

Stop Press, CapTel stays!

Yes, that's right—CapTel is saved!

A brief history—in 1995 the National Relay Service was born in Australia. In June 2010, a small CapTel handset trial is funded directly from ACE monetary reserves for an initial 500 users, marking the introduction of CapTel handsets in Australia. The success of this trial leads to a long fight to make CapTel handsets available to the broader NRS community.

In late 2013 the CapTel handset was formally introduced to the National Relay Service (NRS). In May 2015 the deaf-blind was able to make a call using a CapTel handset in a world first using an adaption to allow caption-to-Braille technology. In July 2017 CapTel handsets eclipsed all other forms of NRS as the preferred method of communication amongst NRS users for the first time. At that time a decline in TTY use was evident.

On 4 April 2018 the Federal Government put out an open tender for the NRS contract. In June 2019 the contract for NRS was awarded to Concentrix, but *did not include CapTel*. A petition was subsequently launched and many complaints were made to the Human Rights Commission by CapTel handset users. As time went on a Save CapTel page was introduced on Facebook, and thousands supported the quest to save CapTel handsets. People from all walks of life shared their stories and lobbied the media.

As a result, Rob Engelke from Captioned Telephone International Ltd has asked us to announce that our advocacy is successful! You can read Rob Engelke's letter on page 11.



We thank our readers for supporting us on this campaign that led to this wonderful outcome. However, CapTel is only safe in the interim, so the fight to keep CapTel in Australia permanently continues. We will maintain pressure on the government. Our story was shared on ABC news on February 1, 2020 and is on their website <https://ab.co/2UhMtaR>.

Please support our advocacy to keep CapTel in Australia permanently, and sign our online petition at <http://chnng.it/78HnRn6H>.

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Happy New Year to the Committee and Members for 2020.

First I would like to reflect on 2019. It was a very busy year for the Committee beginning with the decision to hire Aspire Now Accounts to look after the Clubs financial affairs for consistent Financial reporting. Our financial position is in good shape which is great as it puts the club in positive position for growth.

Kerry Kilpatrick, a onetime committee member, has been engaged to be our Web Consultant so we can look forward to seeing his work in early 2020.

Midyear Allison Cassell, our long time meeting minutes secretary, resigned for personal reasons. The committee thanks Allison for the time she gave CICADA.

CICADA is looking forward to a big 2020. The 2020 calendar is now on the website for download.

Kevin Hobbs has returned to the Gold Coast Branch as the Gold Coast representative after a period of ill health. It's great to see you back in the team, Kevin, also known as Obsie.

Jay Lee Audiologist and committee member has returned to Brisbane and will be the Consulting Audiologist on the committee. This position is a newly created one.

A Darling Downs member approached the committee in regard to starting a CICADA Branch in the area. Louisa Handyside is the driving force behind setting up the branch and the committee is assisting her with



the set up. I am sure you will be hearing more about the Darling Downs branch as they get going. The inaugural meeting has been set down for March 3, the details are now on Facebook and the website. Their monthly meetups are also on the website.

I would also like to thank Penny Phillips, our Sunshine Coast representative, for hosting an outstanding Christmas Function that was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

After last year's raffle sales success, the committee has decided to increase the monetary value of the prizes, and I am sure all members will be happy with the increases. Raffle tickets will be mailed out with the June edition.

There is a change in the way batteries can be ordered. To speed up the process, a special email has been created: batteryorders@cicadaqld.com.au

Lastly, I would like to thank our Secretary Shirley Edwards for all her hard work in running the club.

Stephen Willis, President





Christmas party, Headland Golf Club

Christmas 2019

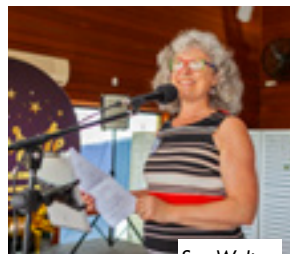
CICADA Queensland held their first Christmas celebration on the Sunshine Coast on 30 November at the Headland Golf Club Buderim. By all accounts, this was an outstanding success with the event enjoyed by all. Members travelled from the Gold Coast, Toowoomba and Brisbane to the event. Three Special Guest speakers gave presentations.

The first speaker, Sue Walters, Secretary of CICADA Australia Inc. shared about how CICADA Australia got started, how she lost her hearing and became the first person in NSW to receive the cochlear implant, and consequently become involved with the evolution of CICADA. She shared about how the name came about due to everyone complaining how loud the cicadas are!

Our second guest was well known Sunshine Coast identity Barry Bull, who entertained us with rock n roll songs, bringing a lot of smiles to guests faces. Barry had a long career in the music industry in which he wrote four books, started his own record label, and ran a music store in Brisbane for over four decades. These days Barry is very involved with fundraising for Hear and Say as his grandson Archie has a cochlear implant.

The last Guest speaker was Dr Kristy Fraser-Kirk, an ENT surgeon, specialist otologist and cochlear implant surgeon, who performed the first cochlear implant surgery on the Sunshine Coast. She trained under well known ENT surgeons Dr Tony Parker, Bill Allen and Andrew Lomas. Dr Kristy shared about how as a newly graduated surgeon in 2013, she had to work hard to get the ENT service established on the Sunshine Coast.

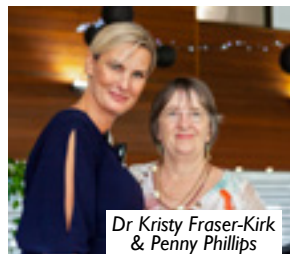
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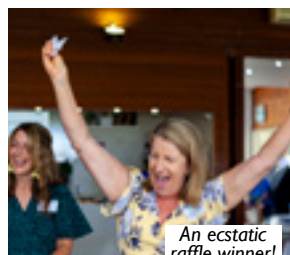
Sue Walters



Barry Bull & Kerry Towers



Dr Kristy Fraser-Kirk & Penny Phillips



An ecstatic raffle winner!

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Thanks to her efforts, local patients no longer need to travel to Brisbane for the CI procedure. Dr Kristy also shared about new industry developments including Cochlear's new release of profile plus, new design with MRI compatibilities.

It wouldn't be a party without a raffle or two, and there was plenty on offer!!

NORTHSIDE

On November 23 the Northside CICADA group 'kicked' off the round of Christmas celebrations at the Dragonfly Café at Carseldine. Along with the attendees, the permanent residents of the Café, the water dragons 'joined' in to join the party.

GOLD COAST

On December 12 the Gold Coast branch, Able Hearing Group and Gold Coast Hearing Support Group had their Christmas party together at the Able Centre at Southport, attended by some 30 people from NSW to Brisbane. All enjoyed meeting each other and exchanging news and views. The Able Hearing Group provided fun exercises including lip reading beforehand. This is the first time all hearing advocacy groups combined for a Christmas function, and the event was very successful.

BETTER HEARING BRISBANE

And last but not least, Better Hearing Brisbane celebrated on December 18 with a lovely lunch at Café 63 in Redcliffe, which was highly enjoyed by all in attendance.

And this brings us to the end of the Silly Season for another year! ●

Who will forget the reaction of Jenny Armstrong when she realised she had won first prize—priceless!

A new initiative of 2019 by CICADA Queensland is a representative for the Darling Downs, Louisa Handyside. She is also a CI recipient. The inaugural meeting in Toowoomba will be on March 3 2020, so keep this date free if you live in this area!



Northside



Gold Coast



Better Hearing

Rick's Story

I was born with normal hearing that I enjoyed for 35 years of my life. I entered the Air Force and after a few years I noticed that my hearing was not what it should be. It was affecting how I did my job. I sought help and ended up with hearing aids which helped a lot. Over the next few years my hearing continued to deteriorate. When I left the service in my 50s, the hearing loss affected my employment opportunities adversely and I ended up doing volunteer tutoring of seniors in basic computer skills to stay busy. Eventually, my hearing reached the stage where I could not hear sufficiently to continue that either. I stopped going to places and events where I was unable to hear or communicate effectively and this affected my relations with others to the extent that I became socially isolated, lonely and a little depressed. I had to do something!

I sought out an independent Audiologist with high qualifications and asked whether I could be helped anymore or should I just embrace my deafness. She advised she could sell me expensive aids that would help but did not want to as the improvement would be marginal and short term. However, she felt that I would benefit from a cochlear implant. This was discussed and I was helped to explore the subject with my own research to be sure. I met with people from CICADA Queensland at her suggestion. This helped me to reach a decision to go ahead as talking with recipients teaches you a lot. I decided to go ahead.

The process was swift and fairly transparent to me as my Audiologist facilitated the whole thing. I just had to show up for different appointments. I was designated a candidate



and was able to choose a convenient surgery date. The whole exercise took about four months.

The worst part of the operation was the unnecessary anxiety I caused myself beforehand! The surgery went very well and I had no adverse effects at all. I only needed Panadol for 3 days. My surgeon and his staff were terrific. My audiology support was, and continues to be, first class.

Seven days later I was activated. They spoke and I heard and understood! Voices sounded fairly normal (I could tell gender and pitch!) and the relief was immense. However, I then met the world outside and experienced a period of high pitched shrieking sounds which was my brain trying to identify those sounds I had not heard for years. Kind of like living in a house full of angry budgies! Voices were fine but accompanied by these other sounds. I took about a month for those high pitch sounds to normalise to some extent as I identified

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Rick's story continued

them. I did my rehab diligently using audiobooks and Ted Talks. Regular mappings were a great help. I was able to use my mobile phone after 2 weeks and use a streamer for TV with great success. Human voices were fine but reproduced sound (TV/radio) was difficult. Music was awful.

Now, after 3 months, I hear people well in small groups but do struggle in large groups or noisy environments. I use the phone with ease and am now able to hear the TV and car radio unaided with only my CI. I do prefer the streamer for TV though. I have a hearing aid that syncs with my N7 processor and it adds a clarity to speech. I use the mini mic 2, Live Listen and streamer when I need to. Music is beginning to happen for me! I can follow beat, some melody and some lyrics. I use Bring Back the Beat to work on this (it is quite fun!).

My experience has been rapid, excellent and quite unique I think. I am very happy with my result and wish I had done it sooner.

My “tips” for new players? Be brave. Listen to your health professionals but do your own research as well so you understand what is happening and what questions to ask. Compare implants and choose what suits YOUR lifestyle. This is YOUR hearing after all. Do your rehab religiously. Take a hearing person to your activation as you will be emotional and there is a lot of information provided at that time. Two memories are better than one! Finally, remember the three Ps: patience, persistence and practice. Go in with high hopes and low expectations. Find a support group—they understand many things others don't and can be very supportive.

This is not “perfect” but it is so exciting to hear and participate in life again. ●

INAUGURAL FORUM MEETING FOR PROPOSED NEW WYNNUM CINEMAS

On January 10 an inaugural meeting was held at the Waterloo Bay Hotel in Wynnum. The purpose was to discuss accessibility needs for patrons who are hard of hearing/deaf, sight impaired/blind, and wheelchair users for a proposed new cinema complex to be built at Wynnum.

The offer of a Business Plan detailing accessibility features was accepted by the owner/developer of Wynnum Cinemas.

A FB page 'Bayside Inclusive Community Alliance (BICA)' and email address of bica4178@gmail.com has been created to provide ongoing updates on this initiative.



ITALIAN GIANT BUYS BRISBANE HEARING FIRM ATTUNE IN \$55 MILLION DEAL

A QLD business founded more than 30 years go by a group of doctors determined to help their patients avoid long hospital queues, has been sold in a \$55 million deal.

BRISBANE-BASED **hearing** specialist **Attune** has been **purchased by Italy's Amplifon** to provide a new growth platform for the home-grown operation.



IF YOU LOSE OR LEAVE YOUR PHONE AT HOME...

Look for a Telstra Smart Payphone, normally located at bus stops.

Telstra advises that a majority of Telstra Smart Payphones (TSPs) are capable of sending SMS to mobile phones. Some TSPs on 4GLTE technology are not able

to send SMS. These payphones are usually in a JCD digital booth.

It is easy to find out if a payphone is able to send SMS or not. Lift the handset and if the message on the screen says "SMS \$.20", the phone is able to send text messages".

HOME SECURITY DEVICE RECOMMENDATION

This product is highly recommended for consumers who are hard of hearing / deaf. It costs around \$200-\$220 and comes from USA but can be purchased online via Amazon.

Once installed you download the app on your phone and no matter where you are, you see what is happening at your home. You can change the location of the security camera in your home as required.

If you don't have a door ringer, the phone app will notify you when someone is at your door and show a video of your visitor. You can even talk to your visitor via the app!



This product is compatible on both Android and Apple phones. Worth checking out!

Source: www.logitech.com/en-us/product/circle-2-home-security-camera/page/12835



Could you repeat that?

FINDING HUMOR IN HEARING LOSS

Life is full of humor, and it plays such a huge part in mine that I would be completely lost without it.

In fact, without my sense of fun, at times I think I would be totally speechless because of my love of puns, jokes, and one-liners. Yet I've observed that some people are almost afraid to embrace the humor in hearing loss.

I was an entertainer for 25 years, which included being part of a comedy duo doing stand up across the UK. This seems like a lifetime ago now, and it was 30 years or so before my hearing loss. Losing my hearing has in no way changed my personality, and it shouldn't change yours either.

LAUGHTER IS GOOD FOR THE SOUL

If you enjoy good-natured well-intentioned humor, that's great, because nothing on earth will help you get through the bad hearing loss days the way a good laugh will.

"...nothing on earth will help get you through the bad hearing loss days the way a good laugh will."

When I think about humor and hearing loss, one thing always comes to mind that never fails to make me smile. It's a scene from a 1970s British sitcom called "Fawlty Towers" in which an old woman with severe hearing loss is doing battle with the hotel owner, played by John Cleese.

The episode in question was aptly titled "Communication Problems." After many misunderstandings, Mrs. Richards reveals

that she doesn't like turning her hearing aid on because it wears down the batteries. It is truly a classic comedy moment, only made possible because of her deafness.

In my own life and in my own experiences with hearing loss, I have had many comedic scenes, not by design or good scripting, but by pure chance. The number of times I have misheard something and suffered the consequences have been the source of much amusement. In my family, it has become something of a standing joke and at times the comic in me finds it impossible not to milk it just a little—okay, a lot.

Humor really does make you feel good and also happens to be contagious—like yawning, only more fun. This is why stand up is so popular, as it involves someone else observing something amusing that other people find they too can relate.

HUMOR PUTS PEOPLE AT EASE

Many hearing people feel awkward around those with hearing loss, which can be uncomfortable for all concerned. However,

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try injecting a little fun into that particular equation and watch the difference.

I joke easily with strangers; it's the way I choose to break the ice and I'm good at it, though I did have a lot of practice. Stand up comedian D.J. Demers is the same way. Not so long ago HearingLikeMe followed his tour. D.J. Demers, also known as "the hearing aid guy," has been doing stand up since 2009 and fully embraces the humor in hearing loss.

The following quote will give you an idea of what I'm talking about. This comes from an incident which happened to Demers:

"I was performing, [and] the battery in my right hearing aid died. First, I heard the warning beeps. I tried to plow through, but within 10 minutes the hearing aid was completely dead. For the first time in my comedy career, I had to make a battery change onstage in the middle of my set. It was actually a lot of fun. After I shut the battery door, I even had the students join me in counting down the seconds before my hearing aid turned back on."

Now, that is certainly something I can relate to. You know what it's like. You arrange to go out for the evening, having stayed home for the last three weeks. An hour into your evening and your hearing aid beeps for a battery change, only you forgot to bring the battery. This happens to me all the time and for some really strange reason, only at important times. It's as if the universe likes to humble us when we least expect it.

Mind you, we should expect it, shouldn't we? I mean, if anything involves technology, shouldn't we at the very least be prepared

for trouble? Nonetheless, it took me a long time to start carrying spare batteries with me when I go out. In the meantime, you just have to laugh.

Humor is important and to assume that because someone has a communication issue, they can't understand whether a thing is funny or not is insulting. Yet there are hearing people who think just like this. It is like those well-educated people who will offer Braille to deaf people, assuming somehow that it will be of use.

I hope that last line raised a smile, or at the very least, an eyebrow because it happens to be true. For some hearing people, deaf stands for different. They really do not get that a person is a person is, well, I'm sure you can guess the rest.

FUNNY THINGS HEARING PEOPLE SAY

To finish off these thoughts, we'll look at some of the funny things hearing people say or do on the subject of, well, you know... If those hearing people could only see themselves through our eyes as they shout at us because they've just glimpsed a hearing aid, or speak super-slowly, because we all know how much that helps us to understand them.

What about when they say, "You don't look deaf?" My personal favourite is when they exclaim, "Wow you can talk!"

It really all comes down to education. Mainstream society is simply unaware of what hearing loss actually means. Isn't it time we showed that we too can roll with the punches? ●

Source: www.hearinglikeme.com/could-you-repeat-that-finding-humor-in-hearing-loss/ Published by PR Hilton at January 11, 2019

Rollout of New Passenger Information Display Totem

On October 21 testing of a new Passenger Information Display totem and Emergency Help Phone took place using the T Switch component of the cochlear implant processor. The inbuilt loop system of the Display Totem was tested to evaluate the accuracy and clarity of spoken speech.

This took place at Roma Street Coach Terminal. When testing is complete, the display totems will be rolled out in Brisbane, and possibly Queensland.



PASSENGER INFORMATION DISPLAY TOTEM:

- Text easier to hear with speech in digital mode.
- The higher the sound on the totem the better the speech reception (perhaps placement should be in

middle of totem pole, so people in wheelchairs can access).

- Too many 'Other services' listed which takes more time to hear. Having less services listed gives room for other information.
- Text could be larger for the vision impaired.
- Recommend wording of 'for more information please see a Translink Officer' on totem.
- Include bus number on orange sign.



EMERGENCY & DISABILITY ASSISTANCE HELP PHONE:

As with the passenger display totem, this totem displays telecoil symbol and provides information in Braille.

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RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Hearing symbol be replaced with sign alongside which also shows T for telecoil.
- A vision impaired person should test the system.
- A hearing aid user should test the system.
- Voice should be quieter as louder sounds are more distorted and harder to comprehend.
- The glass should be non-reflective. ●



Source: Shirley Edwards

» Continued from front page story

LETTER FROM ROB ENGELKE, PRESIDENT

To: All CapTel Users in Australia

From: Captioned Telephone International, Ltd.

By now you may have noticed that the captioning on CapTel handsets remains available to current users. The captioning service is being delivered as an interim measure, outside the National Relay Service, via captioning centers in America.

As you may know, the NRS has informed CapTel users that the CapTel service will no longer be supported by the NRS or ACE after January 31, 2020. While we remain optimistic that this could change, captions will for the near term be supplied by American captioning centers.

I believe that access to the telephone is a right, not a privilege. We developed CapTel to be the most functionally equivalent way for people with hearing loss to access the telephone and believe it should be available to those who need it.

I have been genuinely moved by the outpouring of heartfelt messages from Australians who are clearly distressed and frightened about living without CapTel. CapTel has been available for over ten years in Australia and I believe it is not acceptable to leave CapTel users without access to family, friends, employment, emergency services and the myriad ways that all of us use the telephone.

Therefore, as a temporary measure, I have instructed our American captioning centers to support existing Australian CapTel handsets so that they will continue to operate with captions while we investigate long-term options based in Australia.

I truly hope this offers some reassurance and peace of mind that captioning will continue while more viable long-term solutions can be explored.

With kindest regards,

Rob Engelke, President,

Captioned Telephone International, Ltd.

Join us as a Friend of CICADA Queensland!

Annual membership is \$20 per person and \$30 per family from July to June of the current year. If joining after December of the current financial year, membership to the end of June will be \$10 (single) and \$15 (family).

This fee includes the quarterly CICADA CHORUS magazine. Our Membership Form is available on our [Forms webpage](#).

BATTERY SERVICE AND MERCHANDISE

CICADA Queensland provides a cochlear implant battery service. Remember if you are a NDIS Participant, NDIA will pay for your batteries if you give them our ABN and invoice numbers.

Customised name badges, polo shirts, caps and medical alert! USB wristbands are also for sale. All merchandise has our logo. If ordering by post, postage cost is extra.

Our prices and account bank details is shown on our order forms, which are available on our Forms webpage.

A second reprint of our information booklet on cochlear implants is still available for a donation. For a copy, please contact Shirley Edwards on secretary@cicadaqld.com.au

DID YOU KNOW?

If you provide a receipt of your CICADA Queensland membership fees, NDIS will refund the amount? Be sure to include your NDIS reference number on the receipt.

VISION STATEMENT

To hear, listen and be heard.

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide education, information and support about the cochlear implant, and empowerment on hearing loss issues.

BEQUESTS

We are a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission.

Our ABN is 29 911 299 608.

If you wish to make a bequest to CICADA Queensland, contact secretary@cicadaqld.com.au

Readers' views or comments are to be addressed to the Secretary.

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