



# Anti-Cancer Council

NUMBER 164 AUTUMN 1998

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

PROFESSOR ROBERT BURTON



April 1998

Dear Supporters

Much has happened since the last issue of *Anti-Cancer Council News* and I am happy to bring you two pieces of exciting news on the future location of the Anti-Cancer Council of Victoria.

The first is that we have signed the contract for the acquisition of 100 Drummond Street to house our Victorian Cancer Control Research Institute. If all goes well, the units that make up the Institute will move into the new building in late July, with the Rathdowne Street office remaining as the headquarters of the Anti-Cancer Council, including the units of fundraising, finance, administration and the office of the director.

As a celebration of 30 years of association with our programs, Tattersall's has contributed \$1 million to the establishment of the Institute at the new address.

In addition, The Jack Brockhoff Foundation has dedicated \$150,000 to the Institute's infrastructure requirements.

Negotiations are continuing with some of Victoria's leading trusts for the remainder of the purchase price.

There are also big changes planned for our merchandising department. It will soon be opening its new retail shop in the heart of Melbourne's central business district. Located at 115 Elizabeth Street, the shop will be managed by two part time managers, Lisa Mitchell and Helen Foley, together with a team of volunteers.

This will be an exciting time for all our customers and there will be a new range of clothing, sunglasses and practical gift ideas. Our current shop will remain open at the Rathdowne Street location. Mail orders and enquiries will be unchanged.

Watch this space for the grand opening date.

*Robert Burton*

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## HEART AND CANCER OFFENSIVE AGAINST TOBACCO

**T**HE National Heart Foundation and the Australian Cancer Society have formed an alliance to call on the federal Government to devote the \$64 million raised through tax on illegal supply of cigarettes to children to pay for tough new smoking control programs to reduce the number of children who smoke.

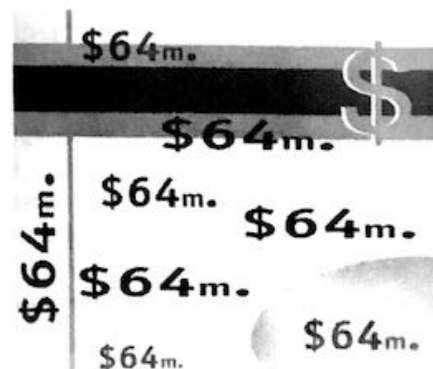
The newly formed Heart and Cancer Offensive Against Tobacco released a joint submission, signed by 60 other health agencies, to the 1998 federal budget.

The alliance outlined a detailed plan for tax increases and reform on tobacco products.

The plan is backed by research which shows the majority of Australians support spending extra taxes on health programs which discourage children from smoking.

The President of the Australian Cancer Society, Professor Richard Fox, said it was no longer possible to continue to tolerate the widespread use of cigarettes by children.

The National Heart Foundation's Director of Health, Medical and Scientific Affairs, Dr Andrew Tonkin, called on the Government to move immediately and instigate changes to prevent another generation of children becoming addicted to tobacco.



# FAP REGISTER TURNS 10

**Gastroenterologist Dr James St John reflects on the 10th anniversary of the Esso Familial Polyposis Register.**

**T**HIS month, the Esso Familial Polyposis Register in Victoria, located at the Anti-Cancer Council, turns 10.

Support from Esso Australia helped establish the register in 1988 and its vital contribution has helped to maintain the register over the decade.

The aim of the register is to prevent bowel cancer occurring in people with familial polyposis (also known as FAP). This is a very rare, inherited condition in which hundreds, sometimes thousands, of polyps develop in the bowel. People who develop the condition should have surgical removal of the bowel to prevent cancer. Without surgery, bowel cancer is inevitable, often occurring at an early age.

Working through specialists and general practitioners, we encourage all members of FAP families to enrol on the register, so that reminders may be sent when bowel tests fall due. The register distributes information to the affected families and their doctors, encourages genetic counselling and testing and produces a regular newsletter.

FAP registers have existed for more than 70 years, with the first established in England. More followed in Scandinavian countries, Japan and the US in the 1970s and 80s. They clearly demonstrate that organised management of FAP families reduces occurrence of and mortality from bowel cancer.

Ten years ago, the Victorian register was only the second in Australia (the first was established in Western Australia in 1985). It now has 576 people on its books. Now there are registers in just about every other state. As families are



**Gastroenterologist Dr James St John**

often scattered, our register works closely with other Australian and international registers.

The polyposis gene was identified in 1991. The register made it possible to quickly offer genetic testing to the families. By March this year, genetic testing had been performed on close to 100 people. Of those, more than 70 were shown not to have inherited the family genetic change, so they could discontinue having regular bowel examinations.

The FAP register has been well accepted by families and doctors. It provides a good model for cancer prevention for other types of familial cancer.

## SURF'S UP FOR SUNSMART



*1st and 2nd place getters Layne Beachley and Pru Jeffries at the SunSmart Classic*

**T**HE SunSmart Classic is the new name of the women's section of the Bells Beach international surfing competition held on 8-12 April. This year, SunSmart replaced Quit as the principal sponsor, to remind surfers and spectators—particularly adolescents and young adults—of the sun's dangers.

Surfers are at high risk from skin cancer because they are exposed to dangerous ultraviolet radiation for long periods.

Shade was provided and sunscreen was distributed at the event and surfers and officials became SunSmart role models. The event will also remain smokefree in the years to come.

## NEW ERA FOR CANCER RESEARCH

**T**HE Federal Minister for Health, Dr Michael Wooldridge, launched a new cancer research database in Melbourne in February.

The data base, called CARA (Cancer Research Australia), is a project of the Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research and the Australian Cancer Society and signals a new era in cancer information and communication.

CARA will enhance communication between cancer researchers, clinicians, the public, media and governments by providing easy access to the latest information on what is happening in cancer research across Australia and around the world.

CARA can be accessed at:  
<http://www.ludwig.edu.au/cara>

# ANTI-CANCER COUNCIL GIVES \$5 MILLION TO RESEARCH

CANCER research involving genetic engineering, childhood cancers and the commonest cancer affecting men and women, bowel cancer, received a major boost this year after the Anti-Cancer Council announced almost \$5 million in research programs.

The Anti-Cancer Council's contribution to cancer research is the largest of any state cancer organisation in Australia and is a reflection of the huge impact Victorians have on the Anti-Cancer Council's fundraising activities.

Thanks to all donors, we were able to award grants to researchers and scientists at Melbourne's research institutes, hospitals and universities and also to our researchers based at the Anti-Cancer Council.

The Director of the Anti-Cancer Council, Professor Robert Burton, said the

funding maximised the use of available research dollars and ensured financial support for a diverse range of projects.

He said the funding was providing results, with the development of new and improved treatments and a greater understanding of the basic biology of cancer.

This year's research allocation includes eight new projects totalling \$426,000, which include improving treatment of the childhood cancer Ewing's sarcoma, investigation of the genes which control the development of bowel and brain cancer and investigation into the cause of leukaemia.

Dr Achen and Dr Stacker at the Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research are investigating how to control the growth of cancer cells, not by killing them but by starving them of blood by destroying the blood vessels to the cancer.

Professor Beck and Ms Chawengaskophak, who are based at the Howard Florey Institute of Experimental Physiology and Medicine, are working on the identification of a new gene which might cause bowel cancer, the commonest cancer affecting men and women, and whether it is inherited.

Professor Kola, of the Monash University Institute for Reproduction and Development, is investigating the role of a gene in children's cancer, in particular Ewing's sarcoma, and whether new knowledge about this gene can improve treatment of this cancer in children.

Drs Smyth, Trapani and Darcy at the Austin Research Institute are investigating how the body's own defence system against cancer can kill cancer cells and whether this can be boosted to improve the control of cancer.

## SMOKEFREE POLICY LAUNCHED BY MINISTER

WITH more Victorians demanding that they be able to participate in and watch their favourite sports in smokefree comfort, the Quit Campaign has responded by launching a new Going Smokefree Policy Kit.

The Victorian Minister for Health and Aged Care, Mr Rob Knowles, supported the launch of the kit at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, where the Melbourne Cricket Club announced restrictions on smoking in 70 per cent of its grounds.

The kit is a simple-to-follow guide for sporting clubs and venues which are considering implementing a smokefree policy.

Mr Knowles said he was pleased to see that more Victorians were demanding that their recreation environments become smokefree.

'This kit is a step in the right direction. It makes it easier for club officials to act and sets out the guidelines for club members. It will help streamline the move

to smokefree no matter what size the venue is,' Mr Knowles said.

The Executive Director of Quit, Ms Judith Watt, said that the kit was based on

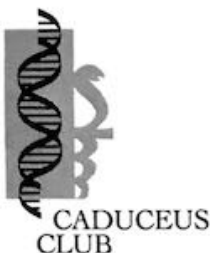
models used in other states and would help to ensure that all Victorians will be able to enjoy playing and watching sport free from the dangers of tobacco smoke.



*The Honourable Rob Knowles with some supporters of Smoke Free*

# FUNDRAISING NEWS

## BEATING CANCER WITH A CLUB: THE CADUCEUS CLUB



As an independent, volunteer based charity, the Anti-Cancer Council's achievements over the past 60 years have come as a direct result of the support of many hardworking and longstanding volunteers and donors. To recognise their wonderful contribution to the fight against cancer, we are delighted to announce the establishment of the Caduceus Club. It is a way for us to say, 'Thank you'.

Caduceus Club members will be recognised by the presentation of a membership pin. We hope they will all wear it with pride and help spread our message of progress and hope in the community.

The Caduceus was the winged staff carried by Hermes, the messenger-god in Greek mythology. With your help we can send a message of hope to future generations.

For more information about the Caduceus Club, please contact Carol or Joanna by phone (03) 9279 1224, fax (03) 9279 1270 or email [carolr@accv.org.au](mailto:carolr@accv.org.au)

Special thanks to National Mutual for its generous contribution towards the costs of setting up and running the Caduceus Club. National Mutual offers all our supporters assistance with life insurance and finances. If you would like to find out how they can help you with your insurance and financial needs you can phone a trained consultant at the National Mutual Service Centre on 1800 700 032.

## CORPORATE CUP GOLF RESULTS

RON Cooper-Thomas, Richard May, Mark Hutchinson and Keith Wilson won this year's cup from a field of 84 corporate participants. Special thanks to sponsors, Bridgestone Golf, Country Club Casino and Southern Australia Airlines.

A total of \$17,685 was raised at the annual event, held at Metropolitan in March on a very soggy day.



Winners: Richard May, Ron Cooper-Thomas and Keith Wilson

## UPCOMING FUNDRAISING EVENTS (call 1300 65 56 85 for details)

ENTRIES for the **Daffodil Day Arts Awards** close soon. There are categories for poetry and prose, art, music composition and young people. The exhibition of last year's entries, called 'Cancer: the Journey' will tour Warrnambool, Mildura, La Trobe, Geelong, Shepparton and Swan Hill this year.

• Don't forget to buy your tickets before 12 June for the **1998 raffle** which could win you a Mazda 626 Luxury Hatchback valued at \$39,450. Second prize is a \$5,000 shopping spree from David Jones, third prize is a seven night Cairns holiday at the Novotel Palm

Cove Resort and fourth prize is a \$1,000 Sportsmart gift voucher. Tickets are \$2.

• A **flower arranging workshop** will be held in July led by professional florists Ms Helen Lindsay and Mr Bryan Frost. All proceeds to the Anti-Cancer Council.

• Volunteers are needed for **Daffodil Day**. If you can spare a few hours to help sell daffodils in your area on 21 August, or you want to be involved behind the scenes with packing orders and taking phone orders, the Community Fundraising Department would like to hear from you.

## FERRARI SUPER LOTTERY REVS OFF



Melbourne homoeopath, Mr Anthony von Moger (pictured with his wife, April) is the proud owner of a new \$300,000 Ferrari following the draw of the Ferrari SuperLottery in February.

The lottery was a joint venture between the Anti-Cancer Council of Victoria and the Cancer Foundation of South Australia and sold more than 1,400 tickets at \$300 each. A net profit of \$185,000 was raised and will be shared between the two states.

Anthony entered the lottery to help cancer research and was speechless when told of his win. With a brand new baby, he is now working out where to put the baby seat.

## VICTORIAN CANCER CALL-IN



The Victorian Cancer Call-In took place on 23 March, inviting people to call in about bowel, breast or prostate cancer, the three main cancers affecting Victorians.

It generated 1,170 calls, 527 of which were from diagnosed cancer patients and their families. The calls were answered by a team of clinicians who volunteered their time.

It was surprising but pleasing to receive more than 300 calls from men. Men have traditionally been reluctant to use telephone counselling services, but many had responded to the radio advertising featuring John Clarke. John is a great supporter of the Anti-Cancer Council and once again donated his talents and time to promote the event.

The major issues discussed by callers were diagnosis, treatment and management. Information about early detection, prevention and familial cancer risks were also prominent concerns.

The Cancer Call-In was sponsored by Novartis Pharmaceuticals. Novartis's assistance enabled us to promote the call-in to a much wider audience and to provide a high level of technical support to the participating clinicians.

## A NEW LOOK AT BOWEL CANCER SCREENING

THE Australian Health Technology Advisory Committee (AHTAC), a committee of the National Health and Medical Research Council, has evaluated the benefits, risks and costs of screening for bowel cancer.

After careful consideration of evidence, AHTAC has recommended that Australia should begin to pilot test a program of population screening for bowel cancer, using the faecal occult blood test (which detects blood in stools).

Recent evidence from overseas trials has shown that such a program can reduce the rate of death from bowel cancer across the community.

There are still a number of questions about screening, such as how well such a program would work in the Australian setting and how much it would cost the community as a whole.

AHTAC has recommended the setting up of a number of pilot studies to determine the best way of operating screening in Australia and the Anti-Cancer Council has volunteered to run them.

Bowel cancer is the commonest cancer affecting men and women in Australia and the second most common cause of cancer death. The latest review of statistics in Victoria show that in 1994, 2,501 men and 2,126 women died of bowel cancer.

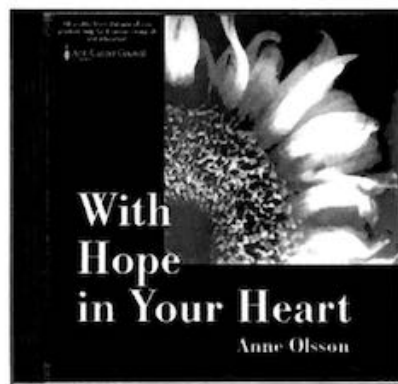
## ANNE HAS HOPE IN HER HEART

ANNE Olsson was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1994. During her treatment she gained much strength through singing and listening to songs of hope. She found that reflecting on the words allowed her to think more positively.

In thanksgiving for her 50th birthday, Anne decided to share some of her special songs with others and recorded a CD, *With Hope In Your Heart*.

Her greatest wish is that the music and words will offer inspiration, comfort, peace and hope.

The CD has been a big hit and Anne has donated almost \$10,000 to the Anti-



Cancer Council from sales to date. The CD sells for \$25, cassette \$15. It is available from the Anti-Cancer Council Shop. You can also order by phone or mail by contacting Sue Flower on (03) 9279 1102.



THE annual Australia's Biggest Morning Tea, sponsored by Lipton Yellow Label Tea, is on Thursday 28 May. However, we need thousands more supporters to help us raise funds for cancer research by having a cuppa for cancer.

It is the easiest and most social event on our calendar. All you have to do is hold

a gathering at home or at work then invite your friends, family, neighbours or colleagues along and ask them to make a donation for their cuppa.

To register for a host kit, email us on [morningtea@accv.org.au](mailto:morningtea@accv.org.au) or ring 1300 65 56 85.

# Dear Doreen



**Doreen Akkerman, Director, Cancer Information and Support Service, answers your questions.**

This edition's Dear Doreen features some of the main questions asked at the Cancer Call-In.

**I have had cancer for three years and I am interested in taking part in any clinical trials of new treatments which are taking place in Australia.**

**How do I find out about these trials?**  
The first person to ask about taking part in a clinical trial is your general practitioner (GP) or your cancer specialist. Hospitals in Victoria are involved in national and international trials. However, they have different eligibility criteria depending on the type of cancer. Discuss your interest with your GP who will be able to find out if you are eligible

to take part in current or future trials. If your GP is unsure about all the trials underway in Victoria, he or she could phone the Centre for Clinical Research in Cancer at the Anti-Cancer Council on (03) 9279 1175.

**My grandmother, aunt and sister have all died of breast cancer. I am 45 years of age and want to have both my breasts removed. How do I go about this?**

This is a major decision to make and you should get all the information you can before going ahead with it. It is not current best practice in Australia to remove healthy breasts and most surgeons are extremely reluctant to do this. You or your GP can phone the Cancer Helpline for details of where to get genetic testing and counselling before you finally decide upon surgery. Even after prophylactic breast removal you could still develop breast cancer in any tissue which has been left.

**I have had bowel cancer and had surgery; however, I feel really anxious about it coming back.**

Your specialist will have set up a moni-

toring and follow up schedule which you should keep to. You can also ask your specialist to refer you to an oncology dietitian to help you follow a healthy diet, one which is low in fat and alcohol and high in fibre. Public hospital social work departments offer face to face counselling for people affected by cancer or you can call the Cancer Helpline.

**I have just been diagnosed with prostate cancer and feel really frightened and unsure about my future.**

I am sorry to hear about your fear regarding your diagnosis; however, prostate cancer can be treated, managed and controlled for many years. Many men are leading good quality, productive lives after treatment for prostate cancer either by surgery, radiation therapy or hormone therapy. I hope you have been able to share your feelings with family or friends. Often, just talking things over can help you to cope a little better. If you would like to talk to a nurse counsellor or to be referred to a prostate cancer support group, where you can talk with other men who have had a similar experience, call the Cancer Helpline on 13 11 20.

## HELP US MEET OUR FUTURE TARGETS—introduce a friend.

As a valued supporter, you are already more than aware of the importance and magnitude of our task to minimise the human cost of cancer for all Victorians. Our past achievements have only been possible due to the generosity of our supporters and there is a simple way you could help us further — **introduce a friend to the Anti-Cancer Council by giving them this newsletter and donation coupon.**

Passing on your copy of *Anti-Cancer Council News* is an easy way to make others aware of our vital work and to encourage them to join us in the fight against cancer.

If you introduce a new donor to the Anti-Cancer Council they, like all our donors, will receive this newsletter four times a year but only one donation request. We believe multiple requests are both an imposition and a waste of money.

### I would like to become a registered donor in the fight against cancer

Please find enclosed my donation of \$  \*

to help the Anti-Cancer Council continue its vital work.

Name: .....

Address: .....

P'Code: .....

Please send me more information on how to include the Anti-Cancer Council in my Will.

My cheque made payable to the Anti-Cancer Council of Victoria is enclosed or

please debit my credit card for \$

Card type:

Bankcard  Mastercard  VISA  Amex  Diners

Credit Card No: \_ \_ \_ \_ | \_ \_ \_ \_ | \_ \_ \_ \_ | \_ \_ \_ \_

Signature: ..... Exp Date: \_ \_ / \_ \_

### Post this coupon with your donation to:

Anti-Cancer Council of Victoria, 1 Rathdowne Street, Carlton Vic 3053

\* Donations of \$2.00 and over are tax deductible