

W.A.Q.C.'s INITIATIVES



Front to Back: Mike Durk, Geraldine Tieschelman, Don Pugh. These members of the Computer Interest Group use a PET Commodore Microprocessor in the Jack O'Keefe Lounge.

IN 1978, the residents of The Quadriplegic Centre in W.A. formalized the Quadriplegic Centre Residents' Association. A constitution made all eighty residents automatically members.

Membership was free and without obligation. Residents elect the five member Residents' Committee annually.

The Committees' primary purpose has been limited so far to recreational activities and funding a Bedford Van with a hydraulic wheelchair lift.

\$10,000 was raised in 1975 and 1976 by residents to purchase the van. Regular fund raising events have been held since then to raise more money to make the van self-supporting.

The van broadened the scope of some residents' lives.

Lorraine Bornholm, a paraplegic, used the bus considerably to raise \$7,000 for the Crippled Children's Society as a candidate in the Mrs. Australia Quest in 1979. Austin Arundale was able to provide daily moral support visiting his aged and ailing mother prior to her death. Bev Collier and Joan Robertson deepened their spiritual belief by using the bus to attend weekly Bible classes.

The residents are now expanding activities in the Quadriplegic Centre itself. Negotiation of reduced restaurant rates, membership in community and service clubs and the provision of transportation mean that conditions have really improved in the last few years as Ken Byrne, a long time resident, states. "When I first came the only transport was in the cars of friends", he says. "Now I regularly visit home and church, and occasionally attend cricket matches and concerts, thanks to the bus."

Another resident John Egeyrazam, a completely paralysed quadriplegic enthuses about the restaurant scheme: "I recently went out with three other residents in the Association bus. We enjoyed an excellent three course meal with wine at Uncle Dominics Restaurant at a low price. I'm looking forward to going again."

Within the Centre the committee organises and supports dances, concerts, BBQ's, fortnightly films and clubs. Active clubs include the chess, book, radio, gardening, investment, stamp and computing groups.

Dances are run periodically and are supplemented with other activities. These have recently included quiz nights, bands, folk concerts and magician and comedian shows. BBQ's are providing opportunities for residents, their famil-

ies and friends to dine together in a friendly and informal atmosphere.

Quadriplegic Centre Resident's Committee most recent initiative is the Q.C. Computing Enthusiast Group. A PET Commodore microprocessor was obtained from Perth's Murdoch University in January, 1980 so that quadriplegics could gain some familiarity with programming in BASIC. The computer was used eight hours a day, and Mike Durk, a C 5-6 quadriplegic said: "I took part because I wanted to find out if I could programme and if I enjoyed it. I found I did and now I want to continue to develop my skill."

Geraldine Teichelman, a paraplegic, who once worked with a bank computer, felt that learning about micro-processing would aid her future job opportunities.

The committee is currently working to encourage and to provide opportunities for younger residents to pursue an education and a vocation. Liaison with educational institutions, advertisement of courses, provision of transportation and support of seminars are some ways being used to promote this.

With Churchlands College of Advanced Education, two community courses on investment techniques and meeting management are being offered. The Paraplegic-Quadriplegic Association's Education Committee also has had good attendance during the last year at three one-day seminars supported by the Residents Committee. These seminars were on Sexuality and the Disabled, Self Image and the Disabled and Employment Opportunities for the Disabled.

Geoff Lysle, a C 5-6 quadriplegic who lives independently with his wife and children, has been involved with all these seminars. "They are useful to all quadriplegics but particularly valuable to people within one or two years of their accident," Geoff says.

"The meetings let quads and paras get together to share their experiences and ways of overcoming problems. We learn of the commonality of the problems of the disabled and of the variety of unique solutions that are possible."

"The main achievement of the Committee," according to Michael Wright, a five year quadriplegic resident, "has been the new co-operation between the residents and the administration. When I first came here residents were not consulted. There was a wide chasm between patients and staff and we're told by the admin. about what was good for us. Too often we're treated like mindless children. Now we're working together and are happier."

DON PUGH and
GRAHAM LAW

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LAST ISSUE WE PRINTED THE FIRST PART OF A DESCRIPTION OF THE REVOLUTION AT THE WESTERN AUSTRALIA QUADRIPLÉGIC CENTRE BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE WAQC'S NEW GOVERNING (AND REPRESENTATIVE) COMMITTEE. HERE IS THE SECOND PART OF THE DETAILS.

THE WAQC's activity and Planning Committee has done much to enhance the atmosphere at the Quadriplegic Centre.

Ian Salter, long term resident of the QC commented, "The suggestion box and regular meetings with the Director of Nursing by the Committee has changed things.

"I used to see queues of disgruntled residents lined up to complain to the Matron. Now the Residents' Committee researches complaints and passes legitimate ones with recommendations along to Lynne Cox, the Director of Nursing.

"The process seems organised, and efficient. Consequently constructive action is being taken and the number of complaints has decreased."

The Committee also intend to nominate a member for election to the Council, the governing body of the Paraplegic-Quadriplegic Association of W.A. This would voice to a disabled resident in the decision making in this Association.

The Residents' Committee is encouraging the involvement of as many members as possible. This is being accomplished through sub-committees to enquire into, report upon and implement specific projects according to needs.

Sub-committees, usually with five members, possess a chairman appointed by the Residents' Committee to call and run meetings and to report back to the Committee.

VEHICLE COMMITTEE

The most successful sub-committee is the Special Vehicle Sub-Committee which supervises the day to day running of the Committee's bus.

This committee does not raise finance but has in 1980 advised on the purchase and design of a new vehicle.

The Residents' Committee has subsequently raised \$20,000 through a submission to the Lotteries Commission and is now successfully implementing the suggestions of the Special Vehicle Sub-Committee.

RECREATION

A second sub-committee for recreation has been started to recommend and operate social and fund raising functions as well as organising trips and meals outside the centre.

MORE

Additional sub-committees for such special purposes as Economic Welfare, Travel and Future Planning are envisaged.

COURIER

Regular communications between residents and the Committee occur through the bi-monthly newsletter, the Courier.

This newsletter is a convenient way for printing and distributing minutes news, surveys and for ascertaining needs. The most recent survey concerns banking services. Previous surveys supported by the Committee have included such topics as food services, charges for the bus and a questionnaire on services of the Para-Quad Association. Such data aids the decision making process of the administration.

FUNDS

Raising of funds by the committee is based on the principle that those using services should have an opportunity to contribute actively to fund raising.

Consequently, funds raised for general purposes will come from general projects such as raffles in which all members participate through selling tickets.

CLUBS

The committee also promotes and supports small interest groups such as stamp collecting, amateur radio operators and computing enthusiasts by providing advice and assistance to these groups in fund raising and appeals to service clubs.

Robert Barr, the committee chairman, explained to Quad Wrangle "we want residents involved and clubs are a good way of doing it. But they need support and money to get started. "Members often don't have the know how to raise funds. We know how to raise money and can help these groups get going. All residents could stand to gain."

ATTACK

The Residents' Committee believes that life must never be an escape but an increasing attack upon adversity.

Former chairman Ken Byrne, a quadriplegic for seventeen years, asserts, "Our social needs and aspirations are the same as anybody's. Having a goal, something to aim for, something you can point to and say I did that is no less important for the disabled. Boredom through lack of interest leads to discontent and stagnation for everyone.

"For this reason it is important for the Committee to help provide something for people to do, give them something they can be responsible for and can talk about."

EXERTION PLUS

Quadriplegics are now showing themselves to be capable and motivated people working for themselves to govern and to better their lives.

The crux of the programme rests upon exertion. The disabled help the disabled to share hardships, meet challenges, overcome them and to achieve new standards of enjoyment.

Betty Ellis, a paraplegic resident from England, has grounds for cautious optimism concerning the Committee's success: "As a fairly new resident of the Quadriplegic Centre, I have been greatly impressed by the many improvements I have found compared with a previous visit here

eighteen months ago.

"It is a good feeling seeing residents taking part in the running of their lives and not just sitting back being patients.

New interests are being developed, something for everyone being the object. Life is constantly changing and we're changing with it.

**DON PUGH and
GRAHAM LAW**

**Don Pugh, a C 5-6 Quadriplegic is a high school teacher and Graham Law, a C 4-5 Quadriplegic, is secretary of the WAQC's Residents' Committee, and a National Paraplegic Games Champion in Chess.*

Don's Double Handicap

QUADRIPLÉGIC DON PUGH IS A KEY FIGURE IN A PERTH SCHOOL'S FIGHT TO OVERCOME AN EDUCATIONAL HANDICAP.

IRON-WILLED Canadian Don Pugh (33) is the coordinator of curriculum at Hamilton Senior High School — a position he held for four months before a motor accident on December 22, 1978 stopped most of his body movement.

He was re-appointed to the \$12,700-a-year job at the start of the current school year, after working at it voluntarily for five months.

This year Mr Pugh introduced a practical trade maths course to suit apprenticeship requirements for Alcoa.

He is continuing the task of co-ordinating a drive to boost literacy and communication skills in the school.

With senior science master Norman Hyde — who acted as curriculum co-ordinator last year — Mr Pugh brought out what is probably the most comprehensive teachers' handbook in W.A.

Hamilton Senior High School comes under the Federal government's Priority Schools Programme. It is in an area found to be under a socio-economic educational handicap.

Though funded under the programme, Mr Pugh's appointment this year had to be confirmed by the WA Education Department.

Said headmaster Frank Usher, "They made it clear this is not a charitable organisation — they said he's got to pull his weight.

"Don has compensated for his disability so well, he's just as effective in the job as he was.

"He is the core researcher advising and helping teachers to work out curricula.

"We're finding out what the students need to learn, and how the teachers want to teach it."

Broad-shouldered and narrow-hipped, Mr Pugh at 1.95m was a typical outdoors man before his accident.

A regular scuba diver and bushwalker, he was also learning to fly. He cycled to the high school from his Kardinya flat.



Mr Pugh had planned a trek through Papua New Guinea over the Christmas holidays and was en route to Sydney when the accident happened on the Eyre Highway. He woke up pinioned in the back seat, in agony and unable to move. Rescuers told him that the driver had fallen asleep at the wheel.

Busy at school, the former canoe trail ranger's disability seemed scarcely relevant.

He was among the students, administering questionnaires and writing a simple plastic attachment.

Mr Pugh said his social life was pleasant and he intended to marry, have ordinary home and hopefully raise a family.

JIM MAGNUS

Courtesy of Perth Weekend News