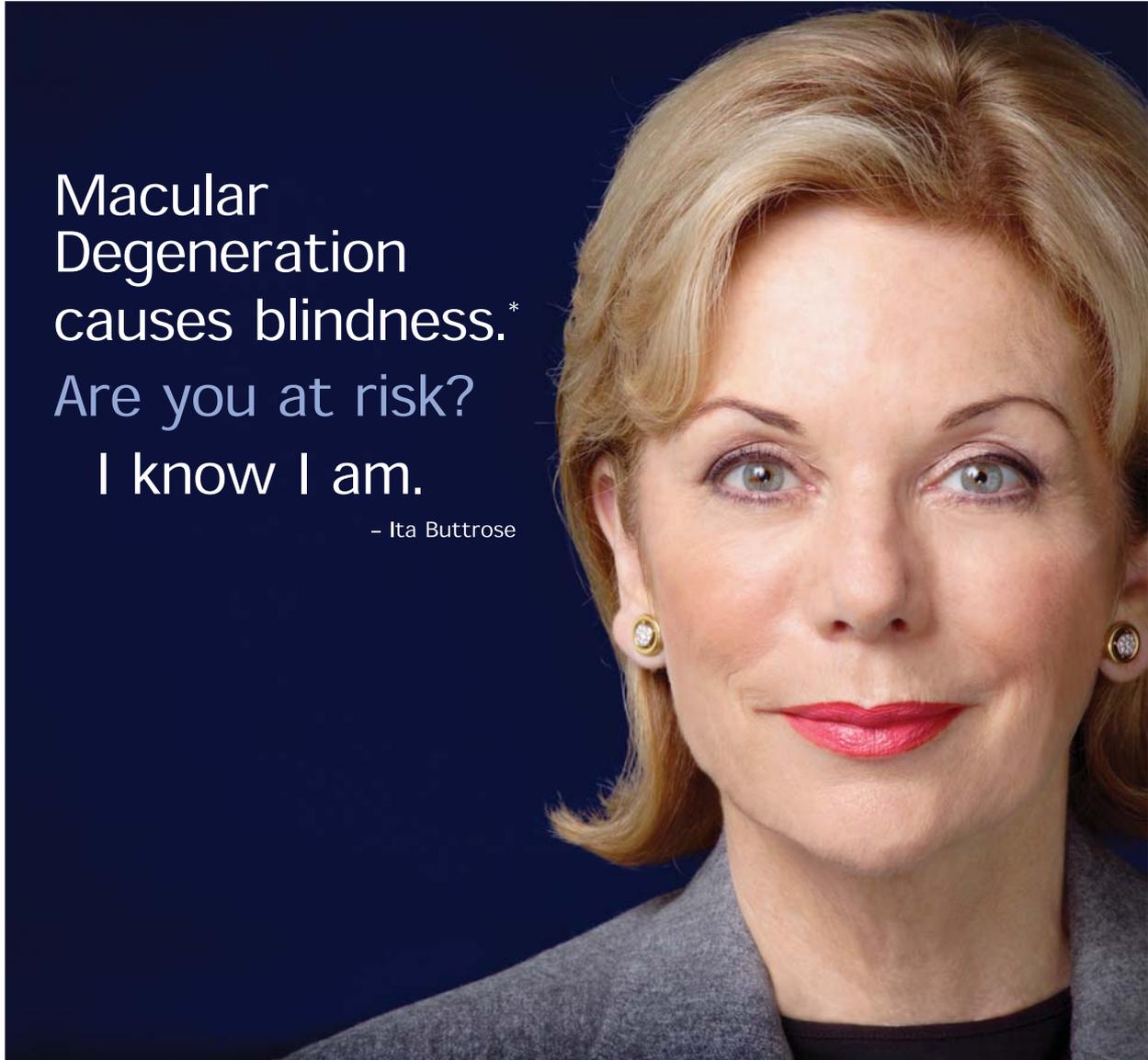


Macular Degeneration Awareness Week 6 - 12 June 2005

Macular
Degeneration
causes blindness.*
Are you at risk?
I know I am.

- Ita Buttrose



*One in seven people over 50 may have some form of Macular Degeneration, now the leading cause of legal blindness in Australia.

It is a great privilege to be the Ambassador for **Macular Degeneration (MD) Awareness Week 2005**.

Not only did I feel that it was important to support the MD Foundation, I also had a very personal interest in making people aware of Macular Degeneration.

My father went blind because of Macular Degeneration and so I have a **family history of MD**. I therefore have a greater risk of developing this disease and I know how

important it is to tell my family about the ways they can reduce their risk.

If you have MD then your family is at risk. You need to encourage your family (especially those over 50) to have regular eye examinations and to take positive steps toward a healthy lifestyle.

Tell your family about MD.
The risk is too great to ignore!

- Ita Buttrose



Thank you Colleen

Colleen McCullough recently wrote to the Foundation saying "It is with a heavy heart that I write to you to resign forthwith as Patron to the MD Foundation. I feel I must step down allowing a person of more robust health the duties that are required. I would like to say that it has been a pleasure to have been the Patron of this Foundation for the last year, and to have been able to give it support and encouragement during that time."

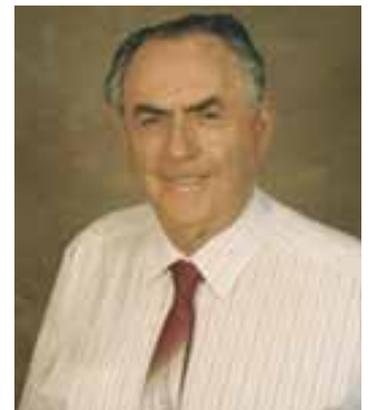
On behalf of all those involved with the Foundation the Chairman, Leslie Lofthouse, wrote to convey our heartfelt thanks for the contribution Colleen has made in reducing the incidence and impact of Macular Degeneration in the Australian community.

"There is no doubt that Colleen's high profile as a renowned author and much loved Australian identity, has raised the awareness and understanding of this disease with so many people. The Foundation will be ever grateful for Colleen's contribution and she will always be a valued and cherished friend of the Foundation." - Leslie Lofthouse, Chairman.

Sir Jack Brabham - Australian sporting hero

Sir Jack Brabham has Macular Degeneration. He is an Australian sporting hero, the legendary triple world Formula One Grand Prix champion.

Only weeks after last year's MD Awareness Week campaign, Jack Brabham was diagnosed with MD. "I didn't even know about the disease before being diagnosed. I found it difficult watching television and reading the newspaper," said Jack.



"My prognosis is that MD will not be cured but I can prevent it from worsening. I have now adopted a healthier way of eating, take supplements and utilise low vision aids".

Jack will help the Foundation by speaking to the media as part of our Awareness Week campaign.

Campaign coverage and supporters

Across Australia your MD Awareness Week 2005 will feature 300,000 brochures and 30,000 posters. **The poster image is featured on the front cover of this issue.** They will be distributed and displayed via Optometrists, Ophthalmologists, Pharmacies, Bowls Clubs and Community Centres.

An extensive media blitz will include Ita Buttose and Sir Jack Brabham spreading the word on Macular Degeneration.

Optometrists will be available to address local community groups on MD. If you would like a speaker to visit your club call the MD Awareness Week Hotline on 1300 665 412.

Our thanks go to our major sponsors of MD Awareness Week 2005 - Optometrists Association Australia, Blackmores and Novartis Ophthalmics.

Funding for Macular Degeneration Foundation

In the 2005 Federal Budget, the Treasurer announced funding of \$129,000 per year over four years to assist with the work of the Macular Degeneration Foundation.

The Foundation greatly appreciates the Federal Government's Grant. It acknowledges the critical need for education and public awareness to tackle this disease.

This grant is the result of an amazing team effort. Many people, across many timelines, have persevered in sending a constant and consistent message to the Federal Government.

I would like to acknowledge the support of all our members who have written and lobbied and worked so hard to drive the message home to the Federal Government. Thank you.

A letter of thanks and appreciation has been sent to the Prime Minister by our Chairman Leslie Lofthouse, on behalf of the Foundation and our members.

At a State level our three year grant from the NSW Government is now at an end. We are now required to submit a funding proposal for the next round of funding in June. It is essential that this funding is maintained.

We also need other States to contribute their share to the Education Program in their States.

If all States share the responsibility we can deliver a greater, more comprehensive national education and awareness program across Australia.

The donations provided by our members, service clubs and community organisations are a key part of our fundraising. I can assure you that the smallest donation is highly valued and appreciated. Thank you to all who continue to support us.

I will keep you informed on the progress of our State funding submission through our Newsletter.

- Julie Heraghty, Chief Executive Officer

Volunteers for injury prevention study

The Queensland University of Technology is conducting a research study in Brisbane titled 'Prevention of Older People's Injuries'. It aims to develop a greater understanding of how visual impairment, in particular Age Related Macular Degeneration, may affect different aspects of peoples' everyday lives. The goal is to implement effective education and prevention strategies.

Tests are conducted by optometrists over several visits which include vision, balance coordination, memory, attention and the ability to conduct everyday activities.

To volunteer call (07) 3864 3784 or email j2.stewart@qut.edu.au

Eyes and Ears in Later Years

In April our MDF Educator conducted an extensive lecture series under the title 'Eyes and Ears in Later Years'. Over 800 people attended in a three week period. The biggest response was generated in Bundaberg - well done Bundaberg!

The program was conducted in conjunction with Quantum Technology and Australian Hearing. It was also a great opportunity to work with the Royal Blind Foundation, the Guide Dogs Queensland and the Queensland Blind Foundation.

The tour was a big success!



Our focus is your vision

Contact us

Suite 1407, 447 Kent St
Sydney NSW 2000

Ph: **1800 111 709**

Website: www.mdffoundation.com.au

How to donate to the Foundation

You can use the enclosed slip and envelope. Donations can also be made over the phone, by mail or in person.

Donations and bequests are gratefully received. Information is available for those wishing to make a bequest. All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

Better Sight Ideas by Dr Peter Herse

Make it Bolder.

The catchphrase for almost all people with vision impairment is "Bigger, Bolder, Brighter". In the last issue we covered **Bigger**. This issue we talk about Bolder.

Bolder means to make things stand out more. Increase the contrast wherever you can.

The most commonly used bold idea is a thick tip felt pen. If you are having trouble seeing handwritten notes and phone numbers, then use a felt tip pen to make the words blacker and easier to read. Most people prefer the black pens, but try different colours.

The numbers on microwave ovens can be really difficult to see sometimes.

A simple trick is to put a small piece of adhesive velcro tape on the most commonly used buttons. Different shaped patches can also help to identify different buttons. It should now be easier to find the right button.

Dinner plates can sometimes be hard to see on white tablecloths. In this case, put a white plate on a dark coloured place mat. The increased contrast will make eating easier.

I would like to say thank you to the people who wrote to me after reading my last column. It is very encouraging to get your positive comments and support. In the coming months I will use some of your letters in my column. There are lots of good ideas in the correspondence I have been receiving!

Did you know?

Talking clocks are available.

Contact your local low vision organisation to purchase talking wrist watches and wall clocks.

Our members tell us that they are fantastic!

Supporters Network... Thank you!

Sydney Fish Markets have donated \$1,000 to help the Foundation with health initiatives. Visit their website www.sydneyfishmarket.com.au

Rotary Clubs are getting behind the Foundation. **Rotary Club of Kenthurst** (NSW) has donated \$1000 and the **Rotary Club of Windsor** (NSW) has donated \$500. Thank you.

Disclaimer This Newsletter is produced by the Macular Degeneration Foundation Australia. It is intended as a Newsletter and its contents do not constitute medical advice and should not be relied on as such. ABN 52096255177.