



# PIP'S NIPPIECES

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FEBRUARY 2012

<b>Chairman:</b>	<b>Peter Chapman</b>
<b>Executive Officer:</b>	<b>Jenny Noblet</b>
<b>Secretary:</b>	<b>Rebecca Boyd</b>
<b>Treasurer:</b>	<b>Janelle Kirk</b>
<b>Public Officer/Committee:</b>	<b>John Rumball</b>
<b>Melanoma Support Group:</b>	<b>Lisa Hamilton</b>
<b>Patron:</b>	<b>Paul Cave AM</b>
<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Cecil Hill</b> <b>Linda Swain</b>
<b>Ambassadors:</b>	<b>Tracy Garner</b> <b>Jake Sylvester</b> <b>Daniel Martine</b>
	<b>Elizabeth Slevin</b> <b>Kristy Brown</b> <b>Erin Lewis</b> <b>Holly Edmunds</b>

Similarly, when we looked at developing the Sun-Surf-Safe program we felt that it was important once again to give the kids something to take with them as a constant reminder. Each child receives a reusable beach backpack, water bottle and wristband as well as water safety and sun safety advice.

## New HMF Ambassador

### It CAN happen to you! Daniel's story

"One minute I'm hanging at the beach with my friends - the next I'm under anaesthetic getting cancer sliced out of my back!"

It's no wonder 15 year old Daniel's view on life changed so dramatically in such a short space of time - 2 weeks after having a biopsy taken from a small mole on his shoulder blade, he was in the operating theatre for a wider excision to ensure all traces of the melanoma were removed.



HMF Ambassador Daniel Martine

"When you're 15 you're not really thinking about cancer. That's what happens to other people...older people...people you see on TV documentaries. It won't happen to me. It all happened so fast, it's really only sinking in now." These were Daniel's words at the December launch of our 2012 summer awareness campaign.

In November 2010, Daniel's father Gary thought that a small mole on Daniel's shoulder blade had changed colour and should be checked. Daniel was 15, did not have any 'risk factors' for melanoma - he was not fair skinned and had no family history of melanoma and though his life centred on the beach (surfing and surf lifesaving for many years), he was always pretty good when it came to sun protection - there was no reason to suspect melanoma and his GP was not overly concerned.

However, in February 2011 his parents were concerned when Daniel said that it became quite itchy at times and revisited the GP with their concerns. The GP took a biopsy, which indicated a 0.4mm melanoma and 2 weeks later Daniel underwent a wider excision. The wider excision showed all melanoma cells had been removed in the biopsy and that there were no traces



## Chairman's Report

Peter Chapman

Welcome to 2012 and all the very best to you and your family for a healthy and happy year.

### Sun Surf Safe!

In December, together with Hunter Surf Lifesaving (HSLs), HMF announced a new awareness initiative, Sun-Surf-Safe. The HSLs Education Team has been conducting water safety programs for primary school children for a number of years. The program included all aspects of beach safety and we have now added the sun safety message, offering tips to prevent sunburn and sun damage.

The sun and surf are very much part of the Newcastle culture and whilst it is a healthy, active lifestyle for our kids to be involved in, care does need to be taken just as much in the sun as it does in the water.

The HMF has been involved with HSLs surf carnivals on numerous occasions over the past two decades providing skin protection advice and skin checks so it was a natural progression for us to be involved in the sun surf safe program.

The feedback from our sun safety program in primary schools has been very positive, We provide each child with a 'take home' reusable bag containing a number of items that will continue to remind them to protect their skin.



Proudly developed & supported by  
Hunter Melanoma Foundation  
& Hunter Surf Lifesaving



of melanoma remaining. This was great news and an incredible relief to his parents.

On seeing our 2011 awareness adverts, Daniel was prompted to contact Jenny to tell her about his personal experience and to also say that he would like to help raise awareness, especially with young people. Last year Daniel told his story on two occasions at his high school and he also joined Jenny and ambassador Jake Sylvester for a visit to St Josephs Charlestown where they were both well received.

The HMF are really pleased to announce that Daniel has agreed to be a HMF ambassador. His hope is that teenagers will listen to his story and that it will make a difference to their attitude about sun safety and their perceptions on tanning when they know the gravity of the consequences.

Daniel's story is a timely reminder for us all that melanoma is not an 'old persons' disease and that it is in fact one of the most common cancers of both young men and young women. As well as protecting their skin from sun damage and sunburn, teens need to be made aware of the importance of checking their skin for unusual lesions or moles, especially anything that changes in size or colour or becomes itchy, on a regular basis. Parents should also make a habit of checking their teen's back regularly as one of the comments that Daniel made was "I couldn't even see it, so I wasn't too worried about it".

## 2012 Committee

The AGM in December saw the election of the 2012 committee with most of the previous committee remaining, joined by new committee member Kristy Brown. Kristy lost her mum, Linda to melanoma in 2010 and decided last year that she would like to be involved with the HMF in raising awareness and to also assist with fundraising events. Last April Kristy helped out when Linda's fellow members of the Sugar Valley Lady Golfers held a very successful golf day and she also brought a table of friends to our race day. Kristy strongly supports our primary and high school awareness programs as she has two children and knows how difficult it can be to get the message across to them.

Sadly, Carole Hooper who has held the position of education officer for the past 5 years did not re-nominate for the new committee. Carole has made a valuable contribution during her time on the committee especially in the development of the sun safe program for primary schools and the Don't Get Cut DVD for high schools. She also attends the Pit Stop for Year 9 boys at Hunter high schools as well as other community events such as the Home Expo.

Carole is kept very busy these days with her young grandchildren and although she has told us she will continue to be available to assist us as and when she can, she would not remain on the committee.

On behalf of all committee members, the HMF extends a huge thank you to Carole.

## Charity Golf Days

Well there are certainly worse ways to spend your Friday than on the golf course and I had the pleasure last year of supporting and playing in two great events at the end of October. The first, held on 21st October, was the Supporters of Cancer (SOCS) golf day held at the Steelworks Golf Club. The day was very well organised by the SOCS golf committee led by Gary Considine with plenty of SOCS volunteers on hand to make sure the day went without a hitch. In December a cheque presentation for \$16,000, being proceeds from the day, was made at the Club.



Form left: David Fullick, Peter Chapman, Gary Considine, Jenny Noblet, Justin Jenkins & Denis Kibble (absent Beau Newell, Geoff Hillard, Ron Freeman)



NBC winning team from SV Partners

The following Friday the Newcastle Business Club (NBC) held their annual golf day and the HMF was their chosen recipient of funds raised. It was another great day well organised by NBC committee members Daniel Quinn and Greg Valentine and supported by the local business community and raised in excess of \$8,000. Thank you to committee members Ces Hill and Liz Slevin who gave their time to sell raffle tickets and help out on the day.

Proceeds from both events will assist us in funding our education programs in local primary and high schools.

## MBA Charity Ball - Friday 2 March 2012

Although tickets have sold quickly there are still some seats available if you wish to attend what promises to be a great night of entertainment - please contact Jenny at the HMF office.



# Treasurer's Report

Janelle Kirk

## Audited Financial Statements

- 30 June 2011

The audited financial statements were presented at the annual general meeting in December indicating an increase in income from the previous year of over \$120,000. Expenditure also increased with funds spent on the development of our website, community awareness programs, GP melanoma update courses, school programs, research (PhD funding and equipment purchase) and support of unit nursing staff to attend conferences as well as providing patient amenities to the melanoma unit.

## Adamstown-New Lambton Rotary Club

- Dinner dance

Service clubs are the back bone of our community, raising funds by various means in support of local charities and although many of these clubs don't have large memberships they certainly do a mammoth fundraising job and small charities rely heavily on their support.



Jenny with Rotary Club President Sue Odgers

The HMF has a long relationship with the Adamstown-New Lambton Rotary Club as we were a beneficiary for a number of years of the annual charity golf day they hold in conjunction with the Elernmore Vale Lions Club.

Another annual fundraiser held by the Rotary Club is a dinner dance and in September 2010 the HMF was a co-beneficiary together with two other local charities of this event.

Jenny attended the dinner dance and also a Rotary Club meeting in November at which the cheque presentation was made.

## PhD Melanoma Researcher

The HMF committee has agreed to offer a PhD melanoma scholarship through the University of Newcastle. The PhD Scholar will be working with Nikola Bowden and her team. Applications are still open and we look forward to introducing the successful scholar in our next newsletter.



Glen Foster (left) and Bob Oliver present the cheque to Jenny

## West Wallsend Colliery

Bob Oliver and two representatives from the West Wallsend Colliery called into the HMF office in October to present a cheque for \$17,320. The amount includes donations from Oceanic Coal management and employees, UGM Engineers employees, Bolt Up Mining and West Wallsend Colliery employees. Their donation was made in memory of Tim Hind who died from melanoma aged 55 and worked as a deputy at the Colliery from 1988 to 2007. This is the second donation that has been made by the colliery in memory of Tim.

## Girlie Day in the Vines - Gemelli Estate

Gemelli Estate owners Michael and Rebecca Boyd (HMF Secretary) were hosts to a girls day in the vines in early November. Close friend, Kirriley Cawthorne thought it would be a nice way to spend a day together with your girlfriends enjoying delicious food and fine wine. I was told it was a day enjoyed by all and Rebecca would especially like to thank Fernando and Renata from Sabor on the Hunter Dessert Bar for generously providing chocolate mousse for dessert (I understand they were divine!)



HMF Coffee mugs  
**ONLY**  
**\$3.00**  
available at the Unit



## Research Update

Dr Nikola Bowden



## Foundation News

Jenny Noblet

### Stand Up To Cancer (SU2C) and Melanoma Research Alliance Dream Team

Stand Up To Cancer is a US based organisation that was created to “accelerate groundbreaking cancer research that will get new therapies to patients quickly and save lives. SU2C’s goal is to bring together the best and the brightest in the cancer community, encouraging collaboration instead of competition”. SU2C is unique as all of its advocates and representatives are from the entertainment industry and have been affected by cancer in some way. SU2C funds “Dream Teams” of cancer researchers who normally would work separately to each other and compete for funding. In December we were very excited to hear that SU2C and the Melanoma Research Alliance announced funding of a Melanoma Dream Team headed by US-based researchers Prof Jeffrey Trent and Prof Patricia LaRusso. The entire dream team of international researchers will undertake research on Personalised Medicine for Patients with BRAF Wild-Type (BRAFWT) Cancer. Prof Trent says “Melanoma has been a success story in the past year, but that success affects about half of the patients, at best. We just said, we’ve got to go after that group that just desperately needs our help.” The Melanoma Dream Team will receive US\$6 million over the next 3 years. To meet the Dream Team or to read more about SU2C go to: [http://standup2cancer.org/su2c/about\\_us/scientific\\_dream\\_teams/melanoma](http://standup2cancer.org/su2c/about_us/scientific_dream_teams/melanoma)

### 2011 International Melanoma Congress, Tampa, Florida, USA. November 9 -13.

The 2011 International Melanoma Congress was held in Tampa, FL, USA in November. The Congress brought together clinicians and researchers to discuss the latest breakthroughs in melanoma diagnosis, treatment and biology. The major theme of the congress was the continued clinical trials for the new BRAF specific treatments, development of quick and reliable genetic tests for the BRAF mutations and the investigation of new treatments for BRAF resistant melanoma. There are several new genes currently under investigation for targeted therapy once a melanoma becomes resistant to BRAF specific treatments, but most are still undergoing investigation in the lab or are in the very early stages of Clinical Trials so the results are promising, but more are still to come. The other major finding of 2011 was the discovery of a gene known as MITF that plays a role in inherited melanoma in some families. This discovery will lead to more research into MITF and what part it plays in melanomas developing.

I hope you all had an enjoyable and relaxing Christmas and New Year and the very best to you all for 2012. I managed to Skype family in England and they were very excited to report that the temperature where they live on Christmas day was a “balmy 15” - very different to the previous Christmas when airports were closed due to heavy snow falls. I must admit that I enjoyed our relatively mild temperatures here over the Christmas period - what a difference a drop in overnight temperature makes to having a good night’s sleep!

### All-Ages Charity Concert - Saturday 10 March - Newcastle Leagues Club

Gabby Summerville is a typical 15 year old school girl with a busy life and a keen interest in music. Like many 15 year olds Gabby had heard about melanoma but never realised just how serious it was until her neighbour Malcolm was diagnosed with a melanoma in March 2011.

Malcolm has been undergoing treatment since then and he hasn’t been very well over the last few months. When she saw what he was going through, Gabby wondered what she could do to support him.

Gabby loves music, plays in a band and has many friends and contacts in the music industry, so she thought she would tap into this. Although she has never organised anything like it before, decided a concert would be a great way to raise awareness and funds as well as providing a great night of entertainment for everyone.



Gabby Summerville

One of her favourite Australian bands is Tonight Alive and after contacting their management, she was delighted to be told that they accepted her invitation to play at the concert.

When Gabby asked Malcolm and his wife Melissa where they thought the funds should be directed, they nominated the HMF.

Tickets are available through [www.bigtix.com.au](http://www.bigtix.com.au).

### Books

Thank you to John Price for providing us with some very interesting books. Next time you are in the clinic be sure to check out the new titles.

## Melanoma Forum - October 2011 - MIA

Lisa Hamilton and I attended the Melanoma Forum at the Poche Centre in October and found it once again very interesting. The following is a brief summary of some of the presentations. The next forum will be in May. Please let me know if you are interested in attending.

### Dr Jeremy Bond

On a twelve month scholarship in Australia to learn more about melanoma to help him with the challenge Ireland will be facing in the near future when the incidence of melanoma is expected to rise dramatically. This rise in incidence is expected due to the advent of cheap holidays to Spain, Majorca, Portugal etc over the past three decades where families (mainly with fair skin) spent two weeks on the beach.

He believes there is a generation of children who experienced these annual holidays abroad in the 1970's and 1980's and 1990's that are now suffering the consequences.

There has been a steady rise in the incidence of melanoma in the UK since 1993 with further rises predicted.

Interestingly in 2008 the highest incidence of melanoma for Northern Europe was in Denmark and Sweden.

He said it was only going to become a bigger health problem in the near future and changes needed to be made to the UK health system to accommodate these changes including a co-ordinated referral system, multidisciplinary approach, Sentinel Lymphnode biopsy and access to new therapies on the NHS as Northern Ireland and UK public health system is very slow to fund new drugs and they need to see the major cost benefit.

In summary he said he has found his time in Australia a very steep learning curve.

### Jill Mason - Nutrition and Dietetics Manager, Mater Hospital

Jill spoke about nutrition and cancer.

Food and cancer prevention - she said it was unlikely that any one food or additive is to blame - more likely long term eating habits and lifestyle.

Dietary risk - importance of variety with plenty of fruit and veggies and food preparation with minimum fat preferred. Portion sizes should be smaller in most cases and an increase in fibre in our diet recommended - especially for the reduction of bowel cancer. A variety in diet provides more nutrients and there is increased evidence that a healthy lifestyle can decrease lifetime risk of developing some forms of cancer.

Food and cancer treatment - ideal to maintain a healthy weight during treatment, be as active as possible, limit energy dense drinks and alcohol, limit red meat and processed meat and salt. Malnutrition is often high in cancer patients so it's important to eat well with a good protein intake. It is often necessary to intervene if the patient is losing too much weight. Eating well will maintain weight, keep up strength and energy, lower risk of infection and help better tolerate side effects of treatment.

Some myths that are **NOT** true: -

- fasting starves cancer cells
- artificial sweeteners and preservatives cause cancer
- cancer cells thrive in an acid environment
- fresh juice provides enzymes that nourish
- undigested meat remains in the intestines and becomes toxic.

There are a number of 'cancer diets' including Gerson Diet, Ian Gawler diet, Macrobiotic diet. Some of the issues with these include side effects and risk of malnutrition by cutting out entire food groups, they rely on high doses of supplements and could interfere with treatment.

A sensible well balanced diet providing adequate nutrition is recommended.

### Gerald Fogarty - Radiation Oncologist

Radiotherapy is a targeted therapy both physical and biological with the aim to maximise cancer cell death and minimise damage to normal healthy cells. Like surgery it is a localised treatment - unlike chemotherapy that is a systemic therapy. It is good for normal tissue preservation as it can kill cancer but preserve normal cells.

DNA is a genetic material in the cell nucleus and must function well for the cell to divide. DNA in cells is very sensitive to radiation - damages the DNA and causes cell to die - radiotherapy needs to be given in short doses as this gives healthy cells the chance to recover and has less side effects. Normal cells can repair themselves after small doses of radiation unlike cancer cells that lack the 'repair' protein and therefore die.

A great deal of planning is required prior to treatment starting with a consultation with a radiation oncologist then meeting the therapist. It is necessary to ensure the right area is targeted and the same area is treated every day for the period of treatment. The therapist discusses any side effects on a daily basis and how best to avoid them.

It is important to be 'well nourished' - see diet tips above - as healthy cells need to be able to recover from the radiotherapy. Patients are weighed weekly to ensure no weight loss as this can affect the targeted treatment.

Side effects include stem cells in normal cells getting damaged - burning to the treatment area - this is a good sign - acute side effects are necessary for a cure.

### Judy Middlebrook - patient perspective

Judy spoke about first being diagnosed with melanoma in 1981 and the shock of recurrence in 2006.

In 2006 she was initially told that her cancer was too extensive for surgery so she sought a second opinion. She had surgery in 2006, a second tumour in 2007 requiring surgery and radiotherapy and is now doing well.

She had a few tips from her experience with regards to the relationship with health professionals and described the different experiences in two hospitals in Sydney. Attitude of health professionals makes a big difference as at times can cause unnecessary pain and tears.

## Melanoma Support Group

The first meeting for the year will be held on 23 February at 3pm at the Cancer Council offices in Broadmeadow. The speaker will be Libby Paton from the Australian and NZ Melanoma Trials.

## Carole Hooper

Carole joined the HMF committee not long after her husband Vince died from melanoma as she wanted to help raise awareness - neither Carole nor Vince realised the potential danger of an unusual mole on an unexposed area of Vince's skin - until it was too late. Carole knows how important it is to make people aware that melanoma can appear ANYWHERE on the body, and any suspicious lesion should be checked immediately.

Carole, a retired teacher, worked with us in developing the Sun Safety program for primary schools and has joined me on many visits to local schools. She also contributed to the "Don't Get Cut" DVD for high schools and assists with the Pit Stop for Year 9 boys program in Hunter high schools each year.

She has held the position of Education Officer for 5 years and has made a valuable contribution during that time as well as volunteering to help out at fundraising events and other committee projects.

I would just like to say my own personal thank you to Carole for the tremendous support she has given me over the past 5 years and I will definitely be taking her up on her offer to continue to be involved.

## Dudley-Redhead Lions Club

The HMF has had an association spanning over two decades with this Lions Club and as Janelle mentioned in her report, many of the services clubs do an incredible amount of work in the community with only small membership numbers.

Dudley-Redhead Lions Club was definitely one of these clubs - I think their membership averaged 10-12 during the period I was associated with them, yet they still managed to raise funds and awareness for many local charities including ourselves.

There were annual charity golf days for many years in the 1990's at the Charlestown Golf Club as well as the sale of raffle tickets at Jewels and surf lifesaving carnivals.

I was therefore very sad to be told at the end of January that the club is disbanding as their membership has dropped off to the point that the club is no longer viable. I have very happy memories of the many fundraising events that we worked together on and will always be appreciative of their support and generosity. The members were everyday people doing an exceptional job and their presence in our community will be missed.

## New Committee member Kristy Brown

New committee member Kristy Brown has been asked to consider taking on the role of education officer. We realise this is a big 'ask' of someone new to the committee and have given

Kristy some time to think about it. Kristy's story is below.

"Hi my name is Kristy Brown. I'm married with two beautiful daughters and I work full time in education. I am honoured to be welcomed onto the HMF committee.

I have experienced melanoma first hand through my wonderful mum Linda, who unfortunately after a 3 year battle died in October 2010.

Through this sadness I felt a strong pull to actively participate in raising awareness and resources to help in melanoma research and hopefully a cure.

I am currently on holidays and am amazed at the number of people on our beaches who are not protecting their skin - are they not getting the message???

I know we just have to keep putting the message out there and hopefully I can help in raising awareness.

I am always available to talk to anyone who feels they would like to chat with someone who has been through a similar experience of caring for a loved one"

## Thank you to the HMF from Donna Owens

In November 2011, the HMF funded my attendance at the annual COSA conference that was held in Perth. COSA is a national conference and covers all forms of cancer with a number of sessions dedicated to the various forms of cancer including melanoma. There was an interesting session on "team work" highlighting the vital link the General Practitioner plays in the care of not only people diagnosed with advanced cancer but also the welfare and care of the carers of these people. Quite often the welfare of carers is overlooked and it is important to ensure this does not happen.

Over 900 delegates attended and as always there were some very good sessions on melanoma and I was able to bring back some valuable handout material for patients of the melanoma unit who are on one of the new drug treatments. Overall, I found it a full and interesting 3 days and thank the HMF for their support enabling me to attend.



## Education Report

Jenny Noblet

## Don't Get Cut

Late last year we contacted high schools to obtain some feedback from the DVD. The response was very positive and one teacher gave us some valuable input as to how we can further develop the program. Funds from the Supporters of Cancer golf day will be used to increase resources and develop a more complete lesson to be included in the PD Health & PE curriculum.



## Pit Stop for Year 9 Boys

I attended a de-briefing in November where ways to improve the program were discussed as well as the request to develop a program for Year 9 girls.

This program has been running successfully in upper Hunter high schools for a number of years.

## Beware the UVR

It seems that all I heard through December and January is 'when is summer going to start?' Well summer may be slow in starting and December may have been the coldest recorded in 50 years...but don't be fooled...the UVR is still very much present and it is HIGH!!!!

UVR cannot be felt or seen and does not relate to heat, high temperature or light. Light-coloured and shiny surfaces such as sand, snow, concrete and water, reflect UVR. UVR intensity is measured by the UV index - the higher the index value, the greater the potential for skin damage and risk of skin cancer - the UV index is part of the daily weather report. The riskiest times to be in the sun are 10am-2pm (or 11am-3pm daylight savings time) when UV levels are at their highest.

Sunburn is the first sign of sun damage to the skin and is caused by UVR. Two rays, long-wave UVA and shortwave UVB reach the Earth's surface and over exposure to unprotected skin causes damage to the skin's cellular DNA which can lead to genetic mutations and eventually skin cancer.

UVA rays comprise up to 95% of UVR and are less intense than UVB and are 30 to 50 times more prevalent and are almost equally intense in all daylight hours throughout the year. UVA rays can penetrate clouds as well as glass and they also penetrate the skin more deeply than UVB causing damage below the surface of the skin.

UVB rays are the main cause of skin reddening and sunburn and damage the more superficial layers of the skin. They play a key role in the development of skin cancers, especially Basal Cell Carcinoma and Squamous Cell Carcinoma. Unlike UVA

rays, the intensity of UVB rays varies by season, location and time of day.

It is so easy to forget about sun protection when the days are not really hot and that's how so many people get caught (and get sunburnt!) and of course, because it isn't so hot we do tend to spend more time outside increasing our risks of sunburn and skin cancer - so don't forget to cover up even if the day doesn't look like it is going to bring a lot of sunshine.

We usually think about sun screen, hat, shirt, umbrella, sunnies etc if we are going to the beach or swimming pool but forget to cover up when doing regular things like going for a walk, putting the washing on the line, gardening, playing sport or enjoying any number of other outdoor activities. Any time we are outside, protecting ourselves and our family from the sun's harmful rays is a must. We all know what we should be doing - we just need to turn that knowledge into action.

## Sun tans - no sun protection

A 'sun tan' does not protect against skin cancer and can actually increase the risk of premature ageing and skin cancer. People with naturally tanned or darker skin have very limited UVR protection - about equivalent to using a SPF2 sunscreen - and they still need to protect their skin when outdoors. Fake tans do not give you any protection at all.

## Facebook competition winner!

Hunter Melanoma Foundation recently ran a Facebook competition to raise awareness about Melanoma and to give people that 'like' the HMF page the chance to win an iPad 2. Congratulations to the winners, Gillian Milton, a local mother of 2, and student, Steph Loxley.

While the competition on Facebook has now finished, don't forget to like the HMF page for upcoming information on Melanoma and future competitions.

**5 ways to protect yourself**

- Slip**  
on clothing that covers your arms and legs
- Slop**  
on 30+, broad-spectrum sunscreen  
Apply before going outside and reapply every 2 hours
- Slap**  
on a broad brimmed hat
- Seek**  
shade
- Slide**  
on wrap around sunglasses



Jenny presenting Gillian Milton with her brand new iPad 2.



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