The ParaQuad NSW Story

Celebrating 50 Years

ParaQuad
Paraplegic & Quadriplegic Association of NSW

supporting *life choices* after spinal cord injury

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From the Founder

Dr John M F Grant AO OBE, Founder
(Courtesy Grant family album)

Major international conflicts are often associated with dramatic changes to many facets of society. World War II was no exception. It resulted in progress in many areas. The practice of medicine was one area where there were significant advances in the understanding of both medical and surgical problems and this resulted in a rapid progress in many areas of treatment.

Sir Ludwig Guttmann, who established the Spinal Injuries Centre at Stoke Mandeville in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire in England, was responsible for a major step forward in the care of people with spinal injuries. The Centre was created to cope with the casualties expected from the landing in Normandy during World War II.

Guttmann was a neurosurgeon and he changed the philosophy around the care of these severely injured people from one of hopelessness in those cases where life expectancy was but a few years to one of hope for a positive future. He based his treatment on an understanding of the alterations of function of the spinal cord that result from injury.

I was significantly influenced by Guttmann's writings when I was involved in the establishment of a Neurosurgical Unit at the Royal North Shore Hospital. Guttmann had written extensively on the medical history of World War II where he outlined his concepts in detail.

Once the Unit was established it was soon very obvious that there was a need to extend the type of medical and surgical services that we were providing. We needed to establish an area for treatment of spinal injuries that not only covered the initial care but also initiated rehabilitation in hospital. As a result, the Convalescent Ward of the hospital was converted into a Spinal Injuries Unit, staffed by nurses who were prepared to follow the dictates of the necessary care these patients required.

It soon became obvious that work of the nursing services and the paramedical services were to result in an alteration in the previous attitude to spinal injury casualties. While the hospital area could cope with the medical and surgical needs of these patients, the total rehabilitation of a person with a spinal injury required a mechanism that could introduce and make use of the scientific advances in other areas. Without such advances people with spinal injuries could not have overcome the physical disabilities preventing them from returning to society as active members and re-establishing their association with nature itself. In addition, the members of the Spinal Injuries Unit saw the need to develop a support system for people after their discharge from hospital and thereby prevent the occurrence of the well-known complications associated with loss of spinal cord function. Those who were involved in this venture were well aware of the fact that we were facing both sociological and economical challenges that needed to be overcome. It was for these reasons that members of the Unit decided to establish the Paraplegic Association of NSW.

The raison d'etre of the Association was to encourage the NSW Government to develop and to extend the Spinal Injuries Unit at Royal North Shore Hospital and to work towards the provision of accommodation facilities for those who were unable to return to their own home.

The Spinal Injuries Unit at Royal North Shore Hospital had already established a friendly and close relationship with Government. We had frequent discussions and visits by the Minister for Health and we were able to establish a close relationship with the NSW Health Commission. Hence, from the very outset, the Association received recognition from many levels of Government.

The Unit recognised the value of sport and its importance in our daily lives. The Annual North Shore Spinal Games began as a part of the rehabilitation program and introduced the general public to sport for the disabled. The Association when initially established was involved in promotion of sport for people with a disability both at a state and national level, and developed close links with organisations in other states. In 1971 the Association's name changed to Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association of NSW.

The Board of the Association is made up of dedicated people who have a wide range of expertise. They can, I believe, justifiably claim to have held to the design and purposes of those who founded it. There is now no question that the Association forms an integral part of our society.

Dr John M F Grant AO OBE
Consultant Neurosurgeon and Founder of ParaQuad NSW

From the Chairman

Wendy Potter, Chairman

Fifty years, what a great achievement! When I think back to the humble beginnings of ParaQuad NSW, I think we have done remarkably well to be in the position we are in today, as the leading spinal injury organisation in NSW.

For the past eight years I have had the privilege of serving on the Board of ParaQuad NSW, and in November 2004 had the honour of being chosen as the first woman in a wheelchair to be appointed Chairman of the Board.

During this time I have seen many changes throughout the Association and am aware of many other changes prior to my time on the Board. This book is a record of some of the events in the Association's history, and captures the essence of its past and the great work it has done in supporting people with spinal cord injury.

In recent years the Board and I have focused on improving the governance processes of the Board; proper planning for the future of the organisation; and overseeing the Ferguson Lodge redevelopment project, which the Board and I believe will be the benchmark for accommodation services in NSW.

Five years ago, the Board appointed our current CEO Max Bosotti who has been instrumental in leading ParaQuad NSW in today's competitive environment into what is now an even more highly respected and professional organisation. ParaQuad's brand name, and now our commercial arm, BrightSky Australia, has become more widely known and respected not only in the disability sector but also within the corporate sector.

In remembering our humble beginnings, credit must go to those who went before us, the ones who had the foresight all those years ago that an organisation such as ParaQuad NSW was needed in the community. Former Presidents of the Board and the Board Directors who gave up their time voluntarily, the Management and staff, all of these people deserve our recognition and thanks.

I personally am very proud of what has been achieved over the past 50 years. Today ParaQuad NSW is an ever-expanding organisation, one that provides a quality service to our members and clients, one that provides first class accommodation facilities for people with spinal injury, and one that treats all people with dignity and respect. This has only been achieved through the support of our members and the wonderful work and dedication of our staff led by the CEO and General Managers, and by the Board, who generously give of their time to make us the organisation we are today.

Wendy A. Potter
Chairman (2004-present)

From the Chief Executive Officer

Max Bosotti, CEO

Some years ago when I was approached to consider taking up the role of CEO for ParaQuad NSW I must confess I knew very little about paraplegia or quadriplegia and even less about the daily trials experienced by people with this disability and their carers. In considering the role, I did some research on spinal cord injury, ParaQuad NSW and the disability sector generally. What I discovered astounded me.

I was particularly impacted by the number of stories about parents of adults with a disability, mostly sons, all with much the same desperate request, pleading for help as they could no longer look after their children. Alfred's mother's predicament was one that stood out because she was 87 and her husband was 89! Like many others she was rightfully concerned about where her child was going to live and be looked after once she and her husband were gone, or at least not physically able to continue caring for their child. Alfred, too, had the right to appropriate care.

This insight into the situation of carers and the obvious lack of supported accommodation for people with spinal cord injury, together with a better understanding of what it was that ParaQuad NSW was doing to help alleviate this, really made up my mind to accept the position of CEO should it be offered.

To this day I am extremely grateful to have been given the privilege as CEO of ParaQuad NSW to help improve the lives of people with spinal cord injury. The most rewarding part of my role is knowing that our work has supported a large number of people through the Community Services Team, and being able to use my business expertise to develop our commercial operations, the Mobility and Functional Services contract and our health products business BrightSky Australia, in order to fund this important work.

In the coming years the issue of supported accommodation will be, among many challenges, the most pressing issue the disability sector will face. While we have finally accomplished the rebuilding of Ferguson Lodge, more supported accommodation is required in NSW, particularly in the north of the State, and we have plans to be involved in filling this gap.

This history is about ParaQuad NSW, not only its achievements and objectives but about the people who have made us what we are. It's about their commitment to establish the organisation, the expansion into new areas in order to secure funds to deliver new services, and the overall vision and drive of these early founders and supporters. I think they would look with some pride as I do today at what we have achieved, because what we are today is largely due to the vision and perseverance of our founding fathers, our Boards and the many dedicated employees.

I am especially proud to have had the opportunity of meeting both Dr John Grant AO OBE and Bob Duncan on many occasions and wish to acknowledge and thank them most sincerely for their invaluable contribution to ParaQuad NSW. It's not often in the 50-year history of an organisation that one can say, "I'm only the fourth CEO!" It's a great testimony to their long years of outstanding service and determination.

Max Bosotti
CEO (2006-present)

Overview

This is the story about ParaQuad NSW, an Association that has worked tirelessly to support people with spinal cord injury over the past 50 years.

The ParaQuad NSW Story celebrates the Association's key achievements and remembers some of the people and the events that helped make it successful. This book is offered as a special keepsake, an opportunity for reminiscing, and a reminder of a job well done.

Primarily the ParaQuad NSW story is about people – those who believed in a cause. Friends and colleagues, able-bodied people working alongside wheelchair users, all with the one key mission: to improve the lives of people with spinal cord injury.

The environment in which the Association was formed was very different to today. Fifty years ago people who sustained a severe spinal cord injury had reduced life expectancy, and those who survived their injury had essentially no support services and limited accommodation options.

People with disabilities were considered the responsibility of their families, and they received no Government support. Assistance was available only through voluntary groups and charitable organisations, however there were no organisations in NSW that specifically represented the needs of adults with spinal cord injury.

To redress this imbalance, in 1961 medical professionals led by Dr John Grant AO OBE established the Paraplegic Association of NSW. Its primary goals were to institute specialised spinal injury units in hospitals, and to provide purpose-built accommodation for those who were unable to live at home.

However, as there were few points of reference for wheelchair users at the time, it quickly became apparent that the Association could offer much more in the way of services and resources.

To this effect, the Association developed a personal health care products co-op, whereby members could purchase equipment at reasonable cost that would otherwise only be available from hospitals. The Association provided wheelchair repairs and car modifications, as well as driving lessons, and was a key player in the development of wheelchair sports. It was also one of the early equal opportunity employers in Australia.

Importantly, the Association provided a sense of community for people with spinal cord injury, offering information and advice, and it was a key advocate for its members in NSW.

In 1971 the Association changed its name to the Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association of NSW and became known as ParaQuad NSW. By the end of the 1970s, it had established the first purpose-built accommodation facility for people with spinal cord injury in NSW at Lidcombe, and had opened a branch at Newcastle.

The Association was supported to a large extent by field collections, the Silver Wheel Committee and other auxiliary committees, the Quest of Nations and the Golden Stave Foundation, as well as telethons, benefactors and some Government grants.

With the International Year of Disabled Persons in 1981 and the Commonwealth Disability Services Act 1986 and related legislation, the state-of-play changed significantly. People with disabilities were now on the agenda, there were new funding initiatives, and ParaQuad NSW expanded rapidly.

A key paradigm shift meant that people with disabilities were now being supported to live independently within the community, and ParaQuad NSW became a provider of personal care staff.

The Association created a Community Services Division in order to assist independent living, and employed allied health professionals and people with spinal cord injury to provide professional advice and peer support.

By the 1990s ParaQuad NSW had established transitional accommodation at Berala and had acquired transitional accommodation at Newcastle.

Its personal equipment supply co-op had become a business venture, known as Personal Equipment and Continence Supplies (PECS), winning the Commonwealth's Continence Aids Assistance Scheme (CAAS) contract for NSW/ACT in 1992. This meant that the Association was now providing product to anyone with continence issues, not just to people with spinal cord injury.

The new millennium brought significant changes to the Association, particularly in its governance and management. Now embracing the disability model, for the first time in its history a Director in a wheelchair was elected President, and the Board had a majority of Directors in wheelchairs.

In 2003 ParaQuad NSW moved into its first purpose-built office and warehouse facilities at Newington in order to consolidate its operations under one roof.

However the new millennium also brought difficult financial times as the Association moved to become more corporatised, while at the same time losing its CAAS contract and a significant amount of revenue. The Association was forced to streamline services and then looked to expand its commercial operations, in order to secure new sources of funding.

Commercial success came in 2004 when it was contracted by the Department of Veterans' Affairs to supply mobility and functional support equipment to veterans in NSW, creating a Mobility and Functional Support (MFS) commercial arm.

During this time ParaQuad NSW redesigned its original PECS operation and merged it into a joint venture trading as Independence Solutions, and in 2005 the joint venture won a contract with the Department of Veterans' Affairs to supply returned service men and women with continence products.

After withdrawing from the joint venture in 2007, ParaQuad NSW developed its own new personal equipment supply operation, known as BrightSky Australia. Brightsky and its associated webstore, clinical support and clinical education unit was formally launched in 2008. Since then, BrightSky has become a leader in the supply of specialist consumable health care products.

Into the new millennium ParaQuad NSW has continued to represent the needs of people with spinal cord injury at all levels of Government, influencing decision makers and policy initiatives.

While nowadays many people with spinal cord injury are able to navigate successful lives with the range of services available, ParaQuad NSW continues to provide assistance to those who need particular support.

As ParaQuad NSW continues to grow, working effectively with other organisations will be increasingly important, while fundraising and profitable commercial functions will underpin its ability to provide services in the long-term. To this effect, the MFS arm recently expanded by entering into a national contract with the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

Having cemented its place as a key resource and service provider, as well as a strong advocacy body, today ParaQuad NSW is the largest not-for-profit organisation for people with spinal cord injury, and one of the biggest providers of in-home personal care services, in the State.

Fifty years and going strong, ParaQuad NSW is to be congratulated.

The Early Years

1961–1980

Environment

Fifty years ago people with tetraplegia (quadriplegia) had markedly reduced life expectancy, as specialised high-level care was severely limited, and those who lived beyond a few years were usually people with paraplegia.

People who were lucky enough to leave hospital would face the challenge of where to live. Without services provided to assist them in the community, people with high-level spinal cord injury were reliant on their families and friends for support.

Those who were unable to live at home were often sent to aged care facilities or an institution for people with disabilities, or to Ward 43 at Lidcombe Hospital.

Many would be discharged from hospital only to return soon after presenting with severe and life-threatening clinical complications, commonly respiratory problems, pressure areas, and kidney or bladder infections, due to a lack of appropriate health care in the community.

Aside from the medical issues, people with spinal cord injury had to navigate a world made for able-bodied people. Public transport and public buildings had not yet been modified for wheelchair accessibility, employment opportunities were limited, and technology was yet to create the aids to living that we see today.

People with spinal cord injury were institutionalised and discriminated against. There was a lack of understanding about their needs, and the infrastructure to support them simply did not exist.

Disability services were restricted to the medical model, in which services were driven primarily by health needs and often directed by medical professionals, while people with disabilities were seen as passive recipients of care and they had very little input into the services they received.

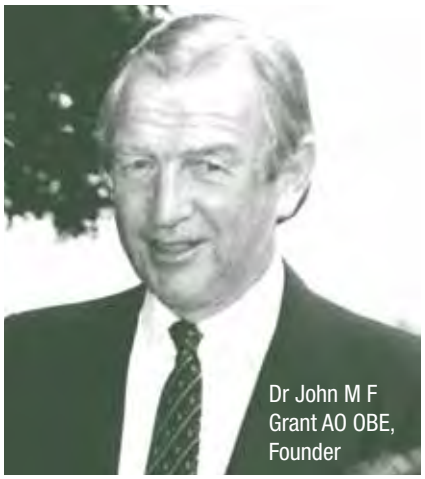
It would take until the 1970s before the Commonwealth Government began to provide funding through the Handicapped Persons Assistance Act 1974. However, this legislation was primarily limited to grants for residential accommodation and sheltered employment.

It was in this context that Dr John Grant AO OBE, one of Australia's most eminent and respected neurosurgeons, led a movement for change in NSW.

The Paraplegic Association of NSW

Straddling neurosurgery and spinal cord injuries, Dr Grant was well aware of the specialised nature of paraplegia and quadriplegia. Appointed to the Department of Neurosurgery at Royal North Shore Hospital (RNSH) in 1958, he was somewhat of a visionary and a pioneer.

At the time there was no significant spinal injury service at the hospital or even in the whole of NSW, and Dr Grant was very much influenced by the work of Sir Ludwig Guttmann, who established the Spinal Injuries Centre at Stoke Mandeville in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, in England.



Dr John M F Grant AO OBE, Founder

As a result, Dr Grant and his team set about developing the spinal injuries aspect of their work. Taking over and filling the entire convalescence section of RNSH, the amount of work they generated led the hospital to recognise it as a Spinal Injuries Unit.

Once they had developed the Unit and had instituted all the accepted methods of care, the recurrent issue was that people would leave hospital and have nowhere to go, or go home where there were no services provided.

For Dr Grant and his team, it was apparent that services outside of the hospital environment were required. However, they needed to create a mechanism for change – and that mechanism was the Paraplegic Association of NSW.

The Association began in 1960 with the drawing up of Memorandum and Articles of Association, in accordance with the Companies Act 1936, by Dr Grant, Jan Benn (head physiotherapist at RNSH), Jean MacLeod (occupational therapist at RNSH), Jack McVey (spinal injured casualty) and Dr Naomi Wing from Royal South Sydney Hospital, plus John "Jack" Ferguson (Member of NSW Parliament and Member of RNSH Board) who took up the position of Chairman.

Seven signatures were obtained to support the Memorandum of Association, the original members, two of whom were wheelchair users, prior to soliciting support from the public at a meeting in Chatswood Shopping Centre, as public agreement was a necessary legal requirement.

This enabled the Association to be granted a License for registration under the Companies Act 1936. The License was signed by then Governor of NSW, Sir Eric Woodward, on 1 March 1961. Sir Eric Woodward, an Australian Military officer and the 31st Governor of NSW, became the first Patron of the Association, and this relationship between the Governor of NSW and the Association has continued through to the present day.

Its statutory obligations met, the Paraplegic Association of NSW was incorporated on 13 March 1961. The key goals of the Association were primarily to lobby for specialised Spinal Injuries Units, and to establish accommodation facilities for people with severe spinal cord injury who were unable to return home.

The Association benefited from key supporters in the NSW Health Commission, in particular Dr Hal Selle (Chairman of NSW Health and a former associate of Dr Grant), and Dr David Storey (Deputy Head of the NSW Health Commission). With their assistance, the Association received recognition from the NSW Government, as well as a significant grant.

The grant provided the financial impetus that the Association needed, allowing it to recruit a paid Secretary, albeit a part-time position, to implement key initiatives.

WE, the several persons whose names addresses, and descriptions are subscribed hereunder are desirous of being formed into an Association in pursuance of this Memorandum of Association.

Names	Addresses	Descriptions
May Keith Lamberton	N Royal North Shore Hospital Crows Nest	Trained Nurse
Jean Dunlop MacLeod	2/20 McDougall St Milsons Point	Occupational Therapist.
Myra Seavers.	66 Catherine St. Punchbowl.	Teacher.
Janet Grace Benn.	1158 Barrenjoey Rd. Palm Beach	Physiotherapist
Amey Ida Bromley.	1158, Barrenjoey Rd, Palm Beach.	Physiotherapist.
Harold Squires	53 Harrington St Marrickville	Clerk
Jack Williamson McVey.	22 Traine Rde Avalon Beach	Retired Teacher

DATED the twenty-first day of December 1960

WITNESS to the above signatures.

(Rev.) Chas Wheeler.

9. Methodist Minister

35. Marine Parade, Avalon Beach. N.S.W

The original seven members of the Association who supported the Memorandum of Association on 21 December 1960. They were May Keith Lamberton (Trained Nurse), Jean Dunlop MacLeod (Occupational Therapist), Myra Seavers (Teacher), Janette Grace Benn (Physiotherapist), Amey Ida Bromley (Physiotherapist), Harold Squires (Clerk), and Jack Williamson McVey (Retired Teacher). The signatures were witnessed by Rev. Chas Wheeler (Methodist Minister).

NEW SOUTH WALES,
TO WIT.

LICENSE

WHEREAS it hath been proved to the satisfaction of me, the Governor, and of the Executive Council of the State of New South Wales that

"THE PARAPLEGIC ASSOCIATION OF N.S.W."

which is about to be registered under the Companies Act, 1936, as amended by subsequent Acts, as a Company limited by guarantee, is formed for the purpose of promoting objects of the nature contemplated by the thirty-fourth section of the aforesaid Act, and that it is the intention of the said Association that the income and property of the Association whencesoever derived shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the objects of the Association, as set forth in its Memorandum of Association, and that no portion thereof shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly by way of dividend, bonus or otherwise howsoever by way of profit to the Members of the Association, and that there is no other Association with similar objects of which the members of the proposed Company might become members upon reasonable terms and conditions: NOW, THEREFORE, I, the Governor, by and with the advice of the said Executive Council, in pursuance of the powers vested in me by the said thirty-fourth section of the Companies Act, 1936, as amended by subsequent Acts and of any other powers thereunto enabling, and in consideration of the provisions and subject to the conditions contained in the Memorandum of Association of the said Association as subscribed by seven members thereof on the 21st December, 1960, do by this License direct

"THE PARAPLEGIC ASSOCIATION OF N.S.W."

to be registered with limited liability without the addition of the word "limited" to its name.

SIGNED at Sydney, this first day of March, one thousand nine hundred and sixty-one.

Governor.

8773 6.60

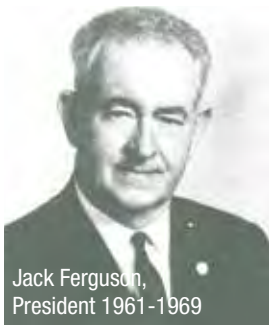
Governance and Management

President and Council of Management

In the early years the Association was very much in unchartered waters, and the enthusiasm, professionalism and resourcefulness of its Directors played a key role in its development.

The Association's original Memorandum and Articles of Association provided for a Council of Management of 16 Directors in addition to a Secretary. The Directors and the key positions of President, Treasurer and up to two Vice Presidents were to be elected by the members on an annual basis, and the Council of Management was to meet monthly. The Council of Management also formed various Sub Committees to manage different initiatives.

From its formation the Council of Management was largely comprised of medical professionals and other influential people who operated in a voluntary capacity, many of whom made enormous contributions to the field of spinal cord injuries.


Jack Ferguson, President 1961-1969

The first President, John "Jack" Ferguson, had been active in the union movement, a Member of NSW Parliament from 1940, President of the State branch of the ALP from 1947, and President of the Federal ALP from 1950. In 1952 he resigned from all union and parliamentary positions to become Chairman of the Milk Board, and he was a Director of RNSH from 1959 to 1969, where he met Dr Grant.

With a working class background and a strong commitment to fighting for the rights of the underprivileged, Mr Ferguson's support for the disabled through the Association was a natural convergence. His expertise in political matters played a crucial role in the development of the Association and its long-term direction. Active until his death in 1969, Mr Ferguson was sorely missed.

Dr Grant was then elected President and remained in that capacity for more than 30 years. Dr Grant was instrumental in gaining the support of NSW and Federal politicians for the Association's initiatives, and he was able to promote the Association throughout his networks in the business world. Providing strong leadership and a clear vision, he not only founded the Association, but he would be a key player in its development over almost four decades.

Kevin Betts AO was appointed to the Council of Management very early on. Mr Betts worked as a physical therapist at Mt Wilga Rehabilitation Centre, and had a particular interest in sports, and assisting spinally injured patients to participate in sports. Having adopted Sir Ludwig Guttmann's philosophy of rehabilitation through sport, Mr Betts was Chairman of the Association's Sports Sub Committee for many years.

Kevin Betts AO (Courtesy Wheelchair Sports NSW)

John Quick, Director 1965-1988

John Quick was elected to the Council of Management in 1965. He brought with him a wealth of knowledge drawn from varied experience, which included service as an Australian Military officer, and he was appointed Vice President as well as Chairman of the Finance Committee. Later on, his experience as Chairman of Chatswood District Community Hospital made him the obvious choice for the position of Chairman of the Ferguson Lodge Management Committee.

While serving on the Association's Council of Management, Mr Quick was also a Board member of the Guide Dogs Association of NSW; Chairman of the Regional Committee for Placement and Review of Intellectually Handicapped Children; and a Lay Preacher of the Methodist and Uniting Church. His services to the community were recognised

through a Citizen of the Year award, which he received from Willoughby Council in 1979. Mr Quick resigned from the Association's Board in 1988.

Fred Kaad OBE, a distinguished senior Australian Government official, joined the Association in 1965 and became a Director in 1966. In 1975 he was elected Vice President, serving in that role until retirement in 1998.

Dr John Yeo AO (Courtesy Wheelchair Sports NSW)

Dr John Yeo AO became a Director in 1966. A spinal specialist and Medical Director of the Spinal Injuries Unit at RNSH from 1968 to 1992, he was instrumental in lobbying Government to formalise and support Spinal Injuries Units. Dr Yeo helped Dr Grant establish the RNSH Games and was very involved in the development of wheelchair sports. He also founded the Spinesafe Education Program for school-aged children and helped revolutionise the care of spinal patients in rehabilitation.

Neville Kidd was appointed to the Council of Management in 1967 and contributed 24 years of diligent service until retiring in 1991. With a background in accounting and finance, and a qualified barrister, Mr Kidd had served in the Second Australian Imperial Force between 1942 and 1946. Like all the Directors, he was well respected by all the members.

Frank Coyne OAM, Director 1968-1998

Francis "Frank" Coyne OAM became acquainted with the Association when a friend of his met with an accident and became paraplegic. A Director from 1968 to 1998, he was a qualified accountant and a Senior Manager with Suttons Motors. He had previously served in the Royal Australian Air Force in the South Pacific, and later was Chairman of the Sydney Legacy Appeals Committee.

Mr Coyne was also a licensed real estate agent and, through his expertise, navigated key property transactions and provided practical business advice. Dr Grant's right-hand man, Mr Coyne was Treasurer and Vice President for many years.

These and the other Directors who served the Association in the early years were not just part of a governing body, but they were very much interested in involving themselves with the Association, its people and activities. In addition, all of the Board members' wives supported the Association in some capacity, either with fundraising or simply by attending events with their husbands, and together they created a strong sense of community.

According to John Trefry, who began working for the Association in 1967, the Directors were very much part of the organisation. "The Directors weren't just a group of figureheads; they were hands-on people," said Mr Trefry. "They would stop and have a chat when their meetings were on, and you could get to know them. They would attend all the fundraisers and events. In a lot of organisations the Directors are a group of silent figures, but we were lucky because they were very much involved in everything we did."

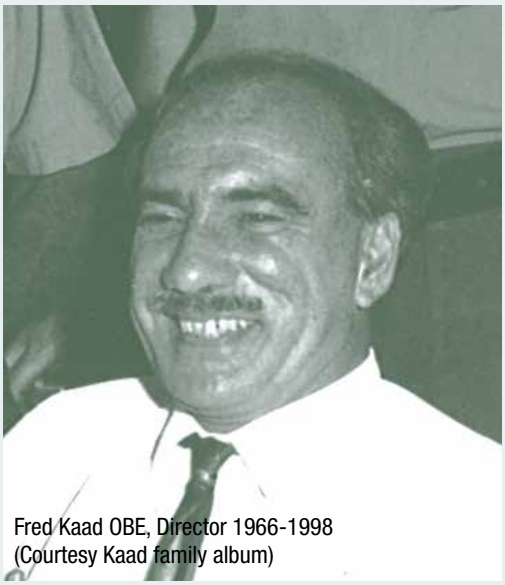
In May 1977, the Council of Management became known as the Board of Directors, or the Board. This was one of a series of resolutions about naming and procedures passed at the Extraordinary General Meeting held in March 1977, bringing the Association into line with relevant legislation.

"The Directors weren't just a group of figureheads; they were hands-on people." – John Trefry, Staff Member 1967-2009

The People

Fred Kaad OBE

Fred Kaad OBE had been a District Commissioner with the Australian Government working in Papua New Guinea at the time of his accident, a plane crash that killed the pilot and left him paraplegic with third degree burns to his legs.



Fred Kaad OBE, Director 1966-1998
(Courtesy Kaad family album)

Transferred to RNSH Spinal Injuries Unit in 1964, Mr Kaad met Dr Grant who told him about the Paraplegic Association of NSW. After being discharged from hospital in 1965, Mr Kaad was invited to become a Director of the Association in 1966.

In his professional life, Mr Kaad continued to work for the Government and completed a Masters in Educational Administration at The University of New England, and became a Lecturer at the Australian School of Pacific Administration (which later became the International Training Institute) at Mosman.

Through the Association, Mr Kaad was active in representing the needs of people with spinal cord injury, joining the President and Secretary to meet with politicians at Parliament House in Canberra, and representing the Association on numerous NSW Government committees.

From 1975 Mr Kaad served as Vice President and during the 1970s he spearheaded fundraising for Ferguson Lodge, the first purpose-built accommodation for people with spinal cord injury in NSW, delivering an address at its opening in 1979.

Mr Kaad was also involved in wheelchair sports and supported Wheelchair Sports NSW after it broke away from the Association. His interest in sports stemmed from his own background in athletics, having been the Australian hurdle champion representing Australia at the Empire Games in 1938.

Mr Kaad with Gaynor, one of his three daughters, c1971 (Courtesy Kaad family album)

Serving on the Board until 1998, Mr Kaad amassed 32 years of voluntary service and is one of only seven Life Members of the Association.

About his involvement with the Association, Mr Kaad simply said, “I’m very glad to have been involved. It was an exciting thing.”

GOVERNANCE IN 1962

SECRETARY:
A.A. Coops*

PRESIDENT:
J.A. Ferguson

HONORARY VICE PRESIDENT:
Dr L. Guttmann

VICE PRESIDENTS:
K.A. Tweedy and B.O. Thwaite*

HONORARY TREASURER:
Mr. C.A.G. Gaskin

COUNCIL OF MANAGEMENT:
Prof D.G. Benjafield*, C. Bentley, K.F. Betts, Dr J.M.F. Grant, Dr J.A. Paul, Mr. H. Squires*

GOVERNANCE IN 1971

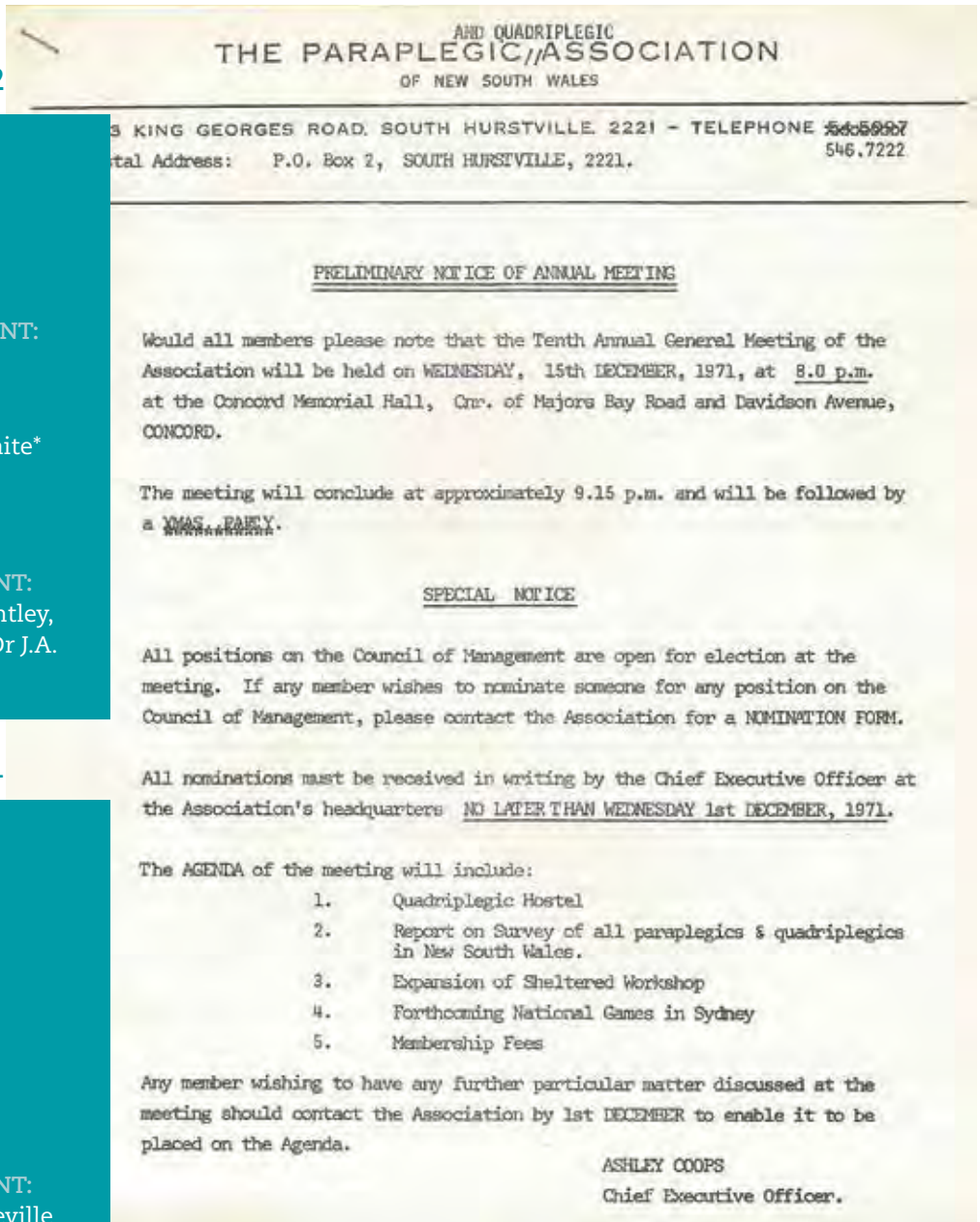
SECRETARY:
Ashley Coops*

PRESIDENT:
Dr John Grant

VICE PRESIDENT:
John Quick

HONORARY TREASURER:
Frank Coyne

COUNCIL OF MANAGEMENT:
Kevin Betts, Fred Kaad*, Neville Kidd, David Plomley, Dr John Yeo



AND QUADRIPLEGIC
THE PARAPLEGIC ASSOCIATION
OF NEW SOUTH WALES

S KING GEORGES ROAD, SOUTH HURSTVILLE 2221 - TELEPHONE ~~5[illegible]~~ 546.7222
tal Address: P.O. Box 2, SOUTH HURSTVILLE, 2221.

PRELIMINARY NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

Would all members please note that the Tenth Annual General Meeting of the Association will be held on WEDNESDAY, 15th DECEMBER, 1971, at 8.0 p.m. at the Concord Memorial Hall, Cnr. of Majors Bay Road and Davidson Avenue, CONCORD.

The meeting will conclude at approximately 9.15 p.m. and will be followed by a XMAS PARTY.

SPECIAL NOTICE

All positions on the Council of Management are open for election at the meeting. If any member wishes to nominate someone for any position on the Council of Management, please contact the Association for a NOMINATION FORM.

All nominations must be received in writing by the Chief Executive Officer at the Association's headquarters NO LATER THAN WEDNESDAY 1st DECEMBER, 1971.

The AGENDA of the meeting will include:

1. Quadriplegic Hostel
2. Report on Survey of all paraplegics & quadriplegics in New South Wales.
3. Expansion of Sheltered Workshop
4. Forthcoming National Games in Sydney
5. Membership Fees

Any member wishing to have any further particular matter discussed at the meeting should contact the Association by 1st DECEMBER to enable it to be placed on the Agenda.

ASHLEY COOPS
Chief Executive Officer.

* Denotes a wheelchair user

Secretary

Ashley Coops, Secretary 1961-1983

When looking for someone to assist in managing the Association, Dr Grant heard about Ashley Coops, paraplegic as a result of polio and active in the Poliomyelitis Association. Mr Coops was amenable to the idea of becoming involved, and became the Association's first Secretary, working in a part-time capacity.

Mr Coops was a strong supporter of equal rights and opportunities for people with disabilities. A wheelchair user, he loved driving his car and captaining his small fishing boat, and was vocal about people with disabilities learning to drive.

With Mr Coops' involvement the Association began to advance. Mr Coops was well respected within the local business and service communities, and he was able to make useful connections. He also offered skilled campaign experience and provided the first headquarters for the Association at his shopfront in South Hurstville.

Membership

In the early years, the membership was small but very active. Many participated in the Association's fundraising activities as volunteers and many others supported its events.

The original membership fee was the sum of one pound one shilling. When decimal currency was introduced, members paid an annual fee of $1, which was increased to $2 in 1972 and to $5 a few years later. People signed up for membership primarily to receive their personal care supplies at discounted prices and National Health Scheme items for free.

In order to establish the characteristics of its membership and determine whether the special needs of its membership were being met, the Association undertook a survey of members in 1969/1970.

In 1969 there were 500 members, and by 1977 this figure had reached 2,000.

Headquarters

Like most grassroots organisations, the Association originally worked from humble premises. The first headquarters of the Paraplegic Association of NSW was an office at the rear of Mr Coops' electrical appliance and service centre at 831 King Georges Road, South Hurstville.

By 1966, due to a degree of lobbying and political goodwill, the Association had procured a grant from the NSW Government that had allowed it to purchase the property next door, at 833 King Georges Road South Hurstville, and it had moved its headquarters there.

In 1970 the Association purchased a second property behind the first, at 2 The Mall South Hurstville. This was achieved through continued fundraising efforts, and with the help of Dr Grant and Mr Ferguson, who guaranteed the loan.

South Hurstville headquarters

Owning its own office space was a significant achievement, providing a facility that clients could visit in the building at the front, and allowing for an expansion of work, particularly its sheltered workshop and personal equipment supply services, which operated from the house at the back. It also meant that it would never have to rely on rented accommodation.

Over the years at South Hurstville the Association's employees were to witness many strange occurrences, including the streaker who was pursued by an irate husband down King Georges Road, and a number of domestic disputes between the local butcher and his wife!

Change of Name

In an Extraordinary Meeting held in December 1970, members agreed to change the Association's name to the Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association of NSW, which would be known as ParaQuad NSW. This change of name became official on 15 January 1971.

While the Association had from the outset the interests of people with paraplegia as well as quadriplegia in mind, clearly the name suggested otherwise, and it was unanimously deemed appropriate to update the name to better represent the Association's purpose and activities.

The name change also reflected the significant medical reality that increasing numbers of people with quadriplegia were now living despite their injuries. While previously the majority of members might have been paraplegic, now the needs of those with quadriplegia were emerging.

NEW SOUTH WALES

No. of Company
68941

Companies Act, 1961
(Section 21 (6))

Certificate of Incorporation on Change of Name of Company

This is to Certify *that*

The Paraplegic Association of N.S.W.

which was, on the thirteenth *day of* March , 19 61 ,
incorporated under the Companies Act, 19 36 , *did on the* fifteenth
day of January , 19 71 , *change its name to*

THE PARAPLEGIC & QUADRIPLEGIC ASSOCIATION OF N.S.W.

and that the company is limited by guarantee

Given *under my hand and seal, at Sydney, this* fifteenth
day of January , 19 71 .

F. J. O. Ryan.

REGISTRAR OF COMPANIES NEW SOUTH WALES

Exd.

Registrar of Companies.

Communication and Information

In the early 1960s the Association began producing a newsletter, which it called Paranews, in order to keep members informed about its activities. The newsletter was written after Council of Management meetings each month, and essentially covered the topics discussed at those meetings. It was foolscap in size and photocopied onto yellow paper.

By 1970, while the look was very much the same, Paranews had expanded into an extensive source of information for people with spinal cord injury. Now Paranews not only informed members about progress on the Association's key initiatives, it also provided information about the latest equipment available; subsidies and discounts; social and fundraising events; employment opportunities; accommodation possibilities; sporting events; and classified advertisements.

The newsletter was also very personable, with staff profiles, lists of new members, condolences and obituaries, as well as congratulatory entries and jovial remarks, which reflected the sense of welcome and community spirit that it provided to its members, as shown in the following extract:

Congratulations Mr. & Mrs. Ross Soutar. A little Soutar is on the way I'm told. Ross had the news confirmed on his birthday. Says it is the best birthday present ever… Alan Brown and wife expecting an addition to the family too. It's getting to be an epidemic." – Paranews, June 1973

Edited for many years by Jack Lewitz, who also served on the Board for a time and made a significant contribution to the Association, his temporary absence from work due to treatment for a pressure area led those who filled in for him to write the following in their editorial.

"Taking advantage of Jack Lewitz' continued absence we rifled his desk drawers in search of unpublished scandal with which to lead off in this scintillating first Paranews of 1977…" – Paranews, January 1977

The Association also used its newsletter as a vehicle for connecting members with one another:

"I am interested in forming a group consisting of paraplegics, quadriplegics and members of their families and interested persons,

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

PARANEWS, MAY 1978
Dear Editor,
I was never very interested in sport, but since my car accident, I've enjoyed many things I would never have dared before. I've also tried scuba diving, which opens up a new world of beauty and freedom. Each week I have a lesson with 'Horse riding for the Disabled' and hope soon to be able to explore the bush, which I thought was closed to me forever. I only wish that when I was lying in hospital, someone could have told me that life would one day become such fun again.
– GLENICE TORZILLO

who are living in the Riverina area… As a mother of a paraplegic son I realise the need for some contact with others who share the same problems." – Paranews, September 1977

By 1978 Paranews was being printed rather than photocopied and was a small magazine style booklet, A5 in size with black and white printing inside and one colour on the cover. Produced bi-monthly, it continued the flavour of earlier issues and contained updates from the main departments: Welfare, Fundraising and Sports. Significantly, for the first time some space was being dedicated to formal advertising, mostly in relation to wheelchair manufacturers.

A key source of information about all things related to spinal cord injuries, the Association's newsletter was something that everyone looked forward to reading, and it attracted many letters to the Editor, which offered insights into the lives of its members.

classified ads...

FOR SALE

Car — Ford Zephyr '61 Model. One owner, 17,000 miles, push-pull control. Please contact Mrs Moyer Thornton of Adam Street, Bemboka. Phone (064) 93 0226.

Vessa Sports Chair, five (5) years old — $45.00. Please contact Mr Brian Batcher at 24/23 Palmer Street, Balmain.

1 Stryker Gel Cushion — brand new and valued at $350 — will sell for $200. Please contact Rehabilitation officers at Association on (02) 546 7222.

Newton Manual Wheelchair as new, $550. Please contact Mrs Hill on (02) 93 5662.

Ross Hand Controls. Please contact Rita Scattagood at 4 Douglas Street, Culcairn 2660.

Lightweight Everest-Jenning Wheelchair, good condition — $200. Please contact Mrs P. P. Hill on (02) 93 5662.

1 Shower Chair — $100. 1 Toilet Seat Extension — $10. 1 Met-a-Lite Standard Wheelchair — $100. 1 Sliding Board — Free. 1 E & J Electric Wheelchair plus Battery Charger — $500. Please contact Mrs McKevett on (02) 982 7858.

1 Talley Ripple Mattress — $50. 1 Reedtex Folding Wheelchair — $75. 1 near new Bye Bye Decubiti Cushion — $10. Please contact Mrs McKevett on (02) 982 785

1 Newton Folding Wheelchair — brand Please ring 935 2662.

SITUATION VACANT

Book-binding. Julia Brown, Librari the Windsor Municipal Library, is lo for a person who is able to do book bi for repair to library books. Must live Windsor area. Phone Julia on (045) 77

JOB OPPORTUNITY

Brookvale area. 'Amberlight' (Jew Makers) of Brookvale are looking for one to set and file medallions. Work delivered to your home. Please c Mrs Cowan on (02) 939 2945.

EMPLOYMENT

Quite often we receive calls from emp looking for staff. Therefore, we woul to compile an up-to-date list of di members seeking employment.

Please call Margaret at the Welfare D ment, advising her of the type of wo are able to do and the area in which you

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

No letters were received from our readers.

Published for The Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association of New South Wales by Kenlea Distributors, 497 Elizabeth Street, Surry Hills. Advertising enquiries Mrs. Lesley Burgess, 698 8296. Wholly set up and printed by V.J.S. Printing Pty. Ltd., 58-60 Buckingham Street, Surry Hills. 699 8337.

Advertistment from Paranews, September 1978

Fundraising

In the early years, there were few ways to access money other than to create a series of fundraising initiatives. From art shows to beauty pageants and balls, as well as ordinary bucket collections and extraordinary telethons, the Association drew from its networks and the community to source much-needed donations.

Surprisingly, for an organisation of its size, the Association was able to attract the interest of celebrities and other high-profile people in many of its fundraising activities, including Julie Anthony OBE AM, Barry Chapman, Barry Crocker OAM, Col Joye AM, Graham Kennedy AO, John Newcombe AO OBE, Olivia Newton-John AO OBE and John Singleton AM. In addition, the Association was fortunate to receive support from each of the three commercial networks, 7, 9 and 10, at different times.

Silver Wheel Committee

Enid Grant, Founding Member, Silver Wheel Committee

The Silver Wheel Committee was an auxiliary committee established by Dr Grant's wife Enid and some of her close friends in 1963. It was a key fundraising vehicle, and it also promoted the mission of the Association throughout its networks.

Through social events such as morning teas, lunches, dinners with prominent speakers, fashion parades and the annual art show, the Committee was able to tap into businessmen who had both the capacity and the willingness to support the Association.

"We started out as four close friends who wanted to support the Association," said Mrs Grant. "What we did cost us nothing; it was all donated down to every glass of wine. We rolled up our sleeves and worked hard and people donated all sorts of things to us."

The original members were Mrs Grant, who was the President, Sybil Moxham, Lorna Wray, Pat Critchley, and Marcia Seymour, who donated all the printing.

"Many wonderful people helped us. We received tremendous support and we all pulled together," said Mrs Grant.

In April 1971, Paranews informed members about the upcoming Silver Wheel Art Show as follows:

"Members and their friends can really help the Association by supporting the forthcoming Silver Wheel Art Show. The Art Show will be held again this year at Grace Bros., Chatswood… The official opening ceremony will be performed by the Chairman of the N.S.W. Public Service Board, Sir John Goodsell… Disabled members should note that there is a lift from the car park to the new Art Gallery. Members who have attended previous Art Shows will know that a wonderful evening is had by all. Admission charge is $2.00 per head and a very generous chicken and wine supper is served."

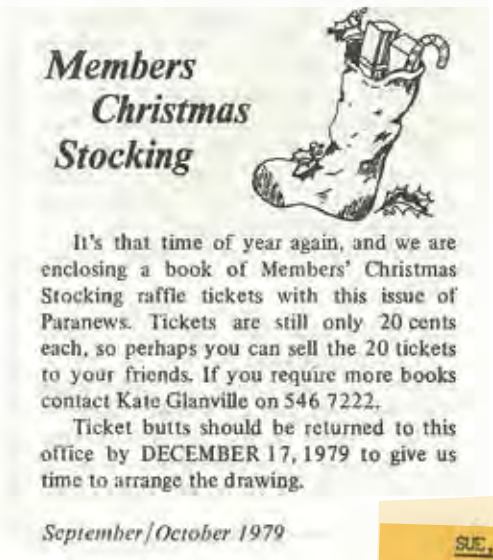
"We started out as four close friends who wanted to support the Association." – Enid Grant, Founding Member, Silver Wheel Committee

Other Auxiliary Committees

Other auxiliary committees were established in order to help raise funds for the Association, including the Spinning Wheel Committee, the Red & White District Committee and the Katoomba-Leura Ladies Auxiliary.

The Spinning Wheel Committee developed several fundraising activities, such as the Association's annual Open House, as well as fetes, cake stalls and lucky numbers competitions on the weekends.

Sue Higgins, who was Secretary of the Spinning Wheel Committee in the 1970s, was an active fundraiser. Also an agent for Avon cosmetics, her efforts included donating all profits from the sale of cosmetics to the Association, and organising knitting bees to make products to sell.



Members Christmas Stocking

It's that time of year again, and we are enclosing a book of Members' Christmas Stocking raffle tickets with this issue of Paranews. Tickets are still only 20 cents each, so perhaps you can sell the 20 tickets to your friends. If you require more books contact Kate Glanville on 546 7222.

Ticket butts should be returned to this office by DECEMBER 17, 1979 to give us time to arrange the drawing.

September/October 1979

SUE, YOU'RE WONDERFUL

Sue Higgins has a wonderful group of people who crochet beanies, scarves, ponchos and a heap of gear in football club colours to sell during the season. Aided by St. George Building Society as sales outlets, Sue and her happy band have raised $1260 this year. That's a lot of crotcheting. Even tho' it is off season, Sue is building up stock for next year, and just to make life interesting, a helpful company made available a consignment of imported mohair in beaut colours.

Now take note of this super bargain offer. Mohair is almost priced off the market -

Double bed cover 6' x 6'	$35.00 (normally $100 retail)
Single bed cover	$25.00
Knee Rug	$15.00
Evening Shawl	$10.00

Baby shawls being made in Club colours.

RED AND WHITE COMMITTEE

The Red & White District Committee is an auxiliary set up to help provide funds for the purchase of workshop equipment. John Trefry, who is the happy voice on the switch at South Hurstville Headquarters, is the President of this happy band. With the help of a small group of workers and Secretary, Ray Phillips, they raised over $800 last year.

John is looking for anyone with a few hours to spare on a Saturday morning to help in the selling of "Pick-a-Prize" tickets. He told me not to mention all the lovely ladies who buy them, as his wife reads the Newsletter, so I won't.

All interested, please ring John on 546.7222, business hours.

Anyone with an exercise bike they don't want or an old bike frame that could be used for the making of same, please contact Tom Bourne c/- the Workshop on 525.6173.

Extracts from Paranews, September/October 1979

The Red & White District Committee was run by John Trefry with the help of Ray Phillips, both of whom worked for the Association during the week and volunteered their time on the weekends.

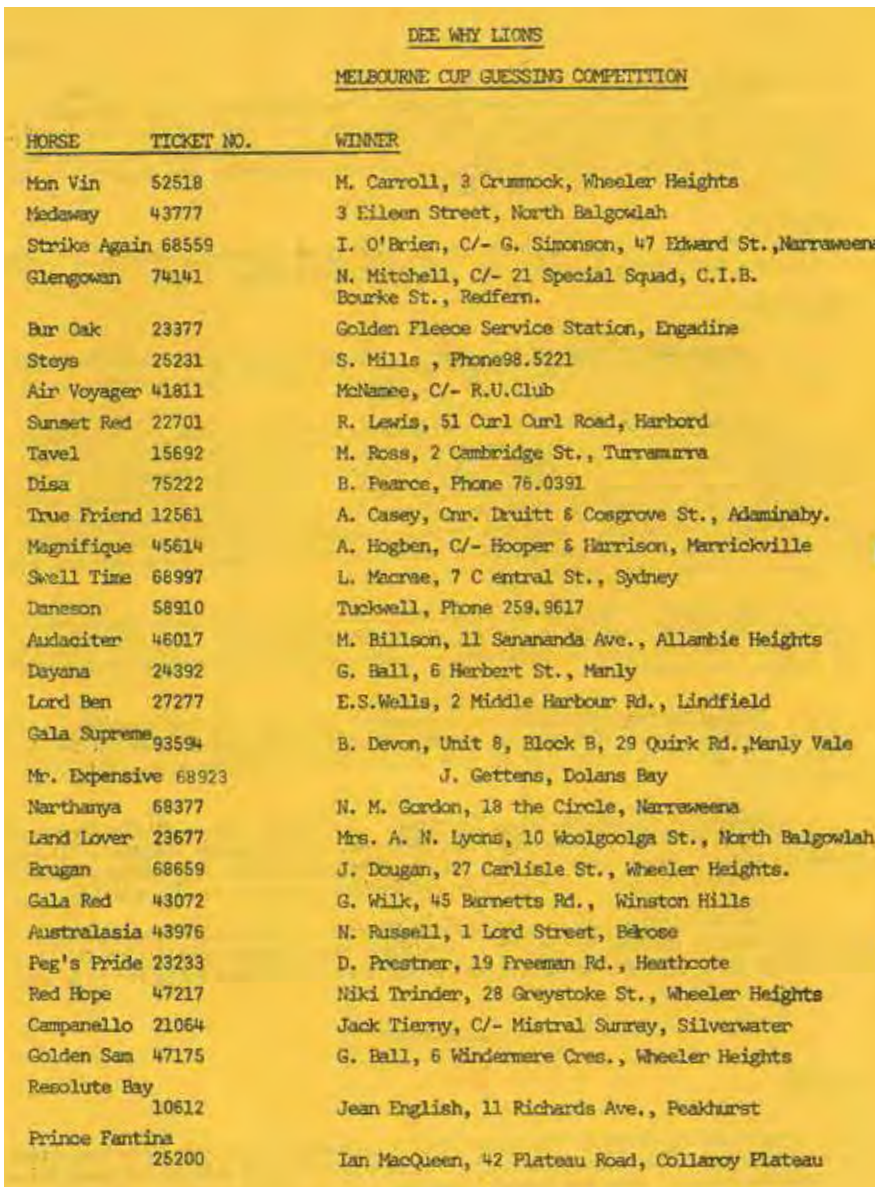
The Red & White District Committee was responsible for the Christmas stocking raffle, with giant six-foot stockings filled with donated electrical goods, toys and festive season treats as prizes. There were several stockings raffled each year, and these were displayed at major shopping centres across suburban Sydney, with volunteers on hand to sell tickets. There was also a Christmas stocking raffle just for members.

The Katoomba-Leura Ladies Auxiliary, originally the Katoomba Auxiliary, raised money through events such as raffles and bowling days. In 1973 the Secretary of the Auxiliary was Mrs Lindsay, mother of the Association's Senior Rehabilitation Officer, Miss Lindsay.

Service Clubs

In the early years the service clubs like Lions, Rotary and Apex were strong supporters of the Association's activities, initially primarily as a result of their relationship with Mr Coops.

Throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s the Lions Club of Dee Why ran a very popular Melbourne Cup Sweep in conjunction with the Association. In 1974, tickets in the Sweep were sold at 20 cents each with a first prize of $500, and 80 percent of total sales were donated to the Association. Each year the winners were announced in the Association's newsletter.



DEE WHY LIONS

MELBOURNE CUP GUESSING COMPETITION

HORSE	TICKET NO.	WINNER
Mon Vin	52518	M. Carroll, 3 Crummock, Wheeler Heights
Medaway	43777	3 Eileen Street, North Balgowlah
Strike Again	68559	I. O'Brien, C/- G. Simonson, 47 Edward St.,Narraweena
Glengowan	74141	N. Mitchell, C/- 21 Special Squad, C.I.B. Bourke St., Redfern.
Bur Oak	23377	Golden Fleece Service Station, Engadine
Steys	25231	S. Mills , Phone98.5221
Air Voyager	41811	McNamee, C/- R.U.Club
Sunset Red	22701	R. Lewis, 51 Curl Curl Road, Harbord
Tavel	15692	M. Ross, 2 Cambridge St., Turramurra
Disa	75222	B. Pearce, Phone 76.0391
True Friend	12561	A. Casey, Cnr. Druitt & Cosgrove St., Adaminaby.
Magnifique	45614	A. Hogben, C/- Hooper & Harrison, Marrickville
Swell Time	68997	L. Macrae, 7 C entral St., Sydney
Daneson	58910	Tuckwell, Phone 259.9617
Audaciter	46017	M. Billson, 11 Sananda Ave., Allambie Heights
Dayana	24392	G. Ball, 6 Herbert St., Manly
Lord Ben	27277	E.S.Wells, 2 Middle Harbour Rd., Lindfield
Gala Supreme	93594	B. Devon, Unit 8, Block B, 29 Quirk Rd.,Manly Vale
Mr. Expensive	68923	J. Gettens, Dolans Bay
Narthanya	68377	N. M. Gordon, 18 the Circle, Narraweena
Land Lover	23677	Mrs. A. N. Lyons, 10 Woolgoolga St., North Balgowlah
Brugan	68659	J. Dougan, 27 Carlisle St., Wheeler Heights.
Gala Red	43072	G. Wilk, 45 Barnetts Rd., Winston Hills
Australasia	43976	N. Russell, 1 Lord Street, Berose
Peg's Pride	23233	D. Prestner, 19 Freeman Rd., Heathcote
Red Hope	47217	Niki Trinder, 28 Greystoke St., Wheeler Heights
Campanello	21064	Jack Tierny, C/- Mistral Surrey, Silverwater
Golden Sam	47175	G. Ball, 6 Windermere Cres., Wheeler Heights
Resolute Bay	10612	Jean English, 11 Richards Ave., Peakhurst
Prince Fantina	25200	Ian MacQueen, 42 Plateau Road, Collaroy Plateau

Winners of the Dee Why Lions Melbourne Cup Guessing Competition 1974

In 1973 the Lions Club of Balgowlah made the Association the beneficiary of its 11th Annual Lovely Mother Quest, which raised $1,000. In 1971 the Rotary Club of Caringbah donated a Bedford bus, which was used to transport employees of ParaQuad Industries, and in 1975 the Rotary Club of Kogarah donated a new specially fitted car to be used in driver training.

The Green Valley United Social Clubs for Paraquads also raised money for the Association, in particular for Ferguson Lodge, to benefit the residents. They raised money through Golf Days and raffles, and through the Green Valley Hotel generally. One of their projects was installing the barbecue area at Ferguson Lodge.

In 1979 their Golf Day was held at Picton Golf Club. The fundraising day, for which John Kerin Federal MP for Werriwa was the Patron, was intended to raise money for a big screen and overhead television projector for Ferguson Lodge.

In January 1980, with the help of the Penrith Chamber of Commerce and the Penrith Lions, Apex and Rotary Clubs, the Association held the ParaQuad at Penrith Day. Staged on the showgrounds thanks to the Nepean Show Society, the highlight of the fundraising day was when Cop Shop actress Louise Philip (also a wheelchair user) and Queen of Nations Julie Bergin-McGeever flew in on the Network 7 helicopter.

Opposite page: Letter to members about the Lions Club of Dee Why annual Melbourne Cup Sweep, 23 August 1976

THE PARAPLEGIC AND QUADRIPLEGIC ASSOCIATION
OF NEW SOUTH WALES

833 KING GEORGES ROAD. SOUTH HURSTVILLE. 2221 — TELEPHONE 546-7222
POSTAL ADDRESS: BOX 2 P.O., SOUTH HURSTVILLE. 2221

August 23, 1976

Dear Member

Once again our friends at the Lions Club of Dee Why have given us the opportunity to participate in their annual Melbourne Cup Guessing Competition.

Knowing how popular this competition is with our members we have, as in previous years, taken the liberty of forwarding two books of ten 20¢ tickets (total value $4.00) for you to buy or sell. We would point out that there is no obligation on any member to take part, although we would appreciate your return of any unsold tickets.

Last year, the winning ticket was sold by the Association, and consolation prizes were won by two other people who bought tickets from us. Let us aim for similar success by selling as many books as we can this year.

Yours sincerely

F.A. BROWN
Administration Manager

P.S. Butts and money need to be back at this office by Friday, October 22, 1976.

Field Appeal Program

From the late 1960s the Association relied on its Field Appeal Program of door-to-door and street collections for a substantial part of its fundraising income.

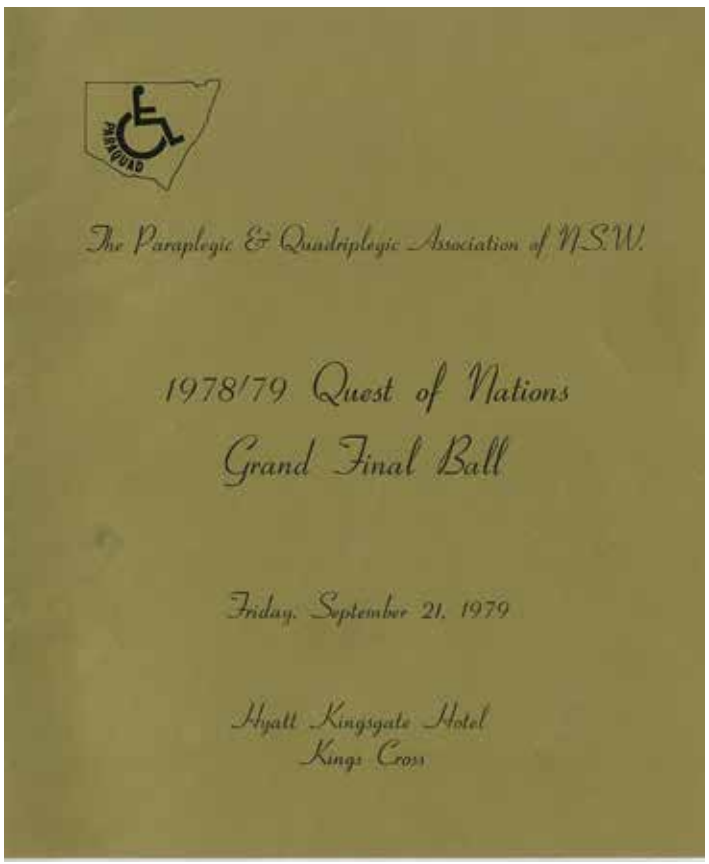
At the time it was one of the most consistent ways to raise money, and people used to collect money for the Association as unpaid volunteers.

Later the Association employed collectors on a commission basis. Paid 30 percent of the total money collected, many collectors were pensioners or other disadvantaged people who needed to supplement their incomes.

Collectors were issued with an Authority to Collect, which they had to display prominently at all times, and they were allocated specific areas in which they were to solicit donations door-to-door or along the street in central locations.

Quest of Nations

Run from 1974 to 1984, the Quest of Nations (initially called Miss Cosmopolitan Quest) was for young women from ethnic backgrounds who were prepared to raise a sum of money for the Association. Not intended to be a beauty pageant, the focus was on supporting the works of the Association while at the same time celebrating multiculturalism, which was the catchcry of the times.



Not just a fundraising event but also a significant awareness-raising opportunity, the publicity that the Association was able to generate for the Quest of Nations was rather extraordinary.

Through the efforts of Fundraising Manager Red Ryan, himself paraplegic and a lively ex publican, and no doubt Dr Grant's political connections, the event was launched in 1974 by the Hon. Al Grassby, Federal Minister for Immigration. Margaret Whitlam, Prime Minister Gough Whitlam's wife, shared in the judging that same year.

For the first few years the Quest's final ball, where the winners were announced, was telecast on the National 9 Network and iconic women's magazine The Australian Women's Weekly featured the event.

The Commonwealth Bank and Qantas were regular sponsors, supplying prizes to the two winners – the Queen of Nations (initially Miss Cosmopolitan) and Charity Queen – and the two runners-up, while local businesses in Sydney supplied prizes for the finalists.

In 1980 there were 13 entrants, each of whom was aged between 17 and 35 and had raised the $500 entry fee required. On 20 September more than 400 guests attended the Grand Final Ceremony in the Grand Ballroom of the Hilton Hotel in Sydney. Judging was based on personality, self-expression, general knowledge, national costume, grooming, fundraising effort and knowledge of her ethnic background. Miss Rima Safar, who represented the Jordanian Community, was crowned both Charity Queen and Queen of Nations, and the funds raised through the event were in excess of $74,000.

Promotional material for the Quest of Nations

QUEST FOR "MISS COSMOPOLITAN"

A BOUQUET of pretty girls vying with one another in a beauty contest is a sure-fire way to make money for charity.

The Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association of New South Wales is the latest to take to the pretty girl field.

The fund-raising manager for the association, Mr. Red Ryan, says his association feels that Australian girls today are true cosmopolitans, and it is out to find the most cosmopolitan.

The final judging will be done in style at a grand function at Sydney's Boulevard Hotel, before a distinguished panel of judges, who include Mrs. Whitlam, the wife of the Prime Minister, and Mr. Al Grassby.

On that night, November 16, the fairest of them all will be "Miss Cosmopolitan," but she will be joined by another monarch, "Miss Charity Queen," who raises the most money.

Both girls will be crowned with a coronets of fabulous looking gems, specially made for the occasion. Although the "diamonds" in the crowns are not real, they are very special crowns.

Many beauty queens have had their poise shattered and their pictures ruined by a slipping crown, I'm told. These won't slip — their secret weapons are ends like combs, with strong plastic teeth.

I learned about slipping crowns and such when, early on in the "Miss Cosmopolitan" Quest, I met some of the contestants when they, in turn, were meeting Mr. Grassby.

On the big final night, as you'll see on the National Nine Network — which plans to telecast the show in glorious living color — the finalists will all look more than able to cope.

In the early days though, meeting a judge and a camera head-on is nerve-shattering.

When Mr. Grassby took his place, they all stiffened up and looked as if they were in a police line-up.

Trying for the simultaneous smile, I said if they said "sex" they'd look as if they smiled: it was the newest thing, a better smile word than "cheese."

It worked with 11 of the girls, but, as you see at right, "sex" was a complete wipe-off for Karen Caffery, from the U.S.A. But she'll be right on the big night.

— NAN MUSGROVE

AL GRASSBY is flanked by, left to right — back row: Roseline Beeraz (Mauritius), Maria Leong (New Guinea), Dianne Harmson (England), Justine Saunders (Australia); kneeling in centre: Karen Caffery (U.S.A.), Julie McLachlan (Scotland); front row: Ann Sim (New Zealand), Linda Bailey (India), Eve Zieren (Holland), Cheryl Whitton (Australia), Janice Grieff (India), Sane Lundberg (Denmark).

The Australian Women's Weekly—

Women's Weekly story about the Quest of Nations 1974

QUEST OF NATIONS' DIARY

Saturday July 23 - Spanish entrant Rosslyn Castillo is having a "Suckling Pig Dinner" at Captain Torres, 73 Liverpool St, Sydney, beginning at 7.30 p.m. Cost - $10.00 single.

Friday July 29 - English entrant Roxanne Thew has arranged a 'Cabaret Dinner' featuring 'The Johnny Pace and Harriet Show', at Sutherland District Trade Union Club, 57 Manchester Road, Gymea. Only $6.00 single and for reservations phone - 524.4914, 521.5312 or 524.5880.

Sunday July 31 - Gatana Fenech from Malta is having a Dinner Dance/Fashion Parade starting 6.00 p.m. at the Merion Hall, Horsley Drive, Horsley Park. $8.00 single.

Saturday August 6 - Australian entrant Karen Fenwick is holding a Smorgasbord/ Fashion Parade at the Argyle Tavern, Argyle St, The Rocks starting 7.00 p.m. Ladies' and Gents' fashions. $10.00 single.

Sunday August 7 - 'No. 2 Car Wash-A-Thon.' This time at the Apple Auto Car Wash, 195 Pittwater Road, Manly. Excellent value, only $3.00 for the works. Anytime between 8.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m.

Saturday August 20 - a.m. - Shopping in Gordon - feeling hungry - call in to a stall selling home made cakes, tarts, etc and say 'hello' to Karen Fenwick.

Saturday September 11 - This is the date of our 'Pop Concert,' featuring top groups. Hosted by Molly Meldrum. The show will start 8.00 p.m. and tickets are $5.50. The venue - no other then the Hordern Pavillion.

For any further information phone the Quest office on 546.7222.

Quest of Nations 1977 Diary of Events, from Paranews July 1977

PRIZES.

The girls selected as Queen of the Nations 1976 and Miss Charity Queen 1976 will each receive:

- Qantas South-East Asia Jetabout holiday for two.
- A new Ford Escort from Thomas Ford, Parramatta.
- $500 spending money from Commonwealth Banking Corporation.
- A $200 wardrobe from the Jo Shoppe.
- A diamond and sapphire ring from Diamond Traders.

Plus the chance to represent Australia in any or all of these fabulous quests: Miss Asia, Miss World, Miss Universe, Miss International.

PARENTS: Give your daughter your support in the Quest of Nations. You'll be helping her achieve honourable recognition in your community as well as helping one of Australia's most worthwhile charities: The Paraplegic & Quadriplegic Association of New South Wales.

CONDITIONS OF ENTRY.

1. Applicants must be unmarried females between the ages of 16 and 25 on January 30, 1976.
2. Contestants will be required to submit an entry fee of $200. Entry fee may be submitted by sponsor, or raised by candidate, if not sponsored.
3. Entries must be submitted as soon as possible.
4. All proceeds of the competition will be allocated to the Paraplegic & Quadriplegic Association of New South Wales.
5. All girls will represent the country of their family's background and as such will be ambassadors for those countries.

Initially, all fund raising, elimination and judging is the prerogative of the National Group. The finalist from each National Group will then be submitted to the Quest of Nations Committee for final judging.

JUDGING.

Final judging will take place on Friday, January 30, 1976, at the Wentworth Hotel, Sydney, and will be televised by TCN 9.

Judges for the Grand Final will be:
Mr. Al Grassby, Mrs. Sonia McMahon, Mr. Doug Fagan, Mr. W. Noble, Mr. E. J. Brown, Mr. J. Allison, Mrs. J. Grant, Mr. D. Shainberg, Miss Angelina Molina.

Quest of Nations 1976 Prizes, Conditions of Entry and Judging information

Telethons

The Association received a significant financial boost through the Channel 10 telethon appeals.

Firstly in 1976, and then in 1978, the Association was invited to share in the proceeds of the telethon held for the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children. The telethon in 1976 was held on Holy Thursday and Good Friday, and the 1978 was held on Good Friday.

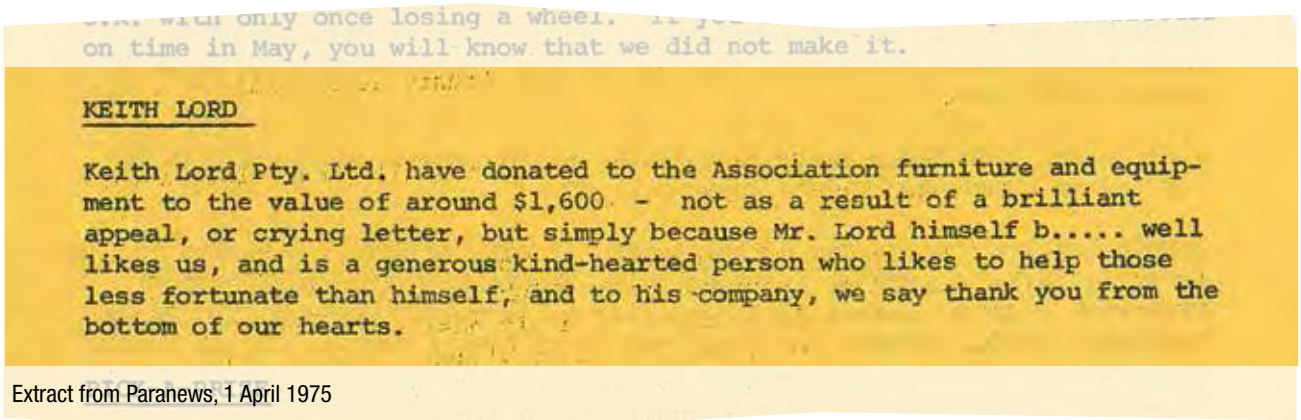
Then, in 1979 the Association again benefited from the high profile telethon opportunity. This time it was the result of a discussion between Mr Coops and Dr Grant about the need for a significant financial injection, that precipitated a decision to approach John Singleton AM, Australian entrepreneur and advertising executive extraordinaire, to solicit his support. Mr Coops went to see Mr Singleton first, later followed by Dr Grant.

The result was that Mr Singleton not only offered his support, but also decided to produce a telethon in honour of the Association, which was again hosted by Channel 10. This time the Association was the sole recipient of all donations, which totalled in the hundreds of thousands.

Benefactors

Many individuals supported the Association with donations large and small, and these were acknowledged in the hundreds in the Association's annual reports.

One such donation came at a particularly crucial time in the late 1970s, a period when finances were tight. It was a cheque for $500,000 from a benefactor's estate, and it arrived unexpectedly one day in the mail. Those who were in the office that day recall that it was a complete surprise and a tremendous help.



on time in May, you will know that we did not make it.

KEITH LORD

Keith Lord Pty. Ltd. have donated to the Association furniture and equipment to the value of around $1,600 - not as a result of a brilliant appeal, or crying letter, but simply because Mr. Lord himself b..... well likes us, and is a generous kind-hearted person who likes to help those less fortunate than himself, and to his company, we say thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Extract from Paranews, 1 April 1975

Other Fundraising Efforts

The Association organised, participated in, or was in receipt of numerous other fundraising efforts, from Bowls Days to the Sportsmans Art Union. The following initiatives have been presented as a snapshot of the generosity the Association received, and the innovative fundraising opportunities it developed, throughout the early years.

At Christmas time, the Association sold Lions Club Christmas puddings and Christmas cards. In 1974 a pack of 10 cost $1, while unsold packs from the previous year were available to members and friends for just 75 cents.

A creative fundraising effort, the Dining Passport was a booklet containing more than 20 complimentary meals at many of Sydney's leading restaurants together with other vouchers, such as cinema passes. The only requirement was that the user had to pay for one in order to get one free – a forward-thinking marketing strategy. The Association sold the 1971 edition of the Dining Passport for $10 per book.

Participants in the Jumbo Tennis event, 1979

In 1979 Cathay Pacific Airways raised funds for the Association through its Jumbo Tennis event (which was also used to publicise the introduction of the 747b Jumbo services to Australia). This very successful event was held at White City and involved more than 130 professional sportspeople and celebrities, including cricketers Bob Simpson and Tony Greig and singer Col Joye, while singer Little Patti supported from the sidelines. A total of 12 major companies acted as co-sponsors for the tournament. Following is an excerpt from Paranews about the event:

"It was a fun day, thoroughly enjoyed too by special guests including Paraplegic and Quadriplegic members Mrs. Margaret Ross of Turramurra, and 'Mayor' Alf Howlett of Ferguson Lodge. First Aid 'stand-by' was Sister Angela Coleman of our Welfare Department, and Quest Director Helen Russ assisted in the official tent. Quest entrants who sold raffle tickets were Julie Bergin, Rosemarie Sumanti, Maria Pavey, Marian Melham and Angela Psarakis." – Paranews September/October 1979

Also in 1979, although a lower profile event, 1000 students from Normanhurst Boys' High School conducted a walk-a-thon in honour of the Association, in which paralympian swimming champion Janette Constable participated.

While in 1980 popular Australian singer Col Joye raised $900 for the Association at the swim-a-thon run by the Lane Cove Lions. Apparently Mr Joy had filled in for John Singleton, who had originally agreed to participate before being sidelined with his television show.

"It was a great gesture by Col Joye, because after swimming at 8.00pm, he had to shoot off to fulfil a singing engagement at Wollongong by 9.30pm. Hope you made it Col!" – Paranews March/April 1980

Lobbying

A hallmark of any interest group is representing the interests of its members, and it is something that the Association was able to achieve at a political level in its early years, primarily through Dr Grant's connections.

Although he had never been involved in politics before, it was an environment in which Dr Grant thrived, and he developed close working relationships with several senior political figures.

One such person was John Waddy OBE, a Member of the NSW Legislative Assembly from 1962 to 1976. Mr Waddy had been an Air Force Ace in the Royal Australian Air Force during World War II and had seen many colleagues acquire spinal cord injuries, something that commonly occurred when landing aircraft at speed. This personal interest led him to become a key supporter of the Association.

Dr Grant also had a close working relationship with Neville Wran, Premier of NSW from 1976 to 1986. After their meeting, Mr Wran became a loyal supporter of the Association, offering encouragement and attending official functions, always bringing along a significant cheque. In the end, whenever Dr Grant would call Parliament House, he would be transferred directly to Mr Wran rather than be connected with a staffer.

The relationship that the Association developed with Government over time assisted it when seeking funding for projects, and allowed it to secure benefits for its members, evidenced by the following extract:

"We have also been successful in securing Government assistance with the purchase of some items of equipment for invalid pensioners. If any invalid pensioner has a problem in this regard, he or she is invited to contact our Rehabilitation Officer, Miss Lindsay, and discuss the matter." – Paranews March 1971

However, lobbying was not just about building relationships with Government figures, it was also about voicing the concerns and needs of the membership at all levels in the community, and feeding back relevant information to the membership. This function was primarily the responsibility of the Welfare Department.

Spinal Injuries Units Secured

The establishment of a central spinal unit in NSW was one of the original goals of the Association.

To this extent, over its first five years the Association lobbied the NSW Government to address this issue, calling for hospital units that would provide holistic allied health care to people with spinal cord injury.

Spearheaded by Dr Grant and later Dr John Yeo (when he was Registrar to the Spinal Unit at RNSH), the campaign was finally given in principle support in 1966, when the Hon. Harry Jago, Minister for Health, endorsed the work achieved at RNSH and committed to building upon it.

Spinal Injuries Units were developed at RNSH and Prince Henry Hospital (PHH). The units offered multi-disciplinary inpatient and outpatient support, with spinal nurses, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, social workers, dietitians and other medical specialists to address individuals' varied needs.

NSW GOVERNMENT RUBBER STAMPS HOSPITAL SPINAL UNITS IN 1966

"It was with a degree of satisfaction that workers in the field of paraplegia and quadriplegia greeted the announcement by the State Minister for Health, Mr Jago… that the Hospitals Commission intended to develop the existing facilities at the Royal North Shore Hospital into a modern adequate unit with full ancillary services. This decision by the Government culminates the campaign which your Association has been waging for the last five years… Expansion of paraplegic and quadriplegic facilities within the Rehabilitation Unit at Prince Henry Hospital is also taking place."

– EXTRACT FROM THE ASSOCIATION'S SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT 1966

Welfare Department

While originally established in order to improve medical facilities for people with spinal cord injury and establish purpose-built accommodation, it quickly became apparent that the spinally injured community had other needs that were not being met. As a result, the Association developed a suite of services to fill the gap.

Equipment Supplies

When the Association was founded it was difficult for people with spinal cord injury to access niche personal care supplies outside hospitals, especially in the small quantities they required. Therefore in 1964 it established a centralised buying scheme, which later became known as Personal Equipment and Continence Supplies (PECS).

Similar to a co-op, the Association purchased in bulk the continence and pressure prevention aids required by people with spinal cord injury and sold them to members at discounted prices. In order to receive the discount, people had to become members, a policy that lasted many years.

Welfare Price List, 12 April 1976

Counselling and Health Care

Welfare Officers were employed to perform many different tasks, however, they were primarily a source of information and a point of reference for medical care. As a result, spinal nurses and other medical professionals were sought after for this dual role.

An important part of their job was to visit people nearing the end of their rehabilitation in hospital, in order to tell them about the Association and the services it offered. Everyone needed personal care supplies and everyone needed to know that there was somewhere to call once they left hospital, so patients welcomed these visits, and it was an effective way to promote the Association.

Welfare Officers also provided individual and family counselling on an ad hoc basis, and assisted people with disabilities to find employment.

By 1979 the Association had changed the job title for this role from Welfare to Rehabilitation Officer, a reflection of the change in language in the community generally. The three Rehabilitation Officers continued to maintain a close link with members, visiting both newly injured people in hospital and members in their homes, and by this time their work had expanded to include members in regional areas.

General Information and Support

The Welfare Department was a key source of information about matters generally related to spinal cord injuries, including equipment; accessible venues, holiday destinations and holiday accommodation options; and information about job opportunities. The Association's newsletter, Paranews, was the primary vehicle for relaying information between the Welfare Department and the membership.

Part of the role of the Welfare Department was to source equipment that would improve the lives of its members, and it also arranged trials of new equipment for members. In Paranews March 1971, members learned the following:

"We have been searching for many years for a good page turning device. We have just received a sample model of a new page turner, which has been developed by a Rotary Club in New Zealand. The device, which is realistically priced at $60.00, can be operated by either movement of a lever or by sucking and blowing gently into a mouthpiece. If any of our quad members would be interested in seeing this device, please contact our Rehabilitation Officer, Miss Lindsay."

"The Association recently had a demonstration of a new English carpet known as 'Endura' which is specially resistant to wheelchair wear. It is an attractive carpet and the importers are prepared to guarantee it for at least 5 years for wheelchair use. Any further details, please contact Miss Lindsay."

And in Paranews 5 February 1975 members received the following update about Rota Readers:

"Many of you will know that the Cronulla Rotary Club has spent a lot of time developing a rota reader for quadriplegics. The Association has accepted the responsibility of stocking the cassettes for these machines and will be glad to provide information regarding the borrowing of these books to those who have purchased a machine. The machine currently costs $100."

THE PARAPLEGIC AND QUADRIPLEGIC ASSOCIATION
OF NEW SOUTH WALES

833 KING GEORGES ROAD, SOUTH HURSTVILLE, 2221 - TELEPHONE 546-7222
POSTAL ADDRESS: BOX 2 P.O., SOUTH HURSTVILLE, 2221

MEMO TO ALL MEMBERS

SUBJECT - WELFARE ITEMS

Would all members please note that all medical goods and appliances purchased from the Association are non-returnable. It has been a strict rule of all Surgical Supply Houses which provide goods to the Association that under no circumstances will they accept goods back for credit which are of a personal hygenic nature. The only possible exception to this rule is that the Association may, at its discretion, accept back for credit goods which are prepackaged and sealed in a plastic or similar pack, and which are returned to the Association with the pack or seal unbroken.

WHEELCHAIRS:

Due to the recent introduction on to the market of a variety of new brands and types of wheelchairs, some of our members have been ordering these wheelchairs without first riding in the chair, or having the chair in their own home to see if it is a suitable chair for their purpose. We, therefore, request that any member who wishes to order a type of chair which they have not actually tried out consult the Association's Rehabilitation Officers. We have recently had cases where prople have ordered chairs without having given then a thorough test and have subsequently found them to be unsuitable. The Association will in future try to keep in stock a test chair of the more popular brands so that members can visit the Association and try the chair out under a variety of conditions before placing an order. Once again we have had problems with Wheelchair Manufacturers who have made special alterations to chairs and then found that members wish to return such chairs for credit. We hope that this new procedure will save any embarrassment for all parties. If any member has any query relating to wheelchairs or other items mentioned in this Memo please contact the Association's Rehabilitation Officers (Miss Blanche Lindsay, Senior Rehabilitation Officer, or Miss Diane Baldwin, Assistant Rehabilitation Officer.)

ASHLEY COOPS
Chief Executive Officer.

Memo from CEO Mr Coops to members regarding welfare items, 3 July 1973

The Welfare Department kept a record of contacts and organisations related to spinal cord injuries so that Welfare Officers could refer people appropriately when calling with different queries, as well as a list of accessible places (such as restaurants, venues and accommodation). Often members would write or call with information about the places they had visited, and from time to time this information was printed in the newsletter. In the September 1977 issue of Paranews, the Welfare Department relayed the following information:

"Two suburban theatres have been recommended to us by members. They are the Mosman Village Theatre and Roseville Theatre. In both cases members found that the staff were helpful and friendly and they were able to stay in their wheelchair on the ground floor level of the theatre."

"Pat Shattell advised that the following places are wheelchair accessible. Pizza Huts, McDonalds, The Lyceum, Her Majesty's Theatre and Georges River Reserve."

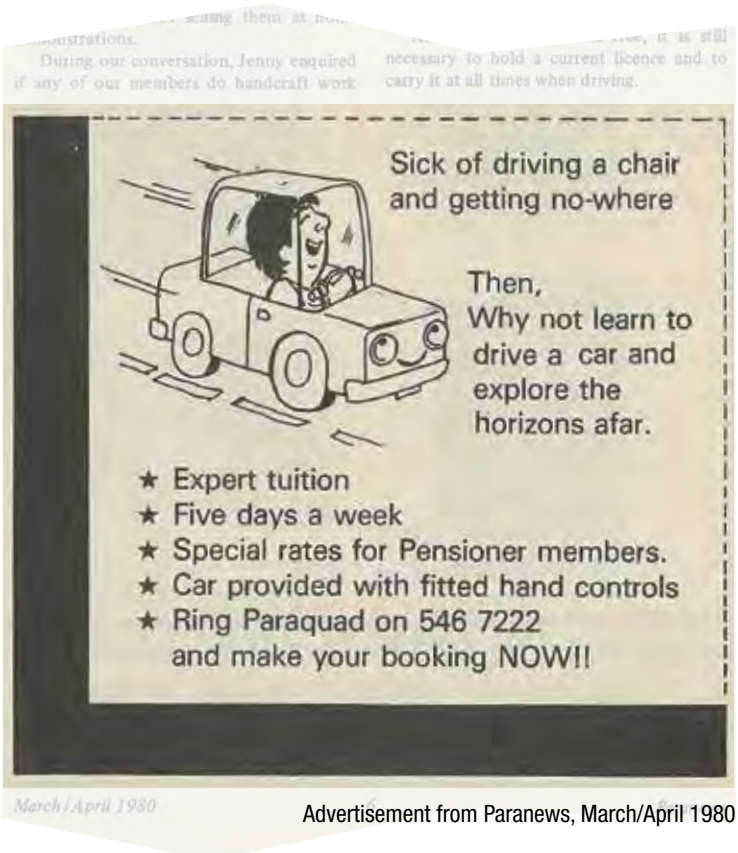
The Welfare Department also coordinated social events, such as the annual visit to the Royal Easter Show. Mr Joe Calcraft OBE was the principal organiser of this event, supported by the Friesian Society, where members were invited to attend the Show on a Sunday at their leisure, with ease of movement guaranteed as the public was not permitted on that day. At other times members were invited to participate in shopping nights, such as the Woolworths Family Centre at Miranda Fair in 1971.

Driver Training

Into the 1970s, the Association received many requests for driving lessons from people with spinal cord injury who were contemplating the purchase of a car with hand controls. In 1971 the Association made contact with a qualified driving instructor, himself paraplegic, who was prepared to give driving lessons to members in his own modified car.

This arrangement with Peter Langley of Burwood continued for several years, until it became necessary to engage a new instructor and use an Association car, which was modified by ParaQuad Engineering in such a way that it would suit a range of individuals.

In September 1989 the Association decided to discontinue its driver training service as it had now become available to disabled people through the Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service and Cumberland College at Lidcombe.



Advertisement from Paranews, March/April 1980

Price 5¢

THE PARAPLEGIC AND QUADRIPLEGIC ASSOCIATION

OF NEW SOUTH WALES

833 KING GEORGES ROAD, SOUTH HURSTVILLE, 2221 – TELEPHONE 546-7222

POSTAL ADDRESS: BOX 2 P.O., SOUTH HURSTVILLE, 2221

"PARANEWS" "PARANEWS" "PARANEWS"

Vol.9 No.12 20th March, 1972.

ROYAL EASTER SHOW

Again this year, Mr. Joe Calcraft and the members of the Friesian Society have kindly extended an invitation to our paraplegic and quadriplegic members and their escorts to visit the Royal Easter Show as their guests on Easter Sunday. Members are invited to bring their families with them.

Easter Sunday this year will fall on 2nd April and members will be escorted on a tour of the exhibits and will be entertained to lunch. Members are asked to enter the Main Gate at 10. 0 a.m. and park inside the grounds near the Animal Nursery.

If you are interested in visiting the Show on this day, PLEASE FILL IN THE FORM BELOW AND SEND IT BACK TO US IMMEDIATELY. If it is more convenient, ring Mrs. Dupen on the Association's number, 546.7222.

Those members who have visited the Show in previous years will know that it is a very interesting day, and we are able to move around the grounds quite freely as the Show is closed to the public on this day. Please let us know of your intention to be present.

To: The Chief Executive Officer,
The Paraplegic & Quadriplegic Association of N.S.W.,
P.O. Box 2,
SOUTH HURSTVILLE 2221.

* X will be / ~~X will not be~~ attending the Royal Easter Show as a guest of the Friesian Society on Sunday, 2nd April, 1972, at 10.a.m.

* I will / I will not be accompanied by .....

NAME: .....

ADDRESS: .....

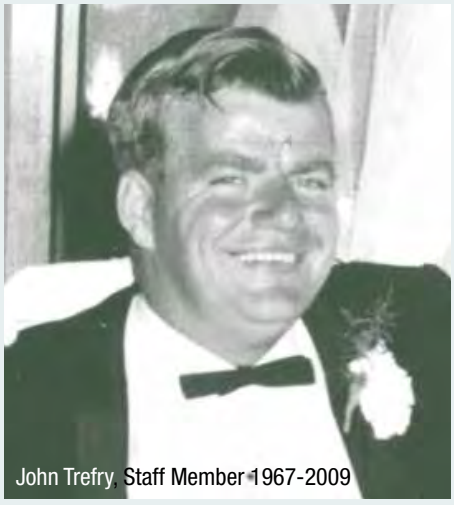
* Cross out whichever is not applicable.

Members' invitation to the Royal Easter Show event in 1972

The People

John Trefry

John Trefry was 20 when a car accident left him quadriplegic. It was 1960 and he remained at the hospital in Orange fully dressed for four days before being transported by road to Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, where he spent seven months.



John Trefry, Staff Member 1967-2009

As there was insufficient medical support at home, Mr Trefry then ended up in a nursing home in Sydney. "In those days the nursing homes controlled your life," he said. "The sign at the entrance read 'Home For The Incurables', and men and women weren't allowed to mix."

Desperate to get out, Mr Trefry asked his sister to find him alternative accommodation. She secured a place at the Prince of Wales Hospital Spinal Ward, where patients could come and go as they pleased, and he lived there for five years.

While there he met and married Pam, a nurse. They built a home at Sylvania Waters and had two children.

Eager to find employment, Mr Trefry had noticed the Association while driving past its headquarters, so one day in 1967 he stopped to speak with Ashley Coops, who gave him a job at the Association's sheltered workshop.

A few years later, the Association needed someone to field phone calls, so Mr Trefry became the switchboard operator. "The phones used to run hot," he said. "A lot of the calls were about finding work, getting support and accessing equipment."

Mr Trefry was later appointed Manager ParaQuad Engineering when it was at Peakhurst and Milperra, and was then asked back to headquarters to answer phones – due to his extensive knowledge base – before moving into sales for the personal equipment supply business. He also performed demonstrations of car hoists, hand controls and ramps.

Working for the Association until 2009, Mr Trefry said, "I enjoyed every minute I worked there. I know that through the Association I helped a lot of people."

Employment Opportunies

In the 1960s and 1970s most employers had no interest in employing people with disabilities. Even most of the doctors at the time would advise patients to go home and live life as best they could after leaving hospital, suggesting that there was nothing more to do.

The Association, however, encouraged people with spinal cord injury to participate at all levels of its operations, from governance to office work and engineering; it was where people with spinal cord injury were treated as equals.

The appointment of Mr Coops, a wheelchair user, as Secretary was particularly uncommon for the day, and the Association's philosophy of focusing on what people could contribute rather than being distracted by their disabilities put it at the forefront of the disabilities movement.

Original premises of the Workshop, 2 The Mall, South Hurstville

People who worked for the Association generally had to be multi-taskers, as it was a relatively small organisation tackling a range of initiatives, like Mr Trefry who was rotated through numerous roles.

Apart from employing people with disabilities, the Association was always on the lookout for other employment opportunities for its members, and it also promoted its members' services. Job advertisements were often displayed in the newsletter, as shown in these entries from Paranews, July 1976:

"Active Hire Equipment of 5 Seddon Street, Bankstown are involved in hiring equipment to the building trade. They are looking for someone to do telephone work 3 days per week, 10.30 a.m. – 5 p.m. (award salary). The building is on the ground floor with parking available. They would prefer a male and want the person to start as soon as possible. For further information contact Mr. Hamilton or Mr. Wilson on 708.2972."

"One of our paraplegic members – Mr. Les Lipman – 371.8936 – is a professional photographer. Family, wedding and industrial photography can be done at very reasonable prices."

Sheltered Workshop (ParaQuad Industries)

The Association established a sheltered workshop, known as the 'Workshop', in 1966. The Workshop originally operated at the South Hurstville headquarters and from 1970 at the house at 2 The Mall. In the Sixth Annual Report 1966, Mr Ferguson wrote:

"Early in the year steps were taken to commence workshop activity. The workshops gradually expanded until there were six disabled workers regularly attending by the end of the year. Contracts have been… simple manufacturing, packaging and finishing of goods…"

One of the first sheltered workshops in the State, it offered an option for many people with disabilities who wanted to find employment. Many parents of teenage children in particular would call the Association seeking work for their children who could no longer attend school, and a lot of these people would be directed to the Workshop.

Mr Trefry was one of the original employees of the Workshop, starting in 1967. "I'll never forget the first job they brought in to me and another man," said Mr Trefry. "They had bags of white buttons and we had to pick out all the ones with cracks in them. A friend of Mr Coops' had built a conveyor belt with a hopper in the middle and we had to figure out for ourselves how we would do the job using that. It was interesting at the time because you had to learn how to manage to do the job despite your disability."

In the early years there were many small jobs like Mr Trefry's first task. There were the Eveready batteries that had been imported from overseas and the Workshop staff had to remove the ones with rusty nipples; the packing of small goods, especially hardware goods such as nails, that would be imported in bulk but had to be packed into small bags for resale; and the packing of medical supplies.

Two employees arrive for work at the Workshop in 1966

The Commonwealth Government provided some assistance to help the Association run the Workshop, and employees with a disability received a Government-funded Incentive Allowance payable regardless of the income they received. Originally $5 per week, the Allowance was raised to $8 per week in the late 1970s and $10 per week in 1982.

In October 1971 the Association moved the Workshop to new leased premises at 35 Alexander Avenue, Taren Point. This building was five times the size of the previous space and allowed for an expansion of the Association's employment activities.

To coincide with this expansion, and also the change of name of the Association, the Workshop became officially known as ParaQuad Industries in 1972, and at its peak in the 1970s it employed more than 30 people from different disability backgrounds.

Employment opportunities at the Workshop were advertised in Paranews, as per the following extract:

"The sheltered workshop at Taren Point is looking for an office helper for Joyce Robertson. The work would involve typing, invoicing, indexing of incoming work and handling of job cards… Pay is incremental to the pension - $20 per week plus $5 sheltered employment allowance… Work is also available at the workshop for six paraplegics, or other similarly disabled people." – Paranews May 1977

At Taren Point there was a short attempt at operating a small printing business, however it was not successful, and ParaQuad Industries then went on to service large contracts for the calibration of dials for the Caltex Refinery and the assembly of runners for filing cabinets.

In 1975 the Association established a 'house-type' hostel at Cronulla. This accommodation was designed primarily for people with paraplegia who wished to train at ParaQuad Industries. There was a small tariff and a housekeeper employed, and it was managed by the Welfare Department.

The Association transported employees to and from the workplace in its own bus, employing a driver for the job. Originally using a Bedford bus donated by the Rotary Club of Caringbah, this was replaced in 1977 when the Association purchased a $26,000 modified bus. The Australian Department of Social Security subsidised the purchase on a $4 to $1 basis, and the Association's share of the cost was raised by the Cronulla Labor & Workingmen's Club under the guiding hand of Ken Pedler.

Bryan Bisgrove assists John Trefry, 1977

Wheelchair Repairs and ParaQuad Engineering

When it became apparent that finding someone to service wheelchairs was somewhat of a challenge, the Association decided to employ a mechanic to service wheelchairs for its members at the headquarters in South Hurstville.

Several years later Mr Coops saw that there was a need for the Association to fit hand controls in cars as well, because it was not a readily available service at the time. So in February 1976 a man called Bryan Bisgrove was employed. Mr Bisgrove had fitted hand controls in England and was able to bring his knowledge to the Association.

Thus, the Association's engineering division was established, and it was known as ParaQuad Engineering. Mr Bisgrove, a dedicated and hard-working man, worked from a small factory at 136 Taren Point Road, Taren Point. In July 1979 the Association moved ParaQuad Engineering to the same premises as ParaQuad Industries in order to improve efficiencies.

PARAQUAD ENGINEERING

(the Research & Development Division of the Paraplegic & Quadriplegic Association of N.S.W.)
wishes to announce a

PRICE REDUCTION

on car hand controls

- Push/Pull control was $165.00 now $130.00
- Paraquad 'Twist Grip' was $165.00 now $140.00
- M.P.S. (imported) remains at $230.00

(these prices include fitting, but spinner knobs and some alterations are extra)

Other services available at Paraquad Engineering include the supply and fitting of Flo-Con car top hoists and the servicing of Vanguard wheelchairs.

If you have any particular engineering problems 'phone Paraquad Engineer Robin Miller, on 524.8900.

Paraquad Engineering, 136 Taren Point Road, Taren Point, 2229

Advertisement from Paranews, September 1978

Wheelchair Sports

Wheelchair sports began in NSW in 1958 with the RNSH Games. Dr Grant had witnessed the work of Dr Ludwig Guttmann, including the establishment of the Stoke Mandeville Games, and after discussions between Dr Grant, Dr Yeo and medical staff, they decided to develop sports for people with spinal cord injury through RNSH.

The RNSH Games became an annual event and, while they were competitive, they were also social and very much about participating in sport. Celebrities were invited to support the event and would often present awards.

From the beginning the Association established a Sports Sub Committee, which was the vehicle through which it promoted and supported sports for people with spinal cord injury, with Director Mr Betts a key player. Originally it was known as the Paraplegic Sports Club.

John Spencer, who would later work for the Association's engineering department, said, "I used to get involved in the RNSH Games every year. It was a lot of fun. I loved it."

For Anders Halvorsen, participating in sports was the catalyst for a significant change in perspective on life. "I had my accident when I was 23 and my life as I knew it had come to an end," said Mr Halvorsen. "While I was at RNSH the spinal patients were taken down to the hospital oval once a week to try their hand at different sports. I tried archery and to my surprise I was reasonably good at it."

"Psychologically it helped me greatly to see that I could do things and achieve satisfaction from them. The sports days were a turning point for me."

Mr Halvorsen later completed a master's degree in business administration (the MBA) and went on to own his own business consulting company, joining the Association's Board in 2004.

Anders Halvorsen takes aim at the RNSH Games in 1973 (Courtesy Mr Halvorsen)

This device, which is realistically [illegible]
either movement of a lever or by sucking and blowing gently into a mouthpiece. If any of our quad members would be interested in seeing this device, please contact our Rehabilitation Officer, Miss Lindsay.

ROYAL NORTH SHORE HOSPITAL GAMES

The annual Spinal Unit Games of the R.N.S.H. will be held from Sunday, 28th March to Saturday, 3rd April. The exact timetable is as follows:-

Date	Time	Event	Venue
Sunday, March 28	9:30 am	Snooker	Mt. Wilga Rehabilitation Centre, Manor Road, Hornsby
Sunday, March 28	10:30 am	Weight Lifting	Mt. Wilga Rehabilitation Centre
Sunday, March 28	7:00 pm	Swimming	Killarney Heights Pool, Tralee Avenue, Forestville
Wed. March 31	7:00 pm	Table Tennis (paras)	Gymnasium, Physiotherapy Dept., Royal North Shore Hospital, (Ground Floor Stage 1)
Friday, April 2	9:00 am	Archery Dartchery Table Tennis (quads) Carpet Bowls " Club Throw " Slalom "	Gore Hill Oval - adjoining Royal North Shore Hospital
Saturday, April 3	9:00 am	Wheelchair Dash Marathon Field Events	Gore Hill Oval - adjoining Royal North Shore Hospital
Saturday, April 3	1:00 pm	Slalom Basketball	

Entries required as early as possible.

INSURANCE BROKER

An insurance broker friend of the Association would be interested in helping any [illegible] to obtain the best possible quote [illegible]

RNSH Games Timetable from Paranews, March 1971

"Psychologically it helped me greatly to see that I could do things and achieve satisfaction from them. The sports days were a turning point for me." – Anders Halvorsen, Director 2004-present

At the national level, the 1st National Paraplegic Games were held in Melbourne in 1960, and as the organisation for people with spinal cord injury in NSW, it fell upon the Association to support paraplegic sports in this State.

The Association was able to conduct the 2nd National Paraplegic Games just one year after being established. The Games were conducted 26-29 September 1962 at Gore Hill Oval. The Association developed the program, and arranged for competitors and their escorts to be accommodated at the Repatriation General Hospital in Concord and transported by the Motor Omnibus Employees Association.

Lord Snowdon Electric Wheelchair - $185.00 as new. Please ring Mr. McKevett -9827858.

RESULTS

FOURTEENTH ANNUAL

PARAPLEGIC AND QUADRIPLEGIC GAMES

8th APRIL, 1973 - 14th APRIL, 1973

EVENT	FIRST	SCORE	SECOND	SCORE
Snooker Pairs	J. Martin		J. Kidd	
Weightlifting				
Light F/Weight	T. Mason	110Kl (Aust & NSW Record)		
Novice F/Weight	S. Perkins	75Kl		
Middleweight	V. Renalson	185Kl (Aust Record)	D. Minter	80Kl
Light H/Weight	D. Gertz	100Kl		
Swimming - Class 1B				
Mens Breaststroke	R. Souter	67.8sec		
Class 2				
Men				
Breaststroke	J. Hind	30.1 (Aust Rec)		
Backstroke	J. Hind	25.0 "		
Freestyle	J. Hind	21.6 "		
Ladies				
Breaststroke	C. Meade	50.1		
Backstroke	C. Meade	32.3		
Freestyle	C. Meade	21.6		
Class 3				
Men				
Backstroke	J. Simmonds	64.0		
Breaststroke	J. Simmonds	1.15.1		
Freestyle	R. Jordan	70.5		

RNSH Games results from Paranews 14th July 1973

RNSH Games. It also supported national events, including hosting the 7th National Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Games 12-18 March 1972. Now inclusive of people with quadriplegia, the 1972 games were supported by Holroyd Municipal Council, which offered to stage the games at Merrylands Oval and other venues.

The Paraplegic Sports Club grew to be an important body in its own right, and by the 1970s it was holding its own Annual General Meetings and had its own membership fee.

That same year the Association also sponsored 24 athletes to participate in the First Commonwealth Paraplegic Games, held 10-17 November 1962 in Perth. To this end, the Association raised £1,500. This was a tremendous result for a fledgling organisation.

The Association continued to be involved in wheelchair sports, holding NSW Games annually, often in conjunction with the

ROYAL NORTH SHORE HOSPITAL OF SYDNEY

TWENTY-FIRST PARAPLEGIC & QUADRIPLEGIC GAMES

Thursday 10th April, Friday 11th April, Saturday 12th April and Sunday 13th April 1980

*PLEASE RETURN ENTRY FORM TO: Physiotherapy Department, Spinal Unit, Royal North Shore Hospital of Sydney, St. Leonards N.S.W. 2065

*CLOSING DATE: **FRIDAY, 21st MARCH 1980**

NAME: Mr/Mrs/Miss .....

ADDRESS: ..... Tel: .....

LESION LEVEL: .....

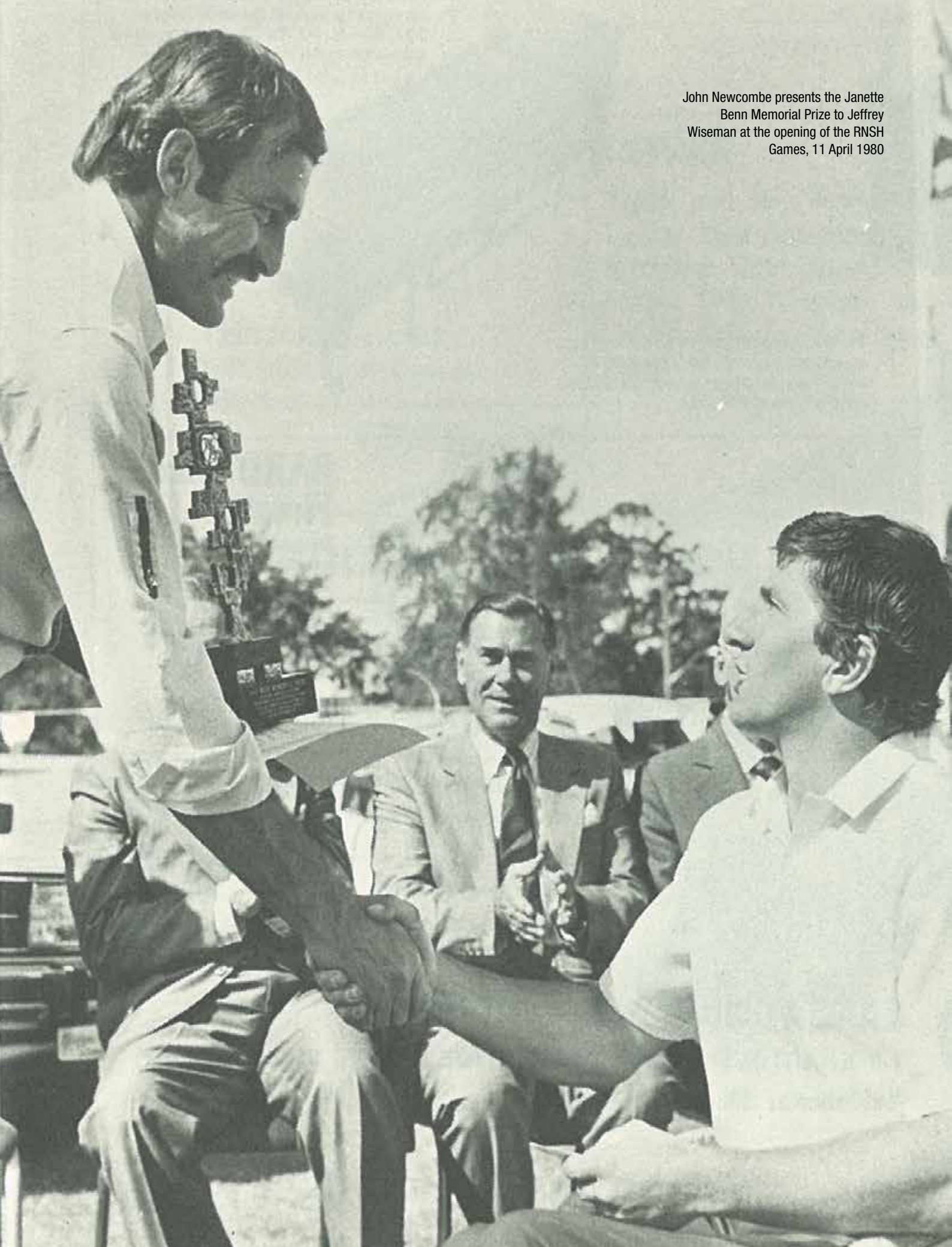
OFFICIAL CLASSIFICATION ..... AGE IF UNDER 16 YEARS .....

*PLEASE TICK EVENT TO BE ENTERED AND TICK IF NOVICE IN THE EVENT

	EVENT	NOV		EVENT	NOV
DISCUS			TRACK EVENT 60 m		
SHOT PUT			QUAD CLUB – Distance THROW – Precision		
JAVELIN Distance			SWIMMING – Crawl		
JAVELIN Precision			– Backstroke		
SNOOKER			– Breaststroke		
SLALOM			– Butterfly		
BASKETBALL			– Medley		
TABLE TENNIS – Singles			Partner if known		
TABLE TENNIS – Doubles					
WEIGHTLIFTING			Division / Present Weight		
CARPET BOWLS			Partner if known		
DARTCHERY			Partner if known		
ARCHERY – Novice round			Quad short metric round		
– Quad Novice round			Advanced metric round		
– Short metric round			Quad advanced metric round		

*ALL ENTRY FORMS MUST BE SIGNED BY COMPETITOR

Signature .....



John Newcombe presents the Janette Benn Memorial Prize to Jeffrey Wiseman at the opening of the RNSH Games, 11 April 1980

PARAPLEGIC SPORTS CLUB COMMITTEE IN 1972-73

PRESIDENT:
Ross Soutar*

VICE PRESIDENT:
Kevin Betts

SECRETARY:
John Kidd

TREASURER:
Don Bennett

COMMITTEEMEN:
Jim Allen, Jim English, Robert Jordan, Terry Mason*, Brian Shirt*

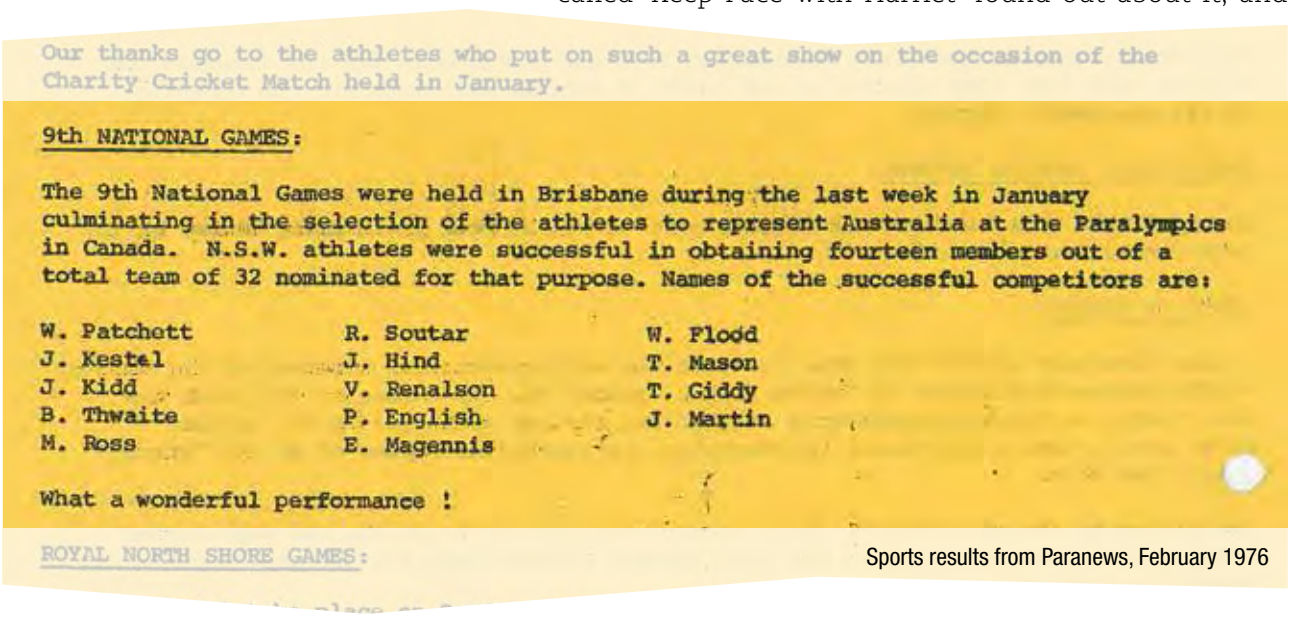
* Denotes a wheelchair user

The Association's newsletter Paranews was the vehicle for relaying news about all its sporting activities, including requests for members to try out for team selections, as shown in the following entry from 24 December 1971:

"Again this year, our State Selection trials will be held in conjunction with the North Shore Hospital Games. Any person wishing to enter the Games is requested to urgently contact Miss Jean MacLeod, Occupational Therapist-in-charge…"

Teams for international events were selected at national games, and then competitors had to raise a significant amount of money in order to make the trip. Mr Spencer, whose sport was table tennis, was selected for the Stoke Mandeville Games held in July 1977. Along with other competitors, Mr Spencer approached businesses in order to try to raise the $2,350 they each required for tour expenses, and it appears that word got around.

"The producers of a new daytime show on Channel 10 called 'Keep Pace with Harriet' found out about it, and



Our thanks go to the athletes who put on such a great show on the occasion of the Charity Cricket Match held in January.

9th NATIONAL GAMES:

The 9th National Games were held in Brisbane during the last week in January culminating in the selection of the athletes to represent Australia at the Paralympics in Canada. N.S.W. athletes were successful in obtaining fourteen members out of a total team of 32 nominated for that purpose. Names of the successful competitors are:

W. Patchett	R. Soutar	W. Flodd
J. Kestel	J. Hind	T. Mason
J. Kidd	V. Renalson	T. Giddy
B. Thwaite	P. English	J. Martin
M. Ross	E. Magennis	

What a wonderful performance !

ROYAL NORTH SHORE GAMES:

Sports results from Paranews, February 1976

they invited me onto the show," said Mr Spencer. "They got me to play table tennis and filmed it on camera. Then a man from the Alcan Australia company presented me with a return ticket to London."

Grateful to have had the opportunity to participate in the Games, Mr Spencer said, "It was a wonderful experience. It was the Queen's Silver Jubilee. I got to meet Prince Charles, who flew in by helicopter, and I met many other good people."

Although Mr Spencer did not win a medal at the Games, he received more than adequate compensation on the occasion of his visit to his hometown of Newport in the Welsh County of Gwent, and a reunion

with his mother and many friends.

Sydney played host to the Far East and South Pacific Games for the Disabled (FESPIC Games), 20-26 November 1977. The Hon. Malcolm Fraser, Prime Minister, opened the Games, followed by a display of wheelchair basketball and then the first of the competition matches.

Fifteen countries were represented, with the athletes comprising 43 visually impaired people, 82 amputees, and 185 wheelchair users.

The FESPIC Games were held at Merrylands Oval, with the support of the Municipality of Holroyd, the City of Parramatta and the Shire of Baulkham Hills. (The Mayor of Holroyd, Bob Devlin, was a keen supporter of people with disabilities and in 1986 he joined the Association's Board.)

John Spencer on the television show 'Keep Pace with Harriet', Channel 10, 1977

As a result of its involvement in sports, the Association was able to encourage its members to become active participants, as shown in the following extract from Paranews May/June 1980:

The Australian Team for the International Stoke Mandeville Games, 1979

The Hon. Malcolm Fraser, Prime Minister, and Dr John Grant, ParaQuad NSW President, greet Dr Nakamura, Head of the Japanese contingent at the FESPIC Games, 1977.

The FESPIC Games, 1977

"Anyone for tennis? A demonstration clinic and a workshop clinic for wheelchair tennis was brought to our attention by the two visiting Americans, Tim Worth and Brad Parks. World champion tennis player, John Newcombe, invited Tim and Brad to Australia… A match was programmed during the Royal North Shore Games, and judging by the enthusiasm of the paras and quads who took part, it could easily become a new sporting event for us to become involved in! If you are interested in trying your skill as a tennis player, then call the Sports Secretary…"

By the early 1980s the Association's Sports Sub Committee had become known as the Wheelchair Sports Club, which worked increasingly on its own. The Club organised events and training programs and selected representative teams, however the Association still provided the administrative and fundraising support.

After hosting the national games 7-14 January 1984, which involved about 200 athletes, the Wheelchair Sports Club wanted to develop and expand in its own right. Separating amicably, this new organisation became known as Wheelchair Sports NSW, and was officially recognised by the Australian Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Sports Federation as the body responsible for wheelchair sport in this State.

Mr Betts had a significant role to play in the establishment of Wheelchair Sports NSW, and is known by them as the 'Father of Wheelchair Sport' in this State.

"Kevin Betts was a legend," said Jeff Simmonds, who was encouraged to participate in competitive sports for people with paraplegia because of Mr Betts. "He devoted his life to people in wheelchairs; he did so much for so many people, and he loved being involved."

The People

Jeff Simmonds

It was 1965 and Jeff Simmonds was a 21 year-old playing first grade Rugby League for the North Sydney Bears when he suffered a spinal cord injury while on a tour of North Queensland.

Jeff Simmonds on his way to the Paralympic Games in Israel, 1968 (Courtesy Mr Simmonds)

Sustaining paraplegia, Mr Simmonds spent the next six months at St Vincent's Hospital in the Orthopaedic Ward (as RNSH was full), then a medical condition shortly after discharge landed him back in hospital, this time at RNSH, where he learnt how to care for himself.

While at St Vincent's, Kevin Betts visited Mr Simmonds and encouraged him to get involved in sports for people with paraplegia. "Kevin was the Team Manager for the Paralympic team and he had heard about my accident, so he wanted to get me back into sport," he said.

Entering into a rigorous training schedule with morning swims every day before work, Mr Simmonds went on to represent Australia in breaststroke and backstroke at the 1968 Paralympic Games and the 1970 Commonwealth Paraplegic Games, achieving a silver medal for breaststroke both times and bronze medals for backstroke and the individual relay in 1970.

"Being at the Games was a pretty moving experience," said Mr Simmonds. "It was great to see 3,000 wheelchair athletes at the Olympic Games Opening Ceremony, and it felt good to compete in sport again."

"I lost to the same English bloke twice, he was too good."

Active in the Association's sporting arm, he was Secretary of the Sports Club for several years. He also played basketball and later tennis, becoming Secretary of the Wheelchair Tennis Club.

Still passionate about Rugby League, Mr Simmonds worked for the North Sydney Leagues Club for 45 years. As Coaching Director for the Club, he introduced a rugby league competition for State High Schools on the North Shore, and was also media manager and editor of their magazine, which utilised his professional background in graphic design.

"If it wasn't for sport I wouldn't have made it," said Mr Simmonds. "Getting into sport was the best thing I did."

Ferguson Lodge

Hostel Priority

In the 1960s the only accommodation options for people with spinal cord injury who were unable to live at home were institutions for people with disabilities or aged care facilities.

Some people ended up at Ward 43 at Lidcombe Hospital; a large ward divided in two sections with the nursing bay in the middle and located on the other side of the main entrance. The ward accommodated about 18 or 20 people with mainly spinal cord injury. Lucien Dumont, who resided at Ward 43 for almost two years from mid 1974 after arriving in Australia from France, said that while they did their best, the staff were not specialised in spinal cord injuries, and the accommodation lacked privacy and was less than ideal.

Mr Dumont said, "We had only a simple partition between us, but it was just one big room. You could hear everyone's television set and it was very noisy. At one end there was a door that opened to the verandah leading to the utility room, and it would often be left open at night in winter, so we'd have to call a nurse to close it to keep the cold out. They did their best to care for us and take us on outings, but it was not easy living in one room with more than 17 other people."

Ward 43 was just one of the reasons why the Association felt it was imperative to raise funds for a purpose-built accommodation facility, originally called the 'hostel'.

This was endorsed by respected neurosurgeon Sir Ludwig Guttmann when he visited Australia in 1962. In the Second Annual Report 1962, Mr Ferguson wrote:

"Dr Guttmann was most outspoken in his belief that New South Wales is lagging badly in the facilities for paraplegic care and rehabilitation… he deplored the lack of hostel accommodation… Just prior to leaving Australia, Dr Guttmann rightly told Association officials that they should devote maximum energies to getting a hostel completed…"

Setting monies aside from the beginning, by 1967 the Association's Hostel Fund totalled $11,060. Little did the Association know that it would take more than a million dollars and another 12 years for its dream to come true.

While small fundraising efforts continued, most of the work was done behind the scenes in the many meetings held between the Association and senior Government officials, a campaign spearheaded by Dr Grant.

Initially intending to build at Allambie Heights, having negotiated with the Department of Lands for the long-term lease of some land in 1970, that land was later deemed unsuitable. As an alternative, Dr Storey suggested six hectares of land within the grounds of the Lidcombe State Hospital.

However, to acquire lands within the hospital grounds meant creating an Act of State Parliament. This seemingly insurmountable task was made possible with the support of Mr Waddy, who ensured that the legislation was developed and approved.

In February 1973, Dr Grant reported to the 120 members who attended the Annual General Meeting that he was confident that the NSW Government, through the Health Department, would subsidise the running of the hostel to the extent of $100,000 to $150,000 per annum.

In 1976, after several approaches to the Hon. Malcolm Fraser, Prime Minister, the Federal Government announced a grant of $660,000 towards the building. It was a significant endorsement of the Association's determination, the only problem being that the Association had to make up one third of the total cost.

Mrs Meade and her two children greet Sir Ludwig Guttmann on his visit to Sydney in 1962 (Mrs Meade was the first Australian patient to be treated at the Stoke Mandeville Spinal Injuries Centre)

Newspaper clippings from 1978 about the Hostel

Young cripple's plea to beat boredom

John Harris looking at a model of Ferguson Lodge

IT'S been 10 months since John Harris, 23, became a "geriatric" patient in a nursing home.

By FLORENCE CHONG

The atmosphere and the company depress John, who sorely misses the company of young people.

But to John, a quadriplegic, it was the best thing, knowing that his widowed mother is not well enough to look after him at their home at Lake Illawarra.

It is estimated that up to 60 quadriplegics in NSW are "lying around in geriatric wards in nursing homes" because they have nowhere else to go.

Unlike Victoria and Western Australia, there are no special hostels where they can go if it is not possible to live at home, as they need special facilities and 24-hour nursing care.

"I need two people to lift me in and out of bed," John said today at his suburban nursing home.

"Mum can't do it. I was home for a month and towards the end the strain was making her sick."

John said the main thing about the nursing home that depresses him is that there is nothing to do.

He would like to draw, but there is no space where he could do it comfortably, he said.

"The difference in our age is a problem," he said. "I suppose the main problem is they (the older patients) prefer to sleep most of the time, but I don't."

John admitted to missing people of his age and being unable to talk about things of mutual interest.

Luckily for John and others, Sydney is to have its first hostel for quadriplegics at Lidcombe after 15 years of planning.

The Association of Paraplegics and Quadriplegics is building the million-dollar hostel with a subsidy of $660,000 from the Federal Government.

The association's chief executive, Mr Ashley Coop, said that when completed in September, it will provide long-term and short-term accommodation for 42 to 46 quadriplegics.

Mr Coop said such a hostel is badly needed for the 400 or so quadriplegics in NSW.

The association is appealing to big firms for funds to furnish the rooms, which will cost about $5,500 each.

The rooms will have special beds, cabinet and clothing facilities.

STATE R.L. AID SOUGHT FOR QUADRAPLEGICS

Cabramatta Rugby League Club officials will meet with representatives of NSW Rugby League on Friday to seek support for a hospital being built to treat quadriplegics.

Cabramatta club need the State League's support to launch a $70,000 appeal to furnish the Lidcombe Ferguson Lodge Hospital for quadriplegics.

Work is in progress on the hospital which is expected to be completed by September, Cabramatta club's publicity officer (Mr. Seamus O'Carroll) said.

On Monday club president (Mr. Wayne Avery) and secretary manager (Mr. Bob Jack) met at the hospital site with chief neuro-surgeon at Royal North Shore Hospital (Dr. John Grant).

Welcomed

Dr. Grant is chairman of the Paraplegic, Quadriplegic Association of Australia, which is building the hospital.

He welcomed Cabramatta's suggestion to help the hospital, Mr. O'Carroll said.

"Cabramatta football club have put a motion to the NSW Rugby League to fully support Dr. John Grant in a fund of $70,000," Mr. O'Carroll said.

Fund aim

"The appeal will pay for the furnishing of all rooms of the 44-bed hospital.

"It will provide special beds, air conditioning, carpets and furniture.

"The special beds alone cost $1500 each.

"The hospital will be used by quadriplegics who receive injuries in football, swimming, in a car accident or any other way."

The aim of the fund was to have every league club in the State raise $1500 each, which will be donated to the hospital.

Cabramatta will be the chairman club and oversee the fund.

When the proposed $35,000 is reached a delegation from the club will approach the State Government for funding on a dollar for dollar basis.

Inspired

Dr. Grant's recent address to the Cabramatta club inspired members to seek some way of assisting the association and the new hospital.

He spoke to the club on the incidence of injuries in sport.

Ferguson Lodge Appeal

The Federal Government had agreed to contribute $2 for every $1 that the Association raised to fund Ferguson Lodge. It was an enormous challenge for a charity in the 1970s to raise its contribution, which in the end totalled about $600,000.

"Ferguson Lodge was our icon; it was our first big venture and it was something that we really needed to do."

– Fred Kaad, Director 1966-1998

Mr Kaad directed the fundraising efforts, however, he said it was a whole-of-Board effort, "All of the Board members got involved. Ferguson Lodge was our icon; it was our first big venture and it was something that we really needed to do."

Very proactive in seeking support, the Directors utilised all of their resources and contacts. Mr Kaad recalled, "We made sure to get in touch with our networks and local clubs and businesses. We'd ask if they could help us, did they have

Newspaper clippings from 1978 about the Hostel

Mr Coops shows a model of Ferguson Lodge on the building site at Lidcombe Hospital yesterday.

New centre will help quadriplegics

For 17 years Mr Ashley Coops has dreamed of building a hostel for the quadriplegics of NSW.

But now that his dream is finally taking shape in the grounds of Lidcombe Hospital, he is faced with the task of turning away the donors that the $1.1 million course cannot accommodate.

Mr Coops, a paraplegic for 22 years, is the chief executive officer of the Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association of NSW.

"We could probably fill two Ferguson Lodges in two months," he said yesterday outside the part-finished centre.

He said the number of people becoming paraplegics or quadriplegics in NSW each year had risen from 20 per million population to 25 in the past decade.

He expected the figure to increase further.

There were now at least 5,000 throughout Australia.

The new centre, named after the association's founding chairman, Mr Jack Ferguson, is due to be finished in October.

With beds for 45 it is the first large hostel of its kind in the State.

It will be a permanent home for many of the severely handicapped. For others, it will offer temporary accommodation during a domestic crisis.

The latest aids would be installed, including adjustable electrically-operated beds, special mattresses to prevent sores and electronically-controlled wheelchairs that could be controlled through chin movements.

Cost estimates have risen sharply since a $660,000 Federal Government grant started the project in 1976.

The association has raised and spent $385,000. A further $250,000 is needed.

A public appeal, seeking tax-deductible gifts, will be launched soon.

Companies will be invited to buy beds, worth $2,000 each, for the hostel. Company items or things for a room can be endowed at a cost of $5,000.

The Home With No Stairs is another organisation seeking funds for the rehabilitation of quadriplegics, in a residential/intensive-care unit to be built at Barrow.

The organisation's publicity officer, Mr John Gregory, said yesterday that the unit would meet all the needs of patients — medical, psychological, institutional and job-training.

Clubs rallying to aid appeal

NSW Rugby League Clubs have already contributed $17,000 to the Cabramatta Leagues Club as part of a target of $70,000 to help paraplegics and quadriplegics.

As previously reported in The Champion, Cabramatta Rugby League Club got the backing of the NSW Rugby League to launch a $70,000 appeal to help furnish a special complex for the treatment of paraplegics and quadriplegics at Lidcombe Hospital.

The complex is to be called Ferguson Lodge.

Pictured above is a model of Ferguson Lodge, now being built for the Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association of NSW in the grounds of Lidcombe Hospital.

Plight

Donations to the appeal may be forwarded to Cabramatta Rugby League Club's Sussex Street address.

The Association says the tragic plight of Penrith footballer John Farragher has "again highlighted the dire hardship and special needs of many."

These are people who have similarly suffered damage to their back and spinal cord through motor accidents, sport, or even slipping in the bath.

Other local sporting clubs are rallying to raise funds to help furnish Ferguson Lodge.

LEAGUE, GOLF SUPPORT

A total of $250,000 is needed to furnish and equip the lodge with modern aids and facilities.

Two social golf clubs in the Green Valley area — the Sadleir Kangaroos and Penguin — are donating proceeds from their bi-annual golf day towards the appeal.

The golf day will be at the Antill Park course, Picton, on Sunday, September 24.

The two clubs have set a joint target of $1000 for the appeal.

Donations

Business firms have donated an attractive range of prizes totalling well over $1000 in value to the Green Valley Social golf clubs.

The clubs are raffling the goods — ranging from a color television set to a set of blankets — and the prizes will be drawn on the golf day.

President of Sadleir Kangaroos club (Mr. Brian Regan) said the two clubs would gladly accept donations on behalf of the Ferguson Lodge appeal.

Mr. Regan can be contacted for further information on the golf day and the appeal by phoning 607 6667.

something we could auction or was there anything they could do for us."

Mr Kaad added that it was fortunate that Mr Coyne was Treasurer at the time because, apart from his personal attributes, he was well connected with hotels, commerce and car dealerships and his networking was invaluable to the Board's fundraising efforts.

The Ferguson Lodge Appeal received a lot of print media coverage across all the major newspapers as the Association campaigned for donations. "We put a lot of articles in the papers, and we got a lot of coverage in the local and city papers," said Mr Kaad. The result was that the community got behind the Appeal in a big way in 1978.

The Cabramatta Rugby League Club was a big supporter, organising an appeal to furnish the Lodge and setting themselves a target of $70,000, to which the NSW Rugby League Clubs contributed $17,000, with many businesses and social clubs making up the rest.

On 31 October 1978 the George Leagues Club held the premiere of the Julie Anthony and Barry Crocker Show in honour of the Lodge, attracting 800 people and raising more than $4,000. Then on 18 December 1978, Luna Park organised a Fun Day, charging $2.50 for unlimited rides, with the proceeds going to the Association.

For its part, the Seppelt family donated a bottle of 1878 Seppelt Para Port, which raised $1,700 at auction as well as a significant amount of publicity; the Association made an event out of it, charging $5 for wine tasting before the auction.

These were just a few of the many supporters who rallied behind the Association and the Lodge. The Association's own Silver Wheel Committee and Quest of Nations event also made significant contributions, as did the Golden Stave Foundation.

L-R: Phillip Stephens, Julie Anthony and Pauline English at the Julie Anthony and Barry Crocker Show

The 1878 Seppelt Para Port makes its way through Sydney city to the Commonwealth Bank vault for safekeeping prior to auction

Ferguson Lodge Opened

In October 1977 Enid Grant turned the first sod for the facility at Lidcombe and it would take two years to build. Named Ferguson Lodge in honour of Jack Ferguson, the first President, it was opened by the Hon. Malcolm Fraser, Prime Minister, on 30 March 1979.

With 42 beds either in single or double accommodation and communal bathrooms, Ferguson Lodge utilised the latest facilities in health care and provided specialist nursing around the clock.

Within a week of opening, the first five permanent residents had moved in. They were mostly young people with quadriplegia aged 18 to 35 who had been living at home with ageing parents or living in nursing homes. Over the next two years Ferguson Lodge was filled to capacity with permanent residents.

Enid Grant turns the first sod for Ferguson Lodge, October 1977

Constructing Ferguson Lodge, east elevation, March 1978

Constructing Ferguson Lodge, south elevation, May 1978

Constructing Ferguson Lodge, east wing corridor, July 1978

The Hon. Malcolm Fraser, Prime Minister, opens Ferguson Lodge, 30 March 1979

A milestone in many ways, residents were able to come and go as they pleased and were largely responsible for their own lives, while the around the clock nursing care allowed them to manage work responsibilities in the community, providing them with all the personal care they required according to their individual schedules.

Evan Fraser was one of the first residents. He had been injured in a Rugby Union match in 1977 at the age of 23 and was at RNSH for 11 months. He moved back home once his parents had organised the necessary modifications, but he also wanted his independence.

Mr Fraser said, "I went home once they got the right medical equipment and home modifications done. Then when my parents wanted to go on a holiday I came to Ferguson Lodge for two weeks. I got a bit of freedom and a bit of choice and when my parents got back I decided to stay living at Ferguson Lodge. I didn't want to burden my parents. They were older and had their life together to enjoy."

For someone like Mr Fraser, with high-level quadriplegia, Ferguson Lodge offered the opportunity to be independent from his family, a desire inherent in every young adult. "There were a lot of young people here who wanted to get on with their lives," said Mr Fraser.

Four beds at Ferguson Lodge were allocated for respite care, some of which were used at times for people from regional areas who needed a place to stay for further rehabilitation or to study in Sydney.

Maureen Cook, who became paraplegic after a motorcycle accident in 1973, lived at home with a high degree of independence. However, she found it difficult to manage pressure areas and was admitted to Ferguson Lodge on respite from time to time. For Ms Cook, the opportunity for specialised medical care helped her resume life at home as quickly as possible.

"When I was at home I was running the household and busy with family life so I wasn't taking the time to rest. When my pressure areas broke down I would come to Ferguson Lodge for respite care," said Ms Cook. "It's a different lifestyle but if there's anywhere I need to be other than home Ferguson Lodge would be my choice."

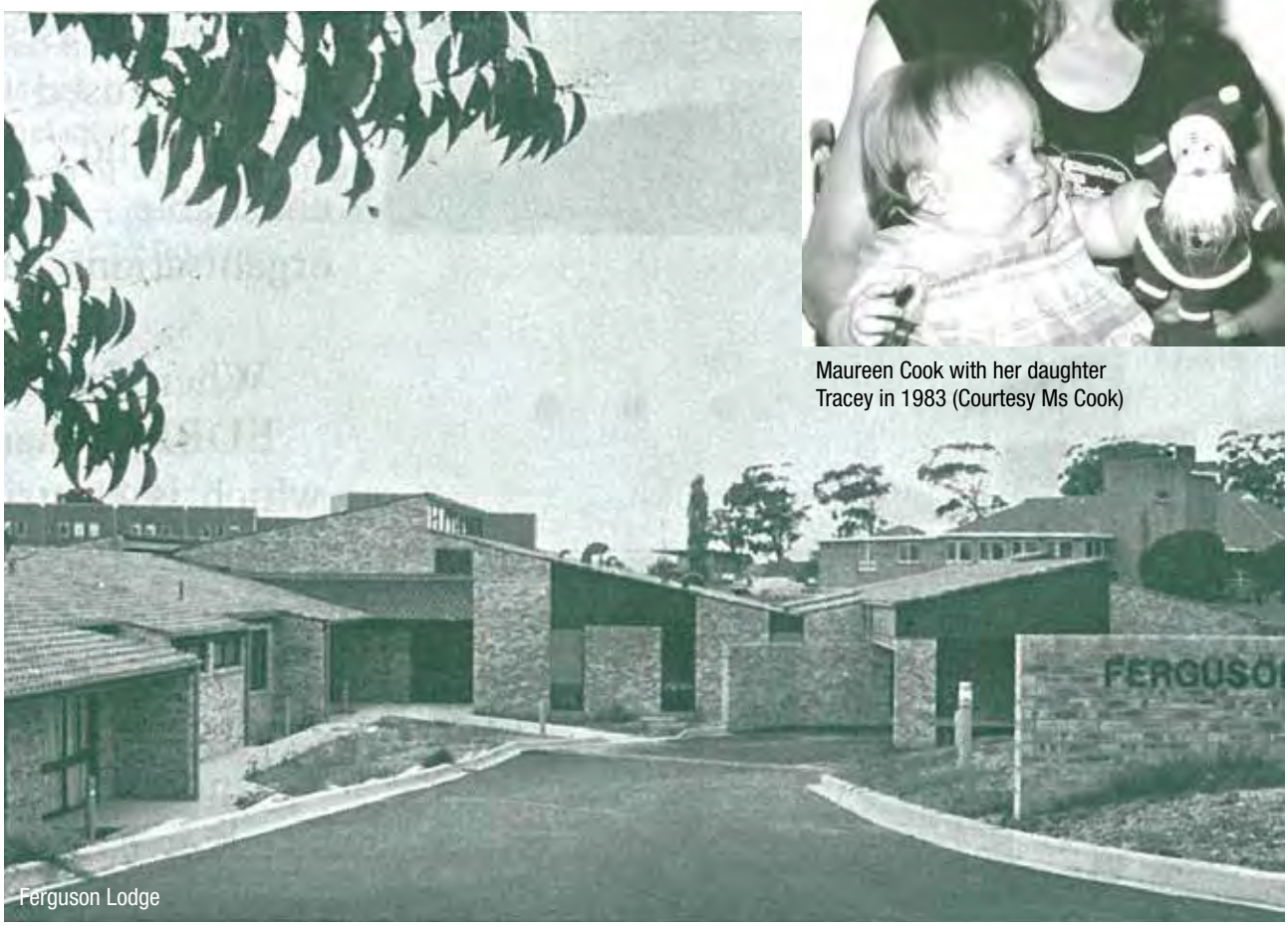
Ferguson Lodge was managed by the Ferguson Lodge Management Committee, which was established by the Board. In the early years it was comprised of Dr Grant, Mr Coyne, Mr Coops and the Lodge's

Director of Nursing under the Chairmanship of Mr Quick. Two residents were also represented on the Committee, and it would meet once a month at the Lodge.

There was also a Ferguson Lodge Admissions Committee that advised the Ferguson Lodge Management Committee and the Board on applicants for admission to the Lodge.

Janette Constable presents a bouquet of flowers to Tamie Fraser at the opening of Ferguson Lodge

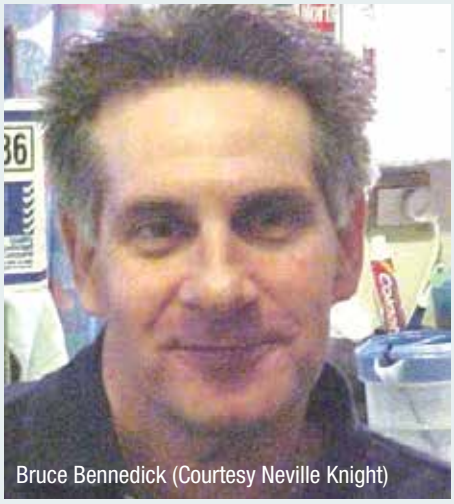
Maureen Cook with her daughter Tracey in 1983 (Courtesy Ms Cook)



Ferguson Lodge

The People

Bruce Bennedick


Bruce Bennedick (Courtesy Neville Knight)

Bruce Bennedick sustained quadriplegia in 1973 as a result of a diving accident at the age of 21. After seven months in rehabilitation, he spent the next seven years living mostly in aged care facilities, with some periods of time spent at home with his parents, who were already in their sixties.

"There were a few other young people with spinal cord injury in the nursing home," recalled Mr Bennedick. "The staff had a bit of empathy towards us but it was still an aged care facility."

Coming to Ferguson Lodge in 1980 was a big relief for Mr Bennedick. "It was a Godsend to me and my family," he said. "Ferguson Lodge gave me a level of independence away from my family and they were much more comfortable knowing that I had somewhere to live for the rest of my life."

With the care offered at Ferguson Lodge, Mr Bennedick was able to carry on with his life again. "Ferguson Lodge supported me with my daily needs and my medical needs, especially when I needed to stay in bed for any period of time. I've always been able to come and go as I pleased, and know that somebody was there to help me whenever I got home. It's been a most independent way of living."

Mr Bennedick had been a technician with Telecom prior to his accident, and after retraining worked as a receptionist with the House With No Steps for more than 20 years. He learnt to drive a modified car and took road trips to Queensland and Port Macquarie. He also travelled overseas four times.

Ferguson Lodge Nursing

A key element of the Ferguson Lodge facility was its specialised 24-hour care, with Registered Nurses rostered on all shifts in order to provide the appropriate medical care and intervention should it be required.

However in the early years spinal nursing was labour-intensive; there was a lot of heavy lifting to transfer residents in and out of bed, and at night the nurses had to turn the residents. The beds were heavy and difficult to manoeuvre despite being electric, and being positioned against a wall, nurses had to move them to perform certain care duties.

While physically demanding, the other side of nursing at Ferguson Lodge was to provide emotional support when needed, and a strong bond formed between staff and residents.

Ferguson Lodge Visiting Medical Officer

People with spinal cord injury have a unique set of medical issues and in order to provide residents of Ferguson Lodge with adequate medical care, Dr Grant wanted to employ a Visiting Medical Officer (VMO) with a good knowledge of spinal cord injuries.

Dr Graham Locke, VMO, Ferguson Lodge (Courtesy Bruce Bennedick)

Dr Graham Locke had been the Registrar of the Spinal Injuries Unit at the Royal North Shore Hospital in 1976 and 1977 before going into General Practice, and was known to Dr Grant. In 1979 Dr Grant asked him to consider being the VMO at Ferguson Lodge. "He said they needed someone who knew one end of a quadriplegic from the other and that I'd be ideal. So I said I'd go and have a look and I've been there ever since."

Dr Locke has been looking after the medical needs of the residents since April 1979. Visiting every Friday morning and receiving calls from Ferguson Lodge every other day, he has developed a high degree of respect within the Ferguson Lodge community, as well as expert knowledge.

"It's almost impossible to teach someone what you've learned over 35 years," said Dr Locke. "It's not book learning. A lot of it is experience and intuition. You can't teach people that unfortunately. You've got to learn it on the job. I enjoy it. It's not ordinary GP type medicine. It's a bit specialised."

The People

Denise Lawler

Registered Nurse Denise Lawler started working at Ferguson Lodge on night shift a week after the facility opened.

Denise Lawler (Courtesy Neville Knight)

While doing her nursing training at St Vincent's Hospital, Mrs Lawler had nursed four people with quadriplegia and then had a personal experience of spinal cord injury when her husband's cousin became paraplegic after a motor cycle accident.

"Suffering a spinal cord injury must be really difficult," said Mrs Lawler. "But it can happen to anyone at any time. I have such admiration for everyone who has made the necessary adjustments to life following their injury once they have come to terms with their disability."

"Family, friends, healthcare professionals and other people with a disability are very helpful to each other and give each other valuable support and encouragement."

Mrs Lawler was on night duty for 20 years while her children were young. The tasks on night shift included manual transfers in and out of bed and repositioning residents throughout the night. In those years residents needed to be turned and repositioned every two to four hours as the mattresses were not specialised. In the mornings she would assist residents with personal care, dressing and preparing them for work.

Mrs Lawler then worked on day duty as Deputy Director of Nursing, later becoming Director of Nursing. Providing 32 years of service to people at Ferguson Lodge, Mrs Lawler said it became her second home. "I've known people since the early days at Ferguson Lodge. They were very special residents and now they are very special friends."

Newcastle Northern Region Branch

With the highest incidence of spinal cord injury per capita in NSW, it was not long before the Newcastle Region raised the attention of the Association.

The catalyst occurred in 1978 when a Newcastle teenager named Alex Sorokowski had a diving accident at Newcastle Baths, and the community rallied around him in what was known as the Paraplegic and Quadriplegic (Alex Sorokowski) Appeal in order to raise money to modify the boy's home.

The Appeal Committee, comprised of Newcastle businessmen, spearheaded the campaign, and a Newcastle nurse named Mary Cleary was also involved.

Mrs Cleary had a son who had become quadriplegic some years earlier, and she understood the needs and requirements of wheelchair users. She was able to offer sound advice to the Appeal Committee, particularly regarding the home modifications that they were preparing to undertake for Mr Sorokowski.

At the time Mrs Cleary was also a member of the Association, and was able to provide feedback to the Board about the level of need in the Hunter Region. It soon became evident that there were more than 100 people living with spinal cord injury in the area who were not receiving adequate levels of community services or support.

Several meetings and discussions between the Association's Board and the Appeal Committee ensued, and it was agreed that a Branch of ParaQuad NSW be established in Newcastle.

The Newcastle Northern Region Branch was officially inaugurated on 27 April 1979, its nucleus being the original committee of businessmen who had formed to help Mr Sorokowski. Its region included the Central Coast up to Port Macquarie, as well as the entire Hunter Valley including the Upper Hunter.

NEWCASTLE/HUNTER VALLEY NEWS

CONCERT: A very successful fund raising concert was held on August 17 at St. Phillips Church of England Hall, Waratah. Guests were entertained by the Leslie Tuxford School of Dancing and the evening raised almost $400. We would like to thank most sincerely John Peschar, Mary Cleary and Cardiff Florist Nursery for their donation of gifts that were raffled during the evening.

FASHION PARADE: A summer fashion parade is being planned for Tuesday, November 13 at the Western Suburbs Leagues Club, Lambton, commencing at 8.00 p.m. Ladies' and mens' fashions have been generously supplied by Dawn Maree Boutique and Kev McDougall Mens' Wear, both of Mayfield. We would like to express our appreciation to the Western Suburbs Leagues Club for allowing us the use of their hall and also to the people who are working to make this function a success. Tickets are available from the Newcastle Office, and we look forward to greeting all members and friends that evening.

GIFT SHOP: To cover the everyday running of the Branch, a Gift Shop has begun operating from the Office. One of our money making schemes for the Gift Shop is the re-cycling of greeting cards. The idea is to gather Birthday, Christmas, Get Well, Wedding, Engagement or any sort of card, remove the centre and replace it with our own insert. We also think that craft items, such as macrame, knitted and crochet goods and plants could be sold. Your assistance would be appreciated by Dawn at the Newcastle Office.

FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP: This Group had its first successful meeting at the home of Mrs. Mary Cleary, 36 Curry Street, Merewether on Wednesday August 15. The ladies who attended have shown a keen interest in the Association and see their role as being –

1. Mutual Support Group.
2. To help families face problems associated with a disabled member of the family.
3. To discuss the needs of the disabled and their families.
4. To raise funds to help the Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association of N.S.W.

Their immediate project is –

1. To compile a list of wheelchair accessible dentists in the Newcastle and surrounding area.
2. To gather recipes for a Cookbook, which would be available for sale.
3. To co-ordinate goods and gifts which would stock a street stall to be held in Hamilton on October 20.
4. To help with the organisation of social outings for wheelchair members.

People interested in supporting this Group or requiring further details are invited to contact Mrs. Cleary on (049) 63 2436.

GENERAL INFORMATION

*Our Association has been invited to fill a position on the Advisory Committee for the FM Radio programme for the Print Handicapped, which can be heard on Monday and Wednesday mornings at 9.30 a.m. on 2NUR–FM (Newcastle University Radio).

This programme is designed to bring interesting news items to people who cannot read for themselves. Obviously, this is intended to meet the needs of a blind person, but the organisers feel that some physically disabled, who cannot handle a newspaper would also benefit.

We need to know from you, the members, if this programme could be relevant and will benefit you. If so, what type of material would you like to hear. Please forward comments to the Newcastle Branch by letter or telephone. *Continued Page 16*

Newcastle/Hunter Valley News from Paranews, September/October 1979

Expansion and Diversification

1980–2000

Environment

By 1980 the treatment and rehabilitation prospects of people with quadriplegia had significantly improved, and their life expectancies were not greatly different to those of people with paraplegia or the able-bodied population.

There was also a growing recognition that people with disabilities had similar needs and abilities to their able-bodied peers and that they had a right to manage their own lives.

This new awareness was crystallised in 1981 with the International Year of Disabled Persons (IYDP) and it gained momentum throughout the 1980s.

The issues faced by wheelchair users were touted as a particular point of contention. From missing out on a football match because wheelchairs were not allowed into stadiums, to pleas for accessible public transport, Australians began calling for the rights of wheelchair users to be acknowledged.

Australian Governments responded with numerous policy initiatives, including the funding of equipment for people with disabilities. Public buildings were modified for accessibility, and new wheelchair accessible taxis and buses became available. The medical model had been ousted, and now the rights model for disability services had taken its place.

The most important piece of legislation for the Association's operations was the Commonwealth Disability Services Act 1986 and later the NSW Disability Services Act 1995. The Commonwealth legislation established a comprehensive framework for the funding and

POLICY REFORM TO ASSIST PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

1981
Concessional rates for taxi services through the NSW Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme.

1981
Introduction of wheelchair accessible taxis in NSW.

1982
Provision of equipment, aids and appliances through the NSW Program of Appliances for Disabled People Scheme (PADP).

1982
Home Care Service of NSW formalised provision of personal care and other support services to people with disabilities in the Community Welfare Act 1982.

1983
Introduction of Commonwealth Government's Mobility Allowance.

1986
Provisions for employment related services and attendant care to assist people with disabilities to live more independent lifestyles and be better integrated into their local communities through the Commonwealth Disability Services Act 1986.

1986
Provisions for Government-funded home-based care for people with disabilities in the Home and Community Care (HACC) Program.

1987
Anti-discrimination legislation for equal employment opportunities through the Equal Employment Opportunity (Commonwealth Authorities) Act 1987.

1992
Subsidies for continence aids through the Commonwealth Continence Aids Assistance Scheme (CAAS).

1992
Requirement for accessible public transport, public buildings, education and information services through the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992.

1993
Provisions for accommodation and other services to people with disabilities and provisions for increased independence and integration into the community for people with disabilities through the NSW Disability Services Act 1993.

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR, PARANEWS, JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1980

I've been a paraplegic for just over three years. Three years of ups and downs. A wandering mind controlling the path I take sometimes I wonder why people cannot accept the fact that we have the same sort of will to live as they do, we have the same right to be happy!…We're still the same person as we were before we became paralysed. Nothing can take that away from us. We're still a human being and we have the will to live and be happy…So what do you reckon! Why not get out there and show them. Do what you want with life, don't let it hassle you too much. There's one important thing to remember, in life, and that's if you don't ever try something, you'll never know whether you can do it or not…

– SHANE STRONG

PEOPLE IN THE SUBURBS

Public attitude is maimed man's biggest handicap

By KATHERINE KIZILOS

When Eddie Ryan asked the Welfare Department to finance his social sciences course at LaTrobe University they told him to become a switchboard operator or a lift attendant.

And Mr Ryan had another battle to fight.

He was used to them. Since an explosives accident blinded him and maimed his hands so he could not read braille, Mr Ryan had discovered his biggest handicap was society's attitude towards him.

With the help of friends who read his lecture notes on to tapes, Mr Ryan received his Bachelor of Arts degree earlier this year. He is now enrolled for a post-graduate diploma in criminology at the University of Melbourne, which he calls, "a bloody useless thing, it qualifies me to be a mafia consultant".

What Mr Ryan really wants to do is to reach the community that the handicapped are not helpless.

"The Hospitals and Charities Act says a disabled person is incapable of running their own affairs," he says. "The Act says beneficiaries are not allowed to sit on the board of the institution they are in.

"But the only experts I know on what the disabled want and can do are the disabled themselves. When I went to the welfare department about my course I knew better than those paid 'experts' what I could do."

Since his accident 10 years ago Mr Ryan, 37, has had about 130 operations. In 1975 he hitch-hiked around New Zealand with his guide-dog. He has also travelled to Western Australia, and gone back-packing around Tasmania.

Mr Ryan says "The community's efforts towards the disabled are pathetic fund-raising appeals, where the disabled are used purely as physical objects to raise money.

"We're not just a gimmick to raise funds.

"I know a couple of spastic girls who don't like the idea of The Spastic Society sponsoring the perfect body with their Miss Victoria quest. The quest tells people that they should judge others on their beauty. But how do those values affect the disabled women the quest is supposed to help?"

It is the International Year of the Disabled next year, but Mr Ryan does not believe that anyone organising the year "can claim the right to speak for the disabled".

He says self-help groups, such as the Disabled Person Collective Action Group, which he founded in 1975, were not invited by the Government to have representatives on the Victorian International Year of the Disabled Committee.

"The Government refuse to accept responsibility for disabled people," he says.

Before his accident, Mr Ryan was a novice Buddhist monk in Thailand, a waiter in Greece, a veterinary worker in India and "I suppose the accident was good in a way, it helped me grow a bit," he said.

Eddie Ryan at his home with the handicapped helpless.

Why no provisio for disabled?

from M. Sheehan

someone in authority please explain why there is no adequate thoughtful provision for disabled people in wheelchairs and bedpans at either the MCG or Park, Waverley?

Through the VFL and Richmond Football Club we were advised to enter the MCG at Gate for the Richmond/Carlton match, and go to Bay 23 which was half-way round the ground. Getting to Bay 23 was difficult enough, but once there viewing was impossible owing to it being a standing area. Should it rain there is absolutely no protection. For the invalid relative in our care this would have been a disastrous day but for the assistance from helpers at Dame Mary Herring Centre and ground staff, thanks to them and to all people working in official capacities who wanted to help but were powerless to do so.

It seems incredible that the League showpiece Park, designed by planners — has no s cover area set aside cases.

Taking into accou mous crowd at thi match, is there any the handicapped shou prived of attending able comfort, such a acle, which so many for granted and accept our weekend activities

Recently, the organi Royal Military Tattoo magnificent display at the MCG providing an undercover area with excellent view

EASY TRAVEL FOR DISABLED URGED

TWO projects are under way to make it possible for the disabled to travel easier and wider in Australia.

This was announced by the Minister for Industry and Commerce, Mr Lynch, as part of the UN International Year of Disabled Persons in 1981.

Mr Lynch

The Australian Council for rehabilitation of Disabled is undertaking projects on behalf of the Department of Industry and Commerce. The first is a study of facilities at hotels and motels for the disabled.

modation guide for the disabled can be produced.

The second project, the preparation of a booklet listing accommodation standards and facilities desirable for disabled persons, will provide a valuable guide for the accommodation industry.

Mr Lynch said that 9 per cent of Australians should not be precluded from travel solely because physically

Plea on cab fares

The Victorian Opposition transport spokesman, Mr Crabb, today called for reduced taxi fares for the handicapped.

"Handicapped people are often dependent on taxis and the payment of full fares is a very great burden on them," Mr Crabb said.

"I am sure many taxi companies would carry handicapped people at a discount if it was permitted by the government," he said.

He said he had written to the Transport Minister, Mr Macfellan, asking for a change in regulations.

Rights on wheels

MY handicapped son in a wheelchair was among those who missed the Collingwood-Richmond match because the MCG decided it would be too crowded for wheelchairs. This attitude just stinks. Next year is the Year of the Disabled. The disabled do have rights, as much as anyone. — **Mrs Moira Thomas** (West Heidelberg).

What it's like to be disabled

You may not know what it is like to be blind, deaf, paralysed, or to have any irreversible disability.

But there are many who do suffer from one or more of these and, as a result, are plucked from normal living.

To give people an opportunity to find out how able these people are, the second year students of the physical education, health and recreation department at Nedlands College of Advanced Education have organised a community project.

They have called it Integrate 80—Who's Handicapped? and it will be on at the college on Sunday, June 8.

Disabled people from various associations have co-operated in the organisation of events.

The project is part of the students' study course which involves learning the art of communication.

This particular group of students chose the topic of integration because it has a great significance in today's society. The students are hoping their efforts will help in some way to mend the fast diminishing rift between disabled people and the general community.

provision of support services for people with disabilities, and underpinned the development of all future disability services across Australia.

Significantly, there was a move away from institutional-based care to community-based services designed to assist people with disabilities to live independently. The advances in technology were able to support this, with increasing access to personal computers, electric wheelchairs, electric beds and other innovations in equipment.

People with quadriplegia were liberated by the increased availability of motorised wheelchairs, which allowed them a greater level of independence, and ventilation was now available to sustain life in people with high-level quadriplegia. Increasingly they too desired to live back in the community, which put even greater demands on services and equipment design.

1981 – INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF DISABLED PERSONS

In 1981, the International Year of Disabled Persons, there was a growing recognition within the wider community that people with disabilities had similar needs and abilities to their able bodied peers. There was also a growing awareness by people with disabilities of their right to manage their own lives.

Buoyed by this paradigm shift, the Association stepped up its support for individuals wanting to live independent lifestyles.

Having been originally largely focused on providing for and advocating for the medical and practical needs of people with spinal cord injury, the Association's focus now shifted to empowering people to live the lives they wanted despite their disability, and it became more involved in lobbying Governments to provide appropriate services.

The Sun, Sat., May 24, 1980 — Page 15*

9 per cent left at the barrier

NINE per cent of the population were forbidden access to schools, places of employment, the footy, restaurants, pubs and shops, Ms Edith Hall said yesterday.

The Sun, Thursday, May 29, 1980 — Page 17*

Easier for disabled . . .

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s the Association underwent dramatic expansion, with the most significant changes occurring in 1988 when it became a major provider of personal care services, and in 1992 when it created the Community Services Division and it secured a Commonwealth Government contract to supply continence aids to residents of NSW/ACT via the Continence Aids Assistance Scheme (CAAS) through its PECS commercial arm.

Through the Community Services Division the Association developed programs with a view to helping people rebuild their lives, restore their confidence and assist them to live as independently as possible. The Association employed staff with backgrounds in spinal nursing, social work and occupational therapy to provide specialised health care to members and clients.

Specialist nurses and a physiotherapist were employed at Ferguson Lodge, along with the Visiting Medical Officer.

This page and opposite page: Newspaper articles from the early 1980s supporting the rights of people with disabilities.

Governance and Management

THE BOARD IN 1981

PRESIDENT
Dr. J.M.F. Grant

VICE PRESIDENTS
Mr. E.J. Quick
Mr. F.P. Kaad*

TREASURER
Mr. R.R. Elder

DIRECTORS
Mr. R. K. Atkinson
Mr. F.P. Coyne
A/Prof. R.J. Jones
Miss N.M. Joyce
Mr. N.T. Kidd
Mr. D. Montgomery
Dr. B.W. Norington*
Mr. E.D. Plomley
Mr D. Ross
Mr P. Silver*
Mr J. Walsh*

THE BOARD IN 1991

PRESIDENT
Dr. J.M.F. Grant

VICE PRESIDENTS
Mr. F.P. Kaad*
Mr. F.P. Coyne

TREASURER
Mr. N.T. Kidd

DIRECTORS
Miss A. Adams
Mr. K. Atkinson
Judge R.T.H. Barbour
Mr. D. Brigden
Mr. R.W. Devlin
Mrs. E. Higgins
Ms. M. Ireland*
A/Prof. R.F. Jones
Miss M.J. McPhail
Mr. E.D. Plomley
Mr. J. Rolfe*
Mr. B.A. Tory*

President and Board

Dr John Grant remained in his role as President throughout this era and the Board continued to be highly involved in the management of the Association, with the Directors ensuring that there was no frivolous spending or unnecessary outlays of finances. In this way, the Association was able to continue to expand and provide services for its members.

In quite an extraordinary fashion, Directors who had served on the Board from the 1960s were still serving as Directors into the 1990s, and the President for several decades was in fact the Founder. Unlike other organisations, the Association had very stable and harmonious governance, and this facilitated its ability to achieve significant outcomes on behalf of its members.

Testimony to their years of outstanding service and commitment, five of the Directors who were active in the 1960s were made Life Members for their contributions to the Association.

However, the end of this era heralded a shift in leadership that would be seen in the new millennium. The year 1998 represented the beginning of a changing of the guard on the Board when long-serving Vice Presidents Fred Kaad and Frank Coyne were not re-elected. This unexpected outcome arose largely from a clause in Corporations Law at the time that deemed anyone over the age of 72 had to receive 75 percent of the votes in order to be re-elected.

Then in 1999 Dr Grant was challenged as President for the first time in the history of the organisation. The challenge came from then treasurer, Dr Edward Watts (PhD), a person with quadriplegia who had joined the Board in 1996. Although Dr Grant won the election, the stage was set for significant changes to leadership in the future.

LIFE MEMBERS OF PARAQUAD NSW 1961–2011

DR JOHN MF GRANT AO OBE
Founder, Director 1961-1969, President 1969-2000

FRED KAAD OBE*
Director 1966-1998

JOHN E. QUICK (DECEASED)
Director 1960s-1980s

NEVILLE KIDD
Director 1967-1991

FRANCIS (FRANK) P COYNE OAM (DECEASED)
Director 1968-1998

MARY CLEARY
Founder, Newcastle Northern Region Branch

BOB DUNCAN*
CEO, 1983-2002

* Denotes a wheelchair user

From Secretary to CEO

From 1980 Ashley Coops began to take long periods of leave due to illness, and Bob Duncan absorbed many of his responsibilities.

Not long after, Dr Grant asked Mr Duncan to take on the responsibilities of Secretary. Mr Duncan said, "When I got the call from Dr Grant I wasn't driving yet and I didn't think I could do justice to the position."

Ashley Coops (front), Bob Duncan (far right) and staff celebrating the Association's 21st birthday

As a result, Jerry Williamson assisted the Secretary, but when Mr Coops resigned in 1983, the Board again asked Mr Duncan to fill the role, which was now to be called Chief Executive Officer (CEO) rather than Secretary. By this time Mr Duncan had gained his licence and felt capable of taking on the role of CEO. Mr Williamson was later appointed General Manager Operations.

Now a full-time position, Mr Duncan remained in that role until 2002 – a period of enormous growth for the Association – and he was instrumental in developing the Association's Community Services Division.

L-R: Errol Hyde, Enid Grant, Dr John Grant and Richard Cordukes at the Garden Party at Government House for the Association's 21st birthday, 23 March 1982

Mr Coops, one of the original driving forces of the Association, passed away in 1987. He left a legacy of tireless service and an indelible mark on the Association and all the people he helped along the way.

In the mid 1990s Mr Duncan and Manager Community Services Chris Campbell identified some key gaps in the Association's organisational structure. In line with best practice of the day, they wanted to employ a Human Resources Officer in order to ensure staff were being appropriately compensated and supported, and also to deal with occupational health and safety issues. As they were constantly preparing submissions to the Government, they also wanted a dedicated Policy Development Officer. However, the Board was not prepared to fund these positions at the time.

While this did not necessarily create tension, it was an indication of changing times and the need for the Association to keep moving forward in all areas of its operations.

The People

Bob Duncan

In 1976 Bob Duncan injured his spinal cord in a Rugby Union match while playing for Port Hacking, and ended up spending six months in hospital.

Mr Duncan learnt about the Association through its Chief Welfare Officer, Leigh Hodgkinson, who visited him in hospital and told him about the job opportunities there.

Bob Duncan, CEO
1983–2002

The medical professionals discouraged him from working during the first two years post injury, but for Mr Duncan having a job was more important. As soon as he could, he went to see Ashley Coops who found him a position in the equipment supply area, and he began working part-time straight away and full-time from 1978.

With a Degree in Economics and a good understanding of business, he gradually started taking on more responsibilities. It was Mr Duncan's idea to begin charging a premium on equipment when on-selling to Government agencies.

When Mr Coops fell ill, Mr Duncan took on several of his responsibilities, and when he resigned in 1983, the Board asked Mr Duncan to fill the vacancy.

After starting work in the equipment supply area, Mr Duncan became CEO just a few years later. One of the first people with quadriplegia in Australia to be employed as CEO of an organisation, Mr Duncan believes that being in a wheelchair helped him to be a more effective manager of the Association.

"I was the CEO and I had a responsibility to administer the Association to the best of my ability, but the other side of it was that, as a person with quadriplegia, I could empathise with the members and see where the gaps were in the system. Being quadriplegic was an advantage."

During his time as CEO, Mr Duncan was elected to the first Disability Council of NSW in 1984-1987; the Management Committee of the Physical Disability Council of NSW 1993-1998; and the Australian Council for Rehabilitation of Disabled (ACROD) NSW Management Committee 1991-2000.

Membership

Up to the early 1980s membership was less than 2,000, but over the next decade it grew rapidly, peaking at around 6,000 members. The annual membership fee in the 1980s was $5.

The Association undertook its second survey of members in 1983 in order to establish the characteristics of its membership and ascertain whether their special needs were being met in the community. In order to conduct a through analysis, the Association employed a Research Officer, and it was assisted with advice from the Department of Youth and Community Services.

PH. 69·6388

either Association so that catering can be arranged.

MEMBERSHIP FEE

A reminder that on April 1, 1982, membership fees to the Paraplegic & Quadriplegic Association fall due!

MEMBERSHIP FEE ONLY $5.00 (FIVE DOLLARS)

Please return 'Fee' form (below) with your cheque.

NAME: .....

ADDRESS: .....

..... POST CODE: .....

PHONE NO: .....

Please forward to:

THE PARAPLEGIC & QUADRIPLEGIC ASSOCIATION OF N.S.W.
P.O. Box 2, South Hurstville, N.S.W. 2221

Paraquad News 3 *March/April, 1982*

Two of the findings in particular were consistent with the changing environment of the day. Firstly, of the members surveyed, more than 50 percent indicated that they would prefer to live at home with attendant care or medical support, and less than 10 percent said they would rather live in a hostel, however only one third of those currently living in hostel accommodation would consider moving out if attendant care were available.

Secondly, while respondents viewed the Association favourably, there was discontent that it should be more actively advocating on behalf of people with disabilities, in particular, more politically involved.

By the mid 1990s, it was decided that people no longer had to become members in order to purchase personal care supplies at discounted prices; only those who required products from the limited range of National Health Scheme items were required to become members if they wanted these items for free. As a result, membership began to decline.

Headquarters

In the early 1980s, the NSW Department of Main Roads planned on cutting the Association's front property in half in order to widen King Georges Road. But with the help of Mr Coyne the Association was able to negotiate with the Department the sale of both the property on King Georges Road and the adjoining property at the back.

The ParaQuad Centre and RSL Memorial Rose Garden at Homebush

With the properties now sold, the Association had to find new headquarters. Active in Legacy, Mr Coyne heard about the RSL Club in Homebush that needed a tenant for its premises.

After amicable discussions, the two organisations drew up a 12-month lease agreement, which allowed the RSL to keep an office at the back and use the meeting room when necessary. It also obligated the Association to maintain the Memorial Rose Garden at the front of the building. The inference was that if all went well then the RSL would sell the premises to the Association.

In December 1983 the Association moved all its operations including the equipment supply store to the RSL Club building at 33-35 Burlington Road Homebush, naming it the ParaQuad Centre. The relocation was assisted by St George and Sutherland Shire Apex Clubs.

A much larger building than the original two houses, it offered an opportunity for expansion. In the new building the store originally operated out of a computer room that had been erected for a previous tenant. As sales increased the store was moved into what had been the auditorium.

Throughout 1984 various alterations were made to the building, and the RSL was especially cooperative in this matter. The toilets and kitchen were modified, there was work undertaken to the floor in the auditorium, changes were made to provide a Board Room, and some structural changes were made in the office area.

When the lease was due for renewal, the RSL offered the Association its property for sale, with the proviso that it keep its office and be allowed to use the meeting room for a peppercorn rental of $1 per year. Fortuitously, the sum of money that the Association negotiated for its new Homebush premises was essentially equivalent to the money it had earned from the sale of its previous headquarters.

Over the years a good working relationship developed between the two organisations. Members of the RSL offered to help members of the Association when needed, and would regularly assist with mail outs – stopping for a beer after the job was done! For its part, the Association continued to maintain the Memorial Rose Garden until the plaques could be moved to a public memorial maintained by Strathfield Council.

L-R: Mrs Zammit, Lady Rowland, President Dr Grant, Governor of NSW Air Marshal Sir James Rowland, Mrs Grant and Mr Zammit at the official opening of Homebush headquarters in 1985

Communication and Information

Newsletter

The Association's newsletter becomes the magazine, ParaQuad News, in 1980

In 1980 the Association's newsletter was renamed ParaQuad News and it began being printed as a larger magazine-style publication, A4 in size, although still a bi-monthly and printed in black and white.

No longer just an update on the Association's activities, it was now the voice of a leading organisation for people with disabilities. Much less chatty and personable in style yet still containing staff profiles, member stories and classified ads, the magazine was more professional and stories were geared towards the latest developments in Government policies and programs, Government benefits, and medical and social issues related to people with spinal cord injury.

Wherever the Association found out new information to help its members get the most out of life – from books on cassette at the local library to para-biking to tips on air travel – this would also be relayed via its newsletter. It also informed members about what opportunities were available to them through related organisations.

Continually seeking contributions from members, the newsletter also incorporated member input wherever possible. With the establishment of the Newcastle Branch, ParaQuad News also featured Newcastle and the Hunter Region from 1980 until the Branch began printing its own newsletter in 1988.

The lighter side of ParaQuad News

An interesting addition was the presence of a series of cartoons poking fun at issues to do with living with spinal cord injury in an able-bodied world, a reflection of the new awareness post the International Year of Disabled Persons.

By the late 1980s the newsletter was being produced as a quarterly publication. It was prepared in-house, sent away for printing, and then returned to the Association for despatch. There was also the coordination of a limited amount of advertising. This was altogether quite a task for people without expertise in magazine publishing, so when a man came to knock on the door saying that he could produce it for free, Mr Duncan was interested.

"A man came to us one day and said his company could produce the same magazine at no cost to us, and that we might even get a couple of hundred dollars out of it. He said they would take care of the advertising and that we wouldn't have to give him a cent," said Mr Duncan. "I was glad to get rid of the thing but of course we still had to give him the articles."

"Some months later a policeman came into my office. He dropped four copies of the last edition of ParaQuad News on my desk. He said, 'Do you realise that there are four copies of the same edition?' Everything was the same except the advertising, which was different in each one. Clearly the people we were dealing with were making money by fraudulently selling advertising space, and we were legitimising the whole thing by letting them use our name! The policeman said, 'What do you intend doing about it?' Of course we went back to doing it ourselves. Apparently it was a big scam and other organisations had also been caught out."

The upside of the experience with the scammers was that the Association became focused on getting advertising that was relevant to its membership. Producing the magazine had become costly and the advertising revenue they were subsequently able to generate became an integral part of the publication process from then on.

Public Relations

By the 1980s the Association had begun to take on the role of educating the public about wheelchair users, a reflection of the community's heightened interest in people with disabilities.

The Association was involved in late night shopping nights, organised primarily through Grace Bros, which highlighted the special needs of people in wheelchairs. A very well received initiative, one shopping night received the following comment in Paranews May/June 1980:

On behalf of the disabled members, Paranews wishes to thank most sincerely Mrs J. Sinclair (Public Relations Officer, Grace Bros.), the Management and Staff of Grace Bros. at Chatswood who made the late night shopping evening on April 29 such a marvellous success! Phones at the Association rang constantly on Wednesday morning with members expressing their gratitude to Grace Bros. for allowing them the opportunity to shop with such ease. It is indeed heartening to know that a large company like Grace Bros. is considering and taking an interest in the needs of the disabled…"

On 20-24 September 1982 the Association was involved in an Awareness Week, with a promotion at the OTC Display Centre, Martin Place, in order to promote the Association to members of the general public.

Later, in 1986 the Association organised an Expo known as 'Disability Lifestyle and Leisure 2,000' held at the State Sports Centre, Homebush, on the weekend of 24-26 October. The Association invited exhibits

from manufacturers and distributors of medical aids and appliances, computers, leisure and hobby equipment, Government departments, travel agents, and banks and other organisations providing goods and services to people with disabilities. Primarily aimed at people with disabilities, it was also an awareness raising exercise for able-bodied people.

Awareness Week, 20-24 September 1982, at the OTC Display Centre in Martin Place

Computers and Website

In 1984 the Association moved into the computer age for its office accounting, and for PECS ordering and invoicing. The Rotary Club of North Sydney funded the installation of this initial computer system at Homebush.

Apparently excited by the usefulness of computers, the Community Development Officer contributed the following to the June 1987 issue of ParaQuad News:

The Association moves into the computer age

"We are presently placing all our members and contacts onto a computer file that will enable the rapid production of a Social Club Fishing Newsletter, with an in-built mailing list, enabling people on the list to be notified of all up-coming events well in advance."

In 1996 the Association launched its first website. With the emergence of the Internet, it was necessary for all organisations to be represented online, and it also enhanced information exchange with members, particularly those in regional areas. The website was essentially a source of information about the Association and for a time included a Bulletin Board where members could post comments.

Fundraising

Two important changes occurred in funding streams during the 1980s and 1990s. One, new policy initiatives meant that ParaQuad NSW could now tap into Government funding through its Community Services programs; and two, expansion of its commercial operations provided an important additional source of revenue.

Nevertheless, fundraising through other sources remained vital to its operations, and throughout this period the Association continued to be supported by the Silver Wheel Committee and the Field Appeal Program, both of which ceased around the year 2000.

The Golden Stave Foundation became a key ongoing sponsor from 1978, and it continues to support the Association today through the Golden Stave Scholarships. Corporate donations became available, and other fundraising events such as the Melbourne Cup Guessing Competition run by the Dee Why Lions Club were still run into the 1980s.

Silver Wheel Committee

In 1981 Enid Grant relinquished her position as President of the Silver Wheel Committee, and asked Di Polkinghorne to take the helm. Over the years many other women took up the responsibilities of President, and finally Sueanne Martin, who also served as a Director on the ParaQuad Board from 1997 to 2000.

Many women who joined the Committee were people who had a personal experience of spinal cord injury, often through a family member or friend. For Mrs Polkinghorne, it was her brother who had become quadriplegic as a result of a surfing accident. For Mrs Martin, it was her father.

"I became involved after my father became quadriplegic through a car accident in 1982," said Mrs Martin. "He was a huge motivation for me."

The Silver Wheel Committee donates a bus to Ferguson Lodge in 1990

By 1995, the Silver Wheel Committee had raised more than $150,000. Rather than put the money into general revenue, the Committee sought funding for specific purposes, much of it going to needs identified at Ferguson Lodge. In this way, the Committee could inform its supporters about what had been done with the monies raised, and invite them to support the next fundraising project.

The Committee's contributions included the purchase of specialised equipment, such as hoists, as well two modified mini buses for Ferguson Lodge. They also furnished the music room, and funded an upgrade of the fire detection system.

In the 1980s and 1990s the Committee had between 14 and 17 members, and they would each take up roles according to their area of expertise, from President and Secretary to Publicity Officer, Ticketing Officer and Catering Officer.

Dr Grant and Mrs Grant were mentors for the Committee, and attended all the functions, along with several other Board members and their wives.

During this period the Committee focused on three major events each year: a luncheon, a fashion parade, and an art show.

The luncheons were held in a private home or a room at a Club donated for the event. They would usually attract between 100 and 150 people, who would attend to support the Association and listen to an address by a prominent speaker.

The fashion parades were generously hosted in private homes on the North Shore and in the Eastern Suburbs of Sydney. Fashion houses like Simona and Australian designers such as Helen Kaminski were very supportive, showing their collections to the up to 250 ladies who would attend.

The art shows were held at different venues, including the Sea Scouts Hall at Mosman Bay and the old RSL Building at Homebush. It should be noted the then department store Grace Bros let the Committee use their gallery at Chatswood and hung the paintings for no charge.

As was the case in the early years, all the events were carried out at no cost to the Association. The Committee arranged its own catering, and sourced everything required for an event in the form of a donation. Many of the members' husbands also assisted, including Mrs Martin's husband James, who being in advertising produced some of the invitations for events.

Golden Stave Foundation

In 1977 Peter Hebbes AM relocated to Australia and by 1978 he had helped to institute the Golden Stave Lunch, the only fundraising event supported by the entire music and entertainment industry in Australia.

Chris Gilbey OAM, co-Founder, Golden Stave Foundation

Peter Hebbes AM, co-Founder, Golden Stave Foundation

Based on the Silver Clef Music Therapy Luncheon in the UK, ex-pats Mr Hebbes and his good friend Chris Gilbey OAM wanted to bring the idea to Australia. So they got together with other members of the music industry – namely Ross Barlow OAM, the late Jack Argent, as well as ParaQuad NSW Director Kent Atkinson – and developed their own fundraising event.

Looking for charities to support, it happened that Mr Gilbey had a good friendship with Dr Grant, and as a result for the first few years the Association was the sole recipient of the Golden Stave Foundation's fundraising luncheon.

The first luncheon was held at Sydney's Sebel Townhouse in 1978. Attracting 187 people from the music and entertainment industry, it raised $3,000, which in those days, the government matched by a factor of four.

"It was hard work cajoling contacts in the beginning but it was a lot of fun too," said Mr Hebbes. "Our first event was a great success and it just happened through word of mouth. Over the past 30

Winning bidder Col Joye receives John McEnroe's tennis racquet and Bjorn Borg's tennis balls from auctioneer Bob Talbott and 1980 Quest of Nations winner Rima Safar, 1981

L-R: Ashley Coops receives a cheque from the Golden Stave Foundation, with Peter Hebbes AM, Roger Davis and Olivia Newton-John.

L-R: Dr John Grant, Morrie Smith, Ashley Coops, Peter Hebbes and Glenn Shorrock with a 23-seater modified bus donated by the Golden Stave Foundation in December 1982.

Barry Chapman from 2SM and John Singleton with Ashley Coops holding a caricature successfully bidded for by Mr Chapman, at the Golden Stave Luncheon, 1979

The Jack Argent Music Room at Ferguson Lodge added with the support of the Golden Stave Foundation in 1985

The Eleventh Annual Golden Stave Luncheon

PROGRAMME

Pre-Lunch Drinks Courtesy of:

Veuve Clicquot

Tankstream Brewing Company

Brewers, Federation Ale, Thunderbolt & Bulls Head Bitter

Hosted by Sydney's Town Crier: Graham Keating

* *

Official Welcome by
Dr. JOHN GRANT, O.B.E., M.B., M.S., F.R.A.C.S., F.A.C.S.

Compere: BARRY CHAPMAN

LUNCH

Entertainment by
GLENN SHORROCK & "THE EDDYS"

THE ORIENT EXPRESS RAFFLE
CELEBRITY AUCTION
Auctioneer: Ray Hadley
GOLDEN STAVE RAFFLE

Dancing by "THE EDDYS"

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

MENU

Duck Terrine served with Caesar Salad

Roast Boneless "Gippsland" Lamb Saddle
with Dried Apricot Stuffing, Pine Seed Jus

Fresh Seasonal Vegetables

Selection of Quality Australian Farmhouse Cheeses &
Platter of Sliced Fresh Fruit

Coffee & Mints

Veuve Clicquot-Ponsardin

Seaview White Burgundy
Montrose Shiraz 1985

Brewers

years the Golden Stave Lunch has been the only fundraising event supported by the entire Australian music industry, from entertainers to radio stations, record companies, publishers, the service industry, and music press and magazines."

"Entertainment is a key part of the Golden Stave Lunch and we've had every major artist play at our luncheons. The numbers have also grown with the event and we now attract more than 1,000 people to a lunch that starts at 12pm and finishes at 6pm; we have also been very fortunate with sponsors and suppliers."

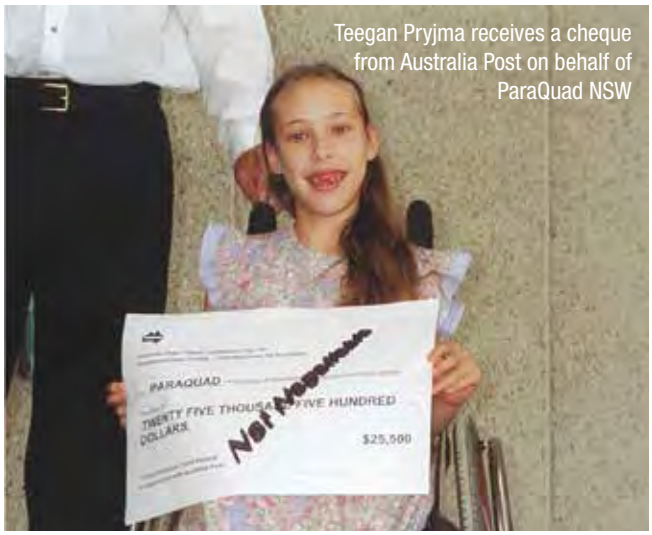
During this time the proceeds from the luncheons funded several of the Association's projects, including the Ferguson Lodge Appeal; $30,000 worth of equipment and a $45,000 music centre for Ferguson Lodge in memory of Mr Argent; and two modified buses (at $30,000 and $25,000 each). In addition the entire profits from the luncheons in 1987, 1988 and 1989, totalling more than half a million dollars, were used to develop, furnish and equip the Berala Transitional Housing Project, which the Golden Stave Foundation was also instrumental in establishing.

Mr Hebbes is humble about his involvement in the Golden Stave. "From the music industry's point of view we feel that we're in a privileged profession, and the Golden Stave Foundation gives us an opportunity to help those who are less fortunate than ourselves while having fun at the same time."

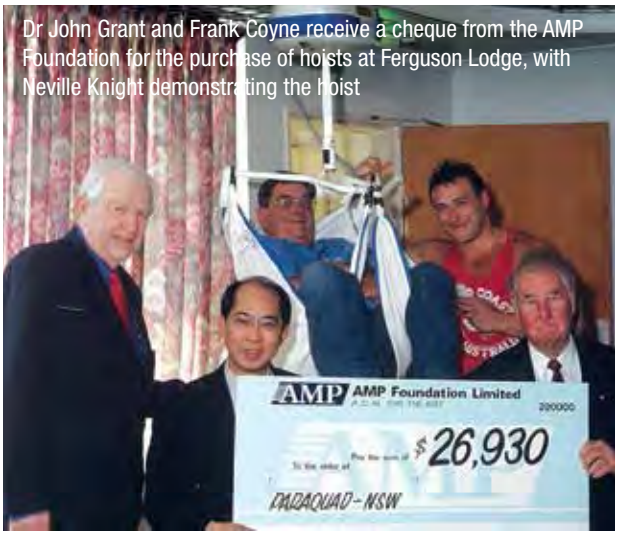
Now in its 33rd year, the event is run by a committee of 30 people led by Graham Fear and Larry Warren and attracts 1,200 people. Donating to many charities, the Golden Stave Foundation continues to support people with quadriplegia and paraplegia through the Golden Stave Scholarships, which are awarded each year through ParaQuad NSW.

Other Foundations

In the 1990s Fundraising Manager Greg Lill set about targeting the philanthropic arms of various organisations in order to solicit their support. The AMP Foundation was particularly generous and became a supporter over several years, directing its donations to the needs of Ferguson Lodge. Australia Post and the St George Foundation, part of St George Bank, also supported the Association.



Teegan Pryjma receives a cheque from Australia Post on behalf of ParaQuad NSW



Dr John Grant and Frank Coyne receive a cheque from the AMP Foundation for the purchase of hoists at Ferguson Lodge, with Neville Knight demonstrating the hoist

Golf Days and Sportsmen's Lunches

Mr Lill worked alongside ParaQuad NSW staff member Evan Fraser, resident at Ferguson Lodge and well connected in the sporting world, to arrange sportsmen's lunches and golf days in order to attract support. There would be an event once or twice a year, with a keynote speaker and sports memorabilia auctioned at the lunches. Peter Fenton, coach of Eastwood and Penrith rugby clubs, was the keynote speaker, and Ray Hadley of Sydney talkback radio fame was the auctioneer for one of the lunches, held at the Dundas Valley Rugby Club.

Celebrity golfer Sean Fitzpatrick (second from left) with participants at a ParaQuad Golf Day

Lobbying

With Governments better attuned to the needs of people with disabilities, there was a flurry of activity in policy and program development, and it was pressed upon organisations like ParaQuad NSW to inform policy direction.

Directors, the CEO and Managers represented the Association on various committees and specialist Government groups and made numerous submissions on various policies and programs in order to represent the needs of people with spinal cord injury.

They developed submissions into the Handicapped Persons Assistance Act, the question of disability allowance, and the No Fault Insurance Scheme, to name just a few.

One of the Association's key policy achievements was the introduction of the Mobility Allowance in 1983. The instigator, Mr Kaad, had been troubled by the fact that although many people with spinal cord injury had cars, they could not afford petrol. On a trip to England he learned that the British Government assisted by payment of a petrol allowance, and upon his return Mr Kaad, along with Dr Grant, Mr Coops and fellow Director David Kerr, went to Canberra to meet with the Prime Minister and MPs to call for a similar scheme in Australia; the Mobility Allowance was a direct result of the Association's lobbying efforts.

In 1982 the Association joined the Programme of Appliances for Disabled People (PADP) committee, which provided continence and mobility aids and equipment at a small cost to people with a long-term disability who wanted to remain living in the community.

Newspaper articles from the 1980s

L-R: The Hon Malcolm Fraser, Dr John Grant, Ashely Coops, Fred Kaad and David Kerr at a meeting about the Mobility Allowance at Parliament House, Canberra (Courtesy Kaad family album)

Later Mr Kaad represented the Association on a special committee of the RTA to ensure that more wheelchair accessible taxis were on the road and that the drivers were trained in how to assist wheelchair users in a safe manner.

With the Association represented on various Government committees such as these, it was not only able to represent its members, but it could also keep its members informed about potential changes to policies and programs that directly affected them. Usually information was relayed through ParaQuad News, as shown in the following extract from September 1989:

"The Association is aware that the Department of Health is tightening up its Guidelines and eligibility for assistance under the Programme [PADP Scheme]. Any members who experience difficulties in continuing to obtain their recurrent and special equipment needs through this scheme should contact the Association immediately."

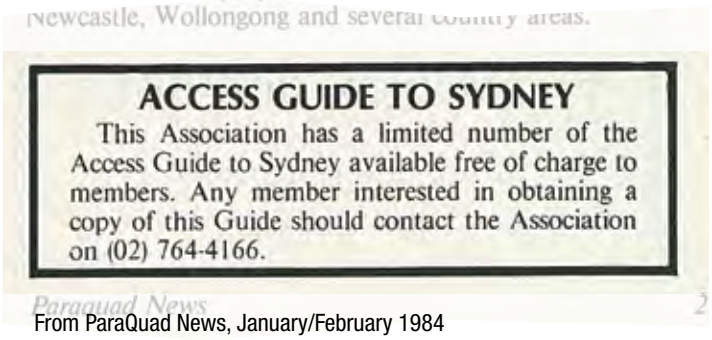
In all cases, the role of ParaQuad News as a vehicle for relaying important issues to its members was paramount, as evidenced by the following extract from October 1987:

Fred Kaad, Director, at a PADP rally

"It is about two months since the Equal Opportunity Tribunal ruled that Brendan Kitt, as someone with epilepsy, had to be regarded as intellectually disabled under the definitions of the Anti-Discrimination Act. The decision reinforced the view that the current intellectual and physical impairment provisions of the Act are extremely limited and confusing in their interpretation… If the physical and intellectual impairment provisions of the Act were removed and replaced by a general impairment provision, it would be possible for everybody with disabilities… to raise complaints…"

Welfare Department

In the early 1980s the Welfare Department continued in much the same way as in the early years. In 1984, there were two Rehabilitation Officers employed, supported by a Secretary.


Newcastle, Wollongong and several country areas.

ACCESS GUIDE TO SYDNEY

This Association has a limited number of the Access Guide to Sydney available free of charge to members. Any member interested in obtaining a copy of this Guide should contact the Association on (02) 764-4166.

ParaQuad News 2

From ParaQuad News, January/February 1984

The Rehabilitation Officers were Angela Coleman, a spinal nurse, and Ross Soutar, a Rehabilitation Counsellor. One able-bodied and the other quadriplegic, they would each visit either RNSH or PHH one day per week. The rest of their time was spent answering telephone calls regarding equipment, community services, travel, Government benefits, vehicles, accommodation and more. They would also make house calls on request and attend relevant meetings to advocate on behalf of individuals or people with spinal cord injury generally.

The Welfare Department also employed three or four clerks who took orders from members and dispatched products. They also ordered, received and stored stocks of continence and pressure prevention equipment. By 1989 a Continence Advisor had been employed as part of the team.

There was one person dedicated to operating the switch and reception, while the secretary to the Public Relations/Fundraising Department was also the co-editor of ParaQuad News.

In addition to its other works, the Association, through its Welfare Department, began preparing medico-legal reports for members who had sustained a spinal cord injury via a motor vehicle accident. Depending on the individual request from the member's solicitor, a nurse, occupational therapist or Rehabilitation Officer would visit the member, discuss their personal care, medical and independence equipment and requirements, and prepare a report to help with compensation claims.

It was not uncommon for 20 to 30 reports to be prepared every year. On one occasion a Rehabilitation Officer, who had been subpoenaed to court for a certain compensation claim, overheard the presiding Judge say, "Oh just give me the ParaQuad report, that makes sense." ParaQuad NSW can be very proud of this reputation as its work assisted not only its members, but also in educating the legal profession and the community at large about the requirements of a person with a spinal cord injury. This work continued up until legislative changes occurred in motor accident compensation in 2007.

Neville Knight enjoys a fishing outing

In the mid 1980s, the Welfare Department was divided into the Equipment (PECS) and Rehabilitation Departments. At this time the Association obtained funding through the Department of Local Government to employ a Community Development Officer who was responsible for organising leisure activities for members. This position was attached to the Rehabilitation Department under the Community Development Program.

In 1987 there was a Fishing Club that had already enjoyed a number of outings. Swimming was available on a weekly basis, held during the winter at Western Suburbs Hydrotherapy Pool, and horticulture classes were held at Ferguson Lodge every Wednesday morning.

Gliding was also held on a weekly basis and it proved very popular. It was held at the Southern Cross Gliding Club. The Association also linked in with other programs, such as the NSW Adapted Rowing Programme, and it held weekly rowing sessions at Glebe Rowing Club. It also organised camping trips and archery.

The Community Development Program was also responsible for the popular Monday afternoon social club, with guest speakers every second Monday, and the Parents and Friends Support Group, which assisted people newly injured with paraplegia or quadriplegia, and their families and friends.

In addition, it offered members general information on accessible accommodation, travel opportunities, recreational activities and entertainment options.

In 1990 the Community Development Program included drama classes, wheelchair dancing and even dragon boat racing!

Tony Legatt gets an opportunity to fly

Mel Derome and Jost from the Civilian Fish Club in

Fishing Club

Well, we're getting there!

Firstly, I will endeavour religiously to produce a regular montly Paraquad Fishing Club News Sheet, so if you have anything to contribute, send into me at Paraquad Centre.

The outings which we have had, have all been good fun, but so far the fish haven't really come to the party! However, I am assured by many fishing "experts" that things will improve in the area during December and the New Year.

Developments are under way with Russ Kennedy, the operator of the charter boat Cetacia, operating from Botany Bay, for our involvement in outings on that boat for both pure relaxed cruising and fishing.

We are hoping to organise a day out on the Sail Australia Pittwater Bar-B-Ques A Float barge from Church Point at an early stage in the new year. This excellent craft can accommodate 6-7 wheelchairs, as well as 6 adults, so it could be a great day.

What we are after in both sections is originality and ingenuity. Of course, you may find it easier to combine the logo and the Club name in one concept, in which cases the judges will consider the concept as a whole, and the logo and naame separately also.

Pied Piper Music Club

This small, but growing and dedicated group of musically inclined people have started to play a steadily louder tune. If you are interested in playing music, learning music, or just getting involved, call Bridget Merchant at "General Systems" on (02) 419 5411; or Lynn Chenowith on (02) 406 5778 —(and we also apologise to Lynn for omitting her name from her "letter to the Editor" in last Paraquad News.

Program Post-mortem.

As per usual, some of the listed events in last P.O.N. last

Extracts from ParaQuad News, December 1986

Community Services Division

It is important to note that towards the end of the 1980s the Commonwealth Department of Community Services began to replicate many of the services that the Association had been providing over several decades. In particular, the Government's Rehabilitation Service Network, which was established throughout NSW in 1987 and 1988, was now helping people with disabilities to gain employment and supporting them generally through client advocacy, independent living assistance, access to equipment, workplace training, driver training and personal support services.

This significant change led the Association to reconsider the ways in which it could most effectively utilise resources into the 1990s in order to avoid duplication of services, and in 1992 it created the Community Services Division, which usurped what had been the original Welfare Department, while PECS developed into a distinct commercial operation.

A series of new programs were developed under Community Services, namely the Peer Support Program, the Regional Network Program, the Community Spinal Advisory Service (which paved the way for the Spinal Outreach Service) and the Community Living Service.

These programs were started with funding provided either directly or indirectly by the NSW Government or through the Motor Accidents Authority (MAA). When the seed funding ran out, the question of where and how to access alternate funds posed quite a dilemma. If a program was determined to be worthwhile, then the Association would do its utmost to continue to fund it from its own sources.

The Community Services Division was also responsible for the Association's Attendant Care Service as well as a team of in-house allied health care professionals, which included two to three occupational therapists through the Community Living Service.

The man behind the expansion of Community Services, Mr Duncan, doesn't mention it. However Kylie Wicks, ParaQuad NSW Clinical Nurse Consultant and Coordinator who began working for the Association in 1992 said, "Bob Duncan was very proactive. Without Bob you wouldn't have Community Services at ParaQuad NSW. He lobbied for funding to set up services. Who we are today came from Bob Duncan."

Chris Campbell, a social worker, was the first General Manager Community Services from 1992 to 1997 and was responsible for the development and co-ordination of these services.

Peer Support Program and Regional Network Program

The Peer Support Program was developed in 1992. At its peak it involved a team of about 20 people with different levels of spinal cord injury offering one-on-one support to help newly injured people cope with life in a wheelchair.

Matching the Peer Support Worker to the newly injured person was very important. Karen Filocamo, General Manager Community Services 2000-2006 explained, "We had to be very sensitive about matching the level of disability of the Peer Support Worker with the newly injured person. It was also important that our Peer Support Workers had lived with the injury for at least five years and had moved beyond their initial grieving process in order to help others."

The Regional Network Program was developed a few years later, in 1996. The key objective of the program was to advocate for the needs of people with spinal cord injury in regional areas and to provide peer support.

Sandra Pethik, Peer Support Worker

Initially there were Regional Network Representatives in Dubbo, Coffs Harbour, Newcastle, Southern, Western and Northern Sydney and the ACT. Like the Peer Support Workers, the Representatives were people with paraplegia or quadriplegia, as it was deemed they could best understand the needs of wheelchair users in their local communities.

There was some overlap between the two programs, and several people were recruited with the dual role of Peer Support Worker/Regional Network Representative.

In the end the Association focused its work on metropolitan Sydney as all newly injured people would be sent to one of the Sydney hospitals for rehabilitation.

In the last few years there were three Peer Support Workers who provided a vital counselling service and were highly valued by the two Sydney Spinal Injuries Units. However, as Spinal Cord Injuries Australia was simultaneously running a similar service in hospitals, it was discontinued in 2005 to avoid duplication of services provided by the two organisations.

FROM THE DIARY OF A REGIONAL NETWORK REPRESENTATIVE

"…the swimming pool in Port Macquarie now has a hoist to make it easier for disabled persons to access the pool. The Hastings area rangers will also start fining vehicles that block access ramps. This has been a problem in the area for a while, and it gets frustrating when you have pushed your way along a path and find the only way across the road is blocked by a vehicle."

– TOM KENNEDY, REGIONAL NETWORK REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE MID-NORTH COAST, 2001

Community Spinal Advisory Service

ParaQuad NSW ran a Community Spinal Advisory Service from 1992 to 2005, a State-wide outreach program whereby three Spinal Nurses worked with clients in three separate regional areas.

The service evolved from an initiative of Dr John Yeo at RNSH, who had commenced clinics in rural areas in the late 1980s. Soon after, Dr Sue Rutkowski took up the role, holding clinics in rural areas with a Spinal Nurse from RNSH, as well as a Spinal Nurse from ParaQuad NSW and often a member of SCIA.

When this disbanded due to other commitments at RNSH and a lack of Government funding, ParaQuad NSW developed the Community Spinal Advisory Service to continue the good work.

L-R: Kylie Wicks, Mark Johns and Jane Template, nurses in the Community Spinal Advisory Service in the 1990s

The Spinal Nurses, known as Community Spinal Advisers, were in many ways trailblazers, travelling to remote parts of the State to offer expert health care to those living with a spinal cord injury. Liaising with the Spinal Injuries Unit in Sydney that had discharged the patient, these pioneer nurses provided an invaluable service.

Mr Duncan said, "We played a vital link between the clients and the hospitals because we had nurses out there in rural areas on a regular basis."

One of the first Community Spinal Advisers, Kylie Wicks covered Burwood to Broken Hill from 1992 to 1996. She would drive from Sydney to Bathurst or Dubbo and to get to remote areas she would use the Royal Flying Doctor Service, travelling on six-seater planes and taking hours to visit just one client.

Ms Wicks said, "Spinal outreach was new and different and that was exciting. It wasn't just a straight forward nursing job. It was a great opportunity."

Rural Spinal Cord Injury Project

In 1997, with about $5,000 from the MAA, the Spinal Injury Units at Royal North Shore Hospital (RNSH) and Prince of Wales Hospital (POWH) in collaboration with ParaQuad NSW conducted a pilot multi-disciplinary outreach clinic at Lourdes Hospital in Dubbo. Based on the Association's Community Spinal Advisory Service that was still running at the time, this Rural Spinal Cord Injury Project was intended to provide data to the Government in order to secure funding for an expansion of the Association's current service.

The team included Dr Sue Rutkowski, Spinal Nurse Kylie Wicks, General Manager Community Services Chris Campbell, and then Regional Network Representative for Dubbo, Chris Fallon.

The three-day clinic proved to be a great success. Twenty-seven clients attended the clinic, 34 referrals for medical or allied health review were made, and three people were admitted to Moorong Spinal Injury Unit for further management. In addition, the Community Spinal Adviser from ParaQuad NSW was able to provide follow-up.

FROM THE DIARY OF A COMMUNITY SPINAL ADVISER

"I start driving at 7am and it's still raining. Avoiding potholes disguised by flooding roads and terrible conditions it takes me over three hours to drive 280 kilometres. I see the client at 11.15am and stay until 2pm going over everything the client wants to discuss. By 2.30pm I'm on the road again heading to Walgett where I will spend the night. Before settling in I ring tomorrow's clients, go through today's notes, write up my report and check my phone messages… At 9am I leave the motel and see my first client at 9.15am. After going through some issues the client wants to discuss, the client calls the community nurse and the carer. This allows the four of us to work through any problems together and ensures the client and those involved can work as a unit towards a better level of care. This visit takes over three hours and I leave at 12.30pm…"

– DAPHNE DAVIS, COMMUNITY SPINAL ADVISER, 2001

This pilot clinic confirmed the need for multi-disciplinary clinics in regional areas and the data gathered was used to put together a proposal to the MAA to fund a Spinal Outreach Service (SOS).

A joint initiative of the Spinal Injury Units at RNSH and POWH, as well as ParaQuad NSW and the AQA (now SCIA), the SOS proposal – the Rural Spinal Cord Injury Project (RSCIP) – aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of a multi-disciplinary outreach service in regional NSW over a three-year period. The RSCIP project was funded and ParaQuad NSW took on the role of Project Manager.

The Dubbo pilot project team

Community Living Service

Jan Pearce and Tina Robinson, the first occupational therapy team

In the late 1980s the Association employed two occupational therapists as part of its Community Living Service. These positions were partially funded by the NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care.

The occupational therapists worked with the Association's Home Care clients and other people with disabilities living in the community, as well as residents at the Association's permanent and transitional accommodation facilities.

Their work not only involved prescribing appropriate equipment to facilitate independent living, they also helped clients to find appropriate accessible housing and linked them with the local services that they might require and helped them to improve their independent living skills.

Attendant Care Scheme

As people with disabilities now wanted to live independently within the community, there was a need for services to support that lifestyle choice.

For people living with spinal cord injury, personal care services were essential, and the Association actively advocated for Government-funded services to be introduced in Australia, as other countries around the world had already adopted the concept.

A breakthrough occurred in 1984 when the Commonwealth Government launched the National Attendant Care Pilot Project, which commenced in NSW with 24 participants under the auspice of the Home Care Service. At the conclusion of the project, the Government gave no commitment to funding a large-scale scheme.

Originally for people aged between 16 and 64 years currently living in nursing homes who wanted to move into the community, the Attendant Care Scheme was advertised to members through the June 1987 issue of ParaQuad News.

ParaQuad NSW Attendant Care Service

In 1988 ParaQuad NSW became a provider under the Government-funded Attendant Care Scheme, establishing its Attendant Care Service whereby it employed Attendant Care Staff and Attendant Care Coordinators to provide in-home personal care services to people who were eligible under the Scheme. Most people who elected to have their personal care services provided by the Association were those with spinal cord injury, and it developed quite a specialised service.

Attendant Care and In-Home Accommodation Support Services

PARAQUAD is a provider of Attendant Care Services funded by the NSW Department of Community Services.

The service is available to people between 15 and 65 years of age who have a high level of disability and wish to live back in the community in preference to a nursing home or hostel.

The scheme helps individuals employ carers to carry out personal care tasks such as bathing, toileting, dressing, transfers in and out of bed, meal preparation, and eating, as well as light household tasks.

It provides for up to 34 hours care a week, and encourages users to take responsibility for training and managing their own carers.

Attendant Care Services are also provided to privately funded individuals and those eligible for compensation settlements.

PARAQUAD can also provide other Accommodation Support Services designed to help people continue living in their own homes.

9

Extract from ParaQuad NSW promotional material c. early 1990s

The People

Phyllis Harding

Phyllis Harding sustained a spinal cord injury resulting in quadriplegia after a car accident in 1979 at the age of 34.

Phyllis Harding (Courtesy Ms Harding)

A year later she left RNSH to return home to her teenage sons, who cared for her with the help of her ageing mother.

All this put a great strain on Ms Harding and her family so after 18 months she made a decision to enter Ferguson Lodge so that her sons could enjoy the teenage years as she had always wanted.

While at Ferguson Lodge, Ms Harding learned to drive a car with hand controls and re-entered the workforce on a full-time basis with ParaQuad NSW, and remained on staff for five or six years.

When the Attendant Care Pilot Program was trialled in 1984, Ms Harding was fortunate to be one of the 24 participants selected.

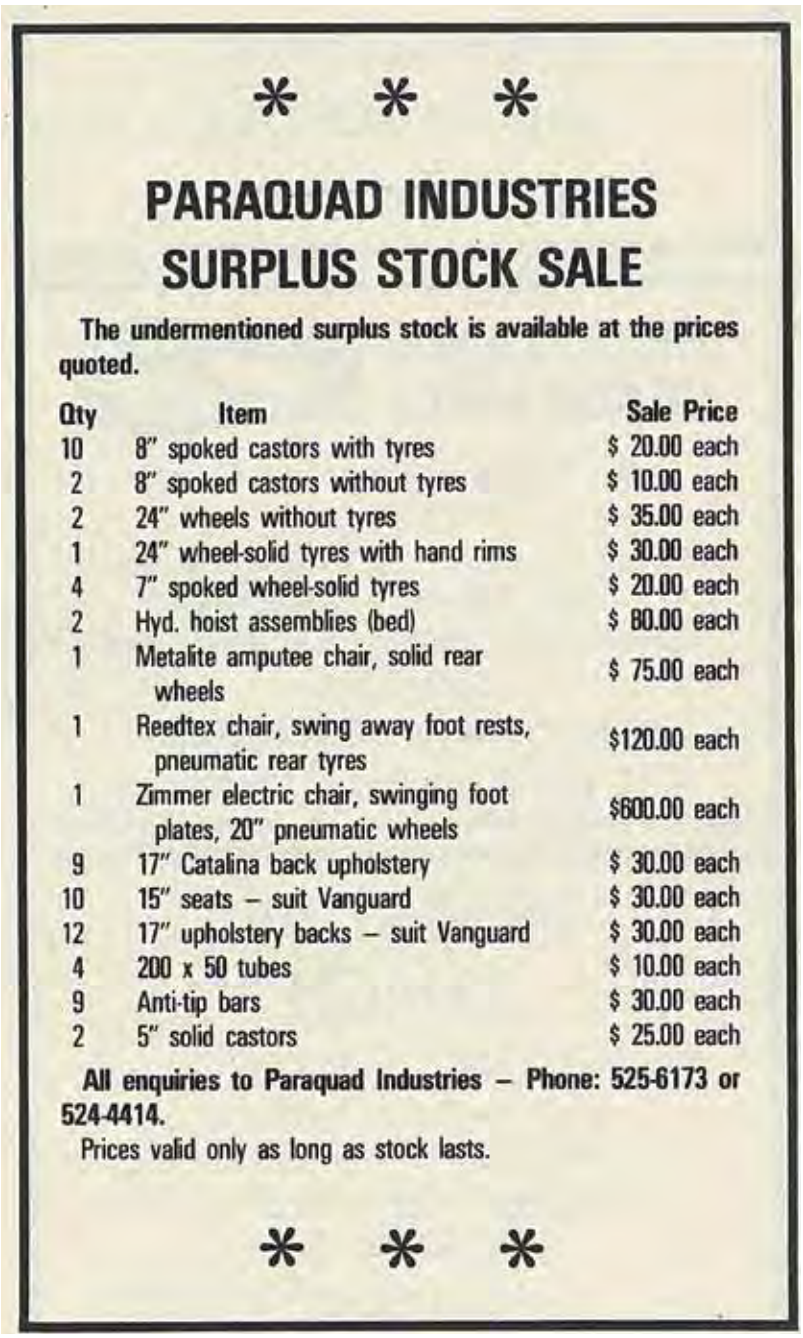
Ms Harding said, "Attendant Care allowed me to move back into the community, which is what I always wanted. My independence increased dramatically because I could employ my own carers and organise my own timetables."

Ms Harding was able to secure a Department of Housing unit at Parramatta and she moved on with her life from there. She helped set up Home Care in Parramatta and worked for 24 years post injury, later moving to Northern NSW and undertaking voluntary work in advocacy for the disability sector.

ParaQuad Industries

In 1985 ParaQuad Industries and ParaQuad Engineering moved from Taren Point to more central facilities at Unit 2, 707 Forest Road Peakhurst, allowing both divisions to expand.

At the time ParaQuad Industries employed 35 people with disabilities. However, due to the nature of the work, the majority of employees were those with a brain injury or intellectual disability; people with spinal cord injury, on the whole, did not find it rewarding or intellectually stimulating. This was the primary reason why, in August 1989, the Board elected to close ParaQuad Industries.



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PARAQUAD INDUSTRIES
SURPLUS STOCK SALE

The undermentioned surplus stock is available at the prices quoted.

Qty	Item	Sale Price
10	8" spoked castors with tyres	$ 20.00 each
2	8" spoked castors without tyres	$ 10.00 each
2	24" wheels without tyres	$ 35.00 each
1	24" wheel-solid tyres with hand rims	$ 30.00 each
4	7" spoked wheel-solid tyres	$ 20.00 each
2	Hyd. hoist assemblies (bed)	$ 80.00 each
1	Metalite amputee chair, solid rear wheels	$ 75.00 each
1	Reedtex chair, swing away foot rests, pneumatic rear tyres	$120.00 each
1	Zimmer electric chair, swinging foot plates, 20" pneumatic wheels	$600.00 each
9	17" Catalina back upholstery	$ 30.00 each
10	15" seats – suit Vanguard	$ 30.00 each
12	17" upholstery backs – suit Vanguard	$ 30.00 each
4	200 x 50 tubes	$ 10.00 each
9	Anti-tip bars	$ 30.00 each
2	5" solid castors	$ 25.00 each

All enquiries to Paraquad Industries – Phone: 525-6173 or 524-4414.

Prices valid only as long as stock lasts.

* * *

Advertisement from ParaQuad News, July/August 1983

In addition, the Association felt that it could not adequately meet the needs of the current employees due a lack of expertise and resources required for such a diverse group of people.

The introduction of the Disability Services Act 1986, which had altered the conditions for funding, had also made subsidising the operations an issue, and by 1989 the rental costs of the facilities at Peakhurst had became unsustainable.

The Association allowed a period of transition, assisting staff to find alternate employment, and permanently closed ParaQuad Industries in March 1990.

ParaQuad Engineering

When ParaQuad Industries closed, ParaQuad Engineering was moved to less expensive and more appropriate facilities at 8 Hearne Street Mortdale, and it continued to expand.

It was managed for several years by John Trefry and later by Ron Day. By far the bulk of its work was in car modifications, which mostly involved supplying and fitting hand controls. While originally hand controls were imported, the Association later employed an engineer and a fitter-and-turner who designed and built hand controls in-house.

As in-house manufacturing of hand controls developed, it reduced its import of hand controls and began supplying its own hand controls to Victoria as well, supplying 80 percent of all the hand controls fitted in that State.

In NSW, it both supplied and fitted 80 percent of the hand controls, and when people with disabilities from regional NSW bought a new car, the dealer in Sydney would bring the vehicle to ParaQuad Engineering to fit it out before sending it to the customer in the country.

A lot of the work was undertaken to suit individual drivers, which included manufacturing tailor-made hand controls, extending or modifying existing controls, repositioning car seats, and changing the position of the accelerator. For people with quadriplegia, switches for indicator lights and high beam lights were fitted into the headrest.

Not just for people with spinal cord injury, ParaQuad Engineering also provided a service for amputees and people who had become disabled as a result of strokes, many of whom needed left foot accelerators.

Advertisements from ParaQuad News, January/February 1984

Mr Trefry provided at-home demonstrations on the use of cars with hand controls and hoists, and would sometimes give a bit of advice on driving to members on-the-side. "We helped a lot of people who thought they'd never drive," said Mr Trefry. "They'd see my car or Bob Duncan's car and wonder how we did it. There was a paddock near my home at Sylvania Waters where they could practice."

"ParaQuad NSW was the place to go if you had spinal cord injuries and needed services."

– Grant Nickel

Grant Nickel chose ParaQuad Engineering to modify his first car in 1987. "I just got my driver's licence and my first car and they were probably the only people that could do modifications. ParaQuad NSW was the place to go if you had spinal cord injuries and needed services."

ParaQuad Engineering acted as the NSW distributor for various brands of wheelchair, and using some initial funding under the Commonwealth Employment Program it also developed its own wheelchairs, releasing the Classic 2000 wheelchair in 1988. It also manufactured the Slider to help with transfers between the car and the wheelchair, or the wheelchair to the bed.

ParaQuad Engineering's services also included the supply and installation of hoists and ramps, including ramps for homes and offices, which involved visiting clients to measure and quote jobs. (Mr Trefry recalls quoting on a ramp for a building close to the RNSH; when he asked what sort of organisation it was he was told it was a brothel catering to patients from the hospital!)

ParaQuad Engineering moved again, this time to 164-166 Beaconsfield Road Milperra in 1995, as Mr Coyne was aware of someone selling a building and the Association was able to purchase it at a good price.

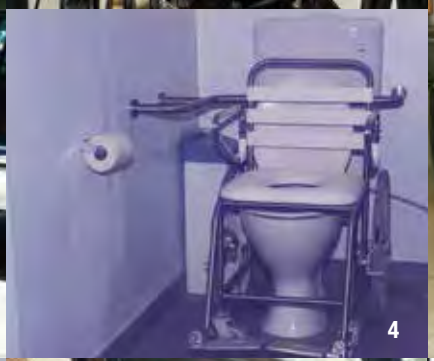
PARAQUAD ENGINEERING SERVICES IN 1990

By 1990 ParaQuad Engineering was providing a range of services, including:

- wheelchair construction and distribution of other types of wheelchairs;
- repair of wheelchairs and other equipment;
- installation of the WYMO car top wheelchair hoist/carrier and the FLO-CON car top hoist;
- supply and fitting of hydraulic hoists to vans; manufacture and supply of portable wheelchair ramps;
- manufacture and supply of lightweight aluminium platforms to use with conventional bathroom scales; and
- equipment hire.

ParaQuad Engineering at Milperra

At its peak in the year 2000 it was given accreditation as an eligible service under the Disability Services Act 1986, and it employed 15 people, five of them in wheelchairs. Mr Duncan recalled, "We had some great tradespeople and they were very inventive. One of them even made wheelchairs. We provided a great service and even though it never turned much of a profit, we still made a small surplus every month."



1. Hand controls **2.** Bob Duncan demonstrates a hydraulic lift **3.** A portable wheelchair ramp for vans **4.** Comode **5.** A portable wheelchair ramp for vans **6.** The Slider **7.** John Spencer inspects a modified van **8.** Hand controls **9.** C-forks assist people with quadriplegia to drive **10.** Wymo car top wheelchair hoist/carrier **11.** Pedal modifications **12.** John Trefry demonstrates the FLO-CON car top hoist **13.** C-forks for steering wheel **14.** Swivel chair

The People

John Spencer

John Spencer had his accident in Queensland in 1967 and was in hospital for two years before moving to Bathurst to help his uncle at his garage. In 1972, his uncle sold the business and he ended up in Ward 43 at Lidcombe Hospital before receiving more rehabilitation at Mt Wilga Rehabilitation Centre and moving out on his own.

John Spencer (Courtesy Spencer family album)

In the mid 1970s Mr Spencer was involved in wheelchair sports at a competitive level, and represented Australia in table tennis at the Stoke Mandeville Games in 1977.

After meeting his wife Wendy, he moved to Liverpool, bought a sewing machine and started his own business working on wheelchairs. A mobile businessman, Mr Spencer repaired wheelchair upholstery from the boot of his car.

"I had been working out of the back of my car fixing wheelchairs when Jerry Williamson, who was General Manager Operations at ParaQuad, asked me to work for them," said Mr Spencer. "I'm a quadriplegic but I've got a good left hand."

Working at ParaQuad Engineering from 1987 to 2005, Mr Spencer made upholstery for wheelchairs, and a man named Ray Platt made the chairs.

"At first we were making wheelchairs out of stainless steel but they were too heavy," recalled Mr Spencer. "Ray used to race motorbikes and he told us about chrome molly tubing, which is very light, so we started making them out of that and they were very popular."

Personal Equipment and Continence Supplies (PECS)

During the mid 1980s, demand for the personal equipment sold by the Association was increasing.

However, there was an ongoing issue in terms of how the service was perceived by potential customers. While the products available were also suitable for people with other conditions, the view was that because these products were supplied by an organisation established for people with paraplegia and quadriplegia, then they must be specialised for these injuries.

Therefore, in order to attract a wider range of customers, the Association decided that it needed a generic name, and one that included the word 'continence'. After some ideas were exchanged, Mr Duncan suggested the name that stuck, Personal Equipment and Continence Supplies, or PECS.

With the introduction of the Continence Aids Assistance Scheme (CAAS) in 1992, the Commonwealth Government began subsidising purchases of continence aids for people with disabilities, and the Association began to view selling continence aids, under the Welfare Department through PECS, as an opportunity to raise revenue to support non-funded services.

In 1992, the Association was successful in winning the CAAS contract for NSW/ACT, which had been tendered by the Commonwealth on a State-by-State basis.

As a result PECS needed more space, and the store and the associated accounting and invoicing functions were moved away from the Association's headquarters for the first time in its history. Now using leased factory premises at Vore Street Silverwater, the downside was that these premises had offices upstairs and no lift, and this attracted valid criticism from members who rightly felt that they should have full and easy access to all parts of the Association's premises.

Into the 1990s, PECS expanded rapidly and hundreds of new lines were added. The Association decided to remove the membership requirement, and began supplying both members and non-members alike with health care products at discounted prices in the areas of continence, pressure prevention and wound management. However, people still had to become members in order to access over-the-counter PBS bowel preparations at no cost.

In 1995, CAAS was tendered nationally and ParaQuad QLD won the tender, but ParaQuad NSW was able to keep the NSW/ACT market by agreement.

With increasing competitiveness in the health care products supply industry, the Association employed salespeople to try to expand into other markets. PECS was promoted throughout the health sector to community and hospital prescribers, and to other disability organisations. Mr Duncan would scan advertisements for tenders, promoting it to State and Federal Government funding schemes such as the Department of Veterans' Affairs Rehabilitation Appliances Program (DVARAP), a contract that it was able to secure.

Ferguson Lodge

Ferguson Lodge Community Life

In the first few years after becoming established, Ferguson Lodge developed a strong sense of community.

Evan Fraser, one of the first residents, said the early years were very enjoyable, with the residents mostly young and ready to socialise. There was a Residents' Committee that ran a canteen, which was operated by Mr Fraser, and put the profits into a Residents' Fund for parties throughout the year, as well as the purchase of items for Ferguson Lodge, such as ice machines, drink machines, and outdoor tables and chairs.

Mr Fraser said, "We'd have Melbourne Cup functions and parties at Christmas and Easter. For Christmas parties we used to put on a raffle to cover the cost of the food. We sometimes had 200 people at our parties; they were a lot of fun. Sometimes different groups would come in and cook for us; once we had the Bikies Unlimited and another time the Green Valley Social Club."

There were also opportunities for outings through the Association's Community Development Program, as well as other in-house activities such as painting, leather work, sewing and knitting (using machines), copper work, typing, and regular use of the library. (The library was established by Jacqueline Norington, wife of Director Dr Brad Norington.)

Evan Fraser in charge of the Ferguson Lodge canteen

The People

John and Akiko Harris

John Harris was in his early 20s when he became quadriplegic. It was 1974 and he was a pillion passenger on his mate John's bike. Coming out of a corner on an s-bend, the bike collided with a Mercedes, and his mate was killed.

John and Akiko Harris
(Courtesy Harris family album)

Mr Harris spent more than a year at Prince Henry Hospital and was home for only a couple of months before having to be readmitted. He then lived in different aged care facilities until Ferguson Lodge was opened.

"I was the first person to arrive at Ferguson Lodge," he said. "I met a lot of nice people there, but it was difficult to associate in groups because I could hear everyone talking at once."

Having lost one third of his brain capacity in the accident, Mr Harris was much better one-on-one, which is why when he saw a lady sitting by herself in the lounge one day in 1983, he said hello.

Akiko was from Japan. She had lost 98 percent of her eyesight and much of her muscle strength due to a bad batch of medication, which had damaged her nervous system and caused the deaths of many.

"I was curious about how other people lived and I wanted to go on a holiday," said Akiko of her visit to Australia.

Together they went out visiting Sydney and they formed a close friendship. When Akiko went back to Japan a few months later, John visited her there and afterwards they talked a lot on the phone.

John moved out of Ferguson Lodge and got himself a unit in Bellambi. He then asked Akiko to come back to Australia. 'The Australian Government said she'd have to get married if she wanted to stay," said Mr Harris. "So we did, on 26 November 1983. Now we live in a beautiful house in Wollongong. Akiko's number one rule for a home was a flat path to the letter box so she could scoot out and scoot back."

Dr Graham Locke, Ferguson Lodge Visiting Medical Officer, said that Ferguson Lodge became a special place. "Ferguson Lodge developed into a real little community. Of course when people live together in a situation like that there are some frustrations and some people get on other people's nerves from time to time, but that happens in families as well."

"Ferguson Lodge filled a unique spot. It's really the only one of its kind and for a lot of the people there it's the end of the road, there's nowhere else for them to go and they do get looked after very well."

powerful if we ARE FULL.
understand the full extent of what Barrier Free Design is, then we can hardly expect those, who don't even need it, to get enthusiastic about it.

NOTICES

FERGUSON LODGE
FIFTH ANNIVERSARY
FIFTIES FROLIC FANCY DRESS
SATURDAY, MARCH 31, 1984
COMMENCING 6.30 p.m.
ADMISSION — $3.00 per adult — children free
PRIZE FOR BEST DRESSED
MALE OR FEMALE
ADMISSION PRICE INCLUDES
BUFFET SUPPER
LIVE D.J.
BEER AND WINE AVAILABLE AT LODGE SHOP
ALL WELCOME
ANY ENQURIES RING (02) 646-3711 AND ASK FOR MARK AZZOPARDI OR PETER MAHONEY

3 January/February, 1984

From Paranews January/February 1984

"Ferguson Lodge filled a unique spot. It's really the only one of its kind and for a lot of the people there it's the end of the road, there's nowhere else for them to go and they do get looked after very well."

– Dr Graham Locke, VMO, Ferguson Lodge

A Stepping Stone

While originally developed to offer permanent accommodation and respite care to people with high medical and support needs, Ferguson Lodge also began to be used by residents as a way in which they could move back into the community; this was made possible with the introduction of the Attendant Care Scheme. People like Phyllis Harding and Wendy Harris benefited from the Scheme, living at Ferguson Lodge only a few years.

At the other end of the spectrum, people who had lived in the community with their parents or other carers were looking at Ferguson Lodge as a way of transitioning out of the community and into a facility that would offer specialised care. One such person was Neville Knight. "I lived with my parents from 1964 to 1990. When dad died, my mother tried to look after me. We battled on for another couple of years and she ended up with a hernia so I came into Ferguson Lodge on respite," said Mr Knight. "After going back home and speaking to my mother we decided that this would be the best place for me, which would give her peace of mind because she knew that I would have somebody to look after me when she was gone."

The People

Wendy Harris

Wendy Harris was a 12-year-old when a car accident left her quadriplegic.

Wendy Harris in 1985 (Courtesy Harris family album)

It was 1970 and services for people with disabilities were sparse, however, with support from family and friends, she completed high school and then studied psychology and education at Macquarie University, and Rehabilitation Counselling at Cumberland College.

One of the original residents of Ferguson Lodge in 1979, Mrs Harris wanted to experience independence, just as her friends were doing.

"For me moving to Ferguson Lodge was a chance to move out of home and do everything that 22-year-olds learn how to do. Ferguson Lodge was staffed on a 24-hour basis; it meant I could get home at 3 o'clock in the morning and had someone to help me into bed."

Mrs Harris' time at the Lodge was pivotal in many ways. She had gained employment in 1981 as a receptionist in the public sector but was not utilising her tertiary training, so in 1984 when Mr Duncan invited her to join the ParaQuad NSW team, she decided it was a better fit. Beginning in the Welfare Department, she later became a Rehabilitation Officer. "This was an important move for me as it gave me skills that eventually saw me work in Rehabilitation Counselling in the public sector."

Mrs Harris also met her husband at Ferguson Lodge; he was a nurse on staff, and after six years at the Lodge she moved out with him. They married and had two children, putting Mrs Harris in a very exclusive group of quadriplegic mums.

Mrs Harris returned to work part-time with ParaQuad NSW in 1997, and she currently works as a Training Officer.

Asked about her achievements, Wendy said, "The chair was just another thing, and while that sounds a bit flippant it was essential to think like this to gain quality of life. Like many others, I'm just making the most of my life."

Ferguson Lodge Under Fire

While Ferguson Lodge continued to provide a valuable service to people with spinal cord injury, it came under attack from an organisation known as People with Disability Australia Incorporated (PWD), a national disability rights and advocacy organisation founded in 1981.

Ferguson Lodge (Courtesy Bruce Bennedick)

Following the introduction of the NSW Disability Services Act 1993, PWD submitted an objection to the NSW Government about Ferguson Lodge. The submission suggested that the Lodge be closed down, deeming it an institution and therefore not in conformance with the Act, which required people with disabilities to live independently within the community where possible.

The residents, however, wanted it to stay open. There were no restrictions placed on their lifestyles, and they could access specialised health care around the clock. In addition, most residents had nowhere else to go, and after years of living at Ferguson Lodge they had no desire to live alone in the community.

The residents formed a Residents Action Group to fight to keep their home. Residents on the committee included Evan Fraser, Bruce Bennedick and Neville Knight; Mr Fraser's sister Janice Fraser generously donated her time as legal support; and there were two silent supporters outside Ferguson Lodge.

The basis of their argument was that people with disabilities had a right to choose how they wanted to live, which was in fact consistent with the legislation. They wanted to stay living at Ferguson Lodge.

Mr Knight recalled, "We banded together as a group of residents and fought. At the time there were a lot of little cliques among the residents but all the residents came together to fight for what they wanted."

While the controversy over whether or not Ferguson Lodge could remain operating continued, by the mid 1990s the reality was that it was no longer best practice. Bathrooms were communal and even bedrooms were shared in the majority of cases, while many other aspects of the facility were outdated given the advances in technology over the years.

A rebuild was the only way to maintain an appropriate level of services, and Government funding was required if it was going to stay open at all. By the end of the millennium, there was still no certainty for the residents of Ferguson Lodge.

Berala Transitional Accommodation Facility

While people were now more likely to survive after sustaining a spinal cord injury, and support services were being developed to assist them to live independently in the community, one problem remained – where to live.

Berala Transitional Accommodation Facility

Modified homes were not the norm, and undertaking home modifications could take several years. Some homes might never be suitable for wheelchair users because of internal design restrictions (such as those with internal stairs), and there were long waiting lists for Community Housing.

For many people, too, returning to the community in a wheelchair was a daunting task, and it became clear that transitional accommodation was necessary. Indeed, one of the recommendations from the survey of members in 1983 requested: "That half-way houses be established to assist the newly disabled and their families for living outside of institutions."

It was a mixture of generosity, timing and a brilliant idea, which fused around 1986 and 1987, that brought about the Association's first transitional accommodation facility at Berala.

The primary recipient of the Golden Stave Luncheons, ParaQuad NSW wanted to make worthwhile use of the hundreds of thousands of dollars coming its way.

At the same time, Board member and person with quadriplegia John Walsh AM was interested in the Association developing a facility where people could go after their injury to get used to living in the community.

When the Association told Golden Stave about Mr Walsh's concept of transitional housing, they were very enthusiastic.

Fortuitously one of the Directors of the Golden Stave was connected with the Hon. Frank Walker, NSW Minister for Housing 1983-1988, and sought his assistance. Minister Walker came up with three blocks that had been earmarked for schools but were now in excess to the NSW Government's requirements. Rather than sell them, Minister Walker offered them to the Association.

"It was one of those things that only happens once in a lifetime."

– Bob Duncan, CEO 1983-2002

Mr Duncan recalled how it happened, "Minister Walker came up with these three blocks that were available for building on and told us to take our pick. He asked us to tell him what we wanted and he said the NSW Government would build it for us. There were 25 townhouses built on the site for community housing, and we got five of them for transitional accommodation plus a facility with five one-bedroom hotel-style units in it. It was one of those things that only happens once in a lifetime."

Government architects assisted the Association to design the main facility plus the five townhouses, and the Berala Transitional Accommodation Facility was opened in 1988.

Grant Nickel and Branko Boskoski take on the great outdoors

The entire profits from the 1987, 1988 and 1989 Golden Stave Luncheons were channelled to the Berala Transitional Accommodation project. Rights to name the streets around the Berala complex were auctioned at one of the Luncheons. It is no coincidence, then, that after winning one of the auctions the Band Manager of Dire Straits named the main street in the housing estate Dire Straits Way.

Grant Nickel was one of the first to move into Berala in 1989. Living in a one-bedroom unit, he was 19 and had started a Science Degree at Sydney University and wanted independence from his family. The following year he moved into a two-bedroom townhouse in Dire Straits Way and with a young man called Branko Boskoski. "It was a pretty funny address for a guy who had a spinal cord injury," said Mr Nickel. "Although, my mum didn't think it was so funny at the time!"

Mr Boskoski, who sustained quadriplegia in 1982 when he fell off his trail bike at just 16, said that Berala provided a springboard towards living in the community. "Grant Nickel and I were two of the first people to move into a townhouse at Berala; it was an excellent set-up," said Mr Boskoski. "Berala offered me the opportunity to live independently in the community and I used it as a stepping-stone to moving out on my own. There was a lot of support and the Coordinator at the time organised activities to make sure we could get out and experience life. Grant and I even went on a camping trip."

FROM THE FIRST FIVE AT BERALA

"Berala has given us an opportunity to regain our independence. We have all learnt skills in living independently. Since living here, we have been encouraged to accept responsibility for our own lives and environment. Those of us who could not cook have now learnt, and we also know about the support services available to us… Berala has provided us with opportunities which we otherwise wouldn't have had…"

– EXTRACT FROM A THANK YOU LETTER FROM THE FIRST FIVE RESIDENTS AT BERALA TO THE GOLDEN STAVE FOUNDATION, 1989

The large facility at Berala contained five single motel-style units, each with its own bedroom, ensuite bathroom and living area. Part of one building, there was also a shared kitchen, dining room, lounge and laundry. The five single-level townhouses (two three-bedroom and three two-bedroom) were built across the road and down the street.

"Berala offered me the opportunity to live independently in the community and I used it as a stepping-stone to moving out on my own." – Branko Boskoski

Newcastle Northern Region Branch

Newcastle headquarters at Wickham

L-R: Ashley Coops, Dawn Peresson, Alex Danilov and Mark Morgan-Jones in 1980

While the Association provided financial assistance, support and leadership, the Newcastle Branch had a strong sense of community ownership over all its operations, especially in its early years.

It had its own Branch Committee that reported to the Board in Sydney, although it could only make recommendations and the decision-making responsibilities rested with the Board. In addition, there was a place reserved on the Board for a member from the Newcastle Branch, a position firstly held by Peter Stokes and then by Mary Cleary.

In its first year, the President of the Committee was Alex Danilov, with Jim Nickerson the Vice President. The Branch Co-ordinator was Dawn Peresson, whose husband was a member of the Branch Committee. The Association's Rehabilitation Officers, who made a number of visits to Newcastle in the first year, assisted Mrs Peresson in her task of establishing the Newcastle Branch. Mrs Peresson worked in this position for nearly six years.

In 1980 when Mr Danilov resigned, Mrs Cleary was appointed President and led the Newcastle Branch in a voluntary capacity for the next nine years, resigning in 1989.

Gary Dobinson was the next President, followed by Greg Ferguson. Both Mr Dobinson and Mr Ferguson were wheelchair users who served the Branch in a voluntary capacity over a number of years.

In the early 1990s it was decided that, while the Branch Committee should remain, the Association would appoint a Branch Manager who would report directly to the CEO and Board in Sydney. The original Branch Manager was Robyn Westbury, who had previously been the Branch Co-ordinator.

The Newcastle Branch originally operated out of a rented shopfront at 33 Broadmeadow Road, Broadmeadow. The premises were made accessible with a ramp donated by the Commonwealth Steel Company, and doubled as a gift shop, where volunteers sold donated goods in order to raise essential funds. By July 1980, sales were covering half of the annual rent.

However, the Branch quickly outgrew its shopfront, especially as it could not accommodate a store for personal care supplies. Fortunately, through the telethon for the IYDP held in 1981, the Association received sufficient donations to seek new accommodation for the Newcastle Branch.

The telethon was telecast through NBN3 in Newcastle for the benefit of several local disability organisations. Personalities from the Newcastle Branch were involved, including Mary Cleary who cooked breakfast for the stars and later received a cheque for $40,000 on behalf of the Association.

Mr Dobinson, third President Newcastle Branch

During the process of looking for new headquarters, Mrs Cleary heard that her Parish church was coming up for sale and thought it would be suitable for the Newcastle Branch. Mrs Cleary then contacted Sydney headquarters, and Dr Grant and Mr Coyne visited the site soon after. Finding it appropriate, the Association secured it before it went to auction. Never too far away from the action, Mrs Cleary's father had in fact built the church, along with her husband and brothers who had worked on the construction!

As the building was not accessible, local supporters funded modifications over time, and the old church at 57 Albert Street Wickham served as a hub for the Branch over many years, and included a shopfront for PECS.

NEWCASTLE BRANCH COMMITTEE IN 1980

PRESIDENT:
Alex Danilov

VICE PRESIDENT:
Jim Nickerson

TREASURER:
Eugene Vilks

COMMITTEE:
Mary Cleary
Nick Goura
Mike Peresson
Peter Stokes*

* Denotes a wheelchair user

NEWCASTLE BRANCH COMMITTEE IN 1989

PRESIDENT:
Mary Cleary

TREASURER:
Jim Larney

COMMITTEE:
John Alcock*
David Anderson*
Graham Farish
Kevin Gilbert*
Jeff Fry*
Maryanne Ireland*
Ross Webeck*

* Denotes a wheelchair user

In 1988 the Branch established its own newsletter, Northern News, whereas until then it had mailed out alerts of upcoming events to members on an ad hoc basis, and had also featured in the Association's quarterly newsletter ParaQuad News. The local newsletter was produced monthly and contained six main articles, as well as information about social events in the Hunter Region.

The Newcastle Branch, like its Sydney headquarters, was founded by volunteers. Indeed, volunteers were the backbone of the Newcastle Branch, as suggested in this piece printed in the September/ October 1980 edition of ParaQuad News:

Craft expo fundraiser 1991

"The Newcastle Branch Office has lost the voluntary worker who has assisted us for the past four months. She has found a job with Australia Post and we wish her every success in her career, but our members may have difficulty in contacting the Office at the moment."

In its first year, its two major fundraising events were a fashion parade organised by Mrs Morgan-Jones with the assistance of the Dawn-Maree Boutique and Kevin McDougall's Menswear Store, which raised $1,800; and a cabaret at the Germania Club Newcastle Ltd, which raised $1,400.

The backbone of the Newcastle Branch was the Family and Friends Support Group, which was originally led by Mrs Cleary. The Group met once a month to organise cake stalls, pie drives, street stalls, raffles at Christmas and Easter, dances and fetes, as well as the annual bucket brigade at the football.

In July 1980 President Mr Danilov wrote in his Annual General Report to the Association:

"The backbone of our Branch is our Family Support Group under the capable leadership of Mrs Mary Cleary. The majority of our projects could not have happened without their help. They have now developed an expertise in knowing which goods will sell and which raffle prize is the most appealing. They have learned to develop a roster system for manning stalls so that no one is overworked and maximum benefit is derived from volunteers. The group is growing in numbers. I would like to express to all of them my sincere thanks."

In 1990 the Family and Friends Support Group became known as the Busy Bees. The Busy Bees continued to support the Association with first class quality jams, pickles and crafts.

Newcastle businessmen were very supportive and funded several balls. One of the most successful balls was held in a newly completed car park – raising enough money to modify the Branch's headquarters and make it fully accessible.

Other supporters contributed their time and energy in various ways. One such supporter and Branch Committee member, Graeme Farish, along with some friends was responsible for raising a tremendous amount of money over the years. Mr Farish organised theatre nights, trivia nights and an annual art exhibition, which in 1984 raised more than $3,000.

It took the Newcastle Branch 10 years to bring in enough sponsorship to balance its outgoings, but with the generosity of everyone involved, it was made possible.

In the Winter 1990 edition of ParaQuad News, President Mr Dobinson wrote:

"I am very proud to say that this is the first year that Newcastle ParaQuad has been self-supporting. This has been due to the support we have received throughout the year from services clubs, organisations, family groups, and also many individual donations which have been very much appreciated. A major factor has been that we now stock a wider range of welfare goods at the Centre and you the members have taken advantage of this service."

Volunteers with the Newcastle Branch were not only active in fundraising and office support, they would also visit members and their families to assess the needs of the membership on a regular basis and simply to connect one-on-one. Within its first year, it had already conducted 168 home visits.

Key Initiatives

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s the core operations of the Newcastle Branch were Community Services, in particular, helping people with spinal cord injury to re-engage with the broader community, and advocating on behalf of people with spinal cord injury. Mrs Cleary was a major player in meeting these key objectives.

When her son decided to do a desktop publishing course at TAFE so as to improve Northern News, Mrs Cleary encouraged other members to join him. The four participants, Anthony Cleary, Greg Ferguson, Ross Webeck and Nicole Wilcox, then went on to study Business Management and Graphic Arts Design and used their skills to assist the Newcastle Branch.

A tireless advocate for people in wheelchairs, Mrs Cleary once took a member to a local supermarket, showing the Store Manager that the aisles were too narrow for the wheelchair. While in the late 1980s she lobbied for local driving schools to teach members how to drive, as the only specialised driving lessons at the time were in Sydney; Barnes Driving School took up the call.

Before the Hunter Spinal Cord Injury Service became established in Newcastle, Mrs Cleary lobbied for spinal clinics to travel from Sydney to Newcastle a few times each year. She was able to secure a team of doctors from the RNSH Spinal Injuries Unit who would consult with 30 to 40 clients in a day.

Together with a team of volunteers, Mrs Cleary developed the 3M Club for people in wheelchairs to help them get out and socialise. They organised BBQ lunches, ten-pin bowling, fishing, games and other social events. In this way, people in wheelchairs were encouraged to get active in life and make friends, and carers could connect with one another.

The People

Mary Cleary

Mary Cleary, a Newcastle nurse, became a member of ParaQuad NSW in 1975 when her son sustained quadriplegia playing Rugby League.

Mary Cleary, President Newcastle Branch 1980-1989 (Courtesy Mrs Cleary)

She later joined the Board of Directors and was actively involved in the formation of the Newcastle Northern Region Branch. When the Chairman of the Newcastle Branch stepped down in 1980, Mary took over and led the Newcastle Branch in a voluntary capacity for nine years, from 1980 to 1989.

Mrs Cleary was instrumental in lobbying Local Government and businesspeople to achieve better outcomes for wheelchair users, and her work with the Association was very much about empowering wheelchair users to re-engage with society.

From taking a wheelchair user to a local supermarket to demonstrate the accessibility issues to the Store Manager, to helping people with spinal cord injury further their education, the name Cleary was synonymous with the Newcastle Branch.

In her honour, the Association named Newcastle's transitional accommodation facility Cleary Court and she was made a Life Member for her contributions.

About her involvement, Mrs Cleary simply said, "I could see what needed to be done. I was a trained nurse and I had a son with a severe spinal injury. So I could see what was lacking. That's why I jumped in."

In her report to the AGM in July 1988, Mrs Cleary wrote:

"The 3M Club have been very busy and while in the process of devouring much BBQ food and refreshments they have had a series of guest speakers, as well as planning their fundraising activities and social outings. They and their coordinator Dianne Lockwood are to be congratulated and thanked for their involvement."

Paul Johnston, quadriplegic at 17 after a sporting accident, used to look forward to the 3M Club events. He is quoted in The Newcastle Star in 1980 saying:

"I don't get out too often. It needs two people to get me into the car. Socially, we don't go out at all – only when the Association has something on. Then we get all the good gear on, polish up the chair, and away we go."

In 1989 due to the success of the 3M Club, the Newcastle Branch received a NSW Government grant to set up the Newlake Peer Support Group. It was a group for people with disabilities aged 18 to 55 in Newcastle and Lake Macquarie who had never ventured out of home. Through the Group the participants were able to broaden their life experiences, as well as connect with people facing the same challenges.

In the early 1990s, Maryanne Ireland took up the role of advocacy for the people of the Hunter Region. Ms Ireland liaised closely with Grant Nickel, who worked in a similar capacity for Spinal Cord Injuries Australia (SCIA). Together they would lobby Local Councils for better access and equity on behalf of people with spinal cord injury, developing a coordinated approach to achieve their goals.

Testimony to the community spirit in Newcastle, Mr Nickel was on the Newcastle Branch Committee and contributed to the ParaQuad publication of Northern News while working for SCIA. During this time, Mr Nickel wrote articles about health for Northern News utilising his experience in Nutrition and Dietetics and from the perspective of a person with a spinal cord injury.

Mr Nickel said, "It didn't matter who you worked for, it was about doing things for the wider good and just getting the job done."

Newcastle Transitional Accommodation Facility

Cleary Court in Hamilton was passed on to the Association by the Boomerang Disabled Association. Boomerang's social worker in the late 1980s saw a need for accommodation for people with spinal cord injury and enlisted the help of some friends to get several houses through the NSW Department of Housing. They also raised money to fit them out.

In 1991, the Boomerang Disabled Association approached ParaQuad NSW to assume responsibility for their accommodation facilities, and the Newcastle Branch took on two of the houses as the third was in bad need of repair.

In 1995, the Association relinquished the head lease on Boomerang House due to its lack of accessibility. The remaining house, Cleary Court, continued to be managed.

Named after Mrs Cleary, the house has four bedrooms and two bathrooms. However, there are usually no more than two residents at one time.

The New Millennium

2000–2011

Environment

The year 2000 was an important year for people with disabilities in Sydney, primarily because of the impact of the Olympics and Paralympics.

Preparations for the Games had led to an acceleration of attempts to make Sydney a world-class city, and this included more accessible buildings and transport.

Just a few years later the community was in debate about the use of human embryonic stem cells in medical research towards a possible cure for spinal cord injuries. This climaxed with a visit from former Superman Christopher Reeve in January 2003, timed to coincide with a major conference on spinal injuries. (Mr Reeve had sustained quadriplegia several years earlier and had become a vocal advocate for stem cell research.)

People who had survived their injury decades earlier were now ageing, and this posed new issues for welfare services and placed more demands on health and disability service providers, such as ParaQuad NSW.

In the new millennium the rights of people with disabilities were now established as an integral understanding within the community, and Governments had a clearer view of their responsibilities to support people with disabilities and their carers.

Fabian Blattman (Courtesy John Sherwell)

What had become more apparent was that disability rights did not fit neatly into a one-size-fits-all approach. Rather, it was clear that the best way to ensure the human rights of people with disabilities was to support them to make their own life choices. In line with this understanding, models of funding that moved the decision-making and control closer to the individual were now being applied.

The role of many not-for-profit organisations became one of delivering services in partnership with Government, however in order to win important Government contracts they had to demonstrate competitiveness in the marketplace.

Not only was there increasing competition for the funding dollar, the new millennium also saw a marked increase in sponsorship fatigue. With hundreds of not-for-profit organisations competing for the same pool of sponsorship money, fundraisers needed to be increasingly creative in order to gain support.

In an era of glossy technology and rapid information exchange, organisations now had to communicate their messages through a range of media tools, and the consumer expected this level of interaction. Indeed, not-for-profit organisations were now required to market themselves and operate with the same degree of professionalism as commercial brands, regardless of philosophical perspective.

A result of environmental influences, ParaQuad NSW experienced a high degree of internal change from the year 2000, notably in its management style. In 2000 a wheelchair user was elected President; in 2003 the Association moved into its first ever purpose-built headquarters; in 2004 it appointed a woman as Chairman of the Board; during 2005/2006 it underwent significant restructure in Sydney and Newcastle, and in 2006 the Board employed a CEO from the corporate sector for the first time in its history.

In 2005 the controversy surrounding Ferguson Lodge was finally laid to rest with the approval of ongoing funding from the NSW Government, and in 2011 the new Ferguson Lodge was opened.

While lobbying, primary health care, equipment and accommodation have remained fundamental elements of the Association's operations, building capacity in other organisations through education and training and awareness raising activities has become increasingly important in recent years. Working innovatively with other organisations has also become necessary in order to comply with relevant legislation and keep delivering services.

However, there is always more progress to be made, and as this book goes to print there is debate over a National Disability Insurance Scheme that would properly fund the disability sector and ensure that adequate provision is made for people with disabilities and carers alike.

The People

John Walsh AM

John Walsh AM was 20 when he suffered a spinal cord injury playing Rugby League in 1971 – something that would shape his career. Spending the next six months at RNSH, he then returned home to live with his family.

John Walsh AM (Courtesy Mr Walsh)

Having begun a science degree at Sydney University, Mr Walsh then decided to pursue actuarial studies, qualifying as a Fellow of the Institute of Actuaries of Australia (IAA) in 1984.

While at RNSH, Mr Walsh met Dr John Grant, who later invited him to join the Board of ParaQuad NSW. Serving on the Board for five years in the 1980s, he resigned when his first child was born. During his time as Director, Mr Walsh is credited with the idea of developing transitional accommodation, realised in the Association's housing project at Berala.

A consulting actuary in accident compensation, general insurance and social policy, Mr Walsh has conducted major reviews of several of Australia and New Zealand's accident compensation schemes. Mr Walsh also helped establish the Australian Spinal Injury Registry.

His public sector work, based on resource and risk modelling, has assisted State and Federal Governments in developing more effective service delivery in community services, disability and health, and in 2001 the IAA nominated him Actuary of the Year.

Serving on numerous committees and boards over the years, including NSW Home Care Service, NSW Motor Accidents Authority, and the Institute of Health Policy Studies, Mr Walsh was recently appointed Deputy Chair of the National Health Performance Authority.

Now a Partner of PricewaterhouseCoopers, Mr Walsh was one of the Productivity Commissioners who developed the National Disability Insurance Scheme, set to revolutionise disability services in Australia.

Having played a key role in advising Government and influencing the shape of policy throughout his career, Mr Walsh said, "Being a quadriplegic has helped me in my work by giving me a better understanding of the data, and my interest in the disability and health sectors absolutely stems from my own injuries. But you need an enormous amount of resilience to deal with quadriplegia."

Clearly Mr Walsh has resilience in bucket loads; in 2011 he was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia.

Governance and Management

Chairman and Board: A Move to Corporatisation

In the year 2000, after almost 40 years of service to ParaQuad NSW and having made a profound and lasting contribution to people with spinal cord injury in this State, the founder Dr John Grant relinquished his position on the Board.

Dr Grant in his role as President of the Paralympic Organising Committee (Courtesy Grant family album)

As President of the Paralympic Organising Committee, Dr Grant had a significant workload and decided it was time to allow others to carry ParaQuad NSW forward, his legacy being the Association itself.

A number of Directors left the Board along with Dr Grant, and many of these positions were filled by people with spinal cord injury.

Dr Edward Watts (PhD) was elected the next President, and the first President in a wheelchair. Dr Watts had joined the Board four years earlier and had been Treasurer of the Association.

Whereas in the early years medical professionals and able-bodied people had dominated the Board, now it was more representative, and for the first time in its history a majority of Directors were people with spinal cord injury.

While this was in many ways a logical development, some felt that the significant changeover in Directors did not acknowledge the fact that the Association had always encouraged representation, from the very beginning when a wheelchair user was appointed as Secretary, or the valuable contributions made by able-bodied people.

ParaQuad NSW operates under one roof from 2003

An honest perspective is to acknowledge that there were two sides, each with its own reasonable viewpoint, and in the end the right of wheelchair users to be represented on the Board was the prevailing voice. However, it was not without its controversies.

"The new Board was very excited about the opportunity to move ParaQuad NSW forward into the new millennium," said Dr Watts. "It is hard to articulate the way those of us in wheelchairs felt about the Association. We were as passionate as the original Directors had been, however for us there was the added dimension of representing people with spinal cord injury in a very personal way."

In 2001 a new Constitution was developed and adopted in March of that year. The original Constitution had become cumbersome due to numerous amendments over the years and required updating to bring it into line with amendments to Corporations Law.

The new Constitution clarified levels of membership and governance requirements. It reduced the maximum number of Directors to 12; introduced three-year terms for Directors; and replaced the old proxy voting system with postal voting for eligible members (Ordinary Members and Life Members), enabling members who could not attend the AGM to cast their vote.

This was followed by a move towards corporatisation, which had implications at the level of governance. A key driver for this change, Dr Watts said, "We wanted to move the Association from charity to not-for-profit organisation. The environment was now demanding a level of professionalism from the not-for-profit sector and it was a matter of keeping up with the times, particularly in order to successfully partner with Government in providing services. However, it was perhaps too much too soon."

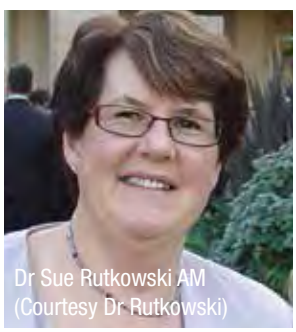
A stark example of this change was that the Board could hire and fire the CEO, but the CEO was now made responsible for the employment and structure of the staff reporting to him, whereas previously the Board had closely managed executive employment. Similarly, while in 2002 the Board had discussed the purchase of one or two laptops, in 2003 the new CEO was recommending the Association sign a three-year lease exceeding $200,000 for a computer network!

While the Board attempted to review its governance processes, a number of Directors were concerned about the power these changes gave the CEO, and the cost of an expanded managements structure. In this context, David Kerr challenged for the presidency in November 2003 and was elected. Following an amendment to the Constitution, this would be the last election for President; the term President would be replaced by the term Chairman, where the Chairman was to be elected by the Board rather than the members.

Also in 2003, Wendy Potter joined the Association as a Director. Ms Potter had been Chairman of People with Disability Australia Incorporated the previous nine years, the same lobby group that had protested the existence of Ferguson Lodge. But Ms Potter believed she could make a difference at ParaQuad NSW, and the members who elected her agreed.

Ms Potter's appointment as Chairman by the Board in November 2004 heralded another shift in governance. Not only was Ms Potter the first woman in a wheelchair to lead the Board, she was also an experienced Chairman and implemented important procedural reform. "We now have very strict regulations on governance," said Ms Potter. "The Board no longer interferes in operational matters and the CEO is responsible to the Board, and must meet key performance indicators."

While it moved towards a more representative style of governance, the Board still retained some medical professionals. Dr Sue Rutkowski AM, a spinal doctor, has made significant contributions to the Association since her appointment as Director in 1998. Dr Rutkowski said, "I joined the Board to represent the members with spinal cord injury to make sure their wellbeing and their needs were being looked after. The hospital system can only do so much. It's up to non-government organisations like ParaQuad NSW to do the rest."



Dr Sue Rutkowski AM
(Courtesy Dr Rutkowski)

"The hospital system can only do so much. It's up to non-government organisations like ParaQuad NSW to do the rest."

– Dr Sue Rutkowski AM, Director 1998-present

THE BOARD IN 2001

PRESIDENT:
Dr Edward Watts*

VICE PRESIDENT:
David Currie*

TREASURER:
Anthony Bowen*

DIRECTORS:
Branko Boskoski*
Dr Ian Cameron
Chris Campbell
Dr Stella Engel
David Kerr*
Anthony Leggett*
Christopher Lummis
Dr Sue Rutkowski
Ian Sherriff*
Graham Spurway*

* Denotes a wheelchair user

THE BOARD IN 2011

CHAIRMAN:
Wendy Potter*

DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:
Anders Halvorsen*

CHAIRMAN OF THE FINANCE AND RISK COMMITTEE:
Anders Halvorsen*

DIRECTORS:
Dr Edward Watts*
Dr Sue Rutkowski
Carole Molyneux
Robyn Chapman
John Renshaw
Steve Osborne

* Denotes a wheelchair user

In 2005, 2006 and again in 2008 there were significant amendments to the Constitution. Importantly, the size of the Board was reduced to a maximum of nine and, while most Directors would still be voted in by eligible members, three Directors would now be appointed by the Board for their specialist expertise. The changes also stated that the Directors themselves rather than the membership would appoint the Chairman.

The CEO and Creating a Not-For-Profit Organisation

In 2002 Bob Duncan relinquished the position of CEO but continued to be active within the Association until 2004, when he faced a serious health issue. Also in 2002 the position of General Manager Finance and Commercial Operations was eliminated and the responsibilities rolled into the CEO position.

In 2002 Greg Smith was appointed to replace Mr Duncan. Mr Smith was hired as one of the new breed of CEOs in the not-for-profit sector. The expectation was that he would manage the organisation with minimal interference from the Board, with the Board focusing on strategic issues.

Mr Smith oversaw the move of the Association's headquarters to Newington and the expansion of senior staff in 2003. With the move to Newington, a new corporate management structure was introduced, built around member services, corporate services, business services and marketing.

There were extra costs related to staffing that were associated with the move to corporatisation. The important link between appropriate management of staff and high quality services was acknowledged, and pay scales were adjusted accordingly. These changes recognised that staff were the Association's most valuable asset.

However, there was a significant financial fallout around this time, and Dr Watts acknowledged the timing was not the best. "The move to a corporate structure occurred at the worst possible time for the Association," said Dr Watts.

CAAS sales had declined to zero when ParaQuad QLD resumed the portion of CAAS that it had sub-contracted to the Association; the Attendant Care Service was hit with enormous insurance premiums, following industry-wide concerns about occupational health and safety; and, as a matter of principle, the Board had discontinued the Field Appeal Program, which had a significant impact on revenues in its own right.

It was a controversial period. While there were many supporters of change, there were also many people on the Board and on staff who held a different point of view about corporatisation, and believed that the changes were too great, and unwarranted. Many felt that the Association had become disconnected from the needs of its members and was now top-heavy.

Branko Boskoski, a Director from 1998 to 2003, was one of several Board members who were not happy about the direction that the Association was taking. "I think we lost our way a bit; we had a nest egg and then we spent it," said Mr Boskoski. "We tried to become more business-like but weren't bringing in the money and we started cutting services."

After sustaining losses for a few years in a row, in 2005/2006 the Board had to make sweeping changes that were highly criticised, in order to keep the Association viable.

Wendy Spencer, a Director from 2004 to 2006, whose husband lost his job in the restructure, said, "The overall feeling within the Association was dissatisfaction. Staff could see services disappearing and it was a very sad time. A lot of people lost their jobs."

As a result, in 2006 the Board decided it needed to employ someone with expertise in finance and for the first time in its history it looked to the corporate sector for a new CEO. After interviewing several candidates without success, Deputy Chairman Anders Halvorsen recommended Max Bosotti.

Mr Bosotti's credentials were perfectly matched to the Association's most pressing need at the time – an operational and financial re-awakening. He had a successful background in the business and banking sectors where he had facilitated multi-million dollar deals, even establishing the Internet network for Telstra in Australia.

"When I was first approached to consider joining the Association I had no knowledge of the overall circumstances for someone with a spinal injury," said Mr Bosotti. "In my researching I came to understand that there were many ageing parents caring for adult children with disabilities at home, and that was one of the things that really motivated me to take on the challenge of ParaQuad NSW."

Mr Bosotti is credited with leading the Association back into a strong financial position after the financial difficulties of 2005/2006, as well as galvanising action on the Ferguson Lodge rebuild.

"My first task was improving the effectiveness and profitability of the organisation," said Mr Bosotti. "They'd had many years of losses. For me turning around the operation in the first year was relatively easy, but keeping in the black while at the same time trying to expand our Community Services was and still is very difficult. As I said the first day I started, we have to be a not-for-loss organisation."

Ms Potter said, "Max Bosotti has worked closely with all the managers and now the focus of decision making always considers the financial implications of the proposed decision. The Board expects the Association to be profitable; even though we're a not-for-profit organisation, we still need money to provide services."

"The Board expects the Association to be profitable; even though we're a not-for-profit organisation, we still need money to provide services." – Wendy Potter, Chairman

Responding to Financial Pressures

The Association experienced some significant structural changes during 2005/2006, brought about largely through environmental factors to which the Board had to respond.

The Peer Support Program and Regional Network Program, which had been streamlined in previous years, were discontinued in 2005, however this was largely due to the fact that the Spinal Cord Injury Association had taken on the role of hospital visits.

Although the Association had hoped to continue its Community Spinal Advisory Service, the funding it had sought to continue and expand the service after delivering the Rural Spinal Cord Injury Project (RSCIP) did not eventuate. Instead, in 2003 NSW Department of Health established a service in its own right known as the Spinal Outreach Service (SOS). Run through the Royal Rehabilitation Centre as part of the State Spinal Cord Injury Service (SSCIS), over the next few years SOS absorbed the Association's role of visiting rural areas. As a result the Community Spinal Advisory Service was concluded in 2006.

While the Association did not receive the funding itself to conduct rotating regional clinics, it was a key player in getting the SOS established. Dr Rutkowski said, "We wouldn't have got anywhere without ParaQuad NSW and the other players. All their efforts were significant building blocks towards the creation of a Government-funded State Spinal Outreach Service."

At the same time, a significant financial burden meant that the Primary Health Care Team run through the Community Services Division was reduced to only one spinal nurse, one occupational therapist and their General Manager (another occupational therapist was retained as part of the Attendant Care Service, which was covered by separate funding).

ParaQuad Engineering also came under review. Over a long period of time there had been debates about the viability of the engineering division. One view was that it would only ever at best be a break-even operation, however it was certainly a valuable service to those who used it and provided employment for several people. An alternative view was that it should be able to generate a profit. Even when it was located at Milperra, the Board's Finance Committee had conducted an investigation into its viability.

However, the Association had been optimistic that moving engineering from Milperra to Newington might have re-vitalised engineering. In recent years there had been greater demand for driving modifications suited to people with quadriplegia, and for modifications of vans to avoid transferring in and out of cars. ParaQuad Engineering had demonstrated its capacity to successfully complete this sort of work, being one of the first to modify a fully automated van that could be driven from the wheelchair. In the end, the predicted demand did not eventuate and operations ceased in 2005.

Ms Potter said, "Closing ParaQuad Engineering caused distress to a lot of our members. I would have loved to have tried to make it profitable but finances were not the only reason behind the decision to close. New regulations were being introduced that would have added further cost and risk to the Association that it could not afford at the time."

With a much-loved organisation like ParaQuad NSW, members felt a sense of ownership and in many cases it was very much a part of their lives.

John Spencer, who was made redundant along with about four others when ParaQuad Engineering closed, didn't agree that it was for the best. "It was a service for people with disabilities and it didn't matter if we made only a small profit or just broke even."

New Management Structure

The restructure led to the creation of a new management arrangement, and this remains today. The Senior Executive Team consists of the CEO, Chief Operating Officer, General Manager Community Services, and General Manager BrightSky Australia.

The Chief Operating Officer is also the Company Secretary and responsible for all financial matters; the Department of Veterans' Affairs Mobility and Functional Support; information and communication technology; property; legal and other corporate affairs.

The General Manager Community Services is responsible for all community service programs including the Primary Health Care Team, Transitional Accommodation; Ferguson Lodge; the Attendant Care Service; Newcastle Northern Region Branch; and Education and Training. In addition, this role has responsibility for overseeing the governance of all clinical roles within the organisation.

The General Manager BrightSky Australia is responsible for the operations of the commercial arm across Australia involved in the sale of continence products, wound care; the national Epidermolysis Bullosa program, BeBright education program and other health related products.

THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE TEAM IN 2011

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER:
Max Bosotti

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER:
Martin Gardiner

GENERAL MANAGER COMMUNITY SERVICES:
Tonina Harvey AM

GENERAL MANAGER BRIGHTSKY AUSTRALIA:
David Sinclair

A number of Managers report to each Executive and are responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Association.

Headquarters

In the late 1990s the old RSL Club at Homebush was in a serious state of decay; it had developed holes in the roof and even attracted rats. With a new housing development in the adjoining block, it seemed that the future of the land was related to its redevelopment as units.

Karen Filocamo, General Manager Community Services 2000-2006, couldn't believe that staff had put up with the building for so long. Ms Filocamo said, "When it rained the water

L-R: Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir with Ed Watts and Greg Smith at the opening of Newington, 2003

Purpose-built headquarters at Newington

used to run down the wall and you couldn't get enough buckets and sheets to soak up the water. The water would soak into the carpet, which would go mouldy and they had to get industrial strength heaters to dry it out. It was unlike any place I'd worked in before."

Although the building was in a prime location with good access to public transport, the decisive factor finally came when Strathfield Council reviewed the one-in-100 year flood levels. Under these revised levels, any new building on the site would need to be significantly higher than the current building. Any sale of the site would be affected by these new flood levels and by issues relating to the Memorial Rose Garden.

Following the election of the Board in November 2000, the property at Homebush was put on the market. It was in fact auctioned twice, as the first buyer backed out of the deal.

In the meantime the head office was moved to temporary rental accommodation at the old Auburn Baseball Club in Tavistock Street, Auburn, in 2001. The old Baseball Club wasn't much better, but the Auburn Council rented it to the Association for next to nothing. (It also came with a shed out the back that was reportedly used by a woman who offered services to male clients, until Ms Filocamo found out about it and got the shed boarded up very tightly!)

Following the Olympics there was a very positive mood in Sydney, particularly around the Olympic site at Newington. The Olympic village was to be redeveloped as a residential area with adjoining development of shops and industrial zones. There was an opportunity to purchase land in the Olympic village area, and the Board decided to purpose-build new headquarters there.

Warehouse at Newington

It was envisaged that bringing all operations onto one site at Newington would help create a single culture for the organisation and generate a number of economies. There was to be a warehouse, one side for medical supplies, the other side was for engineering. The top level of the building would be office space for professional staff, and the bottom level would be used as a shop front, meeting rooms and the PECS call centre.

The building that resulted at 6 Holker Street Newington included state-of-the-art accessibility features and set a benchmark for wheelchair accessible office environments – even the doors on the toilets were designed to open if just tapped by a shoe. Although there was a lift, the main building also had a huge ramp – a symbol of the importance of access in modern design. All staff had computers, which were part of a sophisticated IT network, something very new for the Association.

"Our main vehicle for change was the Newington Project," said Mr Smith. "It was about a whole lot more than just building a purpose-built facility on time and in budget. It brought all the different functions of the Association together, other than the accommodation and Attendant Care functions, and into one diverse new team, with a new and professional culture focused on member services and achieving our goals. Few organisational transformations can match its scope, complexity and successful outcomes."

The Association moved into its new building in 2003, and it was officially opened by the Association's Patron, Governor of NSW Marie Bashir.

Staff member Wendy Harris couldn't believe the difference. "When we got to this purpose-built building it made a huge difference, especially to those of us in a wheelchair."

Communication and Information

Newsletter

ParaQuad News continued to be produced as a quarterly and evolved into a high-quality full-colour magazine. While it was now written in a much more professional style – gone were the congratulatory and jovial entries and other stories that had made it very personable – it was directed at informing and educating its readers on a range of issues, from what the Association was doing to what Governments were saying. It also continued to profile people, particularly its members and especially those whose lives might inspire others.

ParaQuad News becomes a high-quality full-colour magazine

In 2005 the Newcastle Branch ended its publication Northern News as it was finding it increasingly difficult to manage its monthly newsletter, and it was folded into ParaQuad News as a permanent feature known as Northern Region Update.

Website

Into the new millennium the Association developed and improved its website (www.paraquad.org.au). Through the marvels of the Internet the Association was now able to promote the works of the Association and provide an information source for the general public in an almost effortless way. Whereas once Welfare Officers used to visit people in hospital, now newly injured people and their families could find out about the works of the Association through the website.

Extract from ParaQuad News, May/June 2011

The website advanced the Association's global reach and it allowed Ricardo Tanhoffer, a quadriplegic living in Brazil, to find out about services and support for people with spinal cord injury in Sydney.

Working on a website redesign as this book goes to print, the Association plans to offer more for members in the future. Currently there are Facebook and Twitter feeds, but in the future there may be opportunities for chat rooms and forums in a members-only area.

Spinal Cord Injury Information Intake Line

"ParaQuad NSW is the hub of spinal cord injuries."

– Cam Iaquinto, Staff Member

In the new millennium the Association set up its Spinal Cord Injury Information Intake Line. Connected to Community Services, today it caters to anyone with an enquiry related to spinal cord injury or physical disability.

The Primary Health Care Team fields calls not just from people with a disability, but also from their family and friends, as well as allied health professionals. No specific health information is given over the phone, however general information and contact information for other services is provided.

Wheelchair user Cam Iaquinto said, "ParaQuad NSW is a major contact point for people when they have an accident to find out what's available, the products to assist them, what support they can receive, and where to go for help. It's the hub of spinal cord injuries, a resource point."

Referrals

Over the years the Association has developed a strong relationship with key stakeholders in the health care system, and today is well respected in the field of spinal cord injuries. As a result, it receives referrals from hospitals, rehabilitation units, the Spinal Outreach Service and community health care professionals. Today, through its specialised knowledge, the Association has become a valuable addition to the State's health care services.

ParaQuad Voices

In the past few years the Association was receiving an increasing number of requests for a wheelchair user to participate in community education, development days or media events. The volume of requests was more than the Public Relations and Education and Training teams could manage, so they formed a pool of volunteers to help fill requests.

Known as ParaQuad Voices, the program was established in February 2011. Developed by former Education and Training Manager Alex Carbonetti, it involves a team of trained volunteers ready to attend public relations and media events in order to put a face to the spinally injured community. Not intended to be spokespeople for the Association, the ParaQuad Voices volunteers instead contribute their personal stories to community education or public relations events.

The team of volunteers was recruited from the membership after calling for expressions of interest. Currently eleven volunteers have been inducted into the program. Ranging in age from 20 to 68, they are from the South Coast, Young, Canberra and Sydney; to date they have participated in fundraising lunches and a drug action day, and they will be assisting the Training Team in presentations to airline staff.

The People

Ricardo Tanhoffer

Ricardo Tanhoffer had a Masters in Exercise Physiology In People with spinal cord injury and wanted to pursue this course of study. However in his homeland of Brazil there were few people with this expertise.

Ricardo Tanhoffer and his wife Aldre

So when The University of Sydney offered him a PhD scholarship, newly married Mr Tanhoffer and his wife Aldre decided to leap into the unknown. But, having quadriplegia, he needed to find modified accommodation as well as support for his wellbeing.

An Internet search led Mr Tanhoffer to ParaQuad NSW. "I needed to find information about accommodation and what to expect as a wheelchair user, and I found ParaQuad NSW. Leanne O'Reilly was very helpful. She gave me a lot of information and told me about accommodation at Berala."

"Once we prepared the contract for our stay at Berala I felt more secure moving to Australia. It was very important because it's not easy to find a wheelchair accessible home."

Not just a source of accommodation, ParaQuad NSW helped Mr Tanhoffer in many other ways during his four-year stay. "ParaQuad was a great support. I learnt a lot of things from ParaQuad's nurses and occupational therapists. It was bigger than just accommodation, it was about my health as well."

Now at The University of Parana in his home state, he is so grateful to ParaQuad NSW for helping to make his PhD dream come true.

Fundraising

Into the new millennium fundraising has become increasingly challenging. Now a highly competitive environment, raising financial support is no longer just about soliciting donations, but also about building relationships with potential sponsors.

As a result, not-for-profit organisations have had to become increasingly creative in order to secure financial support, and to this end some of the Association's newer events have combined awareness raising and fundraising, offering supporters an experience rather than a fundraising slogan.

According to Mr Bosotti, fundraising is the most important part of the CEO role today. "It's a competitive environment for charitable organisations and spinal cord injuries don't seem to capture a lot of people's attention. We also miss out on a lot of the corporate sponsors because we're not a national organisation," said Mr Bosotti. "I think we need to reposition the Association and seek a higher profile. I'm sure we can secure additional funding with a different, more visible profile."

Field Appeal Program

The Field Appeal Program was a fundraising exercise that had been carried through from the early 1960s. In the latter years, the Association employed 15 to 30 collectors at any one time, grossing about $300,000 per year. However, in 2002 the Board felt that it was not the most appropriate way to secure funds and the Field Appeal Program was discontinued.

ParaQuad NSW Golf Day

ParaQuad NSW held Golf Days intermittently over the past decade, greatly assisted in this task by Evan Fraser, with the last Golf Day held in December 2010 to mark the International Day of People with Disability, at the Oatlands Golf Club. The Golf Days were designed so that participants could enjoy a day of golf and at the same time support people with spinal cord injury.

Independence Day

In 2002 an Independence Day awareness and fund raising event was developed as a special day to celebrate the independence of people with a spinal cord injury. This day initially involved having celebrities and public figures spending a day in a wheelchair, somewhat of a precursor to the Wheels For A Day event that was begun in 2007. The Hon John Watkins MP, who was later to become Deputy Premier of NSW, was one of the people who spent a day in a wheelchair.

The day culminated in an Independence Day Gala Dinner, and three such annual dinners were held at the Westin in the city. The first dinner concluded with a video message from Christopher Reeve, who was campaigning for funds for spinal research. The dinners were part of an overall Paraquad fund-raising program called More than a Roof, which emphasised that bricks and mortar were only a first step in providing accessible accommodation and supporting independent living.

Wheels For A Day

Launched in 2007, the Wheels For A Day event was held during the Spinal Injuries Awareness Week in November and aimed to raise awareness about the issues faced by people in wheelchairs, particularly issues regarding accessibility and employment.

During the event able-bodied supporters had to sit in a wheelchair and perform normal daily tasks. Westpac's Head of Retail and Business Banking Rob Coombe has participated in the event every year. Mr Coombe said, "I'm passionate about advocating for diversity in the workplace, and this includes raising awareness about wheelchair users."

"It has been a real eye opener to participate in the Wheels For A Day event with ParaQuad NSW over a number of years. Simple tasks like getting to work, buying a coffee and even speaking to colleagues was challenging! It really gave me a new level of appreciation for the tenacity and drive that our colleagues in wheelchairs have, just to get to work each day. Our support of ParaQuad I hope will bring more attention to the cause and inspire our people to think about this important issue."

Max Bosotti takes part in Wheels For A Day

Wheels For A Day is now firmly entrenched as an annual event. In 2010 activities were held in Sydney, Newcastle and the Hunter Region during Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Week. Sydney's 2010 event in Martin Place included a wheelchair rugby game, with national wheelchair rugby champions NSW Gladiators competing against a team of former players, the Rugby League Legends, led by Mario Fenech.

Rob Coombe is a regular supporter of Wheels For A Day

Private Sponsors

Over the past few years Mr Bosotti has developed strong one-to-one relationships with individuals who have the capacity to give and a willingness to do so. These benefactors have generously donated hundreds of thousands of dollars, wanting nothing in return.

Mr Bosotti recalled the day when his Executive Assistant Janice Huntington called him with the news that they'd just received a sizeable donation from a benefactor. "Janice said I'd never guess how much it was. I thought maybe $50,000. I couldn't believe it when she said she was holding a cheque for $600,000! People have been very generous."

With this kind of support, there are options for sponsoring positions in the Primary Health Care team, and this is something that could be formalised in the future.

Two years ago the Association set up a formal Bequest Program, something that had been informal in previous years, and to date 18 people have joined.

City2Surf

In 2010 ParaQuad NSW took part in one of Sydney's biggest community events, the City2Surf. With a team of 55 runners, made up of 25 ParaQuad NSW staff and members plus 30 runners from its sponsor SmartSalary, it raised $21,000.

ParaQuad NSW member Ron Gibson became the first person with paraplegia to be allowed to start at the front of the pack with the seeded runners – and he ended up being the first person to cross the finish line, his time just outside the course record set by Australian athletics legend Steve Moneghetti in 1991.

The City2Surf team 2010

Ron Gibson in the City to Surf 2010

High Profile Events

In order to raise the profile of ParaQuad NSW – a necessary feature of appealing to politicians as well as business people – in 2010 the Association held its first ParaQuad NSW luncheon at the Rockpool Bar and Grill with a keynote speaker.

Last year the keynote address was delivered by the Leader of the NSW Liberal Party and now Premier Barry O'Farrell, and this year the Association was fortunate to have former Grand Prix motorbike racer Wayne Gardner OAM in Sydney, once again at the Rockpool Bar and Grill. This was followed by a luncheon with Joe Hockey, Shadow Treasurer, at NSW Parliament House hosted by the Hon. Andrew Constance, NSW Minister for Ageing and Disability Services.

Lobbying

While an independent lifestyle has benefited many people with spinal cord injury since support services were established in the mid 1980s, the reality is that for others it has compounded social isolation. In fact, today people living on their own are those most likely to contact the Association in need of support.

As a result, into the new millennium the Association has expanded its dual focus: one, to continue to advocate for people with spinal cord injury at all Government levels; and two, to help individuals access local services and re-engage with the communities in which they live.

"Part of the scope of our work is to help people with spinal cord injury participate in the community."

– Grant Roulstone, Newcastle Northern Region Branch Manager

Newcastle Northern Region Branch Manager Grant Roulstone said, "When an individual has been isolated for some time it's a massive challenge for them to re-engage with the community. Finances are a huge barrier. Most of our clients are on the Disability Support Pension and once they pay for food, personal care needs, and utilities, there's not much money left over for taxis, even with half price fares."

"Part of the scope of our work is to help people with spinal cord injury participate in the community. There is a huge need to support people and provide access to services, especially if they can't work."

Even finding basic health services can be difficult, such as a GP with accessible offices and specialised equipment or one who will make home visits. Accessibility remains an issue, particularly regarding public transport.

For the Association, the key is helping people to overcome their circumstances in order to live a fulfilling life. In the words of Dr Rutkowski, "People with spinal cord injury are pretty amazing. They just need to be given half a chance to contribute to the community and ParaQuad NSW can be a catalyst for them to be able to live their lives as they would like."

Wendy Harris assists in highlighting the accessibility issue

Primary Health Care Services

Providing free specialist services to adults with an acquired spinal cord injury living in the community, the Primary Health Care team offers expert and holistic treatment and support.

The Primary Health Care Team has been rebuilt over the last few years and now consists of a social worker, three Occupational Therapists, two Spinal Nurse Consultants in Sydney (one full-time and one part-time), and a Spinal Nurse in Newcastle.

The Primary Health Care Team is available to people after their initial 18-month period of community-based rehabilitation with SOS. Clients may be referred to the Team by their local GP or other health worker, but in most cases clients contact the service directly for assistance. Clients do not have to be members in order to access services.

While most clients are in the metropolitan area, people in regional areas who are part of the Association's Attendant Care Service can also receive support. The Primary Health Care team also provides a service to residents at the Association's accommodation facilities, and they provide advice over the phone via the Association's Spinal Cord Injury Information Intake Line.

Tonina Harvey AM, General Manager Community Services

There is no shortage of demand for the Primary Health Care Team. All clinicians operate at capacity and there is often a waiting list to access services, particularly in occupational therapy.

Managed by Tonina Harvey AM, who has a distinguished background in nursing, Community Services not only offers primary health care to clients but also advocates for improvements to health care at the Government level.

Committed to her work at ParaQuad NSW, Ms Harvey said, "I have a passion in wanting to make a difference in the delivery of care. I had an uncle with a spinal cord injury so I understand the impact on families. I believe everyone has a right to access services tailored to their needs – that's what drives me."

Social Work

The number one concern of people who contact the social worker service is housing. Whether they need Government assistance to modify their own homes or whether they need support from a Community Housing provider, there are often long waiting periods and they need temporary housing.

People also ask for assistance with accessing Government benefits, such as the Disability Support Pension, while others require support to navigate services to re-enter paid employment.

For Tony Sharwood, getting assistance in obtaining Government support threw him a lifeline. "I didn't know about the Disability Pension and I was paying for all my attendant care myself. I probably would've been out on the street if it wasn't for ParaQuad NSW."

Other clients are young people in nursing homes who require assistance to engage in programs outside the facility or, at the other end of the spectrum, are older people who have lived independently but require a higher level of assistance as they age.

Occupational Therapy

Working from a client-centred perspective, the occupational therapists' role is to help maintain their clients' independence in the community.

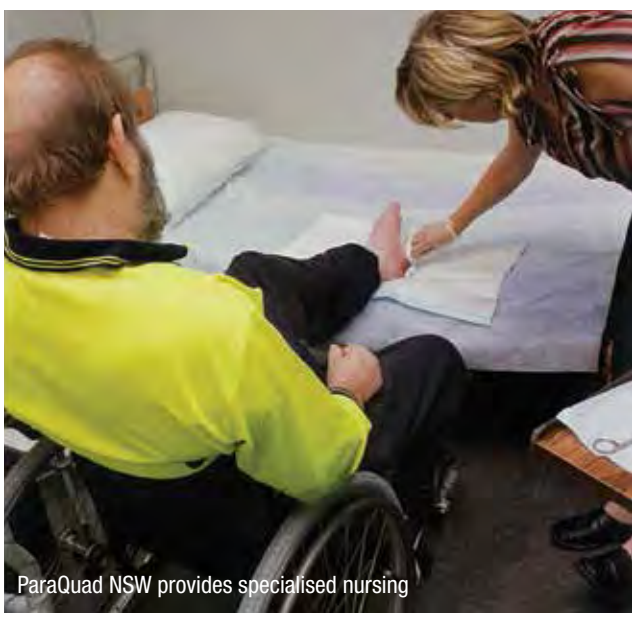
Making sure that clients' physical environments are accessible and that their equipment is functional are fundamental aspects of the service, and the occupational therapists regularly make house calls.

Whereas once wheelchairs were limited in variety, today clients need to be assessed according to their postural and functional requirements, with wheelchairs tailored to the individual. They need to be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure the needs of the client continue to be met.

Arranging for new equipment such as wheelchairs involves applying for Government funding on behalf of the client, which can take up to 12 months to be approved.

Splints assist with a variety of tasks

The occupational therapists also make custom splints for people with quadriplegia. A free service for members, it would otherwise be very expensive and sometimes difficult to access.



ParaQuad NSW provides specialised nursing

Clinical Nurse Consultants

Historically the Association offered a specialist Registered Nurse to support the nursing needs of clients in Sydney but due to the specialist and unique nature of the role it has sometimes proven difficult to resource this service. The gap has been filled by utilising the services of the Registered Nurse in the Hunter Region, Mary Inkston, to clinically support operations in Sydney.

Training

Over the years the Association has become an expert in the field of spinal cord injuries, and it has developed targeted education and training programs in order to share this knowledge with other organisations.

ParaQuad NSW conducts specialised training

Ms Harvey AM, Manager Community Services, said that the Association has an important role to play in education. "Spinal cord injury presents a unique set of issues to individuals and their families. As an organisation with specialist knowledge and expertise, we have a responsibility to share this knowledge."

"As an organisation with specialist knowledge and expertise, we have a responsibility to share this knowledge."

– Tonina Harvey AM, Manager Community Services

"It's about building capacity in other organisations to treat people with disabilities appropriately. It's important to understand etiquette, respect, how to speak to someone, when to touch a wheelchair, and so on," said Ms Harvey.

Carer training

Training for Home Care Staff

The Association has developed training programs for home care staff, with a public calendar of training for staff from Government agencies and other disability organisations, as well as a separate program for its own Attendant Care staff.

Included in the training are the following modules: Becoming A Quality Personal Carer; Quality Personal Care Workshop; and OH&S In The Workplace. Two other training modules are offered four times a year, and these are: Handling Difficult Situations, and Transferring And Moving People With A Physical Disability.

In 2011 the Association also began running Mental Health First Aid courses for personal carers and other members of the community to help them understand the challenges and adjustment issues that clients might face when making the transition from hospital to the community.

Training for Registered Nurses and Allied Health Professionals

In 2008, spinal nurses working in BrightSky Australia began delivering education in wound care and general continence to Registered Nurses. This training forms part of a continuing professional development program and is accredited by the Royal College of Nursing Australia.

In the past the Association also trained other allied health care professionals, however, this was discontinued in the last few years due to reduced demand. The Association, however, for some years has offered university placements to students in medicine, occupational therapy and social work, and this continues today.

Partnering with Response Employment and Training

Mindful that it needed to offer extra training to its staff members in order to continue to provide outstanding service to its clients, ParaQuad NSW recently partnered with Response Employment and Training in Newcastle, an organisation with experience in the disabilities sector.

Being linked with a registered training provider, ParaQuad NSW is now able to access funding through the Industry Skills Council to offer its staff Certificate III and Certificate IV in Disability.

This partnership not only ensures that ParaQuad NSW maintains a skilled workforce, it also means that staff members can access further study to attain industry qualifications at no cost to them, saving them thousands of dollars.

Not just for carers, this partnership will also benefit Registered Nurses and Attendant Care Coordinators who will be able to improve their skills through other courses offered by Response Training.

On the flip side, Response Training builds its capacity in understanding the needs of people with spinal cord injury.

Building Capacity in Other Organisations

As a well-respected organisation in the field of spinal cord injuries, the Association has become a point of contact for other organisations that want to learn more about wheelchair users and associated issues.

Despite the improvement in disability awareness over the last few decades, able-bodied

V-Australia training with ParaQuad NSW staff members Wendy Harris and Robyn Ryan

people are still largely unaware of the issues faced by those with spinal cord injury; be it access to buildings, personal care requisites, transport issues or simply trying to purchase product from a wheelchair.

As a result, ParaQuad NSW runs training for interested organisations on a request basis. Generally delivered as two-hour intensive training sessions, they are tailor-made for each organisation.

Training Officer Wendy Harris, who has shared her lived perspective in the training sessions over the past few years, knows first-hand how able-bodied people still need to be educated today.

"Most able-bodied feel uncomfortable with disability and do things like smile at you in the street when you don't know them," said Mrs Harris. "Singling you out because you're different and they feel sorry for you is not appropriate – and that's why we still need to promote disability awareness."

To date clients have included the Prince of Wales Hospital, Westmead Hospital, The University of Sydney, Coles and Qantas, and there is an ongoing program established for Virgin Australia cabin crew.

Scholarship Program

The Scholarship Program was developed in order to help members who required assistance in order to further their education or sporting endeavours.

There are two sources of funding for the scholarships, one is the Golden Stave Foundation, whose annual donation has been channelled into the Golden Stave Scholarships since 1993, and the other is a silent benefactor who for the past few years has given a very large donation, which forms the basis of what has become known as the ParaQuad Scholarship.

In 2011 the Association awarded nearly 30 scholarships, which have helped to improve the lives of its younger members. Ms Potter said, "There are too many young people sitting at home. We have quadriplegics in their early 20s thinking that's the end of the road for them – but that's not the case – and the scholarships can help improve their lives."

The People

Jacob Ray

Jacob Ray was born with a tumour on his spine. Never meant to live past the age of three, he spent much of the first six months of his life in a hospital ward to undergo intensive chemotherapy, but survived against the odds to lead a full and active life.

Jacob Ray

"I managed to pull through," said Mr Ray.

Now 20, he has never walked a day in his life, the neuroblastoma having damaged his spinal cord. His wheelchair has been a normal part of his life experience, and he has never let it interfere with his passion for sports.

"I like all sports," said Mr Ray. "I have good upper body strength and I'm capable of doing a lot of things in my chair; I'm very independent and I don't rely on anyone for anything."

Mr Ray's parents became members of ParaQuad NSW when he was a child in order to access information and personal equipment supplies. When they heard about the scholarships, they applied and were granted assistance.

Mr Ray received the Golden Stave Scholarship for about eight years, which assisted his parents with education expenses, and with the savings they were able to pay for swimming and tennis lessons.

"The scholarship made a big difference for me and my family," said Mr Ray. "Since we live two-and-a-half hours away from Sydney, it helped my parents afford travel expenses and also tournament and training fees. I'm very grateful for the assistance."

Mr Ray completed his education and now works full-time – plus he still holds five Australian swimming records in freestyle, breaststroke and backstroke.

Jacob Ray as a teenager competing in a tennis match

Employment Opportunities

Having employed many wheelchair users over the years, ParaQuad NSW has been a leader in equal employment policy. A true equal opportunity employer, the Association looks at the merits of each individual rather than viewing them on the basis of their disability.

The Association's recruitment policy, procedures and processes today are based on merit; disability is secondary to whoever is the best qualified for a particular job.

With purpose-built accessible facilities in both Sydney and Newcastle, ParaQuad NSW also has an advantage over other employers who need to consider whether or not they can accommodate someone in a wheelchair.

Today ParaQuad NSW employs five people in wheelchairs at its head office. For Cam Iaquinto, born with a muscle disorder, his disability was never an issue.

John Trefry using assistive technologies

"There are always barriers to employment when you're a wheelchair user. There are certain limitations I have physically that my manager has to be aware of in order for me to work," said Mr Iaquinto. "But at ParaQuad NSW the fact that I'm in a wheelchair is no big issue and it's never been. People are aware of it and that's all. Sometimes my tyres go flat or the carers don't show up to get me out of bed in the morning and my manager understands. But there are no special favours that I'm aware of. If I couldn't do my job I wouldn't be here."

It is pleasing to note that, while ParaQuad NSW was one of the first equal opportunity employers, many other organisations today have taken advantage of the talent available in people with spinal cord injury.

Able-bodied people and people with disabilities work side-by-side at ParaQuad NSW

The People

Anne-Maree Thomas

Anne-Maree Thomas had a skiing accident in 1996. Thirty-one years old, she had just relocated her dental surgery to new premises.

Anne-Maree Thomas (Courtesy Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu)

Ms Thomas spent the next six months at RNSH and Moorong Spinal Rehabilitation Centre. At Moorong, Sandra Pethic and a man nicknamed "Speedy" from ParaQuad NSW made regular visits to provide information and let the residents know that there was support if they needed it.

After another six months living with her sister while adjusting to life in a wheelchair, Ms Thomas found suitable accommodation of her own.

During that time, she had her dental surgery modified so that the equipment was hand controlled. "It didn't cross my mind that I couldn't work just because I couldn't use my legs. The only things I couldn't do were extractions in certain quadrants of the mouth, so I employed an assistant dentist to help."

In 2004, she experienced some medical issues related to sitting for long periods, so she decided to retrain as an accountant.

"Macquarie University had a special needs unit," said Ms Thomas. "They made sure my timetable allowed me to get into the most accessible rooms; I did my exams in the library; and I had a parking space on campus. It was a very positive experience."

Having been recruited to Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu as an Analyst, after completing an Honours year studying research and development, Ms Thomas transitioned smoothly into her new career.

"Deloitte has a recruitment policy that encourages diversity. Before I started they installed sensor doors and provided a desk at the appropriate height. They even allocated a parking space for me in the building; they've been fantastic."

About her injury, Ms Thomas said, "I might stand out a bit but being in a wheelchair hasn't negatively impacted me at all. I don't think of myself as different, so other people don't think of me any differently either."

Commercial Operations: BrightSky and MFS

Since 2006, the Association's commercial operations have covered a substantial part of its running costs and will remain vital into the future. According to Mr Bosotti, "The reality is that Government funding doesn't cover the cost of our Community Services. Without the commercial operations we just couldn't continue to deliver services. This means we must continue to explore new opportunities and think in new ways."

BrightSky Australia

An important part of the Association's commercial operations, BrightSky Australia developed in part out of what was originally PECS.

In 2000 PECS was independently audited and certified as implementing and maintaining a quality management (CQM) program which satisfied the requirements of AS/NZS ISO 9001:2000.

However, soon after the decision by ParaQuad QLD to take over the portion of CAAS that it had sub-contracted to the Association dealt a devastating blow. Many of the Association's members and clients received CAAS, and the only customers to stay with the Association were those who did not receive CAAS.

Although the Association's future in the medical supplies business seemed precarious, the Board had enough faith in the business to proceed with the office-warehouse design at Newington.

BrightSky shopfront at Newington

It seemed that what was required was a national bid for future Government contracts. With a view to putting together a competitive national tender for future contracts, in 2005 the Association entered into a joint venture with ParaQuad Victoria and Tasmania. Trading as Independence Solutions, the aim was to service large national contracts and it was successful in winning the Veteran Affairs contract. While this helped to halt the decline in sales following the loss of CAAS, it did not match previous sales and margins were very small. When the CAAS contract came up for renewal, Independence Solutions was not successful. This was a major disappointment and subsequently the relationship ended in 2007.

Then in May 2008, ParaQuad NSW launched its own new national trading name, BrightSky Australia. BrightSky was officially launched in Newcastle by the Hon. Barry O'Farrell, then Leader of the Opposition, and in Sydney by the Hon. Kristina Keneally, then Minister for Ageing and Disability Services.

Since its launch, it has more than doubled its annual sales volume and now services more than 20,000 customers across Australia and even overseas, with the BrightSky webstore attracting more than 6,000 visitors a month. It also has a call centre and shopfront located at Newington headquarters and covers more than 5,000 items in continence, wound care, nutrition and respiratory aids.

"We have to be a not-for-loss organisation. Without the commercial operations we just couldn't continue to deliver services." – Max Bosotti, CEO

BrightSky has gained industry-wide recognition for its innovative and customer-centred services and its strong clinical focus. In response to changes from CAAS to CAPS (Continence Aids Payment Scheme), BrightSky launched the BrightSky Card to make CAPS easy for clients and prescribers alike and maximises the value of this subsidy for the individual.

Servicing of Government contracts continues to be a strong focus for BrightSky, and in 2009 the team won a national tender to become the administrator of the inaugural National Epidermolysis Bullosa (EB) Dressing Scheme funded by the Federal Government. (EB is an inherited connective tissue disease causing blisters in the skin.)

Also in 2009, BrightSky finalised an agreement with the Lifetime Care and Support Authority of NSW to become the approved supplier of specialist health care products for clients on this scheme. Finally in December 2010, NSW Health and Enable NSW contracted BrightSky to supply more than 700 continence products as part of the NSW Health 250 contract.

BrightSky Clinical

BrightSky employs a small team of Clinical Nurse Consultants to support its business activities and deliver on contractual commitments. The team is headed up by Kylie Wicks, Clinical Nurse Consultant Spinal and Continence, and includes Louise Stevens, Clinical Nurse Consultant EB, and Vanessa Brown, Clinical Nurse Consultant Aged Care.

The team provides a range of direct clinical services including continence and wound care product application advice, continence consults and assessments. Clinical education for healthcare professionals is a key focus of the team's activities, and in 2011 the BeBright Study Series was launched to promote continence and wound care product application education to registered nurses in Sydney,

BrightSky trademark tools, the PadNavigator™ and the Catheter Compass™

Melbourne and Brisbane. The BeBright Study Series is endorsed by the Royal College of Nursing and attracts RCNA CNE points.

The BrightSky Clinical team has also developed a range of clinical tools such as the PadNavigator™ and the Catheter Compass™ as well as a Resource Tool for EB Wound Care and Dressings Application and an educational video for EB dressings application. These tools are designed to assist healthcare professionals with the selection, prescription and application of healthcare products and are utilised by healthcare professionals across Australia.

Mobility and Functional Support (MFS)

Mobility and Functional Support (MFS) is a contract held with the Department of Veteran's Affairs to supply more than 2,000 products to returned servicemen and women who are registered with the Department.

Essentially the MFS team, made up of one manager and seven staff members, acts as the middle-man, processing orders requested by health professionals on behalf of their clients and ensuring that the client receives the product.

Ron Day

MFS was the brainchild of Bob Duncan and his colleague Ron Day, who was the Manager of ParaQuad Engineering at the time. Then CEO Mr Duncan had seen an advertisement for the equipment supply contract and had called Mr Day for his opinion. "Ron was astute and he was good with numbers. So I asked him what he thought about it," said Mr Duncan. "At first he said, 'We can't do this'. But I said that all we had to do was become the administrators of the program, we buy from someone and sell to someone else for a small cost. Ron agreed, and he worked out the figures for the tender." The Association then worked with local suppliers to determine a product range and final tender pricing to submit the tender.

After being successful in being contracted to supply product to veterans in NSW in 2004, the hard work began. The volume of transactions grew rapidly with business doubling in the first two years. The Association was processing more than 1500 orders a month all with multiple printed pages. The MFS Team was drowning in paper and it was not uncommon for several piles of paperwork to be sitting in the office and someone searching through all of them to find a particular order.

In 2006 some major system improvements were made in order to create a computerised ordering system. Today, some seven years after it all started the MFS Team work largely in a paperless environment. Business volume has grown even further with more than 2500 orders processed per month.

Having held the NSW contract for the past seven years, the Association has recently been contracted to supply product and services nationally. The multi-million dollar contract will help deliver more Primary Health Care services in the future.

Ferguson Lodge

The Controversy Finalised

Despite not receiving funding approval from the NSW Government, Mr Smith engaged architects and developed options for the rebuild location, which at one stage was possibly going to be Callan Park at Rozelle, however it was deemed unsuitable. Yet somehow the Ferguson Lodge community got the impression that management was trying to close it down.

In August 2005 Channel 9's A Current Affair ran a story on the battle to save Ferguson Lodge, focusing on ParaQuad NSW management as the unwilling participant rather than the NSW Government.

In his story reporter Simon Bouda suggested that ParaQuad NSW management wanted to close down the facility altogether. Karen Filocamo, who was General Manager Community Services at the time, had no idea how that rumour got started. Ms Filocamo recalled, "There was some bizarre story that we were going to close down Ferguson Lodge. It's the greatest load of nonsense I've ever heard. The story A Current Affair ran on us had no foundation. We wanted to rebuild the facility to give the residents a better quality of life."

"During the rebuilding phase it might have been necessary to rehouse the residents temporarily but no decisions had been made at the time. Maybe the residents required more consultation but at no point were we going to close down the facility."

Nevertheless, the Residents Action Group continued their fight with management, and many supporters got behind them, including radio personality Alan Jones and the CFMEU, which imposed a Green Ban on the site.

Premier Nathan Rees brings good tidings to the Residents Action Group (Courtesy Bruce Bennedick)

Finally, after more than 10 years of lobbying, in November 2005 the Hon. John Della Bosca, Minister for Disability Services, guaranteed that funding would be transferred to a new Ferguson Lodge.

The approval meant that all current residents would have their place at the new Ferguson Lodge secured for the rest of their lives. It was a win not just for the residents of Ferguson Lodge, but also for the rights of people with disabilities to choose the way in which they wanted to live.

The Rebuild Commences

It took Mr Bosotti to get the ball rolling on the rebuild of Ferguson Lodge. "When I started as the new CEO there were a number of plans and a lot of them hadn't been properly costed. When they were costed they were significantly more than the amount of money we had, which at the time was only $7.5 million. But the actual cost of the building alone, without fit-out costs, was going to be $10.5 million."

There was some thought that it would have been advantageous to build on higher ground and build in and around heritage buildings, but Mr Bosotti knew from previous experience that there would be enormous additional construction costs involved. However, in the end the way forward seemed quite simple.

"One day I went out the back of Ferguson Lodge and saw the big grassy field sloping away from the building and thought, 'Well, why not here?' That gave me the opportunity of building on that field and then moving the residents into the new facility and demolishing the old one," said Mr Bosotti. "The one thing that was unusable about the land was that it was a sloping site that dropped about 2.5 metres, but from an engineering perspective it was a no-brainer – you just fill it and make it level."

A WIN FOR CHOICE

"I refer to your correspondence regarding the redevelopment of Ferguson Lodge at Lidcombe. I am pleased to advise that the existing funding provided to Ferguson Lodge may be transferred to the new facility for the purposes of permanent accommodation and respite. This will ensure a permanent place for the existing residents of Ferguson Lodge in the new facility."

– EXTRACT FROM THE LETTER TO PARAQUAD NSW CEO GREG SMITH FROM THE HON. JOHN DELLA BOSCA, MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES, 16 NOVEMBER 2005

"One day I went out the back of Ferguson Lodge and saw a big grassy field sloping away from the building and thought, 'Well, why not here?'"

– Max Bosotti, CEO

Already the Motor Accidents Authority (MAA) had guaranteed $5 million, and the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) had committed $2.5 million, thanks to approaches made to the Government by ParaQuad NSW Director at the time Greg Keating and support from the Hon Craig Knowles, then NSW Minister for Health. So Mr Bosotti went back to ADAHC to ask for another $3.5 million and they gave him $3 million. The MAA, which was holding the money, was very supportive and when Mr Bosotti asked if the Association could use the interest on the funds for the project, the MAA willingly agreed.

Mr Bosotti said, "To ask for the interest was probably the most fundamental decision we ever made because there was about a million dollars worth of interest there. We wouldn't have been able to rebuild Ferguson Lodge without it."

The Hon. John Della Bosca turns the first sod for the new Ferguson Lodge in 2007

Mr Bosotti then invited six architectural firms to present their ideas to the Selection Committee, comprised of Mr Bosotti, Ms Potter, Ms Harvey, and then Director of Nursing at Ferguson Lodge Denise Lawler. The Committee decided to focus on what was going to be functional and attractive, rather than something designed to win an architectural award.

In the end the project cost some $13 million with many construction and design issues in the process. Mr Bosotti tells the story, "We lost about a year in finalising the design with ADHC because they were in the process of coming up with their requirements about how they thought these buildings should be built, and it took some negotiating to build it as we thought it should be built."

The Hon. Nathan Rees, Premier of NSW, along with the Hon. Kristina Keneally and Max Bosotti inspect progress on construction

The ground is levelled to prepare for construction (Courtesy of Bruce Bennedick)

Beginnings

Footings, retaining wall

Laying pipeline

Slab pouring

Unloading first wall frames

First steel framework

Ferguson Lodge begins taking shape

The view of the Ferguson Lodge construction from a crane, 36 metres high, in August 2010 (Courtesy of Daryl Duffey)

The Rebuild Complete

The rebuild of the main building was completed in February 2011 and officially opened on 24 November 2011.

Three of the original campaigners couldn't be happier with the result. Neville Knight said, "If someone had said back in the 1990s when we were fighting just to keep the Lodge open that we would receive something like this, we would have told them they were mad." Evan Fraser agreed, "It's an unbelievable improvement." And Bruce Bennedick said, "We got the best facility possible."

With bathrooms as big as the single rooms in the old facility and the latest technology, former Director of Nursing Denise Lawler said the new facility is world-class. "The building is fantastic," she said. "We have the best of everything. Each of the residents has a single room with an ensuite, the rooms are big enough so people can visit them in private if they wish, and there are common areas so that they can connect with other residents and staff. The residents are very happy in their own rooms, giving them the dignity and privacy that they deserve. Credit goes to Max Bosotti, Tonina Harvey and many others for making it happen."

ParaQuad
Paraplegic & Quadriplegic Association of NSW

The Board of Directors and Management of ParaQuad NSW
cordially invite you to
attend the official opening of the new

FERGUSON LODGE

and to celebrate our 30 Year Anniversary
in the presence of Her Excellency, Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO,
Governor of New South Wales and ParaQuad NSW Patron
and
NSW Minister for Disability Services, the Hon. Andrew Constance, MP

Date: Thursday, 24 November 2011
Time: 10.30 am for 10.45 am followed by light refreshments
Location: 10 College Street, Lidcombe (Parking in Main Ave)
RSVP: Tel: 8741 3627 or Email: events@paraquad.org.au by 14 November 2011

The new Ferguson Lodge is a far different, more residential facility than its predecessor. There are 24 single rooms with their own ensuite, while previously there were up to 40 permanent and respite residents under one roof in a mixture of single and double rooms with communal bathrooms and toilets.

The new facility is split into a main full support building surrounded by 10 two-bedroom cottages for people who are more independent and require only low-level support. There is also a separate gymnasium and activities centre.

Cherry Cameron, Facility Manager at Ferguson Lodge, has many ideas about integrating the Ferguson Lodge community with its neighbours. "The idea is that our residents integrate into the community rather than have everything provided here, but one of the things we're looking at is reverse integration, by bringing the community to us."

Ms Cameron believes that the new Lodge will provide opportunities to continue to break down the barriers for people in wheelchairs. "The Botanica Housing Estate will actually be around the new facility, which means when the residents go out they'll be more likely to bump into people out walking and have a chat, and that sort of informal integration will start to happen with people."

Berala Transitional Accommodation

Since opening in 1989, Berala has continued to be in demand and has provided accommodation for hundreds of people.

Berala Transitional Accommodation Supervisor Julita Harris said, "I get calls all the time from people wanting to know if something is available. There are just not enough modified properties. One person had to stay in a motel until he could find a suitable house to rent. Another young man had to go to an aged care facility. Others just have to sit in hospital."

After being in Prince of Wales Hospital for 14 months, 20 year-old Mitchell Forbes was moved to a regional facility used for drug and alcohol rehabilitation and palliative care. After four months his mother Julie Forbes made a call to Mrs Harris at Berala, where they were already on the waiting list. Fortunately a unit was about to become available and they were able to move in within a matter of weeks.

Mitchell Forbes with his mum Julie

"It was going to be at least another 12 months before we were going to get modified housing in Wollongong and I needed to get Mitchell out of hospital," said Mrs Forbes. "We were very lucky to get a place at Berala. It was a great relief to know that we had somewhere to go while we organise permanent accommodation."

Mr Forbes was just grateful to be out of hospital. "It was great to have a little sense of being home. Smelling my mum's cooking. I couldn't have done another year in hospital."

However not all people who use the Association's transitional accommodation facilities today are straight out of hospital. Some have experienced marriage breakdown and need emergency housing, while others might be moving from interstate or even from overseas.

Importantly, Berala residents know that they have a home as long as they need it. "Our maximum stay is two years, and we always have a waiting list," said Mrs Harris. "But we wouldn't let anyone move out if they had nowhere to go. The Admissions Committee reviews everyone's circumstances on a case-by-case basis."

While at Berala, Mrs Harris helps people make the transition from hospital to living in the community as smooth as possible. "I have individual fortnightly meetings with residents and we meet as a group once a month," said Mrs Harris. "All the residents know each other. We organise meals together at the club or go out for a coffee. People know they're not alone and they don't get lonely. Most of them are on our Attendant Care Service and all of our residents can access our Primary Health Care team if they need extra support."

In 2010 Berala Transitional Accommodation facility won the Auburn Access Award 2010 for making a difference in the lives of people with spinal cord injury. Mrs Harris said, "Berala is a unique facility. There's nothing else like it. It gives the individual an opportunity to learn to live in the community while still being near others in a supportive environment. There's been a huge change in their lives and this gives them the extra confidence they need to make it on their own."

Julita Harris

In 2010 the Berala complex underwent renovations with funding from Housing NSW. Due to the age and design of the complex, and the change in the size and shape of wheelchairs since it opened, the physical environment no longer allowed clients to use the facility easily. The renovations included widening doorways for ease of access, and other structural changes that allowed residents to cook independently and make better use of the common areas.

"Berala is a unique facility. It gives the individual an opportunity to learn to live in the community while still being near others in a supportive environment."

– Julita Harris, Berala Transitional Accommodation Supervisor

Currently developing a partnership with Northcott Disability Services, which manages some shared houses and modified townhouses, the Association will have more options for emergency housing for its clients in the future.

PARTNERING WITH ST GEORGE COMMUNITY HOUSING

In 2009 new legislation required all organisations with Community Housing stock to provide accommodation services and become housing providers. ParaQuad NSW instead selected to partner with St George Community Housing, already a housing provider with a mandate to offer a proportion of stock to people with disabilities. ParaQuad NSW would then become the tenancy supervisor with respect to its clients.

A successful partnership has ensued, with 10 clients receiving permanent housing in the last two years, most of it brand new. Rather than be ostracised or institutionalised, the clients who have benefited from this partnership are fully integrated into core community services and have the option of engaging in a mainstream community environment.

An added benefit, this partnership has given the Association an opportunity to continue its work of promoting the needs of people with spinal cord injury in the community, while at the same time building capacity in its partner service provider.

Newcastle Northern Region Branch

With PECS going strong and members making use of the facilities, the Newcastle Branch began to run out of space. Therefore in 1998 the Association sold the old church building and purchased land in order to purpose-build new facilities.

Purpose-built headquarters at Newcastle

Opened in 2001, the facility at Portside Business Park in Wickham with offices and adjacent warehouse, was designed as a fully accessible environment.

However in 2006 the Association had a difficult decision to make when it closed Newcastle's distribution facility and warehouse for personal equipment supplies. Part of organisation-wide restructuring, it was imperative to create operational efficiencies by establishing a central distribution point.

Since then the restocking, storing, processing and despatch of aids and equipment has been distributed through Newington, with customers able to place their orders online or over the phone. The warehouse was leased to the Northcott Disability Services, which now uses it to undertake repairs and maintenance of mobility equipment.

Grant Nickel, who had previously served on the Newcastle Branch Committee, said that closing the warehouse has had many flow-on effects. "When we lost our warehouse and the ability to go and buy supplies directly it was a major loss. Ordering over the phone is not the same as having a shopfront. When goods were sold from our local Branch, there was a reason for people to go there. People were there all the time and what went with it was a sense of community. It was a tangible meeting place where people would stop and chat, share stories, and even organise social events."

As a Sydney-sider who moved to Newcastle in 1991 and has lived there ever since, Mr Nickel has a good appreciation for the nuances of regional NSW. "People here in Newcastle like to access goods

and services locally. They don't want to drive to Sydney or even order from Sydney. And that goes for just about anyone living in Northern NSW. The vast majority would prefer to connect with a regional centre rather than Sydney, and that mentality isn't going to change easily."

Mr Bosotti understands this point of view. "Newcastle members are very passionate about what they've done – and rightly so," he said. "Having the distribution facility and warehouse closed down, as well as the cut back in Community Services, it probably seemed like the Association was withdrawing and people felt really disappointed. Unfortunately there were just not enough dollars to cover the operation there."

"Newcastle members are very passionate about what they've done – and rightly so."

– Max Bosotti, CEO

Since the restructure, enthusiasm has returned to the Newcastle Branch, particularly in its Branch Manager Grant Roulstone.

"I'm passionate about spinal cord injuries," said Mr Roulstone. "One of my best friends had a motorbike accident a long time ago and that's something that got me interested in the field. I first started as a carer and that helps me have a greater understanding of peoples' needs so that I can advocate for their needs. Some people get on with their lives but a lot of people struggle and don't know where to turn. That's where I see the value of what I do."

Employing a Manager, a Community Development Officer, a Registered Nurse, and an Attendant Care Coordinator, the Newcastle Branch also manages transitional accommodation and a significant Attendant Care service, which was developed in the last few years.

With an expected increase in revenue from its commercial operations, Mr Bosotti will be looking at ways in which ParaQuad NSW can extend its support for the Hunter Region in the future.

Key Initiatives

Into the new millennium representing the needs of people with spinal cord injury has remained an important part of the work of the Newcastle Branch. Having worked as a carer, Mr Roulstone has a very good understanding of people's needs. "As a manager I aim to support the individual as much as I did when I worked as a carer. But in a management position my voice is much louder. A lot of people with spinal cord injury tend to

The Newcastle team in 2011, L-R: (back) Mary Inkston, Ruth Alterator, Melissa Mooney, Grant Roulstone, (front) Melanie Lloyd, Tina Jackson

lose their voices and don't know where to turn. ParaQuad NSW has given me a context to give a voice to the voiceless."

"A lot of people with spinal cord injury tend to lose their voices and don't know where to turn. ParaQuad NSW has given me a context to give a voice to the voiceless."

– Grant Roulstone, Newcastle Northern Region Branch Manager

In the past few years the Newcastle Branch has successfully lobbied for more accessible taxis in the region. In the past there were only four taxis, and they were old and unreliable. Now there is a new fleet of accessible taxis.

By working with other disability organisations, ParaQuad Newcastle has also been instrumental in making the train station and the ferry service fully accessible. This is a victory for those who wish to live independently; it means they can get on and off public transport without needing assistance.

Now with a Community Development Officer, the Newcastle Branch can continue to advocate for the needs of people with spinal cord injury in the region. Melanie Lloyd, recently recruited to the position, is currently working at identifying and assessing the needs of members so that the Association can effectively target programs and services, and better advocate for its members.

Ms Lloyd also represents the membership on various committees and interagency meetings, networking with other disability organisations and local government bodies, and recently undertook an audit of the Tenambit Shopping Centre as part of the Maitland Ideas Group.

Also intending to develop a social group for people in wheelchairs as well as regularly helping members over the phone with a range of enquiries, Ms Lloyd is excited about her role with ParaQuad NSW.

"I enjoy assisting people who have barriers to participating in the community, and helping them to achieve goals for themselves is very rewarding. I'm very excited about engaging people in community life and helping to improve the lives of people with spinal cord injury by advocating for them," said Ms Lloyd.

Nursing in the Hunter Region

Registered Nurse Mary Inkston has been assisting clients in Newcastle as a member of the ParaQuad NSW team for almost 10 years.

With more than 25 years of nursing experience, Mrs Inkston provides case management and specialist nursing care for ParaQuad NSW clients who receive funding from external sources. This involves co-ordination of services, linking clients to appropriate service providers, helping clients access accommodation and supporting them to achieve personal goals.

One client has a spinal cord injury and complex mental health issues, and has required considerable support to live independently in the community and participate in recreational activities. For Mrs Inkston, helping people in this way provides her with a great deal of personal and professional satisfaction.

Mrs Inkston also provides professional nursing assessments as requested for ParaQuad clients and supports the Attendant Care Coordinators in their management of clients with complex health needs.

Future Works

Lobbying and Accommodation

Advocating for change has long been a hallmark of ParaQuad NSW and there is always more work to be done. Issues on the Association's agenda include ensuring that newly injured people receive the appropriate Attendant Care Packages, and securing Government funding for respite care at Ferguson Lodge.

The Association also continues to advocate for modified housing. Ferguson Lodge is still the only purpose-built accommodation facility for people who desire or require 24-hour care; transitional modified accommodation is in high demand; and aged care facilities are still being used inappropriately for people with spinal cord injury.

While nowadays there is a prevailing understanding that independent living is best, what is clear after 30 years of experimenting is that for some people group-style accommodation is better suited to their personalities or their medical needs, particularly for those with quadriplegia.

Housing requirements will also naturally change over time. Newly injured people often require transitional housing while waiting for their home to be modified or for long-term re-housing; others might require respite care if their family needs a break or they need particular medical attention; while the ageing often want to move into accommodation that provides a higher level of health care and support.

Dr Rutkowski said the level of care is particularly important as people age. "Some people might want to retire somewhere where they can easily access high-level care, and a setting like Ferguson Lodge might be suitable. Some might be self-funded retirees while others might be on the Disability Support Pension. The important thing is that they can access specialised care."

Working with Other Spinal Cord Injury Organisations

In addition to ParaQuad NSW, which is the largest not-for-profit organisation for people with spinal cord injury in NSW, are Spinal Cord Injuries Australia (SCIA), Northcott Disability Services, and the Spinal Outreach Service (SOS).

While Northcott is focused on children and the NSW Government's SOS deals with patients in the first 18 months post injury, ParaQuad NSW and SCIA (originally named the Australian Quadriplegic Association and established at the Prince of Wales Spinal Unit several years after ParaQuad NSW was formed) offer different but complimentary services.

As a result, over the years there have been many discussions about a possible merger between the two organisations, and even though negotiations have not yet produced a merger, Mr Bosotti believes it is imperative to create better coordination of services, and this is something he will be working towards in the future.

Future Health Care Needs

While a lot of progress has been made over the 50 years since ParaQuad NSW began, there is still limited understanding surrounding the specific needs of people with spinal cord injury.

People tend to get service and care focused on living with their spinal cord injury however normal preventative health measures are often overlooked, such as screening for prostate cancer and breast cancer.

Currently women with spinal cord injuries have limited access to mammograms, as most mammography machines do not reach down to the level of a wheelchair, and even having a pap smear is a challenge, as most GPs do not have the hoist and other equipment required to perform the test.

The issue of ageing in people with spinal cord injury is also important, as medical needs begin to interact in a different way with existing disability.

There are still big issues to tackle, but after 50 years of achievements for people with spinal cord injury, ParaQuad NSW is in it for the long haul.

The sky's the limit (Courtesy Tony Varrall)

Appendix A

Chief Executive Officers (Secretaries) Of ParaQuad NSW, 1961-2011

Ashley Coops* 1961-1983

Bob Duncan* 1983-2002

Greg Smith 2002-2006

Max Bosotti 2006-present

* Denotes a wheelchair user

Appendix B

Chairmen (Presidents) Of ParaQuad NSW, 1961-2011

Jack Ferguson
1961-1968

Dr John MF Grant AO OBE
1968-2000

Dr Edward Watts (PhD)*
2000-2003

David Kerr
2003-2004

Wendy Potter*
2004-present

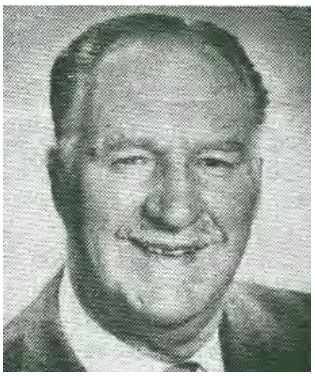
* Denotes a wheelchair user

Appendix C

Life Members Of ParaQuad NSW, 1961-2011

Dr John MF Grant AO OBE
Longstanding Chairman and Founder of ParaQuad NSW; Head of the spinal unit at the Royal North Shore Hospital over many years.

Fred Kaad OBE*
Member of ParaQuad NSW Board of Directors since 1966, Deputy Chairman 1975-1998. Deputy Chairman of SpinalCure Australia since 2004.



John E. Quick (deceased)
Member of the ParaQuad NSW Board of Directors; President of Ferguson Lodge Management Committee. Made a Life Member in 1987.

IMAGE NOT AVAILABLE

Neville Kidd
Member of the ParaQuad NSW Board of Directors 1967-1991. Treasurer of the Association. Made a Life Member on his retirement from the Board in 1991.

Francis (Frank) P Coyne OAM (deceased)
Made a Life Member in 1998 for his 'dedication, support and encouragement of the Association'.

Mary Cleary
Founding member and Chairman of the Newcastle Branch for nine years.

Bob Duncan*
CEO of ParaQuad NSW 1983-2002. Made a Life Member in 2006.

* Denotes a wheelchair user

Appendix D

Directors Of ParaQuad NSW, 1961-2011[1]

Angela Adams
Peter John Andersen*
Ronald Kent Atkinson
Richard Thornton Harvey Barbour
Thomas Colin Bell*
Prof D G Benjafield
Jan G Benn
C Bentley
Kevin F Betts AO
Philip Frederick John Blair
Anthony Michael Blaxland Bowen*
Branko Boskoski*
William Bradley*
David Gordon Brigden
Michael John Briggs
M R Buzacott
Ian Douglas Cameron
Christopher James Campbell
Robyn Chapman
S C Chase
Mary Frances Cleary
Francis Paul Coyne OAM
David Currie*
Dianne Ruth Davis
Robert William Doyle Devlin
Robert Joseph Dyball
Robert R Elder
Stella Engel
John A Ferguson
Raymond John Fewell
John Charles Gale
Glenn Stewart Gardner
Cecil A G Gaskin
David Brendan Morgan Gorman*
John MacDonald Falconar Grant AO OBE
Anders Sydney Lars Halvorsen*
Elizabeth Higgins
Mark John Horton
Maryanne Ireland*
Dr Richard Frederick Jones
Nancy M Joyce
Frederick Peter Kaad OBE*
Gregory Michael Keating
David Raymond Kerr*
Neville Thomas Kidd
Richard Matthew Laffan*
Anthony Leggett*
H M Leslie
Jack F Lewitz*
Christopher Lummis
Robert Manga*
Sueanne Martin
Donald Graeme McConnell*
R McDonald
Simon Joseph McGrath*
Jean McLeod
Margaret Jean McPhail
Jack Williamson McVey*
Karen Joy Mitchell*
Carole Anne Molyneux
David Montgomery
Royce Weston Morrison*
Dr Brad W Norington*
Steve Osborne
Dr J A Paul
Simon Peters
Eric David Plomley
Wendy Anne Potter*
Edwin John Quick
John Renshaw
Jeromy Evelyn Rolfe*
David Ross
Dr Susan Barbara Rutkowski AM
Louise Olga Scambler
Harold Charles Wolfe Scruby
Ian Sherriff*
P Silver*
Ross Soutar*
Wendy Evelyn Spencer*
Graham George Spurway*
Harold Squires*
Vicki Ellen Stanley
Peter Stokes*
Bruce O Thwaite*
Brett Tory*
K A Tweedy
John Walsh AM*
Dr Edward Watts (PhD)*
Elaine B Wilson
Dr Naomi Wing
Dr John D Yeo AO

1. Please note that this list is not exhaustive; it is likely that Directors from the early years have been omitted due to insufficient availability of data; and some dates are unknown.
* Denotes a wheelchair user.

Appendix E

ParaQuad NSW Timeline, 1961-2011

1961 The Paraplegic Association of NSW is established

1962 The Association holds the 2nd National Paraplegic Games

1966 The Sheltered Workshop is established
NSW Government rubber-stamps multi-disciplinary hospital spinal units

1969 Jack Ferguson, the original Chairman and founding member, passes away

1971 The Association is renamed the Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association of NSW, to be known as ParaQuad NSW

1972 The Sheltered Workshop changes its name to ParaQuad Industries

1976 ParaQuad Engineering is formalised as a one-man business in Taren Point
The Fraser Federal Government announces a grant of $660,000 towards the building of Ferguson Lodge

1978 The first Golden Stave Luncheon takes place at Sydney's Sebel Town House

1979 ParaQuad Engineering and ParaQuad Industries operate from the same premises in Taren Point
Ferguson Lodge is opened by the Hon. Malcolm Fraser, Prime Minister
The Newcastle Northern Region Branch of ParaQuad NSW is established

1980 The name of the newsletter is changed from Paranews to ParaQuad News

1981 The International Year of Disabled Persons
Newcastle Northern Region Branch moves from Broadmeadow to Wickham

1983 ParaQuad NSW moves from South Hurstville to Homebush

1985 ParaQuad Industries and ParaQuad Engineering move to Peakhurst

1987 Ashley Coops, the first CEO, passes away

1988 Berala Transitional Accommodation facilities open
ParaQuad NSW becomes a provider under the Attendant Care Scheme

1990 Personal Equipment and Continence Supplies (PECS) commences operation
ParaQuad Industries ceases operations and ParaQuad Engineering moves to new premises at Mortdale

1991 ParaQuad NSW inherits transitional accommodation in Newcastle from the Boomerang Disabled Association

1992 ParaQuad NSW establishes the Community Services Division
ParaQuad NSW wins the CAAS contract for NSW and ACT through PECS
The MAA provides seed funding for the Community Spinal Advisory Service and the Peer Support Program

1995 ParaQuad Engineering moves from Mortdale to Milperra

1996 The MAA provides seed funding for the Regional Network Program
ParaQuad NSW develops its first website

2000 Founder Dr John Grant AO OBE relinquishes his position as Chairman

2001 The Association moves to temporary accommodation in Auburn
The Newcastle Northern Region Branch moves into new purpose-built accommodation at Portside Business Park in Wickham

2003 ParaQuad NSW moves into purpose-built facilities at Newington

2004 ParaQuad commences NSW MFS contract with the Department of Veterans' Affairs

2005 ParaQuad Engineering ceases operations
Peer Support Program and Regional Network Programs are discontinued
Primary Health Care Team is reduced and the service model is redefined; ParaQuad Executive Structure is downsized
PECS trading name ceases; the medical consumable product business commences trading under the name of Independence Solutions

2006 ParaQuad restructures its medical consumable products operations and the warehouse in Newcastle is closed

2007 Wheels For A Day is launched
ParaQuad ceases participation in the Independence Solutions joint venture

2008 BrightSky Australia is officially launched as the new trading name for medical consumable products

2009 Community Services gain accreditation and certification by the Quality Improvement Council of Australia and New Zealand
Attendant Care becomes an Approved Provider of Services for Home Care
Attendant Care becomes an Approved Provider for the Lifetime Care and Support Authority

2010 Berala Transitional Accommodation facilities undergo renovations

2011 MFS wins national contract with the Department of Veterans' Affairs
BrightSky wins Queensland Government Home Enteral Nutrition contract and Victorian Government State Wide Equipment Program for continence supply contract
The new Ferguson Lodge is officially opened

ParaQuad
Paraplegic & Quadriplegic Association of NSW

supporting *life choices*
after spinal cord injury