

SHOULDER-TO-SHOULDER

The quarterly newsletter of Road Trauma Support Services Victoria Inc.

Peter's story: Sharing my experience to help save lives on our roads

I was impacted by a road incident sixteen and a half years ago and it completely changed my life. For some years I was badly affected emotionally - I relived the crash again and again in my head and I required extensive counselling. I still suffer emotionally, even after all this time.

My story begins on a day that I was driving home from the football club. I came across a drunk driver who had hit another vehicle so being a first aider, I stopped to help the injured. As I went to get out the drunk driver took off, so I moved behind the other car to take down the number plate in order to report the incident to police. Before I knew it I was pinned between two cars – a taxi driver had apparently been looking at the computer and had taken his eyes off the road and didn't see me or the car he hit in front of him.

I suffered horrific injuries to my legs and spent nearly three months in hospital where I had to learn to walk all over again. Today I walk permanently with a crutch and sometimes two, depending on how bad the pain is.

After several failed attempts at securing employment, I threw myself into community work and over the years I've become heavily involved in providing advocacy and support for people living with a disability.

For the past two and a half years, I have been a volunteer speaker with RTSSV's education programs. I attend these sessions and share my story with participants. Telling my story has really helped me to come to terms with my crash and disability. Although doing this sometimes takes its



I talk about my incident – how it happened, the impact on my life and how easily things can go wrong. I share my experience in the hope that people don't end up in prison, hurting or killing themselves or others.



toll – reliving the incident and my recovery all over again. If it helps change the attitude of one young driver then it's worth it! The RTSSV team are available to offer support and debrief if and when I need it.

With the support of family and the many new friends I have made on my journey, my will is stronger than ever. My goal has always been to live a full and independent life and that is something I work towards every day. Not just for myself, but for others of all ages and circumstances who suffer with disabilities.

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Message from the GM



With 2013 in full swing, I would like to welcome you to the Autumn edition of our newsletter which will provide you with an inspiring client story, updates on our services, information on amazing supporters and upcoming activities.

In this issue, Peter shares his story of how as an RTSSV education program volunteer speaker, he hopes his experience will help save lives on our roads. We present you with the findings of our service evaluations which reaffirm our commitment to best practice and providing the best possible outcomes for people affected by road trauma. You will read about our 12th annual 'Time for Remembering' ceremony held in November last year and the many ways our supporters who through their generosity and commitment, contribute to our work in the community.

From an organisational perspective, as we move into a new season it sees us planning and budgeting for the financial

year ahead as we reflect and review the activities and achievements of the 12 months gone. The upgrade of our new IT infrastructure late in 2012 has proved to be a great investment, enabling us to work more efficiently and to deliver both enhanced reliability and functionality.

In closing, I would like thank each and every one of our supporters for their contribution – both financial and in-kind – without it we would not be able to do the work we do and for that we are sincerely grateful.

Thank you for sharing our commitment in contributing to the safety and wellbeing of Victorian road users. We look forward to your continued support.

Happy reading!

Cameron Sinclair
General Manager

Committed to providing the best possible outcomes for the community we serve

As part of RTSSV's commitment to delivering 'best practice' services and support to people impacted by road trauma, an external evaluation of RTSSV's counselling services was undertaken late in 2012.

The aim of the evaluation was to ensure that we are providing meaningful, effective and accessible programs and services to Victorian road users and the results were reassuring:

- 100% of past and current clients surveyed indicated that counselling helped them to significantly deal with the issue with which they first presented;
- 83% reported that they would use the service again if the need arose; and
- 100% said they would recommend RTSSV services to others who have been impacted by a road incident.

Further, a recent evaluation completed by Monash University Accident Research Centre (MUARC) of our Education Services found that although there is little research in relation to education programs for traffic offending, those comparable to RTSSV's Road Trauma Awareness Seminars (RTAS) have been found to play a role in motivating driving behaviour change. This finding is reaffirmed by RTAS participant surveys where a high number of participants self-reported they made a conscious decision to change their driving behaviour after attending our seminar and they have not reoffended.

The true value of our services can only be measured by our clients and program participants. The feedback given will be used alongside research to assist us to develop our services into the future to ensure we continue to provide the best possible outcomes for people in our community who need our support.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all who took the time to complete the evaluations and surveys. Your feedback is very important to us. We would like to acknowledge the team at Ultrafeedback for their generous support as they donated their time and expertise to these projects.

IN PROFILE



George Johnson

Director, SysOp Support Australia Pty Ltd

Role at RTSSV

Corporate partner/supporter

How are you involved with RTSSV?

My company and I have been associated with RTSSV for some years. We act as their external IT department providing maintenance and support. Being located virtually next door makes things a lot easier.

How and why did you first get involved?

My involvement came about through a past RTSSV Board member as our children went to the same school. Upon hearing about the great work being done by RTSSV, I had no hesitation in offering our services pro-bono as I believed and still do, that the services provided are essential to the community.

Hobbies:

Reading, travelling

Favourite TV Show:

Criminal Minds

Worst Habit:

I am a perfectionist, so my staff quite often cop it!

If you were an animal, what would it be and why?

A tiger as it is the largest and most powerful cat family predator. They are always sleek and elegant.

Time for Remembering Ceremony 2012



RTSSV held its 12th annual 'Time for Remembering' ceremony on Sunday 21 November in Queen's Hall, Parliament House, Melbourne. The event was held on the third Sunday of November, which is World Remembrance Day for Road Traffic Victims. This Day is acknowledged by the United Nations and many events are held globally to mark the appalling loss of more than one million lives annually because of road crashes.

The annual 'Time for Remembering' gathering is an opportunity for family and friends to remember loved ones injured or bereaved by road trauma and to acknowledge the affect it has on so many others including: witnesses, emergency services' personnel, health providers, law makers and administrators, as well as the community at large. This year two personal perspectives were offered and we thank Ian Zadow and Detective Sergeant Rohan Courtis, Victoria Police, for sharing their experiences. We were most fortunate to have the beautiful voices of the choir 'Entity' and the sublime accompaniment of Michael Johnson on the harp.

Bev Brock, RTSSV Patron opened the ceremony and the Minister responsible for TAC, Hon Gordon Rich-Phillips MP, provided a message of support on behalf of the Premier Hon Ted Baillieu.



The event is a significant occasion for all who attend. It is carefully designed with a blend of personal stories, music, song, times of quiet contemplation, lighting of tapers and spoken prayers and hopes.

We acknowledge and thank the number of organisations which continue to support this event, lending their promotion and encouragement including: the Transport Accident Commission, Victoria Police, Victorian Council of Churches, Faith Communities Council of Victoria, Humanist Society of Victoria, Bicycle Network Victoria, State Emergency Services Uniting Church Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, tomorrow agency and Acton Print Group.

Many thanks to those who kindly agreed to read petitions and prayers. We must also acknowledge the work of the Time for Remembering craft group for creating mementoes for service attendees. Thank you to the organising Committee which comprised RTSSV staff and volunteers. This group worked tirelessly in the months leading up to the event, as well as on the day, to ensure all the planning went smoothly.

Andy Calder
Convenor

I would like to support Road Trauma Support Services Victoria.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Mobile: _____

Email: _____

My donation is \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50
Other \$ _____

Method of Payment:

Cheque MasterCard Visa AMEX

please make cheques payable to Road Trauma Support Services

To donate please complete the form with your cheque or credit card details and mail or fax to:

Road Trauma Support Services Victoria PO Box 1283, Blackburn
Vic 3130 OR Fax: (03) 9877 9799 Telephone: (03) 8877 6900

Card Number: _____ / _____ / _____ / _____

CCV _____ Expiry: ____ / ____

Name on Card: _____

Address: _____

Signature: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

If you would like further information regarding our work please indicate below:

Information on your bequest program

Information on volunteering

I would like to make a major gift, please contact me

Donations of \$2.00 or more are tax deductible and a receipt will be provided.

Privacy Statement: The personal information we collect on this form will be used to track and manage donations and for marketing purposes. This information may be disclosed to other members of the organisation or third parties who do things on our behalf where it is required or allowed by law or where you have otherwise consented. You can access the personal information we have collected, if we have retained it, by calling the organisation.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Have you been affected by a road incident?

Free Information Sessions

Date: Thursday 21 March 2013
Time: 5:30 – 7:00pm
Venue: VicRoads Offices
51 - 63 Lansell Street, Bendigo

Date: Wednesday 15 May 2013
Time: 3.00 – 5.00pm
Venue: Mooroopna Education & Activity Centre
23 Alexandra Street, Mooroopna

Activity Support Groups

Time for Remembering Craft Group
28 March, 23 May, 27 June

Meditation Group
4 April, 2 May, 6 June



For further information or to register your interest, please contact our counselling team via email counselling@rtssv.org.au, telephone 1300 367 797 or visit www.rtssv.org.au

Event Report

Comedy stars unite to raise funds for people impacted by road trauma



Comedy stars Dave Thornton (The Project, Channel 10) and Celia Pacquola (Laid, ABC) were two of the performers who took to the stage on 14 December at 'A Show For Gavin', a charity event in memory of Gavin Keep, a loyal supporter of local comedy who was killed in a road crash in 2012.

Held at Trades Hall, the event featured local comics eager to donate their time for a worthy cause and the event raised almost \$1,600 for RTSSV.

We extend a big thank you to the organisers of the event Joanne Keep, Sharyn Booth and Neil Sinclair. Our gratitude also goes to the line-up of comedians Steele Saunders, Geraldine Quinn, Travis Nash, Lily Slade and comedy duo Watson for their generous support.

Eastlink Cup supporting road trauma awareness



The Box Hill District and Mornington Peninsula Cricket Association 'under 25 All-Stars' came together on 6 February at the Vermont Cricket Ground for a game of 20/20 cricket in an effort to promote road safety among young drivers.

The Eastlink Cup was well attended by the public. Players from Cricket Victoria joined in activities which were supported with a strong emergency services' presence - vehicle displays and information - the Safety Sense Simulator, a raffle and a sausage sizzle.

In all, the day raised an amazing \$2,200 for RTSSV. Acknowledgement and thanks goes to event sponsor ConnectEast and partners Safety Sense, Channel 9 News, radio SEN 1116 and Cricket Victoria.

Proudly supported by



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