

**CELEBRATING  
30 YEARS**

**Patron**



*Sir Zelman Cowen  
AK GCMG KStJ QC*



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UNIVERSITIES  
FUND**

**Trustees**



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*Prof Jonathan Stone  
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.... invites you to celebrate 30 years of investing in the future through medical research and promoting cooperative work between the University of Sydney and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

# SCIENTIFIC PROJECTS ... Opening the doors to better health



During the past 30 years, the Fund has supported scientific and scholarly research in a range of ways, each designed to create new and distinctive patterns of support for research.

## Funding Research Infrastructure

The **Bosch Institute, University of Sydney** brings together the work of 65 laboratories in the School of Medical Sciences, working on a wide range of diseases including dementia, malaria, osteoporosis, cataract, blood pressure, and many others. The work of all these labs is helped by the building of common facilities which make available the latest technology for cutting-edge research throughout the Institute, increase research output and attract large scale funding for further expansion.

The Fund has supported the Bosch Institute's Molecular Biology Facility and Flow Cytometry Facility over the last decade.

## Funding International Collaborative Research Projects

The Fund has provided seeding grants for collaborations between scientists at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (HUJ) and Sydney University (SU), where this funding can bring unique groupings together, and open new horizons.



Prof Jacob Golenser

- **Immunomodulation of malaria: the path to better treatment** is a recent project which aims to improve outcomes in the treatment of malaria by reducing the often lethal side effects of the body's own immune response.

**Chief Investigators:** Prof Nick Hunt, (SU); Prof Jacob Golenser, (HUJ).



Prof Nick Hunt

- **The Microvascular basis of Alzheimer's Disease** is another recent project. See below\* for more details

## Supporting Research into Particular Conditions

### The Study of Age - related Dementia

The Fund has maintained a long commitment to supporting research into particular conditions.

**The Alzheimer's Disease and Inflammation Initiative (ADI)** commenced in 1996, began a long commitment to the study of the dementia of age. This Initiative funded efforts to identify the role of inflammation in the dementia, and to assess the protective effects of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. Research confirmed these protective effects, and evidence also emerged suggesting the protective effect was related to vascular stability rather than the suppression of inflammation. Subsequently, the Fund supported a further international collaborative project **\*The Microvascular basis of Alzheimer's Disease**. Publications from this project have shown an intense microvascular involvement of capillaries (the smallest blood vessels) of the brain in the formation of the plaque pathology believed to cause age-related dementia. This work has the potential to generate a paradigm-shift in the understanding of, and the development of therapy for, the dementia of age.

**Chief Investigators:** Dr Karen Cullen, Prof Nick Hunt (SU), Prof Jonathan Stone (ANU/SU) Prof Eli Keshet, (HUJ)

## Sir Zelman Cowen Universities Fund Prize For Medical Research

Established in 2005 to recognise the work of young scientists, the Prize is presented in alternate years at the University of Sydney and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.



**Mr Mark Elkins** was awarded the inaugural Prize in 2006 in Sydney for a groundbreaking treatment for cystic fibrosis.



**Professor Nir Friedman** was the first recipient of the Prize at the Hebrew University awarded in 2007 for his pioneering work in the field of bioinformatics.



**Dr Catherine Leamey**, from the Discipline of Physiology, School of Medical Sciences, University of Sydney is the winner of the 2008 Prize for her identification of a gene essential to binocular vision.

## Scientific Presentations Bringing The Work Of The Fund To You

Since the inception of the ADI, 3 presentation evenings have given our supporters the opportunity to meet and hear reports from the Alzheimer's Disease researchers whose work benefits from their support.

**In 1997, An Evening with the Scientists** reported preliminary findings from the Alzheimer's Disease Initiative (ADI) and in **May 2002, ADI Report 2001** presented the final report from this initiative. It confirmed the protective effects of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAID's) in the prevention and progress of AD and showed this protective effect was related to maintaining the vitality of the small blood vessels of the brain rather than suppressing inflammation. The Report therefore concluded that a major cause of AD may be the breakdown of the brain's finest vessels, leading to the steady erosion of the brain.

**September 2005, New Insights into the causes of Alzheimer's Disease** Dr Karen Cullen reported on her groundbreaking research showing that the formation of plaques and neurofibrillary tangles may be quite late in a cascade of events leading to dementia. Her studies had indicated each plaque is the site of a small bleed the size of a "full stop" which though too small to cause symptoms, cumulatively has devastating effects causing nerve cells to degenerate from the haemorrhages and eroding cognition bit by bit. Dr Cullen concluded that her work had made clear the tangible benefits of pursuing further studies into the microvascular causes of the disease.

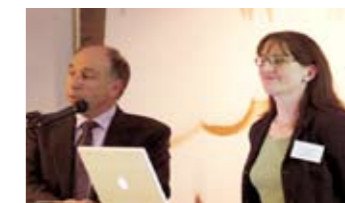
### • Public Seminars – From Test Tube to Treatment

With the Institute for Biomedical Research at the University of Sydney, the Fund has hosted a number of seminars focused on health issues of significant general interest including osteoporosis, cataract, hypertension, diabetes, chronic pain, cystic fibrosis, asthma.

• **Fund Prize Award Events – 2006 and 2008, & 2007 Boardroom Lunch** together with the functions outlined above, are all events through which the Trustees of the Fund are pleased to have shared with supporters the work they help to support and to have had the opportunity to meet with them.



(L to R) Prof Fred Ehrlich & Mrs Shirley Ehrlich with Trustee Mr Michael Dunkel at the 2005 function.



Prof Jonathan Stone & Dr Karen Cullen at the 2005 function

## STUDENT EXCHANGE

The Fund's support to the student exchange program between the University of Sydney and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem supported by a special donation from the John Hammond Trust commenced in 2000. Since that time 12 students have participated in the program. Their interests and faculties of origin have been wide-ranging but without exception each of them in reporting on their exchange has commented on how the experience has broadened and enriched them not only academically, but also in their personal outlook.



Idit Regev 03



Moria Lehman 04



Ori Hirschberg 06



Natasha Wheatley 07



Amir Wasserman 03



Rula Milad 05



Yifat Pinhasi 06



Russell Hobson 07

"Staying at International House gave me the opportunity to make friends with people from Lebanon, Pakistan, Oman. It allowed me to see other sides of Islam and gave me the opportunity to represent both Israel and the Jewish religion. It gave me a great hope for Peace." *Idit Regev*

"The broader perspectives I have gained will enable me to give more to society in the future and thus pass on the generosity extended to me by the Fund." *Yifat Pinhasi*

"I anticipate my exchange experience will have long lasting and positive ramifications, both to me as a student and future scholar, and hopefully to the exchange relationship between the two Universities. For me this was an enormously constructive and illuminating experience." *Russell Hobson*

## ACADEMIC EXCHANGE

Also supported by a special donation from the John Hammond Trust, the Fund's Academic Exchange Program has assisted the visits of 16 academics between the two Universities since 2000. The majority of visits have been from HUJ scholars to the Department of Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies at the University of Sydney. The visits have also enabled the Department to make the HUJ's International Center for Jewish Civilization its benchmarking partner ensuring its teaching conforms to the highest international standards. Another significant outcome of the visits has been the introduction of a new Hebrew program, **NETA**, into many Australian high schools. Visits of HUJ scholars Esty Simons and Shlomit Chayat and Sydney scholar Yona Gilead resulted in the collaboration required for the introduction of this program.

Other exchanges have included Prof Mark Spigelman from the Kuvin Center for the Study of Infectious and Tropical Diseases in Sydney to further study and sample bone from biblical Jericho stored at the Nicholson Museum at Sydney University. The bones form the basis of a tri-national microbiological study of the people and disease of the Dead Sea Valley over the millennia. The aim of the work is to gather information from disease in individuals from the past to help understand modern disease trends and therapies



Esty Simons in Sydney with Yona Gilead



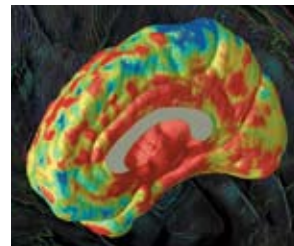
Prof Spigelman (R) with colleague

# FUTURE PROJECTS

## Alzheimer's Disease Research Grant

In April 2008 the Trustees of the Fund announced the establishment of a prestigious new grant for scientific research, the **Sir Zelman Cowen Universities Fund Alzheimer's Disease Research Grant**. Valued at \$100,000, the grant is for a research project in the field of Alzheimer's disease aimed at developing and/or assessing new treatments for this condition. Applications were called for from permanent members of staff of the University of Sydney and of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Joint applications for cooperative projects were also encouraged.

On 26 September 2008, the Trustees of the Fund were pleased to announce that the grant has been awarded to Dr Claire Goldsbury (Brain & Mind Research Institute, University of Sydney) and Dr Karen Cullen (Discipline of Anatomy & Histology, University of Sydney) for their project, *Energy Deficiency as a Cause of Neuritic Pathology in Alzheimer's Disease*. The Trustees look forward to supporting this important work.



Alzheimer's disease-affected brain

## New Bosch Institute Initiative to build International Scientific Collaborations

The Fund's Trustees have welcomed an application from the **Bosch Institute** aimed at developing a long-term collaborative relationship between the **Bosch** and the **Institute of Medical Research** at HUJ. The focus of the collaboration will include, staff exchanges and Visiting Fellowships between the institutions; research student exchanges, including Cotutelle arrangements whereby a student could obtain a research degree jointly badged by the two Universities; research intensive graduate teaching programs delivered by staff from both institutions; joint research conferences; development of internationally-funded research collaborations. To assist establishment of the program, the Fund will support a number of short-term academic visits between the Institutes in each direction and looks forward to reporting on some exciting scientific collaborations to ensue.



L to r Prof Jonathan Stone with Prof Shulamit Katzav & Dr Ron Dzikowski, first HU visitors for this Initiative, recently in Sydney.

## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FUND'S WORK AT 30 ...

This is perhaps best summed up by the words of Dr Karen Cullen concluding her report to the Trustees on her most recent grant for her groundbreaking research in the field of Alzheimer's disease.

*Because of the resistance to the ideas (of my work) in the early years, this work could not have been easily funded by large government agencies and therefore support from private funds has been invaluable. The work has now been recognized as significant and paradigm-shifting.*



## YOUR SPECIAL 30<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY DONATION can shift more paradigms through :

- a direct donation
- a donation in the name of a friend, relative or associate as a special gift
- a donation targeted towards your own area of special interest
- a bequest that will allow you to continue to support the work of the Fund into the future

To make your tax-deductible  
**30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Donation**,  
mail your cheque, Visa or  
Mastercard details to:

The Sir Zelman Cowen Universities Fund  
University of Sydney F13 NSW 2006  
or contact us on:  
Tel: (02) 9351 6558  
Fax: (02) 9351 6556  
Email: [szcuf@anatomy.usyd.edu.au](mailto:szcuf@anatomy.usyd.edu.au)

## LAST WORD: THE FOUNDER MR JOHN HAMMOND



Mr Hammond established the Fund in 1978 to provide a source of funds to further medical research. Speaking about the Fund in the **Sydney Annual, December 2006**, Fund Trustee, Michael Dunkel said of Mr Hammond, "He wanted to alleviate human suffering and he felt not enough money was being devoted to research to achieve that. Giving to research has increased in recent years, but John was ahead of his time...His motivation was to return some of his personal wealth for the benefit of humanity. He felt most people had a contribution to make, but couldn't afford to. He could afford it, so that's what he did."

With the help of the  
Fund's equally  
far-sighted supporters,  
the Fund continues as  
an ongoing memorial  
to the man who  
inspired it ...