

## Season's Greetings and a happy and safe New Year

### MD Foundation Annual Fundraising Dinner 2005...

The Foundation's Annual Fundraising Dinner took place on 18 October at the Shangri-la Hotel Sydney. It was a highly successful evening with 200 people attending including our special guest the Hon. Tony Abbott, Minister for Health & Ageing.

Master of ceremonies for the evening was media personality Terry Willesee.

The evening provided an opportunity to thank our long standing sponsors and supporters and to acknowledge our new partners in 2005.

The Fundraising Dinner has now been established in our calendar as an annual event. Congratulations to our 2005 Dinner Committee - *Peter Brown, Pamela Healy, John McCarroll, Leslie Lofthouse and Graham Walker.*

A special thank you to our guests and those who donated prizes for the event. Thanks also to our supporters who made donations to the fundraiser but could not attend.



**On the Road in Victoria...**

In November, Alison Muir (MDF Education Officer) undertook a successful sixteen day educational tour in Victoria in conjunction with Vision 2020. This followed Vision 2020's recent Victorian 'Save Your Sight' campaign. The tour covered Melbourne and parts of regional Victoria including Geelong, Horsham, Wangaratta and Bairnsdale.

The education series gave Victorians and specifically those with MD, their families, friends and carers; an opportunity to learn more about the disease. The Foundation also welcomed partners Glaucoma Australia, Vision Australia, Guide Dogs Victoria and the Optometrists Association of Australia who provided information on other common eye diseases and support services in Victoria.

A key component of the Foundation's work is providing information that helps people

with Macular Degeneration to maintain their independence. To complement this, Quantum Technology and HumanWare attended each tour event, displaying examples of many low vision aids available.

A big thank you to all who participated in our educational tour of Victoria. We will be back!

*Attendees at the Geelong Seminar*



**We are moving...**

The Foundation's Head Office in Sydney has moved from Level 14 to Level 3 in the **same building**. Our new address is - **Suite 302, Level 3, 447 Kent Street, SYDNEY NSW 2000**. A location map has been included with your Newsletter.

Angela Lazarides, our former Marketing and PR Co-ordinator, took up a new position in September 2005. Our thanks to Angela as she has been a long serving member of the MDF team and we wish her all the best in the future.

The Foundation would like to welcome all new staff members. Our MDF team includes Julie Heraghty (CEO), Craig Patterson (Administration Manager), Alison Muir (Education), Meegan McLeod (Education), Sean Harnett (Marketing and Public Relations), Alison King (Administration) and Anne-Marie Taylor (Research).

*Julie*

*Craig*

*Alison Muir*

*Meegan*

*Sean*

*Alison King*

*Anne-Marie*



## Welcome Our New Patron...Ita Buttrose

Ita Buttrose has kindly agreed to become our new Patron. This was announced at the Annual Fundraising Dinner.

As her first official duty, Ita presented certificates of appreciation to our long standing sponsors, supporters and partners Quantum Technology, Blackmores, Ernst & Young, Profield Foundation, South Eastern Sydney Illawarra Area Health Service (NSW Health), Novartis Ophthalmics and Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists (RANZCO).

*Ita Buttrose*



## MD Foundation Annual General Meeting 2005...

*Leslie Lofthouse*



The Foundation's Annual General Meeting (AGM) took place on Wednesday 19 October 2005 at the Sydney Masonic Centre.

Chairman of the Board, Leslie Lofthouse, conducted the AGM. An open invitation was extended through the last Newsletter and it was wonderful to have the Wollongong and Gosford Support Groups and many other friendly faces at the meeting. It was an opportunity to receive feedback from our clients and enjoy the company of so many people.

We are hoping for an even bigger and better crowd next year!

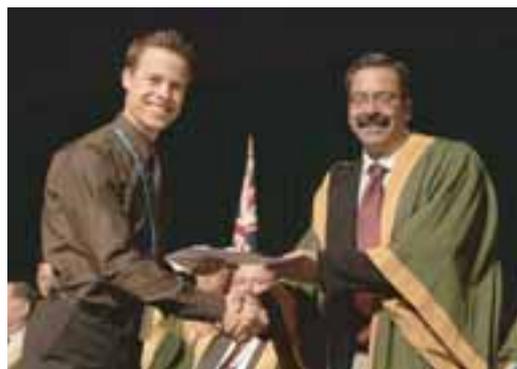
## Research...

The Foundation recently contributed a sum of \$20,000 to The Ophthalmic Research Institute of Australia (ORIA), which will be used to fund the project 'Genetic susceptibility to retinal disease'.

This project investigates the strong and increasing evidence that genetic factors, as yet unidentified, determine susceptibility to retinal disease. The ultimate objective is to identify these heritable factors, so that screening and treatment can be appropriately targeted to those individuals who are most at risk of disease progression.

The project is being conducted by Associate Professor Keryn Williams, Dr H M Brereton, Dr P van Wijngaarden and Professor D Coster from the Flinders Medical Centre in Bedford Park South Australia.

*Dr P van Wijngaarden (left), receives the grant from Dr Nitin Verma, the Macular Degeneration Foundation's Tasmanian State Chair, at the RANZCO Conference recently held in Hobart.*





Our focus is your vision

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## DID YOU KNOW?

Large button telephones can be a fantastic aid to the visually impaired.

These telephones can be purchased from Low Vision Organisations within your State.

If you are currently a rental customer with Telstra, you can

have your telephone replaced with a large button telephone, as part of their Disability Programme.



For more information about this free service, please contact Telstra on 1800 068 424.

## Supporting this Newsletter...

The December Edition of the Macular Degeneration Foundation Newsletter was kindly sponsored by Pfizer Australia.

**Pfizer Australia** focuses on developing new medicines to help Australians lead healthier lives. Their vision is for a future where no one goes blind from treatable eye disease. Pfizer is working hard to develop innovative new medicines for conditions such as glaucoma, macular degeneration and diabetic retinopathy.

To find out more about Pfizer's work visit - [www.pfizeraustralia.com.au](http://www.pfizeraustralia.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.

## A great idea...



We are delighted that many of our supporters have generously offered to forego birthday gifts in lieu of donations to the Foundation. Your help is much appreciated!

## Thank you...

**The Rotary Club of Rose Bay** has donated \$500 towards the Foundation's work. A donation of \$500 has also been received from the **Glenfield Chapter** of the **Order of the Eastern Star**.

The MD Foundation would also like to thank all of **our volunteers** for their help in 2005. Keep up the good work!

Please check the back of our insert for details of all our official **supporters, partners** and **sponsors** for 2005.

**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.