



# Hearing Happenings in the Hill

The official newsletter of the  
**Broken Hill & District Hearing Resource Centre Inc.**  
November 2010  
**Edition 1**

Hello Folks,

We would like to share our pains and share our good news as well.

This is the first of hopefully many newsletters to let you all know how we are travelling in our endeavour to give assistance to all people who are Deaf, hearing impaired or suffer from a associated disorder of the ear. A direct outcome from the Hearing in the Hill Seminar, this an attempt to gain a better sharing of knowledge between the various groups, organisations and the independent Broken Hill & District Hearing Resources Centre Inc. We hope to receive advice from others, build better relationships and generally keep in the loop.

## It's Official

On Friday 1st October 2010 our new building was officially opened by Dr. Andrew MacDonald, MP. Parliamentary Secretary for Health, New South Wales Government. Twenty five years in the making, it was a very proud moment for Cath Bonnes AM to have the building named Catherine Bonnes House. The Broken Hill Mayor, Wincen Cuy assisted with a talk outlining what Cath has gone through to get to this point. During the proceedings attended by 30 dignitaries the centre's volunteers were given a very elegant plaque in recognition of their valuable service.



## What effect has our move had?

Since we moved to the CBD in a higher profile location there has been a marked increase in the number of clients seeking advice, batteries, and to attend the Australian Hearing clinics.

The two sound proof booths allow consultations & testing onsite.

Disabled parking with wheelchair ramps in front of the building makes the Centre more accessible to people with a disability and the elderly.

## “Hearing in the Hill” Silver Jubilee 2010 Seminar

The seminar events started when a meet and greet evening was held at the famous Mario's Palace Hotel. The highlight is to see the murals and artwork on the walls and ceiling of this grand old building.

This seminar, arranged by Cath Bonnes AM and Anne Woods, was held at the Barrier Social Democratic Club, Broken Hill, in a pleasant venue with very good company.

Facilitated by Dr. Jenny Rosen AM, the conference began with a Welcome to the Land. Mayor, Wincen Cuy then opened proceedings with a talk on Broken Hill. Cath Bonnes AM gave the Welcome Address to get the ball rolling.

Topics covered were

- Meniere's Syndrome
- SCIC BAHA program - the latest technology in implants
- Auditory Processing
- Australian hearings role within the community / Indigenous
- Hearing and Communication - a primary concern in aged care
- The National Acoustics Laboratory “I Hear project”
- The National relay service - Stay in touch “a gift of independence”
- Assistive and Alternative Hearing devices
- Role of the Office of Hearing Services in the community
- Tinnitus
- “Listening In” Project 2009

Karen Dempsey gave us her “Personal Story” - Growing up as a hearing impaired person in Broken Hill and the journey to my cochlear implant.

Cath Bonnes AM made the Presentation to the Guest Speakers

On Saturday night the Official Dinner was held at the Barrier Social Democratic Club

After lunch a Sunday Outing was held with a willing band boarding a bus for a tour of the Kinchega National Park and Menindee. They saw the Darling River, Kinchega National Park including the grand old woolshed, and the Burke & Wills Memorial.

On return from Menindee, the weary coach load attended the Sturt Club for a BBQ tea.

On Monday morning a small informal session was held to discuss the weekend.

Our thanks go out to all who travelled to Broken Hill for the seminar.

**A BIG THANK YOU to Dr. Jenny Rosen AM for her work, Facilitating the Seminar, Polly Templeton for her CART work, and Tania Roberts for her IT work.**



## Research

Our centre was recently used by Dr. Jenny Rosen AM and Lyndal Carter who were in Broken Hill conducting research for the National Acoustics Laboratory's "I Hear" Project. The following article was submitted by Lyndal Carter

### The iHEAR study

The National Acoustic Laboratories (NAL) is the research division of [Australian Hearing](#), a Statutory Authority under the Commonwealth Department of Human Services. NAL is recognised as a world leader in hearing research.



There is increasing community concern about the possible risk to the hearing health of young Australians, posed by increasing exposure to loud sound during everyday leisure activities.

Recent research has shown that popular leisure activities, e.g., going to pubs and other live music venues, may be as harmful to hearing health as industrial noise. Sound level measurements made by NAL at typical venues, such as pubs with live and recorded music, reach levels of between 95 and 105 dB SPL. Long term exposure to such levels can lead to long term damage to hearing.

Frequent high level sound exposure has been called "Binge Listening"<sup>1</sup> and many young people leading otherwise healthy lifestyles could be at risk. But it's a bit like other hazards, such as smoking or sun exposure. The effects are cumulative and it can take years for the damage to become really obvious.

NAL is conducting a major study called:

"iHEAR" – Investigation of Hearing loss Epidemiology, Attitudes & Recreation

The iHEAR study aims to investigate the hearing status of a large group of young adults (aged 11 to 35 years) and to estimate their exposure to leisure sound, for example, through the use of personal stereos/MP3 players, attendance at live music, etc.

The information NAL collects (audiograms, tests of middle ear and inner ear function and survey data) will enable them to determine whether or not exposure to high levels of leisure sound is causing hearing problems in young Australians. This in turn will assist them in providing appropriate community information and other hearing loss prevention strategies specifically targeted at this age group.

NAL came to Broken Hill in July 2009 to collect the very first data for this project, at one of our local High Schools. They recently returned to survey some of our young adults, who were seen at the Centre in the week leading up to our official opening and the Silver Jubilee Seminar. The project leader of the iHEAR study, Lyndal Carter, gave a presentation at the seminar about the work of NAL, and in particular the iHEAR study.

If anyone would like more information about the study they can contact the iHEAR team: email: [ihear@nal.gov.au](mailto:ihear@nal.gov.au)

Phone: (02) 9412 6962 (Lyndal Carter, Senior Research Audiologist).

More information about NAL can be obtained at their website: [www.nal.gov.au](http://www.nal.gov.au)

<sup>1</sup> Binge Listening: Is exposure to leisure noise causing hearing loss in young Australians?  
Australian Hearing [www.hearing.com.au](http://www.hearing.com.au)

---

## ***“Listening In” project***

### **Objectives:**

To detect hearing problems in children within their first year of schooling

To provide access to early intervention program

### **Aims:**

Embedding a plan for prevention and early intervention and providing a fair and accessible service

Improving access and equity

Figures from the “Listening In” 2009 project, show us that many children are slipping through the system, not only with hearing loss but with problems associated with the ear: ear infections, dry perforations of the ear drum and problems associated with grommets, which could lead to further complications if not treated. We believe the project has been successful and worthwhile for our local community, not only for the child who is diagnosed with a hearing loss but for the parents, carers and teachers within the schools. With the follow up from the DET these children will now receive extra support throughout their education.

The “Listening In” project has continued throughout 2010. We have extended the program this year to include Menindee and Wilcannia Public Schools with funding through the Sisters of Charity Foundation. To date, 212 children have been screened in 2010 with fifty children being reviewed and a further seventeen children being referred straight to their local GP or Australian Hearing. At this stage I expect to finalise the 2010 program in December 2010, a report will follow.

For further information or if you are interested in a copy of the final Report for the 2009 project, please contact me either by phone or email on the contact details below.

Anne Woods JP

---

## ***“Sleep Safe” Project***

The “Sleepsafe” project began late in 2008 and is run in conjunction with the NSW Fire Brigade, Broken Hill Branch, where we are purchasing suitable smoke alarm systems for Deaf and hearing impaired people.

The principle aim of the project is to ensure the Deaf and hearing impaired community receive the same level of personal protection/safety as the hearing community. Our objective being to install 100 of these specialised smoke alarms into identified clients who are Deaf or have a severe hearing impairment.

These will be loaned to people for as long as they require them, installation and maintenance will be carried out by the NSW Fire Brigade, Broken Hill and the Centre's trained Volunteers.

When the alarms are no longer required they are returned to the project manager and re-allocated to new people. This project of “**Sleepsafe**” has been made possible by the generosity of local businesses, Social and Service Clubs and individuals of Broken Hill; also Brooks' donation of 6 alarms and the Local Fire Brigade's donation of 5 alarms. To date approximately 50 specialised smoke alarms have been installed.

---

## ***“What's new”***

Thanks go out to the ACT Deafness Resource Centre Inc, we now have a portable Loop for our front counter/ reception area.

**We are appreciative to the Committee of ACT Deafness Resource Centre for their donation.**

## Coming events

- Our annual general meeting will be held on November 25<sup>th</sup>. The election of office bearers for 2011 will be of major importance.
- The Centre will be participating in the International Day of People with Disability celebrations to be held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of December.
- **Volunteers Needed;**  
Do you have a few spare hours during the week and would like share some time helping others? We would love to hear from you.
- The Hearing Centre will close on Friday the 17<sup>th</sup> of December at 4pm for our Christmas break; we will reopen on the Tuesday the 4<sup>th</sup> of January at 10am.



Lyndal Carter from National Acoustics Laboratory enjoying the sights and smells of the Historic Kinchegea Woolshed during the Seminar excursion to Menindee

*We are hoping to send out our next newsletter late February / early march 2011.*

*If anyone has any announcements, important dates, Items etc. please feel free to send them in to us at the following Email address.*

We actively encourage any person with hearing difficulties to discuss it with their doctor.

Do you want to contact us?

### **Broken Hill & District Resource Centre Inc.**

187 Argent Street  
Broken Hill. NSW. 2880

Telephone: 08 80882228      Fax: 08 80879388      Email: [hearthis@australiaonline.net.au](mailto:hearthis@australiaonline.net.au)

Website: [www.bhhearingresourcecentre.com.au](http://www.bhhearingresourcecentre.com.au)

We are open Monday to Friday 10am - 4pm Central Standard Time  
Other times by Appointment

This newsletter was compiled by Chris Rawlins  
Edited on behalf of The Broken Hill & District Resource Centre Inc. by Anne Woods.