



POLIO AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED

Representing polio survivors throughout Australia

Report on the

2011 Polio Health and Wellness Retreat Victoria



28 April – 1 May 2011

Polio Australia Incorporated

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1. Executive Summary

Polio Australia's vision is to ensure that ***all polio survivors in Australia have access to appropriate health care and the support required to maintain independence and make informed lifestyle choices.***

In April 2010 Polio Australia, with input from the Post-Polio Network (NSW), conducted Australia's first three day "*Polio Health and Wellness Retreat*" in Baulkham Hills, New South Wales. The success of that Retreat, measured by the active participation, discussion and written feedback, confirmed the notion that this Retreat model should be used as a chronic condition *self-management* technique in future Polio Australia activities. The purpose of the Health and Wellness Retreat is to provide a holistic approach to managing the Late Effects Of Polio (LEOP) and finding life balance.

In April 2011 Polio Australia conducted the second three day Retreat in the tranquil setting of the 'Melbourne Business School' and, once again, focussed on a different aspect of health and wellness each day: Body, Mind and Spirit. This fully residential program was attended by **64** people comprising polio survivors and their partners/Carers, plus Polio Australia's National Program Manager, Mary-ann Liethof.

A number of health professionals familiar with the issues associated with LEOP were involved in facilitating question and answer forums which enabled a broad spectrum of concerns to be raised within a group of people with similar conditions. This format was highly successful with people discussing their own experience of what worked, supported by the knowledge and expertise of the respective health professionals.

Day 1

Sessions addressing the 'Body' included: an overview of 'The Polio Body' by Dr Steve de Graaff (Rehabilitation Specialist, Epworth Rehabilitation) which included how the polio virus initially affected the motor neurons, followed up by the late effects of polio; a scooter demonstration and tryout; seated Tai Chi; respiratory issues; swallowing difficulties; foot care for polio feet; pain management; orthotics; aids and equipment options; explanation of the allied health 'team'; exercise myths and facts; and dietary advice.

A range of personal therapeutic services were also available including one-to-one appointments with a Rehabilitation Specialist, Respiratory Specialist, Physiotherapist, Podiatrist, Massage Therapist and Acupuncturist.

Mt Eliza also has historical significance for polio survivors, as many children were sent to the Mt Eliza Rehabilitation Centre to recover. Although this Centre is no longer operational, a tour was arranged for interested people, and sincere thanks go to Marion Steele, Medical Research Librarian and Peninsula Health Service for organising it.

Day 2

The 'Mind' sessions commenced with a presentation from Dr Andrew Sinclair, a psychologist who works with polio survivors. He covered 'emotional health' and 'mindfulness'. This was followed by sessions on seated yoga; the "Alexander" technique; mindfulness strategies; discussion on early memories of having polio; finding your story; changing habits. There was also a range of fun activities such as: cryptic crosswords; bonsai; Mahjong; photography; art; and singing, which were introduced as techniques to keep the 'mind' active.

This day also included the opportunity of one-to-one appointments with a Rehabilitation Specialist, Orthotist and Massage Therapist.

Day 3

Sessions for addressing healthy 'Spirit' included: meditation; finding life balance; complementary health; and a specific workshop on "Connecting with the Spirit Within" by Ms Maureen Anderson who facilitates a 'Mind, Body, Spirit' class at the University of the Third Age in Mornington.

As there were a number of partners/Carers participating, there were also scheduled and informal opportunities for them to meet and discuss their own specific concerns.

A lot of networking was done during the three days and people agreed to having their names on a Contact List so they could keep in touch with each other following the Retreat.

Evaluations

By way of demonstrating how this Retreat has “changed people’s lives”, a sample of the evaluation comments follows:

“What did I gain from the Retreat? Companionship, support; up until the last few years I had not been one for mixing with people with a disability. Now I see that their knowledge is invaluable to me! See you next year in Queensland.”

To avoid repetition, the “Session” comments in Section 5’s “Evaluations, Feedback and Follow up Action” have been distilled to reflect key sentiments. However, this report also wanted to highlight themes and potential lifestyle changes that emerged during the Retreat, which are located in “Follow up Action”, “Suggested Topics for Future Retreats”, “Organisational Suggestions”, “Companionship”, “Learning/Self Management Strategies”, “Venue”, and “General Appreciation”.

Acknowledgements

We are extremely grateful to all the session facilitators and therapists (see Section 3 – Presenters) for sharing their expertise, especially as the majority of these presenters provided their time and knowledge at no charge.

Polio Australia was successful in its applications for Retreat funding from GlaxoSmithKline (\$15,000), the *Ian Potter Foundation* (\$10,000), the *RE Ross Trust* (\$7,500), the *Elisabeth Murdoch Trust* (\$1,000) and private donations totalling \$1,500.

These grants enabled the financial flexibility to provide the 3-day Retreat at the reduced cost of \$450.00 per person/single or \$350.00 per person/twin share/double, which included all meals, accommodation and activities. We are most grateful to these funding bodies for their support of the post polio community.

We would also like to thank the many individuals who donated door prizes, and the Saturday evening music entertainment was funded by the Lions Club of Mordialloc-Mentone.

The 2011 Retreat again showed what could be done with a lot of good will and a small purse. However, ongoing funding is vital to ensure these Retreats can be facilitated in states across Australia as they provide the only fully comprehensive (body/mind/spirit) approach to effective management strategies in Australia for the tens of thousands of polio survivors, their Carers, and the health professionals who work with them on how to effectively manage the late effects of polio.

This Report, the Program, Presenters List, selected Presentations, and photos can all be downloaded from Polio Australia’s website: www.polioaustralia.org.au / What We Do / Polio Health and Wellness Retreats.

2. Demographics

Who Came?

Polio Survivors	Spouse/Carers
44	20

Gender Representation

Female	Male
40 Total – 34 Polio Survivors	24 Total – 10 Polio Survivors

States

ACT	SA	NSW	QLD	TAS	WA	VIC
2	3	23	1	7	1	27

Participants Year of Birth Range: 1929 to 1990
Years Polio Contracted 1929 to 1963

Participants using Mobility Aids = 28 or 73.6%

Walking Sticks = 20
 Shower Chairs = 16
 Toilet Assists = 13
 Manual Wheelchairs = 10
 Motor Scooters = 7
 Walker Frames = 5
 Elbow Crutches = 5
 Electric Wheelchairs = 5
 Stance Control = 1



Scooter Demonstration



Inner Artist



Cryptic Crosswords



Seated Tai Chi




Life Balance



3. Presenters (in order of presentation)

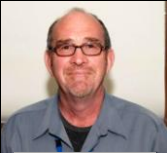



Thursday 28 April

	<p>Welcome & Cryptic Crosswords & Early Memories of Having Polio</p>	<p>Gillian Thomas President Polio Australia Ph: 02 9663 2402 gillian@polioaustralia.org.au</p>	<p>For over 20 years I have worked for the Post-Polio Network (NSW) Inc on a voluntary basis. I was a member of the original Working Party set up in 1988 to establish the Network, was subsequently elected as Secretary, and in 1997 became the Network's President. Since May 1989 I have also been the Editor of the Network's highly regarded quarterly newsletter <i>Network News</i>. In 2002 I was honoured to receive an inaugural <i>David Bodian Memorial Award</i> from the International Post-Polio Task Force in recognition of my work for polio survivors, while in 2004 I was invited to serve on Post-Polio Health International's <i>Consumer Advisory Committee</i>. In January 2009 I was delighted to be awarded an <i>Australia Day Community Service Award</i> from Randwick Council for my outstanding service to polio survivors and the community. I passionately believe in the need for a national voice for polio survivors and my efforts culminated in the highly successful meeting of all Australian State Polio Networks in May 2007 and the unanimous agreement to form Polio Australia. Polio Australia is now a reality and in 2008 I was elected its inaugural President.</p>
	<p>Welcome & Finding Your Story</p>	<p>Neil von Schill Treasurer Polio Australia Ph: 02 6025 6169 neil@polioaustralia.org.au</p>	<p>I joined the Post-Polio Network (NSW) Inc in 1992 and became Convenor of the Albury/Wodonga Support Group. In 1999 I was elected to the Management Committee and accepted the role of Support Group Coordinator for the State. For the past four years I have also been the Secretary of the Network. Since 2003 I have conducted Country Conferences in different locations around the state and assisted with the organisation of Metropolitan Seminars. I organised the Polio Australasia Conference in Sydney in May 2007. I was instrumental in the agreement at that forum to form <i>Polio Australia</i> and am currently the Treasurer of that organisation.</p>
	<p>Guest Speaker</p>	<p>Hon Bruce Billson, MP Electoral Division of Dunkley (Vic) Ph: 03 9781 2333 www.billson4dunkley.com</p>	<p>The Hon Bruce Billson MP is a fifth-term Member of the Australian House of Representatives, having been first elected in March 1996 to represent the outer Melbourne metropolitan coastal constituency of Dunkley. Bruce is the Shadow Minister for Small Business, Deregulation, Competition Policy and Sustainable Cities and part of the Coalition's Shadow Cabinet.</p>




	<p>Program Overview and Announcements & Guided Deep Relaxation & Choir</p>	<p>Mary-ann Liethof National Program Manager Polio Australia Ph: 03 9016 7678 mary-ann@polioaustralia.org.au</p>	<p>I worked as the Coordinator of Polio Network Victoria from mid 2004 to December 2009. During that time, I was one of the Victorian representatives on Management Committee for Polio Australia. Following a small philanthropic grant and a private donation, I was officially appointed as Polio Australia's National Program Manager in early January 2010 on a part time basis, which increased to full time in January 2011 thanks to a three year grant from The Balnaves Foundation.</p> <p>In April/May 2008, I visited 10 post-polio related services across North America on a Churchill Fellowship Study Tour grant, the purpose of which was "To identify techniques to better manage the late effects of polio". In April 2009, I travelled to Roosevelt Warm Springs in Georgia, USA for Post-Polio Health International's 10th International Conference: <i>Living with Polio in the 21st Century</i> and Wellness Retreat to learn the benefits of the holistic chronic condition self-management model. I was able to draw on this experience to conceptualize and coordinate Polio Australia's first Late Effects of Polio Self Management Residential Program (also known as a Polio Health and Wellness Retreat) in April 2010.</p>
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Friday 29 April

	<p>The Polio Body & Self-Management Discussion & Pain Management</p>	<p>Dr Steve de Graaff Rehabilitation Specialist & Director of Pain Services Epworth Rehabilitation Camberwell, Victoria Ph: 03 9426 8765</p>	<p>Dr Stephen de Graaff is a Fellow of the AFRM (RACP). His areas of research interest include Stroke Rehabilitation, Spasticity Management, Pain Management, Post-Polio Sequelae and Continuing Professional Development. Steve is currently Chairman of the Education Committee of the Australasian Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine (RACP).</p>
	<p>All About Scooters</p>	<p>Graeme Beary Sales Representative/ Demonstrator Scooters Australia Ph: 03 9799 9077 or 1300 622 633 dandenong@scootersaus.com.au www.scootersaus.com.au</p>	<p>Graeme joined the ranks of Scooters Australia in 2001 and is always saying "I have the best job in the world". He loves helping people to change their lives. He started his life as a Printer and worked in a large Printing firm for 40 years. He is happily married to wife Debra and has four children and 7 grandchildren. Graeme specialises in helping people to select the right scooter or powerchair for their needs and their budget.</p> <p>Graeme works closely with many local councils, health professionals and other organisations and is looking forward to attending the Polio Health and Wellness Retreat on 29th April 2011.</p>




	Get Moving!	Keith Butler Allied Health Assistant Peninsula Health Community Health, Mornington, Victoria Ph: 03 5975 8266 KButler@phcn.vic.gov.au	<p>I have worked as an allied health assistant at the Peninsula Health Community Health office in Mornington since June 2008. I work with health professionals in co-ordinating and running exercise programs to help members of our community who have chronic health conditions such as arthritis and diabetes. These programs include strength training, warm water exercise and tai chi. I have completed training through Arthritis Victoria to lead water exercise and tai chi programs and am also a qualified fitness instructor and personal trainer. I recently completed a certificate in exercise rehabilitation and am currently studying for a Diploma in Fitness.</p>
	Take a Deep Breath & Respiratory Assessment	Anne Duncan (RN Grad Dip Bus Mgt) Outreach Coordinator Victorian Respiratory Support Service Ph: 03 9496 3665 Fax: 9496 5124 Mob: 0409 387 448 anne.duncan@austin.org.au	<p>I began working with ventilator dependent people in 1989 at Fairfield Hospital (FH) in Melbourne. At the time there were fewer than 40 people in Victoria using ventilators and 15 of them lived in the hospital. I was the Nurse Unit Manager of the ward from 1990 to 1998. In 1996 FH closed and we moved to the Bowen Centre at the Austin hospital. In 1998, with Dept of Health funding, I set up the VRSS Outreach Service. This is a state-wide service that provides equipment, information and support for ventilator users living in the community. I operated alone in this role until 2005 when I took over the contract for ventilator service/repair and expanded our staff to manage to the additional work. The Outreach team now consists of 4 Nurses, 1 Bio-medical engineer and a part time secretary. We have 700 clients under our care, 600 of whom use a ventilator to help maintain their respiratory health. Approximately 10% of our clients are people living with the late effects of Polio.</p>
	Hard to Swallow?	Abby Foster Speech Pathologist St Vincent's Hospital Ph: 03 9288 3846	<p>Abby Foster graduated from La Trobe University in 2004 and has worked as a speech pathologist in the area of adult swallowing management for the past six years. Abby has developed a strong interest in the area of dysphagia (swallowing) assessment and management. She is also a Practising Member of the Speech Pathology Association of Australia. Abby is currently working part time at St Vincent's Hospital and is a PhD candidate at The University of Queensland.</p>
	Foot Care for Polio Feet & Podiatrist Appointment	Paul Musarra Podiatrist Riverina Podiatry Group Ph: 02 6021 7411 pmusarra@drfoot.com.au www.drfoot.com.au	<p>Paul was born and raised in Sydney where he graduated from the School of Podiatry in 1988. Immediately after graduation he relocated to Albury to start work at Riverina Podiatry Group. Over the years Paul has worked in all areas of podiatry with a current focus on foot and ankle injury and overuse management.</p>

	<p>Therapeutic Massage</p>	<p>Annette Vince Massage Therapist Private Practice in Glen Iris Wednesday and Thursday Ph: 0438 556 706</p>	<p>I have a Diploma of Remedial Massage, Advanced Certificate of Trauma Counselling and Therapy, and a Bachelor of Nursing. I have been working as a massage therapist since 2003, mainly treating clients with back and neck problems, following surgery or with a debilitating illness. I have gained an interest in, and understanding of post polio syndrome after treating clients who had polio as a child.</p>
	<p>Acupuncture</p>	<p>Dr Andrea Galgoczi-Kratochvil Chinese Medicine Practitioner Accent On Wellbeing Ph: 03 9687 8939 reception@accentonwellbeing.com.au www.accentonwellbeing.com.au</p>	<p>Andrea has a PhD in Economics, a Bachelor of Health Science in Chinese Medicine (Acupuncture & Herbal Medicine) and a Diploma in TCM Remedial Massage. Andrea has also spent several months of hospital internship at The First Affiliated Hospital of Guangzhou Traditional Chinese Medicine University, in China. Here she has undertaken advanced studies in gynecology, endocrine diseases and post-stroke rehabilitation. Andrea is a registered practitioner – Chinese Medicine Registration Board of Victoria – and a member of the Australian Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine Association. Accent On Wellbeing is managed by Andrea; a polio sufferer herself in her early childhood.</p>
	<p>Physiotherapy Appointment & Exercise Myths & Facts & Who does what?</p>	<p>Louise Thomas Principal Physiotherapist NeuroMuscular Orthotics Mount Waverley Ph: 03 9543 4009 www.neuromuscular-orthotics.com.au</p>	<p>Louise Thomas completed a Bachelor of Physiotherapy at The University of Melbourne and followed this with a Post Graduate Diploma in Lower Limb Prosthetic Biomechanics at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, and a Masters of Sports Medicine (Research) at The University of Melbourne. Most of Louise's clinical experience has been in a rehabilitation setting managing people who have had polio, amputations or neurological disorders. Louise spent a number of years as the Manager of Polio Services Victoria, and then as the Manager of the Physiotherapy Department at St Vincent's Hospital, Melbourne and as the Associate Clinical Dean of Physiotherapy at The University of Melbourne. Louise is a current member of the Australian Physiotherapy Association and works as the Principal Physiotherapist at Neuromuscular Orthotics.</p>

	<p>Aids and Equipment</p>	<p>Margaret Petkoff Occupational Therapist Polio Services Victoria Ph: 03 9288 3900 or 1800 030 324 psv@svhm.org.au www.psv.svhm.org.au</p>	<p>Margaret Petkoff has been practicing as an occupational therapist for 25 years. She has worked as the occupational therapist at Polio Services Victoria for nearly 10 years. Margaret has extensive experience in complex equipment prescription with a special interest in wheelchairs and pressure cushions.</p>
	<p>Companions' Chat</p>	<p>Graeme Smith Spouse/Partner/Carer Ph: 03 9756 6383 joansgra@bigpond.com</p>	<p>As the husband of a polio survivor, I have learned about a whole new part of my wife's childhood. I have also learned to share and partly understand her current issues dealing with post-polio and very recently, cancer. Being a carer created many new issues for me. I found that sharing with others who understand can be very helpful. Through my membership of our polio support group I have been able to meet with other partners of polio survivors and talk about our experiences and challenges. It has also given me the opportunity to gain more information about the condition and how I might be able to help, for example, by modifying our lifestyle and living arrangements. Sharing with trusted friends can also allow a good measure of humour to ease the way.</p>
	<p>To Brace or Not To Brace & Orthotist Appointment</p>	<p>Darren Pereira Director & Principal Orthotist NeuroMuscular Orthotics Mount Waverley Ph: 03 9543 4009 www.neuromuscular-orthotics.com.au</p>	<p>Darren Pereira is Certified by the Australian Orthotics & Prosthetics Association (AOPA) and has completed international sub-specialty training in all aspects of orthotic management. He has a particular focus in neuromuscular disorders and is the Australian specialist in Knee Ankle Foot Orthoses (KAFO) and Stance Control Knee Ankle Foot Orthoses (SCKAFO). Darren completed his secondary education in 1989 at De La Salle College Malvern and commenced an undergraduate degree in Electronic Engineering at R.M.I.T the following year. At the end of first year, he transferred into the Bachelor of Prosthetics & Orthotics program at Latrobe University Melbourne and completed the undergraduate degree in 1994. Darren's clinical semester was completed in public practice at Rancho Los Amigos Hospital in Los Angeles California. He then spent two and a half years in private practice in Los Angeles before returning to the Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne in 1998. Darren held public appointments as the Chief of Prosthetics & Orthotics at St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne and Consultant Orthotist for Polio Services Victoria from 1998 – 2009.</p>


	<p>Recipe for Success</p>	<p>Alison Green Dietitian Private Practice Ph: 0412 513 809</p>	<p>Alison has been a consultant dietitian working alongside General Practitioners in medical centres in Somerville, Hallam and Endeavour Hills (Victoria) for the past 10 years.</p> <p>Over her 16 years of experience as a dietitian, time conducting Diabetes Education courses with Diabetes Educators and running Healthy Heart groups has given her a great interest in helping motivate clients take a healthy approach to their lifestyle.</p> <p>As well giving advice for general healthy eating, weight management, diabetes and cardiovascular disease, Alison has an interest in women's health, elderly nutrition, and gastrointestinal diseases such as Coeliac disease, fructose malabsorption and 'irritable bowel'.</p>
	<p>Therapeutic Massage</p>	<p>Jess Whitbourne Massage Therapist MP Family Physiotherapy Ph: 03 5976 4944</p>	<p>I have a diploma in remedial massage that I obtained at the Australian College of Natural Medicine, Melbourne. From there I have worked in many different environments and with a variety of therapists. I studied hot stone massage in London and then worked on a cruise ship in the Caribbean learning skills and knowledge from my colleagues who came from all over the globe.</p> <p>I use western cupping techniques as part of my treatments, along with stretching, pressure points and of course some lovely relaxation moves.</p>
	<p>Therapeutic Massage</p>	<p>Pam Joy Massage Therapist Private Practice</p>	<p>I have been a professional relaxation masseuse for 18 years, a Shiatsu therapist for 8 years, and I've also trained in Lomi Lomi massage.</p> <p>When I started doing body work I realised I needed to have a variety of skills to assist my clients. Relaxation massage works to let the muscles relax allowing me to go deeper into the body to where the client can release any tensions.</p> <p>I am a trained Counsellor in Cognitive Behaviour Therapy through the Cairnmillar Institute, have completed my Certificate Four as an Activity Co-ordinator, Aged Care, and I currently volunteer as a Peer Educator for Beyond Maturity Blue project through Council on the Ageing Victoria (COTA).</p>



	<p>The Healthy Mind & Mindfulness</p>	<p>Dr Andrew Sinclair Psychologist Independence Australia Ph: 1300 704 456 andrew.sinclair@independenceceaustralia.com www.independenceceaustralia.com</p>	<p>Andrew is the team leader of Psychology and Counselling Services at Independence Australia. Andrew has an Arts degree with Honours in Psychology and Professional Doctorate in Health Psychology. Andrew also has a Science degree majoring in physiology and pathology and he completed a Diploma of Management last year. Andrew has previously had research accepted at international conferences (including a Psychology conference in Barcelona this year) and his work has been published in Scientific Journals. As a health psychologist Andrew specialises in working with people with chronic illness and disability. Andrew's practice is focused on Mindfulness based cognitive therapy, which is a combination of Eastern and Western approaches to psychological well-being. Andrew has regularly worked with people living with the late effects of Polio at Independence Australia's counselling service and has previously presented at "Polio Days".</p>
	<p>Seated Yoga and Relaxation</p>	<p>Trish Jones Yoga Instructor Chiro Yoga Ph: 0409 548 550 chiroyoga@hotmail.com</p>	<p>I started yoga in 1979 and have been an active practitioner since, attending classes, courses and intensive training sessions (mostly at Satyananda Ashram in Daylesford, Victoria.) I began teaching in 2001 and have been regularly teaching classes since then in community centres; schools; for the disabled; in the work place; and privately.</p> <p>Practiced regularly, yoga teaches the frantic mind to settle and find peace. It improves focus and concentration; lowers and balances blood pressure; strengthens the immune system; improves breathing capacity; and eliminates toxins.</p> <p>Yoga is a good preventative health care tool. It gives you the ability to transform stress into energy. The more you are able to relax and release tension, the more vitality you have. This brings about peace, freedom, inner strength. It is empowering. The deep relaxation/meditation practice when done regularly will develop long lasting vitality and feeling of well being. It systematically dissolves tension from the body and the mind, the breathing and visualisation facilitates release of a physical, emotional and mental level. This technique (with its use of affirmation) can inspire profound changes within.</p>

	<p>The Alexander Technique & Frogs in Hot Water or What You Think is What You Get! & Singing Is Good For Your Health!</p>	<p>Jane Coker Alexander Technique Practitioner Private Practice Ph: 0400 053 266 jane.coker@optusnet.com.au</p>	<p>I have 25 years experience as a singer, saxophonist, voice teacher and community music facilitator. Originally from the UK, I have worked in Australia since 1999. My own experience of the Alexander Technique has been an end to over 20 years of chronic lower back pain, an increased vocal range and an a better ability to deal with stress.</p> <p>I had been suffering from severe lower back problems since my early twenties. In my early 40s the condition became intolerable and I began learning Alexander Technique. I learned how to use myself in a different way and can now bend and move more easily without fear of pain or injury. Best of all I can now play my huge baritone saxophone again, mow the lawn, go camping with friends and many other things that make life worth living.</p> <p>I love to work with people who just want to have fun singing or playing but they have never tried or gave up ages ago. As well as teaching individuals I also specialise in group workshops.</p>
	<p>Finding Your Story</p>	<p>Joan Smith Convener, Knox-Yarra Ranges Post-Polio Support Group, Victoria Ph: 03 9756 6383 joansgra@bigpond.com & Neil von Schill</p>	<p>As a polio survivor I have been committed to advocating for the rights and dignity of people with disabilities. That was a strong focus for me as Principal of a school for children with severe to profound disabilities. After early retirement, due to post-polio syndrome, I embarked on writing my life story for my grandchildren. That developed into the further project of producing and publishing "The Calliper Kids" – a book detailing life stories of eleven polio survivors living in our area. The book has proved a useful tool in educating our medical practitioners, aged-care providers and wider communities across the State. The outcomes of the project have also been very powerful for our story tellers. I continue in the role as Convenor of the Knox-Yarra Ranges Polio Support Group, where we continually receive and share very positive feedback about our stories.</p>
	<p>Picture Perfect</p>	<p>Stan Barnett Committee Member Frankston Photographic Club sbarnett@turbonet.com.au www.frankstonphotoclub.com.au</p>	<p>I became interested in photography when I realised that I could not draw or paint! I wanted to be able to record the world around me and in 1964 at age 21, bought my first real camera.</p> <p>About 5 years ago I decided to switch from film to digital and am now very keen on this new technology. The ability to take a photo and see the result immediately makes it easier to get good results. However we still need to obey some simple rules if we are to turn good photos into ones that our friends and family will want to look at!</p>

			<p>I now use a reasonably sophisticated Nikon digital camera with a couple of different lenses. These are processed on my PC using Photoshop software. As a preference I like to take photos of people rather than places.</p> <p>My specialty in photography is the production of short audio-visuals using both photos and music. These usually last around 3 minutes and will often use as many as 50 different photos.</p> <p>As someone that has been taking photos for all of my adult life I am keen to share whatever experience and knowledge that I have in order to improve other people's photos.</p>
	Explore Your Inner Artist	Fran Henke Member Mornington Peninsula Post Polio Support Group	<p>Frances Henke is an artist and writer. She has written 12 books on gardening and related subjects. She was a journalist for 45 years including working as media advisor for state and federal politicians. She is now trying to be a novelist in between community and art work.</p> <p>Fran has a Visual Arts diploma from Chisholm Frankston, majoring in printmaking and sculpture as a mature age student. She is a member of the Mornington Peninsula Post Polio Support Group and Community Reference Group for Independence Australia.</p>
	Bonsai	Alan Byers President Mornington Peninsula Bonsai Society Ph: 5974 4257 byers@satlink.com.au http://home.vicnet.net.au/~bonsaisp	<p>I have been interested in Bonsai for a long time and have been actively developing my own trees for the last 10 years. I'm currently the President of the Mornington Peninsula Bonsai Society, one of many such Bonsai clubs around Australia. I find that creating and cultivating Bonsai trees is a great hobby (or is it a passion?) now that I am getting older.</p>
	Learn to Play Mah jong	Ailsa Lim (<i>left</i>) Jan Mackinnon (<i>centre</i>) Annie Wardley (<i>right</i>) Mah jong Enthusiasts U3A Mornington Ph: 03 5975 9773 www.u3amornington.org.au	<p>Ailsa, Jan and Annie are all retired and living on the Mornington Peninsula. They play Ma jong at the Mornington U3A each week and, because they love the game so much, they get together with another group of 12 'girls' to play on a fortnightly basis.</p>

Sunday 1 May

	The Healthy Spirit & Connecting with the Spirit Within including Meditation	Maureen Anderson Session Presenter U3A Mornington	<p>I enrolled at U3A Mornington about 3 years ago. I was then offered the opportunity of taking a class for "Body, Mind and Spirit" which I have been doing for 21/2 years now. In that class, we cover all aspects of 'Self' including Meditation.</p>
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	<p>Naturopathy</p>	<p>Dr Michael McIntyre Naturopath Peninsula Natural Therapies Ph: 02 4465 2267 0412 322 771 buddharocks@bigpond.com</p>	<p>Michael McIntyre ND A.N.T.A is one of Australia's most experienced naturopaths, having been in clinical practise for almost 30 years. Michael formed Peninsula Natural Therapies Pty Ltd in 1984 and the company has evolved dramatically since that time, moving from a large multi practitioner practise to a boutique service, offering specialised care to athletes, entertainers and families. Michael works with herbal medicine, homoeopathics and mineral therapies and addresses such issues as: immune dysfunction, respiratory conditions, weight loss and metabolic function, fatigue and nervous conditions. Through his years of experience and client feedback, Michael has drawn from over 20,000 case histories, to develop an holistic approach to health care and treatment. He addresses all aspects of the human being - the mind, body and spirit.</p>
	<p>Balancing Your Life</p>	<p>Liz Telford Social Worker/ Counsellor/ Family Therapist Private Practice</p>	<p>I am a Social Worker/Counsellor/Family Therapist with a private practice in Fairfield Melbourne where I see individuals, couples and families.</p> <p>I had polio as a baby and have spent quite a bit of time thinking about how having polio has affected my life and the lives of those around me.</p> <p>Over the past few years I have needed to slow down and pay a bit more attention to what my body has to say. My work gives me the opportunity to meet many people who have reached points of transition in their lives, or who are facing other challenges and to talk with them about their experience. I feel that living is a "work in progress" and we can learn a great deal from each other and from ourselves when we allow the time to reflect.</p> <p>I became involved with Polio Network Victoria in 2008 when I joined the Polio Advisory Committee. In 2009, I travelled with Mary-ann Liethof and others on a journey to a Polio Retreat in Warm Springs, Georgia, which has been the inspiration for this Polio Health and Wellness Retreat.</p>

4. Program

Polio Health and Wellness Retreat Body / Mind / Spirit Program

A program offered by Polio Australia Inc

Thursday 28, Friday 29, Saturday 30 April and Sunday 1 May 2011

at
The Melbourne Business School
Mount Eliza, Victoria

Thursday 15 April

Time	Activity	Facilitator
2.00 to 6.30pm	Registration, room allocation and facility orientation	
6.30 to 7.30pm	Dinner	
7.30pm	Welcome	Gillian Thomas <i>President, Polio Australia</i> and Neil von Schill <i>Treasurer, Polio Australia</i>
7.45pm	Guest Speaker – Hon Bruce Billson, MP Electoral Division of Dunkley (Vic)	Neil von Schill <i>Treasurer, Polio Australia</i>
8.00pm	Program Overview and Brief Announcements	Mary-ann Liethof <i>National Program Manager, PA</i>
8.15pm	Participant Introductions	Mary-ann Liethof
8.25pm	Brief Announcements	Mary-ann Liethof
8.30pm	Relax and Mingle	<i>Optional</i>
8.30 to 10.30pm	Warm Springs Movie	<i>Optional</i>

Friday 29 April

Time	Activity	Facilitator
9.15 to 10.00am	The Polio Body	Dr Stephen de Graaff <i>Rehabilitation Specialist and Director of Pain Services</i> <i>Epworth Rehab, Camberwell, Victoria</i>
10.00 to 10.25am	Morning tea	
10.30am to 12.00pm	All about scooters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The selection process • Getting the scooter fitted to meet your needs • Safety in the community • Practical try-outs <i>1 hr session / ½ hr try-outs</i>	Graeme Beary <i>Sales Representative / Demonstrator</i> <i>Scooters Australia</i>
	Get Moving Seated Tai Chi exercise session for people with limited mobility	Keith Butler <i>Allied Health Assistant</i> <i>Peninsula Health Community Health, Mornington</i>

	<p>Take a Deep Breath Problems with breathing and/or sleep are issues for many people living with the Late Effects of Polio. The impact of these problems on daily life includes chronic fatigue and the inability to concentrate. Is this you? – Interactive Q and A session</p>	<p>Anne Duncan CNC <i>Outreach Coordinator Victorian Respiratory Support Service Austin Health</i></p>
	<p>Hard to Swallow? The Late Effects of Polio can cause progressive weakness in the bulbar muscles of the tongue, mouth and throat and triggers swallowing problems called 'dysphagia'. Typical signs of dysphagia include excessive tongue movements, a delay in the swallowing reflex and constriction of throat muscles, and uncontrolled flow of food from the mouth into the throat. These problems are often more severe on one side of the mouth and throat. This session will discuss techniques for minimising dysphagia. – Interactive Q and A session</p>	<p>Abby Foster <i>Speech Pathologist, St Vincent's Hospital</i></p>
	<p>Foot Care for Polio Feet The more limited your mobility, the more important it is to look after your feet! – Interactive Q and A session</p>	<p>Paul Musarra <i>Podiatrist Riverina Podiatry Group</i></p>
12.15pm	Lunch	
1.00 to 2.00pm	Rest and Relaxation	
	<p>Guided Deep Relaxation – 20 min session at 1.30pm</p>	<p>Mary-ann Liethof <i>National Program Manager Polio Australia</i></p>
	<p>Podiatry appointment – Booked 15 min one-to-one session</p>	<p>Paul Musarra <i>Podiatrist</i></p>
	<p>Respiratory Assessment – Booked 15 min one-to-one session</p>	<p>Anne Duncan <i>Outreach Worker, Victorian Respiratory Support Service Team Austin Hospital</i></p>
	<p>Physiotherapy Appointment – Booked 20 min one-to-one session</p>	<p>Louise Thomas <i>Principle Physiotherapist NeuroMuscular Orthotics Mount Waverley, Victoria</i></p>
	<p>Self-Management Discussion – Booked 20 min one-to-one session</p>	<p>Dr Steve de Graaff <i>Rehabilitation Specialist and Director of Pain Services Epworth Rehab, Camberwell, Victoria</i></p>
	<p>Therapeutic Massage – Booked 30 min session</p>	<p>Annette Vince or Pam Joy <i>Massage Therapists Private Practice</i></p>
	<p>Acupuncture Appointment – Booked 30 min one-to-one session</p>	<p>Andrea Galgoczi-Kratochvil <i>Chinese Medicine Practitioner Accent on Wellbeing</i></p>

2.00 to 3.30pm	Pain Management – Interactive Q and A session	Dr Steve de Graaff <i>Rehabilitation Specialist and Director of Pain Services Epworth Rehab, Camberwell, Victoria</i>
	Aids and Equipment Could you be making life easier on yourself? Find out what's available at this session. – Interactive Q and A session	Margaret Petkoff <i>Occupational Therapist Polio Services Victoria</i>
	Who does what? Understanding the roles and help you can expect from your allied health 'team' – Interactive Q and A session	Louise Thomas <i>Principle Physiotherapist NeuroMuscular Orthotics Mount Waverley, Victoria</i>
	Childhood revisited Tour of historic Mt Eliza Rehabilitation Centre	Marion Steele <i>Librarian and Historical Researcher Peninsula Health</i>
	Companions' Chat Discussion focussing on issues for the Spouse/Partner/Carer	Graeme Smith <i>Spouse/Partner/Carer</i>
	Respiratory Assessment – Booked 15 min one-to-one session	Anne Duncan <i>Outreach Worker Victorian Respiratory Support Service Team Austin Health</i>
	Therapeutic Massage – Booked 30 min one-to-one session	Annette Vince or Pam Joy <i>Massage Therapists Private Practice</i>
Acupuncture Appointment – Booked 30 min one-to-one session	Andrea Galgoczi-Kratochvil <i>Chinese Medicine Practitioner Accent on Well Being</i>	
3.30 to 3.55 pm	Afternoon Tea	
4.00 to 5.30 pm	Pain Management – Interactive Q and A session <i>(Repeat)</i>	Dr Steve de Graaff <i>Rehabilitation Specialist and Director of Pain Services, Epworth Rehab, Camberwell, Victoria</i>
	To brace or not to Brace An important question for people tripping often, or with increasing muscle weakness. Don't wait until you break a bone! – Interactive Q and A session	Darren Pereira <i>Orthotist NeuroMuscular Orthotics Mount Waverley, Victoria and MRI and ARC, NSW</i>
	Exercise Myths and Facts Should we "use it or lose it" or "conserve it to preserve it"? Find out in this session. – Interactive Q and A session	Louise Thomas <i>Principle Physiotherapist, NeuroMuscular Orthotics Mount Waverley, Victoria</i>
	Recipe for Success Food for wellbeing and practical weight management strategies – Interactive Q and A session	Alison Green <i>Dietitian Private Practice</i>
	Therapeutic Massage – Booked 30 min sessions	Annette, Pam or Jess <i>Massage therapists Private Practice</i>
5.45 to 6.15 pm	Choir Practice	Mary-ann Liethof <i>National Program Manager Polio Australia</i>

Saturday 30 April

Time	Activity	Facilitator
9.15 to 10.00am	The Healthy Mind	Dr Andrew Sinclair <i>Psychologist</i> <i>Independence Australia</i>
10.00 to 10.25am	Morning tea	
10.30am to 12.00pm	Yoga and Relaxation	Trish Jones <i>Yoga Instructor</i> <i>Chiro Yoga</i>
	Mindfulness Mindfulness is the practice of paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally - Interactive Q and A session	Dr Andrew Sinclair <i>Psychologist</i> <i>Independence Australia</i>
	The “Alexander” Technique Introduces the relationship between the head, neck and spine – Practical interactive session	Jane Coker <i>Alexander Technique Practitioner</i> <i>Private Practice</i>
	Early memories of having polio This interactive discussion is a time for sharing the good, the bad and any other memories of the ‘polio days’	Gillian Thomas <i>President</i> <i>Polio Australia</i>
	Therapeutic Massage – Booked 30 min sessions	Annette Vince or Pam Joy <i>Massage Therapists</i> <i>Private Practice</i>
	Orthotics Appointment – Booked/paid one-to-one session	Darren Pereira <i>Orthotist</i> <i>NeuroMuscular Orthotics</i> <i>Mount Waverley, Victoria</i>
	Self-Management Discussion – Booked 20 min one-to-one session	Dr Steve de Graaff <i>Rehabilitation Specialist and Director of Pain Services</i> <i>Epworth Rehab, Camberwell, Victoria</i>
12.15pm	Lunch	
1.00 to 2.00pm	Rest and Relaxation	
	Guided Deep Relaxation – 20 min Session at 1.30pm	Mary-ann Liethof <i>National Program Manager</i> <i>Polio Australia</i>
	Therapeutic Massage – Booked 30 min session	Annette Vince or Pam Joy <i>Massage Therapist</i> <i>Private Practice</i>
	Self-Management Discussion – Booked 20 min one-to-one session	Dr Steve de Graaff <i>Rehabilitation Specialist and Director of Pain Services</i> <i>Epworth Rehab, Camberwell, Victoria</i>
	Orthotics Appointment – Booked/paid one-to-one session	Darren Pereira <i>Orthotist</i> <i>NeuroMuscular Orthotics</i> <i>Mount Waverley, Victoria</i>

2.00 to 3.30 pm	Finding your story We all have a story, so how will you tell yours?	Joan Smith <i>Member, Polio Network Vic and Neil von Schill Member, Post-Polio Network (NSW)</i>
	Frogs in Hot Water or What You Think is What You Get! Looks at how our habitual behaviours are the result of habitual brain activity and that we can choose to use our minds to change the habits	Jane Coker <i>Community Facilitator Private Practice</i>
	Picture Perfect Bring along your camera for some great tips on how to get the best out of your happy snaps	Stan Barnett <i>Committee Member Frankston Photographic Club</i>
	Cryptic Crosswords Take up the challenge and learn to translate those elusive clues	Gillian Thomas <i>President Polio Australia</i>
	Companions' Chat Discussion focusing on issues for the Spouse/Partner/Carer	Graeme Smith <i>Spouse/Partner/Carer</i>
	Therapeutic Massage – Booked 30 min session	Annette Vince or Pam Joy <i>Massage Therapists Private Practice</i>
3.30 to 3.55 pm	Afternoon Tea	
4.00 to 5.30pm	Singing is Good For Your Health! Jane has been leading singing sessions and voice workshops since the 1980's – you don't have to have a voice like Dame Joan, you just have to enjoy singing out loud	Jane Coker <i>Community Music Facilitator Private Practice</i>
	Explore your inner artist Find out what you can do with pastels and charcoal	Fran Henke <i>Member, Polio Network Vic (PNV)</i>
	Bonsai Create your own mini garden to take home	Alan Byers <i>President, Mornington Peninsula Bonsai Society</i>
	Learn to Play Mahjong A game of skill, strategy and calculation	<i>Mahjong Enthusiasts U3A Mornington</i>
	Finding your story We all have a story, so how will you tell yours? <i>(Repeat)</i>	Neil von Schill <i>Member Post-Polio Network (NSW)</i>
	Therapeutic Massage – Booked 30 min sessions	Annette Vince or Pam Joy <i>Massage Therapist Private Practice</i>
5.45 to 6.15 pm	Choir Practice	Mary-ann Liethof <i>National Program Manager Polio Australia</i>

Sunday 1 May

Time	Activity	Facilitator
9.15 to 10.00am	The Healthy Spirit	Maureen Anderson <i>Class Facilitator</i> <i>U3A Mornington</i>
10.00 to 10.25am	Morning Tea	
10.30am to 12.00pm	Connecting with the Spirit Within including Meditation Spirituality touches that part of you that is not dependent on material things or physical comforts – <i>Interactive discussion group</i> Meditation Regular meditation practice can have many beneficial results on different levels such as health, well-being, mind, brain and spirit. So why not give it a go?	Maureen Anderson <i>Class Facilitator</i> <i>U3A Mornington</i>
	Naturopathy Herbal and Nutritional Options for Managing Pain and Fatigue – <i>Interactive Q and A session</i>	Dr Michael McIntyre <i>Naturopath</i> <i>Peninsula Therapies</i>
	Balancing your life This interactive session brings together the Retreat themes of Mind, Body and Spirit with a focus on how we want to use energy and how we create priorities	Liz Telford <i>Member,</i> <i>Polio Advisory Committee</i> <i>PNV</i>
12.15pm	Lunch	
1.15 to 2.30pm	Choir Performance and Closing Plenary	Mary-ann Liethof Neil von Schill Gillian Thomas <i>Polio Australia</i>



Jane Coker - Singing

5. Evaluations, Feedback and Follow up Actions

5.1 Day 1 5.1.1 Polio Survivors

10.30am to 12.00pm

Session	Most useful Aspects	What other information would have liked
Scooters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answers to all I requested about motorized scooters and wheelchairs. 	
Get Moving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interesting, enjoyed session, hearing exercise I can do in a chair. Trying Tai Chi, exercise information – best of all seated Tai Chi. Trying out exercises has made me want to try at home with my DVDs. Exercise can be relaxed yet useful. Understanding the body - introduction to Tai Chi - and understanding the importance of pacing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very well presented, but not long enough
Deep Breath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The information, amount and quality of Anne's knowledge. Excellent, most helpful - I learnt a lot. Relationship between breathing and fatigue. Excellent and understood our problems. Information on machines available to assist people. Discussing detailed breathing issues with an 'expert' and other participant information that was shared. Finding how to cope when breathing becomes a problem. Well presented and knowledgeable – realised need for follow up action. The Q and A meeting style. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reminder of breathing technique. To help us with visual and techniques of 'take a breath when tired etc. Extra details on breathing problems in polio people and what to do in an emergency. Latest respiratory help, eg. 'mouth splints' plus standard CPAPs etc. Case studies.
Hard to Swallow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Techniques to avoid swallowing problems - great presenter, well presented. Useful information, still learning how to swallow even after 60 years of bulbar polio. The extensive nerve and muscle coordination needed for swallowing. Exploration and explanation of swallowing process and practical marshmallow demonstration. Where to be assessed for swallowing problems. Techniques to reduce choking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updates on new research and findings (in the future). Medical details, slides of PPS damage and things which go wrong.
Foot Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed description of foot structure. Foot bone structure and what happens to feet without proper fitting shoes/orthotics. Useful and easy to understand explanation of how most problems are developmental abnormalities and their management and correction. Information on presentation and control of foot problems for people of 50-90+ age. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government help (Federal/ State/Municipal) for ongoing and regular podiatry assistance.

Session	Most useful Aspects	What other information would have liked
Pain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being believed/validated. • It was so informal and we all had a chance to speak. • Learnt more about what medications are available and their side effects. • Have been to Steve's sessions before and always learn more. • Controlling pain to manageable levels without medication. Hearing how others deal with pain. • The fact we can never expect to be pain free. • Knowledge of what to avoid. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need letter/phone call to follow up recommendations. • Where to find a good pain management doctor in Sydney! • Excellent – but people should list their problems before arrival.
Aids and Equip	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering a multi-pronged stick, will contact local health center OT. • What to look for in scooters and how to suit a disability and when a wheelchair is needed. • Computer exploration of aids and equipment. • Occupational Therapist role to assess client needs. • Scooter problems. • That it is not just a matter of getting a scooter or wheelchair. • Good 'checklist' on considering what equipment to select. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstration with aids available. • Mostly Victorian based aid - need other state information resources. • Broader coverage of Occupational Therapy issues. • Other Aids and Equip, eg. shower aids, hand aids - broader range. • Session concentrated on scooters, little relevance for w/chair dependents. • Would have liked other home aids.
Who Does What	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping us with contacts. • Contacts and regulatory requirements of professional bodies such as physios. • Very helpful. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate and complete advice on government philanthropic help available to meet needs.
Mt Eliza Tour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to share childhood experiences, compare facilities, educate the speaker. • Listening to actual surnames that had been inpatients there 30's/50's/60's. • Historical interest. • Living history – moving and fascinating with an enthusiastic and knowledgeable guide. • Fascinating to compare rehabilitation in Australia with England. • Sheer nostalgia/memories! Excellent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disappointed that I was not able to see the actual rooms/ veranda/pool, etc.

4.00pm – 5.30pm

Session	Most useful Aspects	What other information would have liked
Pain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pacing, maintain strength and endurance - work smarter not harder! • Steve's knowledge and passion about Polio and us survivors. • Benefits of self-pacing and how to make the most of available mobility aids. • Open discussion of issues – important to deal with life issues ahead of drugs. • How members can correct their pain. • The casual exchange of experiences with excellent facilitators. • Steve very easy to talk to, learning to slow down now. 	
To Brace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical information. • Will brace my good leg and trial a brace before I commit financially, very useful. • The amount that is available. • Wow! So much excellent information covered on braces and shoes. • Enlightened my husband on braces etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help with orthotic costs - Government funding woefully inadequate.
Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad based and open discussion. • Exercise is good for you and not harmful. • Relevant, detailed account of why/how disabled people should exercise - confirmed what polio people knew. • Benefits of personalised exercise routines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More time. • Discussion not applicable to many wheelchair participants. • More relevance to polios. • Would prefer small exercise sessions. • More options for 'non walkers'. • Needs more variation.
Recipe for Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information was familiar but importance of low GI, low fat foods with portion control explained clearly and well-presented. • Very informative, comprehensive coverage of the topic for time. • Information about the lowering of GI. • More relevant to me - weight down and using energy. • Plate showing portion control. • Clear explanation of the nutritional aspects required by our bodies, the effects of these and ideas for connecting nutrition with weight management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More copied notes of nutritional information. • How to cook food a healthy way.

Day 1 Follow up actions (Polio participants):

Exercise

- Be gentle on myself – watch all stressors, seek early professional help.
- Follow analytical, assertive approach to prescribed exercises.
- Follow up physiotherapy exercise program.
- Desperate for physical support - searching for how to pay.
- Check Tai Chi DVD with local physio for relevance.
- Will follow up Tai Chi.

Aids & Equipment

- Check seating, body support, acknowledge my needs, be 'open' and speak up for myself.
- Purchase multi-pronged stick.
- Upgrade my CPAP to a BPAP at the respiratory clinic.
- Explore equipment to assist circulation/lower limb involvement.

Allied Health

- Involve an Occupational Therapist in 'my choice' of the next walking aid and walking frame.
- Look at issues in managing beyond scooters etc. in Occupational Therapy session.
- Many ideas to discuss with GP and follow up with people who can help.
- Consult orthotist - subject to finance.
- Arrange regular visits to podiatry professionals.
- Looking after my feet better and continue with back advice.
- Seek Speech Therapy help.
- Arrange medical follow up on respiratory conditions/problems.
- Look into sleeping and breathing management.

Dietary Advice

- Consider food values when cooking.
- Monitor food portions to keep weight controlled.

General Comments

- Plenary session with Dr Steve de Graaff was excellent – balanced – informative.
- Friendly atmosphere, do not feel alone - at 6.15pm I'm very tired so must take time out tomorrow – but no complaints, all so worthwhile!!!
- A really good day, if not a bit tiring.
- Interactive, informative and relaxing day - glad we returned again, so much more to learn.
- Excellent information from approachable, well qualified presenters - wonderful day.
- Rewarding day of information, experiences, relating to presenters and polio survivors.
- The Retreat is very informative and relaxed.
- Great day – enjoyed my massage.
- Programs well planned – a job well done.
- Excellent way to recover after reaching the venue, meeting old friends and learning more.
- Adaptability of program and encouraging participants to do what they want is a plus.
- Excellent sessions well presented - so much life changing information available.
- All speakers today were enthusiastic and knowledgeable.
- So many wonderful choices and caring, professional practitioners who understand Polios.
- Initial room difficulties but staff willing to accommodate poor wheelchair access.

5.1 Day 1
5.1.2 Spouse/Carers

10.30am to 12.30pm

Session	Most useful Aspects	What other information would have liked
Scooters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for scooter training and when an electric wheelchair may be a better option. • That a scooter might not be suitable and how to use well. 	
Get Moving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New perspective and need to keep up with a variety of exercises. • Learning about Tai Chi. • Learning about muscle toning. 	
Deep Breath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing more about sleep apnea symptoms. • That waking during the night is often a breathing problem. • Anne listened generously and intelligently and shy people were able to put their problems forward. • Physiology of breathing. • Caution about anesthesia and insisting on doctors having information on Polio. • Knowledge that at some point the respirators are available, especially for nighttime breathing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ways of overcoming sleeping/breathing problems.
Hard to Swallow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I found an answer to my problem. Abby presented a very good program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some more written information.
Foot Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arch definition and orthotic explanations/differences. • Very interactive. • Different foot styles and effect of pressure points. • Everyone was given a chance to ask questions and get advice. • I was given constructive advice about how to get better care and attention for my feet. 	

2.00pm – 3.30pm

Session	Most useful Aspects	What other information would have liked
<i>Pain</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to take the whole person into account when managing their pain. 	
<i>Aids and Equip.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources in Victoria • Objective view provided by Occupational Therapist. • Availability of equipment and where to go. • Information regarding available websites. • Overall fantastic. • Visit Independent Living Center at home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More info relating to states other than Victoria. • Demonstration and recommendations of some aids available. • Need to get funding for Tasmania.
<i>Who Does What</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking for the near future 	
<i>Mt Eliza Tour</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very interesting seeing a place I had only seen in photos previously. • Seeing polio survivors reminiscing about dealing with the struggles and the triumphs. • Fascinating being with polios who were there as children – good, enthusiastic tour guide. • The 3 on tour who had been resident had so much to share and even Marion (Guide) said they could provide more info than she could. • Tour was excellent and well worth the effort. The day was even more informative and enjoyable because of 3 former residents being on the tour to regale us with their memories. 	
<i>Companions' Chat</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good comments from participants. • Similar stories but education is required. • Carers at various levels of acceptance of PPS. 	

4.00pm – 5.30pm

Session	Most useful Aspects	What other information would have liked
Pain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr de Graaff is so brilliant. • Each individual to pace themselves to their own requirements and ability. • Completely covered and presented by the best in the world. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would have liked written information.
To Brace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every aspect great, a brilliant presentation by an expert in his field. • Various braces available to stylish shoes to fit problem feet. • Darren is great. • An excellent service to know about even for those who need braces for other reasons. 	
Recipe for Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion sizes, what's important about fats, protein and carbs etc. • Updated previous details and will get us started again. I/we do get slack over time. • Simple solutions to losing weight gradually. • Glycemic Index information and food labelling information. 	

Day 1 Follow up actions (Spouse/Carer participants):

Exercise

- Follow up on Tai Chi.

Aids & Equipment

- Another brace for my mother's good leg. A good tip for the new brace she is receiving.
- Meeting with Darren later.
- Will attend orthotic clinic in Mt Waverley and try a brace.

Allied Health

- I will see a speech pathologist when I get home for my throat.
- Seek help from Speech Therapist, Occupational Therapist.
- Follow up on Podiatry
- Visit podiatrist.

Dietary Advice

- Be mindful of food and healthiness.
- Lose weight.

General Comments

- Written information from guest speakers would be a great help.
- As a Carer be in better tune with my husband and his health and wellbeing from now on.
- I am a fairly well informed 'health' person but am really impressed by the content and presentation of these sessions. Vital for Carers to attend.
- Whole day was good introduction to issues and strategies for improvement and coping.
- Slower activities made this much more relaxed for me.
- Pleased that despite some 'hiccups' – flexibility to provide alternative, eg. Massage.

5.2 Day 2
5.2.1 Polio Survivors

10.30am to 12.30pm

Session	Most useful Aspects	What other information would have liked
<i>Yoga and relaxation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The interactive session with breathing and stretching. • Relaxing techniques, breathing using yoga methods. • Clear, detailed, accurate information with gentle guidance. • Simplicity. • Trish has a great way of including everyone. Doing seated activities was best. • How easy the exercises are. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information to take home.
<i>Mindfulness</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking about my time in hospital. • Two new ways to look at myself as “in the moment” and not to judge. • All good – excellent session. • A great follow up - good exercises for the mind. • The whole series of exercises were useful in helping develop mindfulness, etc. • Andrew’s “Mindfulness” provided great relaxation and coping (thinking) mechanisms. • May be useful in helping me relax. • Psychologist had practical, common sense approach to how life will help. • Andrew’s session included really useful information that I hadn’t heard him speak about previously 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A longer session would allow more time for practical work – which was great!

10.30am to 12.30pm (Cont'd)

Session	Most useful Aspects	What other information would have liked
Alexander Technique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loved session - will find Canberra practitioner. • Relaxing the body and being aware that you are doing just that. • I will try some exercises. • Excellent revelation and should help us all. • Very relaxing, well covered and presented. • Learning about a new/alternative exercise. • The importance of a flexible backbone and posture to ease of movement. • Posture for correction and relaxation. • Reminded me (yet again!) that I am in charge of my posture and to be aware of this and how it affects other aspects of my body. • Facilitator explained the fundamental importance of a flexible intended spine and the relationship between the position of the head relative to the spine. Participants were encouraged to adopt a semi-supine position on the floor but with knees bent and feet on the floor to gently stretch the spine. Practicing this position for 20mins daily will have long-term benefits. 	
Early Memories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just hearing others stories and experiences including similarities and effects on lives. • Hearing everyone else tell their stories and how we all connected. • We all have memories good and bad and looking at our parents in a different light - they did their best. • Very interesting sharing and realising how each story is different. • Hearing other people's stories and how they have managed to move on. Helped my husband understand why I behave as I do. Worth partners hearing from other polios. • Nice to hear other people's experiences. • Interesting to hear how others have tried to come to terms with their experiences. • Interested to hear family attitudes to the polio - so sad - as I was well looked after. • Hearing other polio stories helped me feel 'safe' to open up. • Excellent sharing of polio people talking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prefer to be gently led in personal stories and the sharing. • How to use experience of disclosure to come to terms with difficult experiences • Prefer more of a closed/private space.

Session	Most useful Aspects	What other information would have liked
Story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to hear about and see examples of other's stories and ideas for my own – if I ever get embarked on it! • Sharing other people's stories and getting clues on how to get started! • All of it – helpful structure and getting started strategies. • How to start to relate my story – sharing it. • Raising the importance of finding and telling our stories – helpful advice on structuring. • Talking about your experiences through the years. • Ways on how to write my own story. • POLIO people talking (I prefer Carers to go to a separate group sometimes). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More guidelines to actually writing but what we were given was excellent. • Hard to know what more you can do in an isolated session compared with a series of workshops. • Less being TOLD how to do it by the male presenter. I prefer more sharing/personal stories.
Frogs in Hot Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doing things one likes doing, changing habits and the symptoms of stress on the body. • Interesting. • Easy to get involved in. • Stay active at home - keep my brain going. • Receiving ideas on how to change habits. • Stimulating and enjoyed Jane's presentation. • Very informative and easily explained concepts. Glad that I chose this session. • Found it interesting as it carried on from the morning session. • Explanation of why and how to go about changing 'mindset' and how healthy it can be! • Very informative. • Reference material; medical issues – effects of stress on the body, importance of learning new attitudes – and the fact that this can be done even at an advanced age. 	
Picture Perfect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tips on how to make better pictures. • Very informative. • A good easy explanation. • Great networking with plenty of ideas. • Learning to locate what we want in a photo. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If I had known I would have brought some photos to ask for ideas on strategies for improvement.
Cryptic Crosswords	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great fun, interesting and challenging. • Excellent session with supporting info. • Finding out how to get clues to answers. • Finding out that there is a code! 	

4.00pm – 5.30pm

Session	Most useful Aspects	What other information would have liked
Story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neil and Joan were very interesting and informative. • Session provided a starting point to think about writing my story. • Aspects of planning and how to obtain information. • Need to take another look at my story. • I felt the story sessions were so valuable in terms of people unloading, etc., that I chose to do the repeat session. 	
Inner Artist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good time period. • Excellent session – Fran’s a great teacher. • Great group of people. • Amazing, well presented session, fun, challenging, relaxing, well-done Fran. • We had lots of laughter going through the stage of portrait painting – great fun. • The playfulness of the class – the sense of fun with the exercise. • Good fun and lots of laughter from very light hearted and helpful presenter. • The experience of allowing myself fun and laughter, as well as trying something new. • Fun and relaxed though got lead through a number of steps to achieve outcome. 	
Bonsai	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planting bonsai plants. Practical activity. • Paul was great, with practical ideas. • The practical demonstration. • Really enjoyed the information – and will enjoy the gift plant for a long time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to plant trees with old bonsai methods. • The Mornington bonsai team were helpful but could have done with more plants.
Singing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great end to what’s been a busy weekend. • Lots of fun and aerobic exercise! • Can’t sing well but enjoyed the experience. • Best time ever - finally found my voice. • Just a pleasant experience. • Group participation helps break the ice. 	
Mahjong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning to play ‘Ordinary Mahjong’ and ‘Dragonfly’ – with much fun and laughter. • A great enjoyable session. • Fun, friendly - lots of patience by teachers. • Wonderful opportunity to learn something new. Jan (instructor) just wonderful. • Challenge and stimulation of learning a completely new activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would like to have had more time!!

Day 2 Follow up actions (Polio participants):

Mindfulness

- Need to read Rhoda Olkins' book, quoted by Dr Andrew Sinclair.
- Some good books to follow up on.
- Books – reading – challenging myself.
- Reading reference material. Trying new approaches to manage my life.

Physical Activity

- Recommend the Alexander Technique to my sister who has debilitating back pain.
- Practice Alexander Technique.
- Practice Yoga.
- Will incorporate gentle yoga into my daily routing.

Stories

- Start writing my story for family and friends.
- Find my own story. It is there somewhere!
- Write my story.
- 'Attempting' to write my story interview relatives to find out their memories and how my polio affected their lives.
- I will write my story.
- Plan to write my story, for the sake of my children, who have only probably picked up bits and pieces.
- Publishing a book.
- Find my story on Polio.

Games/Creativity

- I intend to learn to play Mahjong at a U3A.
- Find somewhere to play Mahjong.
- Look for Mahjong clubs.
- I will probably look into Mahjong when I retire.

- I would use my pots, soil and plants and create Bonsai plants for me and family and friends.
- Follow up today's bonsai learning.
- Have now the confidence to extend my experimenting of plants.

- Take an art class next year.
- Holding Art exhibition.

- I will attempt to do the cryptic crosswords!
- Continue singing.
- Get more adventurous with my camera.

General Comments

- Presenters excellent at these sessions – could listen to for hours.
- Another great day of information and companionship.
- So good to share experiences with people who understand. I feel humble after hearing some people's stories. Mary-ann thank you and congratulations on a wonderful effort.
- Had a lovely relaxing day. Felt more 'settled in' than on Friday which was a bit rushed – probably unfamiliar surroundings.
- A good day and lovely mix of more serious side to laughter with 'good friends'!
- I've got most out of the 'one-on-one' appointments; the casually exchanged insights over cups of tea/coffee; the group's discussion sessions and the beautiful surroundings. In the natural course of events along with advancing age comes declining powers of concentration.

5.2 Day 2
5.2.2 Spouse/Carers

10.30am to 12.30pm

Session	Most useful Aspects	What other information would have liked
Yoga and relaxation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breathing and stretching to improve blood flow to joints less used. 	
Keeping the Mind Active	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Methods to concentrate/focus on one thing to clear the mind of excess information. Consolidating the practice of mindfulness – excellent. Mindfulness exercises to lessen stress were rewarding and helpful. This was useful to improve happiness for all the participants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mind control to suppress and manage pain.
Alexander Technique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning to relax. Informative and helpful. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maybe a sheet with simple exercises. Maybe more visual display.
Early Memories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reinforced my good fortune of not having polio - a very moving session. Confidence of most people to feel comfortable enough to tell their story. 	

2.00pm – 3.30pm

Session	Most useful Aspects	What other information would have liked
Story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thank you for practical on-line references about mechanics of writing and publishing. Story structure options from notes and anecdotes. Consider audience and write accordingly. Mind maps, jotting down, not having to write from start to finish, scrap booking good idea. Purpose for writing: a) Therapeutic for polio survivors, b) informative and inspiring for family and friends, c) Public reading if pitched and written well e.g. school children, libraries, health studies, positive living classes; adult reading, health professionals and volunteers. 	
Picture Perfect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All of it as well as the interaction. 	
Frogs in Hot Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good strategies and info on regenerating nerve endings etc. in the brain. In a way this followed on from morning session – different way to look at life. Great presenter - pulled info out of us. Informative and helpful. 	
Cryptic Crosswords	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to think cryptically and look for ideas on solving. 	

2.00pm – 3.30pm (Cont'd)

Session	Most useful Aspects	What other information would have liked
<i>Companions' Chat</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common and contrasting experiences. • Very insightful – enjoyed it immensely. I never knew so many men could suffer in silence. (joke) • Amazed Carers did not know what they are entitled to from Centrelink. • Participants were open and seemed to gain from discussion. Some people with PPS would be surprised by some of the comments given by Carers. • Finding out about Carer's Allowance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change the name back to "Carers' Cuppa".

4.00pm – 5.30pm

Session	Most useful Aspects	What other information would have liked
<i>Story</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neil and Joan gave good information. • Help available to write partners story. • We value "The Calliper Kids" and meeting the authors at this Retreat. • Some at the 'Finding your story' session are not sure how to start and for whom to write. It was good to swap notes and discuss different perspectives. 	
<i>Inner Artist</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great fun and very practical – Fran is a wonderful tutor. • How to shape a face using simple layout shapes - good fun. • Fun - but I will not become an artist. 	
<i>Bonsai</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hands on activity and gaining confidence to tackle bonsai. 	
<i>Singing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good vigorous singing of familiar songs plus new song. Jane's a brilliant director! • This was fun and very interactive - loved it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just a longer session, as I love singing.
<i>Mahjong</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I loved the game – I want to learn more. • Great fun! Good way to end the day. • Good fun and mixed with other conference attendees. Very good information. • Completely different activity – relaxing. • Never played the game before - loved it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A book on how to play the game (but I can do that later). • Written information.

Day 2 Follow up actions (Spouse/Carer participants):

Mindfulness

- Planning to read and practice mindfulness.

Stories

- Encourage my husband to get going with his story.
- Organising one of the guest speakers to speak at our support group.
- Follow up on polio stories as I am very interested.

Games/Creativity

- Play Mahjong.
- Probably find a way to continue playing Mahjong and trying strategies for improving my brain.
- I'm going to play more Mahjong.
- I have had a Mahjong set for 30yrs and plan to get it out and learn.
- Always singing but now will apply things learned to everyday life.

General Comments

- Suggest multiple sessions of popular items as they fill up quickly, eg. Bonsai, Mahjong.
- Good range of activities and a great music entertainment - well-organised and great food!
- All good!
- Great day.
- Great day and presenters.

5.3 Day 3
5.3.1 Polio Survivors

10.30am to 12.00pm

Session	Most useful Aspects	What other information would have liked
<i>Spirit Within and Meditation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The presenter's personal story of coping with disappointment and grief. • Much needed stress relief factor. • The actual meditation. • How to be in the moment. • Maureen was lovely. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More information on benefits of meditation. • I would like more open and general talk – I found this a bit checked, although I did appreciate her struggle and journey. • The first 15-20 mins of the spirituality and meditation session was taken up with irrelevant and anti-Christian, particularly anti-Catholic comments by some participants. Had I known this I would have never attended!
<i>Naturopathy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informative and presentation was excellent. • The attitude of the Naturopath • Body is unique and should be treated as such. • Helped me better understand the approach used in naturopathy as different from orthodox medicine and the need to ensure both avenues complement each other and how to help my system, especially via food. • Showed and named some plants/herbs for cure and healing products for body. • The naturopath explained the different approach by medical doctor and alternative medicine. Both should work together – more education needed on idea. Some food types harmful to body. 	
<i>Balancing your life</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The middle "neutral zone" concept and to allow time to move through it. • The practical experience on trying to reach a balance. • Enjoyed this session and will be making changes. • Life stages model and workshop on how we use our time - discussion and sharing 'ideas' around this. • Transition stages and attendee comments very interesting. • Looking at reality. • Liz was very understanding. 	

Day 3 Follow up actions (Polio participants):

- Practice my meditation.
- Continue the search for places of peace - accept my own place – accept myself.
- Visit naturopath/doctor.
- Be mindful of dietary preferences.
- Read more on natural medicines and curing plants/herbs.
- Be aware and make and accept changes as needed.
- Try to arrange more 'me' time.
- Seek help more.
- Make time to be creative.

5.3 Day 3

5.2.2 Spouse/Carers

10.30am to 12.00pm

Session	Most useful Aspects	What other information would have liked
<i>Spirit Within and Meditation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meditation.	
<i>Naturopathy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Very informative, improved my knowledge of natural healing.• New insight to naturopathy and its relationship to regular medicine.	
<i>Balancing your life</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Session was insightful, well presented and useful.• Very good opportunity to stop and reflect.• Interesting concept for working out how time is spent and how it could be used to improve life.	

Day 3 Follow up action (Spouse/Carer participants):

- Stop, reflect, prioritise.
- Change priorities in life.
- More massages - monthly.
- Help mum help herself.

5.4 One-to-One Sessions Feedback

5.4.1 Polio Survivors

Session	Comments
Acupuncture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energising. • Both (acupuncture/massage) were relaxing - my first experience of acupuncture and 2nd of massage. • Both (Acupuncture/Massage) very relaxing after so much information. • Acupuncture was very helpful to my shoulder.
Podiatrist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most useful.
Massage with Annette	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great hands - found my tension areas. • Relieved pressure points but sore next day. • Muscle relief from massage. • Excellent massage - thanks for your generosity.
Massage with Pam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain relief and relaxing. • Massage was very helpful to my shoulder.
Respiratory Appointment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contingency availabilities.
Orthotics Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Darren's proposal to relieve big toe pain after 5 hours wearing dynamic bracing solution orthosis. • Will follow up with orthotics.
Self-Management Discussion with Dr Stephen de Graaff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical advice. • Most useful. • A quick way to access/explore different options/treatments available. • Gave me a chance to discuss/try and arrange a follow up appointment.

Day 3 Follow up action (Polio participants):

- Follow up Darren's referral to 'Orthotic Solutions'.
- Orthotic assessment by Darren
- I greatly appreciate having access to an orthotic assessment by Darren.
- Dr de Graaff's advice, ie. explanation of shoulder pain and consequent action.
- Relax my nerves and muscles. Helps with blood circulation.
- Plenty of new ideas and info to plan my future rehab/social programs.
- Absorb everything and incorporate into my self-management.
- Follow up massage.
- Follow up acupuncture.
- Follow up podiatry.
- Consult respiratory specialist.
- Follow up recommended equipment.
- Visit medical services for assistance.
- See sleep specialist.
- Make specialist appointments.

5.4 One-to-One Sessions Feedback
5.4.2 Spouse/Carers

Session	Most useful Aspects
<i>Massage – Jess</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very relaxing massage.
<i>Orthotics Assessment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pointed us in right direction for help. • Orthotics session with Darren was most useful for my mother and myself.
<i>Self-Management Discussion with Dr Stephen de Graaff</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pointed us in right direction for help. • Support networks.
<i>Respiratory Appointment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most useful.

Day 3 Follow up action (Spouse/Carer participants):

- Mum is more willing to use equipment which will help keep her safe in her home.

5.5 Overall Comments

Suggested Topics for Future Retreats

- More sessions along the lines of the 2.30-4.00 Saturday program (Games/Creativity)
- Swimming/hydrotherapy options available, including spa/sauna.
- Enjoyed complete experience - made me more determined to push for more Carer recognition.
- Suggest having government agencies to update changes re medical/financial assistance as well as the law regarding the disabled and Carer.
- Suggest Centrelink person to advise on Carer Payments, etc.
- Occupational Therapist to advise about financial assistance programs for wheelchairs and other aids and equipment.
- Use local college students to gain massage experience with polio people.
- CPR – First aid.
- Lifting things right way.
- The hands on “one to one” is just fabulous.
- Do not think evening entertainment was needed - just chat and bed early as people got tired.

Organisational Suggestions

- Suggest including town or city of origin on nametags.
- Suggest ‘show bags’ of calico (made by disability group) with ‘logo’ and including few lollies (for the blood sugar) plus program/s and brochures, ie. Motor wheelchair info, etc.
- As checkout times and breakfast overlapped (and fatigue setting) suggest a ‘pack-up’ time followed by ‘brunch’ and closing sessions

Companionship

- What did I gain from the Retreat? Companionship and support. Up until the last few years I had not been one for mixing with people with a disability. Now I see that their knowledge is invaluable to me – see you next year in Queensland.
- Wellness Retreat was great success plus mixing with other members is so important.
- Very relaxed and enjoyable – great meeting past attendees – hope to meet in Queensland.
- Hope to keep in touch with the people I’ve met.
- Want to become more connected to local Post Polio group and gain motivation.
- Meeting “blasts from the past” and making new friends.

Learning/Self Management Strategies

- Going home exhausted but exhilarated and informed. It’s not just the information it’s the chance to store in between overnight, something not available from a day conference.
- Great Retreat with chance to stop and reflect – not just others experience – but my own priorities.
- Been good overview, good information/education and good insight - and fun!
- Wish I lived in Melbourne so that I could continue treatment in some of the wonderful practitioners medical and complementary.
- All sessions great, have learnt several things, especially from Dr Steve de Graaff, Andrew Sinclair (psychology), and Fran’s Art sessions.
- Unsure if another Retreat could be as good, but learnt so much more – even better this time.
- Enjoyed the second Retreat and continue to learn and improve on self-management.
- Exchanged links to relevant medical people in home state.

General Appreciation

- Already planning to attend the next Retreat.
- Excellent organisation and most enjoyable.
- Grateful thanks to all involved in this Retreat, especially to Mary-ann for her organisational skills, and caring for us all. It’s been a life-enhancing experience.
- Excellent balance of activities/discussion to choose from.
- Well done Mary-ann and committee.
- Sorry – too relaxed, too chilled, have info overload - BUT IT WAS GREAT!!!

- On behalf of all members I want to thank the organisers for a well organised and managed program. Thanks also to the others who have helped make this so successful.
- Thank you for making this weekend so good - lots of hard work – all appreciated.
- Loved balance of modalities, rehabilitation and venues.
- Congratulations on organisation and standard of sessions and facilities.
- Fantastic venue, weather, company and Retreat.

Venue

- Mt Eliza venue: Place of peace.
- Good venue with helpful, smiling and friendly staff.
- Staff were fantastic.
- Catering staff (waitresses) were excellent – happy and quick to offer assistance.
- Impressed venue staff said “This is great learning experience for us” (diet/mobility limitations).
- Would attend future Retreat – provided the cook could meet my complicated dietary needs
- Food excellent - fresh/healthy/top quality.
- Suggest support bars for toilet/showers - thermo temp shower control as dangerous for disabled people to set water temp while standing.
- Access issues, ie. limited furniture, small rooms (not 100% clean).
- Tea making in room would save walking.
- Stairs a problem and only one lift for wheelchair people, initial problem of person in wheelchair not able to fit in shower, luckily problem solved – thank you.
- The resort layout left much to be desired.

5.6 Future Retreats

Would you recommend this type of Polio Health and Wellness Retreat to others?		Would you attend another Polio Health and Wellness Retreat in future?	
Yes	No	Yes	No
40	0	45	0

5.7 Overall Experience Ratings

1 = Below standard to 5 = Excellent	Rating 1	Rating 2	Rating 3	Rating 4	Rating 5
Standard of Venue	0	1	7	16	22
Standard of Room Accommodation	0	1	10	23	13
Standard of Meals	0	1	7	12	27
Organisational Standard	0	0	2	10	34
Met any special requirements	0	1	7	9	26
Standard of Retreat activities	0	0	4	20	22
Standard of Retreat entertainment	0	0	4	22	15

6. Conclusion

The Evaluation Section of this Report overwhelmingly proves the Polio Health and Wellness Retreat format continues to have a positive effect on several levels, in particular the value of being able to share participant experiences. The 'open circle' Question and Answer forums fully engaged all participants in free-flowing discussion and information exchange, resulting in a clearer understanding and better retention of the management strategies being presented.

Numerous comments regarding participant's intention to follow up on a range of self-management strategies presented over the three days justifies Polio Australia's claim that education of polio survivors and their family/Carers in self-management techniques aimed at stabilising and/or reducing symptoms of the late effects of polio (LEOP) will enable people to achieve general wellbeing and ensure that they remain as mobile and independent as possible in their own homes.

It was evident by the comments made by the Spouse and/or Carers that they were very engaged in learning, understanding and enhancing the efficacy of the self-management strategies being learned and practiced by the polio survivors. As many Spouse and/or Carers are also ageing, there were important personal lessons learned for addressing their own health needs, thereby ensuring they can continue to provide much needed support.

The knowledge gained during this second Retreat will enable participants to better manage their condition and share increased awareness of management options to their respective health service providers, which in turn continues to facilitate improved care for patients presenting with LEOP.

The wonderfully located venue and helpful staff of Melbourne Business School in Mount Eliza, Victoria was also a major contributing factor to the overall success of this Retreat.

Main lessons learned and to be considered for future Retreats include:

- The strategy of using local health professionals and session presenters can: provide a fresh perspective; raise awareness of the LEOP amongst health professionals who may not have a great deal of experience in working with polio survivors; and assist in 'spreading the word' throughout the community
- Even those who avoid mixing with fellow polio survivors find benefit from the interaction in this context
- It would be helpful if local and state based service providers were able to provide information about reciprocal services in other states, as many participants travel from interstate
- Being able to arrange soft food catering options for those who have swallowing difficulties
- Try to ensure easy physical access both within Retreat venue and close surrounds

Overall, the organisers believe that the 'Mind, Body, Spirit' theme continues to be an effective framework for Polio Health and Wellness Retreats, taking a holistic approach towards Chronic Condition Self Management for polio survivors, their families and Carers. Preparations are already underway to present Polio Australia's third Health and Awareness Retreat in April 2012 on the Sunshine Coast Queensland.

It is intended that funding be sought so that over time Polio Health and Wellness Retreats can be facilitated across Australia as a key program component towards achieving Polio Australia's strategic priorities and operational goals.

7. Appendices

7.1 Feedback from Knox-Yarra Ranges Post Polio Support Group

by Joan Smith, Convener

Since our last newsletter, so much has been happening! Four of our group were able to participate in the Wellness Retreat at Mt. Eliza. The venue was magnificent as was the food. The very busy program ran like clockwork thanks to the Mary-ann style along with her committee. Thankyou organisers!

On Thursday we had the chance to settle in, meet everyone and find our way around the huge historic building. Each of the other days started with expert speakers; Dr Steve de Graaff (Body), Dr Andrew Sinclair from Independence Australia (Mind), and Maureen Anderson who focussed on Spirituality.

We all chose different workshops for the rest of the days. My first workshop was 'Get Moving' which included an introduction to Tai Chi. After lunch I was included on the tour to the old Mt Eliza Rehab hospital which was really interesting for me to compare it with Hampton where I did my childhood rehab. We were given a DVD of The History of The Mount Eliza Centre. That was followed by a 'Recipe for Success' looking at healthy diets.

I had to put that information on hold with magnificent meals and morning and afternoon teas in abundance.

On Saturday, after hearing Andrew's wise words on top ten tips to increase happiness, I enjoyed a session on the Alexander technique and relaxation. My afternoon was occupied helping run two workshops on storytelling. Everyone appreciated your stories and we sold quite a few copies of "Calliper Kids". We were asked to autograph copies, making us feel quite famous. After dinner we were treated to some great entertainment with much foot stomping and more tempting treats.

Sunday workshops saw me attending Naturopathy which focused on building body defences rather than treating symptoms. After lunch we were treated to a performance by the newly formed choir under Mary-ann's direction. Everyone gained so much from the weekend and went home very tired but filled with new ideas and inspiration.

Planning is already underway for next year's event which will be held in Queensland. Start saving now to make sure you can be a part of a sensational program.

Elsie made the following comments: *"A wonderful experience. Well worth the time and money; the company was great, the location wonderful and the staff exceptionally helpful. I benefited from all the sessions I attended, especially the one-on-one sessions with Stephen de Graaff and a volunteer masseur. My initial attempt at bonsai sits outside on my patio and I've almost finished eating the jelly beans used in one session to measure our individual daily energy output. Hopefully I'll manage to save up enough between now and then to cover the cost of going to next year's Retreat in Queensland."*

Ron said *"The thought of going to a Retreat did not really appeal to me, but eventually I decided to go and I'm glad I did. I enjoyed every hour spent sharing with other polios and listening to the excellent guest speakers. I went to a photography workshop and was surprised to learn how much I didn't know. I think I will be on learners for life. Another workshop I attended was a massage where I enjoyed being pampered, but also learned the differences between a massage therapist, chiropractor, physiotherapist, and osteopath. My last workshop was meditation. The session was well run but I failed badly. I drifted off for about five minutes then my mind was back to reality. I could not relax enough to think I was somewhere else. Apart from that I had a wonderful time sharing experiences and fellowship with others."*

“Stand up and be counted – Billson”

“Compelling numbers”, said Dunkley MP Bruce Billson on opening Victoria's Health and Wellness Retreat last month. And the numbers were that four million Australians since 1930 came down with polio.

“This is your group,” said Mr Billson, MHR, “if we can inform people out there about post polio effects...we have an important cohort of people who can help with the knowledge of early symptoms and should engage in that discussion. He urged groups to take part in the debate over the National Disability Insurance Scheme to “elevate knowledge about polio as part of the inquiry”.

Mr Billson was the keynote speaker on the opening night of the Retreat based on the theme of Body, Mind and Spirit attended by 64 survivors and their Carers/Spouse/family from Victoria, NSW, Qld, Tasmania, ACT, WA and South Australia, as well as a range of health professionals.

He was asked what precautions were being taken to check migrants coming in from Africa and other endemic countries. Pledging to find out, discussion then ranged to the need to have a question on the census to help build up persuasive statistics for Government in provision of services.

Friday's session began with Rehabilitation Specialist Dr Stephen de Graaff, on the Polio Body. Dr de Graaff spoke about survivors desire to be 'normal', adapting their environment to run as smoothly as possible. Post polio was a diagnosis of exclusion, he said. Fatigue, pain, muscle weakness are symptoms of growing older but swallowing difficulties, breathing and sleep disturbance were under-reported and part of the polio picture. Around 25-75 per cent will experience the symptoms but that doesn't mean they have PPS, Dr de Graaff said. He preferred the term Late Effects of Polio. Fatigue we experience was caused by pain, respiratory and sleep disorders, joint problems, depression and coping stresses. Burning pain was hard to treat, however. His advice for coping included: vacuuming just one room a day; playing only nine instead of 18 holes of golf; avoiding low soft lounge suites – have a chair that's easier to get out of.

Keynote speaker on the mind on the Saturday, was IA psychologist Dr Andrew Sinclair. He spoke about the need to work on mind fitness through mindfulness and meditation. “Get what you need” when seeking medical advice. There is nothing wrong with being a “difficult patient”, Dr Sinclair said. Deal with physical crises when they happen rather than worrying about them. The nonsense thoughts we have were illustrated with a cartoon of a zebra wondering if his bum looked big in those stripes. Among his “happiness tips” were: smiling therapy; relating; exercising; appreciating the world around us; trying out new things; having goals; resilience (bounding back); emotion – having a positive focus; acceptance or contentment and meaning – joining groups. Two books were recommended: ‘Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers’ by Robert M. Sapolsky and ‘What Psychologists Should Know about Disability’ by Rhoda Olkin.

Somehow I had booked in for a raft of exercise sessions. Best was on the Alexander Technique presented by Jane Coker; and the last 10 minutes of Keith Butler's session that tried out seated Tai Chi. Exercise gurus really need to know about our ‘law of diminishing returns’ and to take care exercising polio affected limbs, I mused.

Naturopath Michael McIntyre and wife Victoria Wharfe McIntyre described us as a nation as “overfed and undernourished”. Michael talked about the system of iridology that helps naturopaths diagnose problems often before they occur. “So called orthodox medicine has only been used since 1930s when doctors and pharmaceutical companies teamed up,” he said. “Genuinely traditional medicine has been used for thousands of years”. Michael said that drugs can over ride the body's natural healing abilities as they are synthesized from plants and not all the components are identified.

A prime example was calcium made from grinding up bones from abattoirs producing calcium carbonate that the body has trouble assimilating. Victoria listed sugar, alcohol, wheat, dairy products, processed foods, nightshades (potatoes) eggplant, capsicum and chilli as acidifying creating more inflammation and pain. Foods that de-acidify the system included parsley, cabbage, celery, barley, green veggies and two litres of water daily. Smoking leaches vitamin C while alcohol leaches vitamin B from the body, Michael said. "If you must smoke and drink replace the vitamins". "If food comes in plastic avoid it. If it grows eat it, if not don't – Tim Tams don't grow on trees," he said. A lot of obesity problems were caused by emotional problems, address those and weight falls off, Michael said.

At the final session attendees each described their feelings about the Retreat. Best summary was:

"I want to find the voice inside that I haven't listened to before and haven't encouraged before. The Retreat has clarified my needs and I am not so fearful of what the future holds. I am going home with more confidence, more hope and security. It's not just about four days, the benefits carry over".

Many said how beneficial it was to have a residential Retreat rather than a conference giving people the chance away from domestic concerns to talk to others and focus on their own needs for once.

"When we asked questions the answers came back in detail and everyone listened to you."
"I wondered if I needed another Retreat but I'm hooked", said a veteran of three.

Organiser for Polio Australia Mary-ann Liethof was thanked in applause and song for her commitment to making the Retreat work and to benefit polio survivors.

7.3 Mt Eliza Polio Wellness Retreat

by Aroona Prasad, Bayside Polio Support Group

Coral, Fran and her daughter, Annette, Peter and Aroona attended the wonderfully organised Retreat at Mt Eliza Melbourne Business College. Extremely comfortable accommodation in beautiful surroundings overlooking the Port Phillip Bay. The theme of the Retreat was **Polio Health and Wellness - Body, Mind and Spirit.**

Dr Stephen de Graaff, Rehabilitation Specialist, and Director of Pain Services at Epworth Rehabilitation looked at the Polio Body and self-management. I found him precise and clear about our body. The activities on the topic were relevant and we received professional answers to our questions.

For me the **Healthy Mind** was most interesting and the information provided by Dr Andrew Sinclair was helpful and appropriate. Dr Sinclair is the team leader of Psychology and Counselling Services at Independence Australia and has worked with people living with the late effects of polio. After his 'mindfulness' talk and discussion, the activities were very helpful and relaxing. They gave us strategies to transfer stress into energy creating inner peace, freedom and inner strength. There were opportunities to explore our physical, emotional and mental capacities which can inspire profound changes within.

On the last day, Sunday the inspirational witness from Maureen Anderson was motivational and lifted our spirits. I also found Naturopath, Dr Michael McIntyre, very interesting and informative. He explained the different approaches by medical doctors and alternative medicine doctors - not disregarding any methods but working together. He had a great theory that every body is unique and should be treated as such.

A big thank to Gillian Thomas, Neil von Schill, and Mary-ann Liethof from Polio Australia. They all worked tirelessly to make us comfortable and get as much as possible from the Retreat. It was an excellent 3 days.

7.4 Summary of Retreat

by Michelle Graham, daughter of polio survivor and Occupational Therapy Student

The Retreat was held over the Easter intra trimester break from Friday 29th April til Sunday 1st May, 2011. I went along to this Retreat with my mother who, as a 5 month old baby back in 1960, contracted the virus polio in Germany. The Retreat was organised by Polio Australia as an educational weekend, as well as a reunion for old friends. There were post polio people from every state of Australia, including Tasmania there and I was very lucky to be allocated a spot at the Retreat.

Friday was basically just an afternoon tea and dinner social setting where we all introduced ourselves and indicated why we were attending the Retreat. There was a lot of enthusiasm when it was mentioned I am an occupational therapy student and am interested in the polio community.

Saturday involved an information session about the polio body, given by Dr Steve de Graff, a Rehabilitation Specialist and Director for Pain Services at Epworth Rehab Centre in Camberwell. His session discussed the relevant history of the outbreak of polio and what it was the virus did to the human body. Polio replicated the lymphoid system and targets the nervous system and spinal cord in effect killing the neurons. 1% of the polio population suffers paralytic polio in the acute stage of the disease. After the initial effects of polio the body remodels the motor neurons to compensate for the ones that were killed off by the virus, therefore one particular neuron branches to compensate and thus covers a larger than normal area. Over time these neurons fatigue and as the body ages these fatigue effects are felt quicker and more widely spread by the polio suffer especially in the effected body region. He also discussed how the post polio body was a higher risk of early age fatigue and burn out and that as a post polio person it was most important to take notice of these factors and to listen to your body and seek medical help as required.

Next my mother and I attended an information session about foot care for polio feet which was ran by a Podiatrist, Paul Musarra. He explained it was important to keep regular checks on polio feet due to the persons' postural and lower limb abnormal structure which often meant pressure and stress areas are not in the normal location in the foot, therefore polio feet are usually more problematic. Nail and skin conditions are a major issue for polio suffers especially if they struggle to reach their feet. Corns and calluses can easily develop on pressure areas and due to excess friction. Podiatrist help to fit proper foot ware and functional orthotics that best limit pressure points for a healthier polio foot saving the individual from months of possible discomfort and pain, thus improving their mobility and overall life satisfaction.

The afternoon session was an information session about aids and equipment provided to the polio group by an Occupational therapist; Margaret Petkoff. Wheelchairs, scooters, walking sticks, trolleys and general bathroom support equipment were the main areas of interest. The main focus of the session was discussions about the readiness of the individual for a personal aide to assist them in their daily living. Limitations of cognition and functional ability and equipment pros and cons should always be weighed up with client and their therapist for any equipment is purchased.

Useful Victorian websites:

- www.ilcaustralia.org.au/home
- www.swep.bhs.org.au

Final session was about dietary needs as post polio clients struggle to keep unwanted weight off as the years progress due to low metabolism and the post effects of the polio virus on the muscles meaning that the person is unable to exercise to their full potential due to rapid fatigue rates.

The focus was healthier foods such as low GI, low carbs, and more salads and watching meal size intakes. These strategies will also help to lower cholesterol and risk of acquiring type 2 diabetes. Protein, carbohydrates, fats dairy and vitamins are all important in our diets. A controlled intake of essential fats will help to decrease weight. NO diet should be undertaken without consulting a GP as negative health risks are possible and can cause more problems for the individual.

Saturday involved a morning lecture about the polio mind given to the group by Dr Andrew Sinclair, a Psychologist from Independence Australia. Dr Sinclair is involved with the welfare of the post polio community. He focused on the mindfulness approach, living in the moment to decrease the stress in life. Our heads are too busy with everyday life, sometimes we need to stop and take a moment to collect our thoughts and give us a chance to objectively sort out what's going on for us. Mindfulness is a form of meditation used to help an individual clear their thoughts and feeling and sort out what's happening in the moment for themselves; being aware of their experiences and emotions and attempts to lower judgment, especially of one's self, and also to decrease stress and negative psychological aspects of well-being. Being able to let go and break free from the past can be very relieving.

The rest of the day was spent participating in relaxation sessions such as yoga and meditation, take a short art class and learning how to draw portraits (mother and I had an absolute ball here), and other post polio clients sharing their stories about wearing calipers, surgery, being isolated from family, physio, and rehab.

Sunday involved a debrief about the weekend and a final thank you to the organisers of the event and a discussion about what people had learnt and found enjoyable about the weekend.



Circled - my mother, Therese in middle row, and myself, Michelle, front row

Personal reflection:

This weekend away with my mother extended my knowledge of the polio virus and what it does to the neural pathways and muscles in the human body – the wasting effect. It also gave me an insight to other peoples' conditions and their struggles and past experiences, a world I never knew had existed with being taken away from their families and having painful corrective surgery and long winded rehab and other medical complications. My mother was definitely one of the luckier ones. This weekend also gave me an introduction in what a person with post polio requires in their daily lives and where health professions such as occupational therapists, physios, doctors and so forth can assist with. I really enjoyed the weekend away and am grateful for the opportunity to meet people with post polio and share in their experiences and own learning.

7.5 Why I Went to Mt Eliza *by Arthur Dobson, Post-Polio Tasmania*

When the inaugural Polio Health & Wellness Retreat was held in April, 2010 at Baulkham Hills, NSW, many people could not understand why I wasn't particularly interested in attending. The reason was quite simple. Every day, in my role as your Secretary, I am researching and preparing articles for the next issue of TAS POLIO NEWS. As soon as I finish one issue, I start on the next one. I have built up an extensive store of information both in our library and also in the collection of newsletters I receive from other organisations which is readily accessible in my home office. I am also continually answering questions from members, health professionals and the general public about polio and its late effects. As Vice-President of Polio Australia, the organising body for the Retreat, I knew what the program was and who the speakers were. Why would I want to go and spend four days going over the same old issues again and again, albeit with a wider group of people?

Six of our members did attend the 2010 Retreat and had a wonderful experience on which they reported in the June 2010 issue of this newsletter. Other articles about the Retreat have appeared in issues of this newsletter over the past year.

When expressions of interest were called for the 2011 Polio Health and Wellness Retreat to be held at Mt. Eliza on the Mornington Peninsula south-east of Melbourne, Victoria, I again did not consider attending although I did receive considerable encouragement to do so from a number of people both here and interstate.

Earlier this year my 93 year old father asked me to find a nursing home placement for him as he felt he should no longer be living by himself. Up until that time he had enjoyed good health and was very happy in his retirement village where most of his meals were provided but he was still responsible for his own personal care. Unfortunately his health started to deteriorate quite markedly and after mucking up his medication he was admitted to the Launceston General Hospital where it was expected that he would be stabilised. I still went on looking for a suitable nursing home placement whilst sharing visiting him with my sister, brother and my two children who are the only grandchildren he'd had contact with for many years. After a month in hospital and on the very morning he was due to move into a nursing home he sadly passed away.

Fortunately nearly 12 months earlier I had taken Dad to the Funeral Directors to make the arrangements for his funeral. All the necessary paper work was completed without the emotional stress that follows the passing of a loved one. This meant that we could give Dad the type of funeral that he wanted and removed any chance of differing opinions amongst family members. I would recommend that all readers of this article seriously consider taking this action as it removes one of the most challenging tasks at a time that is usually quite stressful and emotional for the families of the deceased. My job then was to organise all his paperwork for the solicitor to wind up his estate. Over this period of several months I still had to find time to carry on my responsibilities as your secretary.

Barely two weeks before the Retreat I was able to hand over the information to the solicitor and I was really looking for an excuse to take a break so I phoned our Chairperson Billie to see if it might be possible to tag along with her and Vice-Chair Georgie to the Mt Eliza Retreat.

Billie checked with her Travel Agent while I checked with Mary-ann at Polio Australia and fortunately there were several places still available on the same flight as Billie and Georgie and also two places still available for the Retreat. At our Board of Management Meeting on the 14th April it was decided that our Network would pay my \$450.00 registration fee for the Retreat, a move which I greatly appreciated.

My intention was to use the trip as a time to relax and recuperate and I made it clear that I would probably not become involved in all the Retreat's activities. Word soon spread that I was attending the Retreat and I received a number of communications from interstate from people looking forward to seeing me again.

It was good to have last year's Tasmanian representatives at the Baulkham Hills Retreat attend again this year and they did so without any financial assistance from our Network. They also kept a close eye on me as I had been showing symptoms of exhaustion during and following my father's demise.

At this point I would like to express my appreciation to Carol and Barry Squires who took their car to Melbourne and provided transport to and from Mt Eliza for Billie, Georgie and myself. This was a really enjoyable trip, following the coastline through some of Melbourne's most upmarket bay-side suburbs. On the way back after the Retreat we travelled on the Nepean Highway, again in the capable hands of driver, Barry.

We did have enough time in the city to explore the recently remodelled Myer Department Store which itself is quite a tourist attraction and well worth seeing. The hotel where Carol and Barry stayed was just over the street from the Myer Building and we continued round the block and through a number of other recycled historical buildings, including the Old Melbourne Post Office which is now an Arcade of upmarket specialty shops, which are also well worth a look.

For those readers who have not been to the mainland for some time, it is whole different world over there and just sitting and waiting in Melbourne Airport is an entertaining experience in itself. The thing that stands out is the number of people of foreign nationality that make up the population in the big cities, sometimes you wonder where the Aussies of European descent are as they seem to be well outnumbered by people of Asian descent.

The venue was in a delightful setting on the banks of Port Phillip Bay and the staff provided excellent service, particularly in the dining room where first class meals were provided.

Unfortunately the venue management did not provide what the organising committee had been led to believe would be provided and Georgie and I found ourselves two and a half floors down from the main floor where most activities were held. Whilst there was a small goods lift available for one floor there were still some fifty steps to go up and down to get to and from our rooms. This was unacceptable to me and after the first night I negotiated to have us moved to the main floor into rooms that were being used for massage therapy during the day. Whilst this meant we had to pack up our belongings each morning and put them in the cupboards, it was much easier that climbing up and down those damned stairs. It also meant that I had nowhere to rest during the day so I ended up not missing any sessions that I had put my name down for. I did however hog one of the couches in the lounge on several occasions taking off my shoes and putting my feet up.

I am not going through the program at this stage as it was listed in the last newsletter and articles will appear in future issues. Whilst the various speakers and discussions organised at these Retreats are very educational, the real benefit for those of us who have been involved in the State Networks and Support Groups for some time is just sharing our experiences with each other.

I did try to keep a low profile but this didn't last long as at the opening session when starting to comment on the lack of services for polio survivors in Tasmania, Dr Stephen de Graaff asked if I was present. Stephen has helped a number of Tasmanian's by seeing them at his practice at Epworth Rehabilitation in Camberwell in Melbourne and he is also working with the Tasmanian Department of Health and Human Services to try and improve their service to polio survivors in this state.

I was able to meet a number of those people involved in the publication of the book "*The Calliper Kids*", copies of which we have in our library, including several who had their stories included. It was also good to catch with other polio survivors I have met over the years.

I am glad I did go to the Retreat and would thoroughly recommend it to anyone who is in a position to attend. Planning is underway for the next Retreat to be held in April 2012 in Queensland.