

**FAREWELL ALEX  
(ALEXANDRA) PETERS, RN, STN  
29/03/1940 — 30/04/2014**



Many of you will have never heard of Alex but there are still a large number who will remember her with gratitude and love as their Stomal Therapy Nurse. Alex was NSW's first STN and patients and stomal therapy nurses have much to thank her for.

Alex was born in Hitchin in Hertfordshire in the UK on 29<sup>th</sup> March 1940. Her nursing training was completed in England at the West Middlesex Hospital in 1961, and in 1965 Alex and her husband sailed to Australia.

Alex was with the Sydney Home Nursing Service and those of us who undertook the Stomal Therapy Course in the 1980s and 90s spent time in the community with Alex observing and learning as part of our clinical experience. A valuable lesson for the trainee stomal therapy nurses was Alex's ability to teach us how to think outside the square!

When Alex retired from the Sydney Home Nursing Service she became the STN at the rooms of the Colostomy Association for many years and continued to help people experiencing problems with their stoma.

In retirement, Alex suffered increasing poor health, but she continued to enjoy life and particularly, Coco and Louis, her two beautiful Siamese. After a lengthy period of illness Alex died peacefully at St. Joseph's in Auburn.

Thank you Alex for all the contributions you gave to people from all walks of life.

Rest in Peace.

*Heather Hill, Stomal Therapy Nurse (Retired),  
Director (ONL)*

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Please post, fax or email to:  
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**ORDERS MAY BE COLLECTED FROM  
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**PLUS OUR DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS**

**BREAKING NEWS!**

**In the Queen's Birthday Honours  
on 9th June 2014 our President,  
Tom Flood, was awarded the  
Order of Australia Medal (OAM).**

**The citation reads:**

**“For service to community health  
through leadership and advocacy for  
people living with stomas.”**

**A full story about Tom will be in the  
next ONL Newsletter.**

# ONL NEWSLETTER

**2014 WINTER QUARTERLY OF OSTOMY NSW LIMITED**

**NAOMI HOUSTON STN**

As a young person, Naomi lived on a small property outside Yass. With a love of the outdoors, Naomi's heart was set on becoming a Park Ranger. Her father asked her to spend a year studying nursing before pursuing a career as a Park Ranger. Naomi fell in love with nursing and graduated at RPAH in Sydney in 1981. After graduating Naomi worked for 2 years on a neuro-medical ward.

After a trip to India, Naomi realised her dream of working as a health educator with youth in the community when she started working for Sydney City Mission as a Health and Community Care instructor for a youth program. While working for 10 years with Sydney City Mission, Naomi taught disadvantaged people including the long term unemployed, sole parents, migrants, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, ex-offenders, and youth at risk. She taught a basic nursing component of a program that included maths, english and job seeking skills, to facilitate employment in nursing homes or as a stepping stone to the students continuing their education. Naomi is very proud of the part she played in the students' lives seeing on a daily basis how the training gave them self-esteem and self-confidence to achieve amazing things. One student she taught is now a Nursing Unit Manager that regularly does relief for senior management positions.



**Naomi Houston and her family**

Naomi returned to study completing her Graduate Diploma in Family Health and a Masters in Primary Health Care while working primarily in ICU at Nepean Hospital. Naomi spent time thinking about what area of nursing to specialise in. Naomi was inspired to specialise in Stomal Therapy by Bev Radmore STN at Mt Druitt and Heather Hill, a retired STN. Naomi saw how Bev Radmore and Heather Hill were so passionate about Stomal Therapy and she had wanted to work in an area that required dedication and passion as well as a chance to educate patients.

Naomi completed her studies in Stomal Therapy while working night duty in ICU. She also travelled to the UK to complete an Advanced Stomal Therapy Course at St Mark's Hospital. After relieving the STN at

Nepean Hospital, Naomi stepped in when the position became available. Naomi is very grateful for the early guidance of the STN at Nepean who she took over from. Naomi is also grateful to the patients who taught her over the years, for the mentoring and support provided by company representatives, Association staff, Stomal Therapy Nurses at Westmead, Blacktown, Concord, Liverpool, John Hunter and at the AASTN meetings. Naomi has been a STN at Nepean Hospital for 5 years, she has learnt a lot, but admits there is also so much more to know. Naomi is just as passionate today about what she does as the first day she stepped into the role. Naomi says it certainly is the best job in the world!

### MANY YEARS HAVE PASSED



Aunty Gwen

I recently visited Aunty Gwen. Aunty Gwen is my aunty through marriage and resides in an aged care facility. She is 98 years old, sharp as a tack and steams around on her walking frame. Aunty Gwen has an ileostomy and she thinks she has had

it for around 61 years. She remembers very hard time back then: being unwell, blood transfusions, trips to Sydney hospitals and many operations.

She recalls the early years being challenging: recovering from surgery, having young children, ostomy bags were not available and her concerns about 'what people would think' – all this whilst her husband worked fulltime. However, resilience prevailed and she went on to lead an active full life, playing sport and raising a family. Aunty Gwen has cared for her stoma meticulously over the years and only recently has required assistance with the care.

*Well done Aunty Gwen!*  
*Jill Fairhall, Stomal Therapy Nurse,*  
*John Hunter Hospital and Newcastle Private Hospital.*

### STN SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

A change to the date for applications to be received (from October 1<sup>st</sup> to May 1<sup>st</sup>) was made this year to enable ONL to provide scholarship funds to successful applicants prior to the enrolment date for the "Graduate Certificate of Stomal Therapy Nursing".

This change should allow more nurses to undertake the course as portion of the fees will be available to them and reduce their out of pocket dollars.

We have submitted 4 applications to the AASTN for review and awards will be made prior to July 2014.

### PATIENTS WELCOME SPECIALIST

For the first time, 100 people with digestive conditions within a 100km radius of Griffith will have access to a specialised nurse. Registered nurse Raye Martin has been awarded a scholarship by the Griffith and District Ostomy Support Group covering the cost of training to become a stomal therapy nurse.

The support group's treasurer Barry Maples said the service was a necessity for people who have to live with bowel or bladder bags. "Griffith doesn't have a stoma therapist even though we desperately needed one", Mr Maples said. "I was in Griffith Base Hospital for 12 days in May and they had no idea how to change the bag, meaning my wife had to come in to do it, which is simply because the nurses don't see it often enough. Everyone with a stoma needs a check-up every 12 months to see if the equipment is still right and we are so thrilled to have a specialist on hand now".

The scholarship was contributed by Ostomy NSW, the local support group, Rotary, Lions, council and private donations. Ms Martin

# People come in different shapes and sizes and so do stomas!

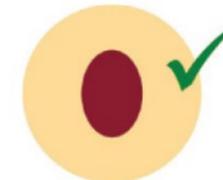


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# Ostomy NSW Ltd Meet and Greet Saturday 15th November 2014 (incorporating the AGM)

BOWLERS CLUB OF NSW  
95-99 YORK STREET  
SYDNEY (CITY)

- ▽ This year we are happy to say that we have the same larger area available for everyone to mix and mingle.
- ▽ Also a larger area for people to talk with company representatives and for our suppliers to demonstrate their products
- ▽ Cost is again \$25 per head including a smorgasbord luncheon and happy hour.
- ▽ Access to our get together will be from 11:00am and happy hour begins at 11:30am.
- ▽ Luncheon tickets will be available from 1 July 2014

The annual major ONL raffle will be drawn at this meeting and there will also be a number of lucky door prizes.

To assist us with catering numbers we would appreciate members purchasing luncheon tickets in advance either by email ([orders@ostomynsw.org.au](mailto:orders@ostomynsw.org.au))—include credit card details—phone the Association on (02) 9542 1300 or forward a cheque or money order to: PO Box 3068 KIRRAWEE 2232 with full details of those wishing to attend.



Cheryl: (02) 9542 1300

Heather: (02) 9790 6003

was delighted with the financial support and looked forward to aiding the community with her specialised knowledge.

“While every nurse has the ability in principle to assist with stomas, there can be psychological issues that develop among patients and part of my training has taught me how to address them,” she said. “There are ongoing things that I will be able to address, such as upgrades in appliances and maintaining supplies, so it’s great that I will be able to use my expertise in the field for the patients. There’s no actual position as a stomal therapy nurse, I’m seeing people at community health in my role as a community nurse with an added expertise”.

*This article first appeared in “The Area News” on January 24 2014*

## STOMA THERAPY LETTER LEAVES ME STAGGERED

How quickly we forget.

I read with interest the article (*The Area News*, January 24) on the Scholarship Award for Stoma Therapy. As a registered nurse, now retired, I worked with the very dedicated Sr Patricia Tyrrell who was a qualified stoma therapist at least 30 years ago and trained us all well in all aspects of stoma nursing.

I was also a friend and colleague of Raye Martin and congratulate her on her continuing education in another aspect of practical nursing but what has happened to GBH when a patient and his wife have to do the nursing and why would it take 12 days for the nurses to learn?

I find it impossible to believe things would ever get so bad.

Catherine Lane SRN, SRM

*This article first appeared in “The Area News” as a Letter to The Editor on January 31, 2014*



To make it easier for members to place their orders each month and easier for the warehouse to cope with a huge influx of orders, we would like to advise everyone of the following points.

**A.** You can order at any time during the month, there is no need to send orders **only** in the first few days of the current month. However, if you order supplies and receive the stock in say February, we are unable to process another order for February unless your STN has completed and given authority for additional supplies to be provided.

**B.** If you send an order for the next month’s supplies we cannot and do not ship the order until the first few days of the new month – as this is the Government Regulation under the Stoma Appliance Scheme.

**C.** Any order received and processed into the computer system up to the last working day of the current month will be considered as a current month order, with the exception of forward orders. Should the month end fall on a weekend any orders received over the weekend by fax, email or mail will be treated as an order for the new month, we cannot back date orders because of computer cut-off times and Government Regulations.

**D.** For pick up orders, please mail, fax or email your order to the office and allow 48 to 72 hours before you phone to establish it is ready for pick up. In this way you are not making a trip to Kirrawee only to find stock had to be ordered to complete the order and is not yet available.

**E.** Please allow 48 to 72 hours from the time of faxing or emailing your order to permit staff time to enter it into the system and start the picking/packing process – before you phone to see if it is ready.

**F.** By law we are not permitted to take phone orders.

G. Please inquire at your local post office first before ringing the office if your parcel is not received within 7 - 10 working days.

## TOMAS AND THE OSTOMY MEMBERS APPLICATION SYSTEMS



We have advised in the past, it was our aim to develop and introduce new computer systems to improve service levels to members and make order processing faster and more accurate for staff. After a great deal of work on the part of the system's developer and staff members, we have achieved many advances.

### 1. Member Information and Orders

This is now all but complete, allowing staff to access current order status plus past orders, what items have been requested and shipment dates along with method of delivery. This also enables us to track fees and amounts in credit for each member.

### 2. Accounts

As a charity we must provide financial details of our company to a number of government bodies. The systems have enabled better collection and presentation of information to our accountants and auditor, to make their job easier.

### 3. Inventory Control

This is the current project in our "To Do List" and is meant to ensure sufficient stock is to hand when member orders are received.

We will also be in a position to order "special" or "small volume" items in a shorter time after member order receipt, this will reduce the delay in order shipment.

Slow moving or stock approaching their expiry date are identified and highlighted to reduce write off of obsolete stock, reducing our cost of operation.

### 4. Other Projects in Development

#### a) Email Orders

Many members telephone to ask if an email order has been received – within the next couple of months – members will receive an automatic response when their email order is input to our

system.

Please note: This will **not** be the shipping date it will be the date the order is input to the system and we would ask that you allow 7 – 10 working days for orders to reach your location.

Our intention is to have the orders ready for pick up or in the mail within 72 hours from receipt however we cannot advise how long it may take for Aust Post to effect actual delivery.

#### b) Order Tracking

We are in the process of attempting to develop an order tracking system which does not increase your costs for shipping.

(We are currently able to send a limited number of parcels by way of a premium service, however this service would increase member costs from \$12.00 per parcel to in excess of \$20.00 per parcel for delivery within the Sydney CBD only).

It is anticipated the tracking system will be available by mid 2015.

We welcome members input and comments on our service levels and system improvements. These can be directed to:

Bob Newman, email:  
manager@ostomynsw.org.au

Tom Flood, email: president@ostomynsw.org.au

## REMINDER TO ALL OSTOMY NSW LTD MEMBERS THAT FEES FOR THE 2014–2015 FINANCIAL YEAR WILL BE DUE THIS JULY



The end of the financial year is also the time for members to renew their membership fee to Ostomy NSW, without payment of a membership fee members are not entitled to receive ostomy products available on the Stoma Appliance Scheme. The payment of a fee also ensures that Ostomy NSW Ltd can continue its good work. The payment of the fee is mandatory.

**Full membership fee is \$45.00, with members on a pension \$35.00 (needs supporting information), this fee structure is the same irrespective of when a new member joins, there is provision for members with financial problems to pay their fee instalments.**

## THE WAREHOUSE AND OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED ON TUESDAY 24TH & WEDNESDAY 25TH JUNE 2014

This is so an annual stock count can take place. No orders will be processed or shipped on these dates. Please place any orders early in the month to avoid disappointment or pick up orders no later than Monday 23rd June 2014.



Thanking you, Bob Newman, Manager

## THE "UNITED OSTOMY ASSOCIATIONS OF NEW SOUTH WALES" VISITED GRIFFITH ON WEDNESDAY 21ST MAY 2014



Griffith was named after Arthur Griffith the State Minister of Public Works in 1916, but this beautiful, friendly country town was designed by Walter Burley Griffen

In 1817, the explorer, John Oxley passed through this area and declared he was unimpressed with what he described as barren desolation and stated that he was the first white man to see it and he thought he would undoubtedly be the last. How wrong he was! In 1906 the construction of the Murrumbidgee Irrigation transformed those barren plains into the fertile agricultural area it is today. Griffith is renowned for its vineyards, orchards, vegetables, wheat, cotton, sheep, and wool, the list goes on and on. A fascinating town.

Griffith appears to have everything including a small but vibrant Ostomy Support Association under the guidance of Barry Maples, and a new

stomal therapy nurse, Raye Martin RN, who has almost completed the Stomal Therapy Course.

The day was held at the Southside Leagues Club with a good attendance of members of the Ostomy Association, family, carers and friends. Tom Flood (ONL) and Kim Lyell (CA) welcomed everyone and spoke about the role of the associations.

Four companies were represented, Coloplast, Dansac, Hollister and 3M and were kept busy in the morning demonstrating their products and answering questions, the 4 representatives also gave a short presentations which were very well received.

After lunch the stomal therapy nurses, Raye Martin (Griffith), Helma Riddell (Wagga Wagga) and Janet Forsyth (Sydney, ONL) presented some excellent educational sessions on colostomies, ileostomies, ileal conduits, stoma care and various problems that may possibly be encountered. At the end of Janet's impressive presentation there was time for an animated question and answer session before the drawing of the lucky door prizes.

Thank you Griffith and everyone involved in making this day a success.

