



North Shore
Heart Research
Foundation

TAKE heart

■ FEBRUARY 2008

NORTH SHORE HEART RESEARCH FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

DONOR LINE: 1800 999 060

Heart disease researchers given a booster shot

North Shore Heart Research Foundation has started 2008 by awarding nearly \$500,000 to heart disease specialists undertaking research projects.

Six recipients were selected late last year from a host of applicants seeking funds for worthy research projects. The money they receive will go towards investigating new techniques into treating and preventing coronary artery disease and heart failure – Australia’s top two killers.



■ Cardiology Advanced Trainee, Dr Gemma Figtree, who is a recipient of this year’s research grant awards.

“Australia has some of the most brilliant cardiologists in the world. The more funding available for research, the more they will achieve in the fight against heart disease,” the Foundation’s Chairman, Mr Ray Knight, said.

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A new home for heart research

A NEW STATE OF THE ART FACILITY FOR ROYAL NORTH SHORE HOSPITAL’S RESEARCH TEAMS WILL BE UNVEILED IN LATE 2008, ACCOMMODATING OVER 350 RESEARCHERS AND SETTING A NATIONAL STANDARD FOR FACILITIES OF ITS KIND.

The Research and Education Building, a project worth \$91 million, is currently under construction on the St Leonards campus, at the corner of Reserve Road and Westbourne Street.

Built with the financial support of the NSW Government and the University of Sydney, this impressive structure will facilitate the “dual carriageway” of the North Shore Heart Research Foundation’s (NSHRF) essential research, which transports and develops discoveries between the bedside and the laboratories.

The hospital’s heart research team and academic teachers, many of whom are financially supported by the NSHRF, will occupy laboratories on the eighth floor and teach in the onsite education facility.

“As the research labs take shape we want to see them equipped to a standard that matches the needs and achievements of the brilliant cardiologists and researchers who’ll use them,” says NSHRF Chief Executive Officer Derek Minett. “This is a rare opportunity to get something right from the very start.”

\$500,000 needed

NSHRF is asking its supporters, community groups and local businesses to help raise an additional \$500,000, to provide the new facility with the state-of-the-art accommodation and equipment needed for its ongoing research



■ The new cardiac research laboratory will be located on Level 8 of this new Research and Education Building now being built on the North Shore Hospital Campus.

program. Not only will this equipment benefit the NSHRF’s teams, it will also serve to attract leading researchers and clinicians from around the world.

“Our goal is focused and the results will be tangible,” Mr Minett said. “These new labs will be operating with equipment that NSHRF’s

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Researcher
Tom
Buckley



PAGE 4
Home based
rehabilitation
with Helen
Glinatsis



PAGE 7
Judith Adams
award
winning artist



PAGE 11
Heng-si Hsu
lucky lottery
winner



■ Ray Knight, Chairman.

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year and best wishes for good health and happiness in 2008!

A busy year for the Foundation lies ahead and I hope to meet you at our upcoming activities.

If you have received a questionnaire with this newsletter, I encourage you to complete and return it. Your responses will help us improve our communications with you and deliver the best results for our research programs.

Despite recent advances and our promising research projects, much still needs to be done as heart disease remains Australia's biggest killer.

Our most important challenge in 2008 centres on the Research and Education Building. We are now seeking to raise \$500,000 to provide the best equipment for our heart researchers in this new state-of-the-art facility.

Legacies from farsighted individuals offer peace of mind to those who see value in research. If you are considering a bequest, our CEO, Derek Minett, will be pleased to assist you and your solicitor in the preparation of your Will.

In this issue we report on recent supporter activities including our annual Cardiology Information Seminar when North Shore-based cardiologists Drs Edward Barin, Melissa Doohan and Peter Hansen gave lively and informative presentations. Special thanks also to our featured survivor, Sue Ewart (see page 10) and Associate Professor Rodney Baber, a senior obstetrician and gynaecologist at RNS, for generously sharing their life experiences and knowledge at our recent Women's Heart Lunch.

Each edition of *Take Heart* contains useful information from Professor Geoffrey Tofler, the North Shore Cardiovascular Education Centre, details of upcoming events and more.

If you are not a regular subscriber, I encourage you to join our family of supporters and receive *Take Heart*. It's mailed free of charge three times each year: just complete and return the form at the back of this newsletter.

Thank you all for your continued support of our goal: *giving HEART to future generations.*

Ray Knight
Chairman



■ An artist's impression of the new Research and Education Building.



■ Foundation Chairman, Ray Knight, Lori Farrar and Jillian Skinner M.P.

DIARY



DIARY DATES

Probus Bowls Challenge

Belrose Bowling Club

Monday, March 17

Clubs from northern Sydney participate in a bowls challenge while raising money for heart research.

Take Heart Ord Minnett \$20,000

Share Portfolio Lottery

Drawn: Noon. Friday, May 23.

Tickets available by telephoning 1800 999 060.

National Heart Week

Sunday, May 4 to Sunday May 11.

Sportsman's Lunch

Hunters Hill Club

Friday June 20

Table bookings now available.

BOOKINGS AND ENQUIRIES

enquiries@heartresearch.com.au

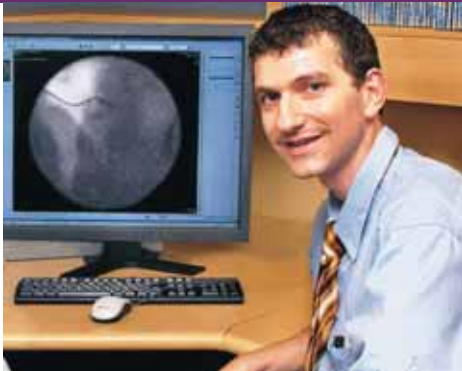
1800 999 060

ORD MINNETT

PRIVATE WEALTH

Corporate partner Ord Minnett has renewed its commitment to the North Shore Heart Research Foundation. The leading Australian wealth management company is supporting Foundation fundraising through our Share Portfolio Lottery for the third year in a row.

Disclaimer: Whilst due care is taken in the preparation of articles, the information contained in this newsletter is not intended as specific medical advice, and should be used as a guide only. Consult your doctor or health care professional before following any health information.



UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

**TOM BUCKLEY –
COORDINATOR OF
CARDIOVASCULAR
HEALTH AND
BEREAVEMENT STUDY**

Tom Buckley is one of the North Shore Heart Research Foundation’s research grant award recipients. An Intensive and Coronary Care certified RN, Tom is currently a PhD candidate working with Professor Geoffrey Tofler. He is also a lecturer with the faculty of Nursing, Midwifery and Health at the University of Technology, Sydney.

I wish I had... the running legs of Steve Moneghetti.

I wish I hadn't... forgotten to have a glass in my hand when raising a toast at my wedding.

When I was a child, I wanted to be... alive at 30!

If only if I could remember... people’s names.

If I wasn't me, I would like to be... Bono (from U2).

The hardest thing I have ever done is... watch my wife give birth.

Heart research is important because... it helps us answer the “why” questions.

The hardest thing about being a medical researcher is... answering the “why” questions. ■

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Heart disease researchers given a booster shot

“This latest round of grants encourages and funds the most innovative and worthwhile research projects.”

Cardiologist Professor Helge Rasmussen and Cardiology Advanced Trainee Dr Gemma Figtree are recipients of a grant, for: Reversible oxidative modification of the sodium pump – A role in hormonal regulation of vascular tone.

Cardiologist and Epidemiologist Professor Geoffrey Tofler also received a grant, for his research work in cardiac disease prevention: Triggered Acute Risk Prevention: a study of feasibility in subjects with cardiovascular risk factors.

Interventional Cardiologist, Dr Michael Ward, is undertaking innovative research looking at genes: Estrogen receptor alpha: a candidate gene for altered vascular reactivity and Tako-tsubo phenomenon.

Medical Registrar Dr Levi Bassin, from the Royal North Shore Hospital’s Department of Cardiology, is undertaking research on The Effect of Myocardial Ischaemia, Hypothermia and Subarachoid Haemorrhage on the Wavefront of Electrical Activation and Recovery.

Thomas Buckley, a senior nurse specialising in cardiology, is undertaking a study on: Evaluation of Cardiovascular Health in Bereavement as part of his PhD research program.

“Research projects are extremely time and resource consuming,” Mr Knight said.

“Without the support of the Foundation, it would be impossible for researchers such as these recipients to undertake important work towards improving the way heart disease is treated and prevented in the future. ■

...continued from page 1

A New Home for Heart Research

supporters have helped to provide, and which will assist us in continuing to pursue our research with dedication and creativity”.

“The advances in the treatment and prevention of heart disease over the last few years have been quite incredible, but so much more is possible”, Mr Minett said.

Help equip the new laboratories

To help us reach the \$500,000 needed to equip our new home for heart research, please:

- tear off the donation form inside the back cover of this newsletter
- indicate the amount you wish to contribute
- fill out your details, and
- return by post, or fax to 02 9906 7539. ■

All donations are tax deductible and gifts of \$1,000 or more will be acknowledged within the new heart research laboratories, and noted in NSHRF publications, including this newsletter.

For more information email today –

Derek Minett ceo@heartresearch.com.au

John Shaw, Fundraising Manager j.shaw@heartresearch.com.au

or call 1800 999 060



FEATURE: REHABILITATION

■ Clinical Nurse Specialist, Helen Glinatsis, works with APAC and the North Shore Cardiovascular Education Centre (NSCEC), who tailor make rehabilitation programs for Royal North Shore Hospital heart patients.

Home-based rehabilitation for coronary patients helps recuperation

AN INNOVATIVE PROGRAM THAT PROVIDES HOSPITAL STANDARD CARE IN PATIENTS' HOMES HAS BEEN EXTENDED TO HEART PATIENTS FROM THE ROYAL NORTH SHORE HOSPITAL.

The program, known as Acute Post Acute Care (APAC), is dramatically changing the face of hospital care in Australia. The evolution of APAC has led to hospitals being able to discharge patients requiring acute care much sooner.

This "hospital in the home" system, offers a wide range of care through a team of specially trained nurses and health specialists for those who have potentially life-threatening illnesses. APAC has extended this care to patients after an acute heart attack requiring a stent.

program now allows heart patients to recuperate in the comfort and peace of their own home following an acute hospital admission," Helen said.

All APAC nurses have skills in general and technical nursing, and are supported by expert nurses. They work alongside other specialised medical staff to ensure that each patient's individual health care needs are met.

This integrated, multidisciplinary approach between APAC and the NSCEC provides a continuum of heart patient care from acute care settings through to recovery.

Members of the APAC team will travel to the patients' homes with a back pack of support material that includes dressings, pathology and intravenous equipment.

"Heart patients referred to APAC are visited by a cardiac nurse after being discharged from hospital and are seen by a multidisciplinary team for at least two weeks," Helen says.

"Often heart patients will forget what they are told in hospital. In their own home they are more likely to be receptive to education.

"As well as providing special nursing care, we also assist patients with their daily living such as attending doctor appointments, obtaining medications, returning to activity, helping them adapt to post-incident living and introducing them to community services," she said. ■



■ Often heart patients will forget what they are told in hospital. In their own home they are more likely to be receptive to education.

As a Clinical Nurse Specialist, Helen Glinatsis works with APAC and the North Shore Cardiovascular Education Centre, (NSCEC) who tailor make rehabilitation programs for Royal North Shore Hospital heart patients.

"The service we offer through the Northern Sydney Central Coast Area Health Service's APAC

For further information about APAC please call (02) 9926 7292 or the North Shore Cardiovascular Education Centre.



ADVICE: ASK THE DOCTOR

TAKE heart

by Prof. Geoffrey Tofler

Q: Dear Doctor, my 78 year old wife, who had been breathless for some weeks, was told by her doctor that she had heart failure. To our surprise, the doctor then said that although her heart was beating strongly, it wasn't relaxing properly. Could you please explain that?

A: Although difficulty getting ones breath can be due to a variety of non-cardiac causes, ranging from chest infection, lung clot, emphysema, or just being unfit, heart failure is always important to consider – and its risk increases after 65 years of age. Since the term “heart failure” can sound frightening, some doctors use alternative expressions like “fluid on the lung”, “weakened heart muscle” or cardiomyopathy, where the word breakdown is “cardio” meaning heart, “myo” – muscle, “pathy” – not working well.

With each heart beat, the left ventricle of the heart normally pumps blood containing oxygen around the body (called its systolic function) and then relaxes to allow blood to fill the left ventricle before the next beat (called its diastolic function). Problems with either systolic or diastolic function can result in the symptoms of heart failure – where the heart fails to adequately deliver oxygen to the tissues of the body without excessive strain. Symptoms include shortness of breath, fatigue and leg oedema. Fluid in the lung can be detected with a stethoscope or on chest X-Ray.

An echocardiogram is an important diagnostic test, since it provides information on heart size and function as well as whether the valves have any narrowing or leaking. In your wife's situation, the echocardiogram would show that although the pumping action of the heart is good, the heart muscle is stiff and its ability to relax is reduced. When relaxation (diastolic function) is impaired, the heart doesn't fill well and increased pressure can result in fluid accumulation in the lungs and shortness of breath. High blood pressure is a common cause of this condition because the thicker heart muscle is often stiffer than normal muscle. This is an important reason to see that blood pressure is kept under good control. Balance can also be upset if a person develops irregular heart rhythm, such as atrial fibrillation, which further impairs the filling of the heart with blood.

Although problems with heart muscle relaxation are seen in almost half of people with heart failure over

the age of 70 years, few research studies have specifically looked at the best treatment for people with diastolic heart failure. Despite the lack of specific information, many of the medications that work well for systolic heart failure, where the heart muscle is weakened, also work for diastolic heart failure. So, a diuretic such as frusemide (trade name Lasix), will help to prevent fluid build-up and shortness of breath. Other useful treatments are the beta-blocker family of medications, such as carvedilol (Dilatrend), Bisoprolol (bikor) or metoprolol (Toprol) that improve the relaxing ability of the heart; and medication that maintain good blood pressure control such as ACE inhibitors and angiotensin II receptor blockers of which there are several brands.

Keeping physically fit and being ideal weight will help improve diastolic function. Although there is no direct link between relaxed heart muscle and a person generally being relaxed, an anxiety state with a fast heart rate could worsen diastolic function.

Keeping to a regular diet, taking medication regularly, and identifying and treating any worsening symptoms promptly, is another important part of good treatment. So it's not ideal that your wife was breathless, but delayed several weeks before seeking medical help. Patients and their families both in the hospital and community can be assisted to understand and manage their condition by nurses in the MACARF program (Management of Cardiac Function) that we run in Northern Sydney Health Area. The MACARF nurse as well as doctors can provide a helpful patient action plan. The Cardiomyopathy Association of Australia (www.cmaa.org.au), a patient education and support group, is also valuable.

Although shortness of breath is a frightening symptom, the good news is that advances in diagnosis and treatment can greatly help your wife and others like her with heart failure, to live long and active lives.

We welcome your questions via email to information@heartresearch.com.au or by post to PO Box 543, St Leonards, NSW 1590.

We recommend each person receives their own advice on their particular condition from their doctor, but as we answer a question or two each issue we hope to cover areas of interest and new developments for our readers. ■

ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO DIRECT LINK BETWEEN RELAXED HEART MUSCLE AND A PERSON GENERALLY BEING RELAXED, AN ANXIETY STATE WITH A FAST HEART RATE COULD WORSEN DIASTOLIC FUNCTION.



NOTICEBOARD: OUR SUPPORTERS

■ Obstetrician and gynecologist, Associate Professor Rodney Baber, who spoke about menopause, hormone replacement therapy and heart health.

A fun and informative fundraiser for women

OUR RECENT LUNCH FOCUSING ON WOMEN'S HEART HEALTH ISSUES REINFORCED THE SURPRISING FACT – FOR MANY – THAT MORE WOMEN THAN MEN ARE AFFECTED BY HEART DISEASE.



■ Thanks to the generous support of businesses, prizes such as this basket of L'Occitane products made the day a huge success.

Highlighting gender differences and the special cardiovascular risks for post-menopausal women, Clinical Associate Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Dr Rodney Barber, shared the latest medical findings in this critical area and answered questions from our guests with practical and engaging responses.

From the perspective of a female heart patient, Sue Ewart, told her personal story of the impact of her incident, its treatment and her inspired approach to continuing recovery. Sue's engaging presentation moved many guests, giving pause for all to consider their own attitudes to better heart health. (Part-two of Sue's story is published on page 10 of this issue.) On hand to help our guests understand the clinical aspects of Sue's incident was Vanessa Baker, cardiac rehabilitation specialist and Manager of the North Shore Cardiovascular Education Centre.

Once again, the support of a small group of dedicated, volunteer business women who are affectionately known as the North Shore Heart Throbs, ensured an excellent attendance, while their personal approaches to local northern Sydney

businesses were rewarded with a stunning array of donated items for the day's raffle and auctions, which in turn helped to raise over \$8,000 on the day.

"The event was born out of our desire to make a tangible contribution to the future of heart research at North Shore Hospital," Heart Throb Lori Farrar, said.

"Thanks to all our supporters and sponsors, this event just gets better and better every year. We are already looking forward to this year's lunch and welcome all new supporters and guests."

Sydney restaurateur and philanthropist, Con Dedes, catered the lunch and guests were treated to a delicious heart healthy meal.

Our special thanks to this year's sponsors including the Hunters Hill Club, L'Occitane en Provence and Watershed Wines and the many others who contributed raffle prizes and auction items. ■

A lively day of fun and learning set new benchmarks for our next annual luncheon which will be held at the Hunters Hill Club later in 2008.

Reserve a table **today** for your business, your club or your friends.

Call Danielle Hielman on 1800 999 060 to find out more and receive your personal invitation.



■ Splendid décor at the Hunters Hill Club provided the ideal setting for last year's Women's Heart Health Lunch.

PARTNERS IN HEART HEALTH

North Shore Heart Research Foundation gratefully acknowledges the generous contributions of our corporate supporters in 2008



DEDES RESTAURANT • ERNST & YOUNG • HOLMAN WEBB • THE CREATIVE ZOO • L'OCCITANE AUSTRALIA PTY LTD • NORTH SHORE PRIVATE HOSPITAL • WATERSHED WINES

Supporters gather for tips on a longer, heart-healthy life

HOW TO LIVE LONGER WITH IMPROVED HEART HEALTH WAS THE NEWS PRESENTED BY LEADING NORTH SHORE CARDIOLOGISTS AT THE RECENT CARDIOLOGY INFORMATION SEMINAR FOR OUR DONORS AND SUPPORTERS HELD AT THE NORTH SYDNEY LEAGUES CLUB IN NOVEMBER.

North Shore heart specialists Dr Peter Hansen, Dr Melissa Doohan and Dr Edward Barin, presented detailed insights into the latest advances in the emergency treatment of acute heart attacks; and learning to understand the importance of the right lifestyle choices and maintaining an active, rewarding life.

Their motivating, easy-to-understand presentations – often very entertaining and light-hearted (pardon the pun) provided energising, life-saving advice on how to recognise and respond to a suspected heart attack; the importance of calling an ambulance without delay; and understanding the significant benefits introduced through changed triage procedures which allow urgent cases to be admitted directly to the Cardiology Catheter Laboratories – bypassing the hospital’s emergency department. Recently completed trials of this new model of care has seen mortality rates at Royal North Shore Hospital decrease to just two per cent of cases.

Understanding the value of maintaining the right diet, combined with no-nonsense exercise routines

and following medical advice in taking prescribed medicines (and the value of daily fish oil supplements), were topics which engaged the audience and helped many clarify widely held misconceptions about heart disease.

In addressing the audience and thanking the cardiologists for volunteering their time on a Saturday morning, the Foundation’s CEO, Derek Minett, highlighted their passion and commitment in sharing what they have learned through their research and everyday practice. ■

If you missed this Seminar, another is being planned for November where other leading heart-health experts will present ‘the latest’ developments in cardiology – information you can’t afford to miss.

Make sure you join our mail list to receive a personal invitation to the 2008 Cardiology Information Seminar. Call TODAY – Danielle Heilman on 1800 999 060.



■ Dr Peter Hansen... don’t delay calling an ambulance.



■ Dr Edward Barin... maintain health and fitness as you age.



■ Dr Melissa Doohan... know your cholesterol levels and what they mean.

Award winning artist’s support for the Foundation

The Australian landscape is a source of inspiration, a field on which imagination plays wantonly... just ask Judith Adams.

A gifted artist, Judith has donated thousands of dollars worth of paintings to the North Shore Heart Research Foundation to help raise money for our research programmes.

Her work has been prominent at art shows such as the Castle Hill Orange Blossom Festival, the St Ives Show and numerous art shows in the Blue Mountains.

As a result of a heart incident in 1997, she lost the use of her right arm and became a patient of cardiologist Dr Alan Edwards who recently retired. A stent inserted in an occluded artery gave Judith an extended lease on life.

Although right-handed, she learnt to paint with her left hand.

She maintains her health with the help of her current cardiologist, Dr Melissa Doohan, who she adores.

Her vibrant landscapes catch the eye of all who recognise her work amongst the prizes and auctions at our Foundation’s events.

“I just love the Australian landscape and all of its colours,” says Judith, who has traveled with her husband to outback places such as the Flinders Ranges and Broken Hill, to seek inspiration for her work.

She began supporting the Foundation in 1999 and is now recognised as a Life Member of the Foundation. ■



■ Award winning artist, Judith Adams, who for the past eight years has donated her paintings to the Foundation.



Want to help Australia's top heart researchers?

Volunteer your life experience and professional skills!

North Shore Heart Research Foundation has some great opportunities for people of all ages to join our team as a volunteer! You can use your free time and professional skills to help raise funds for heart research.

- Are you a student seeking to gain work experience and skills to help you get a job?
- Had a break from the work force and are looking to build on your experience?
- Retired and looking to put your professional experience and some of your newfound free time to good use?
- Want to dedicate some time and effort to a worthy cause in your local community?

Volunteering is a lot of fun and a great way to make new friends while learning new skills. We have a range of volunteer roles requiring different commitments of time.

For further information about volunteering with the North Shore Heart Research Foundation, call Ric Purcell on (02) 9926 8186 or send an email to enquiries@heartresearch.com.au ■

■ (Above) Ilse Stolzenberg, a student and part-time laboratory assistant at the hospital who volunteers on a regular basis for the Foundation.

FEATURE: HEART HEALTH EDUCATION

Cardiovascular Disease

CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE IS ONE OF THE SEVEN NATIONAL HEALTH PRIORITY AREAS IDENTIFIED BY THE FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS.

While many advancements have been made in the treatment of the disease, cardiovascular disease remains Australia's greatest health problem.

Not only does it kill more people than any other disease (nearly 50,000 deaths in 2001), it creates enormous costs for the nation's healthcare system. It also places a heavy burden on individuals and the community due to disabilities the condition causes.



What is cardiovascular disease?

Cardiovascular disease refers to all conditions and diseases involving the heart and blood vessels.

The basic cause of this disease is atherosclerosis, which is a process that clogs blood vessels with deposits of fat, cholesterol and other substances.

These deposits mean that the blood supply to the heart, brain and legs is damaged. Angina or heart attack can occur when the blood supply to the heart is affected.

When the blood supply to the brain is affected, a stroke can happen.

The major cardiovascular diseases include coronary heart disease (CHD), ischaemic stroke (IS), peripheral vascular disease (PVD), heart failure, rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease.

Who is at risk of cardiovascular disease?

There are a number of risk factors:

- Tobacco smoking
- Physical inactivity
- High Blood pressure
- Obesity
- High cholesterol

In 1995 over 80% of the adult Australian population had at least one of the cardiovascular risk factors listed above.

How many Australians does it affect?

In 2001, an estimated 3.2 million Australians, or 17% of the population, had cardiovascular conditions. Hypertensive disease (high blood pressure) was the most common condition for both males and females, reported by 10% of the population.

The prevalence of cardiovascular conditions increases dramatically with age. For example, more than 62% of people aged 75 and over had a cardiovascular condition in 2001 compared with around 23% of those aged 45-54 years.

What treatments are available?

There is a multitude of pharmacological treatments available to treat various cardiovascular disorders.

Pfizer Australia has an extensive portfolio of cardiovascular medications that includes medicines for modifying cholesterol levels, controlling high blood pressure, and modifying blood clotting.

In addition, there are a number of exciting cardiovascular drugs in development that look to expand the current treatments available for heart failure, hypertension and cholesterol management. ■

Special thanks to Pfizer Australia, a long standing Partner in Heart Health for this article.

Welcome to the New Year Edition

Happy New Year and welcome to the first edition of 2008.

It is normally around this time of the year that one takes stock of the excesses over the holiday period. Therefore if you are finding your summer clothes are not fitting as well as they did prior to Xmas then it is time to take stock and act! So exercise shoes out of the cupboard and back to a healthy walking/exercise program.

As some of you are aware 2007 brought considerable change with many of the team deciding to move on. Congratulations to Angela Douglas who has been offered a position at the University of Wollongong supervising exercise physiology students. Earlier on in the year we said out farewells to Karen, Rebecca and Nicole.

In March of this year we will also see Christine Brunsch leaving for awhile to have her third child. Good luck Chris you may need it with three little rascals to contend with!

However change often means a breath of fresh air and we are delighted with our new addition to the team Daniel Hollams. Daniel hails from Perth and comes with a wealth of knowledge and new ideas for re-invigorating the classes. As the new Pulsers program supervisor, he is also open to suggestions from our regular band of Pulsers members.

The NSCEC headquarters has been housed in Vindin House for nearly nine years now.

However 2008 will see a significant move as part of the redevelopment plan for Royal North Shore Hospital.

Therefore in June we will be leaving our old "home" for new premises in the UTS building where we will be housed until such time as the redevelopment is completed.

Still no air-conditioning but lots of fans!!

All our operations are up and running smoothly as of the 7th January other than our Pulsers classes which restarted on the 4th February.

Finally I would like to sincerely thank our loyal band of driving volunteers. All former NSCEC graduates, they offer some of their free time to drive our patients to and from our programs at a time when they are either unable to drive or have no family to assist with transport.

We are currently looking to boost our volunteer driving pool, so if you feel you could spare approximately two hours a fortnight please telephone the NSCEC on: 9926 6560.

As usual you will find lots of interesting and informative articles to read in this edition.

Vanessa Baker



■ Vanessa Baker, Nurse Manager, North Shore Cardiovascular Education Centre.



Major sponsor of cardiac rehabilitation and education programs at RNSH.

Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator (ICD) Support Group

Sponsored in 2008 by:
Boston Scientific, St Jude, Medtronic, Biotronik

The ICD Support Group is coordinated by the NSCEC.

The Group's primary aim is to provide ongoing education, information and support for ICD patients and their families.

Meetings are held 4 times a year at the Royal North Shore Hospital and include an education session with light refreshments provided.

All ICD patients, their families and friends are welcome.

Contact: Ann Kirkness 9926 6560

Our sincere thanks to: Boston Scientific, St Jude, Medtronic and Biotronik for their ongoing financial and educational support of the ICD Support Group in 2008.

North Shore Cardiovascular Education Centre

Office Hours:
Monday – Friday
8.30am – 4.30pm

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NSW 2065

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(02) 9926 8286

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(02) 9926 7844

Email:
vbaker@nscceh.
health.nsw.gov.au

How heart patient Sue Ewart rebuilt her life after life threatening surgery



■ Heart operation survivor, Sue Ewart, who looks for magic moments in every day of her second chance at life.

WHEN SUE EWART WAS RUSHED TO THE ROYAL NORTH SHORE HOSPITAL COMPLAINING OF SEVERE CHEST PAINS, DOCTORS WERE AT A LOSS TO KNOW EXACTLY WHAT WAS HAPPENING. THAT WAS UNTIL HER AORTA – THE BODY'S LARGEST ARTERY LOCATED ON THE LEFT SIDE OF THE HEART — EXPLODED ON THE OPERATING TABLE.

In the last edition of *Take Heart Newsletter*, Sue gave an account of the lead up to that eventful day which began several days earlier when she was first admitted.

In Part Two of Sue Ewart's story in this edition of *Take Heart*, she tells about her life after that dramatic life-threatening event.

Did your life change after your heart incident?

I made a conscious effort to look at and to make changes in my life. In 101 ways! I looked at how I needed to re-direct my mind in a different direction first of all. I looked at my weight, I looked at food, I looked at exercise and I chose to make a difference to not only my physical well being but also to my spiritual one.

Did you get worried about what the future might hold?

Initially yes, and I still do occasionally now. But I have such faith and confidence in my doctors and the continual checks they do for me that any real fears are on the backburner. I am getting to know my body really well because of the seriousness of what happened. I do not dwell on it all the time as that to me would be negative! Today it is all positive.

Did you find yourself getting depressed or anxious?

Depression? Yes that crept up on me... particularly as my body was and still is to a degree, in shock. I take a small dose of medication as the processing goes on and I will be in a good place when I stop the medication and work through any issues that

may still be lurking there. Anxious? Yes because initially I did not have much information. The utmost faith I have in my cardiothoracic surgeon, Dr John Brereton, helps immensely even though I know it could happen to me again. I thank the North Shore Cardiovascular Education Centre team too. My GP, Dr Catherine Scot, is also wonderfully supportive and caring.

Talking to you today, you are such a vibrant and energetic person. What keeps you going?

I work on it. For me on this particular issue, getting depressed or scared would be about something I don't understand and if that was the case, I would go and get information, ask for help and process it so the reality would be manageable. Again, the faith and trust in my medical team is paramount.

My life is all positive. I have, to the best of my ability, emptied myself of any negativity and now bathe myself in peace and serenity. Truly, the roses smell lovely!

What does each day hold for you now?

What keeps me motivated is developing my ability to go gently through my day. I seek to become aware of enjoying each day and the simple things. I steer well clear of any negativity and it is amazing how one can do so if one chooses to. I look for beautiful moments in my day: 101 of them. This is an important part of my healing... my getting well... an important part of the journey I am on. If I wake in the night, I listen to how beautiful the silence is. I love sitting out the back of my home

with a book but also watching equally, the birds in the garden, all the different colour greens of the leaves in the trees. I eagerly look forward to the next visit with my family and especially my grandson. Many things motivate and inspire me throughout the day.

What tips would you give to people who are about to have a heart procedure?

Find out exactly what is wrong, digest what the doctors are telling you, go away and think about it, discuss it with family, write down all the questions and put all your faith and trust in medical science

and the doctors. Choose to have a positive attitude and rid your life of negative thoughts, people and situations. Cardiac rehab is absolutely essential. Look at making changes in your life. It's not the end of the world to have had a heart procedure... it's just a new beginning. Live your life as gloriously as you can. ■

Sue Ewart has become a keen advocate for heart health and personal wellbeing, she regularly attends the Foundation's events and recently shared her story at the Women's Heart Health Lunch.

"I SEEK TO BECOME AWARE OF ENJOYING EACH DAY AND THE SIMPLE THINGS. I STEER WELL CLEAR OF ANY NEGATIVITY".

Sue Ewart.

Lottery winner with a heart of gold

THE 2007 YEAR OF THE PIG HAS PROVED TO BE A BOON FOR MR HENG-SI HSU.

The Hong Kong-born retired IT specialist is the winner of the Take Heart Gold Bullion Lottery 1007 and won \$20,000 worth of gold bullion last December.

Soon after receiving news that he won, the former Royal North Shore Hospital's cardiac patient telephoned to say that he and his wife would donate half of it back to the Foundation.

It was his gift to the Foundation on the cusp of the 2008 Chinese new year, which started on February 7.

"On behalf of the Foundation, and our researchers we extend a big heart thank you to Heng-si and his wife for this generous donation," the Foundation's CEO, Derek Minett, said.

Mr Hsu bought tickets in the lottery to support the Foundation after having a stent inserted by the cardiac team at the Royal North Shore Hospital.

"My brother passed away with heart disease, so when I started getting tingling sensations in my toes and fingers, particularly after exercising, I went for a check up and they discovered the blockage.

"I am OK now but do lots of walking, swimming and watch my diet. I just keep things simple," he said.

Gung hay fat choy! (Which is a Cantonese new year greeting wishing you prosperity.) ■



■ New Fundraising Manager John Shaw thanks Take Heart lottery winner, Mr Heng-si Hsu, who donated half his winnings back to the Foundation.

Tickets for the Foundation's new \$20,000 Share Portfolio Lottery are now available.

You can buy them over the telephone by calling the Foundation on 1800 999 060 or visiting our website www.heartresearch.com.au

2007 Annual Report

North Shore Heart Research Foundation's 2007 Annual Report is now available electronically through our website www.heartresearch.com.au.

The report highlights our supporters and activities while detailing the ongoing projects of our researchers. ■



AVOCADO AND CORN DIP WITH SPICY BBQ PRAWNS

SUMMER JUST BEGS FOR HEALTHY, REFRESHING AND TASTY SNACKS – ENTREES AND SIDE DISHES THAT USE THE PLETHORA OF FRESH PRODUCE. SALADS AND DIPS ARE LIGHT AND SIMPLE TO PREPARE DURING OUR HOT SUMMER MONTHS.

Remember to be heart healthy. Substitute low fat ingredients in salads and dips. Low fat sour cream and mayonnaise can be substituted for full fat versions, and low-fat plain yogurt can also be used in most recipes with excellent results.

Here is a simple but flexible summer recipe that can be made up as a snack, a lunch, or an entrée to a dinner or as a side dish to a main course.

Serves: 4

Prep time: 15 mins

Cooking time: 10 mins

Ingredients

2 Avocados

1 small red capsicum

½ bunch fresh shallots

1 bunch coriander leaves

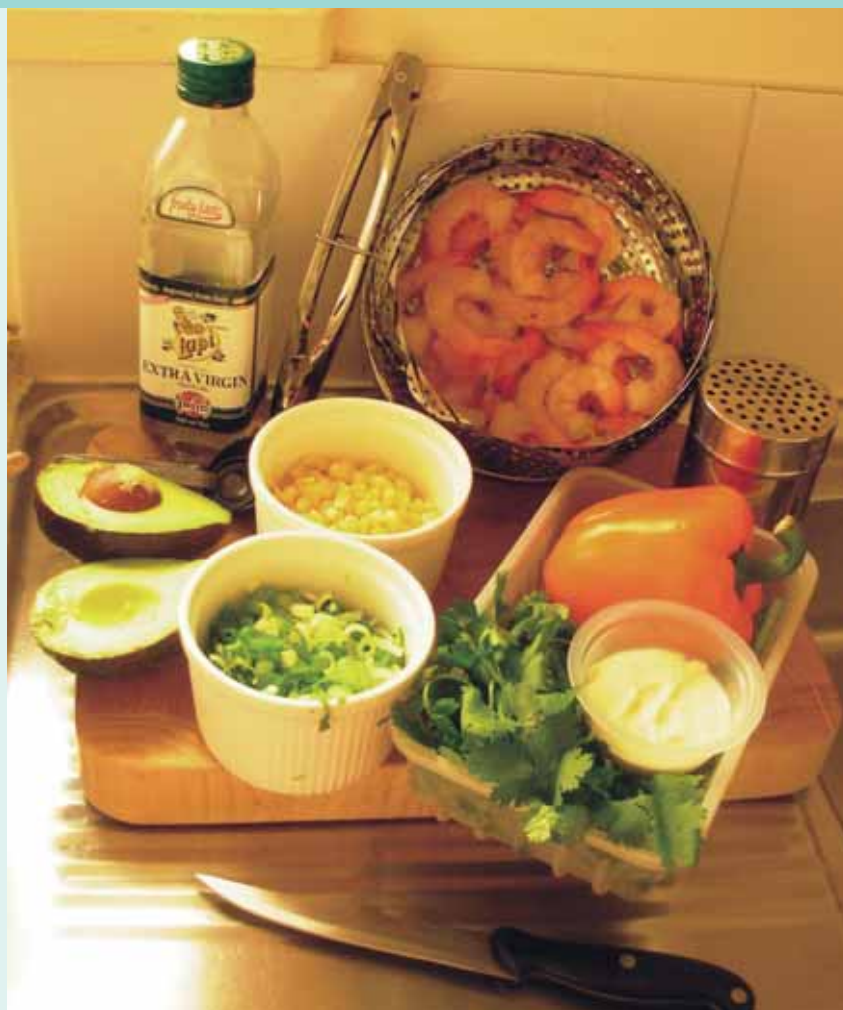
1 tblsp light sour cream

1 tsp Tabasco, to taste

2 cobs of fresh corn blanched

20-24 green prawns (approx 1kg)

1 tbs cayenne pepper



Method

1. Heat frypan, wok or BBQ over high heat. Add the blanched, corn kernels removed from cob and cook until golden. Remove from heat and allow to cool.
2. Meanwhile, combine the avocado and the finely chopped shallots, coriander, light sour cream, Tabasco sauce and lemon juice in a blender or food processor. Process until coarsely mixed. Place in a serving bowl and stir in diced red capsicum and corn.
3. Now for the prawns. Preheat a frying pan, wok or BBQ on high. Coat the shelled, de-veined prawns in cayenne pepper, cook the prawns over a high heat.
4. Serve with the avocado & corn dip. (If you are allergic to prawns or they are not available, the dip is delicious eaten with crackers or corn chips).

This dip is delicious served with carrots or celery sticks or spread on toasted Turkish bread.

Recipe reviewed by Louise Robinson from the Department of Nutrition at the Royal North Shore Hospital.