

theword



Aphasia New Zealand Charitable Trust
mate ngaronga reo



10
2007 - 2017
Years

giving a voice to people with aphasia

Issue 41

Spring 2019

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Office Holiday Hours

The AphasiaNZ office **closes** at 3pm on **Friday 20th December** and **reopens** at 9am on **Monday 13th January 2020.**

Enquiries received during this time will be answered in the New Year.



Toll free: 0508 APHASIA (0508 274 274)
info@aphasia.org.nz www.aphasia.org.nz

Aphasia New Zealand (AphasiaNZ) Charitable Trust
Suite 3, 36 Cameron Road, Tauranga 3110
PO Box 13435, Tauranga Central, Tauranga 3141

From the EO

I took the picture to the right, on Mt Maunganui beach, on an extremely hot and summer's-like November day. I am hoping that we have many more Bay of Plenty summer days to come!



The last few months have been very hectic, resulting in a bigger-than-usual gap since the last newsletter. But, we have been busy:

- Holding 2 **Aphasia Days** in October in New Plymouth and Wanganui;
- Preparing and printing more **NZ Stroke and Aphasia Handbooks**;
- Revamping our **brochures** and informational leaflets;
- Working on a comprehensive **Review document** about our work for our Friends, supporters, and funders;
- Overseeing the day-to-day but extremely important **tasks** of a national organisation providing support services and resources.

It has been quite a year and it's not finished yet! While our work is continuous and ongoing, taking a break over the Christmas and New Year period to recharge is an absolute must. I will be returning to the office in mid-January 2020 and all of our Community Aphasia Advisors (CAAs) will be taking some time out and time off during December and January.

As always, your feedback, comments and suggestions are welcome and help inform our work, so please email these to info@aphasia.org.nz

until next time... Emma

AphasiaNZ's Community Aphasia Advisors (CAAs)

Auckland South

See the next page ☺

Auckland Central and Waitemata – Jan Wanless

Email: aucklandnw@aphasia.org.nz

Waikato West Central – Christa Grbin

Email: waikatowc@aphasia.org.nz

Tauranga – Kate Milford

Email: tauranga@aphasia.org.nz

Eastern Bay of Plenty – Jennifer Sissingh

Email: easternbop@aphasia.org.nz

Central North Island – Melinda Dakin

Email: centralnorth@aphasia.org.nz

Wellington – Stephen Gibbs

Email: wellington@aphasia.org.nz

Christchurch – Eleanor Maxwell

Email: christchurch@aphasia.org.nz

Dunedin – Kathryn Palmer

Email: dunedin@aphasia.org.nz



Please note **all**
CAAs have
@aphasia.org.nz
email addresses

All CAAs work part time hours, and may be unable to respond to you immediately. You can contact the office in Tauranga during business hours Monday-Friday by emailing info@aphasia.org.nz or calling 07 220 9973.

Auckland South CAA Wanted



Our Community Aphasia Advisors (CAAs) provide resources and information to those new to aphasia, as well as facilitate local AphasiaNZ groups and activities and educate our communities, increasing knowledge and raising awareness of the nature and effects of aphasia.

We are looking for someone to work part time in the South Auckland community (area covered by Counties Manukau DHB).

We are seeking someone with:

- 🌀 A knowledge of the nature and effects of communication impairments, specifically aphasia;
- 🌀 An understanding of services available in South Auckland communities for people affected by disabilities;
- 🌀 Excellent written and verbal communication skills;
- 🌀 Enthusiasm and flexibility;
- 🌀 Transport and a driver's license;
- 🌀 Computer skills (specifically with Mac/Apple products and devices).

Are you an SLT or related health professional looking for flexible, part-time contract work and an opportunity to use your skills to make a positive difference to the lives of those living with aphasia in the South Auckland area? If so, we'd like to hear from you.

Email tauranga@aphasia.org.nz to enquire about this opportunity.

*(Please note: This is **not** an **SLT role** as AphasiaNZ does not provide therapy, or therapeutic interventions, but is suited to someone with a SLT background).*

AphasiaNZ Aphasia Days

Education, Information, Resources and more...

An **Aphasia Day** is a workshop for people with aphasia and their carers, spouses and family members. Health professionals are encouraged to come too, to access resources and for learning opportunities.

The first Aphasia Day was held in Nelson in 2012. In **October 2019**, we held Aphasia Days in **New Plymouth** and **Wanganui**. We usually hold 2 Aphasia Days each year.

Aphasia Days:

- Raise awareness of what aphasia is, to benefit those living with it in our communities,
- Identify unmet needs in our regions,
- Are used for fact finding and fact delivery.



There are lots of benefits:

- People share strategies to live well with aphasia,
- People are able to meet and connect with others facing similar challenges because of aphasia,
- AphasiaNZ presents information about technology and the latest international and local aphasia news,
- Sharing what's happening locally for the aphasia community.



But there are also challenges:

- Ensuring people with aphasia find out about the Aphasia Day – getting information disseminated in local communities where AphasiaNZ is not currently offering services - can be tricky,
- Liaising successfully with busy Speech-language Therapists (SLTs) and health professionals working with people with aphasia is crucial, as they can encourage people to come along,
- Accessibility – relating to costs to attend and transport to get there.

What happens after an Aphasia Day?

- A Community Aphasia Advisor (CAA) service – if needed and financially viable,
- Links are made to local services so we can better help people,
- People affected by aphasia make new friendships and connections.

Where would you like to see an Aphasia Day in 2020?

Email info@aphasia.org.nz to let us know!



<< Clients, staff, whanau and supporters from Strive Rehabilitation Manawatu and Strive @ Hawke's Bay travelled to Wanganui to be part of the Aphasia Day

Aphasia Choirs: A New Resource

As you may already know, some people with aphasia find that although they can't speak fluently they are still able to sing – particularly familiar songs which they know well. We know that singing, particularly in a group, can help to improve your mood and emotional wellbeing. This combined benefit has led to the creation of choirs for people with aphasia and other neurological conditions around the world.



Bath Aphasia Choir

Some of the first aphasia choirs were developed in Australia and New Zealand, including the [Stroke A Chord choir](#) in Melbourne and the [CeleBRation choir](#) in Auckland.

Emma and Laura, the Speech-language Therapist and Music Therapist who originally set up the Bath Aphasia Choir in the UK, have put together a **guide** for people interested in **starting their own aphasia choir**.

This **guide** is mainly aimed at Speech and Language Therapists (SLTs) already working with people with aphasia, and Music Therapists involved in new aphasia choirs.

The **guide** is available to download here:

<https://voicesofaphasia.files.wordpress.com/2019/10/aphasia-choirs-guide.pdf>

[And click here to read about how music and the SoundsWell Singers helps Stephen, our Wellington CAA who lives with aphasia.](#)

Communication Problems After Brain Injury



A brain or head injury is the second most common cause of aphasia, after stroke. We talk often about aphasia being a consequence of stroke, but in New Zealand **90 people** sustain a **brain injury every day**...and some will have aphasia.

Shockingly, more than half of those who sustain a brain injury in New Zealand are not treated – so that's many thousands of people who are not getting their injury checked by a health provider.

Communication problems after brain injury are very common. Although most of us take it for granted, the ability to communicate requires extremely complex skills and a number of different parts of the brain are involved.

There are four main categories of the effects of brain injury. Any of these can cause communication problems:

- **Physical** - affecting how the body works,
- **Cognitive** - affecting how the person thinks, learns and remembers,
- **Emotional** - affecting how the person feels,
- **Behavioural** - affecting how a person acts.

Many people will experience more than one form of communication problem after brain injury, depending on the areas of the brain affected and the severity of the injury. It is also important to recognise that such problems may occur alongside other changes in physical, cognitive, emotional and behavioural functions.

For more information, here are a couple of places to look on the web:

From New Zealand:

<https://www.acc.co.nz/preventing-injury/traumatic-brain-injury-tbi/>

From Overseas:

<https://www.headway.org.uk/about-brain-injury/individuals/effects-of-brain-injury/>

Brain Injury New Zealand offers support and resources to those who are affected – whether it be their own injury, or the injury of a loved one.

The support groups available to those living with a brain injury differ from region to region: there are dedicated regional offices. Each office has their own connections with local brain injury support groups.

Find out more here:



<https://www.brain-injury.nz>

And contact us if you have any queries. We welcome enquires from people with brain injury-acquired aphasia, so please get in touch with us if you or your loved one are living with a brain injury and aphasia.



Looking for Information about Disability in New Zealand? Find it on www.firstport.co.nz

Replacing the old WEKA site, **Firstport** is a site for anyone looking for information, advice, support or equipment relating to disability in New Zealand. For example you can find out about:

- Disability funding streams and how to apply;
- Support available around education, transport, employment, housing and vehicle modifications;
- How to find local Disability Information Centres and support services;
- Guides and articles on disability equipment and assistive technology;
- Latest news and events related to disability;
- Real life stories and videos.

Firstport aims to be a welcoming, easy to use presence in a busy online world and is completely accessible. Users can use colour contrast, keyboard navigation, adjust text size and block animations.

Firstport is keen to make sure the look and feel of the site resonates with its target audience. The team finds information from a range of sources and is keen to receive ideas for content. They're currently working with a professional advisor to create guides on common questions and will focus

on topics that are often searched for online, or that Disability Information Centre staff get asked regularly.

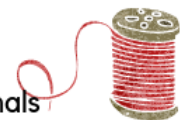
Firstport also has an active presence on Facebook. You can link up with them online at **@FirstportNZ**. If you've got ideas or feedback for the site, then contact the team at **comms@firstport.co.nz**

Check out the **Firstport** website today at www.firstport.co.nz



Aphasia Threads

a story project for people with aphasia | caregivers | professionals



Aphasia Threads is an on-going project created by the National Aphasia Association (NAA) in the US, weaving together three points-of-view: **1)** people with aphasia, **2)** caregivers, and **3)** the professionals who help each family navigate aphasia.

Each week, three unrelated stories are brought together, one from each member of this triad, to learn from their experience. The focus is on information that the NAA thinks other people need to hear about the emotional side of aphasia.

Find out more at www.aphasia.org or email melissa@aphasia.org



**National
Aphasia
Association**



Aphasia New Zealand Charitable Trust
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New and Updated Resources

AphasiaNZ Resource Library

We have recently updated the information available for people looking to borrow items from our loaning library. Click below for a comprehensive list of items for Friends of AphasiaNZ to borrow:

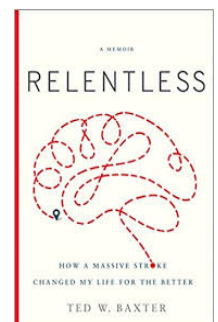


[AphasiaNZ Resource Library for Friends.](#)

We're always sourcing new items for Friends to borrow. *Kate, our Tauranga CAA, has reviewed two of our newest books:*

Relentless - How a Massive Stroke Changed my Life for the Better *by Ted Baxter*

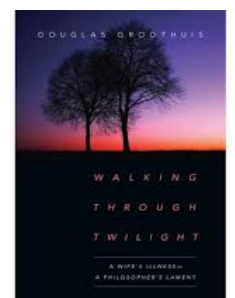
This documents his remarkable recovery from his stroke and aphasia. He had/has amazing determination - and also, being in the US, he was able to access different types of aphasia therapy over many years.



I found it very interesting to read what types of therapy had worked for him at the different stages, as well as what he hadn't liked. The take-home message is - don't give up, keep trying, and improvement can continue many years after the stroke. There is a description of an 'aphasia book club' in Relentless. I think it sounds like a great idea. *A good read!*

Walking through Twilight *by Douglas Groothuis*

A reflection on his wife's gradual deterioration with



dementia. Philosophical and spiritual in nature, there were aspects of the book I found difficult, particularly around his perceptions of his wife. *However, this may appeal to people with a strong Christian faith.*

Tactus Therapy Website

We've mentioned Tactus Therapy before – not only are their apps cost effective and useful for many with aphasia and people with communication problems, but they have some wonderful free and accessible resources. Have a look at their '[50 Things You Can Do Right Now to Help Your Loved One with Aphasia](#)' (*free download*) and their [App Finder](#). Go to www.tactustherapy.com to access both of these.

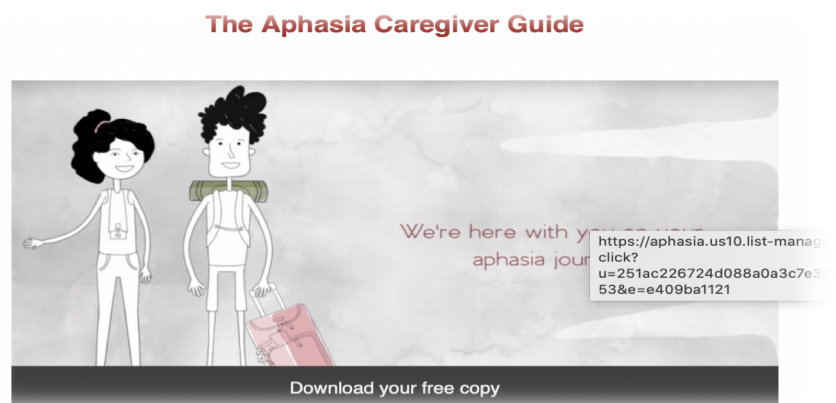


The Aphasia Caregiver Guide

Produced by the National Aphasia Association (NAA) in the US, this is an e-book for those with a loved one with aphasia; advice for navigating aphasia and your loved one's care without losing yourself on the journey.

While some of the content is specific to those living in the US, there is a lot of useful information for people living in New Zealand and throughout the world.

Visit the NAA's website [by clicking here](#) and download your **free** copy.



Our Contact Details



You can get in touch with us in the following ways:

By writing to us:

AphasiaNZ, PO Box 13435, Tauranga Central, Tauranga 3141

By making an appointment and visiting us:

At 36 Cameron Road, Tauranga 3110

By calling us:

In the office on (07) 220 9973, *OR*

On our free phone number **0508 APHASIA**
(0508 274 274)

By emailing us:

info@aphasia.org.nz

Through our website:

www.aphasia.org.nz

On our Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/AphasiaNZ



We look forward to hearing from you

E tatari ana matou ki te whakarongo ki a koe

Can you Help with a Donation?



As a Charitable Trust which does not have members, we do not ask for a yearly 'membership' fee or payment.

But as you may know, we do not receive government funding and grants and donations enable us to provide all services and resources.

It is only with your help and support that we can continue to provide vital and much-used services and resources in our communities.

Can you help us by making a donation?

Your donation will be used to ensure people with and affected by aphasia can access support, information and resources.

Donations enable us to provide Community Aphasia Advisor (CAA) field officer services across New Zealand's main centres.

Donations can be made online into the AphasiaNZ bank account, by posting a cheque, or by credit card via PayPal online.

As AphasiaNZ is an approved donee organisation, you can claim a 33.33% tax credit for all donations over \$5.00. [*Information about tax credits from the IRD is available here.*](#)

Please click here to donate online today!

If you donated during our September donation drive, thank you for your support!