

ASBESTOS NEWS

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About GARDS

NEW HOME FOR GARDS



Village Community Centre

1 Ollerton Avenue, Moe, Victoria. 3825



03 51 27 7744



Did you know some therapeutic things happened before we moved to our new premises on the weekend of the 17th & 18th of June – like painting, cleaning windows, vacuuming and the dreaded transfer of ADSL and the agonizing effort of getting a new phone line to our new home. You know all those things that either wear you out or you tear your hair out over, as some of you who have had to brave a move would know.

I must say though now it is all behind us and we are settled into our new home it is great and we are very proud of our new set of offices. To those people who will remain anonymous that helped us move and do all those therapeutic things with us, we say a big thank you to you, because without your help to give us a hand it would not have happened. YOU ARE WONDERFUL!!! – To all those interested please feel free to call and see our new premises we would only be too happy to show you around and give you a cuppa.

DID YOU KNOW

The International Labour Organisation says:

Asbestos is the most important single factor causing death and disability at work, to an estimated 100,000 workers around the world who die every year from diseases caused by exposure to asbestos.

The most fundamental right at work is the right to life and health.

Some 40 countries have banned the use of asbestos and it is hoped that this will increase to 100 in 10 year's time.

THANK YOU WORKSAFE

We want to say a very big thank you to all those at WorkSafe who have sponsored us for another year of funding. We were very pleased to receive the news that our sponsorship had been accepted again as this money helps us to keep our office doors open to all those who need our support.

Major sponsors:



TAX CONCESSIONS FOR JH

Since the news hit the headlines with “taxpayers shouldn’t fund Hardie compo” We have been amazed at the Federal Governments stance saying that ordinary taxpayers should not shoulder James Hardies responsibilities. I am sure after all the hard work of the last couple of years by so many to get James Hardie to negotiate any sort of compensation will also be amazed by our Federal Government to be so short sighted and short on memory as to remember how, why and whom we are doing all this for and how it all started.

These are Australians who have been exposed in so many different ways to James Hardie products whether it is in their homes, work environments or being an innocent bystander. Those claims that are made for compensation are generally very modest at best and cover health expenses that will be incurred because of the illness, they cover pain and suffering and support the victims families when they are no longer able to work or the unthinkable that they pass away due to the illness.

If the Federal Government does not support James Hardie getting the tax concessions they are seeking as agreed in the negotiations, there is nothing to stop JH from walking away from the deal that was brokered, there are no laws that make corporations responsible to pay. So if JH wash their hands of their disgraceful behaviour the asbestos sufferers and their families will then have to rely on an already over burdened health system. The ordinary taxpayer will then be effectively shouldering the responsibility that the Federal Government said they should not in the first place.

Personally we would rather see James Hardie paying that money into that fund for the next 50+ years to all those who are yet to make claims. We don’t want to see JH get off scott free and to turn their backs on these families who had no control over their destiny.

We say to the Federal Government it is your turn to show compassion and go out on a limb for Australian families, you tell those families they are not going to get compensation because the laws in Australia for corporations allow companies like James Hardie to rid themselves of any responsibilities to the victims of their corporate decisions, their skulduggery will affect generations to come.

Please think carefully about your decisions as a government because you also will affect generations to come and those families will have had a double whammy from the very people that they thought would protect them.

Of course when all else fails you can rely on the support groups and the unions to keep on fighting for however long it takes to get justice from James Hardie for the asbestos victims and families. These families will have to soldier on no matter what, they don’t have any choice and they can’t walk away!



Pictured above Left at rear: Vicki Hamilton, Rod LeLievre, Chris Haywood, Dave Noonan, Front left: Marie Smith, Tanya Hamilton, Dorothy Roberts and John Parker

8-HOUR DAY CELEBRATIONS

Some of the GARDS crew attended the 150th Anniversary of the 8-hour Day with an exhibition and lunch at Wonthaggi in June. The opening of the exhibition was by actor Chris Haywood; other speakers at the event were CFMEU official Dave Noonan. Did you know that Australia, once recognised as the “Working man’s paradise” for its eight hour day achievement, now has among the highest working hours in the developed world. A report done in 2004 saw Australians working around 1855 hours a year compared to an international average of 1643 hours.

GARDS INVITED BY NSW PREMIER

GARDS executive committee, Lyle Seear, Trevor Callow and Vicki Hamilton attended a reception held by the Premier of NSW Morris Iemma MP to recognise the signing of the James Hardie agreement on Tuesday 2nd of May at Governor Macquarie Tower in Sydney.

The reception was for all those who had had major roles in the James Hardie campaign. Among those who attended were: Bernie Banton asbestos victims representative, Greg Combet ACTU president, Bob Carr previous Premier of NSW who was instrumental in setting up the James Hardie enquiry, the law firms Slater & Gordon and Turner & Freeman who donated their time and expertise pro bono to the James Hardie Commission, Union leaders, all major support groups from around Australia, doctors and many more who helped to play a part in the largest personal injury settlement in Australia's history. The amount of compensation that could be paid to victims of asbestos over the next 40 to 50 years could exceed 6 billion dollars.

GARDS wanted to thank the Gippsland Trades & Labour Council especially the CFMEU and the AMWU in the Gippsland area who helped GARDS in the quest to bring the James Hardie campaign to the people of Victoria. We were overwhelmed with the support given to GARDS from the Gippsland community, along with the media coverage from ABC radio, LV Express and country regional TV stations that helped to bring the plight of asbestos sufferers everywhere to the people. The settlement was ensuring that there was enough money into the future to properly compensate asbestos sufferers wherever they were in Australia. The campaign highlighted what people power could achieve when they banded together to prevent injustices in Australia. Now, in the light of the tax concession crisis all of this achievement could be in jeopardy. With our Federal Government still haggling on the tax benefits and whether it will give JH all the tax cuts agreed to in the negotiations, now every thing hangs in the balance. If it emerges that JH walk away from its responsibilities, it would be devastating to families

who thought all of this campaigning and shouting from the rooftops was over.

GARDS can reassure its readers that it will never give up until it sees JH

do the right thing and compensate those whom it has made sick and those yet to present with illness.

Pictured here from left to right Lyle Seear, Trevor Callow, Premier of NSW Morris Iemma, Vicki Hamilton, Nikki Diver and former Premier of NSW Bob Carr at the reception.



GIPPSLAND CANCER CARE CENTRE – LATROBE REGIONAL HOSPITAL OFFICAL OPENING

The GARDS executive was invited to the official opening of the GCCC on the 17th of May. We were very proud to be at that opening, as a lot of you would remember that the GARDS organisation along with many others in the Gippsland region lobbied long and hard to get a facility of this nature in the area. In July 2003 GARDS initiated and circulated a petition asking the people of Victoria to support Gippsland in its attempts to secure a Cancer Treatment Centre with much needed medical facilities and equipment from the Victorian State Government. The GARDS petition closed on the 9th of September with 7,400 signatures being delivered to the steps of parliament supporting Cancer Treatment Centre and other identified medical facilities for asbestos sufferers and other cancer sufferers in Gippsland. On October 3rd, 2003 the State & Federal Governments announce a 21 million Cancer Treatment Centre for Gippsland to be placed at Latrobe Regional Hospital. We were very proud to be acknowledged at the opening by the Minister for Health Bronwyn Pike and also the Chairman of the board of LRH Barry Dunstan for our efforts in helping to obtain this centre for the people of Gippsland. This shows what people power can achieve. We want to thank all those who signed the petition and helped circulate it. Your efforts have been rewarded. Well done everyone! – An estimated 400 new patients will receive treatment at this facility each year.

ANNUAL TUTORIAL AT MONASH UNI CLAYTON

On May 1st representatives from GARDS travelled to Monash University Clayton campus to take part in a tutorial on asbestos diseases and the impact they have on a community to 1st year medical students. This year there were over 300 medical students, they came from countries all around the world such as Botswana, Singapore, UK, Malaysia, Canada, United States, India, Thailand, China, Japan etc. who eagerly listened while the 8 representatives from the GARDS organisation told them their experiences. Some of those GARDS members who travelled to Melbourne were carers, family members who had lost a loved one to asbestos disease, workers who have been exposed and those who have been diagnosed with mesothelioma.

The students were given first hand experiences from carers, family members, workers and those who know only too well what it is like to live with or support those who are dying with asbestos related disease. GARDS has been doing these tutorials for the past 4 years and the students have found this part of their teaching unit most informative. Some of the students told their tutors after the session was

completed that the GARDS representative were awesome!!! – We thought the students were wicked!!!

Pictured here are: some of the 1st year Medical students with Vicki Hamilton Secretary, Trevor Callow Vice President and Jim McLean GARDS member from Noble Park who dropped in to listen to the tutorial



ABB ALLIANCE & TRUenergy DONATION

The GARDS organisation accepted a \$2,500 cheque from the seven ABB & TRUenergy Alliance Yallourn representatives. The money that had been raised to donate to GARDS came from workers who had had 500,000 hours lost time injury free since 2002. Vicki Hamilton, GARDS, Secretary, said that the GARDS members were thrilled to receive not only the cheque but the support from the local power workers. The seven representatives were treated to a morning tea by the GARDS organisation and were given a tour of the new offices that GARDS has just moved to. We thank all those people at ABB & TRUenergy who deemed us worthy of this donation. Pictured here are six representatives and the GARDS gang.

From left rear are:

Trevor Callow, Wayne Powell, Julia Shinnars, Joe Omar, Lyle Sear, David O'Neill.

Left front: Vicki Hamilton, Marie Smith, Pam Nicholson, Dominic Maruzza, Alan Young and Dorothy Roberts.

Photographer was Kaye McLaren ABB



Thank You

NATIONAL ASBESTOS CONFERENCE

In late May, five of the GARDS committee attended an asbestos conference organised by ADFA at Rooty Hill in Sydney's outer suburbs. The conference was a 2-day event highlighting changes to asbestos laws and informing the 9 knowledgeable support groups that attended of research that is being conducted by eminent doctors in their field.

Some of the prominent speakers of the weekend were representatives from three law firms who deal in asbestos litigation Turner & Freeman, Slater & Gordon and Maurice Blackburn and Cashman.

Matt Peacock an award winning ABC journalist who spoke about the plight of the Baryulgil indigenous community who suffered immensely from the James Hardie Asbestos mine in their community. Matt first brought to light the plight of the Baryulgil community in 1977 when he did a program called Broadband, which brought him great acclaim.

Dr Nick Pavlakis, who has a very impressive background as Staff Specialist Medical Oncology, Royal North Shore Hospital, Lecturer at the Dept of Medicine at the University of Sydney, Visiting Medical Officer of the Mater Misericordiae Hospital North Sydney, North Shore Private Hospital and Armidale Oncology Clinic spoke about research advances in early diagnosis, drugs & treatment of mesothelioma.

Bernie Banton from the Asbestos Diseases Foundation of Australia spoke about the National Research Centre into asbestos related diseases that the NSW government have allocated close to \$6 million dollars to build.

Saturday night saw us all at a dinner dance where everyone seemed to let their hair down and have a really great night to the music of the Fat Cats. Of course our President doesn't have very good hearing and kept saying to us all night "those Hot Dogs are really quite good aren't they?" I know all the GARDS executive had a great time and kicked up their heels. It was a bit hard to get some of our executive going the next morning after all that dancing the night before but a hearty breakfast, great company and more laughs that carried on from the night before was just what we all needed to get the day going.

After breakfast on Sunday the conference took on a more relaxed atmosphere where the nine support groups all spoke about their organisations and hopes for the future.

I know that the GARDS committee had a great weekend of sharing ideas and getting to know people from other groups and it was nice to just be with others who knew some of the hardships faced by asbestos sufferers and their families.

GARDS thanks ADFA very much for organising the weekend and we hope to catch up with some of our new found friends in the not too distant future. Those of you of whom we took pictures should have received them by now, just a memento of the weekend to keep from us. See if you can see someone you know from that weekend – pictured

Right here and on page 6.

CONGRATUALTIONS ELLA SWEENEY



ON YOUR
AWARD
FROM ALL
AT GARDS





***THANK YOU TO THESE
WONDERFUL PEOPLE
& ORGANISATIONS***

ESME SHERWOOD FROM SYDNEY FOR HER \$\$\$\$ DONATION

MAURICE BLACKBURN & CASHMAN FOR THEIR \$\$\$\$ DONATION

SLATER & GORDON FOR THEIR \$\$\$\$ DONATION

**DAVID & MOIRA DUNCAN FOR A LOVINGLY HAND MADE
LECTERN DAVID MADE FOR GARDS**

INTERNATIONAL POWER LOY YANG B FOR THEIR \$\$\$\$ DONATION

INTERNATIONAL POWER HAZELWOOD FOR THEIR \$\$\$\$ DONATION

**GARDS MEMBERS WOULD LIKE TO SAY A
SPECIAL THANK YOU**

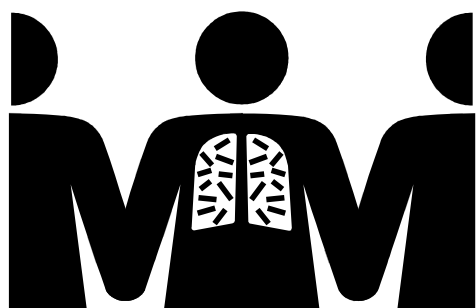
**G & J CROSBY CONTRACTORS PTY LTD
FOR THE SPECIAL DONATION THEY ARE
MAKING TO GARDS ON A REGULAR BASIS**

**– Graeme & Judy you are truly great Aussies
and our asbestos sufferers and their families are
overwhelmed with your support.**



G.A.R.D.S. INC.
WOULD LIKE TO THANK THESE
SPONSORS & SUPPORTERS





GARDS

Gippsland Asbestos Related Diseases Support Inc.

www.gards.org

Gippsland Asbestos Related
Diseases Support Inc.

Village Community Centre
1 Ollerton Avenue,
Moe, Vic. 3825

PO Box 111,
Moe, Vic. 3825

Phone & Fax: 03 51 27 7744

Email: info@gards.org

Web site: www.gards.org

GARDS INC. SUPPORT

GARDS provides support and information to asbestos sufferers, their families and carers. This includes home visits by GARDS volunteers, a telephone information/support service 24 hours, 7 days a week. GARDS has an office, which is open for sufferers, their families, carers and the general community to access at the times listed below in the "About GARDS Inc section"

GARDS INC. Support also conducts a monthly meeting (1.30pm – 3.30pm) on the last Tuesday of the month) where guest presenters are invited to provide information about support services of all kinds and any other topics of interest that the members might find of relevance. The meetings also provide a gathering place for experiences; GARDS Support is open to anyone whose lives have been affected by asbestos, their families and the general public.

GARDS INC. EVENING MEETING

GARDS has an organisational, activities and advocating arm. Interested financial members can come along to evening meetings which are conducted 7.30pm – 9.30pm on the third Tuesday of the month.

These meetings provide a focal point for information sharing and problem identification. The aim of this group is to focus on improving health and support services and any other issues deemed relevant to improving overall outcomes to asbestos sufferers, their families and the general public. Thus ensuring asbestos-related issues are kept in the public eye and trying to rid our environment of asbestos products.

Meetings are conducted on the premises of GARDS unless otherwise stated.

ABOUT G.A.R.D.S. INC.

Committee of Management

President:

Lyle Seear – Ph. 51671376

Vice President:

Trevor Callow – Ph. 51342208

Secretary:

Vicki Hamilton – Ph. 51278219

Mobile 0407274173

Treasurer:

Pam Nicholson – Ph. 51275843

Mobile 0408535671

Member:

Dorothy Roberts – 51274174

Mobile 0407274174

Rodney LeLievre – 51261656

Mobile 0403397800

G.A.R.D.S. FEES

Joining Fee - \$5.00

Annual Fees:

Pensioners/Concession/

Unemployed - \$3.00

Employed persons - \$11.00

MEETINGS:

Support: Last Tuesday of month,
1.30pm – 3.30pm

Evening: 3rd Tuesday of month,
7.30pm – 9.30pm

UP AND COMING EVENTS

Our Night/Day Meetings

25th July

Roger Bond – inspirational speaker

29th August

GMS Rehabilitation Equipment

26th September

*Daryl Pedler – Director of Gippsland
Regional Clinical School Monash Uni*

OFFICE HOURS

MONDAY: 9.30am – 12 noon

TUESDAY: 1.00pm – 3.00pm

WEDNESDAY: 1.00pm–3.30pm

THURSDAY: 12 noon – 3.00pm

FRIDAY: BY APPOINTMENT

CALL IN FOR A CHAT & CUPPA