



**ASBESTOS VICTIMS ASSOCIATION (SA) INC**  
Established 2000

# Newsletter

**January—February 2020**

**There for our Members whenever or however they need us**

## **PAM SANDYS – retirement after 20 years of service with AVA**

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### **Executive Committee:**

#### **President / Treasurer**

Peter Baxter

#### **Vice President**

Maxine Williams

#### **Office Manager**

Lesley Shears

#### **Committee members**

Gloria Hinks

Doreen Ryan



Pam Sandys has tendered her resignation to AVA after almost 20 years of service – a truly outstanding achievement.

Pam's involvement with AVA began in November 2000 when her late husband, Alan, was diagnosed with asbestosis. The devastating news of a terminal disease was made more distressing as they had never been aware of anything but mesothelioma being associated with asbestos exposure and feared the worst.

She saw a notice in the local Messenger paper about a recently formed group in Salisbury for victims of asbestos-related diseases – this was the foundation of AVA. Pam & Alan were able to access relevant information and emotional support, along with legal advice and recommendation to a local general practitioner who was treating asbestos victims. After Alan's death Pam wanted to give something back to AVA. She has been an essential member of the team since that time.

Pam held the position of Office Manager for AVA all of those 20 years and had direct contact with people from all sectors of life, giving advice and support to those who had been affected in some way through exposure to asbestos. Pam was also an active member of the SA Asbestos Coalition. She has been passionately involved in taking every opportunity for members of the public to be aware of asbestos safety by attending field days, Home Shows and conferences, and representing AVA in Canberra to promote changes in laws regarding dust and asbestos controls.

Thank you, Pam. We will miss your friendly, calming presence, and wish you every happiness in your new home in the country.

## **MEMORIAL DAY 2019**

It takes planning and coordination to hold a successful Memorial Day service. Our thanks go to Mayor Gillian Aldridge and Jenny Henry from Salisbury Council, the Vietnam Vets who make the crosses, Peter Hearn and his sons who lay out the crosses, the Caledonian Pipe Band who perform at the ceremony and to retired Union members who put on the BBQ. We also appreciate the attendance by so many politicians, Federal, State and Local Government and in particular Senator Penny Wong and Tony Zappia MP who caught the 6.30 am flight from Canberra in order to attend the service.

The service gives us all an opportunity to reflect on the loss of our loved ones.

We take from it the strength and determination to keep fighting this battle.



## NEWS FROM THE AVA OFFICE

### Annual General Meeting 22 January 2020

At the Annual General Meeting held on 22 January 2020 the following office holders were elected:

President & Treasurer	Peter Baxter
Vice President	Maxine Williams
Office Manager	Lesley Shears

Peter, Maxine and Lesley will continue to work for you, our members, to provide support and to do whatever we can to help in the ongoing campaign to eliminate asbestos-related disease.

Our new office on the ninth floor is a light filled space with views across the city of Adelaide and we welcome members and others to come in to see us ~ the office is open most mornings Monday to Thursday. You can phone first to confirm on **0455 120 588**.

In December we welcomed visitors from Perth: PhD students from the National Centre for Asbestos Related Disease, who were visiting Adelaide to attend a conference.

Left to right: Maxine Williams, Joel Kidman, Gloria Hinks, Nicola Principe, Caitlin Tilsted & Pete Baxter.



### National Centre for Asbestos Related Diseases (NCARD)

The National Centre for Asbestos Related Diseases is located in the Harry Perkins Institute of Medical Research in Perth, within the Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital. It is part of the University of Western

Australia. We were fortunate to have a tour around the NCARD laboratories whilst visiting Perth for the National Conference.



In addition to Professors Jenette Creaney, Bruce Robinson, Gary Lee and Anna Nowak, there are several Masters students and ten PhD graduate students engaged in different lines of research on asbestos related diseases, as well as other lung conditions: cystic fibrosis, asthma, COPD and lung cancer. The graduate students come from Mexico, Syria, the UK, Singapore, Malaysia, Cambodia, Canada, Iran and Western Australia. This keen and energetic meeting of minds offers great hope for the future.

Left to right: Tracey Hayward, Maxine Williams (AVA), Caitlin Tilsted, Lesley Shears (AVA), Nicola Principe.

NCARD has been studying Wittenoom workers and ex-residents since the 1970s – approximately 12,000 people. Almost 5,000 people have been screened and about 1,500 are still followed up annually. Research based on this data has changed the understanding of asbestos related disease. NCARD has created a biobank of patient samples to facilitate research aimed at delivering improved clinical outcomes to people of Western Australia and around the world.

Research is the only way to find new treatments and cures for lung disease.

NCARD is a non-government, not-for-profit organisation, which relies on the generosity of the community, corporate organisations and foundations to continue to deliver life-changing research.

To find out more about NCARD, check out their website <https://www.resphealth.org.au/>



## 2019 National Asbestos Conference – Perth Convention Centre, November 2019

The 2019 Asbestos Safety Conference was held in November 2019 at the Perth Convention & Exhibition Centre, located on the waterfront in Perth. Three of our volunteers attended.

The conference welcomed more than 250 domestic and international professionals from a range of sectors including work health & safety, public health, local government and the environment.

Conference delegates heard from international and local industry experts throughout the three-day programme. A highlight was the official launch of the Australian Government's National Strategic Plan for Asbestos Awareness and Management 2019-23 (the NSP). Delegates had the opportunity to focus on Australia's NSP and the important roles and responsibilities all members of the asbestos management system have in working together toward preventing exposure to asbestos fibres in order to eliminate asbestos related diseases.

The three-day programme also included a Summer Garden Social Event which provided valuable networking opportunities for delegates, and a trade show exhibition featuring 14 exhibitors displaying a range of practices, products and services from across the industry.

AVA volunteers at the conference were impressed with the speakers and presentations - a great way for us to increase our knowledge.



### Support Groups around Australia ~ pictured above at the conference in Perth

The Asbestos Safety Conference in Perth in November 2019 provided a valuable opportunity for the various asbestos support groups from all around Australia to meet up face to face to exchange news and make plans for 2020. It is heartening to know we are not on our own in this battle. AVA volunteers met with representatives from ACV GARDS ( Gippsland Asbestos Related Diseases Support Inc), ADRI (Asbestos Diseases Research Institute), ADSA (Asbestos Diseases Society of Australia), ADSSA (Asbestos Diseases Society of SA), AFT (Asbestos Free Tasmania), AMAA (Asbestosis & Mesothelioma Assn of Australia) and the Reflections through Reality Foundation. These groups have regular teleconferences but it is so much better to meet in person.

### Senator Rex Patrick

It was a very special day for Catherine Wegener when she took a seat in the Senate Chamber in Parliament House, Canberra, to hear Senator Rex Patrick share her husband's story. Rex Wegener was exposed to asbestos during his working life as a carpenter, which led to a diagnosis of mesothelioma.

Catherine said it was a very moving experience to witness her husband's story being presented by Senator Patrick and she hoped it would raise further awareness about the risks associated with asbestos.

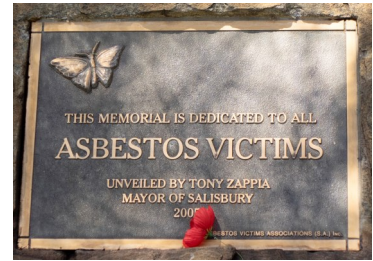
Since losing Rex in 2017, Catherine has been actively involved with AVA and is AVA's representative on the Fleurieu.



Left to right: Lesley Shears, Senator Rex Patrick, Catherine Wegener

## Diary dates

**Asbestos Victims Memorial Day**  
**DATE: Friday 27 November 2020**  
**VENUE: Pitman Park SALISBURY**



AVA will be represented at the following events:

Angaston Show—Saturday 29 February 2020

International Mesothelioma Interest Group—25-28 March 2020

Port Augusta Probus 3 June 2020

Building & Home Improvement Show—3-5 July 2020

Gawler Show—28-30 August 2020

Goolwa Probus—14 September 2020

### Bunnings Reynella – 14 December 2019



We would like to express our appreciation to Bunnings for inviting AVA to be part of the Reynella store opening in December. It was a busy night for us with lots of questions on asbestos awareness and general interest on asbestos related matters. It was also a great success for Bunnings, with many people attending. As with all Bunnings stores, it is a well laid out warehouse and has plenty of room to move about and be able to display a lot of products. A big "thank you" again from AVA.

We also acknowledge the contribution made to the SA Asbestos Coalition by Morris Lamacchia, Bunnings Marketing Manager.

### Your social mornings on the 9th floor - remember you are not alone.



All members are welcome to drop in and see us on the second Wednesday of each month from 10 am onwards. Call in and see our new premises.

**2020 dates:** 12 February, 11 March, 8 April, 13 May, 10 June, 8 July, 12 August, 9 September, 14 October, 11 November, 9 December

### AVA THANKS THE FOLLOWING MAJOR SPONSORS & SUPPORTERS

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### PATRONS

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