



## Celebrating our fourth annual Melanoma March 2015

Left to right:  
John Eales and Mayor Jean Hay  
heading up the Manly march. Townsville marcher  
on the beach and Bonny Hills group shot.

**From 22 February until 29 March more than 5000 participants across the nation united to take action against 'Australia's National Cancer' by being part of Melanoma March. Now in its fourth year, Melanoma March is an Australia-wide fundraising and awareness campaign which brings communities around Australia together to march for a cure.**

Melanoma March this year reached new heights with 23 locations all around Australia getting involved. Melanoma March started as a community walk at Sydney's iconic Manly Beach four years ago to raise awareness and to pay tribute to those who have been taken by the devastating disease.

Since commencing in 2012 Melanoma March has raised over \$1.3 million for research projects that help us towards our goal of lessening the impact of melanoma

on the community and ultimately creating a future free of melanoma.

Tragically, each year melanoma kills more Australians than the national road toll. With Australia having the highest incidence of melanoma in the world, it is campaigns like Melanoma March that are vital in spreading awareness and educating all Australians about the risks associated with this disease.

Funds raised from this year's Melanoma March will assist melanoma researchers around Australia to develop the next generation of treatment options and accelerate the development of cure within Australia.

*"We see this new initiative as our Phase Two of the Genome Project, focusing on how these mutations both strengthen and weaken melanoma cells. It will capitalise on the opportunities we now have to explain, counteract and overcome melanoma in our patients,"* said Melanoma Institute Australia Research Director, Professor Graham Mann

*"We're determined to find more breakthroughs to prolong the lives of our patients and offer them a better quality of life. Community fundraising is crucial in achieving these successes."*

Together with our collaborators Australia Melanoma Research Foundation and melanomaWA thank you for making Melanoma March 2015 our most successful to date.

We simply could not have had such success without the wonderful contribution of our volunteers, sponsors, partners, ambassadors, committee members, fundraisers, MIA staff and of all of our melanoma marchers around Australia.

Your support helps our continued efforts. It's not too late to make a donation  
[www.melanomamarch.org.au](http://www.melanomamarch.org.au).

Thanks to our sponsors Australia's Men's Health magazine, Australia's Women's Health magazine, Prevention Australia magazine, Surf Dive and Ski, Toyota, Cancer Institute NSW and Grant Broadcasters for their support with this year's campaign!



Hayley Chalkley and family, Darwin.



Marching in Brisbane.



Wollongong's symbolic balloon release.



Rachael Sporn and marchers in Adelaide.



## Watch Your Mate's Back

**Watch Your Mate's Back (WYMB) is our summer educational campaign aimed at increasing awareness of melanoma by focusing on prevention and early detection. It is based on the anecdotal evidence that melanoma is usually spotted by a spouse, friend or family member.**

Australia has the highest level of melanoma in the world and in true Australian spirit; we are encouraging everyone to keep an eye on their mates with our inaugural campaign. WYMB is designed to encourage people to look out for each other when it comes to the prevention and detection of melanoma.

The campaign speaks to people who predominately have a focus on health and well-being, are outdoor, sporty, social and are involved in community and sports groups. It aims to establish sun safety and early detection into the culture of these groups, by becoming a part of everyday behaviour.

There are three key messages with our summer campaign:

1. **PREVENTION:** Apply sunscreen then share it with your mates so they're covered too.
2. **EARLY DETECTION:** Check your mate's skin for any suspicious looking spots or moles.
3. **ACTION:** Book in for a professional skin check and tell your mates to do the same.

Thanks to our community partners, Surf Life Saving Australia, Rowing NSW, The Gap Health and Racquet Club QLD and Lindfield Rugby Club WYMB has directly reached 100,000 people Australia wide through a digital, broadcast and print campaign. After a very successful first year, we look forward to growing WYMB over the coming year so we can continue our mission to educate Australian's to look out for their mates, as well as themselves! Prevention is a crucial part of creating a future free of melanoma. To read more about WYMB visit [www.watchyourmatesback.org.au](http://www.watchyourmatesback.org.au)

## Some Spots can be Dangerous

Aiming to encourage Australians to get professional skin checks, the summer-long campaign 'Some Spots can be Dangerous' launched on December 1st, 2014 with a bespoke social media video.

For every share, Invisible Zinc donated \$1 to MIA for all-important research and essential treatment programs dedicated to finding improved patient options and ultimately a cure. Dannii Minogue was painted with leopard spots for the campaign video with the slogan: A leopard can't change its spots but your spots can change. We are proud to say Invisible Zinc has donated \$30,000 to MIA research and education programs. Thank you to all who helped share this important message and in turn contribute to our work.



Karen Pierson with a photo of her mum.

## Million 4 Melanoma

In 2008, Karen Pierson sadly lost her mum Rhonda to melanoma and promised that she would raise a million dollars for melanoma research as well as make a million people aware of melanoma. Million 4 Melanoma was born and Karen is on her way to reaching her goal. Karen recently held her second fundraising event, called Smile. It was a fantastic night with more than 100 people attending, including celebrities Joh Bailey and Prue MacSween.

Earlier in the year, Karen ran a challenge called Man or Mouse, where men were challenged to have their chest waxed all in the name of a good cause! Over the years Karen's fundraising events have raised over \$27,000 which has contributed to research but more importantly has helped spread awareness of this devastating disease. Follow Million 4 Melanoma on Facebook for more updates!

## A Ride of a Lifetime

In September 2014, David Bullock fulfilled his dream of riding 1600km across Britain over 9 days to raise money for melanoma research. A patient at MIA, David found a mole on his leg in 2003 which was quickly diagnosed as melanoma, and later discovering that it had spread to his lymph nodes. David was thankfully given the clear 8 years later in November 2011 and was treated at the Sydney Melanoma Unit (now MIA).

David raised \$8,300 from his ride, and plans to add to this by holding a charity rock concert in Sydney later this year.

David Bullock at the end of his 1600km ride.



# Director's Report

There is an unprecedented momentum in melanoma research at present. Understandably, this is very exciting for the researchers but much more importantly it is producing real advances in patient treatment and outcomes.



## Medical oncology treatments for melanoma

Recent progress in the management of patients with advanced (Stage 4) melanoma has been truly amazing. Previously, the median survival for these patients was just a few months because the available drug therapies were usually ineffective. Some benefited from surgical resection of secondary melanoma deposits affecting their internal organs but most had disease at multiple sites, and complete surgical removal was not possible.

Over the past 5 years, the situation has changed dramatically. We now have several effective medical therapies for people with Stage 4 melanoma. Those of us who have been involved in the care of such patients for a long time had hardly dared to dream that this might ever actually happen.

Used as single agents these new treatments extend life expectancy but may not provide long term disease control in all cases. Clinical trials are underway to confirm that various combinations are more effective than single agents, and to determine how best to sequence combined therapies.

## MIA at The Poche Centre

These are indeed exciting times. The last five years – since MIA was established at The Poche Centre in March 2010 – have demonstrated the enormous boost to melanoma research that the generous philanthropic contribution of our major benefactor, Greg Poche has made possible.

To maintain the momentum we at MIA must continually increase our research efforts.

This requires substantial ongoing funding, highlighting the enormous value of the fundraising activities undertaken by our loyal supporters. Every contribution to the MIA research program, small or large, will help us towards our goal of controlling and ultimately eliminating melanoma in every patient.

## Other research activities

Although they are perhaps eclipsed (happily so) by the advances being made in medical therapies, the MIA surgical team has recently commenced accrual to two important surgical trials. The first, the Melanoma Margin Trial (known as 'MelMart'), will determine whether the width of excision of a primary melanoma (1cm or 2cm excision margins) influences outcome. The second, Evaluation of Groin Lymphadenectomy Extent for Metastatic Melanoma (aka "EAGLE FM" – yes, it does sound like a radio station), will provide evidence to guide the management of patients with secondary melanoma in groin lymph nodes.

Meanwhile the MIA pathology team is making important discoveries that are bridging the gap between laboratory research and patient care, leading the field internationally in "translational" melanoma research. For example, a rapid and simple antibody stain of a patient's melanoma tissue has been developed that can show whether or not a response to one of the new medical therapies (a BRAF inhibitor) is likely

to occur. This makes it possible to decide immediately which of the new agents should be used as first line therapy.

After two years of hard work the MIA genetics group is poised to publish the first important findings from the five million dollar Genome Project. One of our high priority research activities, this project will greatly improve our understanding of melanoma biology and guide the development of new agents to treat the disease.

All this research, and much more that space prevents me from mentioning, is being undertaken by an amazing team of talented and dedicated people. We are fortunate to have them. Our ability to keep producing results depends on MIA's position as a leading research group, a national centre of excellence and in getting our brand out there as a by-word for 'the melanoma experts.' This is not for our personal satisfaction but so that patients nationwide and internationally can benefit from the advances being made in melanoma treatment at MIA.

Our supporters are the engine for that drive. All at MIA – our dedicated Board members, researchers, clinicians, and support staff – salute your crucial role in all our endeavours.

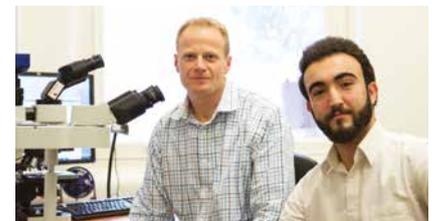
**Professor John Thompson**  
Executive Director,  
Melanoma Institute Australia

## Do you know what projects we are working on?

**Did you know 100% of money raised goes back into our work? This means your money really is making a difference!**

- Three major journal articles were published in 2014 in the prestigious *New England Journal of Medicine* that will make a difference to how melanoma patients are treated in the future.
- Research by PhD student Hojabr Kakavand was recently published that demonstrated that the immunotherapy PD-1 may be effective in treating patients who are also being treated with targeted therapies, giving them a greater chance of survival.

- The Melanoma Research Database commonly referred to as MRD is a database containing very detailed information of nearly 40,000 melanoma patients. We are now working to integrate our tumour database within MRD so that research datasets can include availability and location of tissue samples, ready for genetic testing if required. We are grateful to the Cameron family for their ongoing contribution.



PhD Student Hojabr Kakavand with supervisor Prof Richard Scolyer.

We are thrilled to be part of a \$14.7 million 5 year research project grant to study the molecular determinants of risk, progression and treatment response in melanoma. The research, funded as part of the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Program scheme, will commence in 2016. Lead researcher Professor Rick Kefford from MIA and Macquarie University said the project had real prospects of accelerating prevention and early detection of melanoma. We look forward to following the progress.

## A decade of commitment

Joel Allsop is a man of commitment. Diagnosed with stage 3 melanoma in 2004, Joel was recently congratulated for his 10-year commitment to participating in our international surgical clinical trial, known as MSLT-II. This outstanding commitment was acknowledged by Melanoma Institute Australia's Executive Director, Professor John Thompson, who has been involved in the trial and Joel's care from the beginning. You can read more about Joel's story on our website.



Joel Allsop was congratulated by Professor John Thompson for his commitment to our MSLT-II trial.

## What you need to know about sunscreen (but were too afraid to ask!)

In December, we held an educational webinar with sunscreen expert Dr Curtis Cole. His presentation explored the facts and myths surrounding sunscreen use, such as the safety of nanoparticles, whether SPF 50+ is better than SPF30+, does sunscreen block vitamin D production, and what is the best sunscreen to use. This informative webinar was recorded and is available to view on our website ([www.melanoma.org.au](http://www.melanoma.org.au)).



## Run for a cure

Join Team Melanoma for this year's City2Surf and raise much-needed funds to help in our mission to find a cure for melanoma.

We've created Team Melanoma because we want to unite a group of like-minded people all working toward the same goal of making a difference! Fundraise for MIA through running in this year's City2Surf and help us much-needed funds for research projects, support services and education. Last year we raised \$29,000 and this year's goal is to raise \$50,000 but we need your help!

Find out more by visiting [www.melanoma.org.au](http://www.melanoma.org.au) or contact us on [info@melanoma.org.au](mailto:info@melanoma.org.au)

## Upcoming events

- Taree Charity Golf Day – 12 April
- Bunnings Artarmon BBQ – 9 May
- Community Forum – 17 May
- Sydney Morning Herald Half Marathon – May 17
- Gold Coast Marathon – 4–5 July
- Run Melbourne – 26 July
- City2Surf – 9 August

To find out more about these upcoming events or if you are interested in holding your own contact [events@melanoma.org.au](mailto:events@melanoma.org.au) or call 1300 882 353

## Key research meetings

- 25–28th March**  
Society of Surgical Oncology 2015 Annual Cancer Symposium (Houston, USA)
- 18th–22nd April**  
American Association for Cancer Research Annual Meeting 2015 (Philadelphia, USA)
- 29th May–2nd June**  
2015 American Society of Clinical Oncology Annual Meeting (Chicago, USA)
- 4th–8th May**  
2015 Annual Scientific Congress of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (Perth, Australia)

## With thanks...

Our thanks goes to the following individuals and organisations for their generous support and contribution.

- |                                         |                                            |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Australian Melanoma Research Foundation | melanomaWA                                 |
| Australian Men's Health Magazine        | Morey Media                                |
| Australian Women's Health Magazine      | MX                                         |
| Budget Raffle Tickets                   | Neutrogena                                 |
| Cancer Institute NSW                    | Prevention Australia                       |
| Clarius Group                           | QT Sydney                                  |
| Coca-Cola Amatil                        | Red Property Group                         |
| Dannii Minogue                          | Song Company                               |
| Disciple                                | Spectrum Now                               |
| Handpicked Wines                        | St John Ambulance                          |
| Easy Signs                              | Strictly Ballroom                          |
| Fairfax Digital                         | Surf Dive 'n' Ski                          |
| Folkestone                              | TAL                                        |
| Global Creatures                        | The Strand at Coolangatta                  |
| Grant Broadcasters                      | TMS                                        |
| Hendricks                               | Toyota Australia                           |
| Hills Self Storage                      | Training Balgowlah                         |
| Hotel Steyne Manly                      | True Blue Printers                         |
| Invisible Zinc                          | Weiss                                      |
| Larger Than Life                        | Yakusan                                    |
| Event Agency                            | <b>Ambassadors for Melanoma March 2015</b> |
| Lindt                                   | Brad McEwen                                |
| Marty Haynes                            | John Eales                                 |
|                                         | Tim McGrath                                |

## Melanoma March Committee Members

- |                                                                     |                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Adelaide</b><br>Rachael Sporn                                    | <b>Manly</b><br>James Economides<br>Laura Bergelin                                               |
| <b>Bathurst</b><br>Veronica Manock                                  | <b>Melbourne</b><br>Amanda & Maria Lucci<br>Nathan Jones                                         |
| <b>Bonny Hills</b><br>Paula Jackson                                 | <b>Picton</b><br>Mike Newcombe<br>Mark Thompson<br>Jennifer Skuja<br>Sacha D'Souza               |
| <b>Bribie Island</b><br>Joy Leishman                                | <b>Taree</b><br>Cindee Hammond                                                                   |
| <b>Brisbane</b><br>Kate Davis-Steer<br>Kerry Weir<br>Neville Weir   | <b>Townsville</b><br>Violet and Lace Committee                                                   |
| <b>Canberra</b><br>Nicole Brown                                     | <b>Wagga Wagga</b><br>Amy St Clair<br>Foundation<br>Natalie Cross<br>Kath Priest<br>Rachel Viski |
| <b>Darwin</b><br>Leonie Warburton and Hayley Chalkley               | <b>Western Australia</b><br>Clinton Heal                                                         |
| <b>Gosford</b><br>Nicole Miller<br>Julie Simpson<br>Hayley Van-Elst | <b>Wollongong</b><br>Karen Ryan<br>Tenille Shelley                                               |

## Melanoma Institute Australia

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