You're invited to Conquer Cradle Mountain To Beat MS in 2021!

Are you ready to leave 2020 behind and look ahead to a new year, with new adventures?

Please join us in our fight to beat MS; on this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to trek in one of Australia’s most breathtaking destinations, Tasmania’s Cradle Mountain National Park, from 2–6 October 2021.

This spectacular fundraising trek will take place in Tasmania’s Wilderness World Heritage Area. Trek the spectacular surrounds of Cradle Mountain as we traverse sections of the iconic Overland Trail. Travelling with like-minded adventurers, you’ll spend four days walking across a landscape of glacially carved valleys, ancient rainforests, fragrant eucalypt forests, golden button grass moorlands and beautiful alpine meadows – all while raising vital funds for MS.

COVID-19 has stopped us in our tracks so far this year, so to ensure you have peace of mind while you plan this incredible adventure, our travel partner Soulful Concepts, has updated their T&C’s to offer improved certainty for the journey ahead.

Download the Info Pack, and get all the information today!

Join us for a celebration of resilience through art

This year, our long-standing annual MS Art Exhibition is going virtual and we would like to invite the MS community, including carers and families, to join us for a celebration of art and creativity. People with other progressive neurological conditions are also invited to participate.

Under the theme “celebrating resilience through art,” we invite you to share your original art - be it painting, illustration, sculpture, craft or photography - that somehow represents what resilience means to you.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions in Victoria, this year we won’t be able to sell your artwork. We will however, display your art via a virtual art show on our website www.ms.org.au from October 13.

Ready to share your art? Submissions are now open

If you’re keen to participate, you can register and submit your artwork any time from now until 6 October by clicking on the button below.

For more information about our 2020 MS Virtual Art Show, visit our website or contact our team at msart@ms.org.au
“Search for something greater than self”

For 39 years, tens of thousands of cyclists have hit the road in the MS Gong Ride from Sydney to Wollongong to raise funds for people living with multiple sclerosis. Even though this much-loved event had to be postponed until next year due to COVID-19, we innovated and found another way. This year, the Gong Ride is going virtual, which means that not only can you still ride for MS, but you can take part wherever you are.

Robert lives in Tasmania. He is a person living with MS and is passionate about searching beyond his physical limitations for meaning and satisfaction. His interests are wide and varied and this year, he will take part in the MS Virtual Challenge on his recumbent bike. Here, he shares the story of his journey with MS and some words of inspiration for anyone who is looking at ways to reach beyond physical limitations.

I had a background in architecture and art prior to the onset of MS at the age of 28 and had commenced a career in teaching while constantly practicing and applying my skills in drawing and painting. Although the devastating effects of MS flawed everything for me and left me legless in body and collapsed in mind and spirit, something inside of me said, “fight every inch of the way.” The one thing I adamantly have to recommend to my fellow persons with MS - develop a passion. Not just an interest, but something which truly is far above the ordinary, and beyond the restricted life imposed upon your present being. **Fight every inch of the way.**

I try to find a level higher than the everyday, constantly probing life in every way, trying always to find more, thinking and searching beyond the pain of a disabled body.

I have many aspects to my life with MS - recumbent cycling is a passion. I discovered recumbent tricycles about 30 years ago and I ride on a daily basis. From a slow start, about 3 kilometers distance at first, I am now able to cycle up to 40 kilometers a day. You have to be able to get down into the low seat and stand up from this position, which is actually very difficult for me and requires arm strength.

Whilst it’s very important that anyone whose thinking of trying recumbent cycling obtain the essential information first, I do think that this adventure may be a possibility for others with MS. My walking has not improved in any way. However, I am filled with a wonderful sense of normality as I slowly speed along the road.

I have recently registered for the MS Virtual Gong Ride; my team name is Chariots of Fire - check out my event page [here](#). I have set a project distance of 750 kilometres for the month and nothing will stop me from doing my very best to honour the commitment. It’s going to be great fun!!!

Join the FREE 2020 MS Gong Ride Virtual – all you need is a bike and a phone!

Join the MS Community virtually as we **ride to Fight MS.**

There are eight courses to choose from, each representing the distance from Australian cities to Wollongong, or select your own distance!

Whatever your cycling experience may be and wherever you live, you can take part this month and ride to Fight MS.

**No additional equipment is needed**, just you and your bike... It could be in your lycra or sweatpants, outside or from the comfort of your gym or home.

**ANYONE can join, with any fitness level, anywhere in Australia.**

Plus, there are great prizes up for grabs and you could secure your place in the 40th anniversary MS Gong Ride in 2021 – a sell-out event!

To **register for FREE** today or to find out more, visit: [www.msgongride.org.au](http://www.msgongride.org.au)
ACT MS Symposium 2020

The MS Symposium 2020 will focus on inflammation and brain health in multiple sclerosis.

We have secured knowledgeable ANU and external speakers and will host a panel discussion to respond to your most burning questions.

Instead of an all-day in person event, we will have a whole week of online “morning tea” seminars. Because of the format this year, we are pleased to include international speakers in the line up.

So make yourself a cuppa and join us live or watch each session on-demand at a later time if you cannot attend.

View the program and register here: Eventbrite.com.au/e/120131904761

MS Community Visitors Scheme

MS Community Visitors Scheme (CVS) was developed to meet the needs of Aged Care recipients who, for a variety of reasons, are isolated and whose quality of life may be improved by regular visiting.

At this time, we also seek to coordinate virtual matches whereby visitors and recipients can connect via internet, phone or letter.

If you know of a family member or friend living in an Aged Care Home who might benefit from this service please contact us on 1800 042 138 or email CVSAdmin@ms.org.au

For more information and online referrals please visit our website www.ms.org.au and search CVS
There was a fantastic response to the MS Go for Gold Scholarship program this year, with over 145 applications received. No project, dream, goal, business idea or hobby is too big or too small. People living with MS throughout Victoria, Tasmania, the ACT and NSW have applied for many different reasons.

It is now up to the judges to carefully go through all applications against the set criteria to confirm the 25 recipients. This year the MS Go for Gold Scholarships are valued up to $2,000 each. Recipients will be contacted in late October with the outcome of their application, whether you have been successful this year or whether you should apply again next year.

Recipients will be acknowledged and awarded their Scholarship in a virtual MS Go for Gold Scholarship Presentation held in late October or early November. Everyone will be welcomed to attend and we will share more details around this shortly.

In the meantime you can express your interest to be one of the first people to hear about 2021 MS Go for Gold Scholarship applications on our website at www.ms.org.au/go-for-gold
COVID-19 continues to challenge our MS community and also the way we can provide our services.

As the different stages of COVID-19 have happened, we’ve heard from many of our clients about the challenges, fears, difficulties and uncertainties that come with living through a pandemic whilst living with MS. Many of our clients are worried about being on immunosuppressive medication, understanding their risk of COVID-19 and how to manage symptoms without access to health services that are a part of their normal regimes.

Adding to that, there is the impact of things like home schooling, redundancies, reduced income, social isolation and increased carer burden. Now, more than ever, we’re seeing just how much all aspects of health, your physical and mental health, can impact on each other.

MS Nurses Jane and Bridie are both working hard to keep up to date with information and have some great resources to provide as well. Jane and Bridie have adapted to working at home where they have set up work stations and continue to be there for our community throughout this time. Our MS nurses are still available at the end of the phone to provide information, support, advice and referral for people living with MS, family members, friends, carers and health professionals.

Feel free to get in touch with our MS Nurses to discuss anything from diagnosis, MS treatments, symptom management, lifestyle choices or your overall wellbeing. MS Connect - Freecall 1800 042 138

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**Telegroups**

If you’re interested in connecting with others in a similar situation to yourself, the groups that we currently have meeting are:

- Men with MS Support Group
- Mums with MS
- Women support group
- Women in the 40 to 64 aged group
- Family and Friends
- Over 65’s support group
- People with MS – general group for people wanting support & to share information

To book for any of our Telegroups, call our MS Connect team on 1800 042 138. We look forward to you joining one of our Telegroups. If you need more information, please contact us by phone, email msconnect@ms.org.au or live chat with us through our website.

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**Taking Control Group, People with MS Group & Virtual Coffee Group**

In view of the pandemic, and our need for self-isolation, The Taking Control Group, the People with MS Support Group, & the Coffee Group have all teamed up to have a regular meeting by Zoom every Friday fortnight at 12.30 pm.

The meetings are informal and open to all people with MS and their families and partners. The Zoom meeting invitation is sent out to our normal mailing lists each fortnight but, as it is a recurring meeting, the link is the same.

The Zoom link is normally easy to use. If anyone would like to be added to the mailing list please contact vanessa.fanning@gmail.com or Mary Webb at denmar@netspeed.com.au. If you would like a practice run using Zoom please contact us.

We are using a Professional version of Zoom which has higher security than the free online version. It’s just a way to stay in touch with each other, to catch up on news and information and to offer each other support. Sometimes we will also have invited speakers. See you online!
Meditation Group

As we are all living in stressful times, some of us are stepping up our meditation practice and our online meditation sessions are proving popular. The Mindfulness Meditation Group is meeting weekly on Fridays at 3.30 pm by Zoom for about an hour to chat and then to do a guided meditation. (All suggestions welcome).

If you’re not receiving alerts and an invitation for the online Meditation Group meetings at the moment and would like to be advised when sessions are being scheduled, please contact: vanessa.fanning@gmail.com or Richard Wilmott lisnrich@gmail.com

Elizabeth and Bill’s message

Making life better for others has been one of the major aims of Elizabeth Meredith’s life in her career as a scientist and educator. In turn, her four children, two step-children and nine grandchildren are continuing along this path.

Having been touched by multiple sclerosis (MS) when her daughter was diagnosed, she knows the challenges that living with MS can pose, and appreciates how the loving support of family, especially that of her late husband, can positively affect the lives of those with the illness.

Her ongoing involvement includes supporting the ‘Go for Gold Meredith Scholarship’ which has been awarded continuously since 2004. It was created in memory of Bill, her late husband. Bill volunteered at Multiple Sclerosis Limited for many years and the generous collection at his funeral was the beginning of this loving tribute.

Elizabeth will also be continuing her support for people living with MS by leaving a gift in her Will. However, she hopes that through ongoing financial support and research MS will eventually be eradicated.

To ensure that she can leave a legacy gift, Elizabeth puts aside a small sum each month just for this purpose, knowing that even a modest amount can make a difference.

She hopes that such actions will inspire others to do the same.

If you too believe that your life and your actions can be your message to the world, contact 1800 443 867 (1800GIFTMS) for more information.

Whatever the amount, we are extremely grateful for any gift in a Will left to Multiple Sclerosis Limited.

It will provide future vital support so people living with multiple sclerosis can live the best life possible.

Check our website: www.mymslegacy.org.au or write to futureplanning@ms.org.au

We are here so no one needs to face MS alone
Decluttering
Monday 5 October, 11.00am - 12.00pm AEDT

This webinar is presented by Julie Cliff from Space and Time. Julie is thrilled to share her passion for decluttering and getting organised. Join us to hear Julie's top tips and tricks for "clearing out stuff" and refreshing our space!

Get Active with MS
Friday 16 October, 10.30am - 11.30am AEDT

This webinar is presented by MS Exercise Physiologist, Eric Morales. Eric will take us through some practical ways to get active.

Let's think about your thinking – An interactive session with Dr Luke Smith, Neuropsychologist
Wednesday 21 October, 10.30am - 11.30am AEDT

This webinar will be presented by Dr Luke Smith. This presentation will be an interactive experience for participants with the opportunity to engage with Dr Luke Smith throughout the presentation. Luke will be posing questions and asking you to think about your thinking and memory. A great opportunity to learn more about your cognition: memory and thinking.

An Overview of MS Medication
Wednesday 28 October, 11.00am - 12.00pm AEDT

MS Nurse Advisor Jane Bridgman, will provided an update on medications in MS. Jane is a registered nurse with 6 years' experience in disability and aged care, progressive neurological conditions and primary health care.

Manage MS Pain - A Recorded Conversation with Pain Physiotherapist, Laura Bruggink
Thursday 8 October, 7.00pm - 8.00pm

In March 2020, Laura Bruggink, an APA Pain Physiotherapist working at the Hunter Integrated Pain Service, provided us with a better understanding of pain in multiple sclerosis and strategies to help manage this symptom.

To register for any of these Webinars click on the links above.

For more information please email education@ms.org.au or call MS Connect™ (Freecall 1800 042 138).