



# PIPS'N'PIECES

PO Box 278 Waratah NSW 2298 • P: 02 4985 0103 • F: 02 4985 0101 • E: info@hmf.org.au • W: hmf.org.au  
Facebook: facebook.com/hmf.newcastle • You Tube: HMFmelanoma • Instagram: hmfnewcastle

MAR 2018

<b>Chairman:</b>	<b>Lawrie Hogg</b>
<b>Vice Chairman:</b>	<b>Claudia Tolhurst</b>
<b>Executive Officer:</b>	<b>Jenny Noblet</b>
<b>Secretary:</b>	<b>Rebecca Boyd</b>
<b>Treasurer:</b>	<b>Janelle Kirk</b>
<b>Public Officer:</b>	<b>Claudia Tolhurst</b>
<b>Melanoma Support Group:</b>	<b>Lisa Hamilton</b>
<b>Patron:</b>	<b>Paul Cave AM</b>
<b>Committee:</b>	
<b>Kristy Brown</b>	<b>Leonie Murray</b>
<b>Elizabeth Macansh</b>	<b>Scott Stevenson</b>
	<b>Tracy Garner</b>
<b>Ambassadors:</b>	
<b>Holly Edmunds</b>	<b>Daniel Martine</b>
<b>Tracy Garner</b>	<b>Jake Sylvester</b>
<b>Erin Lewis</b>	<b>Caitlin Rosser</b>

help would be appreciated so please contact her if you are able to volunteer.

### Thank you for your support for the past 30 years – you have helped us:

- raise awareness to the prevention and early detection of melanoma
- support melanoma research and clinical trials in our region
- provide patient support and amenities

### We are making a difference

In the 1980's the Hunter Region was one of the top 'hot spots' for melanoma in the world – latest statistics indicate the region now rates 5th-7th in NSW.

### We believe the following projects have contributed to these results:

- developing a sun safe presentation for primary schools
- attending Pit Stops at Hunter high schools
- raising awareness in the workplace
- raising awareness in sporting clubs
- funding melanoma research PhD scholars
- supporting clinical trials
- community awareness campaigns such as "Don't Get Cut" & "Ewwburn - Look After Your Selfie" for prevention and "Checkmate" for early detection.

### Our vision is to defeat melanoma. You can help by:

- becoming a member of the HMF (membership is \$11p.a.)
- support HMF fundraising events – like us on Facebook to keep updated on events
- become a regular monthly donor (for as little as \$10/month)
- save your 5 cent pieces (& other loose change) in a HMF money box (call if you need any!)
- hold a fundraising event at school or amongst friends or workmates on behalf of HMF - we will work with you to ensure the success of your event
- leave a bequest in your will - where there's a will, there's a way
- open a Beyond Bank Community Rewards account - which benefits the HMF

The first fundraising event for the year will be **Paddlefest 2018** - organised by the Rotary Club of Toronto Sunrise. This



## Chairman's Report

**Lawrie Hogg**

I hope you all had an enjoyable Christmas and New Year and I wish you and your family good health for 2018 and take this opportunity to thank you for your support over the past 12 months.

A big thank you also to the HMF committee. It has been a pleasure for me to Chair this energetic, enthusiastic and committed group of people and I'm also very pleased to welcome Tracy Garner to the 2018 committee.

Tracy participated in the "Don't Get Cut" campaign developed for high school students and has been an ambassador for HMF for a number of years. Tracy and good friend Kylie Wilkinson organised the very successful 2016 Beach Ball and will be involved in organisation of the 30th anniversary ball to be held on 20th October. You can read more about Tracy's melanoma story on page 4 of this newsletter.

2018 is going to be a big year for the HMF as we celebrate our **30th Anniversary!** I invite everyone to get involved in our year-long celebration with events and activities acknowledging 30 years of great work in the community. Whether it's a fundraising event or community awareness opportunity - your support is always appreciated. See Jenny's report in this newsletter about the events we will be attending - naturally any

will be held at **Speers Point Park** on **Sunday 4th March** from 8am (see [paddlefest.com.au](http://paddlefest.com.au) for more info) everyone is welcome to this great family fun day by the lake! Enter a team in the Melon Paddle, get your pink and green on (or whatever floats your boat) and get amongst it! This event is NOT just for serious paddlers!

One of the most enjoyable fundraising events in my calendar is the **HMF race day** and this year it will be held on **28th April**. We will once again be holding functions in both the pavilion and the Mounting Yard Marquee. It is always a great day and well attended and I recommend that if you do wish to come that you get in early to ensure you get your tickets.

Raising awareness for the prevention and early detection of melanoma has always been our key focus and we are very pleased to have the opportunity to attend a number of community events this year that will enable us to provide information and answer questions. HMF speakers are also available to talk to your school, club or sporting group.

I look forward to catching up with you at one or more of our 2018 events.



## Treasurer's Report

Janelle Kirk

The 30 June 2017 audited financial statements were presented at the HMF Annual General Meeting held on 4th December, 2017. Copies are available by contacting Jenny at the HMF office.

The 2017 year was a good year with very similar results to the previous year. There were a number of successful fundraising events including the Beach Ball, morning teas at both The Cove and Elermore Glen Retirement Villages, the 2017 HMF race day, the Metropolitan Players production of Wicked and the Mad Hatter's High Tea. We were also the recipient of a number of bequests.

Generous donations were received from Bob & Jean Sillar, Dick Smith Foods, Wests Leagues Club, NCIG and Koalakrane. Wests funding is helping us raise awareness in bowling clubs and NCIG funding assisted in keeping the "Checkmate" bus on the road. We were also able to continue the Checkmate campaign and support professional development of the melanoma unit nursing staff and melanoma patients and their families.

We are well into the 2018 financial year and I am pleased to report that we are on track for another good year with donations and fundraising events. We are also most appreciative to be one of fifteen recipients of a bequest from the Estate of the late Joy Granger. Joy was born in Dungog later moving to Marks Point before spending her final years in a nursing home and we understand that she was very generous in giving to charity her whole life and this has been borne out in her will.

## McDonalds Coffee for a Cause

Thank you to everyone who dropped into Rutherford, Greta or Singleton McDonalds to grab a coffee on 14th November in total \$540 was raised.

## Grill'd The Junction

If you didn't have an opportunity to have a coffee at one of the participating McDonald stores you may have popped into Grill'd The Junction during December for one of their fabulous burgers. HMF was the crowd favourite during December receiving the biggest donation as part of its Local Matters program. Thank you to Grill'd The Junction and all who voted for HMF.

## Commonwealth Bank Belmont Branch

At the end of 2017 the CBA provided grants of \$500 to its local branches to donate to a chosen charity. It didn't take staff at the CBA Belmont branch long to decide which charity to support as more than one staff member has recently been touched by melanoma. Kirrily from the Belmont branch called into present the cheque to Jenny just before Christmas.

There are a number of fundraising events planned for this year and I hope you are able to join us but remember that if you aren't able to come to an event, we are always most appreciative of any support you are able to offer by way of raffle prizes or auction items.



▲ Jenny receiving the generous donation from Kirrily at the Belmont CBA branch.

## Diary Dates

4th March	Paddlefest – Speers Point Park
11th March	Beaumont St Carnivale 2018 – Hamilton
28th April	Charity Race Day
4-6th May	Total Field Days
24th June	Mad Hatter's High Tea
22nd August	Metropolitan Players – "We Will Rock You"
20th October	30th Anniversary "Pearl Ball"

YOU'RE INVITED TO  
*kick up your heels*

AT THE



**HMF**  
Hunter Melanoma Foundation

**RACE DAY**

SATURDAY APRIL 28, 2018

MY HOOVES  
ARE KILLING ME...



WEAR YOUR SILLIEST, BIGGEST, OR BRIGHTEST HAT AND HAVE A FLUTTER  
AT A FUN-FILLED DAY OF FASHION, FILLIES, FRIENDS & FUNDRAISING.

*Get your group together and book your Mounting Yard Marquee tickets today!*

Tickets **\$70pp** includes  
entry to the track and to the marquee  
with a delicious buffet lunch, cheese  
platters, complimentary drink on arrival  
and tote & bar facilities.

*Prizes for best hat and  
best dressed.*

**BOOK NOW**

Call Jenny to reserve your table on **4985 0103** or book online at [www.trybooking.com/TZWY](http://www.trybooking.com/TZWY)

TryBooking is proud to sponsor this event and will donate back all booking fees.

 **trybooking**





## My Melanoma Story

Tracy Garner

Every time I sat down to go to the toilet I saw it. It was a brown mole about 2mm in width, on the top of my left thigh. Over time I noticed that it had tripled in size, become irregular in shape and had developed black dots inside it. I had been to the doctor twice before when I had noticed it looking bigger. Both times my GP had told me it was fine. I wanted to believe him, but my gut told me otherwise. My grandmother had just passed away, which reminded me that we aren't all indestructible the way we think we are. This brush with my mortality prompted me to ask my GP about it again. It's funny, I just felt like something wasn't right.

I went to my GP for the third time, when he finally acknowledged my concern and wrote a referral to a specialist. Upon inspection of the mole, the specialist immediately agreed that something needed to be done. He scheduled another appointment for the following week to remove the mole and have it tested. I was very nervous about the thought of going back to the specialist! At this stage, my fears were not so much about what could be wrong, it was more about having the needle. Let's just say that me hating needles is a gross understatement!

The specialist was very understanding about my fear of needles and let me hold up a magazine in front of my face so I wouldn't see what was happening. As I left, the specialist explained that he didn't see much of a problem with it but it would be sent away to be tested. He would see me for another appointment the following week. The specialist explained that he removes a lot of suspect moles, he would rather be vigilant and remove anything suspicious. In the unlikely case it is something sinister, he would have saved a life. Who cares about a scar if you get to stay alive?

Four days later I received THAT call. The specialist telling me to come in the next day. My stomach dropped. This didn't sound right and I couldn't wait to find out what was going on.

That overnight wait felt like forever! Thankfully, my mum came with me for moral support. The specialist sat us down and explained to me that it was actually a melanoma. I would need to have surgery to ensure that all of it was removed and that I would need two weeks off work. It is crazy, but it wasn't until the specialist said 'two weeks off work' that I thought it might be serious. The surgery was booked for the following week at Christo Road Private Hospital.

On my way home from the specialist I called my fiancé at work to break the news. He was a little shocked, but held it together for me. When I look back on it, I think it was harder for him and my family than on me. You always think you will be OK.

I got home and wanted to research everything I could on melanoma. Public Service Announcement: do NOT 'Google' medical facts and take them as gospel! You will only scare yourself BIGTIME!

The surgery went well and the melanoma was removed successfully. I was told by the specialist that it had only gone under the skin by 0.03mm. It was also a slow-growing melanoma, I am so thankful for that.

# Tracy

"It's funny... I just felt like something was not right."

**MELANOMA REMOVED AT 23.**

Now for the real reason I wanted to share my story with you. Since I have had my melanoma removed, I have had two people I know lose their young lives to melanoma. Gone too soon. It just isn't fair that they missed out on living the rest of their lives! And so heartbreaking for their families and friends left behind. I was lucky!

### So why did I get a melanoma?

I had no family history of melanoma. So, why me?

I loved to look tanned, like most Aussies do, but my skin is incredibly fair. Wearing fake tan when I was younger wasn't such a good look, you looked orange and usually smelled like wee. I thought I was doing the right things. I never went to the beach just to sunbake and I started working at quite a young age so I spent a lot of time on weekends inside protected. When I was in my teens, I would sit in the school quadrangle at lunch and recess with my girlfriends gossiping. I would slightly hitch up my skirt and we would 'tan' our legs.

Through my early twenties, I went through phases of going to the solarium. It made me feel good, it made me feel more attractive and more confident. I reasoned with myself that because I didn't actually burn like I did in the sun, I couldn't possibly be doing any damage. I was VERY wrong.

I still like to look tanned but there are so many options now to

get the same effect without the damage to your skin. No tan is worth your life. I know that now.

Whether it was sunning my legs at high school or going to the solarium, or even a mixture of both, I was doing the damage. Tanning is skin cells in trauma and it is the Ultra Violet (UV) rays that do the damage. You don't even have to get badly sunburnt to damage your skin. It is the cells below the surface of the skin that suffer the permanent damage. This includes exposure on seemingly 'safe', cool or cloudy days. This myth needs debunking! UV rays can be high, even when the sky is overcast. Protect your skin EVERY day, not just on hot, sunny days!

I am now happily married to a great guy named Brett (who is always there to help with my tanning experiments) and have two beautiful children. Layla is eight years old and Koby just turned two. I am one of the lucky ones and I know it. I am going to live my life to the fullest for the friends I have lost.

Please walk away from reading this knowing that UV radiation is what does the damage and that solariums are definitely a no go! And if you are ever unsure about something, or something doesn't feel right, see someone as soon as you can. It is amazing how in touch we all are with our own bodies. Sometimes you just know!



▲ Tracy Garner, melanoma survivor and HMF committee member.

*In memory of Leanne Mc Dermott & Scott Polglase*



## Foundation News

**Jenny Noblet**

I hope you all had a relaxing and enjoyable Christmas and New Year celebration with family and friends. Mine was a little different this year as for the first time in a long while we had little ones with us when my niece and her family came to stay. The girls are 3 years and 5 months and it was lovely to remember what Christmas was like with a 3 year old in the house – needless to say it was a very lively (and at times exhausting) but enjoyable week.

We Skyped our son and his family in England early Christmas Day (their time) and they had just returned from taking the dog

for a run and were settling down to a cosy day inside. Although there wasn't any snow on Christmas day there had been quite a bit in the early part of December and the grandkids had a great time sledding and ice skating. Certainly a very different Christmas to ours.

### 2018 – a big year!

Welcome to 2018 – a big year for HMF and also myself as 6th September marks 25 years of my employment with the HMF.

I remember my first days well, in an office not much bigger than a broom cupboard (that I shared with the Melanoma Unit medical typist!) on the Wallsend Campus. There have been a lot of changes over the years but the one constant has been the wonderful people that I have met along the way.

A major priority for the HMF from day one is to raise awareness in our local community to the prevention and early detection of melanoma and I think that this is something that we do well, particularly in primary schools and various clubs and social groups.

We have a number of opportunities this year for community involvement including Paddlefest on the first weekend in March, followed by Beaumont Street Carnivale on the 11th March. We will also be at the Tocal Field Days on the first weekend in May this year and look forward to our involvement with the Surfing Newcastle Regional Titles 12-13th May.

Volunteers are needed to help out at these events and if you are able to help would you please give me a call (49850103) or send me an email (melafdn@tpg.com.au) letting me know when you are available and I'll include you on our roster.

The end of the school year was an ideal time for sun safe presentations in the schools and one of the things we focused on was raising awareness to the UV index. We pointed out that the temperature doesn't have to be 'high' for the UV to be high or extreme and that although the temperature may vary significantly within 2-3 days in summer – the UV Index stays the same. We encouraged the kids with phones to download the SunSmart app that provides a daily UV alert including the expected UV index and times when sun protection is recommended.

Schools are also encouraged by NSW Department of Education to include this app on their school website with a reminder that you can still get burnt on cool or cloudy days and to think UV, not heat!

*Keeping you covered for 30+ years*

### Updating our look

To mark the 30th Anniversary we will be updating our pop up shade and stickers and for kids we are planning a HMF temporary tattoo.



A new HMF brochure was produced in December and these are available to anyone who would like to distribute them in their workplace, school or preschool, club or organisation.

## Condolences to the Stevenson and Rumball Families

It was a very sad start to the year for me attending the funerals for two of the HMF's past Chairman's wives.

When John Stevenson took on establishing the Hunter Melanoma Foundation over 30 years ago his wife Verna was right by his side supporting him 100%. Verna was also very active in fundraising and her wonderful cake stalls and the annual fete were highlights of the HMF year during our time at Wallsend.

Rita Rumball was also a great support to husband John during the time he was HMF Chairman and had the difficult task of negotiating the relocation to the Calvary Mater and obtaining the go ahead to construct the Mater Institute that is now home to the melanoma unit.

Our thoughts and prayers are with both families at this very sad time.

## New Guidelines for melanoma

Dr Sillar spoke to the November committee meeting on melanoma including updated information that now advises that 70% of melanomas develop as something new on the skin (in the past it has been 50%) and the term being frequently used is the "ugly duckling" on your skin. In other words something that is very different to all the other spots, freckles, moles and lesions you have on your skin.

Recent research indicates that approximately 20% of melanomas are atypical and can be pale or flesh coloured and are often hard to detect at an early stage and it seems that they are most common in males 60+ and make up 40% of all deaths from melanoma.

This information led us to update the HMF brochure and to no longer include photos of melanomas in the brochure. Melanomas come in all shapes, sizes and colours and don't always look nasty and are rarely painful. The important thing is, if you do have something on your skin that is different or unusual or that you are concerned about, get it checked out as soon as possible.



## In The Media

**"I'm judging you at the beach – but not how you think" Polly Dunning Fairfax Media**

**I think that many of us can relate to this article that was published in the Newcastle Herald in mid January.**

"I have a confession to make: I am definitely judging you at the beach, I am judging what you're wearing and what your kids are wearing. But maybe not in the way you think.

See, I don't care if you're fat, thin, jiggy, wrinkly, or whatever. But I am truly shocked when I go to the beach or

the public pool that I am often the only adult in a long sleeved rashie, hat and sunglasses. I'm even more shocked when I see children running around with bare shoulders, arms and torsos. And I'm judging.

Sunburn causes 95 per cent of melanoma, the most deadly of skin cancers. Exposure to the sun in the first ten years of life is a significant factor in predicting lifetime incidence of skin cancer. We all know the sun is dangerous, particularly in Australia and particularly to children, so why would anyone let their kids run around exposed right in the middle of the day?!

Look, I'm no sanctimummy. I'm a pretty average parent always looking for ways to get maximum outcome with minimal effort. But that's also why a rashie and a hat are so good: it's so much quicker to apply sunblock when there is less exposed skin!

Sunscreen is great and works well to prevent sun burn and skin cancers. But it's not enough and shouldn't be used to prolong the time you spend in the sun. It doesn't replace shade and protective clothing.

We know both kids and adults need vitamin D to build and maintain healthy bones and absorb calcium but during summer, a few minutes of unprotected sun exposure on most days is enough.

I don't want your kids to have to watch you die early because you wouldn't protect yourself. If 95 per cent of melanoma is caused by sunburn and we know how to prevent sunburn, then we should be able to prevent 95 per cent of melanomas – and that's 1747 friends, parents and partners who wouldn't have died last year."

## What would you take to the beach?

**It seems that it isn't just some parents who are remiss about sun protection at the beach as I found when I read this recent article in the Herald Topics section**

A recent survey has revealed that 36 per cent of Generation Z (those under 22 years of age) Australians would choose a smart phone ahead of any other item to take to the beach.

Seriously? What about sunblock, the hat, the towel..... it appears all have been forgotten.

In fact 14 per cent of all Australians, or 1.2 million people, believe their smartphone is the most important item to take to the beach.

The research, derived from a survey of 2017 people by comparison company Finder, shows our willingness to stay connected – at all times!

While it appears the younger we are, the more attached we are to our phones, there is some good news as on average the top three beach items for Baby Boomers, Generation Y and Generation X are: sunscreen, a towel and a hat.

## Can Apps detect skin cancer?

**There's an app for just about anything these days but there is concern over the accuracy of an app to detect your skin cancer as the following article reports.**

Strange growth on your skin? Take a photo and view the app's diagnosis.



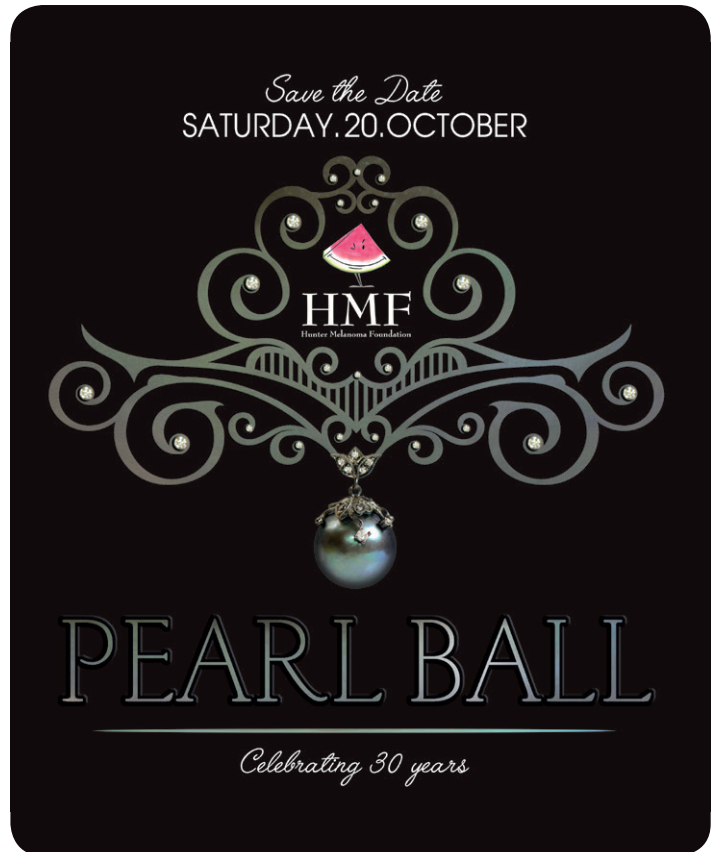
There are several melanoma detection apps currently on the market. Some allow the user to track changes in growths on the skin; others determine whether a lesion seems cancerous.

But doctors have criticised the accuracy of these apps and are concerned they will discourage annual skin checks with a dermatologists or skin cancer specialist, whom they say can examine the entire body for a more accurate diagnosis.

A recent study in JAMA Dermatology looked at four apps and found they missed 30 percent or more of skin lesions which can spread to other parts of the body if left untreated.

Some marks on the skin are tough to diagnose, and it's questionable as to whether an app would be helpful, with the biggest problem being lesions in a 'gray area' where many of these programs can't figure them out. Another concern is a lesion that seems innocuous could be deadlier than one that appears unattractive and gets photographed by the patient.

It would be great to do everything over the phone or on an app but it is important to remember that these devices are only as good as the person who is choosing the suspicious lesion, because if the wrong lesion is picked the information won't be that useful, which is one of the reasons why it is important to get anything that you are concerned about checked by a skin cancer specialist.



# YOU'RE INVITED

to Hunter Melanoma Foundation's  
*High*  
M.A.D Hatter's Tea Party!




24 June 2018

1:30pm • \$60 • Merewether Surfhouse

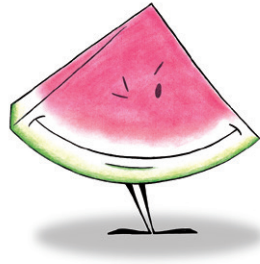


*We're all mad here.*

You're mad, I'm mad & it would be mad to miss a high tea like this!

Call Jenny to reserve your table on 4985 0103 or book online at [www.trybooking.com/UBZL](http://www.trybooking.com/UBZL)  
TryBooking is proud to sponsor this event and will donate back all booking fees.  trybooking





# THANKYOU for your support

Ritchies	T Motum	J Graham	V McKim	CBA Belmont	M Twaddell
Janelle Campbell	C Ross	B Bernasconi	J Cotton	B Davies	R Delaney
Ralph Brooker	M Smithson	E Skelton	K Knight	D Gunter	B Verschelden
John Martin	L Bayliss	L Saunders	Berghofer Family	Ron Elliott	C Malcolm
V Corbett	B Thornton	N Appleby	A Howden	Pharmacy	W Rosser
R Neave	W Jackson	Est Joy Granger	C Hill	E Warrall	
M Sullivan	C Avery	L Murray	M Nicholls	B Sillar	

**PKF** | A special **THANK YOU** to PKF Accountants and Business Advisers for their support.

Yes, I would like to help fight melanoma.

Enclosed is my gift to be used for research, treatment, education, service and care for melanoma patients in our region.

Please find enclosed my tax deductible donation for \$\_\_\_\_\_

I have enclosed my cheque / money order made payable to: **Hunter Melanoma Foundation**

OR please charge my credit card  Visa  Mastercard

Card Number                 Expiry

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please return your gift to: Hunter Melanoma Foundation PO Box 278 Waratah NSW 2298.

