

Feet First



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July 2003

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Special points of interest:

- **AMGFA supports professionalism in the Medical Grade Footwear Industry.**
- **Two day Seminar and Workshop 9-10 August.**
- **AGM — 8 August.**
- **Contact Frances Reeves to book.**
- **Refer insert for more details.**

THE SEMINAR IS COMING TO TOWN!!!

The AMGFA has continually lobbied for greater professionalism in the Australian Medical Grade Footwear industry and is now making a bold statement to industry by holding a two-day workshop and seminar in Melbourne.

The seminar is scheduled in conjunction with the Association's Annual General Meeting on the second weekend in August and will feature Prof. Dr. Neff – the Orthopaedic specialist from Germany. Other presenters will include: Mr. Will Edwards – Orthopaedic Surgeon, Karl Schott – Medical Grade Footwear Practitioner, Peter Reeves – Management Consultant and others. The venue for the semina/workshop is the Australian Catholic University.

This event is open to all people interested in the topics. There will be no questionnaires and no prerequisite to come; there is also no excuse not to come. It is the biggest event we have put together so far and we need you to show up to prove that the Medical Grade Footwear Industry is moving forward. You are not a member? No problem you are welcome and there is no pressure to join our Association.

This seminar is a part of our commitment to providing continuing Professional Development to our members and improving the quality of products provided to MGF practitioners to the Australian public.

As part of the AGM, four members of the current management committee will be resigning, but all are eligible for re-election.

The announcement for the AGM is being sent to all members with this issue of

Feet First together with nomination forms and proxy forms.

Frances Reeves will be accepting nominations for Board members and registering proxies. Please contact her to confirm your booking.

This year we will be raising the issue of a review of our rules and regulations. These have not been reviewed since the AMGFA was incorporated and we need to ensure that they still reflect the way we want our association to work.

Accommodation specials have been arranged at the Metropole Apartments and Conference Centre where the Annual General Meeting will be held on the Friday night. You will have to make your own booking directly with the Hotel. The Hotel features studio and apartment style accommodation so bring your partner or share with a mate.

Check the inserted announcement for further details and call Frances Reeves on (02) 9823 0684 to book.

**AGM
and
WORKSHOPS
8/9/10 AUGUST
BOOK NOW!**



VICTORIAN REPORT

The Victorian members of the AMGFA attended a presentation by Karl Schott at the Whitehorse Hotel on Wednesday 14th May. The meeting was widely advertised to the Orthopaedic industry in the Melbourne area and there was a pleasing response. Twenty-two members and non-members attended to hear Karl speak about the key issues affecting the profession and what AMGFA is doing to help the practitioners.

In addition to a recruitment drive for AMGFA, Karl also made a very professional presentation covering some of the technical aspects of Orthopaedic shoemaking. It is clear why he is in such demand as a trainer and presenter both in Australia and overseas.

Those attending were a good mix of Orthopaedic

shoemakers, Orthopaedic shoe repairers and medical grade footwear retailers. The evening was an excellent opportunity to learn a little more about what is happening in the provision and advice on medical grade footwear and what is happening in our industry.

The evening was completed with an opportunity for networking and more one-on-one discussions of what is happening in the industry. It is expected that a number of guests that attended will join the association in the coming months.

The Victorian members of the association will also be hosting the Annual General Meeting and Presentation/Workshop over the weekend 8-10 August. See elsewhere in the newsletter for details.

Victorian State Representative
 Convenor of our AGM and Course 2003
 Libby Newman

NSW REPORT

The members of the AMGFA in NSW met at the Concord RSL Club on 15th April as a part of a regular program of meetings in the state. It was well attended with most of the AMGFA executive in attendance and six other members and six guests.

Garry Malley and Danielle Lunney from Mason Grogan Pty Ltd gave a detailed presentation on their product range. There was literature and samples provided of insole boards, poron, filler material and medical grade foot beds for inspection and testing. Both Gary and Danielle showed an extensive knowledge of the products and the requirements of Medical Grade Footwear.

The attendees were also informed that Mason Grogan Pty Ltd will shortly be including a new supplier to their product range – "Health Design". This means that they will shortly have available post-operative footwear and larger/deeper foot impression boxes.

Members showed considerable interest in a sample of high/back ankle-strap post-op boots and a heat moldable filler material suitable for boots.

Mason Grogan Pty Ltd will shortly be printing a new catalogue/price list for poron etc. Gary indicated that copies will be sent to everyone at the meeting.

There was also a proposal from Gary that the members of AMGFA cooperate to purchase some of the materials that are only available in bulk, so that costs can be reduced and storerooms do not become overstocked. The idea was discussed and the executive committee resolved to follow up on the possibilities.

Other issues covered at the meeting were, the problems of NSW Repairers Association, Health Insurance impacts on Medical Grade Footwear, First Aid courses for members and the possibility for AMGFA conducting a regular series of workshops in conjunction with TAFE. Ron Henson was asked to follow up with TAFE and report back to the members on what can be done.

The AMGFA Quality Assurance System and CMGFP certification process held considerable interest to both members and guests alike.

The meeting finished at 9:30 with an opportunity for further informal networking.

NSW Coordinator – Alfredo Roldan

ADVERTISE IN *Feet First*

The next newsletter will be published in October if you wish to advertise your products or services please contact:

MRS FRANCES REEVES
 AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL GRADE FOOTWEAR ASSOC. INC.
 P. O BOX 5144
 PRESTONS NSW 2170

A nominal fee will be charged.



From the President's Desk

Welcome to the second edition of our new style newsletter and I would like to thank all those members who went out of their way to complement Frances Reeves on putting it together for us. It is our intention to publish "Feet First" four times per year, with every second issue including a technical or clinical paper on some aspect of Medical Grade Footwear. The first issue triggered some responses from non-industry people showing clearly that the wider community and especially the medical and paramedical community observes our efforts with interest.

This has been a very productive three months with Queensland, NSW and Victoria members holding state meetings and further publicizing AMGFA to other interested parties. The reports on these meetings are found in this newsletter.

Our two major programs, the Practitioners Certification Program and Quality Assurance Program are meeting with success, and I urge all members to get involved with them. Do not be left behind!! It is only by showing that we, and that includes you, support professionalism and quality will we be able to lift our creditability with government, insurance companies and our The AGM will be held in Melbourne on 8th August and will be followed by a two-day seminar on aspects of Medical Grade Footwear. I hope that all members will be able to attend. I have been able to get Dr. Neff to be our keynote presenter and with a number of other speakers, this will be a major event that you will not want to miss.

We will be looking for technical/clinical articles for further issues of "Feet First", so if you have an interesting case you would like to present or a new technique to share, you are encouraged to contact Frances Reeves to include it in our next available issue.

AMGFA will shortly be launching its new website at www.amgfa.org.au for information of our members, referrers and patients.

Make your voice heard and come to the AGM.

Karl

QUEENSLAND REPORT

MGF Industry meet about every 10-12 weeks usually 4-5 are represented including 1 retailer.

We continue to have ongoing problems with the State Health regarding the contributions paid by them for MG custom footwear. This system has been under review for about 24 months. We were given an opportunity to discuss our concerns with them and to provide an input in the administrative and funding arrangements at the time. Our main objective was to make the system fairer for all people receiving MGF by having differing price subsidy for each category of Medical Footwear. We believe our suggestions would not add additional cost to the Dept and would possibly be a saving to them. Our proposal ensures all people receiving MGF would contribute to their footwear whether Depth or Custom, unlike now where it is usually only custom patients who need to pay over the \$350.00 subsidy.

We are still waiting, however feedback does seem positive.

Our hospital assistance for MGF is almost non-existing unless you have some affiliation with an orthotist, as they appear to be the first choice. This therefore eliminates all patients except the more complicated for

the MGF maker, however as the hospital subsidy is the same as the State Health we find little return for this work.

Most suppliers are receiving fewer DVA referrals in QLD since the podiatrists have been provided with a minimum clinical requirement for the provision of MGF. This involves about 15 clinical situations where MGF can be prescribed, most of which are severe in category or of high risk to the patient. If this is followed to the letter, it would virtually eliminate the need for depth footwear, as MG depth would not be an appropriate request for this level of patient. Is that what DVA wants?

As all Queensland footwear providers are good sports and gracious losers, we extend our best wishes to all NSW supporters in the State of Origin series. In conclusion, as our best players in league will be doing us all proud as we defend the world cup in Rugby Union (the greatest game) it was expected.

Queensland Coordinator
Glen Wiley

Feet First



AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL GRADE
FOOTWEAR ASSOC. INC.

P. O BOX 5144
PRESTONS NSW 2170

PH: (02) 9823 0684
FAX: (02) 9610 7950
EMAIL:: freeves@bigpond.net.au



COMMITTEE MEMBERS

President: Karl Schott
Secretary: Mr Casper Ozinga
Treasurer: Mr Ron Henson

Dear Editor,

Congratulations on the FEET FIRST Newsletter. It looks fabulous. The colour print is great and the whole effort was terrific.

I read with great interest one of the articles from last months AMGFA newsletter.

The article was the study on the Variations in Shoe Construction and the Influence on Plantar pressure of the Foot.

I found it to be of immense value. Of course this level and range of study would be mostly impossible in Australia.

Firstly because we do not have a public (or private) institute that would be able to do the study effectively. Our Podiatry Institute colleagues may disagree with that comment, but this study has been done in my opinion so completely from the Medical Grade Footwear perspective, it's refreshing! The only way a study of this range and depth like this could be done in Australia is plenty of funding and a lot of MGFheads together to be absolutely clear what is to be achieved, and a hell of a lot of co-ordinating. Well done to the Germans (and translators).

It took me (a bit slower than the average) quite a few reads of the article and lots of highlighting and underlining and circling. I

looked hard at all the graphs and found some to be quite hard to understand even with deep investigation of the graph legends. Colour certainly helped with graph investigation. Actually it was probably essential to understanding any of them.

The translation was a bit strange in parts or did the article repeat itself in parts?

An understanding of physics – pressure calculations - was necessary if every statistic was to be gleaned. I didn't take Physics at high school but I was still able to understand most of what was said. Anyway any criticism can only be minor at worst.

Of course the aim of the article was to report on the study attempted. This was the main reason for me reading it (of course).

I was fascinated of the excellent results neoprene and latex had over leather when dorsal pressures were tested. The testing and results is absolutely conclusive.

The testing on volume was as expected but still, these stats are even more useful. How so? Well, if the dorsal pressure above the met heads is effected so dramatically by a reduction of 1.5cm of met circumference this is a strong argument for a custom made footwear for diabetics with H/V or clawed IPJ's or other prominent deformities.

Remember it was reduced by only 15 mm in circumference – that's not that much. I wrapped a tape measure around the MPJ girth and it is the equivalent of adding a 4mm insole to the fore foot.

I see diabetic people with these type deformities using stock footwear or worse, being *allowed* to use stock footwear by allied health professionals with no regard to pressure created. These figures show everybody that this is risky.

So, we have some educating to do.

The analysis on shoe modification is hard to examine clearly. The stats done on the "in motion" graph tell most of the story. I was very surprised to see the 'Rocker bar only' stats worse than 'No modification' in Medial and Lateral Met area and toe area. Overall I was unconvinced sole stiffening and Rocker sole are very different from each other and each should be used when patient and footwear circumstances indicate one being more practically useful than another.

How does this study affect the MGF industry in Australia?

With the rise of Australia's epidemic of diabetes in the elderly, people living longer with poorer diets, pressure areas on the foot are only going to get more commonplace.

If the legacy of the 50's and 60's with the high heel use by women in their 20's, 30's and 40's is H/V and ankle skeletal/muscular deterioration, then surely the diet excesses of the 80's and 90's will be diabetes.

- Does the MGF retail sector need to look at latex and neoprene upper shoe manufacturers as suppliers?
- Do we need to look for material suppliers for the custom made footwear sector that should now incorporate in it's armoury of material choice - Neoprene and Latex?
- Should we start some testing of our own with regards to plantar pressure when using differing types of modifications?
- How do we start to educate allied health professionals about pressure areas and ill fitting footwear?

Ernie Tye MGFPrac.

CALENDAR 2003

Date	Event	Location	Contact
02.08.2003 and/or 03.08.2003	Interviews for Certification for Custom-made Medical Grade Footwear	Chamber of Commerce Office 11, 695 The Horsley Drive, Smithfield NSW 2164	Peter Reeves Email: preeves@rimconsulting.com.au
08.08.2003	AGM - Melbourne	The Metropole Hotel Apartments & Conference Centre 44 Brunswick Street Fitzroy VIC 3065	Frances Reeves Email: freeves@bigpond.net.au Telephone: 02 9823 0684
09.08.2003 to 10.08.2003	Medical Grade Footwear Conference- Melbourne with Prof. Dr. Neff International Key Note Speaker	Australian Catholic University Mercy Lecture Theatre 115 Victoria Parade Fitzroy Victoria 3065	
09.08.2003	Social Dinner with conference participants	TBA	