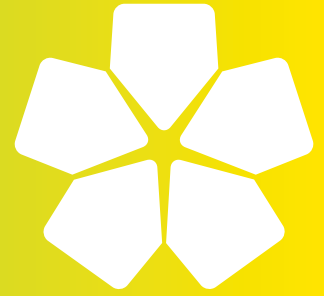


# Autumn Update



The Chris O'Brien Lifehouse at RPA



Tim and fiancée Freya, celebrating their engagement after a tough year.

## Happy ending for rugby enthusiast highlights importance of early detection

BIRCHGROVE resident Tim Cussell was a fit, 25-year old rugby player and sports enthusiast when, in 2008, he noticed something wasn't right. Tim says that he turned a blind eye and didn't think his symptoms, which included a change in his bowel habits and the presence of blood when going to the toilet, were anything much to worry about.

"I put it down to living too good a life at the time," Tim says. "However, the symptoms continued and after about a year I saw my GP who, after examining me, thought I had something insignificant and gave me medication which eased my symptoms for a while.

"It wasn't until Easter 2010, when I noticed these same symptoms increasing in magnitude, that I saw my GP again who booked me in for a colonoscopy. This time the colonoscopy revealed I had hundreds of polyps throughout my large bowel. A biopsy was taken, and two days later I was told that I had bowel cancer. Surgery results then revealed it had spread outside the bowel and into two lymph nodes."

Tim's surgeon, Professor Michael Solomon, and the team at RPA recommended that he have both radiotherapy and chemotherapy before his operation – treatment that was successful in shrinking the cancer.

Due to the extent of the polyps throughout his bowel, after finishing radio and chemo Tim also underwent an operation a month later to remove his entire large bowel and the affected lymph nodes.

"I now have a permanent ileostomy bag (stoma) which took some time to get used to, but thanks to the support from the RPA stoma nurses, I am finding it more and more manageable."

Tim, a stockbroker, said he has had fantastic support from family, friends and work colleagues throughout his treatment. He was also supported by his girlfriend, Freya, to whom he recently became engaged.

Today, three years after Tim noticed his first symptoms and after completing extensive radiotherapy, chemotherapy and surgery he is passionate about raising awareness of bowel cancer and the importance of early detection.

"If I had known what the symptoms were of this disease, I would have had a colonoscopy earlier. It's so important to not ignore any symptoms or brush things under the rug."

Tim is organising a fundraising dinner for 2012 that he hopes will raise funds for Lifehouse at RPA and the Bowel Cancer Institute.

## Cocktails aboard the new Queen supports Lifehouse Capital Appeal



Emcee Helen Dalley with the Queen Elizabeth's Captain Julian Burgess and Ann Sherry, CEO of Carnival Australia.

Supporters of The Chris O'Brien Lifehouse at RPA enjoyed a cocktail party on the world's newest ocean liner, the Queen Elizabeth, when she made her inaugural visit to Sydney last month as part of her maiden world voyage. Lifehouse is extremely grateful to Cunard and Carnival Australia for this generous opportunity which raised over \$25,000 for the Lifehouse Capital Appeal.

## Director's Message Professor Michael Boyer AM



ON BEHALF of all of the patients and staff at the Sydney Cancer Centre, I would like to thank you for your ongoing support.

Over the past year, supporters just like you have donated more than \$2 million. These funds have made a real difference to the care we have been able to provide our patients fighting against cancer, by helping with clinical care as well as funding important research. In the past 12 months, funds from these donations have gone towards:

- a range of research programs into head and neck cancer, breast cancer, lung cancer, and cancer nursing
- portions of the psycho-oncology program at RPAH, which

provides psychological support to patients and their families

- recliner chairs for some wards, allowing patients to be nursed out of beds
- diversional and massage therapies within the palliative care services at Concord and Canterbury Hospitals
- the Information and Support Centre at RPAH, which provides patient support materials and coordinates volunteer programs.

Future issues of this newsletter will include interviews with both staff and patients who are involved in these programs or projects, so you will be able to see the impact that your donation is having.

In addition to caring for the patients of today, I along with many of the staff at the Sydney Cancer Centre have been deeply involved in planning for The Chris O'Brien Lifehouse at RPA. We look forward to keeping you updated on the progress of construction over the coming months. In the meantime, I invite you to continue to support our ongoing work by making a donation today.

Michael

**Professor Michael Boyer AM**

Director, Sydney Cancer Centre and The Chris O'Brien Lifehouse at RPA

## Australian Youth Against Cancer founder leads team to conquer the Murray River



CHRIS BOYD, a former Sydney Cancer Centre patient, recently completed a two-month kayaking, camping and trekking adventure with his friend Ian Bacon and a young team of supporters to raise funds for cancer treatment, research and prevention.

Two years ago, at the age of just 20, Chris was diagnosed with a rare form of sinus cancer, and had a tumour "the size of a table-tennis ball". He underwent four months of chemotherapy and seven weeks of concurrent radiotherapy.

"The treatment that saved me was not available 30 years

ago," he says. "The investment in research that has gone on since then is responsible for saving countless lives, including my own."

Chris established Australian Youth Against Cancer last year to raise awareness of cancer among young people and raise much-needed funds. He felt the Murray River was the ideal location for the Appeal as it meant confronting many of the same issues faced by patients and their families on their cancer journey.

"In the same way in which a person diagnosed with cancer must find the strength to overcome adversity on a daily basis, the challenges presented by the Murray required a spirit of defiance, determination and positivity," says Chris.

The team travelled along the Murray, the longest river in Australia, from Kosciusko National Park to Lake Alexandrina in South Australia - a distance of over 2,700 kilometres. Chris and the team departed on 15th December and arrived in Lake Alexandrina on 7th February, where they were met by Juliette O'Brien, Professor Chris O'Brien's daughter.

The Chris O'Brien Lifehouse at RPA is very fortunate to have the support of Chris and Australian Youth Against Cancer through this Appeal, which has raised more than \$40,000 to date. Our thanks and congratulations go to Chris and his team for their efforts in successfully completing their quest.

**Read more about their recent adventure at [www.ayac.com.au](http://www.ayac.com.au)**

## Research News 'Australia's Cancer' Melanoma

MELANOMA is often labelled 'Australia's cancer' with Australia having one of the highest incidence rates of melanoma in the world.

Melanoma disproportionately impacts the young compared with other solid tumours, and is the most common cancer in men aged 15-50 years of age and women aged 15-35.

Metastatic melanoma or advanced melanoma, where the melanoma has spread beyond the skin, is notoriously resistant to chemotherapy and carries a poor prognosis. Drugs that bind to a specific abnormality in the cancer cell and cause the cell's death are changing the landscape of Melanoma treatment and cancer treatment in general.

BRAF inhibitors are one such class of drug, and in international clinical trials, these drugs have significant activity in patients with metastatic melanoma carrying a particular common mutation of the gene for a protein called BRAF.

Dr Georgina Long is a medical oncologist and clinical researcher at Melanoma Institute Australia (MIA) and Westmead Hospital, and has a particular interest in translational research and the molecular biology of melanoma. In 2009 and 2010, she was a Cancer Institute NSW Clinical Research Fellow at Royal Prince Alfred and Westmead Hospitals, and asked the question, "are there clues in the clinic that suggest a patient with metastatic melanoma may have the BRAF mutation?" This question has largely been answered by Dr Long and her colleagues at MIA, where they found 48% of patients with metastatic melanoma have a BRAF mutation. These findings were recently published in the high impact Journal of Clinical Oncology.

"There were no strong clues in terms of the organs involved with melanoma or the response to chemotherapy amongst many other factors we examined," Dr Long said. "The strongest and only clue was age; BRAF mutant melanoma occurs more commonly in the young." In addition, the researchers looked at the primary melanoma that preceded the metastatic disease, and found some stronger clues including site of primary melanoma and



Dr Georgina Long

pathological findings when the primary melanoma is examined under a microscope.

"One intriguing finding was that those with BRAF mutant metastatic melanoma have a poorer prognosis than those without the mutation, and BRAF inhibitor drugs improved their outcome to at least as good or better than those without the mutation," Dr Long said. The researchers are validating these results in a group of patients from 2002-2006 when the BRAF inhibitor was not available.

"The ability to translate cancer cellular biology into real-time gains for patients is becoming a reality," Dr Long says. "We are turning our attention to exploring resistance mechanisms to novel drugs, and methods for overcoming them."



We look forward to keeping you updated on the progress of Lifehouse. If you would like to receive our quarterly newsletters by email rather than mail (and help us save on administration costs), please sign up to our e-newsletter at [www.lifehouserpa.org.au](http://www.lifehouserpa.org.au) or phone us on **1300 852 500**.

Thank you for your continued support.

## Lifehouse Event Calendar For Your Diary

### The Inaugural Annual Chris O'Brien Lifehouse at RPA Charity Rugby Luncheon Saturday 16th April 2011

We are excited to announce a new annual event for Rugby fans and their friends. Supporters will be invited to attend an exclusive pre-match luncheon in the Oval Room at Easts Rugby Club, followed by the always entertaining Sydney University versus Eastern Suburbs 1st Grade fixture at 3pm.

Eastern Suburbs v Sydney University  
Saturday 16th April 2011  
Easts Rugby Club, Bellevue Hill  
For more information please call  
(02) 9515 2000

## 'Charitable Bonds', a new investment option

Thank you to current, as well as many new supporters of Lifehouse who invested in the Charitable Bonds issued in late March.

We were pleased with the response, especially given "Social Bonds" is a new investment category for Australia. Investors included many Self Managed Superannuation Funds (SMSF), Public Ancillary Funds (PAFs), Foundations and individual donors.

We appreciate your support.



### PROUDLY SUPPORTING THE CHRIS O'BRIEN LIFEHOUSE AT RPA

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## Help Lifehouse Save Lives

Every donation, large or small  
will help people with cancer survive.



You can help The Chris O'Brien  
Lifehouse at RPA, transform the  
treatment of cancer and bring hope  
to the lives of cancer patients, their  
carers and families.

LOCATED in the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital – Sydney University precinct at Camperdown, Sydney, The Chris O'Brien Lifehouse at RPA will be a centre of excellence with integrated clinical care, research and education creating opportunities for innovative discoveries, compassionate holistic care and better outcomes for patients.

By raising funds for patient care, research education, capital works programs and projects at The Chris O'Brien Lifehouse at RPA, you can help us realise the Chris O'Brien vision and make a real difference to people with cancer.



## The Chris O'Brien Lifehouse at RPA

To make a tax-deductible donation,  
please fill in the coupon overleaf.

To donate by phone, please call  
The Chris O'Brien Lifehouse at RPA on **1300 852 500**  
or visit our website [www.lifehouserpa.org.au](http://www.lifehouserpa.org.au)

# YES, I WANT TO HELP THE CHRIS O'BRIEN LIFEHOUSE AT RPA SAVE LIVES

Please complete, detach and return this coupon along with your donation, in the envelope provided.

## THE CHRIS O'BRIEN LIFEHOUSE AT RPA

PO Box M5, Missenden Road, Camperdown NSW 2050

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Suburb: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Ph: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATION TO THE CHRIS O'BRIEN LIFEHOUSE AT RPA

### INDIVIDUAL DONATION

I would like to make an individual donation to support The Chris O'Brien Lifehouse at RPA.

\$10  \$20  \$50  \$100  \$250 Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Your tax-deductible receipt will be mailed to you.*

### MONTHLY DONATION

I would like to make monthly contributions to The Chris O'Brien Lifehouse at RPA. Please debit **monthly** from my credit card (details below) until further notice.

\$10  \$20  \$50  \$100  \$250 Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*One tax-deductible receipt will be mailed to you at the end of each financial year.*

### CREDIT CARD PAYMENT

Amex  Mastercard  Visa

TOTAL AMOUNT: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name on card \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry date \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to receive The Chris O'Brien Lifehouse at RPA e-newsletter.

I would like to receive information about including The Chris O'Brien Lifehouse at RPA in my Will.

I would prefer not to receive further mailings from The Chris O'Brien Lifehouse at RPA.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY AND COMPASSION FOR PEOPLE WITH CANCER.**

## CEO Message Timothy Dugan



OVER the past few months there has been a feeling of increased anticipation as physical changes occur on the site, firstly with the demolition of the existing buildings and more recently with excavations having commenced. As this newsletter goes to press, we are just two years away from the planned opening of the new facility, which promises to bring new levels of comfort and convenience to our patients and their families.

The contract for the bulk earthworks has been awarded, along with the Early Works services tunnel relocation works. Both projects are well and truly underway and forecast for completion in July 2011. This work also includes the demolition of the remaining two floors of the Page Chest Pavilion on the northern end of the site, so the next few months will see significant advancement.

You may already be aware the Department of Planning approved the Part 3A application for the main building works in December 2010. This was a significant milestone in the project – the building project team worked tirelessly on the application and we congratulate them. The construction of the main building works is currently being tendered and the successful company will begin construction directly after completion of the current works.

As the new centre begins to take form physically, we continue to work on the organisational design of the facility and its culture. This is every bit as, if not more, important than the physical facility. We will have 400 staff working at Lifehouse and we want to make sure that they feel passionate about the organisation and proud to be part of it. The staff of the Sydney Cancer Centre, including Radiation Oncology, has devoted a huge amount of time – and always in their own time – to the organisational design of Lifehouse. We are extremely grateful for their generosity of spirit and the valuable insights they have provided. We have also involved patients, and their families and carers in our plans, and appreciate their valuable input as well.

I look forward to updating you again in a few months once construction begins. In the meantime, thank you for your ongoing support.

**Timothy Dugan**  
Chief Executive Officer, The Chris O'Brien Lifehouse at RPA

## Thank you How you are helping support Lifehouse

Lifehouse wishes to thank the following generous supporters for their fundraising efforts and recent donations:

- Swati Jain's Trivia Night – \$106,300, including \$100,000 from Sargents (Pies) Charitable Foundation
- Deposit Power's The Colin Bruce Ultimate Corporate Challenge – over \$26,000
- The Seccombe family's Calcutta for a Cure dinner – \$16,000
- Nick Tambakis' 60th birthday celebration – \$5,925
- Showcase Guitar Raffle – \$5,355
- Southern Radiology Group Christmas donation – \$2,500
- Sydney Women's AFL's Pink Sock Day – \$2,151
- Grant Nixon Memorial Cricket Day – more than \$23,000 has been raised over the past four years

A big thank you to all the riders who took part in the annual **Johnny Warren Jamberoo Classic bike ride** from Loftus to Jamberoo on 8th January 2011, despite the wet weather. Special thanks to Craig Klement of Urban Cyclists, Rosebery, for all his hard work organising this event.

### Dr Zhivago

The final dress rehearsal performance on 18th February of Dr Zhivago, a wonderful new musical starring Anthony Warlow, raised \$87,500 for Lifehouse. Our sincere thanks go to the Gordon/Frost Organisation for this generous fundraising opportunity. We are also very grateful to JCDcaux, Australian News Channel, 2GB, 2CH and ACMN for generously supporting this event. And a big thank you to all our supporters who purchased tickets to this extraordinary show.



Committee members (L-R) Jane Thomas, Sally Goss, Di Sinclair, Sue Melia and Esther Fraser at the lunch.

### Gynae committee lunch

The Sydney Gynae Cancer Committee was formed in 2008 to support oncology research and services, and to raise awareness of early symptoms of gynaecological cancers. The lunch at Parliament House was hosted by Mrs Jillian Skinner, MP, and emceed by the wonderful Ms. Jean Kittson, with more than \$43,000 raised on the day.



The Lunch for Life committee (Back row L-R) Justin Webb, Luke Adams, James Hutchison, Ned O'Neil, (Front row L-R) Camilla Deague, Sophie Erskine, Hermione Joye and Sophie Sproats.

### Lunch for Life

For the second consecutive year, Wildfire, one of Sydney's most stylish venues, was the host for the 'Lunch for Life' event, which raised an outstanding \$96,560. We are very fortunate that this energetic group of young people supports a project that will benefit so many. The superb luncheon was fully donated by Tonci Farac, owner of Wildfire, and other generous sponsors including Fosters and Jacob's Creek.



Event organiser Skye Leckie with Rowan Keating, who supported the event.

### AUTORE Melbourne Cup Lunch

Our long-awaited Melbourne Cup event last November was another huge success. Our thanks again go to the fundraising committee including Skye Leckie, Jo Tait, Stuart Hudson & Peter Metzner, together with AUTORE for their very generous contribution. We are also grateful to Winestock, Combined Wines & Foods, Harvey Norman, Joh Bailey, Six Senses Destination Spa, Foxtel, Mandalay Flowers and Proven Thoroughbreds for their support, which resulted in a wonderful \$150,000 being raised for The Chris O'Brien Lifehouse at RPA Capital Appeal.



(L-R) Lifehouse supporters Sally Zissimatos and Samantha & David Meyn; Keith Cox, Nurse Practitioner Oncology/Chemotherapy at Sydney Cancer Centre; Gail O'Brien, Director of The Chris O'Brien Lifehouse at RPA.

### Lifehouse Thank You Cocktail Party

A cocktail party at Government House in December gave us the chance to thank all of our supporters, sponsors and donors who so generously contributed to Lifehouse in 2010.