



JAMES JOINS THE BOARD AND REVIEWS HIS HEARING HEALTH

A desire to contribute to the direction and future success of an organisation that wasn't focussed on generating profit for shareholders and that had a strong social conscience was what attracted James Caws to the role of board member for BHA (Vic).

Having worn many different hats in the web development industry for over a decade, James, who is now a process improvement manager in the rail and property sector for a government entity joined the board in November 2015. Whilst he was new to the disability of hearing loss, as a young boy James and his family fostered a disabled boy, so he was aware from an early age of the difficulties those with disabilities face day-to-day.

Upon joining the board James got his hearing tested. "The result was quite a surprise" he said, "I can't say that I feel like I have any sort of hearing loss, but the result clearly showed that I'd lost some hearing ability in the upper

frequencies". James' slight hearing impairment is typical of noise induced hearing loss. "If anything, I would say I have been to less nightclubs and gigs than the average person and I've never worked in a noisy job, but I have always enjoyed listening to music through headphones. For me to have suffered noise induced hearing loss just shows how fragile hearing really is".

The hearing test result got James interested in understanding just how loud the everyday noises around us are. He visited the app store on his phone and downloaded a number of free sound meters. "Whilst they are not scientifically calibrated and there's some variance between them, the readings are generally similar and very interesting. They make you think when you're in a loud environment about how long you should be exposing your ears to it. Some of the high readings I've gotten from typical, everyday situations alone, really make you think

just how damaging typical, well known loud places like concerts can be. I am definitely more conscious now about my hearing and taking steps to avoid worsening the loss".

James strongly believes in all of the services that BHA (Vic) offers, but he is particularly proud of the Victorian Hearing Aid Bank (VHAB). The VHAB – which takes donated, disused hearing aids, cleans and refurbishes them – brings hearing assistive technology to the people who need it but can't afford it. "Technology is a great equaliser, but it can sometimes come at a cost that is prohibitive to the most vulnerable" James said. "Imagine that you suffer hearing loss but can't afford a good hearing aid and as a result you feel excluded from society, unable to secure a job and therefore prevented from living a full life. A hearing aid from the VHAB can change that and that's immensely warming to know".

BREAK THE SOUND BARRIER CAMPAIGN

Break the Sound Barrier aims to put hearing health and well-being on the national political agenda.

With one in six Australians affected, hearing health and well being deserves to be a national health priority.

This will unlock more funding for services, more investment in research and better community education.

The campaign is uniting people who are Deaf or have hearing loss or ear/balance disorders, service providers and health professionals to demand we be heard by all levels of government.

Victoria's Story - My Tinnitus Trauma

Three years ago I noticed a sonic, high pitched ringing in my ears and thought it would go away. But after two months, many GP visits, ENT specialist visits and numerous ultrasounds and MRI's, I was told I had garden variety tinnitus and to just cope as there was no hope to stop the ringing.

I plunged into the depths of despair and didn't know how I was going to continue to live with this screaming soundtrack in my head. After a lot of research I found great support from Better Hearing Australia(Vic) in Prahran and received counselling, discovered a noise machine that helped me sleep at night and slowly started to feel stronger and more calm in myself.



Together with BHA and Australian celebrity jewellery designer Jan Logan, we have launched a glamorous and meaningful campaign to support those who suffer tinnitus – MY EAR RINGS FOR PEACE. Our aim is to establish a National Tinnitus Support Line to offer information and assistance to those who struggle with this auditory torment. Two million Aussies have tinnitus and don't even have the luxury to suffer in silence. It's time to talk tinnitus Australia and help people make peace with their tinnitus and support everyone with a hearing issue!

PRE EMPLOYMENT SCREENING

Did you know that Better Hearing Australia conducts Pre employment hearing tests which are now available at our Prahran office. We meet the hearing screening requirements of Victoria Police and CASA.

Our price of \$75 is very competitive and proceeds enable us to continue our work in the community. Call us to arrange an appointment. Ph 03 9510 1577 or email victoria@betterhearing.org.au



TINNITUS SUPPORT GROUP

If you, or a significant other, experience problems with tinnitus (ringing in the ears) you may be interested in a new tinnitus support group being run by Better Hearing Australia (Vic).

Starting on **Thursday 11th August 2016**, there will be one meeting per month. Commencing at 6.00pm (finishing no later than 7.30pm) at Better Hearing House, 5 High Street, Prahran.

This group is open to all who have tinnitus and those supporting people with tinnitus. The aim of the group meetings is to provide peer and professional support, foster independence and the ability to move on, provide accurate information about tinnitus.

It will be a casual, social meeting. You may wish to attend only once, or every month for a while. That decision is yours.

Tea, coffee and nibbles will be provided and we ask for a gold coin donation as a way of covering some costs.

Please RSVP on **(03) 9510 1577** or email victoria@betterhearing.org.au

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Screening Audiometry Courses for occupational health professionals

From 21st—23rd September 2016 Better Hearing Australia (VIC) will be offering a basic screening audiometry course, suitable for nurses and other professionals working in Occupational Health.

The three day course will comply with the competency requirements of the Australian Standard AS/NZS1269 (Occupational Noise Management) and expands on the curriculum originally set by Worksafe Victoria.

The content includes both theory and practical work, enabling participants to accurately perform basic hearing tests and feel confident about dealing with the outcome of the test.

The course will be held at Better Hearing House, 5 High Street, Prahran, Victoria 3181. The cost is \$950 for the three day course which includes course notes, knowledge from an industry professional, lunch, and morning and afternoon tea.

For more information or to book a place on the course

Contact: (03) 9510 5177 or 1300 BHA VIC (1300 242 842)

Or email victoria@betterhearing.org.au

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Don't miss a great opportunity to gather and learn about important Hearing Health topics

BHA National Information Day - Friday October 7th 2016

Venue: Deaf Children Australia Cnr High and St Kilda Road, Melbourne

Topics to include:

- Assistive technology for Hearing
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)
- The latest in Tinnitus research
- Future strategies and more
- + 4PM Annual General Meeting
- + Special Guest, BHA Patron Graeme Clark



An official agenda will be available closer to the date

Everyone welcome, free event.

ASK A HEARING ADVISOR

Dear Hearing advisor,

I am a new hearing aid wearer and having great difficulty adjusting to the sounds at the shopping centre or in the golf club. I have tried but cannot cope with the noise. What is your advice? From the Happy Golfer

Dear Happy Golfer, Adjusting to a new hearing aid takes time for most people. If you have not had your aids for long I would suggest that you only wear your aids at home for the next couple of weeks. It won't matter if there is no one else there. It is important that you reintroduce sounds to your life gently and therefore comfortably. Start with two or three hours use at a time. Increase aid usage until you have confidence to wear them out. Places where there is a lot of talking and noise will always be the most challenging, so gain your confidence and experience before facing these occasions.

Grill'd Prahran

Better Hearing Australia (Vic) was one of three charities featured in the Grill'd Prahran store to raise awareness and raise funds for charities in the area. BHA Vic was fortunate enough to be nominated as the Charity of choice for June. Thank you to all who supported the program and dined at Grill'd during June.

Your Gift Counts

For over 84 years, BHA has helped thousands of people cope with hearing loss.

For many, we are the only support available.

To continue our work we need financial assistance.

As a registered charity, money donated to BHA can be claimed as a tax deduction on your tax return.

To donate to BHA Vic visit the website at www.betterhearing.org.au