



STROKE RECOVERY  
ASSOCIATION NSW

# CLUB NEWS

## Spring 2024

### FROM MICHELLE'S DESK

Hi All,

Welcome to Spring 2024. We are finally getting some warm weather, but with everything in Australia, the land of extremes, we are at the beginning of a three-day heatwave. Remember to stay inside, if possible, stay cool and stay hydrated.

This edition of Club news has an emphasis on Summer safety. With the advent of Very hot Summers when most of us try to escape to the beach. There is an article on Beach safety.

Wherever you are in Australia we are under the ever-present threat of bush fires. Read the Article carefully. Make sure you have a survival plan in place and listen to the ABC for warnings and evacuation alerts.

If you were unable to attend our creating connections conference in September, Lani has done a wonderful job of creating short films of the day's presenters. the keynote Speaker Kylie Tastula's presentation on the NSW Assisted Dying Legislation which came into practice in November 2023 is well worth a watch. Simply google Search, Stroke Recovery Association Youtube Channel and type Kylie's name into the search engine.

It has been a very busy final end to the year with the Association holding five combined Club events. All have been very successful. it was great to catch up with many of you at those events. To quote one of our members, Simon, who attended the Combined Clubs Picnic: "One of the many things I like about our Association is that you get to meet other people and hear their Stories"

Many of you may not have heard me announce at that Annual General Meeting of my intention to retire in early 2025. I will be finalising the details with the Board at the December meeting and work with the Board to ensure that there will be a suitable replacement made before I exit the Association. i hope to be able to visit and introduce them to you and saying my farewells to you all prior to leaving.

I thank you all for your great support over the past 27 years and wish you all a safe and happy holiday period.

Kind regards

*Michelle*



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THIS NEWSLETTER



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Stroke Recovery  
Association NSW



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# Staying Summer Safe

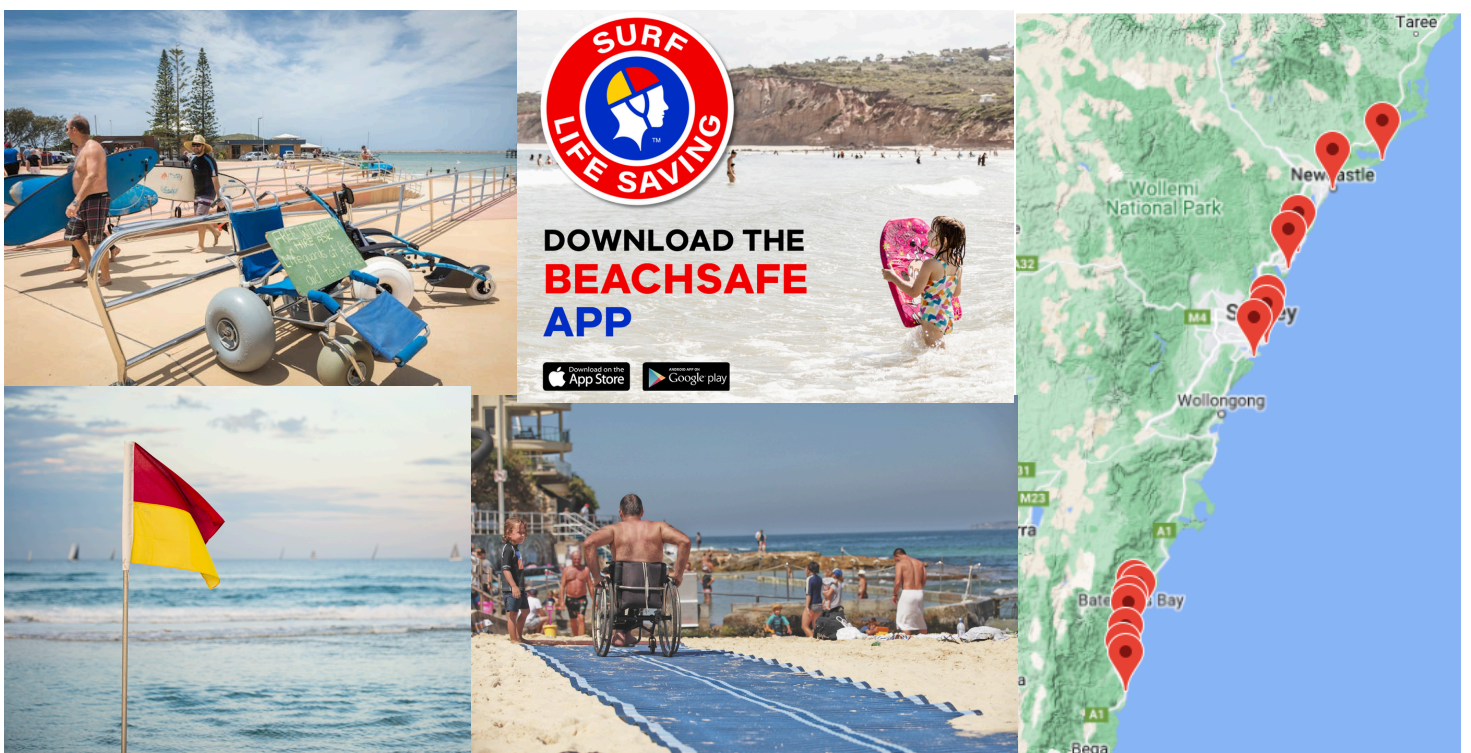
With summer approaching, many of us will be getting ready to head to some of our beautiful beaches. Heading to the beach post-Stroke you may have additional accessibility factors to consider. These may include accessible infrastructure such as hand railing or ramps, wheelchair accessibility, proximity of amenities, accessible bathrooms or parking access.

A resource that can help you assess the accessibility of a beach near you is Accessible Beaches Australia's beach directory. Accessible Beaches Australia is a not-for-profit organisation that advocates for the implementation of accessibility measures on beaches Australia wide. The beach directory categorises beaches by location and accessibility features, ultimately giving beaches a rating out of 5 stars. The directory, alongside other information about Accessible Beaches organisation can be found at [accessiblebeaches.com](https://accessiblebeaches.com)

In addition, some local councils and local surf clubs provide additional beach accessible services. If your local beach isn't listed don't be afraid to contact your council or Surf Club to see if they provide additional services. Some services such as accessible pools are run exclusively by councils and must be pre-booked before use and some are available at set times during the summer.

Another useful resource for beach safety this summer is the Surf Life Saving NSW Beachsafe app. The "BeachSafe" app provides information about beach conditions, patrol status, and potential hazards such as rip currents.

Remember to always gain clearance from your doctor before going in the water after experiencing Stroke, and don't go alone if you are not 100% confident in your ability to stay safe. It may also help to scope out potential beaches before deciding to spend a day there.





# Bushfire Safety

Bushfire season in NSW runs from October 1 to March 31. During this time it is more important than ever to practice Bush fire safety. Bushfire safety isn't relevant only to those who live in areas surrounded by bush. Bushfires can quickly spread from bushland, grassland or paddocks. Embers can travel through the air many hours after the main fire front has passed, and can travel multiple streets back from the bushland or fire site. Coastal areas are also at risk, with coastal scrubs and heath able to become very hot and fast burning.

It is important to prepare a bushfire survival plan. **Remember, leaving early is your safest option.** Below are the 4 steps to prepare for bushfire. For more information on each step visit [www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/resources/bush-fire-survival-plan](http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/resources/bush-fire-survival-plan) to download the fact sheets.



DISCUSS

**Step 1: Discuss what to do if a bushfire threatens your home**



PREPARE

**Step 2: Prepare your home and get it ready for bushfire season**



KNOW

**Step 3: Know the bushfire alert levels**



KEEP

**Step 4: Keep up to date with all bushfire information numbers, websites and apps**

Fire and Rescue NSW offer free safety visits. During the visit firefighters will check your smoke alarms and their locations, as well as offering personalised fire safety advice for your home. To request a safety visit, visit the NSW Fire and Rescue website here - [www.fire.nsw.gov.au/page.php?id=9316](http://www.fire.nsw.gov.au/page.php?id=9316), or contact your local fire station.

RFS also offer the AIDER (Assist Infirm, Disabled and Elderly Residents) program. This is a free one off service designed for people who have limited domestic support available from family, relatives, friends or other services. This could include older people, people living with a disability, and people who are already receiving community assistance and services. To be eligible, you must be living on bushfire prone land. AIDER services can include clearing gutters, thinning vegetation around the home, removing leaf and tree debris, trimming branches from close to the home, or mowing or slashing long grass. To know more about the AIDER service you can fill out a form or view a fact sheet on the RFS website here - [www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/plan-and-prepare/aider](http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/plan-and-prepare/aider) or call 1300 011 737 or email [aider@rfs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:aider@rfs.nsw.gov.au).

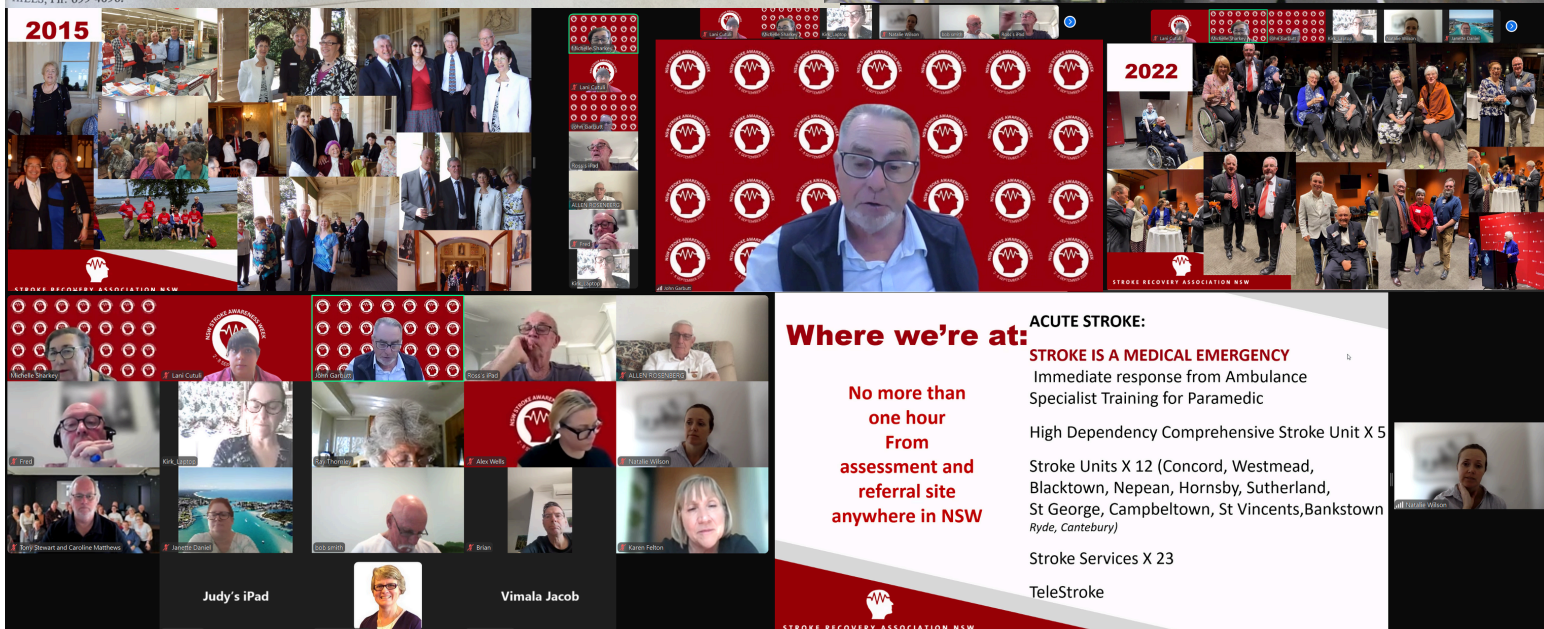
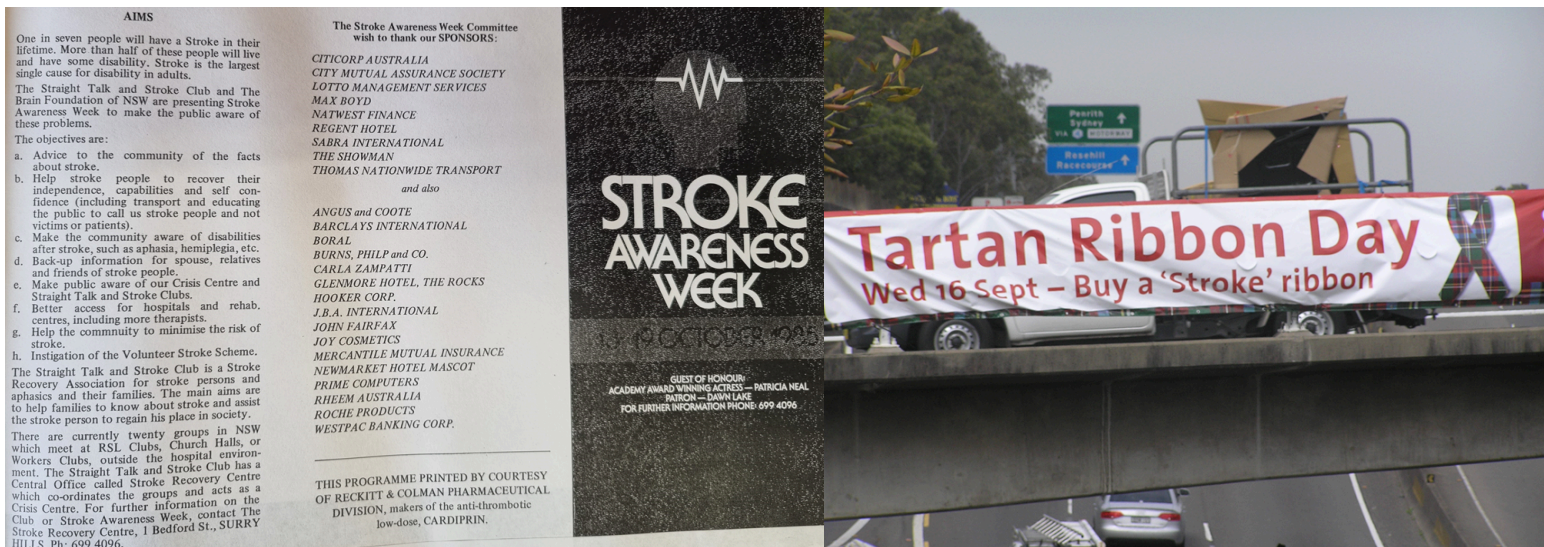
# Stroke Awareness Week 2024 Launch

This year the launch of Stroke Awareness Week was held online to help include our members from rural and regional areas. We had good attendance from a variety of areas as well as health professionals.

Michelle Sharkey along with Alan Rosenburg discussed the history of the Stroke Recovery Association and of Stroke Awareness Week, going through the key milestones of Stroke Awareness Week, including some of the original magazines that were published and Tartan Ribbon Day (photo below).

Also discussed was the important advocacy and information changes the Association has pushed through and how attitudes in both the community and inside NSW Health have changed dramatically over the years and the people who have made this change happen. This has impacted prevention methods, treatment and follow up care, improving the lives of Stroke Survivors and improving the outcomes of Stroke Survivors.

We finished by discussing the next steps in Stroke care and what the Association priorities are moving forward to continue to be a strong advocate for Stroke Survivors and to continue to improve treatments and outcomes and improving disability access in the community.





# Stroke Awareness Week 2024 Walks

This year for Stroke Awareness week the Association in conjunction with Royal Rehab conducted a series of wellness walks at various locations across Sydney. Walks were held at the Royal Rehab grounds in Ryde, Petersham and Penrith with both long and short options. The walks were followed by Stroke discussions and lunch, which were generously provided by Royal Rehab. Royal Rehab have been an indispensable partner to the Association for many years, and we thank them for facilitating the day! Thank you also to everyone who came along on the day for some movement. We encourage you to move your body in a way that works for you to promote your wellbeing all year round.





# Creating Connections Conference 2024

On Wednesday the 4th of September 2024 the Stroke Recovery Association NSW held its annual Creating Connections Conference. This year's theme was "Dying Well, Living Well", with the day featuring presentations from some brilliant members of the Stroke community.

The day began with a presentation on **Assisted Dying** by Kylie Tastula, nurse practitioner and director on the SRA Board of Management. Kylie discussed the requirements for assisted dying in NSW, as well as the policies and procedures that surround it.

We next had Laurel Robinson, lawyer and member of our Sydney Inner West group present **Are your Affairs in Order - Wills, Power of Attorney and Guardianship**. Laurel went through the details of these important proceedings, and explained their relevancy to everyone.

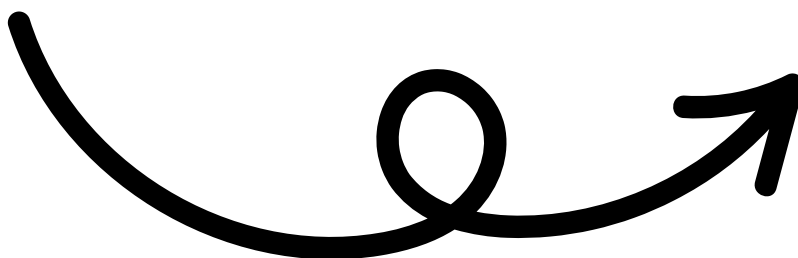
Before a wonderful lunch we listened to a past Topical Thursday presentation on **The Power of Singing** by Anita Connell and our KeyStrokes Choir.

The focus of the day turned to Living Well following lunch, which fittingly began with a panel discussion from Stroke Survivors and carers on **Building Positive Relationships Post Stroke**. Some of the key topics discussed were how relationships for both Survivors and Carers changed post-Stroke and the varied support networks utilised. Prioritising the voices of those with lived experience of Stroke is always a priority of the Association and is enjoyed greatly by conference attendees.

The day ended with presentations on physical and mental fitness from Royal Rehab health professionals. Accredited exercise physiologist Carla Colagrossi presented **Physical Fitness and Falls Prevention**, in which she discussed the impact of Stroke on mobility, the role of fitness in Stroke recovery and fall prevention methods. Lara Fernandez, allied health educator and clinical care coordinator then discussed **Mental Fitness Post Stroke**, including the impacts of Stroke on mental fitness and strategies to boost mental fitness.

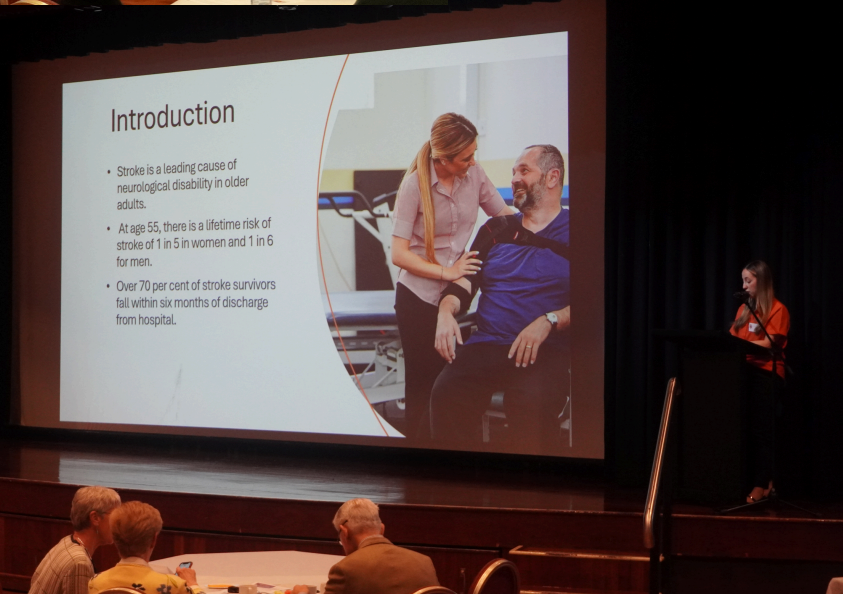
We were also lucky to have some incredible stallholders on the day: Royal Rehab, The George Institute, St Vincent's Research, Concentric, and Able Foods.

Scan the QR code below to view recordings off all the day's presentations, as well as a highlights reel. Thank you to all of our presenters, stallholders and attendees for another successful year of Creating Connections!





# Creating Connections Conference 2024





# Hunter Stroke Olympics

On Tuesday 15th October 2024 the annual Hunter Stroke Olympics was held at Raymond Terrace Bowling Club. A day of fierce competition and fun, the Hunter Olympics is an integral part of our yearly events calendar.

Our club champions were Maitland Aphasia Communication Group, congratulations! Congratulations also to the Battler of the Year Kimberly Morgan-Cruz, our Carer of the Year Joellen Garbutt, and our Volunteers of the Year, Kath and Ross Park.

We would also like to extend a huge thank you to the students and staff from Newcastle University who volunteered on the day. We greatly appreciate their help each year.

Congratulations to all of our medallists, and to everyone who attended. The Olympics are not just about winning, but about camaraderie, socialisation, and Stroke recovery. Everyone's absolute best performances were given, thank you!



	Gold	Silver	Bronze
<b>Carpet Bowls</b>	Michael Fairleigh MACG	Robin Tapara WAGS	Denis Hatch WYSS
<b>Euchre</b>	Phil Christie GLAMS	John Tass WAGS	Clinton Davey MACG
<b>Dominoes</b>	Diane Wallace GLAMS	Robert Carpenter Belmont	Bill Mark WYSS
<b>Card Memory</b>	Bob Smith Woy Woy	Jie Zhong Hornsby	Caroline Matthews MACG
<b>Skittles</b>	Clinton Davey MACG	Janette Daniel GLAMS	Diane Wallace GLAMS
<b>Quoits</b>	Fiona Bell MACG	Layla Andary Hornsby	Michael Fairleigh MACG
<b>Toss the Bean Bag</b>	Brian Lewis WYSS	John Tass WAGS	Caroline Matthews MACG
<b>Pong</b>	Helen Mark WYSS	Phil Baxter GLAMS	Tom Parkhouse Hornsby
<b>Putting (SS)</b>	Robin Tapara WAGS	Jay Peters MACG	Nancy Hall Tamworth
<b>Putting (C)</b>	Helen Christie (GLAMS)	Kathryn Park WAGS	Nicole Hennessy WYSS
<b>Ball in a Box</b>	Clinton Davey MACG	Jeanette Daniel GLAMS	Carol Roworth Belmont



# Hunter Stroke Olympics



**VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR**  
Kath and Ross Park



**CLUB CHAMPIONS**  
Maitland Aphasia Communication Group



**BATTLER OF THE YEAR**  
Kimberly Morgan-Cruz



**CARER OF THE YEAR**  
Joellen Garbutt





# Annual General Meeting

This year's annual general meeting was held at Woonona Bulli RSL on Friday 1st November 2024. Congratulations to all elected board members. We would like to welcome Judy Sumner back to the Board. Judy is the President/Treasurer of the Tamworth Stroke Recovery Club. Judy became a member of the Association in 2004 after her husband Alan experienced a Stroke in his mid-40s. Judy is eager to represent rural members, as well as to advocate for Aphasia awareness. Welcome back Judy!

We would also like to congratulate Alan Sumner, who has been granted Life Membership via election.

We would also like to give a huge thank you to Judith Thornley who was not re-elected to the Board. Judith has been a member of the Association since 2009 and a Board member since 2015. Judith has been indispensable, with her attention to detail and knowledge of policy and procedure integral to the running of the Association over the past 9 years. Thank you Judith.

We would also like to thank Amy Jennings for her work on the Board this past year. Her representation of young Stroke and Aphasia has been both refreshing and rewarding for the Association. Amy chose to not run again for a position on the Board. Thank you Amy.

As there was not a fourth Stroke Survivor running, this position may be filled as a casual vacancy by the Board.

Members also voted in approval of changes to the Association's constitution. These changes were made to modernise the constitution and to clarify membership issues raised by various clubs. If you would like more information about these changes and how they affect your club please contact the Association.

The Association's annual report has also been finalised. Copies have been sent out to club secretaries if you wish to view the report.



# Annual General Meeting - Life Membership

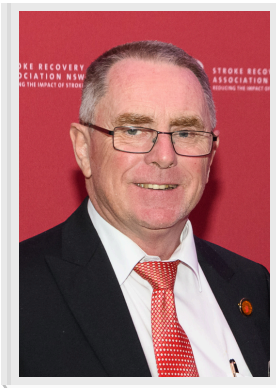


Alan Sumner

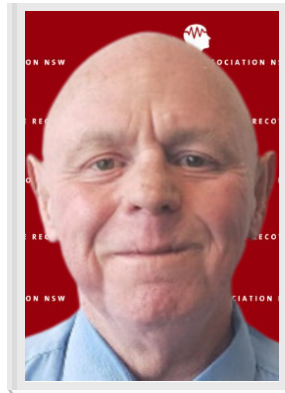
Congratulations to the newest Stroke Recovery Association Life Member Alan Sumner. Alan has been a part of the Stroke Recovery Association since 2004 and held the position of Junior President at Tamworth for 5 years. Alan is on the subcommittee for Aphasia and the committee for the Hunter Stroke Olympics.

Alan was overwhelmingly voted to be the newest Life Member at the Annual General Meeting on 1st November 2024.

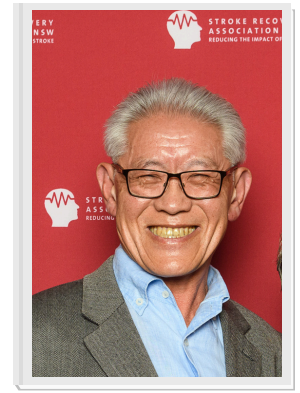
## Your 2025 Board Stroke Survivors



John Garbutt



John Tass

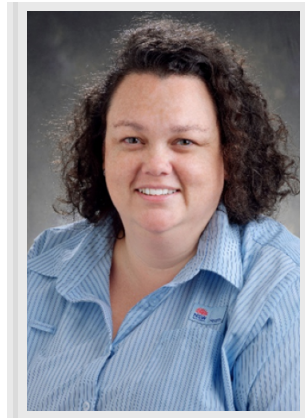


Professor Shih-Chang  
(Ming) Wang

## Non-Stroke Survivors



Karen Felton



Kylie Tastula



Judy Sumner



# Combined Clubs Picnic

Our final event in this year's calendar was the Combined Clubs Picnic held at Sydney Olympic Park's Wentworth Common. A fun day to top off a full year of events, the picnic is a great opportunity for members to connect and socialise. The sun came out in full force and the barbeque was manned under blue skies. Everyone's picnic baskets were filled to the brim with putt putt and bean bag toss being played well into the afternoon. The picnic was attended by members from Fairfield, Sydney Inner West, Macarthur, Penrith and Hornsby Clubs.





# Around the Clubs

## Tamworth Stroke Awareness Week Stall

The Tamworth group hosted an awareness information and fundraising stall in September for Stroke Awareness Week at the Tamworth Craft Shed Markets.

The group were very pleased with the attendance rates and keen interest of the members of the Tamworth community to receive information and to donate to their Club for future events.



The Tamworth Club host a variety of events and activities throughout the year to raise awareness for the Tamworth community and to engage members in the local community.

The Club meets on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 10am at Wests Tamworth. For more information, please contact 1300 650 594.

## Fairfield Carers Lunch

The Fairfield Club were lucky enough to receive \$400 from the NSW Government through the Carers Grants Program as apart of Carers Week to host a luncheon in celebration of the carers who do so much work for our Clubs and Stroke Survivors. The lunch was attended by 22 people and was hosted at Cabra-Vale Diggers, Canley Vale.

Cabra-Vale Diggers was selected because the Fairfield group was also a recipient of a ClubsGrant through Fairfield local grants program. The group therefore wanted to show their appreciating by hosting their first lunch after recieving the grant at the Club.

The luncheon was a wonderful opportunity for the group to show their appreciation to the wonderful carers in their lives.

The Club was extremely grateful to receive the grant and is hopeful to be able to do a similar event next year.

The Club meets on the last Friday of each month at 11am at Cabramatta Rugby League Club. For more information, please contact 1300 650 594.





# Around the Clubs

## Hornsby/Ku-ring-gai Governors Visit

On Friday 22nd November Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC visited the Hornsby/Ku-ring-gai Stroke Club to open their Club games day in her capacity as patron of the Stroke Recovery Association.

The day was a fun and engaging day filled with fun, games and laughs and a lovely way to cap off a wonderful year. It was a pleasure to have Her Excellency in attendance and the Club was extremely grateful to her interest in and thoughtful conversation with members throughout the morning.

The Hornsby/Ku-ring-gai Club meets at 10am every Friday between February and November at Pennant Hills Community Health Centre. For more information, please contact the Association on 1300 650 594.



## Sydney Inner West Melbourne Cup Lunch

The Sydney Inner West Club's November meeting fell on Melbourne Cup Day, and they hosted a lunch to watch the Melbourne Cup race as their meeting for this month. The Club attended their usual venue where they were able to enter a raffle and enjoy the entertainment provided by the Club for the Melbourne Cup. Members of the Club attended the lunch and stayed to watch the 'race that stops the nation.'

The Club dressed up with their fancy hats for the day and enjoyed their day in which they were able to share a drink and a laugh before watching the race together. The Club zoomed into the online groups for a short period, so everyone got to see and enjoy the atmosphere they were experiencing on the day.

The Club meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 11am at Briar's Sports Club in Concord. For more information, please contact 1300 650 594.





# In Memorium

## Julia Coote



September was a particularly sad month with the passing of two of our most beloved members. The lovely Julia Coote and the beautiful Elaine Pandolfi. They passed away on the same day and I assure you if you want two wonderful women in heaven advocating to God for a cure for Stroke these are definitely the two women you would want.

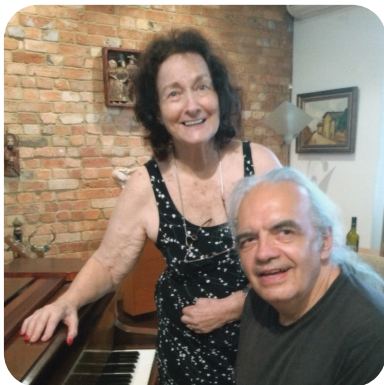
Julia was a long-time member of the Sutherland group. She joined in 2011 when the club was reopened. Anyone who attended any of the Stroke Recovery Associations went over the past year will know Julia.

While she was able, she would travel anywhere to meet up with other Stroke survivors. No place was too difficult. She travelled to Forster, the Hunter Stroke Olympics, the Creating Connections Conferences, Building Capacity Conferences and was a regular at the Sydney Stroke Olympics. Julia was a big believer in getting out and about while you still can.

Julia was a cricket FANATIC. A Life member of the Sutherland District cricket Association. She surrounded herself with Cricket memorability and if there was ever a cricket trivia to be had, it is Julia you would want on your team. She knew all the Australian Cricket Captains personally having travelled extensively to watch the Australian team play all over the world. Glenn McGrath was a personal friend having boarded with Julia when he first arrived in Sydney from Narromine to play Cricket.

Julia was farewelled by family and Friends at a requiem mass in Sutherland. The area she was born, grew up and lived all her life. She will be missed enormously. Rest in Peace lovely lady.

## Elaine Pandolfi



The indomitable spirit of the Elaine Pandolfi left us on 25 September 2024. What a great lady she was. Elaine was a member of the Sydney Inner West Stroke Recovery Club. She lit up the room whenever she entered. She was ever positive no matter what life threw at her. That included a significantly severe Stroke leaving her wheelchair reliant.

For Many years prior to the COVID - 19 she and her husband Vincenzo would host the Sydney Inner West Group to what could only be called the Melbourne Cup Day Festival of Italian Foods. All cooked and catered for by the lovely pair.

Everything was homemade including the pasta, the breads, all the sauces and the deserts. What joyful days they were with everyone dressed up to the nines being entertained by Vincenzo on the piano, an array of culinary delights and to being welcomed with open hearts to their lovely home in Balmain.

Elaine was always on the lookout for the latest research that she would find that may give hope to developing a "cure" for Stroke. She loved to ring and discuss the latest idea she had found on the internet or in the Sydney Morning Herald.

She was ever hopeful, ever optimistic and always open for a chat and to find a new friend she could convert to her quest to make life joyous. Vale Beautiful Elaine!



# Upcoming Events



STROKE RECOVERY ASSOCIATION NSW

## EVENTS 2025



Sydney Stroke Olympics Games Day  
**Thursday 26th June 2025**

Club Burwood (Burwood, Sydney)



Combined Clubs Morning Tea  
**Saturday 2nd August 2025**

Diggers @ The Entrance (The Entrance, Central Coast)



Stroke Awareness Week NSW 2025  
**Monday 1st - Sunday 7th September 2025**



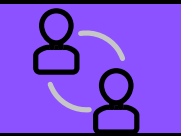
Creating Connections Stroke Conference  
**Wednesday 3rd September 2025**

Club Burwood (Burwood, Sydney)



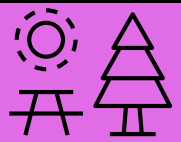
Hunter Stroke Olympics  
**Tuesday 14th October 2025**

Raymond Terrace Bowling Club (Raymond Terrace)



Annual General Meeting  
**Friday 7th November 2025**

Club Burwood (Burwood, Sydney)



Combined Clubs Picnic  
**Friday 14th November 2025**

Wentworth Commons (Homebush, Sydney)



STROKE RECOVERY ASSOCIATION NSW



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### Contributions

We welcome contributions to Club News, especially in our "Around the Clubs" section of the newsletter.

Submissions should be sent to [events@strokensw.org.au](mailto:events@strokensw.org.au).

Contributions may be edited, either to reduce size, to assist with readability, or for legal/liability reasons. To include something in our next Club News, please send it into our office before 28th February 2025

### Memorial gifts & bequests

A bequest is a gift in your will. If you would like to consider how you can include the Stroke Recovery Association NSW as a beneficiary in your will, please contact the office at [admin@strokensw.org.au](mailto:admin@strokensw.org.au) or on 1300 65 594.

We can also supply 'In Memoriam' donation brochures with pre-paid addressed envelopes for use at memorial services.

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