

Bill Rodgers



Bill has been an above knee amputee for 59 years. He lost his leg in a motorbike accident just before his 19th birthday. Following his recovery at the Warrnambool Base Hospital, Bill remembers making the trip into a Melbourne doctor's clinic in Collins Street where he was measured for his first prosthetic leg. The measurements were then sent off to Hangers in England.

After a three month wait, Bill and his father went down to the Panmure train station just out of Warrnambool to pick up a large box, containing his leg and a page of instructions. (See next page)

The leg was heavy and made from aluminium, with only the brief page of instructions Bill had to teach himself how to use it. Nevertheless, he was determined to be active again and worked hard at mastering the skill of walking with his new leg.

Bill's parents were supportive during his recovery and they also helped to pay for his prosthesis which was 70 pounds. At the time the disability payment was 1 pound a week.

Twelve months on from the accident he decided to move to Melbourne in pursuit of work, returning to his previous skill of baking for 5 years, and then completing a course in spray painting.

He soon began working for a sign writing company which he continued doing for the next 26 years.

Bill met and married his wife Thelma in Melbourne in 1950. He shared a comical tale of his wedding day when he had a sudden case of 'squeaky foot syndrome' He didn't want to be making a racket up and down the aisle in front of his new bride, thankfully he found some oil which came to the rescue and the day ultimately went off with out a squeak!

Bill and Thelma have 3 children, 5 grandchildren and 1 great-granddaughter. They will be celebrating their 55th wedding anniversary in December this year.

Thelma says that Bill has always been incredibly determined and nothing has ever stopped him achieving all his goals. The only thing he found difficult was not being able to let loose on the dance floor in the fashion he would have liked.

Now retired Bill enjoys gardening, cooking, going away on the weekends with Thelma and is an avid Geelong supporter. He has recently been a participant in the

La Trobe University amputee volunteer program.

Bill has a very positive attitude to life, he has a wealth of life experiences to share and believes in living without limitations. He has seen incredible changes in the awareness of amputees develop over the years.

Bill completed the 2 day Peer Support Visitor Training Program with Limbs 4 Life in July. He is looking forward to helping others who are in a similar situation by offering them support and encouragement through the recovery process.

Published September 2005



1300 782 231

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SURGICAL TECHNICIANS

/EM

June 11, 1947.

Mr. W.H. Rodgers,
Post Office,
PANMURE. Vic.

Dear Mr. Rodgers,

Your Artificial Limb was despatched to Railway Station, Panmure on Monday afternoon last, and we trust the parcel is in your possession ere this.

We would suggest that you only wear the limb for short intervals in the beginning, say for one hour the first day, two hours the second day, and gradually become accustomed to its use before attempting to wear it for a whole day.

The leg will require very little oiling - perhaps a single drop on each bearing about once every three months. All surplus oil should be carefully wiped off at the time of oiling.

The ankle movement is unlikely to require any attention for at least six months, and may not want greasing for twelve months.

As the greasing of the ankle joint is a somewhat difficult operation, we suggest that you have this done at one of the Melbourne Houses when necessary.

If you have any difficulties, please write to us and we will give you whatever help we can.

Yours faithfully,

GUYATT & CO.

John L. Guyatt
Manager.

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