



Celebrating 30 Years of Lead-Safety Advocacy cont'd

The book “Local Heroes” (see <https://lead.org.au/lheroes.html> which quotes Professor Brian Gulson, head of The LEAD Group’s Technical Advisory Board, waxing lyrical about the book) includes the chapter I wrote for the book (Chapter 1) about the founding and first dozen years of The LEAD Group. Chapter 1 is online at <https://lead.org.au/lanv14n2/lanv14n2-11.html>

“Local Heroes” Chapter 3 is also about the history of lead campaigning in Australia. It (is not online but) was written by Theresa Gordon of No-LEAD. Our two lead campaigns (LEAD Group about all sources of lead and No-LEAD mainly against the Boolaroo lead smelter near Newcastle in NSW) worked hand-in-hand until the Pasminco lead smelter at Boolaroo (which I believe received most of its ore from Broken Hill) was finally closed and No-LEAD disbanded. The LEAD Group and No-LEAD did also combine with Greenpeace to try to speed up the phase-out of leaded petrol in Australia but to my horror it was 10 years after we thought we’d been successful (by getting a 2 cents per litre price hike on leaded petrol and the promise of a lead phase-down schedule) before 1st January 2002 rolled round and leaded petrol was finally “eliminated” in Australia. Sadly, as Theresa pointed out recently, leaded AvGas continues to be used in Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory (NT) in Australia. See <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-07-06/higher-blood-lead-levels-for-nt-kids-sniffing-fuel/8676550>

The only follow-up of post-“Local-Heroes”-chapter LEAD Group history that I’ve written appears from time to time online in the “Annual Report” and “Review of Objectives”:

eg for 2002 <https://lead.org.au/tlgar2002.pdf>

for 2010 <https://lead.org.au/tlg18yr2010.pdf>

and the President’s Reports at <https://leadsafeworld.com/about-us/reports/>:

eg for 2009 at https://www.lead.org.au/The_LEAD_Group_Presidents_Report_2009.pdf

for 2014 at https://lead.org.au/The_LEAD_Group_Inc_President's_Report_FY2014.pdf

Happily, we now have a Lead Archives Digitization Project (LADP) team going through thousands of paper files and a slice of life from 2002 was recently uncovered and is published for the first time in this newsletter – see “Global Dimensions of Lead” below.

Online LEAD Group history articles by other people (both ex-journalists and LEAD Group volunteer writers) include:

1. Liz: as persistent as lead - Snapshot of Elizabeth O'Brien's lead campaign 3 years into the campaign” by Noela Whitton at <https://www.lead.org.au/lanv11n1/lanv11n1-3.html> (written in 1993 but only published in Sept 2010) [and I answered some follow-up questions arising from that article, at <https://www.lead.org.au/lanv11n1/lanv11n1-4.html>];



2. “Elizabeth and The LEAD Group Twenty Years On” by Anne Roberts at <https://www.lead.org.au/lanv11n1/lanv11n1-5.html> (written and published in Sept 2010 and including a photo of Brian Gulson and I at a UN Awards ceremony); and
3. History at <https://www.leadworld.com.au/about-us/history/> published in 2013.

This is all a big reminder that I’d better start planning the 30 year Review of Objectives and continuation of The LEAD Group history, for September 2020!

Just this week, LEAD Group President Michelle Calvert-Kilburn (who joined the team in 1995) wrote in the President’s Report for FY 2020, at <https://leadworld.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Presidents-Report-FY2020-20201028.pdf>

Elizabeth told me recently that she has long thought of The LEAD Group as her 4th child, a daughter. She said that The LEAD Group was conceived while she was pregnant with her third son, so she thinks of the two of them as twins and notes that therefore The LEAD Group and her youngest son Harry both turned 30 on 22nd September 2020. Although The LEAD Group didn’t officially exist until it was incorporated in 1992 when, Elizabeth says, she (The LEAD Group) “started to talk”. In February 1993, The LEAD Group (Elizabeth named her “Lily”) “started to write”... the first issue of our newsletter LEAD Action News vol 1 no 1 at <https://www.lead.org.au/lanv1n1/lanv1n1.html>

Since two of my “four children” have children of their own, I’m wondering if, for my next 30 years of lead-safety advocacy, I should re-brand myself as “Lead Safe Grandma”. Let me know what you think of that idea!!