

# CICADA CHORUS

AUTUMN ~ 2022

SHARE ~ LISTEN ~ CONNECT

## **A Surgeons Journey**

*Dr Kristy Fraser~Kirk*

## **Why I Chose AB**

*Renee Williams*

## **REHAB at HOME for ADULTS**

*New Video Series*

## **Celebrating World Hearing Day**

*Deaf Connect*

## **Don't Be Conned**

*Hearing Aids are not all the same*



John and Donna

Yes, Ladies and Gentlemen, it has finally happened. Thanks to you, our members and also to the amazing effort put in by your committee, CICADA Queensland is now officially CICADA QLD INC.

The move to incorporate has been greatly accepted by our financial institutions as well as various grant opportunities.

The doors are now opening wide, and with this change we are more aligned with other CICADA associations around Australia, and looking forward to creating a national platform that allows people not only in Queensland but Australia-wide to find the support and care they deserve and need. The last 12 months have seen so much change, not only for CICADA Queensland but for our nation as a whole. With all this change we can now only believe that the future is looking positive. As our borders open up and

we are learning to live with and conquer a pandemic, a new gremlin out there called COVID 19, I look back and see all the benefits and the lessons we have learnt together through this season.

While things like QR codes have been around for years, many people had no idea they could simply scan one with their phone. They serve a hundred purposes in so many different areas. It's great watching people embrace new technologies.

My favourite would have to be video conferencing, and the fact that so many platforms have now made closed captions/subtitles a common feature. What a huge advantage this tool can bring to so many of us. When you combine streaming your device straight into your cochlear implant and/or hearing aid along with captions the results can be amazing - communication that you never knew you could achieve. Thanks to a pandemic many platforms have worked so hard at improving these features. Who would have thought growing up watching the Jetson's that video calls would one day be a thing? Now not only do they exist but they also come with incredibly accurate live captions. Lip reading, streaming straight to your CI and captioning available on practically every mobile device.

If you have not tried it and would like to, then I would like to make myself personally available to coach any member wanting to give it a go for the first time. Our Virtual videos meets have been relatively small, however I have taken part in international conferences and CI forums where over a hundred people have been in attendance all through video technology. Would you believe in some cases the platform will even translate languages for us? I speak and read English while someone reads and speaks French.

If you follow some basic, in fact Old School classroom, protocols then video calls with even numerous people attending can be very easy. More importantly, they can bring remote areas closer to us and to accessing support.

If you live in a remote area and need support and are not a CICADA QLD member I will gladly help you get started. If you are a CICADA QLD member and want to trial this new realm with a guided hand please just ask.

*John Ross*

*President*

[Book a video call with John by clicking here](#)

## OUR PARTNERS



# DR KRISTY FRASER~KIRK

## A SURGEON'S JOURNEY

With thanks to CICADA Queensland's secretary, Penny Philips - who has been so welcoming since I commenced practice on the Sunshine Coast - for inviting me to give a 'Behind The Scenes' view into (at least one!) surgeon's journey to hearing implantation.

My experience with hearing loss started early in life – my father was older when he had his children, and had had a failed stapedectomy for otosclerosis (a disease which causes both middle and inner ear hearing loss) before we were born.

His hearing loss – and the frustration, fatigue and social isolation that come with that – was ever-present in our family.

Dad was an ambulance man, and our family's sole breadwinner – hearing aids seemed an expensive luxury. He remained unaided until he reached Government eligibility in his 60s. By then, his ability to work had been cut painfully short by his disability. He had few remaining friendships and the 'stay at home' life that is so often easiest for the hearing impaired was well established.

Once eligible, Dad was much older in mind and spirit. He little tolerance for the irritations of hearing aids. He also had little tolerance for people – he was often short-tempered and irritable – he couldn't find an audiologist he could get along with. He found that 'nuisance inevitabilities' of hearing aids – unwanted background sounds, feedback, discomfort and the narrow margin between 'too quiet' and 'TOO LOUD' - to be unbearable.

After waiting so long, hearing aids were too much of a hassle to amplify what had become a very silent and solitary life – and so, as in many Australian homes, his perfectly good hearing aids were retired to a top drawer. I often wonder how different his life might have been had there been affordable support for his hearing disability when he was younger, and more resilient to frustration and new learning. (Note to Government: Hearing Aids should be funded for all Australians with significant hearing disability).

I studied Journalism when I left school, but was a dreadful journalist so I returned to university. I completed a degree in Psychology, which has proved among the most useful of all things I have studied on the road to become a surgeon.

I chose to be an ENT surgeon because I worked beneath inimitable Head and Neck surgeon, Dr Roger Grigg, as a medical student in Toowoomba. Dr Grigg was intelligent, fair and fierce in equal measure and made surgery impressive to me. I also chose ENT because, in general, ENT surgeons tend to be nice and normal humans.

My best teachers – with a couple of notable exceptions – were otologists, along with a handful of general ENT surgeons who had exceptional skill (and patience!) in an ear. I was fortunate enough to train with Drs Que Hee, Parker, Bell-Allen, and Lomas during my training, and still clearly remember performing my first cochlear implant with Professor Bruce Black at the Royal Children's Hospital.

As a junior consultant, working at Nambour while having babies, my good friend, otologist Dr Andrew Chang, would drive for hours every few months to support the Coast with our more complex ear surgeries. He taught me a great deal and continued to make that drive until my children were three and one when we moved the family to London to complete a Hearing Implant fellowship at the St Thomas Hearing Implant Centre.

This wonderful team taught me not only the skill to perform hearing surgery reliably, but also the importance of an inclusive multi-disciplinary team – a dedicated group of audiologists, speech and language therapists, vestibular physiotherapists and psychologists – who work together to promote best outcomes for patients.

I feel very grateful to have such a rewarding career, in a beautiful part of the world. I feel especially grateful to be able to assist my wonderful, inspiring implant patients and to be in turn supported in providing local implant services by my surgical and audiological colleagues around the State.

Dr Kristy Fraser-Kirk is a paediatric and adult ENT surgeon, and advanced ear surgeon / hearing implant surgeon. She operates at Evolve ENT, Birtinya, and the Sunshine Coast University Hospital ENT Department.

Enquiries to: [reception@evolveENT.com.au](mailto:reception@evolveENT.com.au)

Website: [Evolve ENT](http://EvolveENT.com.au)



Dr Kristy Fraser-Kirk  
Ear + Hearing Implant Surgeon | Paediatric + Adult ENT surgeon  
BA (Psych), MBBS (Hons), FRACS (OHNS)

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Feel the difference.**



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BENEFITS	Nucleus 7 Sound Processor	Nucleus Kanso 2 Sound Processor
Enjoy the style most suited to your personal preferences and needs	Behind-the-ear	Off-the-ear
Hear your best in any environment with SmartSound™ iQ with SCAN technologies and dual microphones	✓	✓
Focus on the conversation by reducing noise coming from behind with ForwardFocus	✓	✓
World's first direct streaming for calls and entertainment from a compatible Apple or Android™ device*	✓	✓
Take control of your hearing with the Nucleus Smart App	✓	✓
Bring sound closer in challenging situations with Cochlear True Wireless™ Devices – no strings attached	✓	✓
Our latest Nucleus sound processors are splash-proof, dust-proof, and water resistant. And when used with the Aqua+ accessory they become waterproof, so you can enjoy your favourite water activities. ^	IP57	IP68

**To learn which option is best for you, visit [cochlear.com/au/upgrade](https://cochlear.com/au/upgrade) and speak to your healthcare professional today.**



\* The Cochlear Nucleus 7 and Kanso 2 Sound Processors are compatible with Apple and Android devices. The Cochlear Nucleus Smart App is available on App Store and Google Play. For compatibility information visit [www.cochlear.com/compatibility](https://www.cochlear.com/compatibility).

^ The Cochlear Nucleus 7 Sound Processor is dust and water resistant to level IP57 of the International Standard IEC60529. The Cochlear Nucleus 7 Sound Processors with Aqua+ and Aqua+ Coil are dust and water resistant to level IP68 of the International Standard IEC60529 when you use a Cochlear Standard Rechargeable Battery Module or Cochlear Compact Rechargeable Battery Module. Refer to the relevant User Guide for more information. The Cochlear Nucleus Kanso 2 Sound Processor is dust and water resistant to level of IP68 of the International Standard IEC60529. The Cochlear Nucleus Kanso 2 Sound Processor with Aqua+ is dust and water resistant to level of IP68 of the International Standard IEC60529 and can be continuously submerged under water to a depth of up to 3 metres for up to 2 hours. Refer to the relevant User Guide for more information.

Please seek advice from your health professional about treatments for hearing loss. Outcomes may vary, and your health professional will advise you about the factors which could affect your outcome. Always read the instructions for use. Not all products are available in all countries. Please contact your local Cochlear representative for product information. Cochlear™ Nucleus® implant systems are intended for the treatment of moderately severe to profound hearing loss. ForwardFocus is enabled by your clinician and user-controlled via the Nucleus Smart App. Apple is a trademark of Apple Inc., registered in the U.S. and other countries. Android is a trademark of Google LLC.

# CELEBRATING WORLD HEARING DAY WITH DEAF CONNECT

In October 2020 Deaf Services Limited and the Deaf Society officially merged to form a new entity - Australia's largest provider of whole-of-life support for the Deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind communities. In November 2021 this new organisation was rebranded to; Deaf Connect – and a new logo was introduced which is focused on the intersection between the diverse groups that make up the Deaf community in Australia.

Our journey from two of Australia's largest Deaf societies, to a single organisation with a new name and brand has been a long one and will shortly be recognised by the launch of our new website.

Deaf Connect stands with the whole deaf community in Australia; Deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, as well as those without traditional labels, as well as their families and allies. On World Hearing Day we highlight those hard of hearing community members for whom hearing health issues are particularly important.

World Hearing Day is a yearly reminder of the importance of hearing and ear care and the steps individuals can take to care for their hearing. For those among the community who already identify as Deaf or hard of hearing it is an opportunity to highlight the various communication methods, information, technology and initiatives which complement healthy hearing habits.

The challenges which face new parents of a deaf or hard of hearing child are well known – information about the best pathways and support can be conflicting and subject to bias or preference. Information access for those with later onset hearing concerns – be it age-related or sudden onset can be equally confusing.

On average, Australians who are identified with a hearing loss wait seven years before actively seeking treatment. It is critical that information is provided in our community so that there is a better understanding of hearing and that this information is made accessible and promoted alongside prevention strategies and tools.

This information and support can be in the form of medical intervention, or technology solutions to ensure someone's day-to-day interactions can continue with minimal impact to their recognized way of life. Through Hearspace and the Deaf Connect shop, Deaf Connect works with deaf and hard of hearing people every day to understand their unique situation and explain the right supports to maximise their access to things that they may have taken for granted.

Beyond this, support for those who want to better understand their situation can also take the form of an introduction to the wider Deaf and hard of hearing community, and a variety of support networks of like-minded Australians who are living in similar situations.

One gateway to the wider community can be Australian Sign Language – Auslan. Deaf Connect has long history of Auslan education; introducing the language of the Deaf community to Australians right across the hearing spectrum. Students undertaking these courses can follow a number of

**deaf  
connect**

Serving our community.  
Sharing our culture.



# CELEBRATING WORLD HEARING DAY WITH DEAF CONNECT CONTINUED

career pathways, whether it be to become an interpreter or other professions that work with Deaf clients, deaf or hard of hearing people who have not had the opportunity to learn Auslan as well as other students of all ages and backgrounds that have a passion for understanding more about the wider Deaf community or a new language.

Our Community Classes can take place in person or online and are taught by native Auslan users. These classes do not include assessments or testing but rather they are conducted in a casual classroom environment that immerses students in the language and culture of the Deaf community.

While there are many differences in the needs of the individual groups within the D/deaf community, Deaf Connect looks to find those points where these groups intersect and build community around shared experiences, needs and desires.

Through our new website, and continued focus on supporting the whole Deaf community, Deaf Connect aims to bring together some of the disparate information available to those who are faced with understanding their hearing journey. To learn Auslan with us, check out our community courses here: <https://www.deafservices.org.au/services/Education> or to find out more about assistive technology options and information on finding your place in our community visit: <https://shop.hearspace.org/>

## \* WE HAVE A WINNER \*



Lucky winner ~ Joan Henderson

The lucky winner Joan Henderson, one of our Brisbane members, received first prize at the CICADA Queensland party which was a weekend away at Portobello by the sea in Dicky Beach on the beautiful Sunshine Coast. She has decided to celebrate her 80th birthday in September using her winning ticket and bringing her sister along. Thank you to Deaf Connect for providing this prize and have a wonderful weekend Joan!



# INTERNATIONAL COCHLEAR IMPLANT DAY

## KYMM SMITH

February 25th was International Cochlear Implant Day and CICADA Queensland asked you on our social media pages what your favourite things are about Cochlear Implants! We wanted to know your unforgettable moments, best tips and tricks, and what you love most about your Bionic Ears!

What you told us...

“Having a cochlear implant has allowed me to continue my social and working life without barriers...[and] I’m able to fully appreciate music. With one granddaughter studying Musical Theatre and another enjoying all aspects of dance, it’s important that I can fully enjoy and participate in their excitement.” - Del

“Hearing my audiologist’s voice on activation, understanding them, answering them and they sounded so normal! The best. [I use] forward focus and change sensitivity to deal with noisy places. I love my CI because it makes me a person again who can interact and share.” - Rick

“Hearing ‘Happy Birthday’ being sung on a movie from another room; Being able to recognise which child swore in the car; [and] Hearing my unborn child’s heartbeat for the first time.” - Leeann

Check out our Facebook page and let us know why you love your CI’s!

Did you know? February 25th celebrates the anniversary of the first ever cochlear implantation by Charles Eyries and André Djourno in 1957. However, the first modern multi-channel cochlear implant surgery was in Austria in 1977, a device developed by Ingeborg Hochmair and Erwin Hochmair. A year later, a device developed by Graeme Clark was implanted in Australia. For more info on the history of International Cochlear Implant Day check out the MED-EL blog here...<https://blog.medel.com/everything-you-need-to-know-about-international-cochlear-implant-day/>

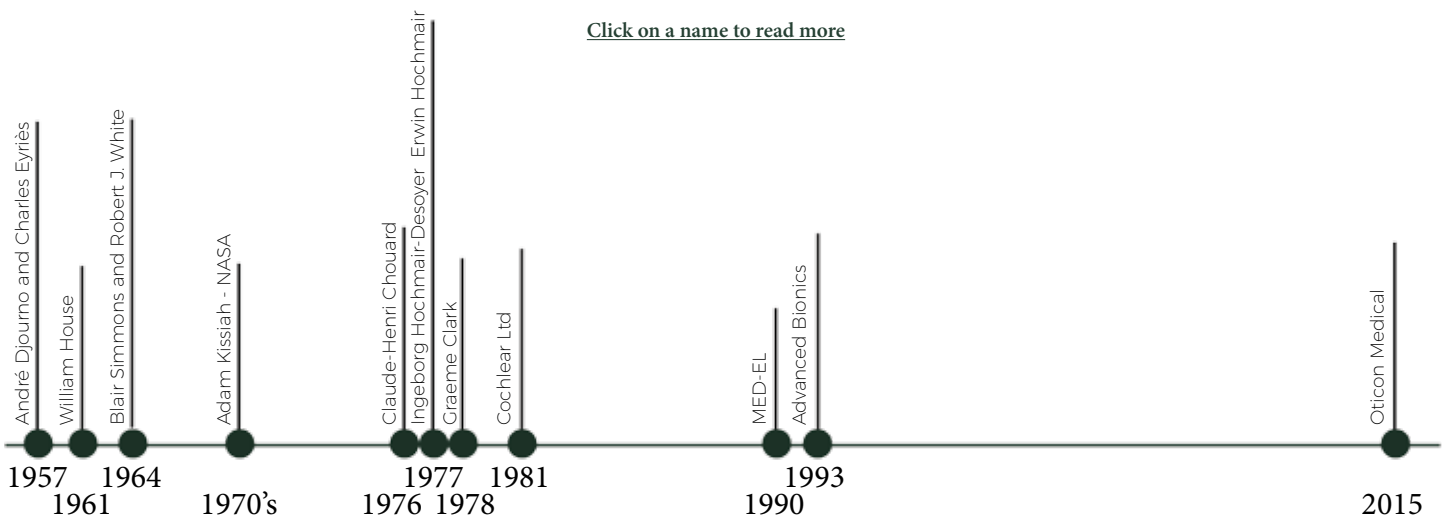
### Fun facts

Around 14,000 Australians now have a Cochlear Implant on either one or 2 ears.

As of December 2019, around 736,900 registered cochlear implant devices have been implanted around the world.

([www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/cochlear-implants](http://www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/cochlear-implants))

[Click on a name to read more](#)



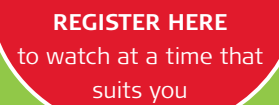
## INTERACTIVE COCHLEAR IMPLANT HISTORY TIMELINE



MED-EL



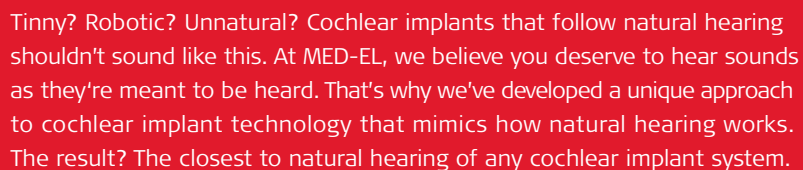
MEET MED-EL  
Information  
Session



REGISTER HERE  
to watch at a time that  
suits you



## What Does a Cochlear Implant Sound Like?



Tinny? Robotic? Unnatural? Cochlear implants that follow natural hearing shouldn't sound like this. At MED-EL, we believe you deserve to hear sounds as they're meant to be heard. That's why we've developed a unique approach to cochlear implant technology that mimics how natural hearing works. The result? The closest to natural hearing of any cochlear implant system.



Find out more here:  
[go.medel.com/NaturalHearing-p](https://go.medel.com/NaturalHearing-p)



hearLIFE



medel.com





# REHAB AT HOME FOR ADULTS

NEW VIDEO SERIES

MED-EL have an upcoming exciting new rehabilitation resource suitable for adults using any brand of hearing implant. Rehab at Home for Adults consists of 13 videos that explore ideas and activities designed to help adults who use hearing technology rehabilitate at home. All fully captioned to assist those new to listening, the series progresses through increasingly more challenging Everyday Listening Goals. The videos, which will be released on the MED-EL blog, were all created and filmed here in Queensland.



Two CICADA Qld members with Rebecca Claridge on set

The videos feature genuine MED-EL hearing implant recipients and their families. You will recognise some QLD CICADA members amongst the star cast, and for some additional inside information, hidden behind the scenes producing and directing is one of CICADA QLD's well known personalities.

MED-EL Australasia is proud to have been given this opportunity to produce a global rehabilitation product that will contribute to hearing implant users around the world reaching their listening potential.

We thank the participants who volunteered their time for this project and for sharing their experiences.

To receive an email notification when the series is released subscribe for free to the MED-EL blog.

[Subscribe - To the MED-EL Blog Click here](#)

## TIPS N TRICKS

CHANGE YOUR COVER / FILTER

Regardless of what brand of processor you are using keeping your microphone cover / filter clean and free of dust and dirt will guarantee you optimal performance.

It is recommended by most manufacturers that you should do this at least every 3 months, more often if you live in areas that have a lot of dust or sand etc. So every time you read a new edition of CICADA CHORUS if you have not changed your cover since the last edition, its probably a good idea you stop and do it right now. Don't know how? click on a link below.

Links:

[Advanced Bionics](#)

[Cochlear](#)

[MED-EL](#)

[Oticon](#)



A red promotional poster for a MED-EL information session. The text on the poster includes: "Want to hear the birds tweet?", "The rain fall?", "The dogs bark?", "MEET MED-EL", "Cochlear Implants for Adults Information Session", "REGISTER HERE", "to watch at a time that suits you.", "We will answer these questions, and more!", "Who is MED-EL?", "How does a cochlear implant work?", "Who is eligible for a cochlear implant?", "How does MED-EL deliver the closest to natural hearing?", "What is rehabilitation following cochlear implantation?", "What is life like with a cochlear implant?". There are also icons for a bird, a dog, and a rain cloud, and a "FULLY CAPTIONED" logo with "CC". The MED-EL logo is in the top right corner. At the bottom, there is the "hearLIFE" logo and social media icons for Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube, along with the website "medel.com".

# VOLUNTEERING

PENNY PHILLIPS

Following the death of my husband in Sydney where I had lived and worked for over 30 years I decided to make the big trek up to Queensland with all my baggage and my dog. I did have a son and family already living there and really needed a change of direction and new adventures. I had a severe hearing loss and it wasn't always easy to cope with life with two ears that didn't work very well, and I struggled for many years. I was lucky to be able to initially live with my family and we shared a house in Maroochydore for many years. After a settling-in period I started to get bored and needed to make new friends so contacted Better Hearing Australia on the Sunny Coast to ask when they met and if I could join up. They welcomed me with open arms. And the rest as they say is history. I met some lovely people and soon became a regular attendee at weekly meetups. After a period I was asked if I would volunteer as Secretary for the group and I couldn't say no. This started 12 years of meeting with people with hearing loss, helping to keep the organisation going and advocating for people with hearing loss, whether they had hearing aids or Cochlear Implants. It was all the same issues and problems they were coping with and I like to think I helped a few over the years. It was a two way street though - in helping others you also help yourself and I enjoyed and made friendships that would last forever. Following the sad closure of BHASC I decided I would put myself up for a Cochlear Implant as my hearing had deteriorated once again. This happened in 2014 and I haven't looked back. I moved forward to helping people with CI's with my role as a Committee member of CICADA Qld. I started my own group on the Sunshine Coast and from a small group of 4 people we have grown to almost 40. I so enjoy telling of my hearing loss and CI journey and get enormous satisfaction from meeting with others that are considering going down the same road and bringing themselves back to the world of sound.

CICADA Qld has an amazing history of helping people for over 30 years and the hope is that it continues on for many more years but we do need more helpers to make this happen.

## DO YOU FEEL YOU COULD START YOUR OWN GROUP IN YOUR OWN AREA?

There is so much to be gained, even if it's just a small group. All you need is a genuine empathy for people with a hearing loss and time to devote once a month to small get-togethers, be it for one person or ten. If you feel you could and would like to get involved please let us know - we are open to new ideas and you will have the support of a group of people that just want to continue the CICADA Qld tradition of volunteering to make the lives of people with a hearing loss a little better.

## REGIONAL UPDATES

### BRISBANE

CICADA QLD Brisbane Northside group usually meet on a weekday morning at the Dragonfly Cafe in Carseldine, led by area representative Gail Anderson. Unfortunately, wild weather meant the recent MeetUp had to be postponed - please keep checking our website and social media for details of the next MeetUp at this location.

Sunday, March 27th brings the return of CICADA Qld to The Garden Room cafe, located at Roma Street Parklands. This follows on from the success of our first 'Sunday Social' event last October, which saw CICADA members from Brisbane and beyond share morning tea and chat about life with our cochlear implants. Some new connections and friendships were made and we look forward to the upcoming event! All are welcome to come to any of our Brisbane MeetUps and events - family, friends and support people can come too!



The Garden Room - Brisbane

## DARLING DOWNS

I looked at my watch and it was 10 minutes to 10 and thoughts started creeping in. Will this be it? Surely not.

I reminded myself of the joke that church goers would say, “nobody arrives at church until 1 minute to the hour and no sooner”. Then a couple arrived.

I had earlier received an email from Mike and Giulietta Garvis, with Mike saying his wife was considering a CI and could they come along to the meet. So, seeing them walking toward me, comfort set in and I thought well that’s two and I have a job to do.

Mike had warned me that Giulietta was shy and I was totally unprepared, she was anything but, unless I have an amazing presence that makes people at ease, which I’m pretty sure I don’t. We started chatting and the rest started arriving. In truth there were only three members and the remainder were interested and potential candidates.

Helen Curtis and her son William bedecked with a large brimmed hat, had lost most of her hearing in one ear and was considering the future with a CI. We talked at length.

In the side of my eye, I saw a young man walking purposely toward us. Dakota’s my name he said as our hands embraced. I had received an email from Dakota from Cochlear and we immediately started chatting. Being close to Giulietta, I introduced her, indicating that Dakota was from one of the 4 possible suppliers of CI. Dakota acted magnificently pointing out some facts that I didn’t even know. It was a great help for Giulietta.

Later I spent some time chatting with Helen with her son William listening on. As they parted, they sincerely thanked me for making their time there worthwhile. It’s a good feeling to be told that. Giulietta and Mike had already departed, and Giulietta asked me to keep her posted of future meetups. Both were enthused and said it was well worth them being there.

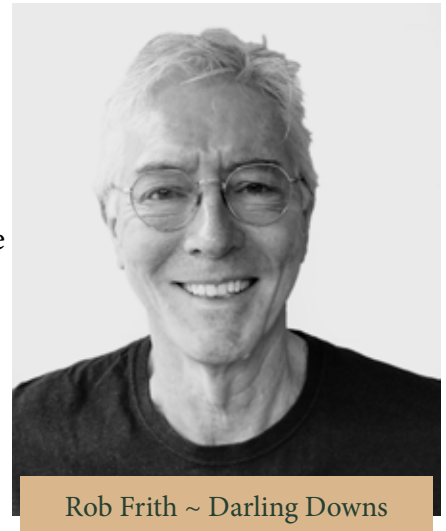
What was good was that two members, Robyn Chapman and Barney Davoren, provided the reality check. CI has its problems and Helen and Giulietta listened in. Robyn is still contending with an irritating whistling and Barney can barely hear with his CI. Apparently, he experiences a resonance, best described as echoes.

I was very concerned. Later when it was just Barney, John Bacon and Robyn Chapman, we swapped yarns. Barney was interested to learn about my background as it turned out we were not dissimilar; in that we were both born deaf and basically coped for years without an aid. The difference was that I had my first CI when I was in my late 40’s, while Barney had his only a few years ago and he was in his late 70’s. Could that be the difference? Had he lost his brain plasticity? We didn’t know, but we all felt good that we could share our experiences. John impressed me endlessly. He still had his normal aids and remained a member of the Cicada Club as he wanted to keep the CI option open. John is a pilot and plays the piano. So, I thought to myself, I’m not so special.

There are some amazing people out there.

*Rob Frith,*

*Darling Downs Coordinator*



Rob Frith ~ Darling Downs



February 14th MeetUp

## FRASER COAST

We have a new venue at the Kathleen Costello Centre in Maryborough. We held our Christmas Party there last year and a few members remarked it would be a great venue for our meet ups. There's plenty of parking and is in a quiet area. So here we are ! We now have use of a kitchen and can once again enjoy a cuppa and chat. Sadly, due to floods, we had to postpone our first meet up on 9 March which included a Presentation by Rebecca Claridge from MED-El. Rebecca's presentation includes Rehabilitation and will now be held on 6th April.



Judith Raxworthy ~ Fraser Coast

These Presentations by Representatives from the various Cochlear Implant Companies are an integral part of our support especially for rural CICADA Support Groups. Our members and members of the public have the unique opportunity to meet and ask questions of these Representatives.

Prospective Cochlear Implantees now have a choice of implant and sound processor. Choice can be a good thing. However, it can also cause confusion for some people. After all, it is a permanent choice. A life time choice.

So this is where the other integral part of our CICADA Support Groups can be of great benefit. That is having the opportunity to talk to people who have a cochlear implant. We have members with Cochlear brand, MED-El brand and Advance Bionics. These people generously share their experiences.

Recently it was really brought home to me how confusing the choice of implants and their processors can be to some people. I was asked if you have one brand of implant and later found a different brand of processor had features you prefer couldn't you just buy that processor and wear that one instead? True story.

If your holidaying in Maryborough or Hervey Bay you are welcome to come along to our meet ups.

## GOLD COAST

Fresh New Look for the Gold Coast Group

CICADA Queensland has revamped our group on the Gold Coast, with a brand new area coordinator, Del Volp. Del shared her experience of running her first ever MeetUp...

*The Path to my First MeetUp at the Gold Coast*

Today is the morning of my first MeetUp as Coordinator of the Gold Coast Group. I'm excited and grateful to be given this opportunity to grow the group along with the vision of CICADA and it's members. Thanks to Penny for developing a flyer for the event. I've been busy getting that out there to as many places that my busy life allows. Social media is where I've been receiving amazing support. One Question I received on Facebook really sums up what I believe the meetups are about...

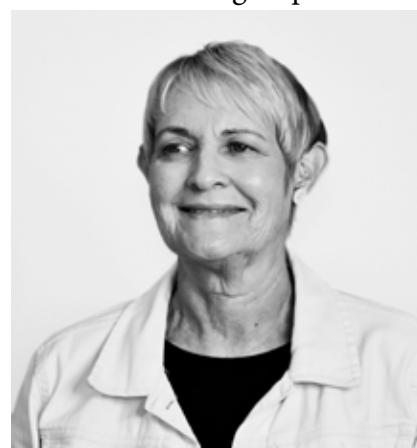
"I have very short hair on the sides and back. When I get my haircut will the scissors stick to my implant?"

We had a good laugh over all the things that could stick! When I shared this quote with the group who came along, we all had a giggle. These are the kind of questions and conversations we can have at these MeetUps - so much fun and valuable information shared.

Thank you again to everyone who came to my first MeetUp. Our members had a good chat, sharing a joke or two, as hearing partners. It was a delight to meet you and to learn some of your journey through CI listening.

I'm looking forward to our future as a group!

Del



Del Volp ~ Gold Coast

## SUNSHINE COAST

Finally, we managed to start the 2022 CICADA Qld year off with a Meet Up at the Waterfront Hotel Diddillibah on 15th February 2022.

We were fortunate to have Vicki Tse on hand to tell us about the Advanced Bionics app for rehabilitation which is available to all users not just AB clients, you just need to register and you can access a very good Rehab app to practice with, it is well worth checking out. 'Sound success' Advanced Bionics.



Our new member Renee was especially pleased to talk with Vicki as she has chosen her CI to be an AB implant, we wish her well with her implantation and look forward to hearing of her progress.



For many of us we hadn't seen each other for a couple of months so it was lovely to catch up with our regulars and we enjoyed a nice lunch afterwards, with plenty of chat and laughs.

Meet Ups throughout this year will be a variety, with special Presentations and our regular 'Cuppa and Chats' and a special morning out in September, keep checking the CICADA Qld calendar on [www.cicadaql.org](http://www.cicadaql.org) for news of upcoming events.

*Penny Phillips, Sunshine Coast Rep*  
*CICADA Queensland Secretary*

## DON'T BE CONNED

JOHN ROSS



It's all too common these days for people to buy hearing aids simply because of successful advertising and promises made by paid endorsements. More and more we are being bombarded with television advertising and gimmicks promising incredible results from devices that can be delivered in the mail. Not only do they arrive in a box to your door - somehow they automatically check your hearing and miraculously program themselves to be perfectly suited to you.

Far too often I have met people who would spend upwards and close to \$20,000 to find out the devices they have purchased are useless. It is so critical that anyone with a hearing loss sees a professional before making any purchase. It's not just about the brand of hearing aid that

they purchase. More importantly, it's about the ongoing service that they receive and the fact that someone is monitoring their hearing loss and continually adjusting and adapting those devices to suit their needs.

There is a vast difference between a salesman who has done a four day course and been granted the title of Audiometrist, and someone who has spent years in university and has a masters degree in audiology. One is a salesperson - his responsibility is to sell a product. The other is a medical professional who has dedicated their career to hearing loss and, I would also like to think, places a client's quality of life as their priority, rather than profit.

As a cochlear implant support group, many people with hearing loss consider us knowledgeable and experts when it comes to understanding what it's like to live with deafness and profound hearing loss. They also listen to our advice and experience when it comes to devices. More and more there are retail hearing aid locations popping up that are owned by large companies whose number one focus is profit. We must encourage anyone with a hearing loss to seek professional advice before making any purchase, and that is why we proudly support the independent audiologists of Australia.

Always recommend anyone who asks you to seek proper professional help and don't be conned by television advertising and promises that are too good to be true.

# WHY I CHOSE AB

RENEE WILLIAMS

I have had a long and varied hearing history. I was diagnosed with Otosclerosis at age 16. Once my hearing deteriorated, I used in-canal hearing aids which I hated and seldom wore. I had 2 successful stapedectomies in 1999 and 2000 but was told that I would probably end up with CIs by the time I reached my 40s. In 2017, I had a stapedectomy revision on my left ear, which was successful, until I suffered acoustic trauma at work resulting in profound-severe mixed hearing loss. At this point I was told that hearing aids were unlikely to provide any help and that a CI was needed. I was not ready for that and coped reasonably well with one hearing ear. Fast forward to last year - coincidentally a month after turning 40 - I suffered Sudden Onset Hearing Loss in my 'good' ear resulting in moderate to profound hearing loss. Left without the ability to hear my family, work, or socialise much, I knew it was time for a CI.

The amount of information available was both overwhelming and confusing. Google searches resulted in advertising spin or technical medical jargon. I tried posing questions on Facebook support groups about peoples' decisions. A lot of people it seems were not given a choice of brand and many responses said to 'buy Australian made'. This was irritating as I don't believe life-changing medical decisions should be made based on such a country of origin. I met with my surgeon and audiologist who answered my many questions and allowed me to 'try-on' devices and explained the features and specifications. I also met with Penny & Joyclyn from Cicada and watched John's YouTube series, each person had a different brand of CI, which allowed me to get a good feel for the pros & cons of each. In the end I decided on Advanced Bionics for the following reasons:

- ~ New AB implant will allow for MRI scans to be safely carried out – I am relatively young, the likelihood of needing one of these in the future is high.
- ~ Bluetooth capability for streaming
- ~ T-mic to assist in more natural hearing and ability to use standard phones
- ~ Prosthesis comes with a Phonak hearing aid, meaning I don't have to pay for a hearing aid as well. Phonak brand HA had great reviews.
- ~ Pairing capabilities of CI with Phonak aid – less apps and settings to have to fiddle with.
- ~ The Aqua kit attaches to clothing, rather than just relying on magnet, providing additional security
- ~ Upgrade available when new processor model is approved which will allow streaming to CI and HA without a ComPilot

*Renee's surgery was brought forward to February 25th, International Cochlear Implant day - how fitting is that?*



My surgery was set for February 28th, Covid restrictions permitting. I am excited and nervous of what lies ahead and know that the hard part is still ahead of me, but it will all be worth it. The support members of this group gave in helping me arrive at my decision is much appreciated.

## SOUND ADVICE

JOYCLYN TURNER



Hearing and Listening are complicated! But please take the time to revisit your audiologist or find a fresh professional that understands your situation – not all audiologists understand cochlear implants. You will be pleased with the result! To gain a better quality of life, CI recipients are constantly on a journey to improve the way they hear and listen. To improve comfort in wearing your processor and to achieve a balance of sounds can be difficult. Tweaking of your mapping can make a huge difference to your wellbeing, whether you are an adult or child. Please take the extra step of making notes on how you feel and what you need from your cochlear implant to move forward confidently with your hearing journey.

Join a support group or attend a Meet up near you where you can talk and meet others young and old who are CI recipients.

Contact CICADA Queensland for dates and locations of our monthly Meet Ups – come along and have a cuppa and a chat with our friendly members.

Chat with a mentor - solutions and help are closer than you think.

Joyclyn, Advanced Bionics Mentor

Member CICADA Queensland Sunshine Coast.

## Meet our AB Mentors from the AB Community

“It really is **worthwhile** to speak to someone who has been implanted. So **if you feel that you’ve got questions** and want to know more about it, contact Advanced Bionics and they can put you in touch with me or other **mentors who can help you with those answers.**”

Steve Dawson

Advanced Bionics Cochlear Implant Recipient and AB Mentor



AB mentors volunteer to provide you and your loved ones with information, education, and support for choosing, getting and living with cochlear implants.

**Contact Advanced Bionics to connect with one of our AB mentors.**

Email: [ABCommunity.AU@AdvancedBionics.com](mailto:ABCommunity.AU@AdvancedBionics.com)

Phone: (02) 8858 1600



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## WHO WE ARE

CICADA Queensland is a completely independent, not-for-profit organisation staffed by volunteers. We support people from all walks of life who have been affected by hearing loss, including current and prospective cochlear implant recipients and hearing aid users.

Whether you identify as Deaf or Hard of Hearing, use Auslan or spoken language as your primary method of communication, or simply need some support for yourself, family or friends, CICADA Queensland is here to help you navigate this journey!

## OUR MISSION STATEMENT

To provide advice, support and accurate information about cochlear implants to enquirers, members and their families and friends, and to assist cochlear implant candidates and recipients in their journey back to the world of sound. We also provide support with rehabilitation where it is needed.

SHARE ~ LISTEN ~ CONNECT

## VOLUNTEER WITH US

Would you like to host a CICADA Qld group in your local area?

Can you spare a few hours a month to hold a regular MeetUp? We are looking for friendly, outgoing people with a passion for supporting people with hearing loss, cochlear implant users and prospective cochlear implant recipients.

Good with technology? We need volunteers to assist with social media, graphic design, digital content and technical assistance.

Are you a business with a venue or room suitable for our MeetUps?

If any of the above apply, please contact us [CLICK HERE](#)

## OUR PARTNERS



## CONTACT US

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