

MELBOURNE OSTEOPOROSIS SUPPORT GROUP INC

Reg No. A0038140R

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT 2017/2018

We have enjoyed a very busy, informative and social year, with an enthusiastic committee. We have all learned more about self management and been more involved in our treatments. Our financial membership stands at 98. 49 of our members have attended meetings at some stage during the year. Attendance at meetings has picked up in the last few months bringing our average attendance up to 27 which is pleasing when we have such high quality speakers. Some of our members are in the work force, many live out of Melbourne, some interstate, and for others, travelling is no longer possible for health reasons. Members who attend meetings appreciate hearing from others as to how they are managing their condition and their experiences with various health professionals. Our library of books, DVD's etc. on the subject of osteoporosis is available to all members who attend meetings.

Our General meetings continue to be held in a very comfortable and spacious room on the 4th Floor in Ross House, 247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne. We are also represented at gatherings/meetings arranged by Ross House Association. Our bi-monthly committee meetings are still held in Glen Iris at St James' church hall.

In April we celebrated our 20th Birthday with a catered Luncheon in our meeting room. We were pleased to have with us Melita Daru from Osteoporosis Australia in Sydney and Professor Peter Ebeling who is the Medical Director of Osteoporosis Australia. There were other invited guests present including Linda Martin who was CEO of *MOVE muscle bone and joint health*, Vanessa Jones Exercise Physiologist and Manager at Monash Link Health & Community, and Paul Percy Head Physiotherapist at Kieser. Pauline Vincent an original member from our first meeting also attended as did representatives from the South East Melbourne Osteoporosis Support Group and the Ankylosing Spondylitis Support Group.

Our meetings started the year with our Open Forum where members discuss and ask questions generally about osteoporosis, learning from others experiences. Members have benefitted from the variety of speakers they have heard, all imparting useful information. These included Dr Howard Zeimer, endocrinologist in June, Monique Vero, dietician in August and Tanja Bahro, palliative care specialist in October. Last February it was decided not to meet in December. In February our Patron, Dr Sally Cockburn was a very interesting, informative and entertaining guest speaker on "Looking After Your Health – Especially Your Bones".

Many of our members belong to *MOVE, muscle bone and joint health* and we encourage this. as apart from receiving personal membership benefits, this aids the community, helping to finance programs and services to assist people with musculoskeletal problems, including osteoporosis. It also contributes to research and adds the weight of numbers when Grants are being applied for from the government and corporate sector. The Support Group's relationship with *MOVE muscle bone and joint health* is very valuable as they cover us for insurance which we otherwise could not afford. Committee members were invited to the *MOVE muscle bone and joint health* Volunteers Luncheon in May as a thank you for our support.

We have formed a close relationship with St Vincent's Research Institute, Bone Laboratory and some of our committee paid another visit to them in May. Members enjoyed another interesting tour of the Walter & Eliza Hall Research Institute also in May, followed by lunch nearby. Our Annual Luncheon at William Angliss restaurant in September was enjoyed by all who attended. We also had an information table at the Opening of Seniors Week at Federation Square.

For the month of August, Ross House granted us window space onto Flinders Lane to publicize our Group. In February this year at the 'Ashburton til Twilight Festival' we had an information table aimed at informing young people that they also are susceptible to osteoporosis. We sold a variety of plants on our stall, the proceeds of which were added to our funds.

This past year we were again invited to participate in the 'Grill'd Local Matters' program this time at their restaurant at South Melbourne from which we received \$100 towards our funds.

Our website continues to attract 'hits' from which requests for information are followed up. We also have our own Facebook page which is well supported. Our bi-monthly newsletters continue to be sent to all financial members with copies of the Minutes of the previous General Meeting. I have also been able to forward to members from time to time, additional information I receive, who have given me their email address. We exchange newsletters with the South East Melbourne Osteoporosis Support Group and the Young Womens Arthritis Support Group. We have strong links with Osteoporosis Australia in Sydney and Kieser Strength Training who have a particular interest in helping people with osteoporosis, as well as the National Osteoporosis Society in the UK from which we receive helpful information and the International Osteoporosis Foundation in Switzerland. Our newsletter goes out to 20 people in the health sector who have requested to be put on our mailing list.

Endocrinologists, rheumatologists and physiotherapists are available to us for advice when certain issues arise and I thank them for their support. I would also like to express appreciation of the Department of Health & Human Services who enable us to take part in the Seniors Week Celebration as an awareness exercise and also for the financial help we receive from them through their Grants program.

In conclusion I would like to thank Linda Martin who was the CEO of *MOVE muscle bone and joint health* for most of the year and her staff for their help when needed, Bruce Brown, our website manager for keeping our site up-to-date, Bill Logie for looking after our sound system for meetings, Karen Mills our Facebook page manager, and afternoon tea provider, office bearers, Beryl Noonan Vice-President, Leonie Cartledge Secretary and Irene Sansom Treasurer and committee members Helen Cunningham, Leigh Lugton, Andrea Priest (librarian) Helen Lechte, Bev McLachlan Odille Douglas and Irene Rawson who carry out their duties so cheerfully.

Beryl Logie
President 17.4.2018.