see our members and friends at Solidarity Park. Also if anyone wished to join us in any areas; such as Pemberton, Manjimup, Bridgetown, Balingup, Mullalyup, Kirup, Donnybrook, Boyanup, Dardanup, Burekup, Collie, Quindanning, Pinjarra, North Dandelup, Keysbrook, Serpentine, Byford, Armadale or for the short walk from Perth City Centre to Parliament House. Please ring Simone at 1800 646 690 or mobile 0400 922 542 for the approximate time of location if you wish to join us at any of the above mentioned places.

### **4. ASBESTOS AWARENESS WEEK NOVEMBER 24 - 27 2014**

As advised in the previous newsletter our organisation has been invited again to Royal Perth Hospital for Asbestos Awareness Week this year. There will be an information desk on the main concourse of the Hospital where we will be able to provide information to patients, visitors, and hospital staff. Additional programs have not as yet been arranged and will be communicated in the October newsletter.

### **5. ECUMENICAL MEMORIAL SERVICE 2014**

The Service will be held at the Redemptorist Monastery, Vincent Street, North Perth on Friday 28 November at 9:30am. More information regarding the Ecumenical Memorial Service will be in the next newsletter.

### **6. SOCIETY AND EXPOSURE TO ASBESTOS**

For many years our office has received a large number of enquiries (in excess of 2,000 per annum) regarding asbestos issues relating to removal, risk of exposure, type of fencing, how to identify whether a building product contains asbestos, how to safely deal with asbestos products, i.e. fences, house claddings, who to contact for removal, what to do after being exposed to asbestos dust etc. Asbestos is unique, not only in its interaction with the human body, but also in its interaction with society. It was not confined to the workplace, but rather was spread throughout society in the developed and developing world, as a construction material in the building industry, both industrial and domestic.

In this regard please read carefully the following details that may assist your understanding of some of the issues relating to asbestos and its consequences.

Without a doubt over the last decade risks from environmental rather than occupational exposure have contributed to much of the public health uproar in Australia. The dominant risks of concern were and still are the malignancies mesothelioma and lung cancer. Although we have ceased to introduce new asbestos into our lives, we have not removed the pernicious building materials which are widely dispersed; this represents a special public health issue. Because of the costs and perhaps, risks associated with even careful handling, controversy surrounds the management and removal of asbestos building materials.

Asbestos fibre is a most potent carcinogen which is responsible for the many crippling and fatal diseases; malignant mesothelioma, lung cancer, asbestosis and a host of pleural diseases.

It is believed that Crocidolite (blue asbestos) may be more carcinogenic than the other types of asbestos, such as, Amosite (brown asbestos) or Chrysotile (white asbestos). Each has distinctive physical properties making them more or less valuable according to the product. Generally, crocidolite or “blue asbestos” was by far the most valuable and preferred because of its strength and excellent insulating, acid resisting and fire proofing characteristics. The combination of asbestos and cement created revolutionary building products. In particular, flat and corrugated “Asbestos Cement Sheeting” was widely adopted as a standard building material in industrial and residential building projects in the 1920’s, 30’s, 40’s, 50’s, 60’s, 70’s and to the mid 1980’s. These products were seen as an extremely cheap and versatile alternative to conventional building materials and, in many instances, “fibro” construction completely replaced the brick and tile approach to building. It is estimated that the Australian asbestos manufacturers produced in excess of **1.4 billion square metres** of asbestos cement sheeting between 1916 and 1984 and almost that entire

manufacturing product was used in buildings around Australia. It is further estimated that at least thirty percent of that figure was corrugated asbestos sheeting (which was commonly used as roofing and fencing material). In addition there are thousands of kilometres of asbestos pipes around Australia being used to deliver drinking water, storm water drainage, etc. Asbestos cement sheeting deteriorates more rapidly than brick or other like building materials when exposed to the elements. Studies have revealed that corrugated asbestos cement sheeting used as roofing material will release a considerable number of asbestos fibres when exposed to the elements for 20 years or more. The deterioration of the bonding and cement component can commence in some instances after only several years of exposure to the elements. There is no doubt that significant numbers of asbestos fibres are being released into the immediate environment.

The extensive use of asbestos for at least 70 years in the last century has created a health hazard not only to occupationally exposed individuals, but also the general public. Asbestos is ubiquitous in our environment, and has been found in outdoor and indoor air and in drinking water supplies. In fact, asbestos fibres have been detected in the lungs of most adult urban residents upon autopsy. Concerns about exposure to asbestos at an early age is particularly relevant because when children are exposed to asbestos at an early age, their life expectancy increases the probability that they may live long enough to develop long latent period cancers such as asbestos-induced lung cancer and mesothelioma.

When exposed to the elements, the surface of asbestos cement sheeting becomes degraded leaving a loosely bound, asbestos enriched layer which becomes colonised with organic growths. (A weathered asbestos cement roof is generally characterised by the presence of lichens which significantly darken its appearance). Asbestos cement building products typically contain 10 to 15% by weight of asbestos, each sheet of asbestos cement will typically contain hundreds of millions of asbestos fibres. (Asbestos cement sheeting in Australia contains mostly chrysotile asbestos, however substantive numbers of sheeting also contain chrysotile mixed with amosite or crocidolite). What is not known exactly is how many billions of asbestos fibres are typically released into the environment as a result of weathering of, or interference with, asbestos products, ie renovating, removing etc. Weathering will, in each case, depend on the degree of the severity of elements (e.g. wind, pollution, rain, hail, sun etc.). For example, it is generally accepted that an asbestos cement roof will deteriorate much faster than asbestos cement fencing because of its pitch position. Theoretically, some scientists believe that inhalation of a single asbestos fibre could cause malignant mesothelioma in humans. However it could be reasonable to assume that it is very unlikely an individual would not inhale only a single fibre in any setting of exposure. International Health and World Health Organizations, also including Australia and the rest of the developed world agree that at present it is not possible to assess whether there is a level of exposure to asbestos below which an increased risk of mesothelioma or lung cancer does not occur. **Therefore it could be said that there is no safe level of asbestos exposure. Please refer to page 4 to observe a deteriorating asbestos cement fence showing abundant loose asbestos fibres. For every visible fibre there are one hundred unseen to the naked eye which are capable of causing a number of asbestos diseases.**

## **7. PERIODIC EXAMINATIONS OF PERSONS EXPOSED TO ASBESTOS**

We would again urge members and friends to have regular medical check-ups, on a yearly or 2 yearly basis relating to previous asbestos exposure. Dr Deleuil is available at our Osborne Park office for medical check-ups and referrals. It has been recognised that low dose radiation high resolution CT Scan (HRCT) is more likely to detect early stages of malignant and non-malignant asbestos caused diseases. Dr Deleuil's surgery operates every Tuesday and Thursday morning. **Please ring our helpful staff on 1800 646 690 or 9344 4077 to arrange an appointment.**

## **8. CHRISTMAS FUNDRAISING RAFFLE**

Our Christmas Fundraising Raffle tickets are now available by ringing our office on 1800 646 690 or you can email your request for raffle tickets. This particular fundraising raffle is very important because its proceeds will be also allocated towards funding of asbestos diseases medical research and other beneficial programs specifically for the benefit of our members and friends. Therefore it would be greatly appreciated that members and friends participate to at least disseminate a book of ten raffle tickets.

With best wishes and kindest regards,



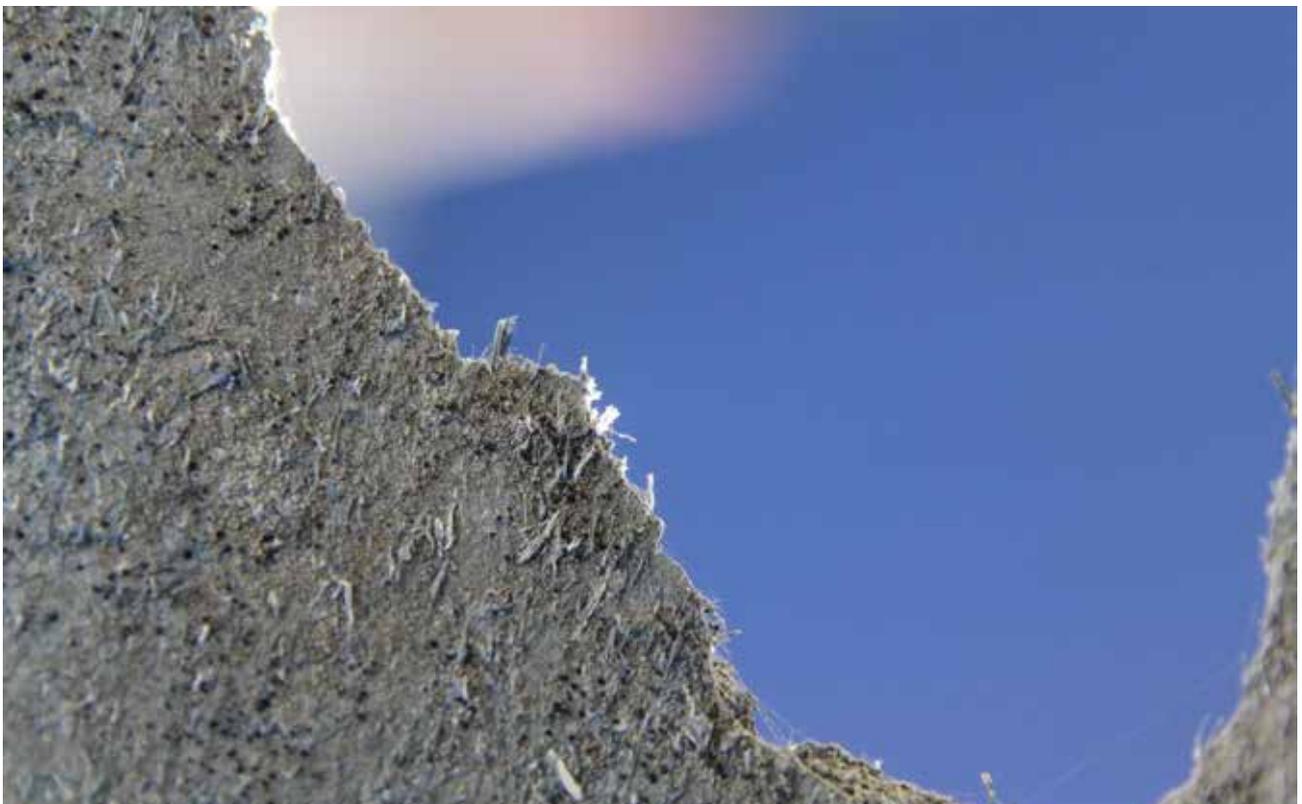
Robert Vojakovic AM JP

PRESIDENT

# DETERIORATION OF ASBESTOS CEMENT FENCING MATERIAL



**MIX OF CROCIDOLITE (BLUE ASBESTOS) AND CHRYSOTILE (WHITE ASBESTOS)**



**X10 MAGNIFICATION OF THE ABOVE HOLE SHOWING LOOSE ASBESTOS FIBRES**

