

September 2022

BRAIN INJURY MATTERS

NEWSLETTER

Meet Troy Huggins

1. How long ago did you acquire your injury?

My accident was 15th October 1992.
30 years in a few weeks.

2. What is your greatest achievement since your injury?

Living independently the last 20 years.

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

Learning to become financially independent.

4. What do you find your biggest challenge?

Concentrating for long periods of time.



5. What is your favourite food?

For convenience, because I have difficulty cutting things up: sushi, or California rolls. Previously large seafood too difficult to order, cannot always be cut up for me by the restaurant.

6. What is your favourite movie?

Probably "*Star Wars*" (because I went to opening night in first form) or "*Being There*" (Peter Sellers), third choice "*Dr Strangelove*".

7. What is your favourite hobby?

Do not have a favourite hobby, partial to general knowledge quizzes.

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

Greater socialisation with people who have things in common.

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

Hang in there, it gradually gets better.

10. What does Brain Injury Matters mean to you?

The place of understanding and common ground.



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 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:

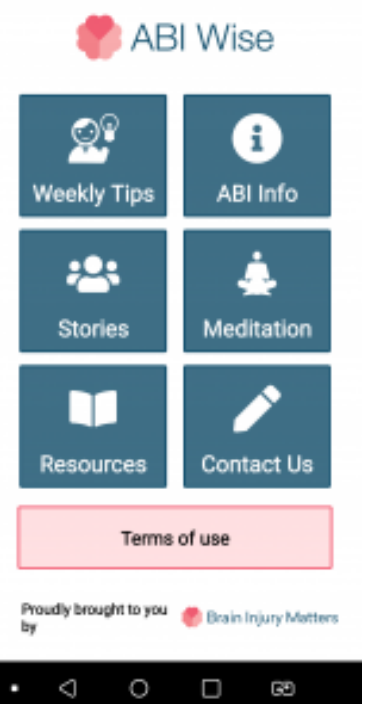
- **Northcote** - Tuesdays at 10am
- **Frankston** - Tuesday at 10am
- **Online only** - Wednesdays at 10am
- **Ringwood** - Thursdays at 10:30am
- **Footscray** - Thursdays at 10am
- **Gisborne** - Last Wednesday of the month

Contact 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



Updates

Committee of Management (CoM) Report

Our focus remains on providing activities and supports that assist people with brain injury to connect with each other, advocate on their own behalf and on behalf of others. That is why BIM is focused on our peer support groups – they connect people, they build skills, and they build confidence. We continue to follow-up with the Federal Government and the Department of Social Security about funding for 2023 and beyond. We are incredibly pleased to have Adam Bandt, the Member for Melbourne, visit the BIM office and participate in one of our Zoom-only peer support groups.

Our collaboration with the Melbourne Disability Institute, part of the University of Melbourne, to investigate the impact of peer support groups is progressing. We are 12 months away from completing this piece of research.

We are also keen to build professional and community awareness of what brain injury is, from a lived experience perspective. A number of BIM members already speak to schools and at other forums to build community awareness. This month, for the first time, we delivered a newly developed training package on brain injury to a disability service provider.

Our AGM is coming up in November: Thursday 3rd of November. It is a chance for us to catch up face to face. Please come along. It would be great to see you.

Cheers
Brent

Brent Alford
Chairperson

Project Report

The past couple of months has seen the some of the peer support groups consolidate their numbers, while others have had huge increases in attendees. Numbers alone confirm that for a considerable number of people with ABI, peer support groups are a significant point of connection.

As Brent mentioned, the groups build people's skills and confidence. For example, we now have two peer group members facilitating two of the peer support groups on a weekly basis.

The peer support groups continue to meet face-to-face and online. Some of the activities included visiting Sages Cottage, Frankston Pier, the Fairfield Boathouse, cafes in Footscray, Ringwood and Northcote, bowling and karaoke, baking scones and morning tea provided by the Jika Jika Community Centre. As always, all the activities are suggested, and chosen, by group members.

Talk to you next month.

Fiona, Fraser, Nick, Peter, Ryan, Sally, and Yannick



Report from the Office - Lauren

This month, BIM held a Law Webinar for people with ABI and health professionals.

Will Betts presented a 75-minute session on future planning, including information about Wills, Power of Attorney and Care directives.

Brent introduced the session and concluded the session by thanking Will. Another session will run next year if there is demand. A recording was done. This will soon be on the BIM website.

Written information will be sent to those who attended. PCLC did the session for free.

This year the BIM AGM is on Thursday, 3rd November. It is general practice to have the AGM on the same day as the usual second Tuesday of the month COM meeting. To get access to the most suitable room we had to change days. We have arranged a great guest speaker for the AGM: Neil Cameron. I don't think there is anything Neil doesn't know about ABI, through his lived experience and his tireless advocacy. Neil is well known to many members. Those who have not met him: you will enjoy meeting him.

Please save the day (3/11/22) to come into Ross House, Flinders Lane Melbourne. Meet other people with ABI, hear Neil's presentation and have a great lunch: all FREE. I am really looking forward to seeing you ALL in person, as the last two AGMs have been on Zoom.

Brent, Nia, Fiona, Sally and Peter have been working hard on developing a training module about working with people with ABI for workers. The first presentation was with the organisation Inclusion Melbourne. It took place at their office in Armadale. Nia, Fiona, and Brent presented, with Sally's support. It went very well, with more training events to be booked in soon. Please spread the word – BIM can provide presentations about ABI at a reasonable cost for organisations.

Report from the Office continued

COM meetings next year will be held in the Hayden Raysmith Room on level four. This is due to re-modelling of the ground floor of Ross House.

The third floor is also having extensive re-modelling, causing some noise.

A hard rubbish pick up is due for excess items in the BIM office soon.

I have been promising a clean-up for so long...Anyway, our new BIM banner brightens up the place!

Bill Shorten, Federal Minister for the NDIS, and State Disability Minister, Colin Brooks, have been contacted and invited to visit BIM. Funding will be the topic of conversation. There is a TAC grant that is to be announced next month. Bruce – our very experienced occasional contract worker, some of you met at peer support groups, has worked alongside the BIM COM Executive. Fingers crossed.

The COM and all BIM volunteers work an enormous number of voluntary hours. Too much to list here. I make sure that these statistics go into BIM's state government funder (DFFH) report, along with case studies about the events BIM runs. BIM is without a DFFH contract manager at present.

We give our sincere thanks to Ashley and Paul, from DFFH, for their work with BIM over the last three years. We wish them well in their new endeavours. We will invite the new appointee to visit BIM as soon as we are notified who they are.

The BIM Newsletter goes from strength to strength. Special shout out to Adrian, Bernadette, and Evan for their great work on it. I hope you saw the August issue with all the great photos of events and many of the PSG outings.

All back issues are on the BIM website: www.braininjurymatters.org

A good way to catch up on some great content if you are a new member.

September 2022



BIM is a small team of active volunteers, staff, and the COM, with hundreds of members with ABI, plus family members, professionals, government representatives, community groups, universities, and businesses. All playing their part in BIM's success.


Thank you all for your support.

To all the BIM members with an ABI - **Brain Injury Matters is you.** Nothing for you without you. You are the ones that direct what happens at BIM. You are the only ones with Voting rights – your governing body is up for half election at the AGM in November.

Just as important as that other election in November. Please contact me for assistance for either: the BIM COM election, or State government. Sessions at BIM are in the offering, run by the Victorian Electoral Commission (with thanks to Anat), or [go here](#) for voter information for the State government election.


Peter is Returning Officer for the BIM election and has sent out nomination forms.

Have a happy day.
Cheers Lauren



Brain Injury Matters

Special Guest Speaker
Neil Cameron



AGM
Annual General Meeting

2022

3rd of November
11 am to 1pm LUNCH PROVIDED

For those who wish to attend but cannot in person, a ZOOM link will be provided closer to date

4th floor Hayden Raysmith Room
Ross House
247 Flinders Lane Melbourne

rsvp
office@braininjurymatters.org

Helpful websites from Col

<https://ninite.com/>

Ninite allows you to select the apps you want on your Windows computer and then install them. Even if you have them already installed, select the app and it will install it as an update or ignore it.

www.skyscanner.com.au

Want to head off on a flight somewhere. This is one site that will scan for prices for airfares. My tip is to look at other sites after this to compare what you get.

If you have any tips or want some help finding a website let me know at vicechair@brainjurymatters.org

BIM ABI Wise app update

Don't you have the app on your smartphone? Well, it is about time you did! The next update is about to be released and with that will be fixes and a new module. Cyber**ABI**lity will be on the app and will provide information on how to be wary of the problems of romance scams and others.

To download the ABI Wise app, click on the link below for your smartphone:

Apple - <https://apps.apple.com/au/app/abi-wise/id1453507116>

Google - <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.braininjurymatters.abiwise>

Contribution from Adrian

DIFFERENTLY ABLED

People came up with the label 'disabled'. Most of those people have not lived with the challenges that we have. I prefer the term 'differently abled'. We are all different, we all have different gifts- different ways we can contribute to the world. We are all on a different path to growth- and we can share all our experiences to help others. This is what this newsletter is for...share because you care!

I've been limited most of my life (since I was hit by a car at 14 years old) by what others thought I could do. This has effectively created a 'glass ceiling' over my potential: over what others thought and, subsequently, over what I thought.

Over the years, I've learned how to break through that 'glass ceiling' and try new things. I've tried to change my thoughts from 'I can't do it' to 'how can I do it?

It's a small change that makes a big difference.

Have a great day,

Adrian

Below is an additional comment in relation to Adrian's contribution from BIM volunteer Bernadette.

In honour of my late uncle Dennis, who had Friedreich's ataxia in the late 1970's. He claimed he was 'inconvenienced' not disabled... even towards the end of his life when the muscle wasting had so progressed and diminished his ability to talk.

Articles

Alissa's singing

On Tuesday, 13th September, BIM member Alissa Wells performed with People's Choir in East Malvern. The People's Choir welcomes people of all abilities, ages, nationalities and religions and focuses on the joy of music and singing.

Alissa has been singing in the choir for about 4 months.

A number of Alissa's fellow Brainwave peer support group members (and some ring-ins) came to support Alissa and enjoy a night out at the performance.

Well done, Alissa!

For more information about The People's Choir go to

www.thepeopleschoir.com.au



Inclusion Melbourne Presentation

On Wednesday, 14th September, BIM Members Nia Giddings, Brent Alford and Fiona Hopper delivered training to Inclusion Melbourne employees. The training focused on the lived experience of Acquired Brain Injury.

Inclusion Melbourne are considering expanding their "Leisure Buddies" program to include adults with brain injury.

The program links a volunteer with an adult with a disability, so they can share interests, goals and activities, developing a real friendship. Nia, Brent and Fiona did a great job, and the feedback was very positive. We will keep you updated about the Leisure Buddies program.



Employ Me flyer



What is Employ Me?



Employ Me is a project to....

Assist people living with **brain injury** in Victoria and Tasmania to develop their confidence and capacity to gain employment and/or further educational opportunities.

The Employ Me Project aims to:



**BUILD CONFIDENCE
AND CAPACITY**



**IMPROVE EMPLOYMENT
OUTCOMES**



**SUPPORT
DISCLOSURE**

This involves using the Employ Me Project **tailored resources** to create a personalised **professional video** that can be used by you to gain and/or maintain employment.

If you are someone living with an acquired brain injury and are interested in creating a professional video then contact us via: Email: enquiries@biat.org.au Phone: (03) 6230 9800

or visit <https://www.employmeplus.com.au/>

Photos from Brent's Presentation

Brent Alford BIM's Chairperson (President) talking to a school group from Gilson College.

He has done over 700 of these presentations and always gets a wonderful reaction.





September 2022



Brain Injury
Matters

Photos from Frankston PSG called Brain Injury Friends (BIF) Frankston Pier



September 2022

BIF at Sages Cottage





Photos from Northern suburbs PSG at Studley Park Boathouse



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.

The National Assistance Card can:

- help cardholders communicate their unique areas of difficulty and the assistance they may need.
- give cardholders greater independence.
- assist cardholders to feel more confident in everyday social situations.
- provide peace of mind for families and carers.
- enhance community understanding of disability and health conditions.
- support positive community interaction with cardholders.

Every National Assistance Card is personalised.

The Card includes a cardholders:

- first and last name
- photo
- date of birth
- nominated contact person's name and phone number
- (A cardholder can choose if this person is contacted)

Also printed on the Card:

- up to five areas of difficulty chosen by the cardholder
- (for example: communication, fatigue, memory, processing information)
- a QR (Quick Response) Code providing access to additional written information (written or personalised video) that the cardholder has chosen to include.
- the Police Assistance Line phone number.

To apply for a National Assistance Card please visit:

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>

[v=ZW4DmfiDwEo&t=8s](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:

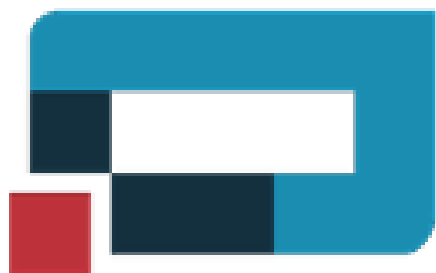
- Visit the National Assistance Card Website, you may find the answer you need on the Frequently Asked Questions page:

www.nationalassistancecard.com.au/frequently-asked-questions

- Contact the National Assistance Card Team via:

- Email: info@nationalassistancecard.com.au or

- Phone: freecall 1300 242 827



**NATIONAL
ASSISTANCE
CARD**

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

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