



GIPPSLAND ASBESTOS RELATED DISEASES SUPPORT INC.
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 VOLUME 3, ISSUE 4

ASBESTOS NEWS

AWAITING RESPONSE ON JH COMMISSION

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Now that the JH Medical Research & Compensation Foundation Commission has ended and Mr David Jackson QC findings have been made public on the 21st of September. Neogiations have now commenced on the 1st of October between JH representatives, lead by Meredith Hellicar and a unions/sufferers committee lead by ACTU –Greg Combet, NSW Labour Council John Robertson & Asbestos support group - Bernie Banton, Jack Rush QC and Jonathon Beach QC.

The key goals for the negotiating team unions/sufferers will be to achieve funding for the compensation of current and future victims of Hardie products and to make very clear opposition to a statutory scheme proposed by JH company. Union/sufferers group will want continued access to common law rights and no reduction in compensation for victims.

Also goals from the union/sufferers side must include scope for detailed discussion of the funding structure for present and future asbestos compensation and the way in which the funding would be secured.

May I also take this opportunity to thank Peter Gordon of Slater & Gordon & his dedicated staff, Jack Rush QC, Turner & Freeman Lawyers & their dedicated staff & all those wonderful significant others who have shown such wonderful support to asbestos sufferers all over Australia in representing them at the Commission of Enquiry. I know I speak for all the asbestos sufferers now and into the future when I say a Big Thank To You All.

It has also been terrific news that all Premiers and Chief Ministers stated their full support for the ACTU Secretary, Greg Combet, leading the negotiations with James Hardie. The States and territories are taking all immediate steps to implement a possible ban on the purchase of Hardie products, should it become necessary. The ban will be implemented if James Hardie fails to agree in principle to a settlement with the ACTU and sufferers very soon.

We wish all those representing the unions/sufferers all our very best and we know that they will not come out of those negotiations without a just and fair outcome for all asbestos sufferers.

DID YOU KNOW

That Bernie Doran is the Champion RSL carpet bowler – Well Done Bernie!

There is a GARDS pen addict in Morwell who every time he sees a certain committee member can't resist buying another GARDS pen – You must be up to pen number 50 by now – Thank you for your support

Supported by



CALLING ON MR HOWARD

After your win in the Federal Election GARDS now awaits you to help asbestos sufferers and make sure that ASIC prosecutes all those people who have acted reprehensively against asbestos sufferers. We want all other corporate people to realise that there is moral as well as a legal obligation when making decisions about peoples lives. We hope you will keep your promise to do whatever is necessary to stop this happening again. I urge all our readers to lobby their newly elected Liberal/National Members of Federal Parliament with this very important issue.

JAMES HARDIE PROTESTS & RALLIES

Continuing on with our theme about James Hardie lets move on to the protest that took place on the 8th of September on parliament house steps. GARDS members travelled down by bus to join Parliamentarians, Victorian Trades Hall Council, Unions, ADSVIC, other asbestos sufferers and concerned community members to speak out about the dirty tactics used by this large corporation to avoid its legal responsibilities to asbestos sufferers. The "Make James Hardie Pay" campaign was launched with the face of one of our very own GARDS members Fred, who may I say was proud to help in his own way.

It was great to see our very own Victorian State Government standing with us on this very important issue and heart warming to hear the Attorney General Rob Hulls saying "It's a damn disgrace that a company like James Hardie has shown such callous disregard for loyal workers, for innocent workers – and their tragic plight". Parliamentarians, asbestos sufferers, workers and community laid yellow gerberas on the steps of parliament house, 500 in all, one for every person in Victoria expected to get an asbestos related disease this year. **Photos on page 6.**

The 15th of September saw the GARDS members again travel down by bus to Trades Hall to march in a rally from there to the stock exchange. The crowd was enormous there were over 10,000 people who marched to show their disgust in James Hardie. This march and protest coincided with an information meeting for their shareholders being held in Sydney at the stock exchange. There was also a march/protest-taking place in Queensland as well. I am quite sure that the shareholders and the executives of James Hardie were well aware of the shame that has befallen James Hardie. **Photos on page 6 .**

Another RALLY is now planned for Thursday October 28th outside the Telstra Shareholders' Meeting, 9.45am. Exhibition buildings (Jeff Shed, Spencer Street, opposite Casino entrance). Donald McGauchie is the Telstra Board chairman and a board member of James Hardie Industries. Many Telstra employees have gotten sick as a result of Telstra's use of James Hardie products - & yet the chairman of Telstra made decisions as a board member of James Hardie to keep Hardie's assets in the Netherlands and limit compensation for asbestos victims. GARDS members will again be travelling down by bus to join this rally please feel free to join us.

GUEST SPEAKER – PETER GORDON

On the night of the 22nd of September we were privileged to have Peter Gordon from Slater & Gordon come straight from Sydney and David Jackson's QC findings on James Hardie MRCF to inform our members and interested community on the ramifications of those findings. Peter gave a run down on the shameful manoeuvres by James Hardie and its executives to try and evade its legal and moral responsibilities. Peter emphasized that this is no just a NSW issue, but an Australia wide issue and negotiations with Hardies and unions/asbestos sufferers will effect all of Australia's asbestos sufferers and their families, in particularly Gippsland which is experiencing one of the highest rates of asbestos related disease. These negotiations are an integral part of this process and will shape future of claims to come so it will be most important to get it right for the sake of future sufferers. One of the major things that came out of the night that was identified was that all of us whether it be State government, unions, asbestos groups supporting sufferers, law firms and community need to collectively push to see the Federal Government change the corporations law to make sure that no other company is able to ever do this again.

We thank Peter Gordon and his team for taking the time to come and inform us on this very important issue and answer the many questions that people had saved up to ask of him. **Photos on page 6.**

**MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY STUDY
WORK & HEALTH IN THE LATROBE
VALLEY**

An independent study into asbestos related disease in the Latrobe Valley was launched at a community meeting in Moe on Thursday the 23rd of September. This research was spurred on by Associate Professor Tony LaMontagne and his research assistant Hannah Walker from the Centre for the Study of Health and Society at the University of Melbourne and funded with assistance from VicHealth, the incitement for this research was an observation that the voices and perspectives of those most affected by asbestos disease are rarely heard in the formulation of responses to Australia's on-going asbestos disease epidemic. The goal of the study was to determine how a community affected by asbestos disease defines asbestos disease issues, and what they think could or should be done about these issues. As you would be aware Latrobe Valley has 7 times the state average for mesothelioma due to extensive use of asbestos in the past in the power industry. The study highlighted the need for the community to have input into the decisions made about how to respond to this on-going crisis. Associate Professor LaMontagne says, "Community members deserve a place at the table alongside government, health professionals and other stakeholders in ongoing formulation and implementation of responses. Speakers at the launch were: Latrobe City's Cr Bruce Loughheed, Associate Professor Tony LaMontagne, Vicki Hamilton Secretary GARDS, Luke van der Meulen, Victorian President of the CFMEU (mining & energy division) and Steve Dodd Organiser, AMWU. The launch was well attended by approx 50 people and copies of the report can be obtained from the GARDS office.



**VICTORIAN TRADES HALL
COUNCIL OH&S DAY
MOONEE VALLEY**

As part of WorkSafe Week GARDS will take part in Victorian Trades Hall Council's OH&S day for Health & Safety representatives. This will take place on the 27th of October at Monee Valley Racecourse. GARDS will have a display stall to promote the organisation and the activities, advocacy, education and support that it gives to people with asbestos related illness and the general community.



**PALLIATIVE CARE
CONFERENCE**

Palliative Care Victoria is conducting a conference in Gippsland called 'Strengthening Palliative Care in Victoria - Parts of the whole: city and country'. We were very pleased to be chosen to have a poster presentation display at this conference for the 2 days that it will take place. The conference is at Monash University Churchill Campus on Thursday 18th and Friday 19th of November. Palliative Care agencies from all over Victoria will be represented. We are looking forward to making new friends and relationships and enlightening new people to what GARDS is all about.



GIPPSLAND ASBESTOS MEMORIAL CENTRE

GARDS and Gippsland Trades & Labour Council have been in discussions in planning a memorial centre. We have sort interest from Latrobe City Council and a number of groups on planning a Workers Memorial that will encompass a tribute to the working men & women who have succumb to an asbestos related illness. We would like to see this memorial pay tribute to the wide range of industry and the diverse ethnic and professional backgrounds that made Latrobe Valley & the wider Gippsland community what it is today. Plans are being drawn up on what that project might look like. We hope to make this centre a living and changing display where the general community can come and be apart of the rich history of Latrobe Valley and celebrate the lives Gippsland people.



DOMESTIC ASBESTOS TIPPING IN LATROBE VALLEY

GARDS, GTLC & Latrobe City Council have been in discussion with AsClear on setting up a facility to handle domestic asbestos from residents in Latrobe Valley. There has been one meeting on the site in Firmins Lane with all parties involved and further discussions and negotiations will take place in the very near future to talk about the future possibilities that this site will have in collecting domestic asbestos at an affordable price to Latrobe City residents.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING FOR GARDS

The AGM for GARDS will take place on Sunday the 30th of January at 1.00pm at Latrobe Business Centre, 36 – 38 Darlimurla Ave, Newborough. The positions of Vice President, Secretary and one committee member will fall vacant. All nominations welcome. For further details please contact GARDS office. The returning officer for this will be elected at the November GARDS night meeting.

GARDS CHRISTMAS PARTY & BREAK UP

The GARDS Christmas party will be held on Sunday the 5th of December at 12.30pm. The venue will be the GARDS premises. There will be a BBQ lunch, soft drinks, coffee & tea provided by GARDS. Those attending can you please notify us of your attendance for catering purposes by December 1st. It would be appreciated if you could bring a plate of salad or dessert to share. Santa will be making an appearance.



GENEROUS DONATIONS THANK YOU FROM GARDS

GARDS has received donations from the following

Maurice Blackburn & Cashman Lawyers

\$1,500.00

Anonymous Traralgon Gentleman who donated

\$100.00

A pledge from Edison Mission Energy for

\$1,000.00

International Power Hazelwood for

3 great under bench filing cabinets

Thank you for your support without these donations GARDS would not be here.

Remember that any donations to GARDS of \$2 or over are tax deductible

ASBESTOS AWARENESS DAY

GARDS will be conducting its Annual Asbestos Awareness Day on Friday November 26th at 11.00 am. This event will take place in the Morwell Rose Garden. There will be an ecumenical service with invited guest speakers followed by a BYO picnic lunch with family and friends. This day is to highlight the awareness of asbestos in our community and to celebrate the lives of those who have succumb to this deadly disease. Please feel free to come along and join us for this special day.



EAST GIPPSLAND CONSUMER/ CARER GROUP CONFERENCE

On July 21st GARDS was invited to speak on the topic of “what makes a support group work”. This conference was held at Lakes Entrance and was well attended by consumer carer groups and health professionals. Being asked to speak on what makes a support group work was really a great way for the committee to sit back and reflect on just what has made our support group work and why. When we wrote down all the things that a support group must achieve to be successful we were quite surprised at just how much time and effort goes into what we do. I think the people who attended our workshop had a good insight into how support groups operate. It was nice to make some more new friends.

GARDS SPEAKING AT TRARALGON PROBUS

On the 18th of October GARDS was privileged to speak about what services our organisation offers to asbestos sufferers & the general community. Vicki and Lyle were received with a warm welcome and there were approximately 50 people in attendance. We were very pleased to hear that lots of the Probus people were keeping abreast of the asbestos issue on the James Hardie Commission and were aware of the dangers that asbestos is posing in our community. There were a few who mentioned that they had someone affected by this in their family or knew someone who was. We thank Probus for their hospitality.



On page 6 & 7 is one way that you or your family, organisation or company can help Gippsland Rotary Centenary

House. The house was a feature in the April 2004 newsletter. It will provide affordable & temporary accommodation based on the Ronald McDonald house model for families accessing cancer treatment at Latrobe Regional Hospital.

Thank You

GARDS would like to thank our guest speakers who have come over the past few months. Associate Professor Tony LaMontagne & Research assistant Hannah Walker - Melb Uni, Judi Vincent - LV Paramedical Skin Laser Clinic, Peter Attwell - Hazcon Asbestos Laboratory, Catia Sicari - Glaucoma Australia, Peter Gordon - Slater & Gordon

WELCOME TO JANE AT ADSVIC

Jane Staley has been appointed the Business Manager for the Asbestos Diseases Society Victoria. There will now be another shoulder to the wheel. We wish you all the best and look forward to working with you in the future.

RALLY

OUTSIDE THE TELSTRA SHAREHOLDERS' MEETING

9.45 am, Thursday 28th of October

Jeff's Shed (Spencer Street, opposite Casino entrance)

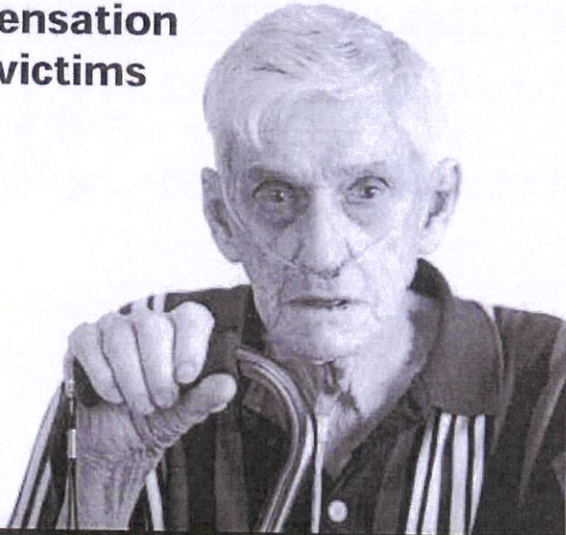
Donald McGauchie is the Telstra Board chairman and a board member of James Hardie Industries. He has been complicit in James Hardie's corporate thuggery, as well as being a proud union buster.

Many Telstra employees have gotten sick as a result of Telstra's use of James Hardie products - and yet the chairman of Telstra made decisions as a board member of James Hardie to keep Hardie's assets in the Netherlands and limit compensation for asbestos victims.

DEMAND McGauchie's resignation
DEMAND full compensation
for James Hardie's victims

**VICTORIAN
TRADES
HALL
COUNCIL**

For more info go to
www.vthc.org.au or
ring 03 9662 3511



MAKE JAMES HARDIE PAY!



GARDS MEMBERS
HELPING TO
LAUNCH THE
MAKE JAMES
HARDIE PAY
CAMPAIGN

PROTESTING ON
THE STEPS OF
PARLIAMENT
HOUSE 8TH OF
SEPTEMBER, 2004



GARDS MEMBERS
ON THE PROTEST
MARCH TO THE
STOCK EXCHANGE

ON THE 15TH OF
SEPTEMBER, 2004



PETER GORDON
FROM SLATER &
GORDON
LAWYERS
BRIEFING THE
GARDS MEETING
ON THE JAMES
HARDIE
COMMISSION ON
THE 22ND OF
SEPTEMBER, 2004

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

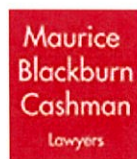


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GARDS WEB SITE ADDRESS
www.gards.org

**Gippsland Asbestos
 Related Diseases
 Support Inc.**

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 Newborough, Vic. 3825

PO Box 111,
 Moe, Vic. 3825

Phone: 51281218
Fax: 51261897

Email: info@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 advice service, and drop-in service at GARDS office.

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.

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

Treasurer:
 Pam Nicholson – Ph. 51275843

Member:
 Dorothy Roberts - 51274174

G.A.R.D.S. FEES

GARDS new members
joining Fee - \$5.00

Annual Subscriptions
 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

*Jan Smart
 HARP Program
 26th of October, 1.30pm*

*Jacinta Opie
 Thoracic Surgery Liaison Nurse
 Austin & Repatriation Medical
 Centre- Heidelberg
 30th of November, 1.30pm*

*Xmas BBQ Party
 5th of December, 12.30pm*

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