

# The Roden Report



Winter 2010 Issue 7

*When there is no-one else to help*

## Sir Roden & Lady Cutler Foundation

Our Foundation began as the 'Home and Away' project of the Kings Cross Rotary Club in July 1999. Two years later in March 2001, it became a charity operating the 'Pick Me Up' service with Christopher Williams and Peter Porteous, the only two remaining Rotarians.

In February 2002, Sir Roden Cutler passed away. Through our Patron Alan Jones, Sir Roden's widow, Lady Joan Cutler, got together with Christopher and arranged for the charity to take over Sir Roden's wheelchair vehicle.

Lady Cutler began attending events. After some months and discussions she gave her blessing to the charity being renamed in Sir Roden's honour.

Since March 2003, Lady Cutler's contribution as Principal Advisor and Board Member impacted more and more favourably on the charity with each passing year.

In 2009, the Board decided to recognise Lady Cutler's immense personal input by changing the name to Sir Roden and Lady Cutler Foundation.

### MY LIFE: Beryl Rutter

The doctor this time had asked her to have an ultrasound along with a mammogram. Beryl Rutter, 83, was tired of having these regular tests, but decided to comply with her doctor's request. The diagnosis was breast cancer.

"Don't think you are ever too old for a mammogram. I had not felt a lump before, but thanks to an early diagnosis and surgery, all is well now", says Beryl.

It was soon after her surgery at St Vincent's Private that she was told to undergo Radiotherapy for the next five weeks. She was concerned about commuting daily to and from the hospital when the nurse put her in touch with Sir Roden and Lady Cutler Foundation's Pick Me Up service.

"I must say my trips to the hospital were most enjoyable. All the drivers were pleasant and kind. I am full of admiration for people who give up their precious time to help others", says Beryl, who has been a teacher for 38 years and retired as principal of Vacluse Primary school. Since her retirement she has been doing voluntary work for the past 20 years.

"I have been reasonably lucky in life and felt a sense of duty to give something back to the community. I love being with people. I did a variety of voluntary things, for example conducting quizzes, at St Luke's hospital", says

Beryl, who has been having problems walking in recent years.

"I bought a mobility scooter, but for some reason I wasn't confident driving it and felt rather insecure on it. It was parked in my front verandah and I would look for excuses not to use it. I was thinking of placing an advertisement to sell it as it was something I wouldn't miss and it was "money" unused", says Beryl, who went to Sydney Girls High during the War years.

"Sir Roden was always our hero and then last December the Charity arranged transport for me for Radiotherapy appointments. I thought it would be worthwhile donating the scooter to the Sir Roden and Lady Cutler Foundation. I did want the ownership of the scooter to remain with the Charity so they could lend it to people who needed it the most and would use it", says Beryl, who thinks it has all been a wonderful coincidence.



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## Thousands join Wheelies for a vegemite roll

In a record-making trek across Australia, a group of volunteers from the Sir Roden & Lady Cutler Foundation are pushing a wheelchair 4500km from Perth to Sydney to highlight the transportation difficulties faced by the aged and disabled.

In Beaufort and nearby Chute, the birthplace of Vegemite inventor Cyril Callister, the BigRoll will be joined by hundreds of local school children and community members for a Vegemite-themed BBQ held at the Goldfields Reserve. The spread was prepared by The Australian Women's Weekly Test Kitchen Director Pamela Clark.

The 200-strong turnout will celebrate Cyril Callister's remarkable invention in Vegemite, and mark some 3,300km travelled since the troupe set off from Perth back in April. And the locals will be joined by thousands of well-wishers across Australia – including state parliamentarians, mining communities in the north, Australian Hotel Association members, members of the Armed Forces, and many others.

The charity's supporters will be tuning in via 'wheelchair cam' streamed to the website – [www.thebigroll.org.au](http://www.thebigroll.org.au)

Funds raised will go towards growing the Sir Roden & Lady Cutler Foundation's fleet of CarerCars and their Pick Me Up Service which offers free transportation to and from urgent medical appointments for the aged and disabled who have nowhere else to turn.

The Wheelchair Roll continues to be a unique program that not only helps in country communities, but it also raises the profile of the charity. It builds on the profile that Sir Roden himself set years ago when he travelled extensively as Governor of NSW. He always showed concern, compassion and support for local community projects and this continues with our more annual Wheelchair Roll.

## What's On...

August 15: The BigRoll 2010 returns to Sydney. Please consider lending the Rolling Bones volunteers a helping hand by making a donation. For details on their journey and how to donate to the cause, please visit [www.thebigroll.org.au](http://www.thebigroll.org.au)

## Your Say...

I have much pleasure in enclosing my donation of \$200 in recognition of the wonderful work your organisation does for frail people like my husband and me. Keep up the excellent work!

*June V Owen*

Just a small thank you for all your help in driving me to my hospital appointments. A Big Thank you to all the drivers. It is much appreciated

*Eileen O'Keefe*

## From the Desktop...

**Share your stories with us:** If you are a passenger or past passenger, who would like to share his/her story with others through the Roden Report, please email us on: [neena@india-voice.com](mailto:neena@india-voice.com) or call 02 9362 4430

**Acknowledgement:** We would like to sincerely thank all our volunteer drivers who make it all happen.

A Great Big Thank You to Beryl Rutter for donating a mobility scooter to the Foundation.

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## Pick Me Up Service

The charity has seen a significant increase in the number of people seeking the Pick Me Up (PMU) service.

"In 2008 -09, the charity received 3180 bookings and made 2802 trips to hospitals in the eastern suburbs with an occasional trip to the Westmead Children's Hospital and other specialist centers. The demand for the service spiralled in 2009-10 with 5401 bookings and 4972 actual trips", informs Phillip Beeston, Coordinator of PMU.

"The demand for the service has been steadily growing because there are more treatments available and more people are at home rather than in institutional care or hospitals. In May this year, we made the highest number of trips ever in a month with 501 pick up and drop offs", says Phillip, who joined the Charity 18 months ago after volunteering as a driver for 2 ½ years.

The charity currently has four vehicles with three vehicles on road everyday and one on standby for last minute emergencies. While the larger van can transport six passengers, the three smaller vehicles can take three passengers. Two of these vehicles have a wheelchair seat, which swivels out, making it easier for immobile patients to get in and out of the vehicle.

"Passengers using our service sometimes travel in from around the state and we collect them from the Airport and Central Station. The majority of our passengers live in the Eastern Suburbs from the Harbour to La Perouse. Their ages range from a few weeks to 95 year olds. Most trips are to and from the several hospitals including Prince of Wales, St Vincent's, Royal Prince Alfred, and others throughout the area. We also make regular trips to specialist centers and the Dental Hospital," says Phillip.

There is a pool of 18 to 20 volunteer drivers and on any given day the charity has four/ five drivers driving an average a four hour shift



*"Yesterday is but a dream,  
Tomorrow is only a vision.  
But today well lived makes every yesterday a dream of happiness,  
and every tomorrow a vision of hope."*



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## Please help us to continue helping others

Sir Roden Cutler Charities helps when there is no-one else to help. To make a donation, please call or fill out the following and post a cheque/money order or send us your credit card details:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Enclosed is my cheque. Please accept my donation of:**

- \$20       \$50
- \$100     My choice \$.....

**Credit Card Details. Please debit my:**

- Mastercard     Visa     Amex

Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_

Card number: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Bequest:** Solicitors have contacted us because their clients want to make a bequest to us in their will. Please consider asking your solicitor how you too can remember us in your will. Call us for information.

## Meet the Editor...

I am a Sydney-based foreign correspondent, writing for national and international media. In a career spanning over 25 years, I have worked in India, the United Kingdom and Australia, reporting on a range of issues from health & environment, crime & law to politics & development.

I have always enjoyed producing newsletters for its personal feel. It is a medium that connects people, besides providing information that directly affects us. I had poliomyelitis at the age of three, and like many of you, I have encountered falls, pain, frustration and have found great relief with regular therapy. If it hadn't been for the Charity, I would still be spending three hours, waiting for buses to get to and from the hospital.

This newsletter will be a platform to share your views and experiences. In life, we learn from each other and sharing is part of the healing process. We look forward to hearing your stories and sharing it with the wider community through our newsletter. Look out for *The Roden Report*, it will make a perfect companion on the pillow, especially during those long winter nights, when sleep sneaks in only slowly.

All the very best!  
Neena Bhandari

## Did you know...

*There are significant differences in the benefits paid by private health funds.*

*To help decide which policy is best suited to your needs and budget click [www.iselect.com.au](http://www.iselect.com.au)*

*It compares the health funds and shows the best possible option based on your needs.*

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