

# QUEST

Winter 2010

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Royal Hobart Hospital Research Foundation

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Our QUEST is for knowledge that will lead to better healthcare and medical services for the people of Tasmania. You can help us by supporting our research efforts with a gift, bequest or donation.

Each year the Foundation funds research into a variety of disorders affecting the lifestyle and well-being of the people of Tasmania, including cancer, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases.

This research is undertaken by doctors, nurses, surgeons, anaesthetists, scientists, pathologists and many other health professionals at the Royal Hobart Hospital, and the University of Tasmania's medical school and Menzies Institute.

Many of our researchers are nationally-renowned in their fields, whilst others have achieved international acclaim for their efforts. All of them are working to improve the quality of healthcare for Tasmanians.

Your gift, bequest or donation can be vital in ensuring that this QUEST continues to provide benefits for Tasmanians, now and into the future.



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## "Coffee with Kevin"



Prof. Ray Lowenthal

*Research Foundation Board member and leading oncologist Prof Ray Lowenthal relates a recent and most unexpected involvement at the (then) peak level of our nation's political system:*

When the call came to my iPhone from a blocked number I diverted it rather than have it interrupt my Wednesday morning hospital ward round. A few minutes later came the unexpected message "Please call Corri in the Prime Minister's office". So I called several times only to be asked to leave a message. Frustrating.

Then Corri called back to tell me that the PM would be in Hobart that evening and wanted to meet some AMA office bearers. Would I be available to have coffee with him at 5pm? Would I what?

Some quick phone calls to reorganise my afternoon private rooms patient

list, a call to Michael Aizen to ask him to join me in his role as AMA State President-elect, a quick lunch, start on the patients who remained on the list, then a call from another of the PM's minders to tell me that the PM was running a bit late and would 6pm be OK? Well at least the pressure was off for the waiting patients. The meeting would be in a small coffee shop in Salamanca Square, there would just be four of us, Michael and myself, the PM and his health adviser.

5.30pm and I meet up with the minder. 'The PM is still a little late'. Where is he now? In the air! He will be coming straight from the airport. So Michael and I sit at a window table in Cuiccio's discussing tactics. Intriguingly when informed by us who is coming, it turns out that none of the waiting staff of the coffee shop had been warned.

A few minutes after 6pm and the PM walks in, a quick introduction, we sit down and immediately he is chatting about the last few days of intense negotiation with the state and territory leaders about his health plan. He is very fired up and keen to explain it to us. The AMA is very important, he has a lot of respect for the AMA he says. Clearly he wants us on side.

There really are only four of us. A young man comes and takes our coffee orders. The PM drinks ordinary tea using a tea strainer. I have a chai. We are offered the dinner menu but the PM says 'we're not eating'. The menus are removed.

Michael and I put a number of matters of concern to him. Doesn't his new system run the risk of increasing rather than decreasing the bureaucracy by adding a third layer, the networks? Will

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## Kylie Kwong breakfast



Kylie Kwong)

With special thanks to Penguin Australia and Papillon Health & Beauty Centre, the speaker at our August Motors' breakfast is one of the most recognised and loved "celebrity chefs" in Australia, the hugely popular writer Kylie Kwong.

Kylie is a nationally-recognised food icon as the proprietor of the celebrated Billy Kwong restaurant in Sydney, and is a passionate advocate of sustainable food and ethical eating. She is a chef who thinks globally and acts locally. Her restaurant's menu uses only local, organic and biodynamic produce, and in 2007 it became the first carbon-neutral restaurant in New South Wales, as well as winning the *Sydney Morning Herald Good Food Guide's* inaugural sustainability award in 2009.

Kylie Kwong is launching her fifth book, **It Tastes Better**, an eye-opening tribute to the dedicated people - growers, farmers, fishers and food providores behind sustainable food. She firmly believes that the wonderful food and wine that these people produce tastes better, and the book contains simple, vibrant recipes for a whole range of styles and tastes.

Kylie is the author of four other books, **Recipes and Stories, Heart and Soul, Simple Chinese Cooking**, and **My China**, and is the presenter of three television series.

Please book early for this special breakfast on 6222 8088, as it will definitely be sold out!

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the new system really stop the blame game? You know what, the PM says, 'the buck stops with muggins here'. Then he draws some diagrams with lots of boxes and arrows showing how the money will quickly pass from Canberra through a new independent (non-political) body that will disburse the funds, to the point of need.

Activity based funding has been tried before, there was lots of fudging the figures we say. 'Gaming' says the PM, showing his awareness of the jargon. "We are awake to that". And so on and so forth. We tell him that some important issues have been little mentioned in the last few days, indigenous health, research, e-health. They are all important says the PM and will be attended to, assuring us for example that Nicola Roxon is a 'zealot' for e-health. He certainly has a good understanding of the issues, you can't take that away from him.

Part way through Rudd takes out his mobile phone (was it an iPhone? – I couldn't quite tell) and says he has to send a text to his wife. The five or six young women at the next table, arriving one by one for some kind of celebratory meal, don't even seem to notice who is there, or if they do they are very discrete about it.

I recall that just up the road the satirical revue "Pennies from Kevin" is playing at the Theatre Royal starring a Kevin Rudd look-alike. According to the photo in the Mercury the following morning, the resemblance is uncanny. Perhaps the young women think it's the look-alike having coffee with three of his mates and not the real thing.

At 7pm the PM and his adviser leave quickly. When they get into the Square I note, only then, a couple of people appearing out of the shadows, presumably security, discretely in attendance. Somewhere along the line someone must have paid for our coffees but I didn't notice. No one asked me to pay anyhow! I muse that Australia really is a lucky country. In how many others would the country's leader drop into a provincial city for a coffee, just two on two, for forty-five minutes, with two of his constituents, no security in sight, ordinary people coming and going, passing right by.

On the other hand, maybe it was the Rudd look-alike we were talking to after all!

**With thanks to Ray and the AMA TasTalk newsletter**

## Vital new cancer research underway through special Research Foundation grant



*Prof. Richard Turner*

*One of the Research Foundation's most important goals is to build the scale and quality of Tasmania's medical research infrastructure.*

*This provides an opportunity for our brightest medicine and science graduates to pursue their research careers in their home state, as well as enabling the Royal Hobart Hospital and University of Tasmania to attract senior clinicians to Hobart who can carry out their research projects alongside their hospital and university roles.*

*The Research Foundation has provided a special research grant of \$70,000 to Professor Richard Turner, recently appointed Chair of Surgery at the University's Medical School, to assist with the establishment of his research program in Hobart.*

*Prof. Turner has provided us with an update on very promising progress on one of the areas of research he's undertaking:*

One of my clinical research interests made possible by the Foundation's funding is anal cancer. I was first lured into this seemingly unloved area of enquiry in my former position at Cairns Base Hospital. The director of the local Sexual Health Service basically wanted a surgeon "fall-guy" for his pilot screening program!

As with the more widely known cervical cancer, anal cancer is largely due to previous infection with the human papilloma virus or HPV. In other words, it is a cancer you can "catch". Most cases are treated by radiotherapy and chemotherapy, but if more advanced, radical surgery with permanent colostomy may be necessary.

Also like cervical cancer, anal cancer has a pre-cancerous stage or dysplasia that can be detected by a smear test. The cancer can be literally nipped in the bud, avoiding more aggressive treatments. Although rare, evidence worldwide suggests that anal cancer is on the rise due to increased population exposure to HPV.

In conjunction with the Hobart Sexual Health Service, a suite of anal cancer-related research projects has evolved over the last nine months. We are firstly examining all cases of anal cancer diagnosed in Tasmania since 1973. Preliminary analysis indicates that, despite popular belief, the majority of cases are women and they do not have HIV. Such information may help us aim screening at those most at risk.

At the same time, we are performing anal Pap smears on all those in the State with HIV to ascertain the prevalence of anal dysplasia in this group. The pilot screening program will eventually be extended to other groups such as women undergoing routine cervical Pap smears. We also plan to compare standard Pap smear cytology with so-called PCR technology, to see which is the more effective screening test.

All people currently found by our screening to have high-grade anal dysplasia are offered minor surgical treatment through the Royal Hobart Hospital. Ultimately, it is hoped that results of our research into anal cancer and dysplasia will not only enable better patient care locally, but also contribute to data being gathered elsewhere in Australia and other parts of the world.

**Richard Turner**



# RSVP



ROYAL HOBART HOSPITAL  
RESEARCH FOUNDATION

## Registration and Authority Form

First name \_\_\_\_\_

Family name \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ P/code \_\_\_\_\_

Workplace \_\_\_\_\_

Workplace Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ P/code \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

### Choice of deduction

#### 1. Deduction from pay

I authorise my payroll officer to deduct \$ \_\_\_\_\_ from my pay each pay period and forward same to the Royal Hobart Hospital Research Foundation, OR

#### 2. Periodical deduction from credit card account

I authorise the Royal Hobart Hospital Research Foundation to arrange deduction of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ from my credit card account each

month or  quarter

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

VISA  Mastercard

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

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

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Were you recommended by an existing RSVP member? If so:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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# QUEST

Winter 2010

## Healthy living



The chilly weather is well and truly with us! Winter solstice has just passed so the days will slowly get longer, but the weather continues to get colder! So how do we keep motivated, ensuring we get a good amount of daily exercise when it's cold in the morning and dark by the time we get home for work? The answer...lunchtime!

We are seeing more and more reports in the press suggesting that the majority of working Australians now eat their lunch 'al desco'! Yes like never before we are eating at our desks, rather than taking proper lunch breaks. When asked in a recent interview respondents suggested the reason for this is greater work loads

and added pressure. But the reality is if we have a proper break away from computer screens and ringing telephones we will be more focused, work efficiently and be more productive. So try and make the time and make the effort to get away from the office, stretch your legs and get some fresh air.

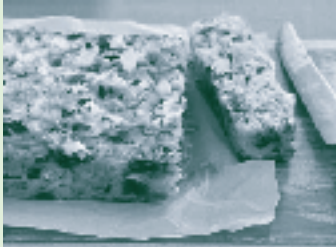
Which brings up the next point...

### what's in your lunch box???

Do you make lunches for the children but buy something for yourself on the way to work as you're grabbing your morning coffee to 'save time'? Do you nip out to the corner shop and buy hot chips or fast food, or for a healthy choice a sandwich then return to your desk to eat it? Well here is a recipe that the children will love in their lunch boxes and you won't be able to resist either, and what's brilliant is it's great as leftovers!

Serve this tasty dish straight from the oven for dinner with a salad, then wrap up any leftovers for a super-healthy lunch box filler.

## Mediterranean tuna & rice bake



### Preparation Time

10 - 15 minutes

### Cooking Time

25 minutes

### Ingredients

(serves 4)

- 225g (1 1/2 cups) cooked long-grain rice
- 1 x 185g can tuna in spring water, drained, flaked
- 70g (1/3 cup) low-fat semi-dried tomatoes, coarsely chopped
- 1 large zucchini, coarsely grated
- 2 tbs chopped fresh basil
- 75g reduced-fat feta, crumbled
- 2 eggs, lightly whisked
- Mixed salad leaves, to serve

### Method

Preheat oven to 200°C. Line a 19cm x 9cm (base measurement) loaf pan with non-stick baking paper.

Combine the rice, tuna, tomato, zucchini, basil and two-thirds of the feta in a large bowl. Add the egg and stir until well combined. Season with pepper.

Spoon the mixture into the lined pan and smooth the surface. Sprinkle with remaining feta. Bake for 20-25 minutes or until puffed and golden. Set aside for 5 minutes to cool slightly.

Slice. Serve with mixed salad leaves.

Like all recipes this is adaptable you could add grated cheddar cheese, cannellini beans, grated carrot or spring onions. Furthermore you can double the quantities for extra leftovers. Happy cooking.

## Raffle winner

On 28 May the Research Foundation's first major raffle for 2010 was drawn, and warmest congratulations to our winner - Michelle McKean of Howrah.

Michelle is pictured collecting her brand new Holden Barina 3 door hatch at Motors in Macquarie Street.

Tickets for our next big raffle are on sale from August - good luck!

