

Chairman: Paul Kolatchew
Vice Chairman: Scott Stevenson
Secretary: Peter Chapman
Treasurer: Janelle Kirk
Committee:
Linda Swain
Carole Hooper
Cecil Hill
John Rumball
Rebecca Boyd
Elizabeth Slevin
Bob Dailey



Chairman's Report

Paul Kolatchew - Chairman HMF

I am often overwhelmed and humbled by the enormous support the HMF receives from our local community. A recent example is the extremely generous donation of \$30,000 raised by the **Maitland Cancer Appeal Committee**. It was their 25th anniversary this year and they celebrated by donating to the Australia & New Zealand Breast Cancer Trials Group and HMF. Not only does this wonderful group operate an op-shop at Rutherford and raise money through various fundraising activities, they provide a free linen service to palliative patients being cared for at home. To president Karl Wagner, secretary Lesley Flannery, Alice Bennis and your committee a big heartfelt thank you.

The Appeal Committee has asked that the funds go to melanoma research. As you will be aware, a large proportion of our funds are directed towards research as we believe it is only through research that we will one day find a cure for melanoma. This newsletter features some of the latest pieces of equipment purchased for the research laboratory, what the equipment does and how it has benefited research in the Newcastle laboratory.

Last year HMF committee members had the opportunity to visit the laboratory and we were all impressed by the scope of melanoma research being undertaken.

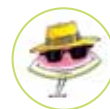
Professor Hersey spoke to the April HMF committee meeting and advised they are making steady progress in testing new agents in treatment of melanoma and that a new signal pathway inhibitor is looking promising. Antibodies that stimulate

immune responses against melanoma are also being tested and some impressive long term remissions of the disease have been reported. Professor Hersey recently received one of the highest accolades when he was chosen by his peers for a prestigious grant in recognition of his work. We are indeed fortunate to have someone of his caliber in Newcastle.

February saw the last of our sun safety education visits to local schools. We believe the program has merit and ideally we see it as an on-going program during the summer months. Application has been made for further funding from the Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation to enable the continuation of this worthwhile program.

Thank you to all who supported the **Elmore Vale Lions/Adamstown-New Lambton Rotary Clubs Charity Golf Day**. Over \$12,000 was raised from the event and the AMP Foundation will be adding \$10,000 to that amount. PCYC and HMF will be co-beneficiaries. Thank you also to the Lions and Rotary clubs for a well organized day.

Lastly, a reminder of our **Charity Race Day on 28th July**. All races have been sponsored and very few seats are left in the pavilion. However there are still seats available for the marquee but you will need to book them as soon as possible. I look forward to seeing you there.



Treasurer's Report

Janelle Kirk

We invited Professor Hersey to our April meeting to discuss his requests for funding assistance from the HMF. A recent funding grant has resulted in the employment of 4 new research technicians and increased the need for additional computers. As well, OH&S regulations require the replacement of an existing Biohazard Hood at a cost of \$12,000. As a Sonicator (a probe used to breakup organic material that is difficult to dissolve) is being shared with another researcher who will be relocating shortly, a new one needs to be purchased at a cost of \$6,000. Professor Hersey's final request is for a Microplate Reader at a cost of \$33,000.

Professor Hersey explained the use and benefits of each request and committee members had the opportunity to ask him questions.

The committee has agreed to fund all of the above requests as we believe they are all important to the professionalism, efficiency and safety of the melanoma research team.

There have been a number of donations/events recently which will enable us to fulfill these requests.

The very generous donation from the Maitland Cancer Appeal Committee will enable us to purchase the Microplate Reader.

Funds from the golf day held by Elmore Vale Lions and Adamstown-New Lambton Rotary will enable us to purchase the Biohazard Hood.

On 1 April Wendy & John Avard opened their home to family and friends for an afternoon of food, drink and fundraising. No one was more surprised than Wendy & John when they raised over \$4,700. Jenny & husband Geoff attended and you will read more about the day in her report. Funds from the day will assist us in the purchase of a Sonicator for the research laboratory.

Our race sponsorships have all been taken – thank you to Radford Shopfitters, McKanna Fabrications, Harvey World Warners Bay Travel, Luke Financial Advisory Group, Friends of John Whitmore, Friends of Arnold Smith, ABB Australia and Physio at Work for your support. Unfortunately all pavilion tickets have been sold but I urge you to join us in the HMF marquee for a great day. Tickets are \$45 which includes admission to the race course and marquee, lunch, tote and bar facilities. Phone Jenny on 49850103 for tickets.



Research Update

C/- Professor Peter Hersey

Signal pathways in Melanoma

When a cell undergoes changes that lead to malignancy there are inherent mechanisms which in most cases result in the death of the cell. This is most likely the outcome for most changes and this prevents cancers developing. Sometimes there are concomitant changes in so called survival signal pathways that overcome the death signals. One of these pathways is the so called MAP kinase RAS,RAF ,ERK pathway which signals cell division and prevents cell death. It is normally activated by signals from soluble factors that act on the cell.

A major finding several years ago was that this pathway may be activated by a mutation in RAF which was present in about 70% of melanoma. This provided an explanation as to how melanoma may develop. The situation was complicated however by the finding that most nevi (moles) also had this mutation but clearly the nevi were not malignant. Instead most nevi were in a state of senescence. i.e. an arrested state of cell division. There is now intense research into why melanoma develops and what is different in melanoma cells compared to nevi.

This pathway however is already being targeted in new treatment approaches. We have completed one trial with one inhibitor of this pathway (Sorafenib) and are currently testing another inhibitor called AZD 6244 sponsored by Astra Zeneca. Results are encouraging and herald many new initiatives in treating melanoma. We will keep you posted.



From the Unit

Gail Walker (RN Newcastle Melanoma Unit)

A note of appreciation once again for the support of the HMF in assisting me to attend the fourth annual skin cancer conference presented by the Skin Cancer Society of Australia and Med Ed in March.

The conference was held on the Gold Coast and was very well attended by predominantly GP's and skin cancer physicians from all over Australia and also from New Zealand. Much of the program focused on the diagnosis of skin lesions clinically and dermatoscopically. Four world renowned experts in the field covered the topic extensively. Scott Menzies from the Sydney Melanoma Unit, Professor Harald Kittler from Austria, Professor Wilhelm Stolz from Germany and Ashfaq Marghoob from New York all shared their different approaches to the detection of melanoma and other skin lesions. The various sessions on melanoma management, histology and photography were also very interesting.

Although I don't consider I am now in any way proficient in diagnosing skin lesions, I do feel that I have gained some valuable clues to what I see under the dermatoscope and that I might be able to provide more information to patients in the Unit in the future.

Dr Michael Reid on the other hand actually attended the 4 day dermoscopy master class that preceded the conference so should be well skilled in the art and science of dermoscopy.

Thank you once again to the HMF for their support.



Foundation News

Jenny Noblet

Before I tell you what's been happening at HMF, I must tell you that I am a grandmother again to a baby boy, Harrison, born in England on 17th April. This is our third grandson and we are delighted that he has arrived safe and well. We are not sure when we will have the opportunity to visit but we receive regular photos via the email to keep us updated with his progress. In March Geoff and I visited our "ozzie" grandson, Andrew who lives in Pt Douglas. He's nearly a year old and is a beautiful little boy – very hard to say goodbye especially when he had mastered "nana" by the end of our stay. Geoff and I also enjoyed our time in far north Queensland.



Miss Surfest Finalists with Lahnee McKenna

Surfest

We only attended the final Saturday, the conditions were ideal and we were kept very busy. The relocation to Merewether Beach seemed to work well, but not being a surfer, I have no idea if it provided better surf conditions or not. As usual the event attracted a big crowd of spectators and the Wine and Food marquees

provided a relaxing way to sample some of our local product.

Miss Surfest contestants assisted us by walking amongst the crowd and handing out sunscreen, HMF wristbands and brochures. I was very lucky to have a young assistant, Lahnee McKenna who worked with me throughout the day.

Maitland Cancer Appeal Committee

We all received a very warm welcome (and delicious morning tea) - it was lovely meeting members of the committee who work very hard for cancer related charities in our region.



Alice Bennis, Peter Hersey, Jenny Noblet and Lesley Flannery

Golf Day

Unfortunately I had already booked my holiday to Pt Douglas to visit my son and his family so was unable to attend on the day. By all accounts it was a very successful and enjoyable day for all who participated. Thanks also to our wonderful volunteers, Kim & Angie Polglase, John Rumball and Trish Marjoribanks who helped out on the day.

The day received tremendous support from family and friends of Scott Polglase, who died last October, with the No 1. hole sponsored in his name. **Woolworths, Masterton Homes, One Steel-Market Mills and Raisbeck Refrigeration, Les Cawthorne and team and Kylie Foggarty and team** also sponsored and played on the day.

Other HMF supporters of the event included **NAB, PSI Group, Wayne Lennan Financial Services, Garis Accountants, Cadbury Schweppes and Allweld Services.** Thanks also to **Godfrey Fong** and the **Albion Hotel** for donating prizes.

Lunch at Bonnells Bay

There were five siblings in Wendy Avard's family, but Wendy and her older sister Jo had a very special relationship. Although Jo had lived in England for 30 years she visited her family in Australia every 2 years.

In 2001 she and husband Martin decided to retire in Australia, settling at Dora Creek. They returned to England after a short time though because Martin preferred to live there. It was not long after returning to England that Jo was diagnosed with melanoma. When given

the news that Jo had only a short time to live, Wendy and husband John organised their trip to England so that Wendy could care for Jo. Sadly Jo died at home in December 2005.

After a year of grief and sadness at the loss of her treasured sister, Wendy Avard wanted to do something positive in Jo's memory. Wendy and John have a beautiful waterfront home at Bonnells Bay and on Sunday 1st April, they extended a warm invitation to family and friends to join them for lunch and an afternoon of fun and friendship.

Geoff and I arrived at 11.30am and all was setup for a midday start - not even a slight drizzle could dampen the spirits of Wendy and her friends. The best way to describe the day is that it was a mini fete - there was a sausage/steak sizzle, bric-a-brac and cake stalls, guessing competitions as well as a gigantic raffle with fantastic prizes - all of which were donated.

Wendy was just amazed at the amount of support she received from not only her local community but from people and businesses in the Hunter Valley and as far away as Queensland. Geoff and I were amazed when we returned later in the day to be told that the fantastic sum of \$4,700 had been raised. We joined Wendy, John and their helpers for a well deserved drink in celebration of a very successful day.

Race day

I look forward to catching up with you all on **Saturday 28th July** - can't believe how quickly it comes around! Volunteers also needed to sell raffle tickets at the gate from 11am to 1pm.



Wendy and John Avard

Considering a donation?

DO IT NOW!

If you are considering a donation to the Hunter Melanoma Foundation, do it before June 30, to receive your tax deduction for 2007.

Your donation will make a difference!

You will help to ease the lives of those suffering from melanoma.

You will advance research into finding a cure for this insidious disease.

You will assist in the education of medical professionals working with melanoma patients.

You will be assured that your donation will be utilised locally.

Last year's tremendous response to our appeal, prior to June 30, added to funds to purchase an Apo Tome microscope. The microscope is now being used by Professor Peter Hersey and his team to greatly increase the speed and accuracy of diagnosis and treatment.

Write your cheque to the Hunter Melanoma Foundation, put it in an envelope and post to P O Box 278 Waratah NSW 2298.

Make a difference – send your donation today.

“Hole-in-One” for Charity

from Rotary, Lions and AMP

Each year the Elermore Vale Lions Club and the Adamstown-New Lambton Rotary Club come together to run a Charity Golf Day at Merewether Golf Club. On March 26th this year, the Hunter Melanoma Foundation was lucky enough to be co-recipient of the funds raised, along with Police & Community Youth Clubs.

Planning for the golf day began early in December last year. Jenny & Trish attended meetings every Monday which continued right up to the week prior to the event. Jim Cowburn got The Post Newspaper and Kennards Hire on board as major sponsors and Sally Blake from Premier Financial Planners at Charlestown applied for a special grant from the AMP Foundation to match funds raised – dollar for dollar to \$10,000!

Teams came from businesses and the private sector with the final field numbering a record 128 players. Unfortunately Jenny had long ago planned a trip to Queensland and Paul was at a seminar in Melbourne so John Rumball and Trish looked after things on the day.

During the day, players had a ‘charitable’ punt on a couple of

holes for Nearest to The Pin. (Any gambling conducted on the 3rd was called a ‘donation’ and no returns were forthcoming from John or Trish!) Everyone took this in the manner of fun and most threw in a few extra dollars to boot.

The wisdom of the organizers was clear with the event run as Ambrose so most teams managed at least one good lie per shot. There were some decent ‘putters’ and a few very ‘long drivers’ (some of whom managed to overshoot the 2nd into the Defense Housing land at Adamstown!). Even with four chances, on occasion, teams found it challenging but everyone had a good hit or two during the day.

Those with carts scooted through and those who walked did it a bit tough in the heat. Some who were mobile ‘encouraged’ other team members to do it on foot (Butch Hayes seen walking the hard yards following team members in their cart) and some were so overwhelmed by walking the course that they couldn’t make it to dinner (Tonny Jensen disappearing from Jim Garis’ team before the 19th).

Following the full day of golf, (most) players returned to the clubhouse to enjoy a few beers, the delicious dinner, presentation and auction. The golfers were very generous and the day’s activities raised over \$12,600. Combined with the dollar for dollar contribution (to \$10,000 from the AMP Foundation) the final total reached \$22,605.40 to be shared between HMF and PCYC.

It was a huge day and a big “THANK YOU” goes to HMF committee member, John Rumball for working hard all day, and to all the Rotarians and Lions involved, especially Jim Cowburn and Sue Odgers. Thanks also to all those who played (& Wayne Lennan’s team who couldn’t due to unforeseen circumstances) and helped raise funds for two very worthy causes. Finally, a big thank you to Hamilton Sunscreen who kept us covered with sunblock on the day.



Sue Odgers announces the winners

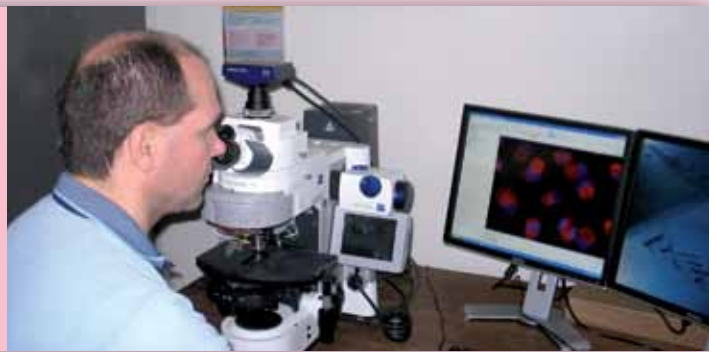


Golfers enjoying the presentation dinner

Translational Research in Melanoma

Professor Peter Hersey

Research Director, Newcastle Melanoma Unit



Fortunately about 90% of patients who develop melanoma are cured by the initial surgical removal. The remaining 10% of patients however run into varying degrees of problems due to spread from the initial site on the skin to other body sites. Cure of the disease once it has spread presents the main challenge we are faced with.

Some understanding of the factors that cause progression of the disease is evolving, e.g. a signal pathway in melanoma called the MAP kinase RAS, RAF, MEK, ERK pathway is activated in many melanoma cells and this activates cell division and resistance to cell death. This information is being translated into clinical medicine by use of drugs which inhibit this particular pathway. Dr. Xu Dong Zhang has been a major contributor in this area.

We are also working to understand why melanoma cells do not respond to chemotherapy agents and this has led us to studies on a key gene called p53. Kelly Kiejda is a key worker in this area. Melanoma cells are very active metabolically and consume blood glucose. Deprivation of glucose results in a metabolic state called endoplasmic reticulum stress. We believe this sets in transit mechanisms which inhibit responses to chemotherapy and immunotherapy. If correct, this opens up many new treatment options which we will translate into the clinic. Dr. Zhang and his co-workers are leaders in this area of research.

The Hunter Melanoma Foundation has been of tremendous help to our efforts over the past 20 years. In the past few years they have been instrumental in providing financial support to purchase equipment needed in the research, some of which is illustrated in this newsletter. The latest being a very sophisticated microscope which allows us to look into a melanoma cell and study what happens when they are exposed to treatments. Purchase of the microscope was made possible by a grant of \$60,000 from the Foundation (Total cost - \$120,000). The Biorad Bioanalyser Gel Doc was also purchased for us by the Foundation. It is in daily use and has provided much of the data in many of our recent papers. This is in addition to help in purchasing basic items such as computers, liquid nitrogen storage containers and biohazard hoods.

This support has been instrumental in the award to us of a National Health & Medical Research Council Program Grant shared with the Sydney Melanoma Unit and the centre at Westmead. This has provided much needed stable long term support for research in melanoma.





Education

Carole Hooper

“Caps don’t protect you”

This was the heading of a recent letter to the editor in the Herald. The writer was lamenting the fact that many people are still wearing caps that only partially protect their face and leave their ears and back of the neck exposed. As the writer had a melanoma removed during war service he was able to speak first hand about the unpleasantness of the necessary surgery. He finished by saying that we should be “wearing a decent hat designed for our climate”.

Obviously we couldn’t agree more and one of the aims of our sun safety education program is to reinforce the school’s “no hat – no play outside” regulation and also emphasise the benefits of a wide brimmed hat. And yes, we should all be leading by example and wearing a broad brimmed hat when outdoors – even in the cooler months of autumn and winter.

A recent report showed Princess Mary of Denmark reading to young Danish school children from a book about protecting your skin from the sun. As an Australian she is very aware of the damage caused by the sun and the importance of this message to children.

Winter Protection

If you are among the many Australians who enjoy skiing and snowboarding – make sure you remember to pack your sunscreen before hitting the slopes. It’s easy to think that a cold environment frees you from the risk of sunburn, but solar ultraviolet rays actually can be more damaging on the slopes than on the beach. One advantage is that on the slopes most of our body is completely covered with heavy duty cold weather materials to keep us warm.

For every 1,000 feet of elevation, UV exposure increases 8 to 10 percent. A skier with an average complexion at 11,000 feet above sea level will burn at noon after just six minutes of unprotected sun exposure. Plus, snow reflects nearly 80 percent of the sun’s UV rays so that you are hit by the same rays more than once.

It is important to wear a hat that protects your ears and large wraparound sunglasses to protect your eyes, eyelids and the sensitive skin around your eyes and gloves. Make sure that you use a highly protective lip balm and generously apply sunscreen to the exposed areas of your face.

Tocal Field Days

This year we were part of Maitland-Dungog Community Health’s Health & Safety exhibition. The beautiful weather brought a lot of people to the event. Friday was busy with bus loads of school children - many were doing a project on the various exhibits and were eager to take our information brochures. On Saturday and Sunday we talked more to families – Sunday morning was the busiest time over the three days.

Our UV reflective camera was a big attraction but not many people were pleased with the resultant photograph. It was interesting to note that many of the older men who had their face photographed did not show a large amount of sun damage. Although most of them were outdoor workers, they had always worn a broad brimmed hat and thereby reducing the exposure to their faces.

The Tocal Field Days has certainly grown over the last five years and the event gives us an opportunity to reach a large number of people – especially those who work on the land - as well as our primary target of men 55+.

Melanoma and heredity

We are all at risk of melanoma however some people are more at risk than others. Heredity plays a major role. If your mother, father, siblings, or children (i.e. first degree relatives) have had a melanoma, you are part of a melanoma-prone family. Each person with a first-degree relative diagnosed with melanoma has a 50 per cent greater chance of developing the disease than members of the general public who do not have a family history of the disease. If the melanoma occurred in a grandmother, grandfather, aunt, uncle, niece or nephew (second degree relatives) there is still an increase of risk compared to the general population, though it is not as great.

About one of every ten patients diagnosed with melanoma has a family member with a history of the disease. If melanoma is present in your family, it is important that you protect yourself and be vigilant with regular skin checks.

When atypical moles are found in an individual belonging to a melanoma family, the condition is known as FAMMM (Familial Atypical Multiple Mole Melanoma Syndrome). These people are at the greatest risk of developing melanoma. People belonging to melanoma prone families can improve their chances of early detection by ensuring they perform regular skin checks. In some instances it may be recommended that they have photographs taken to document whether there are new moles or any changes in existing ones.

There is some good news though: because families with a history of melanoma are on the lookout for the disease and see their doctor early if they are concerned about anything, the survival rate for familial melanoma is higher than that of non-familial melanomas.

Can sunless tanning products cause cancer?

The Skin Cancer Foundation tells us that sunless tanning lotions and sprays do not cause cancer. They deliver a perfectly safe tan that usually lasts three to five days. They don’t involve dangerous ultraviolet rays like tanning beds and are made with completely harmless common ingredients.

The active ingredient in most sunless tanning lotions is dihydroxyacetone, also known as DHA. This ingredient is derived from sugar, 100 percent natural, and reacts with the outer layer of the skin to produce a golden brown tan colour, just like an apple turns brown when it is exposed to the air. In fact, it is the DHA in apples that causes this reaction.

The potential downside to sunless tanning is that the appearance of a tan confuses many into thinking they have a base tan, when in actuality it is just the appearance of a tan. People may think they can then sit out in the sun and not get burned, but that is not the case. Sunless tanners alone provide only a minimal amount of sun protection; therefore you have to remember that you still need to wear protective clothing and a sunscreen.

Thank you to our volunteers

It would be impossible to do all that we do, from providing a sun safety education program to schools, speaking to various groups, attending education & promotional events, to organising a fundraising function, without the tremendous support we receive from our volunteers. National Volunteer Week was held from 14-20 May to acknowledge the important role volunteers play in our community. Like many small charities we rely heavily on our wonderful volunteers and as Jenny is the only person employed by the HMF she is deeply grateful for the support she receives. If you would like to be a HMF volunteer please give her a call.

Membership renewal

HMF membership renewal forms are enclosed – as we had a computer crash late last year it would be appreciated if you would complete all the information so that we can ensure that your details are correct.

Diary Dates

Friday 27 - Sunday 29 July

Newcastle Home Show

Can you help? Volunteers needed over the 3 days. Rosters will be morning or afternoon – please contact Jenny on 49850103 if you are able to help out.

Saturday 21 July, 7:30pm

The Balance Ball

Balance Health Club is holding this ball at Wests. Tickets are \$75 each (including a 3 course meal, wine and beer) with entertainment by The Cruisers. For enquiries/tickets phone 4903 6200.

Support those who support the HMF and get a bit of balance in your life at the Balance Ball! Book Now! All funds raised on the night go to the Hunter Melanoma Foundation.

Saturday 28 July

HMF Charity Race Day @ Broadmeadow Race Course

Saturday 24 November

Myall for Melanoma Paddle



You're invited...

...to The Hunter Melanoma Foundation Race Day

Hats on Track for Melanoma

Saturday 28 July 2007

Wear your silliest, biggest, brightest, trendiest or best hat and have a flutter at a fun-filled day of fashion, fillies and friends.

Get your group together and book your tickets today!

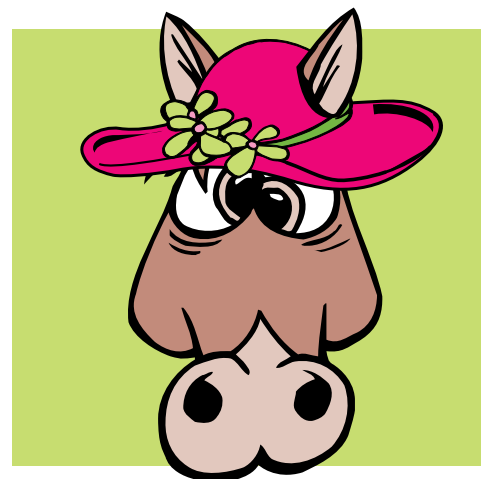
\$45pp includes entry to the track and to the HMF Marquee with light lunch, tote & bar facilities.

Great prizes! Great racing! Great cause!

Call Jenny to reserve your seat on **49850103**

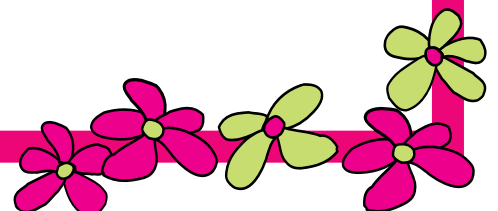
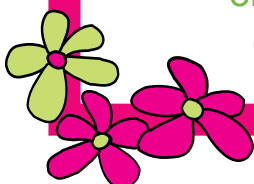
or email **melafdn@tpg.com.au**

(tables of ten available for reservation)



HATSONTRACK

For Melanoma





THANKYOU for your support

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|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| B O'Connell | Mick Monin | A Cromarty | R Burgess | M Killeen | Wilton Ainsworth |
| A White | D Smith | Mrs L Schofield | M Scott | Mrs Pfitzner | B Fox |
| Cessnock Lions | Mark Sutherland | C & R Chapman | G Medbury | Dora Gray | Mrs J Symes |
| CLJ Holdings | Stevensons Stores | M Twaddell | M Cohen | P & B Davies | K Byles |
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| J & V Stevenson | Robert Dyer | Mr F Dunne | H Carveth | J & E Stoker | J Crossley |
| AH James | Teece Campbell | Adamstown Lions | E Johannsen | Carole Donohue | J & S Preston |
| J Tubb | Clint Brown | Darren Emerton | Vivorah P/L | R Avard | Westlakes Retired |
| Peter McKenna | Ryan Marlow | Kerry Willis | Z Shedden | P Henry | Bowlers |
| Harald Wittig | John McCawley | Mary Joliffe | N & G Romeo | A & B Grace | Cadbury- |
| Gayda Bottle P/L | Nelson Bay RSL | R Lowrey | W & J Avard | Oasis Newcastle | Schweppes |
| Simpson Retail P/L | J Newton | R Seston | M Walker | Bob Wilson | |
| Arctec | Maitland Cancer | Newcastle District | Chantal, John & | West's Leagues | |
| Construction | Appeal Committee | Bowls Assoc | Jane Young | Club | |
| Dudley-Redhead | Dixon Park Winter | Muswellbrook | Soul Pattinson | Kahibah Women's | |
| Lions | Swim Club | Lioness Club | Pharmacy | Bowls | |



Yes, I would like to help fight melanoma.

Enclosed is my gift to be used for research, treatment, education, service and care for melanoma patients in our region.

Please find enclosed my tax deductible donation for \$ _____

I have enclosed my cheque / money order made payable to: **Hunter Melanoma Foundation**

OR please charge my credit card Bankcard Visa Mastercard

Card Number Expiry

Name _____

Address _____ Postcode _____

Signature _____

Please return your gift to: **Hunter Melanoma Foundation PO Box 278 Waratah NSW 2298.**