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Amputee Society
Canterbury & Westland Inc

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November/December/2012

Quote of the Month:

We shall find peace. We shall hear the
angels, we shall see the sky sparkling
with diamonds.

[Anton Chekhov](#) (1860 - 1904),

Editor's Message

Greetings Everyone and hope this finds you all doing ok. Gads I don't know where the time has gone and before you know it the Holidays will be upon us.

Recently one our members came down with Legionellis and we almost lost him, so PLEASE read the article enclosed and be careful in your gardens. The numbers released today by the Health Board are sobering and we all need to be aware of this disease.

A number of folks didn't receive their Newsletter last issue and I cannot find out why. If you don't receive one every 2 months please let me know as I always have extras.

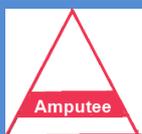
Our Christmas Luncheon was held Nov 25th, and although a smaller than usual turnout, it was a lovely day and great to meet up with old friends. Thanks again to Margaret for all her work in arranging these events for us and getting such great raffle prizes.

The AGM is Feb. 24th and I hope to see many of you there, as this is YOUR Association and we would like to hear your views etc and always welcome new members to sit on the Executive Committee. Bring along your ideas and voices and let us know what you like or don't like. Our guest speaker Mr. Mervyn Monk, will also answer any questions you mite have about the Limb Service.

The website is doing well and once again I ask you to contribute to both the Newsletter and website with pictures, your stories, or an interesting web site or article you mite have read. It's both interesting and enjoyable to read how others have coped and that includes your families or caregivers as well.

I would like to thank Ava, Leigh, Jo and Shazz for all their help in the small awareness campaign we held this month. It was a start and hopefully will lead to a bigger and better one in the New Year.

Well Dear Friends I will be away over the Holidays but on behalf of the entire Executive Committee I want to wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, Ngā mihi o te Kirihimete me TeTau Hou. and a very Happy, Healthy, and Prosperous New Year. See you once again in 2013.



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Legionellosis - What You Should Know if You Work with Soils, Compost and Potting Mix

Introduction

If your work involves handling garden soils, compost and potting mixes, you need to be aware of the possible risk of contracting legionellosis, or Legionnaire's disease. This fact sheet answers some questions you may have, and describes the health precautions you should take

What is legionellosis?

It's a lung condition with symptoms similar to pneumonia. It's most common form is called Legionnaire's disease, but there are also less severe forms of the disease (respiratory infections usually known as Pontiac fever).

The early symptoms of legionellosis start with mild flu-like symptoms, including: muscle aches, tiredness, chills, shortness of breath, loss of appetite, coughing; and sometimes stomach pain and diarrhoea.

If left untreated, the disease can progress to Legionnaire's disease, and require hospitalisation. In severe cases, death has resulted from contracting this disease. The period between exposure and onset of illness for Legionnaire's disease can vary between 2-14 days. For Pontiac fever, the onset of illness usually occurs between 5 hours to three days.

What causes this type of illness?

Legionellosis is caused by bacteria (called Legionella) that occur naturally in the environment. The most common way that legionellosis enters the body is by breathing in dust or liquid droplets contaminated with the bacteria. Legionella longbeachae, can be inhaled into the body when dust or mists from soils, potting mix or compost product are generated. In 2011, New Zealand had 159 confirmed cases of legionellosis. 107 cases occurred where the legionellosis was contracted from an environmental source. Of these cases, 81 patients had reported contact with compost, potting mix, or soil.^[1]

Are some people more at risk than others?

The risk of contracting legionellosis increases with age, and most often affects people who smoke or drink heavily, have chronic lung disease or have underlying medical conditions that lowers their immune resistance to disease, such as diabetes, cancer or kidney failure. Drugs that lower immune resistance, such as steroids, also increase the risk of contracting legionellosis. It's important for the illness to be diagnosed and treated promptly because of the possibility that health complications may develop.

How is Legionnaire's disease treated?

Usually patients are put on a course of antibiotics. The illness responds readily to treatment. Antibiotics are not usually required for Pontiac fever.

Can you become immune to it?

If exposed to *Legionella* you can contract a mild form of the disease without realising it, and your body builds up antibodies to resist the bacteria, which give immunity to future infection. However, this immunity is only specific to the particular strain of *Legionella* that you were exposed to— because there are approximately 40 different strains of *Legionella* species around, you could be immune to one strain but not another.

What should I do if I think I'm affected? You should see your medical practitioner immediately. Your doctor may arrange for you to have blood, serum or sputum tests. Your doctor can give you further information and advice about legionellosis.

Health and safety precautions

To avoid the risk of contracting legionellosis from soils, compost and potting mix, here are the precautions you should take:

Keep bags of potting mix stored out of direct sunlight. If stored in the sunlight, the temperature inside the bags can range from 20-40°C, making it an ideal ground for *Legionella* bacteria to grow.

Water gardens and composts gently, using a low-pressure hose.

When opening bags of composted potting mix, do so slowly, making sure the opening is directed away from your face.

When potting plants, wet the soil to reduce dust.

When working in greenhouses, potting sheds or indoors, make sure that the working area is well ventilated.

Wash your hands carefully after handling soils.

Packaging on bags containing compost or soil mixes should have health warnings compliant with *NZS 4454:2005 Composts, Soil Conditioners and Mulches*, informing the user that: Occasionally, products like compost and potting mix may contain micro-organisms, which on rare occasions, can cause illness in humans. Infections can be serious for the elderly and those with reduced immunity.

The following precautions should be taken: Avoid opening bags in enclosed areas. Avoid inhaling the mix. Always wear gloves and wash hands after use. See your doctor if you develop high fever, chills, breathlessness or cough.

Packaging on bulk materials should have similar health warnings, including: While working around bulk stockpiles, wear a mask to prevent inhaling the water vapour.

Bulk stores of compost and potting mix should also have signs prominently displayed nearby stating: "While working around bulk stockpiles, wear a mask to prevent inhaling the steam or vapour."

<http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/media/photo/christmas-day-holiday>

KIWI CHRISTMAS

[Christmas comes to New Zealand](#)

The Christian origins of Christmas meant that before European contact, the celebration had no place in the calendar of Aotearoa. The first celebration of Christmas in New Zealand coincided with Abel Tasman's voyage to New Zealand in 1642. The next celebration of Christmas in New Zealand occurred during James Cook's first expedition in 1769. The crew of the *Endeavour* marked the occasion by feasting on 'Goose pye' for their Christmas dinner while battling heavy seas off the tip of the North Island. There were no geese, so the crew had to improvise – with the magnificent gannet that had been shot in preparation for the feast by the ship's noted botanist, Joseph Banks.

[The first sermon?](#)

Russell Clark's reconstruction of Samuel Marsden's Christmas Day service at Oihi Bay in the Bay of Islands in 1814 is how many New Zealanders have visualised the first Christmas service in this country. Clark's work commemorated the 150th anniversary of the event and shows Marsden at a makeshift pulpit preaching to a large group of Maori and Europeans. Ruatara, the Nga Puhi leader Marsden had met in Port Jackson (Sydney), translated the service. This service marked the beginnings of the Christian mission to New Zealand, but was it the first Christmas service or, indeed, the first preaching of the gospel in New Zealand? On Christmas Day 1769 the French explorer Jean François Marie de Surville and his crew were in Doubtless Bay in the Far North. On board the *Saint Jean Baptiste* was a Dominican priest, Paul-Antoine de Villefeix. While no records survive, it seems highly likely that such an important Catholic festival would have been marked with a mass. In the absence of hard evidence, New Zealand's English colonial traditions have favoured Marsden's claim to fame.

[New Zealand's Christmas tree](#)

The pohutukawa tree (*Metrosideros excelsa*) with its crimson flower has become an established part of the New Zealand Christmas tradition. This iconic Kiwi Christmas tree, which often features on greeting cards and in poems and songs, has become an important symbol for New Zealanders at home and abroad. A gnarled, twisted pohutukawa on the windswept cliff top at Cape Reinga, the northern tip of New Zealand, has become of great significance to many New Zealanders. For Maori this small, venerated pohutukawa is known as 'the place of leaping'. It is from here that the spirits of the dead begin their journey to their traditional homeland of Hawaiiiki. From this point the spirits leap off the headland and climb down the roots of the 800-year-old tree, descending into the underworld on their return journey. Legends tell of Tawhaki, a young Maori warrior, who attempted to find heaven to seek help in avenging the death of his father. He fell to earth and the crimson flowers are said to represent his blood.

['Sticky Beak the kiwi](#)

Many traditional Christmas songs have been adapted for a New Zealand audience and conditions. In 1981 Kingi Ihaka wrote 'A pukeko in a ponga tree', a version of the popular song 'The twelve days of Christmas'. The Kiwi version has become a firm favourite in schools and often appears on New Zealand Christmas song compilations. One of the most popular New Zealand Christmas songs of the 1960s was 'Sticky Beak the kiwi.

[Claus in stores](#)

Santa Claus made his commercial debut in New Zealand in 1894 when he took his place, complete with tree and toys, among the furniture in the Wellington DIC store on Lambton Quay. Santa appeared in Dunedin for the first time in 1902, also at the DIC. He arrived in Auckland in 1903 at the DSC store (later John Court Ltd). Toys were not a permanent feature in most department stores, but having 'Santa in the house' in the lead up to Christmas changed this. In 1896 Wellington's DIC temporarily handed over its furniture section to Santa and his display of toys, beginning the trend of creating 'Christmas wonderlands'. In 1903 children visiting Santa at the DSC in Auckland were treated to a 'Magic Cave' designed by 'Frank L. Carr Jnr, the celebrated American Decorator'. As a result of these ventures, by the mid-1920s many stores had established permanent toy departments.

[Christmas in wartime](#)

Christmas during wartime gave soldiers a rare opportunity to relax and enjoy themselves away from the stresses and hardships of combat. It was also a time of sadness for many New Zealanders, both overseas and back home, as they thought of their absent family, lovers and friends far away. Christmas parcels despatched from New Zealand supplied special food, drink and other treats as well as Christmas cards and mail. During the Second World War the men of 28 (Maori) Battalion especially welcomed the delivery of mutton-birds and other favourite foods from back home. Despite the difficult circumstances of wartime, service personnel often put a great deal of effort into creating a celebratory, festive atmosphere.

[A day off for Christmas](#)

It's hard for most of us today to imagine Christmas Day not being a holiday, but a day off on 25 December hasn't always been a legal entitlement. New Zealand's first holiday law was the Bank Holidays Act 1873, modelled on British legislation, which confirmed the banks' existing practice of closing on 25 December and certain other holidays. The Employment of Females Act 1873 and the Factories Act 1894 gave female and youth workers the right to time off on Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday and several other days. After the introduction of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1894, most other New Zealand workers were guaranteed a handful of holidays, including Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND LUNCHEON

Place-- Hornby Working Mens Club
17 Carmen Road, Hornby

Date-- Sunday Feb. 24th, 2013

Time-- 11am for drinks and a social get together
Annual Meeting 11:45am
Meal- approx. 12:15pm

Guest Speaker- Mr. M. Monk

Chief Executive of the NZ Artificial Limb Board

Please contact Margaret on 03 349 7585 before Sunday the 17th of Feb. if you are planning to attend. Meal will be \$20 per person.

If you are unable to attend and have already said you are coming **PLEASE** advise Margaret by 9:30am on the 24th as we may have to pay for those who don't show up!!!

DIABETIC CHRISTMAS FRUIT CAKE

1kg Fruit Mix 1/2c chopped walnuts 1/2c chopped almonds 2c hot tea
2c self rising flour 1tsp vanilla essence 1tsp almond essence 1tsp of brandy or rum
essence 1tsp caramel essence.

In a bowl place fruit mix, walnuts and almonds, and pour over hot tea. Leave to soak for 12-24 hours. Then add self-rising flour and essences. Mix well. Put into a lined greased tin. Bake at 160cC for about an hour or until cooked. While this is called a Diabetic Fruit Cake, it tastes delicious and finds favour with everyone.



Society News

We are now doing Internet Banking so anyone who wishes to pay their subs in this manner, the number is- 030830 0264400 00. If you haven't paid last year's subs as yet once again you will have the dreaded red dot on your newsletter as a reminder.

If you need extra taxi vouchers for over the Holidays please contact Ava and she will be happy to fix you up with some.

A big Congratulations to Scott Martlew, who was a finalist for Athlete of the Year at the recent Attitude Awards. I'm sure we will be hearing a lot more of this young man.

Web Sites

Amputee Society of Canterbury & Westland Inc.

www.amputeeinfo.co.nz

The Amputee Federation of NZ

www.af.org

Amputee Information

www.mossresourcenet.org

International Diabetes Federation

www.idf.org

Parafed Canterbury

www.parafedcanterbury.co.nz

Disability Awareness in Action

www.daa.org.uk

Amputee News

www.amputeenews.com

Disability Rights Commission

www.drc-gb.org

UN Programme on Disability

www.un.org/issues/m-disabl.asp

WEKA-NZ Disability Info

www.weka.govt.nz

Disabilities Information Service

314 Worcester Street, Christchurch

PO Box 32-074, Christchurch

(03) 366-6189

(03) 379-5939

9.00am - 4.30pm

Email: admin@aspirecanterbury.org.nz

Website: www.aspirecanterbury.org.nz

Amputee Coalition (USA)

www.amputee-coalition.org

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www.nzalb.govt.nz

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