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Please do not publish my name in the "Valued Supporters" section of Menzies' next Bulletin.

Please send me information on remembering Menzies in my Will.

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Two new fellows join Menzies

Two internationally renowned medical researchers joined the Menzies Research Institute this year, boosting research into the most mysterious and complex of human organs – the brain.

Neuroscientist Professor David Small has returned home to Tasmania after more than 40 years. Professor Small has been appointed a Professorial Research Fellow and Senior Member of Menzies. He said that the central focus of his research is to better understand the causes of Alzheimer's disease and related disorders.

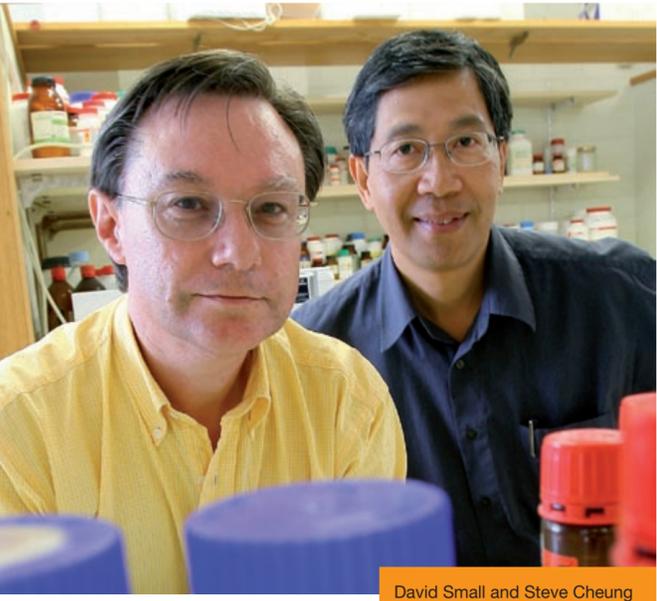
"The Menzies Research Institute presents a lot of opportunities for me as a researcher," he said.

"By understanding what causes different types of dementia, we hope that we can discover opportunities for new therapies and diagnostic techniques which can be used to discriminate Alzheimer's disease from other dementia causing illnesses," Professor Small said.

Associate Professor Steve Cheung has moved from Singapore to also join Menzies' team of neuroscientists as a Principal Research Fellow and Senior Member.

Associate Professor Cheung said that his research focuses on understanding the processes that regulate death and survival of nerve cells.

"I have collaborated with the Menzies Research Institute on identifying new and novel therapeutic targets for treating mild and moderate brain injury," he said.



David Small and Steve Cheung

Menzies Research Institute Director, Professor Simon Foote, said that these appointments were made possible with a \$5 million injection of funding from the University of Tasmania, giving the Institute the opportunity to employ five new senior research fellows.

"We are very pleased that the University

has recognised the Institute's potential to attract high quality researchers through this significant investment. Our new research fellows are bringing diverse skills and biomedical knowledge to Tasmania, and enabling us to establish new links with the national and international research community," Professor Foote said.

Ripping it up for a good cause

Multiple sclerosis research at Menzies has been given a boost thanks to the fundraising efforts of Cygnet teacher, Elias Bruno.

Compelled to 'do something' to help, after his wife was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS) in October 2006, Elias drew upon support from his friends within the Hobart skateboarding community.

The idea was to raise awareness among the youth of Hobart, and to raise much needed funds to directly support MS research. With cooperation from local media, businesses and local council, Elias organised MS Skate 2008.

Over 300 skaters and spectators braved blustery conditions at Taroona Skate Park on January 20. Menzies PhD student Stella Foley addressed the crowd, outlining current MS research at Menzies. With St John's ambulance in attendance, competitors battled it out for over three



A young skater competing on the day

hours, with the overall winner Tom Field taking home a swag of prizes donated by local businesses.

Community fundraising is vital to the continued success of research programs at Menzies. If you, your club or school would like more information on fundraising for Menzies, please call Susan Sussems on 6226 7707.

Society for the Future

"Remember Menzies Research Institute in Your Will"

Thank you to the 19 supporters who became members of the Menzies 'Society of the Future' in 2007.

If you would like more information about bequest giving, please contact Barbara Zimmerman, Development Coordinator on 6226 7782 or by email at barbaraz@utas.edu.au

Grants

The following grants have successfully been awarded to the Menzies Research Institute since the last issue of the Bulletin.

ANZ Charitable Trust Grant-J.O. & J.R. Wicking Trust.
*Vickers, JC; *Robinson, A

Proposal to establish the Wicking Dementia Research and Education Centre (WDREC) \$1,500,000

National Health & Medical Research Council Award-Career Development.
*Blizzard, CL

Goodness-of-fit testing and extensions of relative risk models \$360,000

National Health & Medical Research Council Award-Career Development.
*Dickson, TC

Cellular mechanisms underlying neurodegenerative disease and responses to trauma \$362,000

National Health & Medical Research Council Award-Career Development.
*Ding, C

Longitudinal studies of knee osteoarthritic changes using magnetic resonance imaging \$400,000

National Health & Medical Research Council Fellowship-Training.
*Johnston, F

Understanding the health effects of biomass smoke in Australian towns and cities \$170,400

National Health & Medical Research Council Fellowship-Training.
*Vincent, AJ

The role of SPARC in regeneration and neurogenesis in the central nervous system (Australia) \$252,000

Royal Hobart Hospital Research Foundation Grant- Starter.
*Stewart, NJ; Bettiol, SS; *Reid, DEC

Do mediators produced by the bacterium Pseudomonas aeruginosa prevent the immune system from 'switching off' in cystic fibrosis sufferers? \$8,164

Royal Hobart Hospital Research Foundation Grant-Research.
*Walters, EH; *Dharmage, S; Abramson, M; Erbas, B; Matheson, MC

Epidemiology of middle-age BHR: prospective study from childhood to middle-age \$22,727

Royal Hobart Hospital Research Foundation Grant-Research.
*Dickinson, JL; *Holloway, AF; *Patterson, B; *McMorran, BJ; *Stankovich, J

Elucidation of the role of a novel susceptibility gene in prostate cancer \$25,000

Royal Hobart Hospital Research Foundation Grant-Research.
*Winzenberg, TM; *Jones, G; *Nelson, MR

The effects of vitamin D supplementation bone density in vitamin D insufficient teenagers: randomised controlled trial \$22,727

Royal Hobart Hospital Research Foundation Grant-Research.
*Reid DEC

For support of 2008 NHMRC recommended projects \$27,273

The Cancer Council Tasmania Grant-Cancer Research.
*Woods, GM; Muller, HK

The effect of UV radiation and vitamin D deficiency on the development of the skin immune system \$50,000

The Cancer Council Tasmania Grant-Cancer Research.
*Dickinson, JL; *Holloway, AF; *Patterson, B; *McMorran, BJ; *Stankovich, J

Elucidation of the role of a novel susceptibility gene in prostate cancer \$25,000

David Collins Leukaemia Foundation Grant.
*Dickinson, JL; *Foote, SJ; *Stankovich, J; *Lowenthal, RM; *Marsden, KA; Bahlo, M.

Investigating the genetics of familial haematological cancers in Tasmania \$25,000

David Collins Leukaemia Foundation Grant.
*Holloway, AF

Characterising aberrant RUNX1 transcriptional complexes \$20,000

Tasmanian Community Fund Grant.
*Dickinson, JL

Development of the Tasmanian Familial Prostate Cancer Genetic Resource \$76,588

Clifford Craig Medical Research Trust Grant.
*Woods, GM; *Holloway, AF; *Casey, N

Silencing the AML1/ETO fusion gene as a treatment strategy for acute myeloid leukaemia \$8,474

National Heart Foundation Grant-In-Aid.
*Rattigan, S; *Richards, SM

Interaction between adiponectin and insulin in vascular control of glucose uptake in muscle \$119,574

Physiotherapy Research Foundation Seeding Grant.
*Jose, KA; *Hansen, EC

Physical activity and young adults: what factors help to explain participation in physical activity during the transition from dependent adolescent to independent adult? \$4,704

Royal Australian College of Practitioners Fellowship-Jacquot Research Establishment Award.
*Jose, MD; *Foote, SJ

Chronic kidney disease in Tasmania \$90,000

Motor Neurone Disease Research Institute of Australia Inc Bill Gole MND Research Fellowship.
*King AE

Investigating the causes and consequences of axonal pathology in amyotrophic lateral sclerosis \$217,500

Tasmanian Community Fund Grant.
*Reid, DEC; Busch, J; Turner, P; Cummings, EA; Cameron-Tucker, H; Beggs, S; *Walters, EH; *Foote, SJ

Tasmanian community network of mentors and smart information technology solutions (SITS) for families affects by cystic fibrosis \$130,000

Australian Cystic Fibrosis Research Trust Grant.
*Reid, DEC; Lamont, IJ; *O'May, C

Unravelling P. aeruginosa iron acquisition mechanisms in vivo: novel insights and potential therapies \$87,879

University of Tasmania Grant-Institutional Research Scheme.
*Walters, JAE

Health-Mentoring by Community Health Nurses to Enhance Self-Efficacy for People with Moderate Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease in the Community \$10,000

University of Tasmania Dr Eric Guiler Tasmanian Devil Research Grant.
*Woods, GM; *Kreiss, A

An immunological and immunogenetic approach to protect Tasmanian devils against Devil Facial Tumour Disease (DFTD) \$23,524

*Menzies researchers.



Dr Jo Dickinson using the new laser dissection microscope



Going under the microscope

Last year, the Menzies Research Institute was awarded \$1.1 million in funding from the Australian Cancer Research Foundation to form the ACRF Tasmanian Inherited Cancer Centre.

The Centre will be based in our new \$58 million building which is due for completion in October 2009.

"This grant will facilitate the fit-out of state-of-the-art laboratories in the new building and the purchase of cutting edge equipment not currently available in Tasmania," Professor Simon Foote said.

Most of the new equipment will not be purchased until the new Menzies building is complete, though a number of specialised items of equipment have already been purchased. The recently purchased equipment is currently being used by our researchers working on different aspects of cancer research.

Dr Jo Dickinson, who is the first Cancer Council Tasmania research fellow dedicated to cancer research and treatment at Menzies, was delighted with the arrival of the new equipment late last year.

Dr Dickinson's work and that of her team, has been greatly strengthened as a result of new equipment already purchased through the ACRF funding.



One such important item is the laser dissection microscope which is valued at over \$295,000.

"The microscope was ordered from Germany and flown out to Hobart at the end of last year, along with a number of technicians who provided us with specialised training on how to use it," Dr Dickinson said.

"In the past we had to travel to Victoria to utilise the required equipment and facilities, which was neither time nor cost efficient. By having our own laser dissection microscope, we can rapidly expand our current work in the molecular pathology of cancers," Dr Dickinson said.

The laser dissection microscope is essential to our efforts to understand the genetic basis of inherited disease. Our researchers need to be able to study the tumour tissue itself and therefore need the ability to dissect out the tumour tissue from the surrounding normal tissue.

The laser dissection microscope enables sections of tumour tissue and indeed cells to be individually targeted for harvest both in fixed and live mount sections.

Other specialised equipment purchased includes a liquid handling robot valued at \$65,000 and a micro injection rig worth approximately \$200,000.

Director of the Menzies, Professor Simon Foote, said that this ACRF grant will provide researchers with significant resources needed to unlock the causes of inherited cancers like prostate cancer and leukaemia.

The ACRF Tasmanian Inherited Cancer Centre will bring together a number of groups in Tasmania that are working on different aspects of cancer research.

"Some cancers are due to a combination of genetic factors and environmental events. This grant from the ACRF enables the Menzies Research Institute to put all systems in place to allow researchers to identify not only disease genes but also the environmental triggers to disease," Professor Simon Foote said.

"That the grant was awarded to the Menzies Research Institute is a tribute to the quality of research performed in Tasmania," said Professor Foote.

When every breath counts



Proud mum Angie with husband Phil, Zach and Jess

Cystic fibrosis, or CF as most people call it, is a life threatening genetic disease that affects a number of organs in the body, especially the lungs and pancreas, by clogging them with thick, sticky mucus.

CF is an inherited condition. For a child to be born with CF both parents must be genetic carriers for CF. In Australia, approximately 1 in 25 people are genetic carriers, usually without knowing it.

Tasmania has one of the world's highest birth incidences of CF and it is estimated that 1 in 16 Tasmanians carry the gene for CF.

In 1974, the life expectancy of a child with CF was only eight years – a heartbreaking statistic. Amazingly, today 90% of children born with CF in the 1990s can expect to live to the age of 40! Many people are able to lead reasonably normal and productive lives.

Early screening of new babies has huge benefits for those who are identified as having CF. The sooner that treatment starts, the better the chances of the child being able to have a long and healthy life.

In the meantime, a great amount of effort is being directed towards improving and extending the lives of those with CF – some of it right here in Tasmania at the Menzies Research Institute.

The statistics mentioned above are very encouraging, but it's important

to note that good outcomes are based on patients receiving care from dedicated, CF-specific multi-disciplinary teams of doctors, physiotherapists, nurses, dietitians, social workers and psychologists.

The difficulty in Tasmania and in other regional parts of the country is that the CF population is scattered all over the state, which means that it is difficult for every patient to have access to this type of expert team to optimise their health and their quality of life.

Tasmanian researchers have come up with an innovative solution to this problem. They are working on a project to develop a comprehensive community support and education program for people and families affected by CF.

The team is developing a health-mentoring and self-management system for people and families affected by CF. Technology such as smart-phones that allow individuals to record how they feel, internet chat-rooms with open forums with the opportunity to "Talk to the Expert" and online resources will form a network of information so that people can connect and support each other through their shared experiences.

The aim of the system is to support people with CF to improve their own health, and also to reduce the isolation experienced by many people with CF and their families in Tasmania.

The Menzies Research Institute is also shedding light on the biology of CF, and in particular the bacteria that cause severe and recurrent lung infections in patients. One particularly nasty bacterium called *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* thrives on iron in the lung. Menzies' researchers are investigating new treatments for infection that may work by limiting the amount of iron that is available to the bacteria in the respiratory system.

Ground-breaking research conducted at the Menzies Research Institute is further identifying changes in bacterial behaviour with production of toxins that may cause acute illness and admission to hospital. The identification of key factors produced by bacteria at these times may allow Menzies to develop early warning systems based on the detection of certain chemicals in sputum or exhaled breath. This would allow very early intervention and prevention of exacerbations.

Brothers Zach and Jess have been living with cystic fibrosis all their lives.

Proud mum Angie Brown says "Jess and Zach have a huge amount of responsibility for children their age. It takes a lot of time to do physiotherapy daily, to take all their tablets and all the other things that come with the disease."

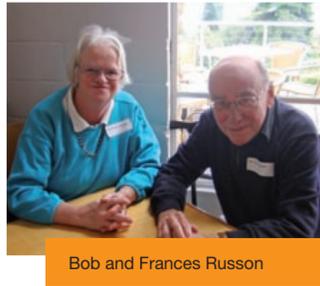
"But I have always taught my boys to have the attitude – 'I have CF, so what?' We all believe that you should make the best of what you have been dealt and get on with life," says Angie.

"We are very grateful for the work Menzies is doing to improve the lives of families like ours living with CF."



Great mates, brothers Zach and Jess

Touching lives, making a difference... everyday angels



Bob and Frances Russon

Bob and Frances, like many of our supporters, have a long association with the Menzies Research Institute.

"We first became involved when I competed in a bridge day that was a fundraiser for Menzies in the late 1990s," said Frances. "We then attended a funeral where Menzies was the beneficiary of donations made instead of flowers. We received a thank you letter with our receipt which we thought was very nice".

Bob and Frances are retired teachers, but they both still enjoy busy lifestyles. "I like to garden, as well as playing bridge. I have a competition on in Devonport this weekend. Bob likes to read and he exercises too," Frances said.

Bob and Frances have steadily increased their level of involvement with Menzies. From that first in memoriam gift, they have now become part of the Menzies regular donor program – Everyday Angels. "We made a conscious decision to support a positive Tasmanian organisation. Both Bob and I felt that the work Menzies does has a huge impact in Tasmania, as well as nationally and internationally."

Bob and Frances join a very special group of people who make regular automatic donations to Menzies. While Bob and Frances contribute on a monthly basis, our Everyday Angels are welcome to arrange a schedule to suit their own requirements.

Please contact Development Officer Susan Sussems on 6226 7707 if you would like more information on becoming an Everyday Angel.

A change of direction



Professor Simon Foote with Ian Matterson at the Menzies

Ian Matterson is excited about his new role as the voluntary chairman of the Menzies Research Institute's 'Society for the Future', and the potential difference it could make to the lives of many people in the future.

Ian graduated in law in 1966, and after ten years in private practice he was appointed a magistrate and coroner. In addition to those duties he also chaired several appeal tribunals in the area of transport and OH&S as well as being a guest lecturer in a variety of venues.

In 2006, Ian retired from the bench as Tasmania's longest serving magistrate. However, Ian thought a change in direction would be more appropriate than actual retirement. So he decided to take on a new challenge as the first voluntary chairman of the Menzies Research Institute's 'Society for the Future', assisting Menzies to increase the number of major donors and bequest supporting its health and medical research.

Ian wanted to do more for Tasmania and willingly said "yes" when Menzies asked him to assist with raising funds to support their on-going research.

"There aren't many families around the world that have not been affected by disease, the cure for which has not yet been found," said Ian.

"We are delighted Ian Matterson has agreed to help Menzies raise funds for research, medical equipment and to create new scholarships," said Professor Simon Foote, Director of the Menzies Research Institute.

As the inaugural chairman, Ian assisted Menzies in establishing the Menzies Research Institute 'Society for the Future', which thanks bequest donors, their families and solicitors for their support. Almost 40 supporters to date have made a bequest to Menzies in their wills. Ian indicated

"I want to work to make a difference to the lives of many people in the future through supporting Menzies' locally-based, but globally significant research."

Menzies achieves success in NHMRC awards

Five Menzies' researchers have been awarded 2008 National Health & Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Career Development Awards and Training Fellowships.

The awards will enable them to continue their innovative research at the Menzies Research Institute.

Menzies' Principal Research Fellow and Senior Member, Associate Professor Leigh Blizzard, was awarded a NHMRC Career Development Award to further his study in enhancing the practical usefulness of relative risk estimation methods.

Senior Research Fellow and Member, Dr Tracey Dickson was awarded a NHMRC Career Development Award to examine the brain's response to injury and disease.

Senior Research Fellow and Member, Dr Changhai Ding received a NHMRC Career

Development Award to research using magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) to study knee osteoarthritis.

Research Fellows Dr Fay Johnston and Dr Adele Vincent were awarded Training Postgraduate Fellowships.

Dr Johnston will research understanding the health effects of biomass smoke in Australian towns and cities. Dr Vincent will examine the role of (a protein) SPARC in regeneration and neurogenesis in the central nervous system.

The NHMRC Career Development Awards and Research Training Fellowships last for four years.

The awards are extremely competitive and demonstrate the high quality of our Menzies' researchers and the quality of research performed in Tasmania.

Menzies Research Institute

Thank you to our valued supporters

Many thanks to all of our donors for your ongoing support of Menzies' local research with global significance. November 2007 – January 2008

Everyday Angels

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Mr Stephen Bender
Dr David Boadle
Mrs Anita Clarkson
Mr Don Cornish AO
Mr Brendon Davidson
Ms Judy Hebblethwaite
Mr & Mrs Garth & Brenda Haas
Miss Emma Jackson
Mrs Margaret Keogh
Mrs Margaret Knight
Mr Ian McConnelly
Mr Sam Mollard
Mrs Wendy Noye
Ms Felicity Oakford
Mr Kim Paterson
Mrs Glenda Paton
Mr & Mrs Bob & Frances Russon
Mrs June Scott
Mrs Gwynneth Sperring
Ms Carmel Taylor
Mrs Cynthia Tennant
Mrs Pat Vallance
Mr & Mrs Walter & Robin Verth
Mrs Margaret Williams
Ms Barbara Zimmerman and Prof John Dickey

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Blundstone Australia
Bruny Island Health Advisory Committee
Burnie Friendship Group
Burnie Senior Citizens Club Inc
Derwent Valley Lodge
Latrobe High School
Lions Club of Perth Tasmania Inc
Lions Club of Port Cygnet Inc
Lions Club of Queenstown Inc
Lions Club of Wynyard Inc
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Newstead Heights School
Rotary Club of Brighton
Sheffield RSL Women's Auxiliary
Tasman Ex-Service Bowls Club
Thirlstane Golf Club Associates
Veolia Environmental Services
Wellbeing Club 13

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Mrs Elizabeth Curtis
Mrs Lorraine Dalco
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Mr & Mrs Wayne & Lynette Denehey
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Mrs Marjorie White
Mrs Nancy Williams
Mr & Mrs Ken & Jeanette Wills
Ms Christine Wilson
Mr Ron Wisbey
Ms Joan Woolley
The Woolley Family
Mr Dave Wootton
Mr Rodney Dale Yaxley

Two new Malaysian hospitals join the LessMAS trial

The lessMAS trial is a multicentre international randomised controlled trial of surfactant lavage therapy in meconium aspiration syndrome, a newborn lung disease that can cause severe respiratory failure in newborn babies.

Coordination of this trial moved in 2007 from the Murdoch Childrens Research Institute to the Menzies Research Institute.

The study investigates whether a lung cleansing procedure known as lung lavage can shorten the duration of ventilation in infants with meconium aspiration syndrome. Lung lavage is a radical departure from the normal care given to infants on ventilators, involving a rapid sequence of instillation and recovery of a large amount of detergent-like fluid which may help to cleanse the lung of meconium.

Associate Professor Peter Dargaville, Director of the Neonatal and Paediatric Intensive Care Unit at Royal Hobart Hospital and Honorary Member of Menzies, is the Chief Investigator of the trial and Tanya O'Byrne is the Trial Coordinator.

"Each new centre joining the trial receives training in the technique of lung lavage during a half-day training workshop," Associate Professor Dargaville said.

Peter and Tanya recently conducted training workshops in two new centres joining the trial in Malaysia, Hospital Sungai Buloh in Kuala Lumpur, and Hospital Sultanah Nur Zahirah in Kuala Terengganu.

The lessMAS trial currently has 23 participating centres in six countries, including five centres in Malaysia.

More than flowers

In Memorium (November 2007 – January 2008)

Gifts of remembrance have been made in honour of:

Mr Lindsay Chadwick	Mr William Milburn
Mr Allan Curtis	Mr Robert Morrisby
Mrs Lenna Downham	Mrs Mollie Onnes
Mr Gary Eastley	Mr Sydney Ploughman
Ms Marie Jasinski	Mr Graeme Squires
Mrs Irene Mavis Kaufman	Mr Dennis Taberlay
Mrs Gwendolene Lucas	Mr & Mrs Albert Thodey
Mr Peter Markowicz	Mr John Tomlinson
Mrs Valerie Marsh	

Trusts (November 2007 – January 2008)

Matterson Family Trust on behalf of the late Helene Elizabeth Matterson



Menzies Research Institute

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