

# COCHLEAR IMPLANT UNIT KOGLEËRE INPLANTINGSEENHEID

HOSPITAAL • TYGERBERG • HOSPITAL



JULY 2011 NEWSLETTER • NUUSBRIEF JULIE 2011

*Stories van ons inplantingsgebruikers en hul ouers.  
Hier is verkorte weergawes van hul stories. Die volledige  
stories is in die foto-album in die KI Eenheid.*

## History made

*On the 24th January 2011 we made history by implanting our 400th recipient, Connor Müller, almost 25 years after Rinelma Rugan (née Wapenaar) became our first implantee on the 4th November 1986.*

**No 1. Rinelma Rugan (née Wapenaar)  
with her WSP III speech processor**



Over the years since we started our cochlear implant programme we have seen many changes in the candidacy criteria, surgical procedures, implant design, speech coding strategies, and the speech processors. Today the speech processors are much smaller than the heavy WSP III we started

with in 1986! Initially we could only implant adults with bilateral profound hearing loss who lost their hearing after they had developed spoken language. In 1988 we implanted our first child, Kevin Einstein, at the age of nine years. Children younger than two years could not be implanted until 1998. Today we know that children born deaf who achieve the best results are among those who have received cochlear implants before two years of age. Their successful participation in mainstream education has become a realistic expectation. Stimulation of the hearing system in the brain during the sensitive/critical periods is central to normal development of hearing, speech and language development. In 1999 little Emma Roach became our youngest implantee when she was implanted at the age of 6 months. Tygerberg Hospital was the first hospital in South Africa where multichannel cochlear implant surgery and audiological management was performed. Recipients all over South Africa had to travel to Cape Town for the service. Some families even relocated to be closer to Tygerberg Hospital. Now there are implant programmes in other parts of the country including Pretoria, Johannesburg, Bloemfontein, Port Elizabeth and Durban.

In November 2011 we plan to celebrate our programme's 25th anniversary. We will inform you about the events closer to the time.

## Connor Müller (no 400)

Connor is a five year old boy from Plumstead who was born with a hearing loss, and was not making the expected progress with his hearing aids. His mother wrote the following:

As expected during the first 2 months after the operation, there was no noticeable improvement in his speech and hearing, with adjusting to the new sound.

Connor was generally a very quiet boy. His twin brother and 9-year old sister would be the only ones participating in conversation while driving in the car. Connor also used to be a bit aggressive, which I believe was as a result of his frustration in not being able to express himself verbally. It's now 4 months, since he received his cochlear implant. Now he talks non-stop! We play 'I spy' in the car, and he readily participates, often not giving his siblings a chance. He now feels the need to comment



Connor and his parents Chereé & Brendan Müller

on things and to ask so many questions "Mommy why you have 2 bags"? or "What food you making Mommy"? He even spontaneously sings now!

Before the cochlear implant, he struggled to differentiate between the 's' and the 'sh' sounds. Now the 'sh' and 's' sounds are being pronounced, much easier. I have also noticed that he has starting to pick up words and phrases incidentally, like "Oh my golly gosh"! or "My hearing aid is not sitting properly"!

He has come such a long way and I am extremely proud of the progress he has made. We remain committed to working with the team in assisting with his speech and language development. Soon his language will be able to match his expressive and extrovert nature! We are now confident that our son will speak normally, soon.

## Kaylan van Rhyn (no 401)



Kaylan is gebore op 20 Februarie 2001. Sy is 'n baie gesonde kind maar sy het gesukkel om te praat. Op die ouderdom van 5 jaar sukkel sy nog steeds om te praat en doen ons 'n besoek aan ons dokter. Hy sê sy het te veel was in haar ore en gee ons 'n middel wat die was

sal verminder. Nog 'n jaar het verbygegaan en nog steeds is daar geen verbetering in haar spraak nie.

Ons is Tygerberg Hospitaal toe met ons seuntjie, waar ons 'n audioloog sien wat pamflette uitdeel waarop die inligting lees "Sukkel u kind om te praat". Ons het dadelik 'n afspraak gemaak, waarop ons kind getoets is vir gehoorverlies. Dit was 'n skok vir ons toe ons hoor dat ons Kaylantjie semi-doof is.

Ons word toe verwys na die Carel du Toit Sentrum waar sy gehoorapparate gekry het en begin skool gaan. Soos die jaar verloop het, het sy geleer om te praat. Sy het goed gevorder totdat die Sentrum se audioloog agtergekom het haar gehoor in die een oor raak swakker. Hulle moes talle kere vir haar sterker apparate gee. Sy was later op die sterkste apparaat en nog steeds het dinge nie goed gelyk nie. Daar was toe toetse gedoen om te kyk of sy 'n kandidaat is vir 'n kogleêre inplanting. Die toetse was positief.

Op die ouderdom van nege moes ons fondse vind vir die kogleêre inplanting. Ons het nie 'n mediese fonds nie, en deur die Here se genade is fondse bewillig deur 'n skenking van die Harry Crossley Foundation vir die kogleêre inplanting. Kaylan se operasie was op 25 Januarie 2011 en haar aanskakeling op 15 Februarie 2011. Trane van blydskap het uit ons kind se oë geloop. Sy het gelag en gesê sy kan baie dinge hoor, dinge wat sy nooit vantevore gehoor het nie. Die aanpassing by die huis is ook heelwat beter. Jy kan nou buite of in die kamer staan en Kaylan sit voor die TV, en sy sal reageer as jy haar roep.

## Carol Conradie (no 402)



Whatever was I thinking? With the benefit of the 20/20 vision that hindsight offers, I now know that the timing of my cochlear implant was dreadful and probably contributed to the problems I experienced adapting to this new way of hearing. In the six months prior to the operation, I had managed to rack up a perfect score on the top ten causes of stress, the highlights being: My divorce was finalized after almost a 4 year fight, resulting in me being out of a job and a home, both my parents passed away within two weeks of each other, I started a new business, moved house, started a major renovating project, and booked a trip to Australia in March.

Progressive hearing loss had gradually robbed me of higher frequencies and although I was fairly adept at lip-reading, I was desperate to be able to communicate effectively with the builders, sub-contractors, handymen, rental agents and tenants with whom I came into daily contact. Hearing aids had never really benefitted me – while they could amplify the frequencies which I already heard, they were unable to give me higher frequencies which I had lost. The die was cast and I decided to go ahead immediately.

I dashed organising building materials and sub-contractors on Thursday, 3 February 2011, before going into hospital for the operation.

I looked forward to "Switch-on Day" with equal amounts of excitement and trepidation. Despite all that I had read to the contrary, I was confident that I was ready to experience The Miracle. The gods must have given themselves hernias giggling in anticipation of my disillusionment. I emerged from the hospital, clutching my suitcase full of accessories, feeling as if my head been trapped in a cage of demented parrots. I could hear sound – lots of it – and all of it totally incomprehensible!

Back home completely overwhelmed, I dissolved in tears of despair. I'm sure it didn't help that I had a concrete mixer churning outside my kitchen window and a jackhammer and angle grinder demolishing floors and walls in the braai room opposite my bedroom, but I sank into a state of abject misery. Not only could I not understand anything anyone said to me, but the "noise" generated by the processor completely overwhelmed what little I could still hear with my dodgy left

ear. Never before had I considered myself deaf, but now I was definitely disabled and hating every minute of it.

When, a couple of weeks and several mapping sessions later, I first heard a dove cooing in the trees, I was determinedly negative, thinking sourly that I would far prefer to be able to hear people and leave the birds to do their thing without my knowledge. But gradually, almost imperceptibly, I realized I was actually hearing more, and that now, for the first time in decades, I could hear someone talking to me from another room, participate in the conversations of my children and their friends in the back of the

car, hear the doorbell ring without having to wait for my dog to bark to announce visitors, listen to the news on the radio while driving. I have since sat in a body corporate meeting of 12 people, which would previously have been a waking nightmare, and been able to follow exactly what was going on around me.

I find I still prefer gravelly low-pitched voices – my version of “normal” sound – and music still sounds tinny and metallic to me, but even that is now improving. It seems that once I got “over the hump” my progress has been dramatic and infinitely gratifying.

## Lilli Nienaber (no 403)



‘n Dekade gelede sit en hou ek ‘n dowe dogtertjie dop en skryf ‘n gediggie oor haar. Agt maande gelede kom die nuus “Lilli kan nie hoor nie”. Al wat deur my kop maal is een reël uit my gedig “Jou geraas doof op eie ore”.

Lilli was amper twee toe ons uitvind sy is gehoorgestremd, en alreeds twee met die operasie en aanskakeling. Hier is ons twee maande na haar aanskakeling met ‘n redelike mate van skuldgevoel en ‘n oormaat van bewondering.

Bewondering vir ons kind en tegnologie (wat ons nie geweet het bestaan nie) en vir almal betrokke by hierdie proses. Dit is verstommend hoe Lilli verander het in die kort rukkie met gehoor. Drukies en soentjies kom nou vanself. Sy roep Mamma en Pappa “po-po”. Die kat ‘n “k” en ousus Ayla, Aya. Sy was nog altyd baie ‘loud’ vir iemand wat wat nie kan hoor nie en het ons altyd geluidloos nageaap asof sy gesels. Sy is definitief ‘n ekstrovert gebore en ek dink dit help baie met haar ontwikkeling.

Geduld en humorsin is wat ons as gesin bygekry het. Dis wonderlik om te lag vir die familie wat vir sussie stil maak as Lilli slaap. Ons is geseënd dat Lilli in beide ore inplantings kon kry, dus was die nuus dalk makliker om te verwerk en om die klippe in die pad kleiner te laat lyk. Dankie aan almal wat hierdie pad voor ons geloop het en al ‘n hele paar hobbels plat getrap het.

## Zamephi Doncabe (no 392)

Maybe by the time you read this article, you will have already realised that you are one of those people who has chosen to ignore most of the activities that used to be important in your life due to your hearing loss which makes you so withdrawn that you feel enjoying life has become impossible and meaningless.

I was diagnosed with bilateral profound deafness ten years ago and I know exactly how it feels to live in that world. It felt like the whole world was collapsing. I lost touch with almost everything. I gave up hope of ever hearing the voices of my family.

As time went by, there were few things that kept me going, an unbelievable support system and having found out about a Cochlear Implant Unit at Tygerberg Hospital. I started dreaming that maybe one day there might be light at the end of the tunnel. I got even more motivated the minute I started attending this Cochlear Implant Unit. I was attended by professionals who have great passion for their work, who bring out the best and most achievable outcomes from their clients through their patience and dedication, who have great respect for their clients and display highly professional understanding of client disabilities. With them you are not alone.

Since I had my cochlear implant I feel reconnected to the world. I may not be exactly the same person I was before I became deaf, but with being realistic about who I have become, I feel like a complete and independent person again.





## Ethan John Erasmus (no 382)

Finding out that our son, Ethan was profoundly deaf came as a shock but it was not devastating. On various check-ups with doctors and specialists due to concerns about his lack of development with speech, we were assured all was fine as kids develop differently.

After a hearing test early in 2010, Ethan was diagnosed as deaf. They referred us to Carel du Toit Centre at Tygerberg hospital. Here he went through some more testing and they recommended that a cochlear implant was needed. We managed to raise the money to cover the shortfall which our medical aid was not paying in less than 2 months and the operation was done in July 2010. After 3 weeks he was switched on and we could see the difference in him. Every day he discovers new things and learns new words. He brightens up our lives and all around him. After a long and stressful day at work I arrive home to see our bundle of joy reaching out with a big smile on his face.

This makes me forget the tough day as I get absorbed in his aura of happiness and love. We want to thank everybody that made a contribution, whether it was praying, encouragement or financially. As parents we realize a miracle has taken place and has given us new dreams and inspirations for our child. Chris & Freda Erasmus

## Jody Daniels (no 394)

Let me start by saying that I think the cochlear implant is the best invention since aeroplanes for the following reasons.

As a father with a hearing impaired daughter it has made communication between us so much easier, even with her back turned from me, I just need to call her once for her to respond instead of having to call to her two or three times before I get any reaction.

Soft sounds that she couldn't hear before she is now able to pick up, like the purring of a cat. Chatting on the phone is fun instead of frustrating; listening to music is relaxing instead of aggravating.

And last but not least, what makes me really happy is that I have seen her confidence in herself grow and all that due to the fact that it is invisible and that she can hear better and feel safer in her surroundings.



## Sian Bennett (no 396)

"What a miracle the Cochlear Implant is!" I decided to go for a cochlear implant after realizing at work that I was missing out on much more than I thought I was. I had my operation on the 25th November and after a tough few weeks of recovery, I had the "switch-on" on the 14th December. Nothing prepared me for this emotional journey into the world of sound.

The first month was a blur, accompanied by loud noises that felt as if they were coming from inside my body. I struggled to make sense of the overwhelming sounds and was exhausted with trying to listen with my good ear, whilst my implant was picking up and amplifying all the day-to-day sounds that I thought were peaceful and soft. Luckily, I had the support of my patient mother and sister, father and Jenny who all assured me that my journey would become smoother, despite the noisy and too loud road that I was travelling along.

It has been 3 months since my "switch-on" and I have forgotten about the horrendous first month of my journey. My implant and I are now best friends! This incredible device is picking up all the high frequency sounds that I have never heard before, not even with my good ear (which I can use to hear on the phone). The other night, I heard a constant buzzing sound every 2 seconds that I could not hear with my good ear (the right ear). Intrigued, I asked my flat mate what sound was and she said "crickets"! I now enjoy the nightly sounds of the crickets and do not think they are irritating creatures at all, as some might, because I can now hear them! I have recently begun listening on the phone and cannot believe that I can make out as speech whereas I just heard muffled sounds before. I am progressing further everyday and am just in awe of my journey into sound.



## Bronwyn Brown (no 393)



I am a 13 year old girl with a progressive bilateral profound hearing loss. The specific cause could not be identified. My hearing loss started at the age of five years. I've been wearing hearing aids since that time in both ears. I didn't benefit that much from the hearing aids and a cochlear implant became a better option.

Due to a huge donation by the Harry Crossley Foundation to the Tygerberg Cochlear Implant Unit, they could help some people who were in need of an implant. My operation was done on the 8th November 2010. The 29th November was my "switch-on" day.

After the processor was switched on, my life changed completely because my hearing was much better. I'll be forever grateful to the Cochlear Implant Unit because they helped me to hear again.

## Gunnar Muth (no 405)

For the last 16 years I had to cope and manage with bilateral profound hearing loss. The cause was prolonged noise exposure in my occupation as a marine engineer combined with a genetic susceptibility to noise induced hearing loss.

Today, three months after my cochlear implant I can again communicate very easily with a person and quite comfortably in a large group of people too. I am enjoying communicating with my friends in a normal manner and my family has been relieved from many years of stress and pressure as a result of my hearing impairment. I feel a lot better about myself and more confident too. Many wonderful changes have happened in my life since the implant but most importantly I am enjoying my life to the fullest and I am appreciating the beauty of sound like never before.

I would like to share with you some extracts from my diary of the first month after the sound processor was switched on.



## Kevin Roos (no 375)

Ek is woonagtig in Stellenbosch. Eerstens kan ek vir Telkom en Prosano dankie sê vir hul finansiële bystand.

My lewe het baie verander toe die kogleêre inplanting aangeskakel is. Ek het baie in my werk gesukkel om te hoor. Wanneer ek by kliënte gekom het, moes ek eers aan hulle verduidelik dat my gehoor baie swak is. Ek kon selfs nie eers 'n gesprek oor 'n telefoon gevoer het nie. Ek kan nou 'n telefoon gebruik. Ek kan sosiaal verkeer. Hoef nie meer skaam te wees nie. Ek kan weer na musiek luister. Ek geniet dit baie om weer TV te kyk.

Somtyds vergeet ek, ek dra 'n inplanting. Ek is eintlik spoggerig met my nuwe inplanting. Baie mense wil graag weet wat dit is, dan verduidelik ek aan hulle.



**31 March 2011.** I will never forget the day my sound processor was switched on. It is an unbelievable experience to hear sound, no matter what type of sound; I can 'hear' something!! That's all that matters. Sound in general reminds me of a space ship story which I listened to as a 10 year old. It sounds like you are in outer space. Sound appears metallic but interesting.

On my way home I can hear the car's indicator again, for the first time after 22 years. In someway it feels like I am learning a new language. You hear sound and have

to learn to interpret what it means. At this stage everything appears to sound the same, e.g. somebody coughing sounds very similar to a desk drawer being closed.

I can now hear myself when I am whistling a tune, its sounds very clear and enjoyable and like music to me.

**1 April 2011.** "First day" at work and I can hear, identify the doorbell, and for the first time I hear Lindy stirring the tea

and coffee, it sounds like some kind of music instrument she is playing but the main thing is that I can 'hear' it. Next time I will recognize the sound and know what she is doing without having to look at her. While in the office and everything relatively quiet around me, my pc mouse sounds like a canary when 'clicking'. After work and back at home I am talking to my wife and I cannot believe what is happening. I am starting to hear her voice clearer and better all the time. I am starting to 'hear' more and more all the time. Never in my life would I have thought that this will ever happen to me.

At about 22:00 I am taking the sound processor off for recharging and drying. All of a sudden I am back in the world of silence. Thank God it's only for the night and tomorrow I can switch on and tune into the real world again. In the past I was relieved when ever I could switch the hearing aid off but now its completely the opposite and I don't want to go back to the quite world.

#### **6 April 2011.** "SEEING IS BELIEVING and HEARING IS KNOWING "

My life has changed dramatically. It used to be like watching a movie with very little sound, no volume. I actually forgot that we live in a very noisy world with many natural and man-made sounds. I arrived at home from work and the burglar alarm was switched on today. Since I did not have a remote control with me I had to enter the house before I could switch the alarm off. As a result the alarm was activated and I could for the first time hear what it sounds like. I also noticed our parrot was whistling the tune which I whistle for calling my dachshund.

**9 April 2011.** In the evening I am given the task to activate our neighbor's house alarm. I am accompanied by Erhardt my son to assist me in case I cannot hear the 'peep, peep' of the alarm control panel. What a satisfying feeling, after pressing the remote control I can hear the 'peep, peep' and know the alarm is activated. It might appear to be a small achievement, but believe me, it is not. Being able to hear and understand basic signals is very important and expected of you as part of our daily life and activities.

**12 April 2011.** In the late afternoon I am on top of the roof cleaning the gutter of our house and making sure the drains work properly before the first winter rain comes. I can hear the birds around me, the neighbour's kids next-door and my dachshund making a noise while I am on the roof. While sitting on top of the roof I am looking back at how much my life has changed since 31 March 2011, how much better I can communicate and with so much less effort and frustration. I can hear again so many, different sounds which I had forgotten over the years and got used to living without. A person's hearing is so important

not just for communication but also for everything else in life. Sound has an effect on you emotionally and physically and it can change your state.

**13 April 2011.** This evening a friend was visiting and what pleasure it was. I have no difficulties understanding him and even when he is not looking at me directly I managed well and can follow everything he is saying. He is quite funny at times and it was very relaxing listening to him. This is another example how hearing can effect and change your mood from average to very high.

**15 April 2011.** Today is a complete new experience and my first business trip on a plane after the implant. I arrive at the airport to travel from Cape Town to Johannesburg. As I am coming up the escalator to the check-in counters I can hear the voice from the loudspeaker saying that if you have a trolley you must hold and press the handle in order to release the brake. I have noted the voice many, many times before but could never understand the instructions. I was so very pleased and excited when I actually understood the voice coming through the loudspeaker. Being able to hear and understand instructions make you feel secure and confident.

**22 April 2011.** Easter weekend, I have time to listen to the music CD HOPE Notes which I bought from Southern ENT. The CD is amazing and enjoyable. Well done to the producer/writer. Some of the songs are very basic but still effective. The various music instruments, notes and music I hear with the implant are beautiful. It sounds different but so what; I am still enjoying the music. I am now keeping the CD in my car and I am listing to it almost every day while driving home. Its good practice and helps me with learning to hear and appreciate music. Over the last few years I lost interest in listing to music because I could not enjoy and appreciate music and songs anymore, but today I can interpret and hear many different instruments. I am also starting to understand the words of songs quite well after listing to the same song a few times. Music now sounds very clear and I find classic music most enjoyable.

**4 May 2011.** My hearing and understanding has improved week after week. My silent world was left behind and transformed into a realistic and lively one. When I compare my life before and after the implant I can describe it best with a picture in a coloring-in book. Before the implant you can only see the black lines in the picture and after the implant the picture is colourful and looking alive.

Hearing is not just about being able to communicate with others but also about receiving and understanding all the different sounds which form part of our daily life.



## **Congratulations to Soné Crouch** (no 351)

Soné Crouch was accepted onto the Sanlam Learnership training course which leads to a NQF Level 3 Financial Services Administration Qualification. This is an employment equity initiative offered by Sanlam which aims to create equal opportunities for people with disabilities. She wrote about her experiences:

I was very excited to start something new when I was admitted on the Learnership programme. I was fresh out of school looking forward to the challenge. I was curious on how I would fit in with my new fellow learners in a Financial Institution.

Starting the Learnership, I was very uncertain about what to expect from Sanlam regarding my cochlear implant. I did not know how the people in the business world would treat me and how they will accommodate me with my disability. When the learnership started, I was so shy that I sometimes lost important information because I did not say or did not ask anything! I especially did not ask anyone to repeat what was said, because I was so scared of what the people's response would be.

In time, making new friends and getting the front row seats in class started building my confidence. When I am asked how Sanlam can accommodate me now, all I need to say is that I must sit in front of the class. Actually my hearing disability made no difference in my learning progress. Afterwards I became so comfortable in my new working environment I sometimes do not realize that I have a hearing impairment. I became so talkative that I often do not realize that my cochlear batteries have gone dead, with a little embarrassment on my side!

From 1 April I am starting in a new job and this learnership has equipped me with the confidence and capabilities needed to make a success of it, with a cochlear implant to help me along my way.

### HOPE NOTES

*HOPE Notes is a program for cochlear implant and hearing aid users designed to help improve music perception and appreciation using original songs, traditional Folk, Blues & Country styles and some familiar tunes played in unexpected ways. The creator of HOPE Notes Richard Reed, wrote the following:*

*When I first went deaf, all music sounded the same: messy background noise that kept me from hearing spoken words. For a lifelong musician, it felt like a curse. What could be worse? Not being able to converse with family and friends, of course. My Cochlear Implant allowed me to communicate with people again. If that was the extent of the benefit – that part of the curse lifted – it would've been a happy ending.*

*At first, listening to music through my cochlear implant was stranger than ever. If music through my old hearing aids was indistinct rhythmic background noise, well, now it was foreground noise. With practice, patience, persistence, a new sound processor with a program designed to enhance music, and auditory therapy that included strategies for music listening – some songs slowly started sounding a lot less noisy.*

*I remember wishing early-on that someone would come up with a "CI Music" practice program. HOPE Notes is pretty close to the one I wish I'd had back then. Okay, maybe not on activation day – there was enough going on just to make sense of the spoken words and everyday environmental sounds. Once I'd started to understand speech sounds and could recognize the difference between a seagull squawking and the siren of an approaching fire engine, it would've been nice to have had some simple songs to restart my musical odyssey. Having a visual complement so that I could "see" the lyrics and know which instrument was playing would have been better.*

*The HOPE Notes music is designed to help CI users find songs that, even if they don't sound good right away, might hopefully sound "less strange" as you become acclimated to them. Unless you're incredible gifted, some kind of genius or prodigy, there's no way to get better at anything without practicing. No matter what these songs sound like the first time, give the ones that*

*sound "the least strange" additional attention. Start by watching the DVD versions and eventually listen to the CD without having to watch the words. We don't necessarily need to understand, or to even hear, each individual fragment in order to enjoy the whole. The simplest pieces in this collection are "The Thing with Scales" and some short piano snippet variations of "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" which precede "Little Star Blues". The "Scales" demonstrate 12 melodic instruments and a drumbeat; the "Twinkle" variations are all piano. Some of the other pieces are noisier than others. "Canciones en Espanol" uses just an acoustic guitar, cello and male singing voice (with brief mandolin solo); and "Surfer Elise" uses a five piece rock band. And whenever someone sings, their words (which you can read along with on the DVD) are louder than the backing band.*

*I've tried to supply a mix of familiar and unfamiliar melodies, with relatively simple arrangement; recorded, equalized and mixed in ways that will HOPEfully be a bit less difficult to hear with your electric ear.*

HOPE NOTES can be ordered from Southern ENT.

Contact details: 012- 667 4460 or

email Marie Fourie at [marie.f@southernear.com](mailto:marie.f@southernear.com)

## Siyashova

(We are pedaling)



## Cycling from Cape to Cairo to give sound to people with hearing loss

Three friends have quit their jobs to embark on a journey that will see them cycle through 10 countries in 8 months on a mission to raise R1 million for cochlear implants. Jiten Magan, Ria Moothilal and Imraan Sayed set off on their Cape to Cairo trip, called Siyashova on March 22nd 2011.

The three South African cyclists in their late twenties, sacrificed their professions for this cause for the duration of the tour. With this journey of eight months through ten countries and over 12 500km, the team aims to raise one million rand for HearUs, a non-profit organization that helps connecting hearing impaired people to the world of sound through a cochlear implant.

The route will take them through South Africa, Swaziland, Mozambique, Malawi and Tanzania where they will stop in Arusha to hike up to the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro before continuing on to Kenya, Ethiopia and Sudan before reaching Cairo their final destination sometime in December.

Jiten was inspired by his deaf brother, Anesh, who received his cochlear implant in 2007 at age 30. Anesh was born deaf and unable to afford a cochlear implant as a child. Jiten replies: "I hope this cycling project will help more deaf children like my brother, but earlier in their lives, to experience the joy of music, a mother's bedtime story or even just the laughter of friends."

About the team: They describe themselves as "by no means similar but we share a love for the outdoors and passion for adventure". Jiten a qualified veterinarian is from Cape Town. Ria and Imraan, both from Verulam in Kwa Zulu Natal, are respectively qualified as a bio resources engineer and veterinarian. Due to their veterinarian background, a secondary

goal with the tour will be to assist the poor en route with basic animal advice and better farming practices.

The target of raising one million rand is challenging but the team trusts that sponsors will support their effort. They are calling on the South African corporate and business sector and public in general to get involved. People can visit their website by [www.siyashova.com](http://www.siyashova.com) and make a donation in one of the following ways:

Sponsoring kilometers, Purchasing the SiyaShova T-shirt, Purchasing a CD with the official SIYASHOVA song, SMS "sound" and the number 31243 and contribute R10 or Making a general contribution.

The donations are directly made towards the HearUs Fund. Sponsors or people who need more information can contact Sarah Allwood at HearUs at 079 504 4332 or Jiten Magan at [jiten.magan@yahoo.com](mailto:jiten.magan@yahoo.com). People can also follow their journey via their website ([www.siyashova.com](http://www.siyashova.com)), facebook page or blog.

## IN MEMORIUM: Beverley Crouts-Knipe

27 August 1972 – 19 April 2011



It was with great sadness that we learnt of the passing of Beverley Crouts-Knipe on the morning of 19 April 2011. Beverley received a cochlear implant in 2007. She had developed a progressive deafness as a child. Despite her deafness she had achieved remarkable heights during her life. She was the Provincial Manager of South African Heritage Resources Agency's Western Cape Office, and was currently registered for her second Masters Degree in City and Regional Planning.

Beverley has been a prolific champion for heritage in the Western Cape and, increasingly, nationally and internationally. She was a superb speaker and served on international heritage bodies and presented at many local and international conferences.

She was also an ardent activist for the rights of people with hearing loss and served on the Exco Committee of Hear2day. Her insights and contributions have benefited many of our implantees and those who knew her loved her dearly. Our thoughts and condolences to Trevor and their two young children.

### QUESTIONS ABOUT POWER PLATES

Vibration Fitness Devices are passive training devices, which activate Tonic Vibration Reflexes. The user stands on a vibrating plate evoking these involuntary muscle contractions at the same speed. The amplitude of the vibrations is within several millimeters which easily penetrate a large portion of the body. The strong induced vibrations have the potential to penetrate the whole recipient's body, including the head. Prolonged application of these vibrations could potentially have a negative effect on the cochlear implant (e.g. damage of the electronic components) and to its integration into the human body (e.g. adverse tissue reactions).

Recommendation: Vibrating Fitness Devices are not recommended to be used by recipients of cochlear implants for prolonged training purposes. The vibrations can damage the implant or induce adverse tissue reactions at the implant site. So, in summary --- no more power plate use please! For further information about recommended guidelines of safety for cochlear implant users we have a copy of the guidelines at the Cochlear Implant Unit at Tygerberg Hospital or you can access

it on the internet by going to [www.bcg.org.uk/downloads/pdfs/Safety%20document.pdf](http://www.bcg.org.uk/downloads/pdfs/Safety%20document.pdf)

### MEDIC ALERT

Remember to get a MedicAlert® bracelet if you are a cochlear implant user. MedicAlert® has been protecting people from mistakes in emergencies with their world-renowned bracelet. By having your medical condition engraved on your bracelet doctors are forewarned of your medical conditions before they treat you and therefore mistakes are prevented. This would especially be relevant in the case of undergoing an MRI or surgical procedures where induced currents are used. For more information call 086 111 2979 or email [info@medicalert.co.za](mailto:info@medicalert.co.za) [www.medicalert.co.za](http://www.medicalert.co.za)

### ARE YOU COPING WITH HEARING LOSS?

Hear2Day is an active South African group that aims to enhance communication through listening. We campaign for better conditions for people with hearing loss and meet regularly in a social setting to discuss and share hearing-related experiences. Email us at [hello@hear2day.co.za](mailto:hello@hear2day.co.za) to get in touch and join us at our next meeting.