

The Roden Report



Spring 2008 Issue 8

When there is no-one else to help

A Toast to Carers

As black clouds descended on the Sydney skyline, an array of stars from all walks of life raised a toast to carers and those they care for, at the 2008 Sir Roden Cutler Medal Presentation Dinner hosted at the Royal Jockey Club in Randwick on August 30.

The 2008 medal was awarded to Mrs Roslyn Packer, AO, for her continued commitment to charitable causes amidst wide applause from the 500-odd supporters of the Charity who were present.

"I would like to thank all at Sir Roden Cutler Charities for honouring me with this medal – the work they do for those in need in our community is truly inspiring and I am proud to be associated with their cause", Mrs Packer said.

Across Australia, 2.6 million carers provide support to family members, partners or friends and almost 500,000 of these are primary carers, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

The evening kicked off with long-time and new
Continued on page 2...



The 2008 Sir Roden Cutler Medal recipient Mrs Roslyn Packer, AO.

Inside

Saluting those who do so much for others *Page 2*

In Search of a Carer's Story *Page 2*

My Life: Tania Hayes (continued) *Page 3*

The Sir Roden Cutler Wheelchair Roll *Page 4*

A Great Big Thank You to City Tattersalls Club, City of Sydney RSL & Community Club Ltd, NSW Leagues Club and Woollahra Council *Page 6*

What's On & Your Say *Page 7*

Walkabout Mondays *Page 8*

Cleanfitt Australia *Page 9*

From the Desktop *Page 10*

MY LIFE: Tania Hayes

*At the Sir Roden Cutler Medal Presentation dinner, **Tania Hayes**, shared her family's personal story and her own journey to becoming a carer.*

Eleven years ago when I was just 22, I thought I had my future mapped out just how I wanted it to be. I was young, in love, financially establishing myself and enjoying my career.

Then, out of the blue, just a few months short of my wedding day, my fiancé Warren was diagnosed with a life threatening 8cm brain tumour. This tumour

was so large and dangerous that it was tangled around his brain stem and all the vital blood vessels and nerves, and at any moment, Warren's life could come to a sudden end.

From the moment that Warren fell sick, I gave up my job and the carefree life that I knew to be by his side in the hope that this would pull him through.

Together we faced an agonising series of medical battles, mishaps and close calls as Warren was hospitalised for a
Continued on page 3

Saluting those who do so much for others

...Continued from page 1: supporters of the charity engaging in intense conversation as a sumptuous five course meal with great Australian wines was served, topped up with a selection of the best cheese.

Suits, silks and sequins added colour to a night, when one was treated to a moving narration by Jack Thompson of "The Man from Snowy River" fame; an exclusive preview of Baz Luhrmann's much anticipated epic film, 'Australia', and performers from the cast Priscilla Queen of the Desert Musical singing with full-



throated ease, setting the mood for the dancing finale.

A high-tech device on each table made it easier to bid for the truly amazing "Wish list". The proceeds from the auction would contribute towards those in need, including our nation's forgotten carers and those they care for.

Carers in Australia contributed an estimated 1.2 billion hours of care in 2005. This is the annual equivalent of \$30.5 billion of formal aged and disability care services in Australia. (Access Economics 2005).

In Search of a Carer's Story: From March to May 2008, Sir Roden Cutler Charities had launched the 'Search for a Carer's Story', a national campaign acknowledging and recognizing the outstanding role carers play. Entries were accepted until August 31 and the Charity received many entries from across New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and Australian Capital Territory.

The 'Search for a Carer's Story' has been an opportunity to give a voice to carers all around Australia. Each application will receive a Sir Roden Cutler Charities Medal and a Certificate of Appreciation, which will be posted during Carers' Week in October.

A panel of judges will choose from each state/territory a maximum of four inspiring carer stories that arouse the judges' collective compassion and admiration for the outstanding role these carers play in looking after their loved ones. One story will be chosen as the Sir Roden Cutler 2008 National Carer's Story of the Year. The winner will be announced during The Carers' Week held from October 19 to 25.

Carers Australia events: National Carers Week, focusing on the theme.....*because I care*, will be held between October 19 and 25.

Carers Virtual 2020, based on the 2020 Australia summit, will be encouraging carers and members of the public to develop big ideas on a range of carer issues. Submissions to *Carers 2020* will be compiled into a report and presented to the government at the national launch of the Carers Week on October 19, 2008.

For more details, click on www.carers2020.com.au

Bring it! Young Carers Forum will be held over two days at Parliament House in Canberra during November 2008. Besides focusing on latest research, the Forum will feature workshops involving service providers, policymakers and young carers.

The selected group of young carers, who attend the Forum, will also participate in a leadership program to help them become mentors for other young carers and to represent young carers in public. For further information on Carers Australia events, contact Alison Kemmis on 02 6122 9900.

The Roden Report

“If you believe in the love you share, nothing in life is ever impossible”

Continued from page 1: total of 446 days. During that time Warren endured twenty different operations, suffered from infected brain shunts, fungal and bacterial meningitis, golden staph, pneumonia, a deep vein thrombosis blood clot and spasmodic breathing which saw him rushed back onto life support. On more than one occasion I was advised that Warren would never breathe independently again, and was urged by doctors to end his life by switching off his life support. However, I refused to give up.



Towards the end of Warren's long illness, the doctors recommended that he should be sent to a nursing home. The thought of my once vibrant and athletic young fiancé being put in a nursing home after everything he had been through broke my heart.

So on the 10th of July, 1998, I decided to discharge Warren from hospital to bring him home. I wanted to become his full-time carer, and I was prepared to happily give up my life if it meant Warren could have a life in society too.

On coming home from hospital the months and years passed by, rehabilitation quickly became a way of life for us. I started with the simplest of tasks to teach Warren to learn to talk, eat and move once more, before progressing onto more challenging exercises of learning to stand and then walk with assistance again. And I am proud to say that over the years our determination to beat the odds has paid off. Warren

has come back to life. Although Warren is fully dependent on me for every task in life, today he has a better quality of life than any doctor could have ever expected.

And who would have thought that four years after coming home from hospital we were finally able to celebrate our long delayed wedding and then three years ago we were blessed with a beautiful baby boy name Josh. Josh is the precious reward we have received after a difficult 11-year caring journey together, proving that if you believe in the love you share, nothing in life is ever impossible.

I love my life and I love my family. Being a carer for Warren is truly the most rewarding and fulfilling job I could ever imagine doing!



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The Roden Cutler Wheelchair Roll around NSW

The Wheelchair Roll commenced in May following the same route as last year. Kicking off at Gosford, we proceeded to Newcastle, Port Macquarie, Macksville, Nambucca Heads, Coffs Harbour, Grafton, Yamba, Evans Head, Lismore, Kyogle and Casino. We then headed through Bathurst, Orange, Cowra, Forbes, Parkes, Dubbo, Mudgee, Gilgandra, Narrabri, Carinda, Coonamble and Bourke. Next will be Broken Hill, Deniliquin, Hay, Berrigan, Conargo, Jerilderie, Narrandera, Corowa, Wagga, Cootamundra, Gundagai, Tumbarumba, Cooma, Bombala, Narooma, Moruya, Yass, Goulburn, Batemans Bay, Nowra, Kiama, Wollongong, Bowral then and finally expected home sometime in November.



Wayne Bensley, our Wheelchair Roll Coordinator, is still working tirelessly putting the event together. He has had assistance with the travelling this year from Vincent and Benedicte Zurstrassen, who travelled through the Central West and then on to a Wheelchair Sports Expo in Albury. Also involved for the first time have been Jenny and Michael Bradley, who travelled out west to Narrabri, Carinda and Coonamble. Everybody who has been involved in the event again this year continually comments on the lovely people they have met along the way.



Thus far, we have assisted 13 community groups or individuals during our travels. The sponsorship funds have gone towards diverse community nominated projects and people. These include community transport support; trust funds for accident victims; purchase of medication and medical equipment; support for localised treatment and rehabilitation for needy children and the purchase of a specialised equipment (eg. shower chair, car seat, a communication headset, a video camera) to help in programs of support for young, elderly and mobility impaired/disabled people. Each of these projects are greatly welcomed and appreciated. They provide significant assistance to the beneficiaries and their carers thereby making their life happier and easier.

Continued on page 5...

When there is no-one else to help

The Roden Report

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Continued from page 4: Unfortunately the Lime Taxi had to be returned, but we have had an opportunity to use the most amazing new import into Australia, a wheelchair accessible vehicle from Al Palmer. It is a Toyota Porte – small yet roomy and very economical to run. There are about six different versions of this car available and the most amazing thing is that the passenger's seat doubles as a wheelchair that can be used away from the vehicle. More information on this amazing car is on www.alpalmer.com. Al has also loaned us a specially set up van with a side access seat for another journey.

The Wheelchair Roll continues to be a unique program that not only helps in country communities, but it also raises the profile of Sir Roden Cutler Charities. 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.



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The Roden Report

A Great Big Thank You to...

City Tattersalls Club, City of Sydney RSL & Community Club Ltd. and NSW Leagues Club: A combined total of over \$28,000 has been granted to our Pick Me Up service to help people living in the City of Sydney Council area. In the last financial year, Sir Roden Cutler Charities received over 1,800 bookings from the City of Sydney alone. This equated to 70 per cent of those we help through this service.

Fortunately, we have been once again supported by City Tattersalls Club and City of Sydney RSL through the CDSE scheme, which is a shared State Government-Club Industry program, funded by a 1.5 per cent gaming machine tax rebate provided by the State Government to those registered clubs with gaming machine profits in excess of \$1 million per annum.

This is the first year that NSW Leagues Club has supported our Pick Me Up program.

The Clubs in the City of Sydney have been able to help between 20 and 25 different community organisations assisting residents in the area and beyond. However, the clubs have pointed out that they have been compelled to reduce funding towards the community development scheme following legal changes coming into effect in NSW.



Charity's Christopher Williams receiving the grant from Woollahra Council.

We seek this opportunity to profusely thank John Healey, recently retired Chairman of City Tattersalls Club, who has supported the Charity's Pick Me Up program for many years.

Woollahra Council: Many thanks to Woollahra Council for two separate funding approvals. One is for the cost of producing our quarterly 'The Roden Report' newsletter for the next 12 months and the second grant is for 'lunch money' for our tireless drivers and the purchase of two hands-free mobile phone devices. The Charity very much appreciates the gesture.

Special Circumstances Grant Scheme funding

Over the past three months, grants have been awarded for additional learning, part funding for a person with severe back injury, respite for a person whose carer needed an operation, small items of medical equipment in situations where those needing them could in no way afford their costs, walking equipment for a young boy with Cerebral Palsy and transport costs assistance for young children and/or a person living in a nursing home.

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What's On...

Free Dementia Information Seminar:

Understand the physiological processes that affect the brain function and its role in communication; what elements influence behaviour; Effective communication techniques and strategies; Problem Solving Process; and Future decisions you need to know about from professors, doctors and specialist nurses. No booking is required. Register 15 minutes prior to commencement.

Monday, September 29 from 7 to 9 pm; October 20 from 10.30 am to 1 pm; October 27 from 7 to 9 pm
WHERE: Little Sisters of the Poor – Auditorium, 70 Market Street, Corner of Avoca Street, Randwick. Refreshments provided and there is parking on site. If respite is needed to attend this seminar call Carer Respite Centre on 9599 0233 or for all other matters call Dementia Advisory Service on 8382 1921.

Health Promotion 2008: Falls Prevention group meets from October 14 to November 18 at Bondi Junction Waverley RSL Club, 1-9 Gray St, Bondi Junction.

Cancer myths explained seminar on October 13 at

Day Centre, War Memorial Hospital, 125 Birrell Street, Waverley.

Driving and scooters seminar on November 3 at Day Centre, War Memorial Hospital, 125 Birrell Street, Waverley.

Care at the end of life seminar on November 20 at Waverley Seniors Centre, 31-33 Spring Street, Bondi Junction. For Information and bookings call Catriona Beaumont 93690215

Senior Insight Wellness Centre is a privately owned therapeutical respite centre for seniors. It gives carers, who are looking after elderly family members, much needed respite.

It also allows elderly people a fantastic opportunity to create new social relationships as well as the chance to participate in fun therapeutical programs and activities.

Senior Insight also provides meals and transport to and from the centre and will run four hours each day on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 10.00am-2.00pm. To register your interest for this valuable service, call 9387 6688.

Your Say...

Dear Sirs,

I am writing on behalf of S to say thank you so much for your generous donation. We were extremely surprised and grateful to be told that S had received funding through your charity to get him a treadmill.

S was diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy at 12 months of age. He has had ongoing difficulties and we have had to pursue a lot of information and therapy strategies to help him. We have been involved with The Developing Foundation since S's diagnosis.

We have continually accessed health professionals such as Paediatricians, Ophthalmologists,

Speech, OT, Physio, Neuro Developmental Therapy (The Developing Foundation), Dieticians and Chiropractors to name a few.

S's struggles are ongoing and he will require a wide range of therapies throughout his childhood. The donation of the treadmill will help S to increase his exercise tolerance as he feels fatigued easily. S started walking when he was two. Getting around has been a struggle for him as he has had trouble with uneven surfaces.



Regular walking will train his muscles and he will be able to cope better with the every day tasks of getting around.

We sincerely thank you and we will keep you posted about S's progress and the difference your donation has made to his life.

Kind regards, **TVG – Qld.**

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The Roden Report

When her name slips your mind.....



One evening, an elderly man was invited to an old friend's home for dinner. He was impressed by the way his buddy preceded every request to his wife with endearing terms such as: Honey, My Love, Darling, Sweetheart, Pumpkin, etc. The couple had been married almost 70 years and clearly, they were still very much in love. While the wife was in the kitchen, the man leaned over and said to his host, "I think it's wonderful that after all these years you still address your wife with those loving pet names". The old man hung his head. "I have to tell you the truth," he said, "Her name slipped my mind about 10 years ago and I'm scared to death to ask her what it is!"

Please help us to continue helping others

Sir Roden Cutler Charities helps when there is on-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: _____

Donations can be made online through www.ourcommuity.com.au/giving/appeal_details.form?appealid=1381

Bequest: Solicitors have already 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. Please call for

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, email: info@sirrodencutlercharities.org.au or call 9362 4430.

Acknowledgement: We would like to sincerely thank all our volunteer drivers who make it all happen. Many thanks to Neena Bhandari for the time and support she has given in editing and producing the newsletter.

Your copy of the Newsletter: For the sake of costs, if you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please let us know on 9362 4430.

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