

under the microscope

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"Hanging up his jeans"

After a marathon 26 years in the job, Professor Peter Rowe, Lorimer Dods Professor and Director of the CMRI, has officially retired. This momentous occasion was celebrated in style with an elaborate morning tea (with chocolate fountain) and a superb formal dinner at the University of Sydney Great Hall.

Since taking over as Director of the Institute, the CMRI has evolved from a small toilet block-like building in Camperdown, into a premier purpose-built medical research facility, which is incorporated as a company with an independent board. As Stephen Ryall, Administration and Community Relations Manager, says, "Prof is leaving the Institute with two vital legacies, **independence and focus**, which

hand-in-hand have ensured that the CMRI remains at the forefront of biomedical research."

Professor Rowe, who once described himself as a "Benevolent Dictator," says he has always strived, "to achieve top quality research in a family environment." And Dr Peter Jeffrey, former Head of the Neurobiology Unit, attributed CMRI's friendly atmosphere to Professor Rowe's open door policy for all of his staff and students.

Continued page 2

A BIG THANK YOU to our

100% gene-iuses

– Jeans for Genes updates see page 4.

Professor Rowe was presented with a pair of his jeans, 'immortalised in bronze,' at the retirement dinner



**CHILDREN'S
MEDICAL
RESEARCH
INSTITUTE**

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Professor Rowe's Legacy

Continued from page 1

Under Professor Rowe's leadership, senior researchers at the CMRI have been encouraged to explore their own ideas within the stable environment of the Institute. Many are now highly regarded both nationally and internationally and we have a number of international leaders in their own fields. A number of Unit Heads have been at the Institute for many years and this is a testament to Professor Rowe.

Stephen Ryall, who has also been at CMRI for 26 years, says, "I remember guaranteeing Prof I would commit to two years in the job before I would consider moving on to bigger and better things! That I am still here today is a very real tribute to him and what he has achieved for the CMRI."

Greg Craig, our Operations Manager also confessed that, "Prof saved me from a life in a brewery and I have enjoyed an incredible ride over the last 19 years, watching the CMRI grow."

Of Professor Rowe's various roles within the community, Carolyn Forster, vice-president of the board and member of the Canberra Committee says, "Peter is extraordinary in his passion for children's health, and this is manifested in his obvious loving care whenever he speaks to or holds a little one. This passion, extended to the CMRI, has helped to make the Institute the highly successful organisation that it is today.

He has been wonderful with the fundraising committees, making time to attend functions, conversing with and encouraging the volunteers. He has been fiercely loyal towards them, as he has been with his splendid researchers and staff.

It has been an immense pleasure to have known and worked with Peter and I wish him and Joanne health, happiness and a busy retirement."

Member of the board, John Bevins agrees with these sentiments, "I think of Peter Rowe not just as Prof, but as 'Prof the Protector'. Fierce and energetic protector of his beloved Institute, of its priceless independence, of its brilliant people, of science itself and especially basic research, of the reality that such research is the never-ending work of unsung heroes who work collaboratively as teams ('breakthroughs' being, by and large, ballyhoo). I think of him as a friend whose professional wisdom I know I can count on in matters medicine. And I think of him as a man who shovels six teaspoons of sugar into his coffee – 'it's pure energy' – which explains a lot."

As Dr Roger Reddel, Acting Director of the Institute says, "We owe Professor Rowe a great debt of gratitude for building up the CMRI to what it is today. It's a fantastic achievement and we wish him all the best in his retirement."

Director's Report

As many of you may be aware, I retired from the position of Lorimer Dods Professor and Director of the CMRI on July 24 2006.

It has been my pleasure and a privilege to have worked with and known so many committed staff, supporters and committee members over the past 26 years.

That the Institute has achieved so much is due to the efforts of people working together for a common goal. It is now in a strong position both scientifically and financially to move into the next phase of its development. Dr Roger Reddel, the Head of our Cancer Research Unit will be the Acting Director until a successor is appointed, and I have no doubt that he will be a strong and effective leader.

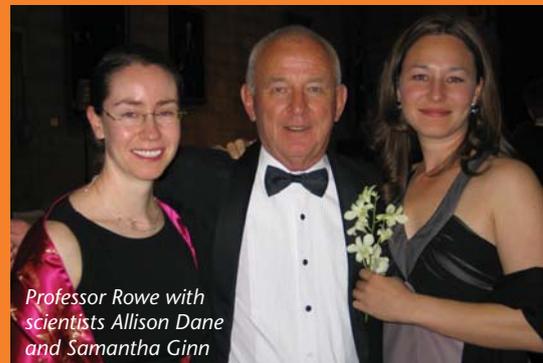
Naturally I will be saddened to leave so many friends and co-workers but it is time for me to move on.

Farewell and best wishes for the future.

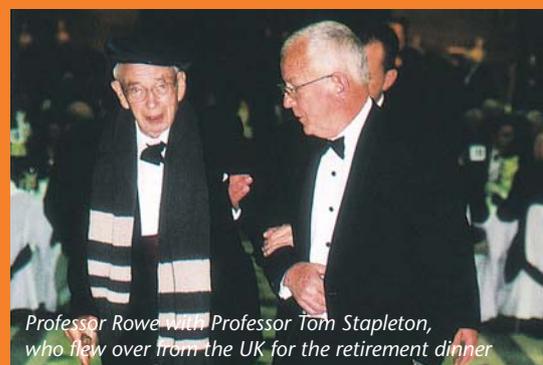
Professor Peter Rowe



Professor Rowe and the morning tea chocolate fountain



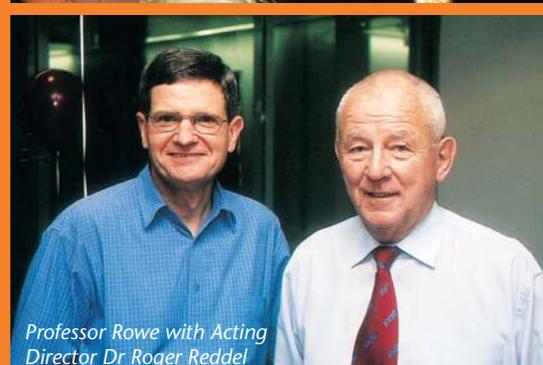
Professor Rowe with scientists Allison Dane and Samantha Ginn



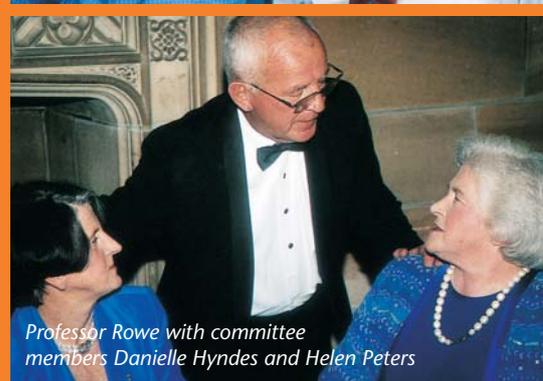
Professor Rowe with Professor Tom Stapleton, who flew over from the UK for the retirement dinner



Joanne Rowe and Vice President of the Board Carolyn Forster



Professor Rowe with Acting Director Dr Roger Reddel



Professor Rowe with committee members Danielle Hyndes and Helen Peters

If the chemistry is right... you might remember this



Victor Anggono of the Cell Signalling Unit
Photograph courtesy of Frank Violi

A young Australian scientist has made an important discovery about how brain cells communicate. This finding is central to understanding all brain function – from laying down memory to being able to walk.

The groundbreaking research has been published in the latest edition of world-leading journal *Nature Neuroscience*.

Victor Anggono, a PhD student at the Children's Medical Research Institute (CMRI), set out to identify the molecular partners of a key protein called dynamin, and how their partnership allows neurons to send messages.

The result was astounding. A protein called syndapin, previously thought to have no major role in nerve communication, was proven to be the molecule that simultaneously works with dynamin to allow the transmission of messages between nerve cells.

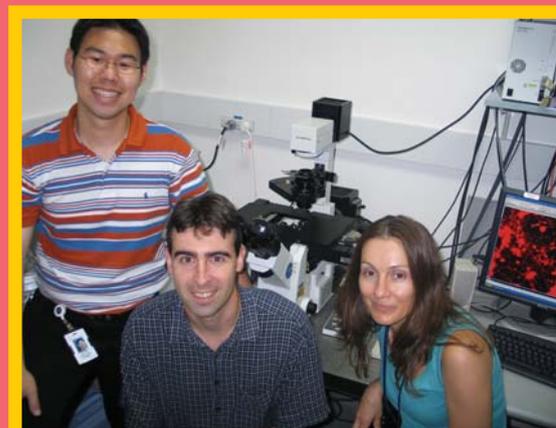
The brain functions by sending chemical messages between nerves. The messages, or neurotransmitters, are held in tiny packages at the nerve terminal where they are released to send a signal. The packages then return to the cell and are re-filled so that brain function can continue.

In collaboration with researchers from the University of Edinburgh further studies have revealed that by blocking the interaction of these two proteins nerve communication shuts down.

"The partnership between dynamin and syndapin is crucial for the continuous cycle of neurotransmission. This makes syndapin a very specific target for medicines that could treat conditions where there is an overload of nerve activity, such as during a seizure," said Dr Phil Robinson, Head of the Cell Signalling Unit.

The relationship between dynamin and syndapin is also crucial to understanding other processes where there is a high level of brain activity and nerve transmission, such as when forming memories and during learning.

Dr Robinson says, "A discovery like this will be vital for future research into many neurological disorders, such as epilepsy, conditions of memory loss and schizophrenia. It is only through research like this, that medical science can now target specific problems and develop improved treatments."



Victor Anggono, Dr Mark Graham and Val Valova
at the live cell imaging microscope

The picture in the "O" on the front cover depicts a nerve cell. The fluorescent green marker highlights a protein called dynamin, which is involved in nerve cell communication

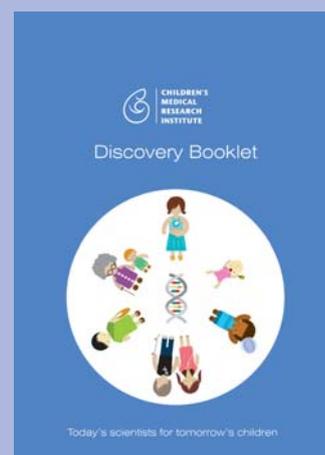
News

We are very excited to announce that our **brand new website** has just gone online!!! Take a look at www.cmri.com.au

The "**Beach and Bush Calendar Girls 2007 Calendar**" is now available for just \$20. Twelve intrepid ladies have bared all, in front of beautiful coastal and rural locations. Can be ordered from CMRI.



A new **Discovery Booklet** has been produced with sponsorship from partner Kimberly-Clark Australia, beautiful illustrations by Design Lab and printing by Burwood Press. This educational resource will offer our supporters a better understanding of inheritance and genetic disease.



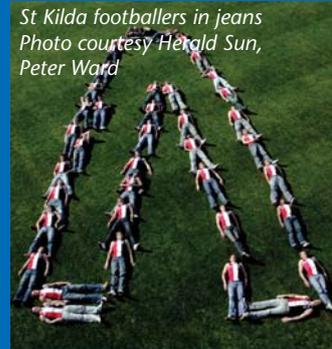
You are a GENE-IUS. . .

Jeans for Genes® Day, now in its thirteenth year, was bigger than ever on Friday August 4. Once again, across Australia, literally millions of people were wearing their jeans in support of the Children's Medical Research Institute. Early indications show that the year will be a great success with businesses, schools, individuals and retailers ordering over \$1 million worth more stock than last year.

Regarding our events 'The Jeans for Genes Art Auction' went off with a bang on July 20 with the Brent Street Dancers revving up the crowd with their amazing opening number. They then modelled denim outfits designed by TAFE students for our 'Do it with Denim™' Design Competition. The presenter of the parade, Kerrie Alcorn, Editor of the magazine *Shop Til You Drop*, did a fabulous job of describing the garments and announcing the winner with the National Campaign Manager Julijana Trifunovic.

Great Australians such as Nicole Kidman, Greg Norman, The Wiggles and Tina Arena all donated their personally signed jeans for the auction. In total there were 16 pairs of jeans, all painted by Australian artists. Rolf Harris donated the pair he wore when he painted the portrait of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and Hugh Jackman's jeans painted by Nafisa Naomi broke the record for the highest selling pair, which sold for a whopping \$30,000! "Aussie" John Symond, who was on holiday, made the winning bid via the telephone. Ray Hadley from 2GB was in fine form and again kindly donated his time to auction the jeans and Channel 7 newsreader Chris Bath, once again donated her time to be the master of ceremonies. Other celebrities who attended the event included: Kamahl (who helped out with the Jeans for Genes Community Service announcements for radio with Jeannie Little) and Layne Beachley and Peter Brock (whose jeans were also on auction).

St Kilda footballers in jeans
Photo courtesy Herald Sun,
Peter Ward



Artist Nafisa Naomi with the fabulous Hugh Jackman jeans



'Do it with Denim' winning designs



Madeline Spielman from Vietnam Airlines handing over the Business Class tickets to Ray Fell, the highest bidder for a trip for two to Vietnam



Komatsu Australia J4G supporters and their truck, Gladstone, QLD



Ella in a pocket
Photo courtesy Perth Sunday Times, Theo Fakos

A special thank you must go to the major sponsors, Leading Hotels of the World and Vietnam Airlines for donating fabulous travel prizes and auction items.

The Leading Hotels of the World®

 Vietnam Airlines



Kimberly-Clark Australia CEO Wayne Jones and General Manager of Professional Care David Stillman at the Milsons Point BBQ



Glenn A Baker and Becca Cole 'Jamming 4 Genes' at the Civic Hotel

Thank you!



Ruth Hardman with Roseville's Jack and Henry who shaved their heads for Jeans for Genes



Two Brent Street dancers backstage at the Art Auction



Bargain shopping Jeans for Genes in Melbourne



CMRI's Mary Donnelly and Margaret La Rosa with Smoky Dawson



Catherine McAuley students selling badges in Westmead

The 'Do it with Denim™' Design Competition, now in its third year was a great success with close to 300 entries from fashion design students from all over Australia. Westfield, the major sponsor, kindly donated exhibition and kiosk space in 22 centres across the country and Westfield Miranda had two fashion parades showing the finalists' garments on July 29 leading up to Jeans for Genes Day.

The new Jeans for Genes event 'Jamm 4 Genes™', was a great success. On the night of Jeans for Genes over 70 music venues large and small across Australia and over 100 bands and musicians supported Jeans for Genes. Venues such as the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, the Mean Fiddler in Rouse Hill, Blacktown RSL, The Basement in Sydney, 'Boomalli' (for under age musicians), The Civic Hotel (host venue), The Cornish Arms in Melbourne and The Vic Hotel in Darwin all put together fabulous 'Jamm 4 Genes' events. Patron of the event was Mr Glenn A. Baker OAM, who on the night drove to eight different venues in the "Jamm Mobile" to talk about the importance of the event. He suggested that everyone attending Jamm 4 genes should be proud, as it was the first event of its kind in the world and can only grow bigger and better in the next few years. Other fabulous spokespeople for the event included singers and musicians Jade McCrae, Beccy Cole and Nathan Cavaleri who all spoke about the importance of the music industry getting behind research into children's genetic diseases.

Other great events, which occurred around Australia, included the annual Jeans for Genes trivia night at the Olympic Hotel, Preston in Victoria. Once again the event was sold out and they raised a record \$20,000! Special thanks must go to Mary Johnson and Paul Pavlou for running another fabulous night. The team at Domayne in Campbelltown, Sydney organised a fundraising bowling night at their local bowling alley and Melbourne Bargain Shopping Tours put together a great shopping adventure to raise funds for CMRI. The Children's Medical Research Institute's Port Hacking Committee had eight female members raise funds by doing a charity walk from Coalcliff to Wollongong on the South Coast of NSW on Jeans for Genes Day. The weather was cold and wet and yet they still raised a staggering \$20,000!

On Jeans for Genes Day over 300 "Genie" volunteers including: children from schools, individuals, CMRI staff and business representatives weathered the cold (and in some places rain) in Sydney, Melbourne, Perth and Brisbane to sell badges on the streets. The Telstra Dome in Melbourne was a new venue on board and volunteers sold badges on the Friday night before the AFL siren went off and then again at the bars afterwards for 'Jamm 4 Genes.'

Jeans for Genes would also like to thank all of the official retail outlets who sold our merchandise or collected donations on our behalf: Jeanswest, BIG W, Just Jeans, Westpac, Gloria Jean's Coffees, Best and Less, The Warehouse, GO-LO and Crazy Clark's, MYER, Harvey Norman, Franklins. Lowes, Domayne. Terry White Chemists, HCF, Toys "R" Us, Banjo's, Harris Scarfe, Rebel Sport, The Perfume Connection, Sunglass Hut, Sizzler, Babies Galore, Bayswiss, Charlie Brown, The Pharmacy Guild of Australia, Glue Store and Joyce Mayne.

Everyone at the Children's Medical Research Institute would like to thank you for being a "Gene-ius" and for supporting Jeans for Genes Day this year. We look forward to doing it all again in 2007 – **Date for your diary is Friday August 3. And guess what ... planning has already begun!**

Welcome to the New Cell Transformation Unit

Professor Antony Braithwaite, expert in cancer research and native New Zealander, is the Head of our newest research group, the Cell Transformation Unit. Previously a Professor at the University of Otago, Dunedin, Antony is renowned for his research efforts into the function of a tumour suppressor protein, p53, that normally protects us from getting cancer. The hope is that by understanding how p53 works, his group will be able to develop new treatments for cancer patients.

They will also look at natural differences in the p53 gene that might make some people more susceptible than others to developing conditions that speed up aging and cancer onset. "If we can identify such 'at risk' individuals, it may be possible to encourage life style changes that will lower the chance of developing disease. For example, people with one version of p53 may be less able to handle the damage done by exposure to sunlight. Although we all need to protect ourselves from sunlight, these people would need to be especially careful," Antony says.

Dr Priya Ganesan is no stranger to the CMRI having studied for a PhD in our Gene Therapy Research Unit. After a two year stint in the States, Priya will now study a region of the gene p53 - normally involved in apoptosis or programmed cell death.

Dr Daniel Speidel is interested in cancer genes that might be activated in cells that have been stressed. He would like to identify which genes or factors might interact with p53 to cause tumours. Daniel, a research scientist from Hamburg, will join the CMRI in 2007.

Weini Ma, a Research Assistant from Dunedin, has quickly settled into CMRI and the change in lifestyle that comes with moving to Sydney! Weini is studying another protein, YB1, which also interacts with p53. Increased levels of YB1 were first found in breast tumour cells. Weini will also look at the possibility of using YB1 as a diagnostic marker for cancer.

Carina Rubio, our newest Research Assistant, has always had an interest in cancer. She studied in Spain and the UK and previously worked in pathology laboratories in North Ryde. Carina is now looking forward to the challenges of her new research career.



Antony, Priya, Carina, Daniel and Weini in their new laboratory

New FACS at CMRI

Researchers at CMRI are thrilled with the purchase of a new Becton-Dickinson **FACSCanto cell sorter**, a vital piece of equipment for studying the characteristics and behaviour of cells, which replaces the seventeen year old FACScan.

The new machine is an analytical tool, which can gather information about millions of cells by analysing them one by one, very quickly. Fluorescent chemicals, fluorochromes, attach to specific proteins on the surface of the cells and emit light when these labelled cells pass through a laser beam. The light is then detected by photomultiplier tubes.

The new FACS, which can detect three fluorochromes at one time, will be particularly useful for the Gene Therapy, Cancer and Muscle Development Units. It will be used to identify: different cell subsets in blood, to quantitate amounts of virus vector and to study cell cycle and apoptosis (cell death).

This equipment has the potential to analyse sub-populations of cells more quickly and with greater sensitivity than before.

Written by Rachel Eddowes, a student in Science Communication at ANU, who joined the CMRI for one week's work experience in May.



Samantha Ginn using the new FACSCanto



Pictured from left to right:

Carolyn Forster OAM and Patti Payne OAM at the CMRI;

Members of CMRI Canobolas Committee who provided a fabulous lunch;

Piggie racing in Caboolture;

Georgie Parker and her mother Rosie Campbell at the Sofitel Wentworth;

Mrs Heather McKeith, Year 6 students Caela Dye and Eliza McKeith and CMRI's Jennifer Philips;

Dr Roger Reddel accepting a cheque from the Kids for Life executive committee: Nathan Davis, Brad Newling, Kate Dixon and Tracey Baldwin.

Roll of Honour

We are delighted to announce that:

Patti Payne, President of our Hills Committee and Carolyn Forster of our Canberra Committee have each been awarded an OAM. Congratulations ladies, we are very proud of your achievements and very grateful for your fabulous support.

Dates for your Diary

Join the Beecroft Committee at **Castle Pines Arts and Crafts Show** on October 13-15, Castle Pines Clubhouse, 3 Spurway Drive, Baulkham Hills. Mary Howell 02 8850 1271.

Quirindi Committee "A Day at the Races" with luncheon at Quirindi racecourse, October 14. Details Til Symonds 02 6747 1744.

Thumbelina Committee Trivia Night at 'Laurelbank' Willoughby, October 21. Annual battle of the wits, BYO, entry \$25. Details Michelle 02 9412 1162.

Hills Committee **"Raceday at Rosehill"**, November 4. A fabulous day with prizes, gifts and luncheon. Contact Patti Payne 0418 876 784.

Wagga Wagga Committee Fair at the Murrumbidgee Turf Club, November 10-11. "The best Christmas Fair in NSW." Details Rhonda Walmsley 02 6926 3555.

A celebration for all the family. **Charity luncheon with the "Calendar Girls,"** Cabana Bar and Grill, N. Sydney, November 12, 12 noon. Contact Ken Green 0418 448 118.

Canberra Committee Annual Luncheon. A legendary event not to be missed at Government House, Canberra, November 15. Details Celia McKew 02 6273 7977.

The glorious garden of **'Briarsdene'**, 22 Crotty Road, Glenn Innes will be open November 18-19. Lunch and tea will be available.

Committee Power

"Millamolong Polo in the Paddock."

On a fabulous autumn weekend in April, polo teams on galloping ponies battled for the Jamie Ashton Memorial Cup.

The Northern Beaches Committee Annual Golf Day, Tuesday 2 May. With perfect weather for golf, this was a superb event enjoyed by 148 keen golfers.

Hills Committee Annual Mother's Day Luncheon. Over 400 guests were enchanted by the interaction between TV stars Georgie Parker and John Mangos at the Sofitel Wentworth, Tuesday 2 May.

At the **Beecroft Committee Card Day**, Wednesday 31 May, 100 enthusiastic card players enjoyed a game of cards and a talk by CMRI's Stephen Ryall.

OTHER SUPPORTERS

Mrs Jacinta Bezzina selected the CMRI as her chosen charity for the **Blacktown RSL Lucky Draw**. Thank you to the club and members.

Roseville College students visited CMRI to present a cheque to CMRI's Jennifer Philips, from their Easter fundraising activities.

The **QUT Urban County Music Festival**, May 1, was lots of fun and the "Hogs Breath Piggie Race," breathlessly raised money for Jeans for Genes.

The **BMW Trivett Classic Golf Day** at the fabulous River Oaks Golf Course was a huge success. Many thanks to BMW's Simon Macedone, John Hylands and Michael Munro for their superb effort.

We are especially grateful to the **Kids for Life Foundation** who have made a significant donation to CMRI. These funds will be used to upgrade to a new Typhoon (Multi Signal) scanning system.



PRIZE WINNER THUMBELINA GRAND RAFFLE 2006

LUXURY HOLIDAY TO HONG KONG & SHANGHAI

Courtesy Leading Hotels of the World and Crowne Plaza and also sponsored by Cathay Pacific and Hong Kong Tourist Board.

MRS BARBARA MCGLOIN of PYMBLE

