



ASBESTOS VICTIMS ASSOCIATION (SA) INC
Established 2000

Newsletter

January – February 2021

There for our Members whenever or however they need us

NEWS FROM THE AVA OFFICE

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Planning Day

AVA volunteers held a Planning Day in the office in January to work on aims and goals for the coming year. We came up with a wealth of ideas both to improve communication with our members and to reach out to more people. We want more people to hear about AVA so they know who to contact if they have an asbestos related disease or indeed any query about asbestos.

We also hope to welcome more volunteers into our organisation. If you are interested in helping, whether in the office or at shows or presentations, please get in touch with us. More news to follow from this initiative.



Executive Committee:

President / Treasurer

Peter Baxter

Vice President

Maxine Williams

Office Manager

Lesley Shears

Committee members

Gloria Hinks

Doreen Ryan

Catherine Wegener

NEWS FROM THE AVA OFFICE AT WHYALLA

Whyalla Asbestos Victims Support Group founders John & Marlene Arthur have been achieving positive outcomes for many years for those affected by asbestos-related illnesses.

John and Marlene run the group through a shop in Essington Lewis Avenue at Whyalla, a safe space for people to raise matters relating to asbestos with them.

There is a warm atmosphere inside the shop with plenty of food and locally-made jams as well as a range of DVDs. It is a comfortable place for victims to meet with the group's lawyer to discuss what options and actions they can take. President John Arthur said the lawyer worked on a 'no win, no pay' basis. "We have had quite a few wins, about 90 % of people. I get a lot of satisfaction out of helping them as I lost my brother to asbestos-related disease and have a touch of it myself."



New Immunotherapy Treatment for Malignant Mesothelioma

It has been fifteen years since any real advance has been made in the treatment of malignant mesothelioma—the current treatment regime is still Premexetred plus Cisplatin or Carboplatin (chemotherapy).

A new immunotherapy treatment using Opdivo + Yervoy has been showing encouraging results as a first line treatment for mesothelioma—that is, instead of chemotherapy. Trials have shown an increased life expectancy than chemotherapy. Opdivo + Yervoy has been available to some patients but at a prohibitive cost.

Bristol Myers Squibb has applied to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee to have Opdivo + Yervoy added to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS). This would enable all mesothelioma patients to access an alternative course of treatment.

AVA has supported this application. It is important for a patient to take an active role in their illness and to have some say in their treatment. Having an alternative treatment to chemotherapy is a step in the right direction.

We recommend that anyone considering this treatment should talk to their medical advisor to better understand the side effects of the different treatments.

SafeWork SA

SafeWork SA has fined a principal contractor \$3,600 after they failed to review an asbestos register leading to workers carrying out demolition work being exposed to asbestos fibres.

A SafeWork SA Investigation found that an asbestos register was readily accessible and had recorded the presence of asbestos for the work area being demolished.

The principal contractor who had control of the workplace failed to review, and if necessary revise the asbestos register prior to the demolition work commencing.

Asbestos alert for acetylene cylinders

This article is reprinted from the Australasian Mine Safety Journal.

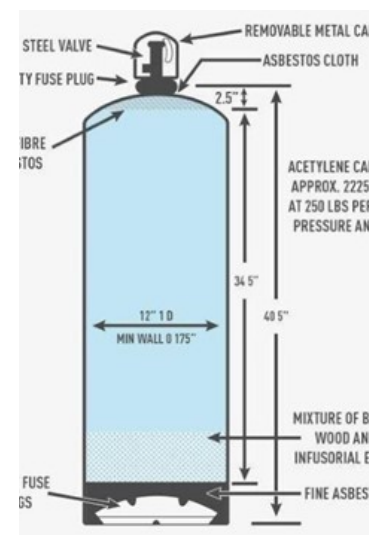
To read the full article, see

<https://www.amsj.com.au/asbestos-alert-for-acetylene-cylinders/>
6/1/21

A safety alert has been issued regarding the discovery of asbestos in Chinese manufactured acetylene cylinders that have been imported into Australia.

Recent testing identified asbestos within the internal insulation (porous mass) of acetylene cylinders that are commonly used in Australian mining operation workshops. The cylinders were reportedly manufactured and supplied by companies based in China to Australian businesses.

Information supplied to AMSJ indicated that the Australian importer received information from the China-based supplier that the product did not contain asbestos or asbestos-containing materials. While batch testing was conducted in China and an asbestos-free certificate issued, other batches tested in 2020 through a registered **National Association of Testing Authorities** (NATA) laboratory in Australia and were found to contain chrysotile (white) asbestos.



NEWS FROM OVERSEAS

Organising to raise awareness of asbestos risk in Cambodia

In Cambodia, union organisers are refreshing their strategies and tactics to educate workers about the dangers of asbestos.

Building and refreshing skills to confront asbestos exposure risk

Using distance learning, union educator Kathleen Galvin is volunteering her time, skills and expertise developed over her career in union training to work with the APHEDA (Australian People for Health, Education and Development Abroad) Cambodia team to help build the capacity of partner organisations, in particular, the Builders Woodworkers Trade Union of Cambodia (BWTUC), to organise construction workers against the threat of asbestos.

Construction workers exposed to deadly dust

Construction workers in Cambodia are exposed to the dangers of asbestos. Most workers have not been informed about the risks of asbestos – they *work* with asbestos, they *live* with asbestos [in workers' accommodation], and they *carry* asbestos back to their family on clothing. That's why Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA and the BWTUC are working together to train union organisers to go out into worksites to inform workers about the dangers of asbestos, and what they can do to minimise the risk of asbestos-related diseases.



New techniques, new strategies and new methods to save lives



With support from the American Centre for International Labour and the Australian NGO Cooperation Program, APHEDA is supporting the BWTUC to refresh their organising strategy on asbestos.

In these sessions, the union educators and organisers develop new techniques, new ideas, and new methods of explaining the dangers of asbestos to workers. Many construction workers come from rural areas where there are few educational opportunities to develop literacy. Many workers may not have heard about asbestos at all.

Organising training delivered online to tackle asbestos risk offline

With organising moving more and more to online platforms, the value of working in partnership is increasingly important. Translators, administrative officers, union leaders and APHEDA Cambodia staff are working closely together to make organising possible in an online environment.

The goal is to both inform and to encourage action as well as spread awareness from workers to the community and beyond to reach employers and government. Building on awareness raised through training and building organising skills, that awareness will be harnessed to seek real policy change, reducing asbestos exposure over time by eliminating asbestos altogether from Cambodia.

Article reprinted with kind permission of APHEDA October 2020

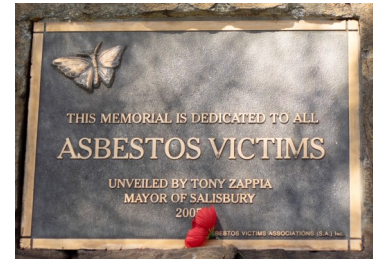
ASBESTOS DISEASE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

ADRI's **public health and prevention research** continued under the leadership of E/Prof Ken Takahashi. In July and December 2019 ADRI conducted asbestos training workshops in the Philippines and Fiji. The main purpose of these workshops was to elicit an awareness of mesothelioma within these communities in the hope that they will utilise the knowledge to facilitate an improved, multi-disciplined and collaborative response to combat the rising incidence in mesothelioma cases. The training workshops were supported by the Australian Academy of Sciences and in conjunctions with local agencies, partnered with the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO). The workshops provided a unique opportunity for ADRI to convene with international representatives from varying training backgrounds/disciplines to share expertise aimed to advance the Philippines and Fijian capacity to detect, diagnose and treat cases of asbestos-related disease, with particular emphasis on mesothelioma. ADRI researchers also continued to **assess the burden of asbestos-related diseases** including mesothelioma, at national, regional, and global levels based on internationally standardized as well as originally developed methods. ADRI are a regular contributor to the internationally acclaimed Global Burden of Disease (GBD) study series and international conferences on the global situation of asbestos-related diseases.

Information provided by ADRI

Diary dates 2021

Asbestos Victims Memorial Day
DATE: Friday 26 November 2021
VENUE: Pitman Park SALISBURY



AVA will be represented at the following events:

23 February	Lions Club, Goolwa
18 & 19 March	Cancer Survivorship conference
28 April	International Workers Memorial Day
30 April -2 May	Home Living Expo at Wayville Showgrounds
2 June	Port Augusta Probus
12 July	Goolwa Probus
28—29 August	Gawler Show
17-18 September	Riverland Field Days
10 November	Fleurieu Peninsula Memorial Service

Social mornings at 60 Waymouth Street

Have you seen our new, light and bright, premises? We are settled in now and we love to meet our members. Come in to the office to say hello — you are guaranteed a friendly welcome. You are welcome to drop in at any time the office is open, but as the office is staffed by volunteers and times are flexible, we suggest a phone call first to ensure someone will be there.

Phone 08 8212 6008—it will transfer to a volunteer if the office is closed.

Regular Social mornings are held on the second Wednesday of each month from 10 am onwards.

2021 dates: 10 March, 14 April, 12 May, 9 June, 14 July, 11 August,



AVA THANKS THE FOLLOWING MAJOR SPONSORS & SUPPORTERS

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