

February 2022



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# BRAIN INJURY MATTERS

## NEWSLETTER

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### Meet Bernadette Cheesman

**1. How long ago did you acquire your injury?**

1992

**2. What is your greatest achievement since your injury?**

Among a number of personal achievements are walking again, retraining my short-term memory and winning a writing award from an Order of Australia writing competition.

**3. What do you want to achieve in the near future?**

To maintain my (in)sanity in this (in)sane world: ie: to maintain my sense of humour. Everything else will follow from that.

**4. What do you find your biggest challenge?**

Dealing with whole brainers who refuse to listen, hear, think, accept responsibility, or otherwise use the intact brain with which they have been endowed, then who pigeonhole me. Yes, I am talking about medics, too.

**5. What is your favourite food?**

Rice and the rainbow of vegetables and fruit.



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### 6. What is your favourite movie?

Many of the 1970's and 1980's Australian movies, like the *Cars that ate Paris*, *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, *Sweetie*, *Mad Max* (when you could still drive around the Werribee paddocks and see where part of it was filmed) and others. I'm more a book person than a movie buff. *Merry Christmas Mr Lawrence* was a good film translation of the book, *The Seed and the Sower*.

### 7. What is your favourite hobby?

Bushwalking and poetry.

### 8. What do you want to achieve through Brain Injury Matters?

I'm still thinking this through. Perhaps to have my question from last year answered: would BIM do the small administration required for my significant anniversary (10, 20, 25, 30 year etc.) celebration suggestion?

My 30th anniversary is June, this year. Could 30 people 'sign-up' to do 30 random acts of kindness over the course of the month? One a day is not too onerous, but if they wanted to try 30 each day...

If someone had a 10th anniversary, 10 people would sign up to do 10 random acts of kindness over the anniversary month. Etc.

### 9. What advice would you give to a person with a new brain injury?

Be kind to yourself, get over yourself and don't always trust the 'experts.' Please remember: you probably are going to forget anything and possibly everything. Don't overlook colour therapy and the joys of nature and art.

### 10. What does Brain Injury Matters mean to you?

I'm still finding out.

## REGULAR THINGS HAPPENING AT BIM:

### Online Coffee Mornings

Mondays at 11am

Open to anyone with a brain injury.

A fun way to start the week includes jokes, quizzes, and conversation starters.

Contact [office@braininjurymatters.org](mailto:office@braininjurymatters.org) to receive the Zoom link.



### Peer Support Groups

Small groups of people with brain injury meet weekly to catch up, learn from each other and have some fun.

Current groups:

- Northcote - Tuesdays at 10am
- Frankston - Tuesday at 10am
- Online only - Wednesdays at 10am
- Ringwood - Thursdays at 10:30am
- Footscray - Thursdays at 10am

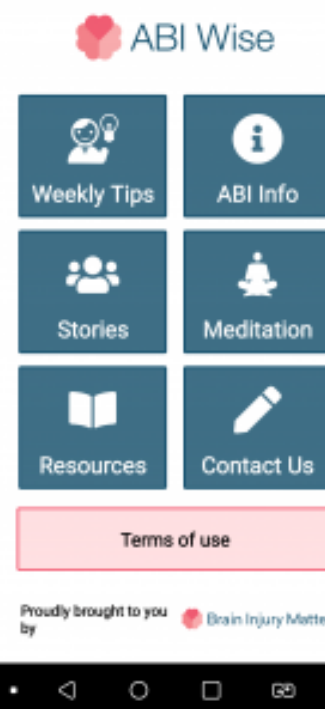
All groups are back meeting face to face following the end of lockdown. We are complying with the Victorian Government directions about how those catch ups take place.

Contact [office@braininjurymatters.org](mailto:office@braininjurymatters.org) if you are interested in joining a group.

### Check out our Website, ABI Wise App, Facebook and Instagram

<https://www.braininjurymatters.org>

ABIWise App is free to download from GooglePlay and the App Store





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# Updates

## PROJECT TEAM REPORT

Our face-to-face peer support groups have started back through January. It has been a mix of ZOOM and face to face catchups, with people meeting outside to reduce the risk of COVID. New people continue to join the groups, which is great to see. Some of the feedback from people who attend the group is so positive, meeting a range of needs, foremost of which is talking with people who share their lived experience. The peer support groups will continue to meet weekly, and we will explore the possibility of a group in country Victoria, as we are visiting the Northeast in March.

Fiona, Fraser, Peter, Sally, Sonia, and Yannick

See Photo – Northern Peer Support Group celebrating Lynne’s Birthday



## **Peer Support Group Update**

### **Peer Support Groups**

Brain Injury Matters Peer Support Groups are off to a great start in 2022. BIM now has six peer support groups that meet weekly. Here's some of the highlights.....

### **Coffee Morning - Mondays**

Our online group has told lots of bad jokes, had lots of laughs and answered questions such as "Would you rather have more time or more money?", "Where do you get your news?" and "What's the weirdest food combination you enjoy"?

This is a drop-in group and open to everyone.

### **Get-A-Head - Tuesdays**

The Get-A-Head peer support group, which meets in Northcote, has been alternating between Jika-Jika Neighbourhood house and local cafes. Group membership has doubled this year and the group is going strong – check out the photo of a birthday celebration.

### **Brain Injury Friends (BIF) - Tuesdays**

BIF Peer Support Group meets in Frankston. This year BIF members have visited the Moonlit Sanctuary (see photos), been ten pin bowling and had fish and chips in Morningson Park. They've also played an epic game of Cluedo (it was Dr Orchid with a wrench in the study).

### **Brainwave - Wednesdays**

Brainwave meets online each Wednesday morning. Topics of conversation have included passions and hobbies, and goals for the year ahead. It's been very encouraging to have group members stepping up and leading the sessions.



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## Updates continued...

### **Think-A-Like - Thursdays**

Our Western suburbs group meets in Footscray. They swap between meeting at the West Footscray Neighbourhood House and the Myrtle Wine Café. They have enjoyed some great conversations.

### **Brainstormers - Thursdays**

Our Ringwood Brainstormers group loves going on outings. So far this year they've been to a pool hall, Hungry Jacks and had a BBQ at Ringwood Lake. They've also met at Central Ringwood Community centre to make stress balls and play board games.



*Doul (and his carer, Robert) from Brainstormers on the liberty swing.  
(swing for people in wheelchairs)*

## Updates continued..

*Brain Injury Friends (BIF) excursion to Moonlit Sanctuary*



Manda and Fiona



Left to Right: Cheryl, Manda, Fiona, Stephen, Priyan, David and Nikki



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# **COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT**

## **REPORT**

We hope you had a restful and enjoyable break. The Committee of Management has come back with renewed energy to face some big challenges. The biggest of these is considering the funding for our amazing peer support groups. BIM has set up 6 peer support groups that supports well over one hundred people with ABI. This is part of the NDIS Information, Linkages and Capacity Building funding, we received 12 months ago. The funds BIM received for this conclude on 30 June 2022. But we are looking at a number of options to ensure these groups continue, and more than that we want to develop new groups, particularly in country Victoria. We are likely to be in contact with you to seek your assistance in talking with State and Federal Governments about funding for our peer support groups.

As you will read elsewhere in the newsletter, we have our 3rd Annual Needs Survey. Please fill in the survey. Your views and feedback help guide the work of BIM.

Cheers for now



Brent Alford  
Chairperson



February 2022



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# Brain Injury Matters 2022 ANNUAL NEEDS SURVEY

For the past 2 years BIM has surveyed our members and friends, to find out what their key issues are, and what BIM should focus on in the forthcoming year. This information will also be used to support our applications for funds to operate services like our peer support groups. The survey will ask you what you think are the important issues for people living with brain injury. Your responses will be anonymous. We have used the results from previous surveys to develop strategic plans for Brain Injury Matters and to help gain funding for our Peer Support Groups project. We now have 6 peer support groups running, with plans to start others.

By completing BIM's Annual Needs Survey, you will help shape the direction of BIM and strengthen our future funding submissions, as we work together to improve the lives of people with brain injury. We would greatly appreciate you taking the time to share your opinions by doing the survey.

If you have any questions about the online survey, please email [office@braininjurymatters.org](mailto:office@braininjurymatters.org)

Kind regards,

Click this link to start the survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WXRZN29>

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# Lauren's Report from the BIM OFFICE

We are well and truly back from the holiday break. A lot is happening in the office. We continue to work on improving the ABI Wise phone App. New content will be added soon, including information on online scams. Here is a link to Cyberability <https://cyberability.org.au/> BIM is working on Cyberability with Monash University. It is not only people with ABI who need this information. I am working my way through the modules to improve my cyber safety. I have had close friends who have been ripped off for a lot of money online! We all need to be aware. Check it out.

This month BIM had its first Committee of Management meeting for 2022. A long meeting with reports from the BIM Executive, our allies at United Brains and all the hard working COM members. The COM examined budget projections for the year and have plans to ensure BIMs current activities are sustainable into the future. Staff members gave reports and were questioned by the COM about day-to-day operations. There is thorough oversight, accountability and transparency about the management and operation of BIM. Please contact me at the office if you have any enquiries. A new volunteer policy was discussed and passed.

Several new members have stepped up to take on some important tasks that we hope will result in extending BIMs income and services. I work two days a week. A great deal of the work is done by BIM volunteers. A great team. This month we did meet at Ross House and used the BIM office on some days. The government order is still to work at home when possible. None of us (at BIM or in the community) are back to life before the pandemic, however we are kicking goals. Resilience is conspicuous at BIM.

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## 2022 The New YEAR

**What are Australians New Year's resolutions for 2022?**

<b>Improve fitness</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Eat healthier</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Lose weight</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>Sleep more</b>	<b>13%</b>
<b>Be more sustainable</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>Work less/have a better work-life balance</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>Travel overseas</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>Renovate my home</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Find love</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Take more risks</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Change my job</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Volunteer</b>	<b>5%</b>

Apparently 83% of Australians make NY resolutions, though reportedly less than 10% are kept!



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# CHINESE LUNAR NEW YEAR

This year it fell on 1st of February. And it is the Year of the Tiger. So, for those of you who have 12th, 24th, 36th, 48th, 60th, 72nd or 84th birthday this year, it is your birth year. And if it is your birth year, carry something red every day for good luck.



## ABI Wise App Tips

To all of our members, if you have tips that you would like to have sent out to other members via the BIM ABI Wise app or you have any questions regarding tips or anything else about the app, please forward them to [vicechair@braininjurymatters.org](mailto:vicechair@braininjurymatters.org).

The tips should be relatively short and to the point and primarily regarding ABI's. If you are unsure what to write you can get an idea by opening the app and going to "Weekly Tips".

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# Newsletter contribution from Adrian Jones

- Be the change you want to see in this world- Ghandi

People talk about goals all the time. I like another perspective- vision, strategies, tactics and systems. I find it's important to have a vision- that you want to achieve at the end of the day, and make it BIG! Strategies are the how you want to achieve this. Tactics are what you do and systems are how you do it.

My vision is to improve my life everyday. My strategy is to work towards this a little everyday. With this in mind, I need strategies. Strategies give me a plan how to get everything done. For example I will be mindful of using my left hand more. An example of a tactic is typing on my keyboard, using both hands (which I'm doing now). And an example of a system is contributing to this newsletter each month.

Goals are good, but they are only part of the story. I need to take action, and I find the best way to do this is by implementing a system, which will make a habit. Hopefully one that will remain for the rest of your life- so make it a good one!

Why don't you take the challenge with me and create your own vision? You can develop your own strategies, tactics and systems to create the life you deserve!

**Happy New Year 2022**  
**Let's make it all about YOU!**

## COOKING WITH CHEF ADRIAN

### Greek Salad

#### Ingredients- salad

- 1 cup cherry tomatoes
- 1 small red onion
- 1 medium cucumber
- 1 medium pepper
- ¼ cup whole kalamata olives
- ¼ cup feta cheese



#### Ingredients- dressing

- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 ½ tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- ¼ teaspoon sea salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper

#### Method

1. Start by prepping your ingredients. Dice red onion and slice and chop cucumber into quarters.
2. Chop green pepper and crumble feta.
3. Mix all vegetables together in a bowl.
4. To prepare the salad dressing juice 1 lemon. Then combine all other dressing ingredients.
5. Pour salad dressing over salad and toss well. Top with crumbled feta.



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## Spotlight on Pets

Henry and me...

This is Henry and he is a Labradoodle, which is a cross between a Labrador and a Poodle...therefore he has the temperament of a Labrador, and the playfulness of a poodle...and some oddness mixed in, which, I think comes from the Poodle side of the family

Henry is about 12 years old which I understand is old in dog years but we never let him know that...I take him for walks on most days when the weather is good...as you can see in the picture, Henry likes his toys like this one, his monkey, and he regularly chews them, but never to the point where they fall apart...Henry lives with 4 cats that he gets along with, because if he didn't he would be in a pretty difficult position...

We adopted Henry several years ago when the builder we knew who was working on building some units next to our house moved into an apartment, he couldn't take Henry with him so we took him on...who wouldn't?



*Col  
and Henry*

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## New Resources

### The National Assistance Card

The National Assistance Card is now available for people in Australia living with brain injury.

The National Assistance Card Service hope that, in the future, the National Assistance Card will be available to all Australian's living with disability and/or health conditions.

To apply for a National Assistance Card please visit:

[www.nationalassistancecard.com.au/apply](http://www.nationalassistancecard.com.au/apply)

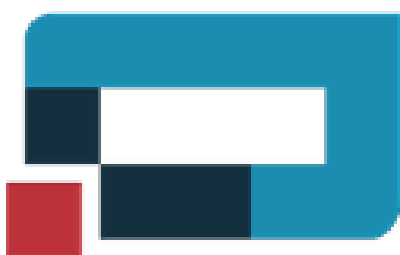
Click on the **Apply Online Now** button to access the online application.

To help you with your application we recommend you:

- Read one of the How to Apply Guides available at the link above. You can refer to these Guides while you complete your application.
- Watch the 'How to' videos included in the application, such as the overview video. Here is the link- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZW4DmfiDwEo&t=8s>
- Ask a family member, friend or support worker to help you.

If you have any questions about the National Assistance Card, please:

- Visit the National Assistance Card Website, you may find the answer you need on the Frequently Asked Questions page: [www.nationalassistancecard.com.au/frequently-asked-questions](http://www.nationalassistancecard.com.au/frequently-asked-questions)
- Contact the National Assistance Card Team via:
  - Email: [info@nationalassistancecard.com.au](mailto:info@nationalassistancecard.com.au) or
  - Phone: freecall 1300 242 827



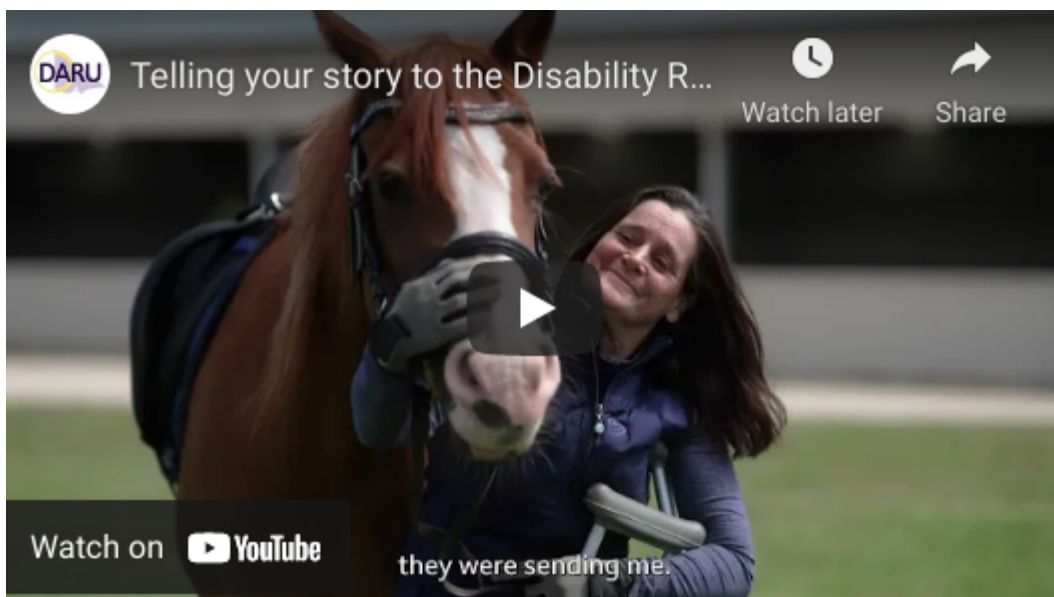
**NATIONAL  
ASSISTANCE  
CARD**

## Video from Leadership Plus

Do you have a story to tell The Disability Royal Commission? Lots of small stories add up to one big story if The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability gets to hear your story. They are accepting submissions up to the end of December 2022, but you need to register before the end of June 2022. You can get help in telling your story to the Royal Commission, Leadership Plus is able to support individuals in Victoria, there are other agencies across the country who can help as well.

Watch the video, share it with friends and most importantly, make a submission to Disability Royal Commission.

Youtube link- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mQVNIInaO6Q>



## Newsletter Contributions Welcome

Contributions by BIM members to our newsletter are always welcome. If you have any tips, stories or experiences that would be of interest to others, please contact [office@braininjurymatters.org](mailto:office@braininjurymatters.org)

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