

UPDATE

Australian Rotary Health Research Fund

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A U T U M N • 2 0 0 3

Message from the Chairman

The future impact of the Australian Rotary Health Research Fund on Mental Illness Research was discussed at our Symposium held at the Australian National University in Canberra from 19th to 21st March 2003.



Chairman Denis Green and Dr Richard Smallwood at the ARHRF Symposium, ANU Canberra

At the Convention in Brisbane in

The Symposium brought together Clinicians, Researchers, Consumers/Carers and Funders hoping to reach a consensus about the direction our Fund's research in mental illness would take over the next three years. We believed that if Clinicians, Researchers, Consumers/Carers and Funders could work together more effectively then we would be able to better help those with existing mental health problems, help prevent the onset of mental illnesses and more effectively promote mental health. By the end of the Symposium, the participants were able to give the Board of our Fund advice concerning its future involvement in the area of mental illness research.

Due South Wines (two whites and one red) should be now available at Vintage Cellar stores around Australia. They are very good quality wines, so call into Vintage Cellars and buy them. If not in stock ask them to get them in! Remember for every bottle you purchase, our Fund receives 5% of the cost, towards further research.

June we will have display booths to promote to Rotarians world wide, Australian Rotarian's involvement with mental illness Research and the community awareness campaign concerning the stigma, isolation and discrimination suffered by those with a mental illness as well as their families. Please call in and make yourselves known to us at the booth.

There are only a few months left before the end of the financial year, a time when you are considering tax deductible donations to your favourite charity, a time when Clubs consider their donations to their favourite Rotary Programs. Think no more!! Make the Australian Rotary Health Research Fund a beneficiary this year.

As PDG Allan Male once wrote "You can't change the past, but you can shape the future" and "Growing old is compulsory, growing up is optional." Your Fund has grown up and with your continued financial support can look forward to an exciting future.

Denis Green

RESEARCHERS – PLAQUE PRESENTATIONS

There was an ARHRF Plaque presentation at the Rotary Club of Kalamunda, to Dr Clare Roberts and her assistant Ruth Drake-Brockman, who gave a presentation on their research project "Family Based Mental Health Promotion for Young Adolescents".



They were extremely appreciative of ARHRF and made mention of the high esteem the Fund holds as a premier funder. Rod Style, District 9470 Chairman, and a three members from Rotary Club of Bassendean were also present.



Professor Osvaldo Almeida and his team of researchers receive their ARHRF plaque for their 2002 research project "A randomised, placebo-controlled clinical trial, to prevent depression amongst stroke patients".



INDIGENOUS HEALTH SCHOLARSHIPS

The ARHRF Indigenous Health Scholarship Program is a co-operative project between the ARHRF, Rotary Clubs, Universities and the relevant state government department in each state or territory.

As an independent State program it has been running out of South Australia under the guiding hand of Geoff Bailey, in New South Wales by Ted Anderson and is currently being launched by Ted Peake in Victoria. The program is also being supported by the Commonwealth Government who provide administration financial assistance.

The object of this program is to provide a scholarship fund, which can be used to assist indigenous students to undertake a course in a wide range of health related professions with the purpose of assisting students to gain an education, which will enable them to use their education for the benefit of other indigenous communities.

Today, we still have only about 40 indigenous doctors and that is why in South Australia there were at last count only 7 qualified nursing sisters working. There are 64,000 non-indigenous doctors, yet only 40 represent the 2% of indigenous people.

The project is very much a partnership between government and the Rotary clubs of Australia. The various governments have undertaken to subsidise funds raised for this project on a dollar for dollar basis up to a total of \$2,500 annually for each student.

Central Region – In South Australia, the Department of Health Aboriginal Services has an agreement to provide up to \$100,000 annually as a dollar for dollar sponsorship with Rotary Clubs.

Eastern Region – NSW Health Department has provided an annual subsidy of \$25,000 initially for three years, but with the

provision that both the amount and the time may be increased if the need is shown. We are currently in the second year.

Southern Region – Victoria government has agreed to fund a pilot program of \$7,500 for the first year and \$5,000 for the next two years. There are numerous clubs interested in supporting the program.

Western Region – Western Australian government department are keen to have Rotary's involvement as they have allocations of \$80,000 on a similar scheme.

Indigenous students are not normally as well off as their non-indigenous counterparts, and their families are not in a position to give them as much assistance, so they need to supplement their income, which adds considerably to the burden of studying for a degree.

A large proportion of the indigenous students are mature aged. They are people who have been in the work force for a number of years, and who wish to improve their knowledge – to take the next step and become a nursing sister for example, instead of a nurse attendant.

Abstudy does not go very far, and the need to borrow or to work and study is a major reason for the previously high drop out rate. Either the university or the relevant government departments' call for nominations from suitably qualified students for scholarships in health related professions.

Once the students have been successful they are required to keep contact with their sponsor club at least twice a year by either attending a dinner meeting, or by writing to advise of their progress, and their welfare.

Clubs are encouraged to treat students very much like exchange students, but without hosting. Students are asked to assist to help in

promotion of the project by speaking to Rotary clubs if they have a talent for speaking.

Current Rotary Club Involvements

Central Region – Mitcham, Unley, Edwardstown, Morialta, Campbelltown, Eastwood, Victor Harbor, Stirling, Alice Springs/Mbantua, Marion, Morisset (NSW), Onkaparinga, Port Augusta, Blakiston, Glen Osmond

Eastern Region – Balmoral, East Gosford, Galston, Roseville Chase, Sydney CBD, Mosman, Eulowiree (St Ives), Terry Hills, Carlingford, Turrumurra, Chatswood, Northbridge

Southern Region – Hazelwood, Morwell, Drouin, Trafalgar, Warragul, Traralgon Central

Students Currently Receiving Sponsorship

Central Region

Aleeta Dawes	Medicine
Olivia O'Donoghue	Medicine
James Charles	Podiatry
Christina Boin	Nursing
Courtney Thompson	BioMedical Engineering
Harriet Coleman	Nursing
Zoe Luz	Bio Medical Technology
Rebecca Schmerl	Nursing
Abby McCann	Psychology

Eastern Region

Sara Jane Gibbons	Medicine
Beth Campbell	Medicine
Paula Williams	Medicine

Southern Region

Isaac Haddock	Nursing
Chantelle Stubna	Medicine
Veronica Kylie	Pharmacy

Aleeta Dawes



ARHRF MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS FORUMS

The New Year has started with great interest being taken by clubs in promoting the Mental Illness Awareness Forum Program to the community. March has ARHRF with 21 forums in place and still growing. April and May are moving along also having 8 forums in place for each month.

The aims of the Community Forum Project are:

- To help de-stigmatise mental illness
- To bring the community in contact with mental health services and support groups
- To clear myths and misunderstandings surrounding mental illness
- To raising awareness of the need for early recognition and treatment of mental illness
- To offer hope and understanding to consumers and carers
- To form ongoing partnerships between Rotary Clubs, mental health services, support groups, local government and the community.

Enthusiastic Rotary Clubs are taking the concept of being proactive in the community and spreading the word of the program at every possible chance.

April 2003

- 5th Rotary Club of Melton, VIC
Mowbray College, 2pm
- 5th Rotary Club of Gympie
Cooloola, QLD: Civic Centre,
Gympie, 6.30 for 7 pm
- 9th Rotary Club of Victor Harbor,
SA: Lutheran Centre,
6.30 for 7 pm
- 12th Rotary Club of West Tamar, TAS:
Riverside Community Centre,
1.30 for 2pm
- 13th Rotary Clubs of Murray Bridge,
Mobilong, SA: Unity College,
Murray Bridge, 1pm
- 17th Rotary Club of Toowoomba,
QLD: Mt Lofty State High
– Year 11
- 29th Rotary Club of Northcote, VIC:
Preston City Hall, 6.45 for 7 pm

May 2003

- 1st Rotary Club of Cooma, NSW
Cooma Servicemans Club, 7pm
- 5th Rotary Club of Mosman Park,
WA: Mosman Art Foundation
- 7th Rotary Club of Huntingdale,
VIC: Monash University –
Alexander Theatre,
6.30 for 7 pm
- 8th Rotary Club of Corowa, NSW
Corowa RSL, 6.30 for 7 pm
- 8th Rotary Club of Goulburn Argyle,
NSW: Trinity College – Goulburn
- 13th Rotary Club of Strathmore -
Gladstone Park, SA
- 14th Rotary Club of Castlemaine,
VIC: Campbells Creek
Community Centre, 7pm

- 15th Rotary Club of Caloundra Pacific
and Caloundra, QLD
Caloundra Cultural Centre, 7 pm
- 20th Rotary Club of Glen Waverley,
VIC: Glen Waverley Uniting
Church, 7pm
- 21st Rotary Club of Werribee and
Altona City, VIC
The Event Centre, 7 pm
- 22nd Rotary Club of Longreach, QLD
Stockman's Hall of Fame, 7 pm
- 28th Rotary Club of Shellharbour,
NSW: Shellharbour Workers Club
- May/June 2003 Rotary Club of
Malvern, VIC

If your club would like to get involved or like to know more about this program please contact Cheryl Deguara, ARHRF Project Co-ordinator on (02) 9633 4888 or email cheryldeguara@arhrf.org.au for more details.

ARHRF has a new logo!!!



Similar enough to be easily recognised, our logo has been updated and given a new look. Watch out for it.

New ARHRF Display Kits

Every Rotary District in Australia has now received a new Display Kit (fold up panels).

Please contact your District for that special ARHRF event!

WORKPLACE FORUM ON MENTAL HEALTH

The ARHRF was invited to organise a workplace forum on mental health for staff at the Department of Family and Community Services in Canberra. This forum, featuring ARHRF speakers Fay Jackson, Noel Trevaskis and Margaret Costigan was extremely successful and the following email was received shortly afterwards:

"I just wanted to thank whoever was responsible for this great presentation.

So often we only see statistics and reports. It was really wonderful to learn about the effect of mental illness on real people. I thought the speakers were very courageous and discussed their illness openly. It was very moving and made me re-think about mental illness.

This was one of the best presentations I have been to. I work in the Personal Support Programme and many of our participants experience mental illness. This made it far more real to me and opened my eyes more widely to the impact on a person's life of having a mental illness.

I really hadn't thought of mental illness as something physical that affects your ability to read and write, to feel, taste, rationalise, know who people are etc. I also didn't realise that many would then get sick with diabetes, cancer etc through medication and treatment. I hope someone passes on our warmest thanks to the speakers and assures them that it made a big difference to people in my section that attended and will in turn affect the way we work, think and develop our programme in the future."

How the Indigenous Health Scholarships are Making a Difference...

James Charles

"I am 34 of age and I have 4 children aged 8, 7, 2 and 6 months. I left school at the age of 14 and started working as a laborer. I found myself out of work and with no real prospects of satisfying employment. My mother always believed in my academic abilities and suggested that I should investigate the possibility of returning to school. I went to study at Tea Tree Gully TAFE. I gained my year 10 certificate and went to Marden Senior College and completed year 11 with the emphasis on chemistry and physics. I completed year 12 with physics, politics and American history, chemistry and legal studies.

In 2001 I started a Bachelors of Arts degree in Adelaide University. Half way through the first year of my Arts degree my results were encouraging and I applied through the Aboriginal Access Scheme to

transfer to Bachelor of Podiatry at the University of South Australia.

My main inspiration to succeed at university is my 4 children. I am determined to set an example for my children because I want them to finish year 12 and gain a university degree."

Courtney Thompson

"I have personal reasons for choosing Biomedical Engineering as a career. Ever since my nana lost her leg through diabetes, I felt compelled to help people in this situation. I saw the frustration and pain my family experienced from their loss, especially my grandpa. From that point on I've wanted to help people with disabilities. With such a high rate of diseases, including diabetes swarming the Aboriginal population and non-aboriginal populations causing loss of limbs and other horrible fates, I yearn to help and feel such help is a necessity."

Christine Boin

"I'm married with two beautiful daughters 2 and 4 years. I want to help others in the aboriginal community to also be proud and make a difference. Even if one person in every 5 aboriginal

families tried to further their studies what a difference it would make to future generations.

I have wanted to be a nurse all my life, but another passion of mine always took priority – singing. After the birth of my 2nd child, I became ill – postnatal depression. It took some time to recover, and it was a real eye opener to the world of mental health. I believe I was meant to have this experience, as it was my illness that changed my life forever. As I was being treated for depression, I decided that was what I wanted to do. I wanted to help others with the same problem.

I believe that gaining a scholarship would help me achieve my dream of becoming a competent nurse/midwife, and feel that I would be an asset to both the aboriginal and nursing community."

If you or your club would like to get involved or like to know more about this program please contact Cheryl Deguara, ARHRF Project Co-ordinator on (02) 9633 4888 or email cheryldeguara@arhrf.org.au for more details.

FROM WESTERN AUSTRALIA DUE SOUTH WINE

When you purchase this wine **5%** of the proceeds are donated to the Australian Rotary Health Research Fund.

Grapes sourced from the cool climate Great Southern region of Western Australia have produced this well structured wine.

New South Wales Vintage Cellars outlets: Rushcutters Bay, Clovelly, Abbotsford, Stanmore, Neutral Bay, Seaforth, Dural

Victorian Vintage Cellars outlets: Brighton East, Mentone, Mount Waverley, Richmond, Sandringham, Melbourne (King Street), Ashburton, Brighton, Camberwell, Doncaster, Donvale, Greensborough, Melbourne (Little Bourke St), Port Melbourne, South Melbourne, Toorak, South Yarra

Victorian Quaffers stores: Mount Waverley, Tooronga

Northern Territory Vintage Cellars outlets: Darwin (Cavenagh Street)

Western Australia Vintage Cellars outlets: Duncraig, Dalkeith, East Perth, Fremantle



These quality wines are now in stock at Vintage Cellars outlets in Western Australia, Victoria and New South Wales.

2001 Semillon Sauvignon Blanc

2001 Chardonnay

2000 Cabernet Sauvignon



MENTAL HEALTH FORUMS – AT NEWCASTLE

The Rotary Club of Newcastle held an evening forum featuring Youth Suicide, organised in conjunction with a local Hunter group (Life Activities).

They organise training and functions for people with disabilities (physical and mental). One of our members is the CEO of Life Activities (Kay Tierney) and she was assisted by one of our past presidents (Bob Baldwin) and her events coordinator (Lisa Mills).

It was a very successful evening – about 150 attended, It was officially opened by the Lady Mayoress of Newcastle, Kathy Tate.



Bob Baldwin, Maree Gleeson, Kathy Tate, Kay Tierney, from the Rotary Club of Newcastle forum.

– AND AT ROCKINGHAM



The Rotary Club of Safety Bay recently held a Community Mental Illness Forum at Kolbe Catholic College, Rockingham, WA. Pictured are Mr Kim Beazley who was the M.C. for the night, Dr Sandy Tait, Clinician and Terry Boyd Chairman ARHRF D. 9460. Between 170-180 people attended.



From this night it is looking very promising for the establishment of a June O'Connor Centre.



SNAPSHOT from the 2002 ARHRF Chairman's Dinner
PDG Leon Becker, Ian Scott Fellow Melinda Andrews
and PDG Ron Beslich,
ARHRF Director.

RESEARCH GRANTS 2003

*Dr. Jane Pirkis,
University of Melbourne, Vic.*

*The impact of media reporting
of suicide on actual suicidal
behaviour*

This study examines the influence of good and poor media reports of suicide on actual suicidal behaviour. Specifically, it examines the hypothesis that the rate of completed/attempted suicide in a given geographical area will be higher than would be expected in the period following a media report on suicide that is of poor quality, and lower than would be expected after a report of good quality. It combines data on media reporting of suicide from a previous project, with routinely collected data on completed and attempted suicide. The findings have the potential to inform media-based public health interventions.

*A/Professor Gary Hulse
University of Western
Australia, WA*

*Is there a safe level of alcohol
consumption for people with
mental health problems*

Excessive alcohol consumption is known to increase the severity of mental health problems such as frequency of hospital episodes and length of hospital stay (LOS) among persons with severe mental health disorders (eg. Schizophrenia). However, data also suggest that even low levels of alcohol

consumption can have negative outcomes for those with severe mental health problems, but the relationship between alcohol consumption and health in those with less severe mental health problems needs to be clarified.

The study will assemble hospital morbidity, mental health and mortality data on five groups of people whose use of alcohol was recorded whilst they were on general hospital psychiatric wards between 1994-96. The groups were defined as 'non-users', those who consumed alcohol at a 'safe' level, those with hazardous consumption levels, those with harmful consumption levels and those with alcohol dependence. The study will identify any subsequent differences in the frequency of hospital presentations and LOS between these groups.

Method: the Western Australian Health Services Research Linked Database can assemble health information on individuals including the number of hospital episodes and the diagnosis associated with those events. This will allow us to compare the health outcomes for the five groups over the five-year period since they were screened and to examine the relationship with previous mental health and alcohol related diagnosis.

Significance: if low levels of alcohol consumption have negative outcomes in those with 'safe' consumption levels, preventive interventions need to be instigated as a routine part of mental health treatment, for all alcohol users not just for those with hazardous plus alcohol use.

COMPANIONS & FRIENDS OF THE FUND

Gold Companions

Richmond Manyweathers
 – from R/C Caringbah, NSW
 Don Gordon
 – from Mrs. Dot Gordon,
 Rotary Club of Mornington, Vic.
 Russ Riddell
 – from R/C Carlingford, NSW

Companions

Phil Francis
 – Toss the Coin, Vic.
 Gillian Armstrong
 – from Ian Armstrong,
 Rotary Club of Nunawading, Vic.
 Charles Morrison (posthumously)
 from Rotary Club of Liverpool
 West, NSW

Diamond Friends

– \$2,500

Jim Gordon
 – from Rotary Club of
 Carlingford, NSW
 Ken Bunt
 – from Rotary Club of
 Carlingford, NSW

Platinum Friends

– \$2,000

Ken Hooton
 – Rotary Club of Crows Nest, NSW
 Peter Sheppard
 – Rotary Club of Brighton, Vic.

Silver Friends

– \$1,000

Amy Zelmer
 – Rotary Club of Rockhampton,
 Qld.

Bronze Friends

– \$500

George Lake
 – Rotary Club of Wynnum &
 Manly, Qld.
 Max Bunter
 – Rotary Club of Liverpool West
 NSW
 Alex T Watson
 – Rotary Club of Walgett, NSW

Friends of the Fund

– \$100

James Armstrong
 – from Ian Armstrong, Rotary
 Club of Nunawading, Vic.
 Joan Thompson
 – Rotary Club of Padstow, NSW
 Philippa Lowe – from Rotary Club
 of Miranda Daybreak, NSW
 Robert Gray – from Rotary Club of
 Miranda Daybreak, NSW
 Harry Bambrick – Rotary Club of
 Rockhampton West, Qld.
 Kelly Armstrong – Rotary Club of
 Nunawading, Vic.
 Geoff Pitcher – Rotary Club of
 Adelaide, SA
 Norma Bashington /
 Michail Zacharia / Virginia Hall /
 Jane Gray / Pam Como /
 Jamie Carroll / Neil Massingham /
 Louise Nobbs
 – Rotary Club of
 Miranda Daybreak, NSW

Rhonda Shukur / John Alexander /
 Peter Anderson / Robert Barnes /
 Faye Barney / Rex Bloomfield /
 Neil Brewer / Rob Comollatti /
 Horst Dargel / Lawrie Everton /
 Jack Fleming / James Florey /
 Colin Gough / Neville Harris /
 Paul Harris / John Horton /
 Ken Kwong / Clive Munday /
 Mervyn Ohl / Lola Peters /
 Alf Ramm / Rod Schlencker /
 Bob Shewan / Ian Sim / Ken Smith
 John Tate / Don Thomasson /
 Allen Thomson / Kevin Weaver /
 Bob Webb / Jan Smith
 – Rotary Club of
 Rockhampton West, Qld.
 John L Morgan – Rotary Club of
 Caloundra Pacific, Qld.
 Oscar Bartolo – Rotary Club of
 Pascoe Vale, Vic.
 Heath Hind – Rotary Club of
 Pascoe Vale, Vic.
 Peter Threlkeld / John Squillacoti /
 Vlad Rouhliadef / Barry Peirce /
 Pat Murray / Jim Leahy /
 George Kristen / Dan King /
 Mike Kencalo / Mladen Jovancevic
 Peter Houghton / Lawrence Hay /
 Gary Halliday / Alan Hall /
 John Gibbs / Frank Fleming /
 Peter Farrell / Jock Cimino
 – from Rotary Club of
 Liverpool West, NSW
 Tony Sullivan
 – Rotary Club of Croyden, Vic.
 John Gabb
 – Rotary Club of Cooroy, Qld.



**Australian Rotary
 Health Research Fund**
 Post Office Box 779
 Parramatta
 New South Wales 2124

I wish to make a donation.

My details are as follows:

Name

Address

Postcode

Rotarian Tick if applicable

Please credit the

Rotary Club with this donation.

Enclosed is my cheque for \$

I authorise ARHRF, as a one-off donation,
 to deduct \$..... from my credit
 card account

I authorise ARHRF to deduct a monthly/
 quarterly/annual donation of \$.....
 from my credit card account

Bankcard Mastercard Visa American Express

□□□□ □□□□ □□□□ □□□□

Expiry date □□ □□

Signature