

Welcome to another edition of

AIR FLOW

Number BW9, March 2011

Edited by Bruce Whitfield, Canterbury Branch Member.

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Well folks... this is it! Due to the developing pain in both my elbows, I have reluctantly decided to greatly reduce the amount of computing I am doing, hence, this will be the last AIR FLOW newsletter that I edit. I have thoroughly enjoyed the experience of writing, collating, editing & producing this document over the past 2 years. I am sad to be standing aside, but Mother Nature dictates that I should.

Hopefully, at least one of you will give consideration about stepping into the role of AIR FLOW editor, and we can elect someone to the position at the upcoming Speak Easy AGM to be held in Christchurch in May 2011.

Nina & I recently watched a good movie on TV called "LIAM". It was about a little boy who lived in Lancashire around the time of the great depression. The poor wee lad had a terrible stutter. I hope you can all get to see it sometime.

ANOTHER OF MURPHY'S OBSERVATIONS

Speed dating was not invented by a person who stutters!!!

P.S. I have just got myself a mobile phone: Bruce Whitfield 022-68-131-86

**Invites all its members plus anyone else
with an interest in stuttering to their**

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2011

COST: \$10 per person

THEME: “Life begins at the edge of your comfort zone”!

**VENUE: Coppertop Room, Commerce Building, University of Canterbury,
Creyke Road, Christchurch (as in 2007)**

FRIDAY 27th May 7pm

**Welcome, Oratory Competition (Topic: ONE DAY SOON)
Guest Speaker, Supper & Fellowship**

SATURDAY 28th May

8.45 am Relaxation followed by Annual General Meeting

12 noon Lunch

1pm Guest Speakers

4pm Open Forum

7pm Pre-dinner drinks

7.30pm Smorgasbord meal at “Sequoia 88” restaurant

Partners welcome (\$28.80 adults, \$26.80 seniors)

**RSVP to your branch president ASAP if you plan to attend
& include your accommodation needs.**

Accommodation will be at the Academy Motor Lodge

www.academymotorlodge.co.nz

This is just a short walk from the venue

Further information can be obtained from:

Bruce Whitfield (03) 343-0053

Email: brucepw@slingshot.co.nz

NEW ZEALAND SPEAKEASY ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

ORATORY COMPETITION RULES

- 1.** The competition is to be known as the New Zealand Speak Easy Association Oratory Competition and is to be held in conjunction with the Annual Conference of the Association.

- 2.** Each branch is eligible to be represented by two orators who are financial members of their branch. The organisers of the competition shall accept other entries at their discretion. The winner of the previous year's Competition will be accorded automatic entry into the Competition.

- 3.** A topic (or topics) will be provided by the organisers and made available to each branch at least two months before the competition.

- 4.** The duration of a competitor's speech is to be within three and a half to four and a half minutes and the judges may at their discretion deduct points when a speech falls outside these limits. Up to one and a half minutes extra may be used for setting up props etc for use in the speech.

- 5.** The Competition organisers will be responsible for providing a judging panel, the composition of which will be at their discretion.

- 6.** The speaking order of the competitors will be chosen at random by the Competition organisers.

- 7.** In the event of a tie for first place, winners will be given a topic chosen by the organisers and asked to speak on it for up to two minutes, after a preparation time of ten minutes.

Fat Tongue

By Rachel J. Fenton

Neither tree lined nor hidden;
the path, a fat tongue lolled between green cheeks, stuttering.
we pad on, stranger still, save our talk for darker places.

Gecko

You once licked my eye laying close as a gecko.
We giggled,
your voice, tear-lightened,
accepting in darkness what others flinch from by day.

Rachel J. Fenton lives in Auckland and has poetry, prose and criticism housed in **Otoliths**, **Ramshackle Review**, **Melusine**, **Camroc Press Review**, and other diverse magazines and journals. Her flash "Rogue Trading" was shortlisted for the Fish 2010 One Page Prize and "One Of These Days" was longlisted for the Sean O' Faolain 2010 International Short Story Prize. Links to published works can be found on her blog: [snowlikethought](http://snowlikethought.com). She is married to a stutterer.

Incidentally, I have another poem about stuttering on my blog, titled "Aubade To Balbettare", which you or your readers may find of interest.

Kindest regards,
Rachel

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Bruce Whitfield

Firstly, did you all go & see the movie "THE KING'S SPEECH"? If you did miss it (shame on you) you can always hire it when it comes out on DVD.

What were your impressions? Did it make you feel more motivated? Did it give you hope? How did the techniques used in the movie compare with the techniques you use? Did you do anything to take advantage of the publicity surrounding the movie to promote the NZ Speak Easy Assn?

I visited most of the movie theatres in Christchurch & asked if they would be happy to put NZSEA brochures on their counter while the movie was showing. All but one were obliging. I have had no enquiries so far, but I live in hope.

Secondly, as I mentioned in the previous edition of AIR FLOW, I will be stepping down as president of the national body. Once again I have enjoyed & learnt much from the experience. I will still be carrying on & working hard at my own personal development & encouraging others to do the same. I trust there will be someone to step into the role & keep the Speak Easy flag flying. Be proactive & accept the challenge!

Thirdly, just a reminder about the annual NZSEA essay competition.

TOPIC: must be about stuttering

LENGTH: maximum 1,000 words

DEADLINE: 30th April 2011

EMAIL ENTRIES TO: brucepw@slingshot.co.nz

Fourthly, all NZSEA branches are asked to submit a written entry for the "BEST GROUP" award. The submissions will be judged at the AGM in Christchurch in May 2011. Also, written entries are requested for the "BEST NEW MEMBER" award. (Let's hope there are some new members).

Finally, in January I got the opportunity to speak at the Memorial Service for a very good team-mate from my teenage cycle racing years in the 1960's. I only had 3 days to prepare, but I kept it brief, practised with Nina & a couple of other people & felt I could do well. The day was pleasant outside but the temperature & stuffiness in the room was almost unbearable! I estimated nearly 300 attendees! Speakers prior to me spoke at great length. I fought back tears listening to ever one of them. Eventually after 1½hrs my turn came around. Sweat, due to the heat, was just running off me. My singlet & a new shirt were soaking wet. How none of the oldies in the room never collapsed with the

conditions I don't know. Anyway, I went to the front of the room, used the lectern & microphone, fought back my emotions & said my spiel, glancing at my notes, looking at the congregation when I spoke, breathing deeply, speaking assertively, ad libbing a couple of times, not using any filler words or sounds, and eventually being satisfied with a job well done. I got some good feedback from a few people & caught up with a number of ex-racing cyclists from those heady days of the 1960's. Wow, I felt great!

A VISIT TO BEIJING

By Stephen Hoare-Vance

The first semester of teaching has finished and I have *two months* holiday! My speech has been severely tested with many situations in China, and one of the things I want to do with any spare time is better prepare for the coming classes. I stutter a little with different people and I only wonder if someone gets to know me really well they will hear that actually I stutter a lot. Actually I've found a lovely Chinese girlfriend recently and this experience seems to be helping my speech in actual fact.

Anyway, I decided to take a break and head to Beijing - the big smoke, which is three hours away by train. I did some preparation by thinking of some things I would like to do, and contacted someone for the Beijing Stutterer's Association. Arriving at the main station not knowing where my hostel accommodation was, I fell victim to a predatory taxi driver who approached me in English and once in the cab proposed a very expensive fare. I accepted it and made it to where I wanted to go, but I will tell them to "jump in a lake!" the next time.



I began walking around and found my way to “The centre of the Chinese universe” as Tiananmen Square is known. There is no sign of the democracy protests of June 1989 but the landmarks remain such as the Monument to the People’s Heroes where the last students gathered while tanks rolled into the city twenty years ago. And who would say that China now does not have more democracy than it ever has had, when the people are getting what they want? Chinese people have much more economic development now and the chance of more to come. There were plenty of people filing past the tomb of Mao Zedong who helped found the socialist nation in 1949.

By contacting Albert Zhang who I met at the 2004 World Congress of People who Stutter in Freemantle Australia, I was able to communicate with a member of the Beijing Stutterer’s Association; Li Zongshan. He gave me directions to meet near a subway station, and this was my first test: finding my way there. After spending some time in cafes studying maps I bought a ticket, transferred trains and made it to the appropriate location. Psychologically it is very rewarding doing things for the first time and I saw how many of the locals travel - very conveniently I might add.

Li Zongshan took me to a Pizza Hut restaurant and impressed me with the quality of his speech and how much we had to talk about. He is studying

Tibetan tree rings and climate change for an advanced degree and is 32 years old. He said that there is not a lot of speech therapy available in China, but in Beijing there are 12 stutterer's associations. These had been a big help to him and although he used to find people made fun of him, now many people are not worried if he stutters. He also knew Stephan Hoffman, who had been Vice-President of the International Stuttering Association, had lived in China for some years, and whom I met in Freemantle.

After three days in the nation's capital I walked to the railway station - it took one and a quarter hours but it didn't cost anything. I hope Li Zongshan can visit me in Tangshan otherwise I'll be in debt to another Chinese person for a meal. At least I've got some more things to talk to the students about.



INCREASING PUBLIC AWARENESS

Alan Badmington speaks of his own experiences of addressing community organisations and approaching the media, while also offering suggestions on how to follow suit.

Those who were present during the 'open microphone' session at the last BSA conference will have heard me speak of the need to create a greater public awareness about stuttering. How can we expect others to understand what is happening, or know how to react, when we suddenly block or display secondary behaviours? In many instances, even members of our own families have little knowledge about the difficulties that we experience.

So, isn't it time that we did something about it? My comments are directed towards persons who stutter - you, me and the other 75,000 who live in the UK. Who better to relate our stories, than those of us who have encountered the problem for so long, very often since childhood?

Two years ago, I decided to do just that - I felt it was time that others should become better acquainted with what it is like to be a PWS. I also saw it as a means of expanding my comfort zones, by placing myself in those challenging speaking situations that I had always avoided.

I initially prepared for the venture by joining the Association of Speakers Clubs to improve my confidence and presentational skills. Having stuttered since childhood, I knew I had to change the belief that I could never successfully perform such a role. I needed to revise my self-image, so that I could fulfil my lifelong dream of becoming a public speaker.

There are many avenues that may be explored: public speaking, newspapers, magazines, radio and television. Let me deal with them in that order.

Public Speaking

I was surprised to learn of the numerous organisations within

the community that require speakers for their regular meetings. The majority convene weekly or fortnightly. It's just a question of letting them know of your availability. Strangely enough, I didn't have to make much of an effort. A former colleague learned of my desire to spread the word and (unknown to me) suggested to the secretary of his local Probus Club (a country-wide network comprising professional and business persons) that they might invite me to speak at one of their future meetings.

I spoke for an hour on the many problems that I have encountered. The degree of interest that my talk had generated was overwhelming. I told them about the avoidances; the secondary behaviours; the emotional baggage; the heartache, frustration and lost opportunities that blighted my career as a police officer. You could hear a pin drop as I graphically described my experiences, with the aid of numerous anecdotes.

But it was not all doom and gloom - I introduced humour. I spoke about the time I invented a false identity (Adrian Adams) at the dry-cleaner's because I could not say my name. Unknown to me, someone else decided to collect the items on my behalf. When she requested the jacket and trousers for Alan Badmington, there was no record. That required a great deal of explanation.

Since that introductory talk, my speaking engagements have escalated dramatically, as news has filtered rapidly along the community grapevine. The need for new speakers is insatiable and those who join the 'circuit' become very much in demand. Without virtually any promotion, I currently have a programme of engagements that extends well into 2004. They include such organisations as the Women's Institute, Rotary Club, Towns Women's Guild, church groups, St John Ambulance Brigade, a history society and many other Probus clubs. In some cases, I am returning for a second and third time to present subjects not related to stuttering.

A pleasant bonus is that I receive financial donations to help the BSA. I am also frequently invited to join the hosts for a

meal - thereby further improving my social and interpersonal skills.

One final point: Most groups tend to organise their speakers at least 6-12 months in advance, so it is unlikely that you will secure a vacancy in the immediate future, unless a cancellation occurs. Don't let that deter you. Scour the local directories and contact the respective group secretaries as soon as possible. Make a decision and act now. You'll generally have plenty of time to prepare for the actual event.

Facing up to one's fears requires courage but the rewards are immense. Quite apart from the personal satisfaction that you will derive, you have the added incentive of knowing that your actions could be beneficial to everyone who stutters.

Approaching the media

Newspapers

Start modestly by approaching your local paper - they are always looking for newsworthy items with a human touch. Each person who stutters (PWS) is unique and has a different story to tell.

Call into the office - I have found that a personal approach achieves far greater success. Prepare a news release, outlining the story or message(s) you want to convey. Compile a few quotes - they will be most welcome. Reporters prefer to have a hard copy from which they can work, and you will probably find that it takes the pressure off you. Alternatively, submit your details by post or email, and then follow it up with a visit or a telephone call a few days later. Don't forget to include your contact number or email address.

You can expect further questioning to develop the article, or to clarify any points. Talk about yourself, make it personal - and mention the BSA and the services it provides. Refer to the guidance for parents, children, teenagers, adults, partners, teachers, employers and friends. Emphasise that you wish other PWS to know about the BSA, so they no longer feel

isolated. Tell them how becoming a member has influenced your life and give details of the website and helpline. Reporters will have their own ideas of how they wish to compose an article - you are entirely in their hands. But that does not prevent you from emphasising any points that you would like to be included.

One word of caution, do not attempt to promote any particular therapy or programme, as this could be seen as seeking free advertising. Where appropriate, such involvement could be introduced into your overall story.

You can, of course, quite properly publicise the silver jubilee conference, particularly if you are involved in a workshop. It would also be an ideal opportunity to mention BSA open days and sponsored activities.

Magazines

National magazines occasionally feature articles about stuttering. Should you have a particularly interesting story to tell, why not submit a rough draft? It needn't be a masterpiece - an outline and some facts will suffice. Journalists are trained to write the articles, not you. Look at back issues for contact details and the nature and format of previous features.

Trade journals associated with a particular employment, trade union, hobby, sport, or leisure activity are other areas to explore, together with church magazines.

Radio

Local radio is easily accessible via regular phone-in programmes. These provide a very effective means to get on air. If you are looking to expand your comfort zone, make a few notes beforehand so that you do not overlook any important points. Then just pick up the telephone and call them. Some stations present shows where the caller is allowed to choose the topic about which he/she wishes to speak. An assistant will initially screen your call and require a broad

outline of what you intend to say. When you are eventually connected to the show, the presenter will have already been briefed about your proposed contribution.

I frequently telephone radio stations to contribute to current affairs programmes that involve 'live' listener participation. At my suggestion, BBC Radio Wales (the national station for the Principality) devoted one show to stuttering and other speech problems.

On another occasion, I rang in to take part in a debate: "The lost art of conversation". I introduced an entirely different aspect when I mentioned that many PWS are denied opportunities to develop inter-personal skills. As one of the panellists was a teacher, I also outlined some of the problems that stuttering creates within a school environment.

After contacting BBC Radio Wales, I was later invited to Broadcasting House in Cardiff to take part in four live prime-time broadcasts on stuttering. A fifth interview related to consumer competitions, a former lucrative pastime of mine.

Each was preceded by a lengthy chat with a researcher who prepared a list of questions for the interviewer. You can be assertive and request sight of the questions in advance of the interview - even if it's only 10 minutes before you are due to go 'on air'. I found such preparation invaluable.

Other radio stations run competitions, where listeners are invited to ring in with the answers. In many cases the host will engage you in a little chitchat before requesting the competition response. Whenever I am asked about my interests, I turn the conversation around to my involvement within the stuttering community. It has never failed to create interest.

Television

The nature of television is that news programmes/bulletins generally relate to a wide geographical area. Production costs are also much greater than in other branches of the media;

consequently, only the more newsworthy stories are likely to be featured. Nevertheless, stuttering has generated far greater publicity recently, as illustrated by the forthcoming BBC television documentary.

International Stuttering Awareness Day

If you have ever considered increasing public awareness about stuttering, the forthcoming International Stuttering Awareness Day (ISAD) will present you with a golden opportunity to bring the subject to the fore.

Link your story to ISAD; relate the fact that it is celebrated annually on October 22. Tell them what you, your support group, and the BSA are planning for that day. Due to ISAD's worldwide status, I suspect that most newspapers will wish to include an item about that event. If you make it sufficiently newsworthy, radio and television might express an interest. (See our [International Stammering Awareness Day](#) page for more on ISAD, Webmaster.).

Being open

During the past few years, I have talked openly about my stutter on TV, radio, newspapers, the internet and to large groups of strangers, both here and the USA. I have been so heartened by the reactions I have received. Almost everyone showed the utmost courtesy, while many expressed an apparently genuine interest in the subject.

As a result, I have become totally desensitised. My beliefs and perceptions of what others think about my speech are now extremely positive. This has greatly assisted my passage to self-acceptance.

Approaching the media presents a sizeable challenge, but the rewards are immense. It involves moving out of your comfort zone, widening your self-image and placing yourself in new situations. If you are not ready to explore those uncharted waters alone, you might feel more confident if accompanied by someone else who stutters. Is there anyone with whom you

might wish to share the adventure?

Living a safe and predictable life denies us opportunities to discover just how courageous and extraordinary we are. We gain strength and confidence each time we confront our fears. I have gained a lot of personal satisfaction through my speaking engagements within the community and extensive media involvement.

I earnestly believe that the lives of many people who stutter can be significantly improved by creating a greater public understanding of our difficulties. I feel that we all have our part to play in increasing awareness - it is to our mutual benefit. Why not take up the challenge? Hopefully, others will then be inspired to follow suit.

TECHNIQUE CORNER

Do not avoid ANY opportunities to speak

Do not avoid ANY words or sounds

Do not avoid good eye contact

Do not inhale & hold your breath

Do not stand or sit with a bad posture

Do have it clear in your mind what you are going to say

Do have the attitude that you are a good speaker

Do concentrate on using strong technique

Do as much practise as possible

Do be polite & have consideration for your listener(s)

McGUIRE PROGRAMME NZ NEWS

By Bruce Whitfield

McGuire graduate Rob Woolley from Christchurch has confirmed he will be attending the Sydney intensive course in March 2011. A handful of North Island graduates are still debating whether to make the journey also. I have already booked my flights & advised Geoff Johnston that I will be at the Melbourne course in July. (During which I will celebrate my 64th birthday). I will actually be in Melbourne for 2 weeks to do a few touristy things as well & to escape the Christchurch winter for a short while.

A UK McGuire graduate, Jon Bielby, now living in Auckland with his wife & 2 children has made contact with us & is keen to have contact with other people who stutter. Jon says he did his first course in Edinburgh & emigrated to NZ in 2007. Welcome to Godzone & our small but determined group of PWS. Jon's wife, Rachel Fenton, is the author of the poetry published on page 2 of the edition of AIR FLOW. A talented lady indeed!

I still host the only regular support group in New Zealand for McGuire graduates. We meet on a Monday evening every fortnight at my house. We usually have a group of about five. There is always lots of hard work involved, intermingled with plenty of laughs.

The Canterbury graduates will hold a Refresher Day probably in April or May 2011 to which everybody is welcome. I plan to moot the idea that we all chip in to pay for an Australian course instructor to come to Christchurch to host a full weekend refresher. Failing that, there could well be a refresher in Levin again towards the end of the year.

The schedule for McGuire Programme courses in Australia for 2011 is as follows:

Sydney – 24-27 March

Melbourne–14-17 July

Sydney – 6-9 October

More information is available at:

www.mcguireprogramme.com

Please direct any enquiries to:

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Should a new editor be found, the editorial deadline for the next edition of AIR FLOW will be: 31st May 2011

A sincere thank you to those people who submitted a contribution to this edition.

Bruce Whitfield, Editor.

Recent back issues of AIR FLOW can be viewed on the New Zealand Speak Easy Assn website at: <http://sites.google.com/site/nzspeakeasyassn/>

Some other websites relating to stuttering are:

www.stutterisa.org/

<http://www.mcguireprogramme.com/>

<http://www.stutteringinnovations.com/>

<http://www.mnsu.edu/comdis/kuster/stutter.html> (the stuttering home page)

<http://www.stuttering.co.nz/>

<http://www.speecheasy.com/>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stuttering>

<http://www.cmds.canterbury.ac.nz/>

<http://www.casafuturetech.com/>

<http://www.stutteringhelp.org/>

<http://www.stutteringdissolution.com/>