

NEWSLETTER WINTER 2016

OFFICE BEARERS

Patron: Her Excellency, The Governor of Tasmania
Professor The Honourable Kate Warner AO

President Deirdre Tuck
Vice President Greg Woods
Secretary Annette Ogilvie
Treasurer Catherine Willis

Committee:

David Asten, Norm Dean, Anne Piaszczyk, Katherine Marsden, Robert Heuke, Karen Dun, Deborah Lovell.

Executive Officer: Graeme Petterd

Website: www.leukaemia-tasmania.com.au

Email: enquiries@leukaemia-tasmania.com.au

Telephone: 0475 182 989

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The above members have been appointed to our Committee for 2016. Catherine Willis has accepted the position of Treasurer. We welcome Debbie Lovell to the committee. Norm Deane has relinquished the position of Public Officer to David Asten. Our thanks to Norm for his long term as our Public Officer.

PRESIDENT DEIRDRE TUCK OAM

Congratulations to our President Deirdre Tuck, who has been recognised in the Queen's Birthday Honours list with an OAM for service to medical research organisations and to oncology nursing. Deirdre has been involved with the Foundation since its inception when David Collins was a leukaemia patient in 1978. She has been a tireless supporter for leukaemia research, oncology services, leukaemia families and ongoing educational programs for oncology and haematology health professionals. She has been a great supporter of the DCLFT and we are delighted that she has been rewarded with an OAM. Well done Deirdre.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Our work continues to provide support to the Tasmanian community in the areas of patient welfare, professional development awards for those who work within the hospital environment, equipment for hospitals and ongoing support for research.

David Collins Leukaemia Foundation 2016 Subscriptions are now due Pensioner \$5.00 Family \$10.00

Tear off _____

The Secretary David Collins leukaemia Foundation of Tasmania GPO Box 372 Hobart 7001

Name _____

Address _____

Please find enclosed Subscription for 2016 please tick Pensioner__ \$5.00;__ Family__ \$10.00; Donation_____

DCLFT, in consultation with hospital professionals around the state, has continued to provide one off financial support to families in meeting the financial commitments associated with their illness which amounted to \$7484. David Collins House has been well utilised by patients & their families from the East, North & North West of Tasmania. We have received very complimentary feedback on the standard of accommodation & amenities following the upgrade.

During 2015, the Foundation presented six Professional Development Awards state wide to the value of \$8431. These awards enabled scientists, nurses & a social worker to attend national and international conferences and courses. They were then able to share that knowledge with their fellow workers.

Our research commitment continued during 2015, with \$30000 allocated to research conducted by Dr Adele Holloway, School of Medicine, University of Tasmania.

An anonymous benefactor donated a large sum of money to support a PhD student in the study of blood related illnesses. DCLFT and the University of Tasmania Foundation liaised in the application process, resulting in the selection of Ms Alexandra Woodworth for the David Collins Leukaemia Foundation Elite Research Scholarship. Alexandra has commenced her studies at the Medical Science Precinct of University of Tasmania in Hobart with Dr Adele Holloway as the project primary supervisor. Below is an explanation of Alexandra's research project.

Leukaemia often arises because genes involved in producing white blood cells are faulty, usually due to mutations.

A combination of two genes can (RUNX1 and ETO) result in white blood cells continuously being produced, resulting in leukaemia. For these genes to be active, they need to be 'turned on'. This is due to function of transcription factors (similar to a switch) which are controlled by 'epigenetic' factors. If these epigenetic factors can be controlled (in a treatment) the production of leukaemic cells will stop, leading to a cure. This is the aim of the project: To test if drugs that alter the 'epigenetic control' of RUNX1 can be pursued for a treatment of leukaemia.

The Foundation continued to support a portion of the position of Haematology Cancer Care Coordinator at RHH as part of a three year agreement. In light of the success of the position at RHH, Calvary Hobart submitted a similar proposal for support for a Haematology/Cancer Care Coordinator at St John's Hospital. The Foundation has committed to a three-year agreement with Calvary to part fund the position. Subsequently, Calvary has gained further support from other benevolent organisations as a result of the Foundation's initial commitment.

Early in 2015 we appointed an accountant & bookkeeping firm – Halys & Sells to coordinate all of our financial business. This agreement has been most successful with a very cohesive working relationship developing between both parties. The transfer of workload and responsibilities has meant that our Executive Officer – Graeme Petterd has subsequently been able to reduce his hours of work.

The 2015 Financial Report showed that rental income from David Collins House remained consistent, fundraising decreased due to no Button day taking place; however, donation tin collections doubled from 2014. Interest from investments was increased due to changes in investment institutions.

Work has proceeded in the development of a new website for DCLFT, following on from our rebranding and new logo last year. In this digital age, it is imperative that DCLFT is accessible via the internet

Deirdre Tuck **President**

NEW WEBSITE

Our new Website (www.leukaemia-tasmania.com.au) is up and running after considerable time and effort from many people. Our old site had served us well however it needed renewal. Its features include our new look logo with up to date information on leukaemia services that we provide including social activities, reports, presentations, research and education grants/scholarships. It also has a facility for receiving donations and other payments including annual subscriptions using PayPal or a direct payment into our account with Bendigo Bank. Go on line and have a look for yourself. We are sure you will be impressed. Let us know what you think. If you have suggestions or ideas for items to include please let us know. We would like to acknowledge Clare Sweeny of Blue Box Design for her time and patience in putting it all together. Without Clare it would not have happened.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AWARDS 2016.

There were four successful PDA applicants this year.

Fiona McEwen Acting Nurse Unit Manager at the Holman Clinic in Launceston has been awarded the David Joyce Award to conduct a Myeloma Study Evening in Launceston for Oncology/Haematology Staff from the Holman Clinic, LGH and Calvary St Luke's Hospital. The evening will be presented by Dr Hang Quach Clinical & Laboratory Haematologist St.

Vincent's Hospital Melbourne and Dr Kim Rooney VMO Haematology Launceston General Hospital. **Claire Gourley** a Registered Nurse with the Day Chemotherapy Unit at the RHH has been awarded the David Balon Award to complete her Graduate Certificate in Transfusion with the University of Melbourne online course. **Deborah Thompson** who is the Haematology Cancer Care Coordinator at the RHH has been awarded the Judy Slevin Award to attend a Nurse Short Course – Advanced Haematology at the Royal Melbourne Hospital. **Catherine Youl and Anita Oakley** Cancer Care Coordinators at Calvary St John's Hospital South Hobart have been awarded the Ray Lowenthal Award to arrange a two Study Day Seminar for staff at St John's Gibson Ward. Tracey Harris from Amovita Consultancy in Brisbane will conduct the Workshops which will include Haematology Theory and Clinical Practice on the first day and a workshop on the second day titled The Accidental Councillor. We congratulate this year's successful applicants and look forward to receiving their final reports.

NEW ACCOUNTANTS

When new Government compliance regulations for charities were recently introduced we needed to appoint qualified accountants to handle our financial business. We appointed Emma Sells of Halys & Sells Accountants & Business Advisers and what a difference they have made to the way we do business. Our Executive Officer has been able to cut his work by 50% which is a substantial savings and he sleeps a lot better. We have reviewed and streamlined all our investments and now do most of our banking online. Financial reports for the previous month are provided by the third working day of every month to the committee. Emma attends our meetings to keep us informed of our financial situation.

COCKTAIL PARTY

Over 50 guests attended a Cocktail Party at the White Wall Restaurant in the RACT building in Hobart on 16th March to launch our new website, which received positive comments. Clare Sweeny was on hand to answer questions and explain its new features. Ali Tope the RACT's Community Advisor was also present to hand over a \$3,000 cheque to the Foundation from the RACT Community Act of Royalty Program. We were selected as one of three Tasmanian Charities to take part in the November '15 to February '16 RACT members token promotion. Our President accepted the cheque and expressed our appreciation to the RACT and its Members for supporting leukaemia in Tasmania.

2016 SUBSCRIPTIONS

The committee has resolved to increase annual subscriptions for 2016. Pensioners \$5.00 and Families \$10.00. Payment can be made online using PayPal or mailed to GPO Box 372 Hobart 7001. This is the first increase since the Foundation was founded in 1980.