

THE *Advertiser*

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Children's Medical appeal celebrates 50 years

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LONG-TIME SUPPORT: Cessnock Wine Country Rotary Club president Bill Hoye (left) and treasurer Bruce Wilson cut the cake with Children's Medical Research Institute community relations manager Jennifer Philps.

For the past 50 years, the Children's Medical Research Institute has received a generous annual contribution from the Cessnock Donor Group.

This year was no exception, with \$3000 from local donors and Cessnock Wine Country Rotary Club recently handed over.

Support for the CMRI began in 1963 through the efforts of the Quota Club of Cessnock and the late Mrs. Olive Drayton who was a member of that club.

Cessnock Wine Country Rotary Club treasurer and former Advertiser editor, Bruce Wilson, recalled first coming in contact with Mrs. Drayton through his job at The Advertiser, when she would seek some publicity to give the donors a gentle reminder to send their donations.

"Olive would distribute the envelopes to supporters and when the funds were collected would hold a Thank You Party for the donors," Mr. Wilson said.

"They were grand affairs with vocal items and a scrumptious supper.

“This was done through the generosity of Olive and they were very well attended functions in the former town hall supper room and later at Olive’s home.”

The Rotary club became involved with the appeal more than a decade ago when Mrs. Drayton decided ‘age had caught up’ and she may be forced to call it a day.

“Many, many thousands of dollars have been raised over the years and we would like to think that in some small way the efforts of the donors and Rotary have had just a small impact on the important work of the CMRI,” Mr. Wilson said.

The club presented a cheque to CMRI community relations manager Jennifer Philps, who reported on the institute’s latest work.

The CMRI is dedicated to discovering how to prevent or treat birth defects and diseases such as cancer, epilepsy, and a range of genetic disorders.

With the addition of a third storey to its building in Sydney, the institute now has the capacity to accommodate up to 300 researchers – some among the best in the world.

As it receives no ongoing government funding, it relies on community support and its major fundraiser, Jeans For Genes day.