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Welcome to our 13th edition of Inside APC.

Welcome to our "luckiest" edition yet ... it's the 13th edition of Inside APC, so it must be!

In this edition we introduce Tim Holmes, one of our quiet achievers. If Tim cannot fix it, it cannot be fixed!

Latest articles include an account of the APC open day run at the Newcastle branch, some words on "Bills boots" and Cameron's feedback on the 2011 Arafura Games.

Probably the most significant issue in this edition is the article on "Every Australian Counts". Hopefully this federal government initiative will lead to better and adequately funded services to those requiring prosthetic treatment. So make sure that you and your families have your voice heard by signing up.

Enjoy!
Richard

PS Please feel free to let us know what you think about "Inside APC" - we love to hear your feedback. Simply send your thoughts or ideas for articles to editor@apcprosthetics.com.au

Team Profile: Tim Holmes

What is new in your life?

I recently joined the SES as a volunteer.

What do you get up to outside of work?

Other than the SES I really enjoy getting out into the bush either four wheel driving or hunting.

How long have you been involved in Prosthetics and Orthotics?

I've been involved in P&O for a bit over 5 years as a Prosthetic technician.

(Editorial: He is one of the people who actually put your leg or arm together! We are currently looking for more technicians, so if you are interested in the actual fabrication process of artificial limbs or know someone who you think might be, please get them to drop us an e-mail jobs@apcprosthetics.com.au or give us a call & chat to Richard on 02 9890 8123.)

What do you enjoy about prosthetics?

I enjoy being a part of people's recovery and the ongoing support they need in manufacture and maintenance of their prosthetic limbs.

What do you see the future bringing?

Continued learning and growth.



**I SUPPORT
THE NDIS,
It's time to make every
Australian count**



TAKE ACTION

www.everyaustraliancounts.com.au

Let's revolutionise
disability services

I support
the NDIS

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APC Hunter Open Day

Ian Robertson

APC Prosthetics (hunter) held its first open day on Friday the 17th of June. The aim of the day was to provide information to amputees and their families on current prosthetic practices and the state of the art componentry, that is funded through the Prosthetic Limb Service (PLS) and privately through our facilities.

This hands-on approach was well received with people leaving satisfied that they have had the opportunity to ask questions on a one-to-one basis, and handle components in a nonclinical setting.

We had guest speakers and demonstrations throughout the day. Melissa Noonan from Limbs4Life (www.limbs4life.com) spoke about her personal experiences as an amputee and how to bring about positive changes to the current government service model through people power!

Please log on and join the campaign to see positive change to services for people with disabilities - www.everyaustraliancounts.com.au

Cathy Howells and Sandra McFaul from The Amputee Coach provided demonstrations on various physiotherapy techniques, and had participants improving their walking pattern in minutes through the use of an appropriate training regime. See more about them at: www.theamputeecoach.com

I would like to thank our talented team at APC Prosthetics (hunter) and our suppliers, Otto Bock, OSSUR, OPC, Reis Surgical and esp@apc for their generous support.

Ian Robertson



Listening & Learning



Cathy Howells demonstrating with Wayne Matheson



Melissa Noonan — "Limbs4Life"



Catching up after the talks



NDIS | revolutionising disability services

Every Australian Counts is the campaign for the introduction of a National Disability Insurance Scheme.

The NDIS will revolutionise the way people with a disability, their families and carers are supported in this country.

Have you signed up to the "Every Australian Counts" campaign, www.everyaustraliancounts.com.au ?

The final report of recommendations from the productivity commission has been handed to the government, as yet we do not know what the final outcome will be. However, if it even goes close to the draft recommendations, then we will have a new platform for disability services here in Australia.

Here is a summary of the Draft recommendations:

"Understanding the Draft Productivity Commission Report into Disability and Care and Support"

The Productivity Commission has accepted that the disability system is not meeting the needs of people with a disability, their families and carers or indeed the needs of the nation and has recommended a complete overhaul. The opening words of the draft report say it all – "the disability support system overall is inequitable, underfunded, fragmented and inefficient and gives people with a disability little choice."

The Commission is proposing two schemes. The larger National Disability Insurance Scheme will provide support to approx 360,000 people whose disability has a significant impact on their daily life.

A second smaller scheme -the National Injury Insurance Scheme - would provide support for people who suffer a catastrophic injury and would be based on widening and strengthening existing state-based schemes.

A person getting support from the NDIS would need to have a permanent disability and meet one of the following conditions:

- * Have significant limitations in communication, mobility and self care
- * Have an intellectual disability
- * Have a condition for which early intervention would improve functioning
- * Be a person for whom intervention would have significant benefits

The Commission also suggests that the NDIS should have an information and referral function for a much larger group of people with a disability, providing information, referrals and linkages to services and supports outside the NDIS.

Once a person has been deemed eligible and their support needs assessed, they would be entitled to a package of supports and services, which would be portable across Australia. They would be able to either:

- * Choose their own service providers
- * Ask a disability support organisation to assemble the a package on their behalf
- * Cash out parts of their funding allocation and direct the funding to services they believe best meet their needs.

The list of supports the NDIS would provide include:

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| • Aids, equipment, home and vehicle modifications | • Specialist accommodation support | • Case management and coordination |
| • Personal care | • Domestic assistance | • Specialist employment services |
| • Community access – to support community inclusion | • Transport assistance | • Crisis/emergency support |
| • Respite | • Therapies | |
| | • Guide and assistance dogs | |

The Commission calculates that an additional \$6.3 billion is needed to fund the new system and suggests that only the Commonwealth has a sufficient taxation base to meet the cost of the scheme. The Commission therefore proposes the federal government take over funding the entire disability system. They prefer to see the funds drawn from general revenue rather than a specific tax or levy but recommended the funds not be subject to the annual budgetary process and quarantined for NDIS use only.

The Commission has suggested a pilot project in 2014 in one region in Australia. This would extend to the whole of the country the following year, beginning with all new cases of significant disability and some of the groups most disadvantaged by current arrangements such as adults living with ageing parents and young children requiring early intervention. The scheme should be fully functional by 2018.



These Boots Are Made For Walking... Bill Watson

When Bill Watson was recently in the clinic for an adjustment he took the time to chat with the Michelle at reception, as he wanted to let people know that his boots were made for walking NOT slipping. *"When you are walking between Town Hall Station & the church, (in central Sydney), the floors are made of Slate – they can be very slippery but with these shoes I have had no problems! **These are the best boots ever!**"*

Being a bilateral transtibial (below knee) amputee for over 50 years, you can imagine that Bill has been through a "lot of boots" in his time and knows the importance of having great grip in his footwear. *"I used to be able to catch myself when I slipped, with my stomach muscles, but as I have gotten older it is a bit more difficult and I have to rely on my shoes more"*, he smiles and pats his stomach.

Born with congenital deformity of his feet, due to his mother having Rubella during her pregnancy, Bill was 14 when doctors recommended amputating both his legs below the knees. His increasing height was putting too much stress on the ends of his "feet".

Now 70, Bill has spent his life "roaming", having run businesses from Far North Queensland to Tasmania, China to Sydney. Now retired he is no less active or demanding of his prosthetic limbs or his Prosthetist, David Howells!

While Bill can recount the many different styles of limbs he has worn over the years – starting with his first ever pair, that were made out of hand carved cedar wood with feet of compressed wool & wood! He is very specific about how his legs are fitted, having had many different pairs over the last 55 years, *"I'm fussy. I know the difference between good and bad fitting legs! Everybody should."*

So, what boots is Bill wearing? *"These are Grosby's – I got them at K-mart"*.

Not everyone is going to want to wear boots like Bill!

So, here is a reminder of **what to look for in your footwear**, as your shoes should take into account both your prosthetic and non-prosthetic needs.

Shoes need to:

- Be comfortable and not cause rubs or blisters anywhere on your remaining foot.
- Have a sole that helps with shock absorption. They need to be a bit "cushiony" and not too hard under your foot
- Have a non-slip sole
- Be light in weight
- Have a large surface area for the heel to make contact with the ground. You don't want small narrow high heels, as these will make it difficult for you to balance.
- Be an adequate length – your toes should not be crowded.
- Support your feet well, especially around your heels. The heel counter at the back of the shoe should be firm. This is just as important for your prosthetic foot as your remaining foot.
- Not alter the alignment of your prosthesis – this means that the prosthesis stands up straight - it does not tilt forwards or backwards. When you are changing shoes, make sure that you have similar heel heights.
- You may want to consider Velcro closures if you have hand problems.



NB: If you regularly change your shoes & heel heights, you may want to speak with your Prosthetist about upgrading to a foot that you can change the heel height yourself.



The 2011 Arafura Games - Cameron Ward

I was lucky enough to be invited to attend the 2011 Arafura games by the Australian Paralympic committee as the supporting Prosthetist. The Arafura Games are a week long multi-sport competition held every two years in Darwin. The Games are a major sporting event targeting developing athletes across the Asia Pacific region and beyond. Twenty years after its inception, the Arafura Games were held from Saturday 7th May to Saturday 14th May 2011.

The Games incorporate the Oceania Paralympic Championships & consisted of four main sports, Athletics, Swimming, Power lifting and Table Tennis. Unlike most "games", at Arafura the Paralympic events and able-bodied events are integrated into the one competition providing a unique and diverse sporting environment.

The other unique part of Arafura, was that

due to the weather, e.g. temperatures & humidity beyond belief, all events were scheduled between 5pm & 10pm .

As the Oceania Paralympic Championships is open to all countries of the world – this gave our athletes from the Asia Pacific region a chance to compete at an International level and proved to be an important place to gain international classification and qualifying times leading up to London in 2012.

So, unsure of what I would be required to do I came armed with a small case of tools and the contact details of the prosthetics department at the local Darwin Hospital for any major breakages or repairs that would require a workshop.

The games had a far more relaxed feel to them, typical of the Darwin setting. This was a stark contrast to the IPC World Championships held earlier this year in Christchurch. I spent most of my time at the track watching the athletics that I know well. I made a few minor

adjustments to a number of different prostheses and organised for a young girl from Samoa to have her above knee cosmetic cover replaced at the Darwin hospital. Thanks to Richard Freijah at the Darwin hospital for donating his time to help out this very grateful young girl. Away from the track I also watched the Power lifting where Cameron Whittington did some amazing lifts.

It was great to get to see a number of APC clients competing Kelly Cartwright, Jack Swift, Liam Hunter, Sarah Hilt, Cameron Whittington most of whom are aiming for the Paralympics in London 2012 .

Thank you also to Otto Bock who were kind enough to sponsor me going there and the Australian Paralympic committee for looking after me while I was there.

To find out more about APC Prosthetic's athletes and their quest to represent Australia at the London Paralympics in 2012 check out the new section on our website "[London ... Bring it on!](#)"



"The Team"
Stephanie, Harvey, Stefan & David

"The Limbering Prost"

This year's 100km trail walking challenge, an event that has been running in Sydney since the late 90s organised by OXFAM, will see the rise of a new walking superpower: "The Limbering Prost".

Stephanie, Harvey and Stefan from APC Prosthetics as well as David, a physiotherapist from Liverpool hospital, will participate for the first time in the event. They are currently in training!

The aim is to complete the 100km walk in about 24 hours. The trail starts in Brooklyn and follows the Great Northern walk towards St.Ives and finishes up in Mosman.

The team is determined to raise \$7,500 for Oxfam's great cause – providing people in need in developing countries with much needed assistance in education, housing and employment. Please help us reach our target by donating to the following link:

http://trailwalker.oxfam.org.au/sydney/teams/team/?team_id=9730

Thanks and happy limbering
Stefan

PS... To learn more about Oxfam's work - <http://www.oxfam.org.au/>

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