

doing more
with less!



Amputee Society

Canterbury & Westland Inc

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**Amputees
Federation
of New Zealand
Incorporated**

Affiliated with the Amputees Federation of New Zealand

June 2017: Contents

Editor's Message

Profiles/Articles/Messages

Society news/Smile awhile

Website links & Sponsors

Quote of the Month:

To the man who only has a hammer, everything he encounters begins to look like a nail.

Abraham Maslow

Fun Fact:

More people live in Auckland than in the whole of the South Island.

Editor's Message

Disclaimer: The information in this editorial does not necessarily reflect the views of the Amputee Society of Canterbury/Westland

In a past editorial, I encouraged readers to try and make someone else's day by either a kind word, gesture or both. I want to relate an interesting episode that I experienced recently when I visited the Life Pharmacy at the Barrington Mall. When I made an enquiry at the counter, the female staff member was not only extremely helpful but she displayed a bubbly and happy disposition. So much so that I commented to her about how chirpy and upbeat she was. Her response was "And why not?, I work with great people, love my job and I get to interact with (mostly) lovely customers every day". Some friendly and humorous banter was exchanged before I left to grab some items from the supermarket and whilst doing this, I couldn't help but reflect on the positive nature of what had transpired which lifted my spirits and gave me an elevated mood. She had made my day so I did something to make her day better and delivered a fruit cake (from the bakery) to her and the rest of the staff to share at afternoon tea. Her reaction and the look of appreciation on her face was worth more than I could describe and she said, "Thank you so very much, I am known as "the hugger", can I come around the counter and give you one?" Far be it from me to say no so around the counter she came and we shared a friendly, respectful hug in the middle of the store, albeit to the quizzical looks of other customers. I walked out of the store with a feeling that with such a minimal effort by both parties, we had mutually contributed to make each other's day just that bit more enjoyable and worthwhile. It was so easy to take this path and I know that her investment paid off towards me by raising my spirits as I continued about my daily tasks. Thank you to "the hugger" from the Life Pharmacy at Barrington...you made my day :)

Meet Matthias Markl:

Matthias is the newest addition to the staff at the Christchurch Limb Centre and has been employed as a Prosthetic Technician since February year.

He was born in Starmberg near Munich, Germany and has recently celebrated his 25th birthday. Matthias completed his schooling locally to his home town and left school at 16 to pursue a career as an orthopaedic technician where he conducted his training over the next 3 ½ years about 50kms south of Munich. At the age of 20, he qualified and spent the next 3 years working for two different companies before deciding that he wished to complete some overseas travel.



Because he had some friends in here, New Zealand was his first stop and he has never left! He travelled around both the north & south islands in a van and particularly liked the vineyard areas of Marlborough. In July, 2015 whilst sitting at a café in Wellington having coffee, he engaged in a conversation with a man who, when he found out what Matthias was qualified for, directed him to the Wellington Limb Centre. After being interviewed, he had a job one week later and the NZALS sponsored him for a work visa which finally came through allowing him to be granted a full time permanent position in Christchurch.

Matthias is an only child and although he misses his family & friends back in Germany, he calls his parents weekly to keep in touch. He recalls having a happy “normal” childhood and enjoyed the family adventures in the outdoors as well as having a passion for Lego as a child. He also says that as a young boy growing up, he dreamed a lot about the rest of the world and travel so he is pleased he is now living that dream. Matthias has yet to meet that “special” Kiwi girl and is living with 3 other young people in a house on Clifton Hill, a lifestyle that he is thoroughly enjoying being so close to the beach where he is trying to hone his surfing skills. He has a passion for the outdoors and regularly undertakes tramping trips which he says Christchurch is a great base for. One of the greatest risks he has taken came recently on a tramping trip in the Arthurs Pass area when he had to traverse a narrow ledge with a sheer drop off.

He says that he enjoys people who have the same passion as he does for the outdoor pursuit’s lifestyle and lead an active, full life.

FAVOURITE FOOD: Absolutely everything!

FAVOURITE PLACES: Arthurs Pass, Dunedin and Burghausen Castle in Germany near the Austrian border where his grandparents actually lived **IN** the castle.

FAVOURITE ACTIVITIES: Surfing, mountain biking, tramping & snorkelling.

FAVOURITE MUSIC: Hard rock- Band-Rage against The Machine.

FAVOURITE MOVIE: Forest Gump.

FAVOURITE BOOK: Medieval fantasy genre by Jo Abercrombie.

Matthias Markl Continued:

He has travelled to the UK, Austria, Italy, Switzerland, Croatia, Slovenia and the USA but for now, he is very happy to be living and working here although further travel to other parts of the world remains on his list of things to do. Matthias says he is most happy when he has "achieved" in both his work & private life and also enjoys "kicking back" and resting.

Matthias has advised me that due to a family situation back in Germany, he has unfortunately had to resign his position at the Limb Centre but I have decided to run with this article in the hope & possibility that we may see him return in the near future. Wishing you all the very best Matthias.

New Plymouth Conference-April 2017

Over the weekend of April 7-9th, 7 members of the Canterbury/Westland Society attended the Amputees Federation of NZ annual conference in the fabulous city of New Plymouth where everyone enjoyed a wonderful weekend of information sharing, guest speakers, entertainment, making new friends, renewing old acquaintances and exploring the hidden gem that New Plymouth & Taranaki most certainly is. Earlier that week, Taranaki had been hit hard by substantial rainfall but when we landed in New Plymouth, we were greeted by brilliant sunshine and 20 degrees which continued for our entire stay.



The Taranaki society were superb in organising & hosting the conference and we are in debt to them for all their hard work and wonderful hospitality. The conference itself was informative and most enjoyable. The Mayor of New Plymouth, Neil Holdem, opened the proceedings on Friday evening and after a "mingle & greet supper" the National Council meeting was held with Mark Bruce being elected to the position of National President. Saturday morning provided leisure time for attendees and many took the opportunity to do the 2 hour bus tour of the city & surroundings. At all times, the magnificent Mt Taranaki can be seen but New Plymouth offers much more. For me, one of the absolute highlights was to experience the Coastal Walkway which is a wide paved area that runs from the city all the way towards Bell Block in the north, **13 kilometres !**. There are many larger cities in NZ that would be envious of such a magnificent facility and its' popularity could be seen by the number of walkers, cyclists, runner & people with dogs using the walkway.. On Saturday afternoon, we heard from a pain medicine specialist, Dr Lorna Fox, Tim Crowe from Amputees in Action ("mock ups" of injured people for training purposes), Marnie Gower from ACC who assesses high needs claims for prosthetics, Otto Bock and the NZALS. The evening dine & dance had a "western" theme and many people joined in by dressing up for the occasion. On Sunday morning, the GIAG participants gave their feedback on the activities they enjoyed at TOPEC (Taranaki Outdoor Pursuits Centre) the day before and this was followed by a marvellous presentation from Ken Sowden, Manager of Parafed Canterbury. Ken focussed on his experience of the Paralympics he has attended and he played inspirational video clips of Kiwis in action. An interesting statistic was that of the 22 medals NZ won at Rio in 2016, 14 were won by amputees ! We had leisure time before flying home in the evening and thanks must be given to Pub Charity for their funding to allow our members to attend a wonderful weekend in "The Naki".

New Plymouth Conference-April 2017



The Canterbury/Westland attendees at conference enjoying the Saturday evening festivities.

Pictured at rear left to right, Ed Jones & Mark Bruce.

Standing, Rita Crabbe & Margaret Hunter.

Seated, Heather Plows (Life Member), Lisa Gray & Chrissy Williamson.

“ Go Big or Go Home ”

This is what 8 year old able bodied Lucy Holdaway told her mother, Rebekah, when told that \$10,000 was a huge amount of money to raise.

Lucy is a charming young girl who attends St Margaret’s College and after seeing a You Tube video back in 2016 of amputees doing gymnastics, she was “hooked” on the idea of raising money to assist young amputees to assist them in achieving their own dreams. Lucy and Rebekah have not finalised how they will distribute the funds raised but have in mind maybe helping with prosthetics, coaching & sports trips. I had a most



pleasant meeting with Lucy & Rebekah recently and was told that she has the full support of her family, school & peers to help her attain this lofty goal. Lucy has sold baking, had a mufti day at school, is being sponsored for a “sugar free” week and is hoping to present her cause to a group of business people.

Lucy has a Facebook page (search prosthetic help) and also has a Givealittle page, link below. As at the start of May, Lucy has raised \$1690 towards her target well done Lucy.

<https://givealittle.co.nz/profile/individual/prosthetichelp>

I was thoroughly impressed with the passion & dedication that Lucy is displaying to this cause and am sure that given her wonderful compassionate attitude to achieve her goal, she will make every success of her future life. On behalf of all amputees Lucy, we thank you most sincerely for your fantastic initiative. To our members, we should be justifiably proud of Lucy’s endeavours and if you can find any way to support Lucy in achieving her target, I would encourage you to do so. A very impressive and inspiring young girl.

It is with regret that we advise the recent passing of one of our members, Gordon McLeish. To the McLeish family, we offer our sincere condolences at your loss.

Mid Winter-Fun Indoor Sports

A reminder about our Fun Indoor Sports afternoon at the Hornby Club on **Sunday, 16th July**. This message was in our April newsletter but the response has not been great so we are canvassing for support of this initiative.

Activities on offer will be, Quoits, Darts, Indoor Bowls & Mini-Golf so nothing too strenuous and a friendly, fun competition will run with the top teams receiving prizes.

Details are;

When: Sunday July 16th starting at 1pm till 4pm

Where: Hornby Club, Carmen Rd

Cost: \$8 pp payable on the day which includes, hire of the hall, use of the equipment and a light afternoon tea.

We would love to have your company on the day so could you please give Margaret a call (349-7585) and let her know if you are interested in attending. **Please support** this initiative and we hope to see you at this fun afternoon.



Grace Johnstone:

We warmly welcome Grace Johnstone as a new member of the society. Ed Jones and I recently visited with Grace & her family and thoroughly enjoyed meeting her and the family who made us most welcome in their lovely home. Grace is keen to attend GIAG next year in Wellington and we will be doing all we can to make this happen. This is Grace's story: As an aside Grace, has met young Lucy Holdaway at a Parafed function.

Hello everyone, I'm Grace Johnstone and I am 15 years old. For my birthday this year I did a tandem skydive in the Abel Tasman National Park. I totally recommend it!!!!

I was the first child to my parents Mark and Tracey, a much loved and wanted fertility treatment baby. I was given a very poor prognosis after antenatal scans and although I was born with twisted legs and a malformed spine, I was alert and well and my parents celebrated. After many operations, I walked at the age of three and a half with a built up boot, AFO splints, and a truck to balance on. When I started school I was the size of a petite two year old and was adept at using crutches and could zoom around in a wheel chair when needed.

Hospital trips for ongoing corrective surgeries to re-angle bones, sort tendons and lengthen my smaller leg were a big part of my childhood. Orthopaedic surgeries involve a lot of pain and unfortunately epidurals never worked for me.



Grace Johnstone:

I was blessed to have a Mum and Dad who doted on me and a Mum who is a paediatric nurse to care for me. My sister Emma was adopted and is only four months younger than me. Everything Emma did, I wanted to try too.

I'm so thankful to Mr McKie, my leg surgeon, for enabling me to walk as my family are all very outdoors orientated and I too have a love for nature and animals. I have a pet "love bird" called Smudge who is awesome. When I was thirteen and had been unable to walk without crutches for a year and a half, my right foot was very painful and leg not too useful. Amputation, although hard, was amazing, enabling me to walk, run and ride a bike using my new prosthetic leg. My amputation was a "through the knee" procedure and my new leg was fantastic, once I mastered it. I did the Pegasus fun run only four months after the amputation.

My spinal health deteriorated and a year later I had surgery for my scoliosis. My spinal abnormalities meant it was a very challenging operation. I lost movement in my legs and was in a lot of pain. Further surgery was required to free the nerves and this was followed by an intensive rehabilitation time. I'm now a year on from this surgery and learning to walk with my prosthesis is my next challenge. Sitting at school all day is difficult and trying to walk causes pain. I'm also four months post a heel osteotomy and tendon transfer on my left foot. Also a sciatic neuroma resection in my stump which I call my "little leg". I have a new physio who is keen that I learn to walk with a water leg in the pool.

My spine needs a higher fusion at some stage and I'm looking forward to getting back to the activities I love. I love rock climbing, kayaking, swimming, badminton, bush walks, reading, singing and playing the piano. I live on a lifestyle block with five other siblings. My favourite time of year is spring as I love the arrival of the new baby animals and daffodils. My favourite places are the Abel Tasman and Wanaka. I hope to kayak the Abel Tasman one day. My Uncle Bob, who lives in Wanaka, has fundraised by doing the adventure race The God Zone and a Give a little page for me to get a pedal assist mountain bike from Germany. My small size is why it needed to come from Germany. I want to say a huge thank you to all who have made this possible. I also hope to do the rail trail on this when I am able.

I loved meeting Mark and Ed from the amputee society last week and was inspired by Ed's stories and his running leg. One day I also hope to run and do a triathlon.



Did You Know?

Ever hopped into a strange vehicle and not known what side the petrol flap is on?. If you look at the fuel icon on the display, all cars have an arrow showing whether the flap is on the right or the left. 45 years of driving and I only just found this out !!!!!

Smile Awhile



Web Sites

Amputee Society of Canterbury & Westland Inc.

www.amputeeinfo.co.nz

The Amputees Federation of NZ

www.af.org.nz

NZ Artificial Limb Service

www.nzals.govt.nz

Amputee Information

www.mossresourcenet.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

Nation Wide H&D Advocacy Service – 0800 555050

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

Kipp's Patch

www.kipps-patch.com

International Diabetes Federation

www.idf.org



CCS
disability action
Including all people

TE HUNGA HAUĀ MAURI MŌ NGĀ TĀNGATA KĀTOA

CCS Disability Action

224 Lichfield St, Christchurch.

03 3655661 or 0800 2272255.

Email: canterbury@ccsdisabilityaction.org.nz

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Artificial Limb Service

330 Burwood Road,
Christchurch
Phone 03-383-0501
Fax 03-383-3566
Hours: 8.00am - 4.30pm

Office administrator

Pauline Afitu
www.nzalb.govt.nz

Association Bank Info

Westpac 03 0830 026 4400 00

**Burwood Hospital
Hydro Pool**



**Wed: 4-30pm-6-30pm
Sundays: 1pm – 2-30pm**
This is with Parafed and
there is a \$2.00 charge.



Christchurch City Council

Amputee Golf NZ

For any enquiries about
becoming involved,
anywhere in NZ, please
contact Alan Dearden, 03
383-3766.



Need Computer Help ?

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Mobile 027 2909246
Home 942-5320

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