

HAT DAY 2018

IN October, Rotary clubs across Australia held Hat Day events to help Australian Rotary Health Lift the Lid on Mental Illness. Hat Day events included high teas, trivia nights, fundraising dinners, and some even celebrated it online!

We appreciate all the support we have received so far to fund more mental health research, and ultimately help the one in five Australians who suffer a mental illness each year.

It's never too late to help. If you would like to donate, head to hatday.com.au or australianrotaryhealth.org.au.

Here are some memories from Mental Health Month!



EWA Rotary celebrating Hat Day online.



Rotary Club of Port Macquarie, NSW





SCHOLAR SPOTLIGHT: BREANNE HOBDEN

LAST year, Ian Scott PhD Scholarship recipient Breanne Hobden was able to experience the sense of relief that many feel after completing their PhD.

Breanne was awarded funding by Australian Rotary Health to investigate depression management for individuals with comorbid alcohol dependence at the University of Newcastle.

"There is limited research examining co-occurring depression and alcohol misuse, despite these being commonly co-occurring conditions," Breanne said.

"We need to continue to conduct high-quality research in this area if we are to provide the best possible care for these individuals, and to improve their treatment outcomes."

Interesting findings that arose from Breanne's research include:

- In a general practice setting, approximately one in 15 people



may be both depressed and be misusing alcohol, however, general practitioners only accurately identify 21 per cent of these people.

- The rate of depressive symptoms is high in substance abuse treatment clinics, with 55 per cent of patients in this setting screening positive for depression.
- Substance abuse clinicians are relatively aware of depression in their patients, being able to accurately identify 73 per cent of those who report being depressed.
- Only seven studies have examined the best psychosocial treatment for co-occurring depression and alcohol misuse.
- The studies that have examined

psychosocial treatment for co-occurring depression and alcohol misuse were generally poor quality, and therefore stronger research is needed to inform clinical treatment.

"Many people in our healthcare system with co-occurring depression and alcohol misuse are slipping through gaps and going undetected," Breanne said. "There is more we can do to help this vulnerable group."

Breanne has had six research papers published in psychology journals, with one more expected to be published at a later date.

ARH is also pleased to announce that Breanne will continue to receive funding in 2019 as a Postdoctoral Fellowship recipient.

HATS OFF TO GERALDTON



AS the sun rose over the eastern horizon on the morning of October 10, there was already a flurry of activity, with Rotarians and friends preparing for the first Hat Day combined meeting to be held in the city. Of course, Hat Day has been observed by the individual clubs of Geraldton, WA for a number of years, but this was to be a special day, where the community could come together and acknowledge mental illness, as well as raise funds for mental health research. The objective was to involve every member of the community.

By 6.30am, the marquees were up and a barbecue trailer was providing the savoury aroma of fresh cooked sausages, bacon, onions and eggs. There was almost a carnival atmosphere, with members of the 11th Battalion AIF Living History Unit dressed in full uniform, preparing and

servicing the gathered Rotarians and friends a hearty breakfast. By now, the sun had risen and there was an amazing array of head dress on display.

The meeting was called to order and breakfast commenced. As the meal was being devoured, a farmer provided a moving discussion on mental health and suicide prevention in his community, followed by an address from a representative of Headspace who works with people suffering from many different forms of mental illness.

Because the breakfast was located on the City Foreshore, there was a constant stream of people passing by and, in some cases, joining in the observance of Hat Day. When breakfast was over, the tables were set in preparation for the "Mad Hatters Tea Party". Members of the community

began to arrive and the CWA ladies cranked up the morning teas.

A broad section of the community was represented and there was a real spirit about the gathering, which was once again treated to presentations from special speakers.

Towards the end of the event, we were graced by a group of school children who had been collecting for Hat Day. They presented a sum of cash, which was gratefully acknowledged, and joined the public to hear the final speaker. As the sun reached its peak in the sky, the "Mad Hatters" and Rotarians began to disperse, all vowing to do it again next year on a bigger scale. This is what makes a community.

In total, the event raised \$2000 for mental health research.

An unexpected result from the day was the interest shown in Rotary, with five potential new members attending club meetings since.

In 2019, Geraldton will again become Hat Town... and good luck to any other town that tries to take our title!

EPIPHANIES CONCERT



ON Saturday, October 27, Sydney had the privilege of hosting some amazing talent at the Seymour Centre for the Australian Rotary Health musical theatre charity concert *Epiphanies*.

In an intimate concert hall, the audience was swept away by a 19-piece professional orchestra, dance troupe, and the angelic voices of Rob McDougall, Daniel Belle, Kerrie Anne Greenland and special guests, who all starred in the most recent Australian stage production of *Les Misérables*.

The song line-up included popular pieces from *Sweeney Todd*, *Phantom of the Opera*, *Carousel*, *Wicked* and of course, *Les Misérables*, all with the objective of raising money for mental health research.

Epiphanies producer and performer Rob McDougall said mental illness is rampant in the entertainment industry.

"It's tearing us apart. We believe very strongly that more research is needed to understand this important health issue," Rob said.

From the two shows, the event raised several thousand dollars for mental health research grants through Australian Rotary Health.

We are very grateful for the support.

NEW FUNDING PARTNER AWARDEES

Jake Mazur

Jake Mazur is the chosen candidate for the Rob Henry Memorial PhD Scholarship (D9810) this year. He was recently presented with a plaque by Australian Rotary Health (ARH) chairman Gregory Ross at a presentation at Deakin University. Mrs Val Henry and her son Luke were also in attendance.



Jake's focus will be cancer research, looking at the use of naturally derived therapeutics against Glioblastoma (GBM) and specifically focusing on their combination with nanoparticles to increase anti-cancer efficacy.

"The idea of using developing technology to overcome treatment limitations in such a devastating disease really sparked my excitement," Jake said.

Pictured: Jake Mazur, right, with supervisor Professor Jagat Kanwar.

Jasmin Galper

With funding from ARH and the David Henning Memorial Foundation, Jasmin Galper will spend the next three years of her PhD studying pre-symptomatic, sporadic Parkinson's Disease patient blood, to identify substances involved early in the disease. Factors found may help the generation of new bio-markers, which could lead to new therapeutic targets and an earlier disease diagnosis, at a stage when therapy may be better able to alter the course of neurodegeneration.



"Neuroscience is appreciably intricate and fascinating, yet it is arguably one of the most poorly understood areas of biomedical science," Jasmin said.

Pictured: Jasmin Galper is the new awardee of the David Henning Memorial Foundation PhD Scholarship.

NEW AMBASSADORS SUPPORTING ARH



Sturt Hinton is a new Ambassador of Australian Rotary Health.

AUSTRALIAN Rotary Health has recently teamed up with Sue Perry and Kara Geyer from the Media Hut to promote our cause to the wider public.

Resulting from this, we have now brought on some new Ambassadors, who are very passionate about mental health and promoting ARH to their vast networks.

We are very pleased to introduce founder and CEO of Frequency H2O Sturt Hinton and Winter Olympian Cameron Bolton. We are looking forward to working with them in the near future.

Sturt Hinton

Sturt is the creator and CEO of Frequency H2O and inventor of LOVE,

LUNAR and RAINBOW infused water. He founded the company in 2015 in a quest to create the finest beverages on earth after recovering from debilitating depression.

“By creating such a product, I could hydrate the world with happiness, while supporting causes that bring other men who suffer from similar experiences back from the brink, and thereby lifting the spirit of the world,” Sturt said.

This year, Frequency H2O won the industry gold medal at the Berkeley Springs International competition in the US and was titled the best tasting bottled water in the world.

Frequency H2O is distributed nationally through Global by Nature

and Organic Life Distribution, and regionally through Mungali Creek, Posh Pantry and V Gourmet.

Sturt is an official Ambassador for the Wesley Mission and Australian Rotary Health.

“Australian Rotary Health’s Lift the Lid campaign is so important. To take the stigma out of mental health and gain early intervention and rehabilitation ultimately helps young people, allowing them to get back into education or back to work so they have the opportunity to live a life full of passion and purpose,” Sturt said.

“Growing up is brutal; kids are thrown everything, from bullying, learning difficulties, drugs and alcohol, body dysmorphic issues and societal



New Ambassador of Australian Rotary Health, Cameron Bolton.

pressures from social media. So much is happening so fast, and before you know it, you're an adult and expected to be able to manage your own life on life's unpredictable terms. Kids go running from ill-footed foundations head on into the responsibilities of life with even more pressures to live up to. We have a mental health crisis in this country. The statistics show a staggering one in three youth are diagnosed with a mental illness by the time they are 25.

"As someone who suffered from all of the above as a teenager, I was still gobsmacked at the statistics."

Cameron Bolton

Cam Bolton previously competed in skiing and snowboarding until, at 15 years of age, he was advised by coaches to choose – with snowboarding being his preferred snow sport.

The all-round sportsman also has a love of the beach, and competed

in surf lifesaving at a national level in the ironman, board race, surf race and 2km beach run, becoming the under-19 state champion for the 2km beach run.

Cam's first World Cup Snowboard Cross season was in 2011, and in March 2013 he clinched a then-career high – a top-10 finish in Sierra Nevada, US.

In the 2013-14 international season, Cam received a confidence boost heading into the Sochi Olympic Winter Games, with a fifth placing at the prestigious X Games in Aspen, US. He continued his good form into Sochi, Russia, advancing to the semi-final and ultimately 11th place – the highest result of the Australian men.

Cam experienced a challenging 2014-15 season after many event cancellations, yet placed 15th in the 2015 World Championships in Kreischberg, Austria.

His best result came in December 2015, with a World Cup fourth place

(and final) at Montafon, Austria. Early in 2016, Cam sustained a significant back injury and returned to the World Cup circuit late in 2016 with a 15th place finish – again at Montafon.

With his health returning, Cam finished the 2016-17 season ranked 20th on the FIS World Cup ladder.

"Mental health among our youth has never been more relevant or a more important topic than it is today. Mental illness doesn't discriminate, and it really can affect anyone.

"I've seen those close to me deal with mental illness and have seen how debilitating it can be. It's so important for us to continue research and learn all we can about it. We need to become more informed as a society, so that we can begin to understand what those suffering may be going through, and how we can better help support each other. The solution involves all of us, and it is our duty to be a part of this solution."