Hunter Melanoma Foundation

PIPS'N'PIECES

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SFPT 2012

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Check Mate

The HMF is committed to reducing the incidence and mortality rate of melanoma through our prevention and early detection education and awareness campaigns. For the past six years we have concentrated on the prevention message targeting primary aged children with the "SunSafe" and "Sun Surf Safe" campaigns as well as young adults with the "Don't Get Cut" messages. We will continue with these campaigns as prevention is always better than a cure.

However, some frightening statistics have come to our attention prompting an urgent need to highlight the **early detection** message to adults.

I can attest, as can many members of the HMF Committee, to the devastating effects of losing a loved one to melanoma which - in most cases - is preventable. It would seem, as adults, we have become complacent and men, in particular, are notoriously bad when it comes to matters of their own health. The "she'll be right", "won't happen to me" attitude of many older men means regular skin checks are not on the agenda.

Sadly, in the Hunter, more than 50% of all deaths from melanoma are men over the age of 50. When you consider they only make up 12% of the population – something needs to change - quickly - to stop these unnecessary, early deaths.

When melanoma is picked up early there is a 97%* cure rate... so we really need men to get a simple skin check to try and catch melanoma before the damage is done and stem this appalling death rate. In a nutshell the message we need to

communicate is "melanoma kills - skin checks save lives".

To make an impact we enlisted the help of three women all of whom lost their husbands at an early age to melanoma. They bravely talk about how the loss of their life partner affected them and their families. Also featured is 52 year old Lawrie, who luckily caught his melanoma early and survived.

Aimed primarily at 40+ males and their wives/partners the multichannel **Check Mate** campaign comprises TV, radio, press,

outdoor, digital and point of sale



Jenny Noblet launches the new Check Mate campaign

Check Mate posters and drink coasters have been distributed to local pubs and clubs with the support of the Newcastle & Hunter Hotels Association and the Newcastle and Hunter Valley Region Registered Clubs. Posters and magnets reminding people when to check their own skin and record their annual skin check have been distributed to GP's.

The second phase of the campaign will be posters in the workforce particularly in male dominant work places.

There has been a lot of positive feedback from the campaign and we hope it has the desired effect of encouraging regular skin checks. So, don't wait - get a **check mate**!

PhD Scholar

I am really pleased to announce that the HMF's latest PhD Scholar, Ryan Davey started at the end of July. Ryan was able to attend the Check Mate campaign launch which provided an opportunity for him to meet some of the HMF committee

*5 year survival rate for melanomas < 1mm thick

as well as meet representatives from the Maitland Cancer Appeal Committee whose funding is sponsoring his scholarship. President Karl Wagner, Vice President Ingrid Huymen and Secretary Lesley Flannery were delighted to meet Ryan and had quite a few questions for him about his melanoma research.

Race Day

After last year's cancellation we thought the odds were that we would have a good day this year. But despite the sun shining, unfortunately the track was deemed unsafe and, for the second year in a row, there was not a horse to be seen at our race day.

Functions still continued in both the pavilion and the marquee and it was pleasing to see that everyone still enjoyed themselves with betting directed to other courses in Australia. Thank you to sponsors and attendees for their understanding of the situation. With the cancellation notified at 7.30am it was a rush to let people know and give them the option to not attend. Thank you also to the **NJC** who helped us make the most of the day and ensured all who attended had a good day.

Golf Days

It's a great way to raise funds, especially if the weather is favourable and you're hitting the ball well, in fact I can't think of a better way to spend a Friday afternoon! The **Rankin Nathan Lawyers Charity Golf Day at Pacific Dunes** on 7 September was a great day raising over \$20,000! Team Zurich battled the strong winds (and stiff competition) to win.

If you enjoy a round of golf, there is also the Newcastle Business Club Golf Day on 12 October at Merewether Golf Club and the Supporters of Cancer (SOCs) Golf Day on 23 November at Shortland Waters. Contact Jenny for more details.

Thank you to Volunteers

With only one paid employee the HMF relies heavily on its volunteers to assist with various events, pack the hundreds



Volunteers Deb, Robbie & Maggie enjoying a cuppa.

of school packs that are given to primary school children, help with mailouts etc. so we were delighted when **Event Cinemas Glendale** offered a free morning tea and screening of The Best Marigold Hotel for our volunteers in April.

Those who were able to attend were most appreciative of the opportunity to have a cuppa with other volunteers and relax and enjoy the movie.

HMF Committee

The HMF is unable to function without a committee and I would urge anyone interested in supporting the cause to become involved. The committee meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month for approximately $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours. All are volunteers with busy schedules and become involved or support various events as and when they are able to. New committee members are always welcome as they bring fresh ideas and a new perspective. The HMF's AGM is on Tuesday 4th December at the melanoma unit and I look forward to seeing some new faces. Please contact either Jenny or myself for more information.



30 June 2012 Report

The audited financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2012 will be available at the HMF annual general meeting.

In summary, I am pleased to report that it was another very successful year for the HMF with total income over \$360,000 which was almost identical to the previous financial year. This included generous donations from the Maitland Cancer Appeal Committee, the Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation, SOCs golf day, West Wallsend Colliery, bequests, Wests, Rotary, Lions and Lioness Clubs.

Expenditure was higher this year as all the primary school sun safe resources needed to be replenished with the remainder of expenditure similar to the previous year - funding a summer awareness campaign, melanoma research, patient facilities and professional development for unit staff.

So a huge thank you to everyone who supports the HMF by attending balls, race days without horses, Christmas parties without Christmas, buying raffle tickets, selling raffle tickets, eating watermelon (see pics), working in op shops, opening your gardens and golf days and the many small business and corporate organisations that support these events and donate to our cause. You make a difference.



Check Mate

Funds received from the MBA ball and the Xmas in July have been used to fund the 1st phase of this campaign and the Club Grants donation from Wests will assist with the 2nd phase. These funds were received in the current financial year and not accounted for in the 30 June 2012 report.

Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation

Jason Bourke, Barrie Lewis and Phil Neat from the **Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation** along with other Newcastle Permanent staff members visited the Melanoma Unit recently so that they could learn more about the Ultrasound machine that was purchased with a Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation grant earlier this year.



Dr Richard Levy from the Melanoma Unit was on hand to explain the benefits of the machine and also provide a demonstration.

The Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation has been a strong supporter of the HMF since its inception in 2004. On behalf of the many melanoma patients who will benefit from the availability of the Ultrasound machine in the melanoma unit we say a big "thank you".

Taking the Sun Safe message to Upper Hunter Schools

A generous grant from **NuCoal Resources** is enabling us to reach Upper Hunter primary schools with the Sun Safe message. Maree Roberts from NuCoal said that the company was pleased to be assisting the HMF get this very important message out to these schools.

Club GRANTS

Western Suburbs Leagues Club has once again supported the HMF through the Club GRANTS scheme – formerly known as CDSE. Wests have funded HMF education programs for a number of years and this year their funding will assist with the 2nd phase of the Check Mate campaign with posters and coasters in clubs throughout the region as well as local work places.

Melbourne Cup Day

With the HMF Xmas in July function at **Belmont 16s** claimed a resounding success, **Colleen Praniess** is once again behind the reigns organising Melbourne Cup Day. The HMF Melbourne Cup Luncheon will be held in the Spinnaker Room, Belmont 16's on Tuesday 6 Nov 2012. Doors open 9.30am, Bingo will commence at 10am with lunch served from midday. Tickets include a 2 course meal, bingo, sweeps, raffles, fashion parade plus great prizes and are on sale now from Belmont 16s Booking Office for \$25. Thanks again to the generous Colleen and 16s for organising what we are sure will be a great day out.



Direct deposit donations

A number of people are now doing most of their banking online and we want to let you know that it is possible to make a donation to the HMF by direct deposit into our NAB account.

If this is your preference, HMF account details are:

Name of Account: Hunter Melanoma Foundation BSB: 082637

Acct: No: 037112575

If you do make a direct deposit donation please put your name as the reference and follow it up with an email to Jenny at **info@hmf.org.au** with your name and address for receipt purposes.



Introducing Ryan Davey - HMF PhD Scholar

My name is **Ryan Davey**. I graduated Biomedical Science at the University of Newcastle in 2010. In July 2012 I finished my honours research project for Biomedical Science, which was focused on examining genes involved in DNA repair. As soon as I read the details of Nikola Bowden's melanoma research I was interested. Not only is it a project related to



Ryan Davey - HMF sponsored Phd Scholar

my interest, DNA repair, it has the potential to directly help people with melanoma in real time, which I find very motivating. I am very grateful to the Hunter Melanoma Foundation for supporting my scholarship and giving me the opportunity to continue to study in Newcastle and be involved in melanoma research. Outside of the lab, in my spare time I like to play a range of sports and go out with friends.

Ryan's - PhD research project: Dr Nikola Bowden

The main cause of melanoma is exposure to UV-light from the sun, however, the biology behind this is not well understood.

Cisplatin is a chemotherapy drug used in the treatment of many cancers, however, its effectiveness in melanoma is limited. Both UV-light and Cisplatin damage the DNA in cells which must be repaired by a precise biological process called nucleotide excision repair (NER).

Our research team discovered NER does not work in melanoma cells, which may explain why they develop from sun exposure and why Cisplatin is not an effective treatment.

The aim of Ryan's PhD research is to further examine NER genes in melanoma tumours and to investigate the relationship with clinical information about the tumours. The ultimate aim is to use this information to understand why UV-light causes melanomas and to give more accurate predictions for melanoma response to treatments, disease aggression, survival times and risk of recurrence.

We are very excited about Ryan joining our research team and will keep you updated with his progress.

Melanoma Study

Dr Tony Azzi and **Dr Alister Lilleyman** at Newcastle Skin Check will be participating in a multicentre study over the next 4 years, in conjunction with Professor Scott Menzies and the Sydney Melanoma Diagnostic Centre, Royal Prince Alfred

Hospital, involving high-risk patients with a previous diagnosis of invasive melanoma.

The study will be looking at the benefit of whole body photography and digital dermoscopy in the surveillance of patients who have:

- a. Dysplastic Naevus Syndrome (>100 naevi, >5 dysplastic naevi, or ≥ 1 naevus 8mm in diameter) in addition to a personal history of invasive melanoma
- b. Personal history of ≥ 2 primary invasive melanoma
- c. Personal history of invasive melanoma and ≥ 4 1st or 2nd degree relatives with melanoma (including self)
- d. CDKN2A or CDK4 melanoma-prone gene mutations.

Patients must be at least 18 years of age.

Patients will be assessed by a full skin examination and whole body photography will be performed. Any lesions suspicious for melanoma will be either excised or followed up with short-term digital dermoscopy.

They will be re-examined every 6 months for the next 4 years with comparison made to the whole body photography and digital dermoscopy images.

If other non-melanoma skin cancers are detected during their initial examination or subsequent visits, their referring doctor will be contacted to co-ordinate treatment of these lesions.

They are aiming to enroll a total of 100 patients into the trial (of the total 400 patients enrolled) and are seeking the support of patients who fulfill the criteria and who would be willing to be involved in the study.

The Sydney South West Area Health Service Human Research Ethics Committee has granted ethics approval, and results will be recorded in a secure computerised database for auditing and analysis of the data on completion of the study.

There will be no fee charged to patients involved in the trial and your doctor will be kept informed of any changes in your management as a result of your involvement.

If you think you may be suitable for this study, please contact **Annette** at **Skin Check Newcastle** on **40328700**.

DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

- Friday 12 October Newcastle Business
 Club Annual Golf Day Merewether Golf Club
- Tuesday 6th November Melbourne Cup function Belmont 16s
- Friday 23 November Supporters of Cancer Golf Day – Shortland Waters Golf Club
- Tuesday 4th December HMF Annual General Meeting



Race Day 2012

It was unbelievable that our race day could be cancelled due to rain two years in a row but sadly that was the case. Despite the 14th July bringing a cool but sunny day, the track was deemed too heavy for safety reasons and I received the call at 7.30am to advise there would not be any horses running that day.

A very hectic couple of hours followed with numerous phone calls to sponsors and attendees giving them the option to attend or not. The Newcastle Jockey Club were just as disappointed as we were and assisted in notifying people. They also advised that they would only charge us for people who turned up on the day which enabled us to provide refunds to non-attendees.

Most people opted to come along – they had planned for it, they were dressed for it – they were ready for it and they weren't disappointed as it was still a fun day with good company, just no horses.

Gary Harley kept pavilion guests entertained with his punters club and the marquee people joined up with Allen Hardes, Greg Frame and their group – this move paid off very well for one HMF guest who won their 500 club 1st prize!

Once again there were a variety of lovely hats on display and it wasn't easy to pick a winner.

We celebrated two birthdays – well 3 actually as one birthday was twins – and enjoyed birthday cake in celebration.

The watermelon lolly guessing competition was won by Sarah Wilson in the marquee and we had 3 people with the right answer in the pavilion so the prize was shared between Peter Dick, Chris Catalovski and Ron Tamsett.

Thank you to everyone who supported the day – especially our race sponsors – Radford Shopfitters, McKanna Fabrications, Wexfab Pty Ltd, Garry & Kim Polglase, Lynette Siddens, Varley Group, Cactus Creative and Friends of the late John Whitmore. Also a big thank you to John Lewis who supplied some lovely wine for prizes, Event Cinemas for their movie passes and Kristy, Kylie and Rebecca for their help on the day.



A day at the races!

Xmas in July

It wasn't quite a white Christmas (actually I am hoping for one of those this year) but it certainly felt a lot like Christmas when we entered the auditorium at Belmont 16s on 27 July. Due to the efforts of **Colleen Praniess, Santa** and his **elves,** the room had everything but snow!

It was a great night with an amazing number of prizes thanks to the generosity of **Joyce Mayne**, **Bennetts Green** as well as a number of other sponsors including **Santa's Warehouse**, **Whirlpool**, **Dyson**, **Philips**, **LG**, **Blanco**, **Yamaha**, **Sunbeam**, **GlemGas**, **Tech2Home**, **Glen Dimplex**, **Teac**, **Pioneer**, **Sony**, **Map Italian Coffee**, **VAX**, **Fuji Film**, **Product Care and Electrolux**.

I am sure that everyone who attended went home with a prize – I know everyone at our two tables did.

With 1,000 \$5 raffle tickets and 100 \$20 raffle tickets as well as the live auction and silent auction, there was a large amount of cash to be dealt with on the night and a huge thank you to the two **NAB** employees Greg & Paula who handled it all.

Josh Hodges did a great job as Emcee and **Belmont 16s** provided a delicious Xmas meal and accompanying wine so thankfully we had the opportunity to dance it off to the music of Fully Charged.

Colleen has said that she will be doing the event for us again in 2013 so keep the 2nd Saturday in July free.





Top: Getting into the Christmas spirit.

Above: Colleen and her Christmas elve helpers!

Mulchalot

For a number of years Geoff & Bronwen Tyler have participated in the Australia's Open Garden Scheme opening their garden to the public for a weekend in November. Those who have taken the opportunity to visit Mulchalot know how much work Bronwen & Geoff put into it and what a beautiful, peaceful garden it is.

Earlier this year, Bronwen advised that they will sadly no longer be participating in the Open Garden Scheme due to the heavy commitment involved. She did say however that they remain part of the Toronto Garden Club and will continue to have various fundraising functions on a smaller scale.

Thank you Bronwen and Geoff for your support over the years – I can assure you that I never had a problem organising volunteers to man the gate for your open garden days as they all knew it would be a chance to relax in the wonderful surrounds of your garden and get spoilt with your delicious biscuits and slices.



HMF Sunscreen

I am often asked about sunscreen and which is best to buy and we have previously noted the things you should be looking for when you purchase sunscreen. As with most things, it is a personal choice and can depend on what activity you are involved in.

This year the HMF committee decided to source sunscreen for HMF distribution. This is

quite an involved process as the staff at Cactus Creative will attest to. And having found what we all felt was the right one, there is always the question as to its effectiveness and not one of us really had the time to sit in the sun for a couple of hours to test it.

Fortunately a friend's teenage daughter was going to Groove in the Moo and I remember her being quite upset last year when her daughter came home sunburnt – even though it was a relatively cloudy day. I decided this would be a good opportunity to test the sunscreen and gave her a sample.

I had a message on my answering machine a couple of days later "Thanks for the sunscreen – it goes on easily, doesn't smell, feels nice on your skin, only applied it once and didn't get sunburnt when others I was with did. Can I please keep it!"

This fabulous sunscreen should be available very shortly in a purse size container for only \$5.

It was timely that the following article appeared in the Skin Cancer Foundation (New York) newsletter just recently and addresses some of the myths about sunscreen.

Since its inception in 1979, The Skin Cancer Foundation (New York) has always recommended using a sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher as one important part of a complete sun protection regimen which includes seeking shade, covering up with clothing including a wide-brimmed hat and UV-blocking sunglasses and avoiding tanning, UV tanning booths and solariums. Recent attacks on sunscreens in the media point to imperfections and potential risks, but miss the point that sunscreen continues to be one of the safest and most effective sun protection methods available.



We are concerned that the criticisms will raise unnecessary fears and cause people to stop using sunscreen, doing their skin serious harm.

In general, the criticisms have *not* been based on hard science. In fact, The Chair of the Skin Cancer Foundation's **Photobiology Committee**, an independent panel of top experts on sun damage and sun protection, reviewed the same studies cited in the media, and found that their determination of what made a sunscreen bad or good was based on "junk science".

Below, the Photobiology Committee responds to the criticisms and explains why sunscreen remains an essential part of anyone's daily sun safety program.

Sunscreen blocks Vitamin D

While solar UVB is one source of Vitamin D, the benefits of exposure to UVB cannot be separated from the harmful effects of sun exposure: skin cancer, cataracts, immune system suppression, premature aging. And excessive exposure to the sun actually *depletes* our body's supply of **Vitamin D**. The safest way to obtain Vitamin D is through a combination of diet and Vitamin D supplements. The Skin Cancer Foundation recommends increasing your intake of vitamin D to 1,000 mg. daily. Normal daily exposure to sunlight should provide sufficient levels.

The sunscreen ingredient Oxybenzone may be a carcinogen

Old research on rodents suggested that oxybenzone, a synthetic estrogen, can penetrate the skin, may cause allergic

reactions, and may disrupt the body's hormones, producing harmful free radicals that may contribute to melanoma. However, there has never been any evidence that oxybenzone, which has been available for 20 years, has any adverse health effect in humans. The ingredient is FDA-approved for human use based on exhaustive review. The Photobiology Committee reviewed the studies on oxybenzone and found no basis for concern.

 The use of excessive SPFs and terms such as "Broad-Spectrum Protection" or "Multi-Spectrum Protection" on sunscreen labels mislead us into a false sense of security, when sunscreens really do not protect adequately against UVA radiation

Since both ultraviolet A and ultraviolet B (UVA and UVB) are harmful, you need protection from both kinds of rays. "Broadspectrum protection" and "multi-spectrum protection" mean only that a sunscreen offers protection against parts of both the UVA and UVB spectrum. It does not mean complete protection. Because there is no consensus on how much protection the terms indicate, they may not be entirely meaningful. SPF – sun protection factor – refers specifically to how much protection is offered against UVB rays, but to date in the US, we have no equivalent measurement to represent the degree of UVA protection in a sunscreen. Nonetheless, UVA protection in sunscreen has greatly improved in recent years. To make sure you're getting effective UVA as well as UVB coverage, look for a sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher, plus some combination of the following UVAscreening ingredients: stabilised avobenzone, ecamsule (a.k.a. Mexoryl™), oxybenzone, titanium dioxide, and/or zinc oxide.

For everyday use an SPF of 15 or higher is generally adequate, while SPFs of 30 or higher are appropriate for active, extended outdoor activity. An SPF 15 sunscreen screens out 93 percent of the sun's UVB rays, while SPF 30 protects against 97 percent and SPF 50 against 98 percent. The Skin Cancer Foundation agrees that in most cases, SPFs beyond 50 are unnecessary.

 Retinyl Palmitate, a form of Vitamin A and an ingredient in 41 percent of sunscreens, speeds up growth of tumors and other lesions when exposed to the sun.

An FDA study is often cited for this data, with some faulting the FDA for not releasing the study. However, the FDA is yet to release the study precisely because it has not gone through proper peer review. Thus, the criticisms are based on an unapproved 10-year-old study of mice that has never been published in any journal. To date, there is no scientific evidence that Vitamin A is a carcinogen in humans. What's more, only trace amounts of retinyl palmitate appear in sunscreens, and some evidence suggests that it is actually *protective* against cancer.

 Nanoparticles in Micronized Zinc Oxide and Titanium Dioxide may be more harmful than larger forms of these chemicals, crossing the placenta

and affecting the developing foetus, or causing DNA damage linked to cancer

Micronized versions of zinc oxide and titanium dioxide were designed to improve them cosmetically, so that they no longer left a tell-tale splotch of white on the skin. This improvement greatly increased the use of sunscreens containing these ingredients, which is a good thing, since they are the two most effective ingredients to date in sunscreens against the entire UV spectrum. Multiple studies have demonstrated that the nanoparticles in these ingredients do not penetrate the skin, and there is furthermore no strong evidence of their toxicity. The general scientific consensus (which even the EWG now admits) is that they pose no risk to human health.

Consumers should rest assured that sunscreen products are safe and effective when used as directed, and should be considered a vital part of a comprehensive sun protection program.

Jodie's story

Profile of our newest HMF Committee Member.

My name is Jodie Macdonald, I have a wonderful husband and beautiful 2 year old girl. I am a Social Worker, working with children who have chronic diseases. My mother passed away from melanoma in October 2010.

Mum was diagnosed just 6 months prior when a tumour was discovered in her brain. Mum's goal was to live to meet her first grandchild but unfortunately she passed away 2 weeks before my daughter was born.

I joined the Hunter Melanoma Foundation because I believe raising awareness on how serious and devastating melanoma can be is very important. I really admire the amazing work the foundation has achieved and am excited at the opportunity to contribute.



Jodie Macdonald with 2 year old daughter Amelie





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