

# Australian Philanthropy

Autumn 2003 – Issue 51

Honouring the Philanthropy of Dame Elisabeth Murdoch AC DBE

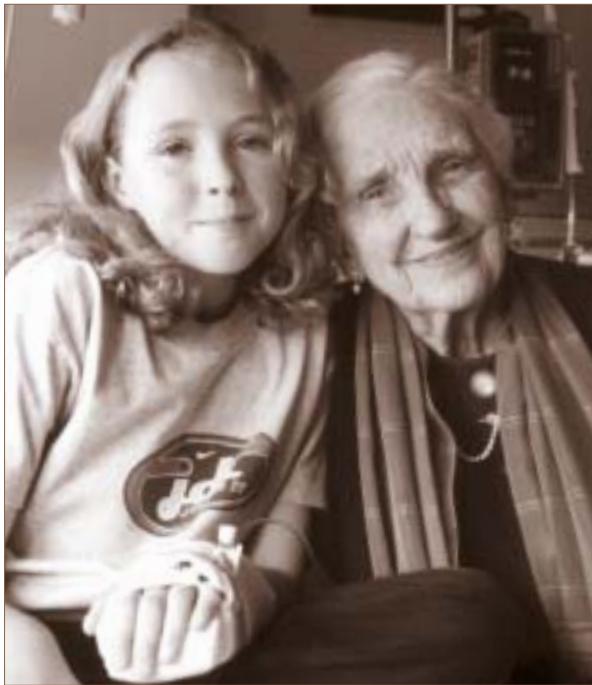


*National Association for Grantmaking Family, Private,  
Corporate and Community Trusts and Foundations*



**PHILANTHROPY**  
*Australia*

*Dame Elisabeth Murdoch*



*“There are those in the community with vision and drive, and there are others who support through philanthropy and benefaction, but it is a very rare phenomenon to find both attributes in one person. Dame Elisabeth is exceptional for this reason alone.”*

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**Image on front cover:** Portrait of Dame Elisabeth Murdoch 2000. Woven by the Victorian Tapestry Workshop. Christopher Pyett (photographic image). Normana Wight (computer treatment). Merill Dumbrell (interpretation and weaving). Warp: cotton no. 12 Seinetwine. Weft: wool and cotton 146.0cm x 120.2cm. Collection: National Portrait Gallery, Canberra. Tapestry commissioned with funds provided by Marilyn Darling 2000.

**Image on inside front cover:** Dame Elisabeth with a patient at the Royal Children's Hospital, Murdoch Children's Research Institute.

**Image on page 15:** Dame Elisabeth at Cruden Farm.

**Image on page 27:** Dame Elisabeth at the Royal Children's Hospital.

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# Foreword

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## Honouring the Philanthropy of Dame Elisabeth Murdoch AC DBE

Great philanthropists like Dame Elisabeth Murdoch do not seek glory, honour or tributes. They give because they believe they should, and as Dame Elisabeth has so eloquently explained, because the enrichment of being involved with others is itself the best reward.

Yet we believe that it is important to acknowledge and celebrate great philanthropy. It is important because it highlights the value of giving and encourages others to also give. It is important because it helps to showcase the valuable work of organisations and individuals who, in partnership with those who support them, make such a difference to their communities.

Dame Elisabeth is best known for her enormous contributions in the fields of children's health and well-being, medical research, and the performing and visual arts, but her interests and generosity are even more extensive, as I hope this publication demonstrates. Her efforts have without doubt helped to strengthen civil society in Australia.

Dame Elisabeth seems to have boundless energy. She has devoted herself to her family and her many friends, yet still manages to involve herself in so many committees, boards, trusts and projects. She is a well respected gardener, and she has opened her beautiful home and garden at Cruden Farm for countless fundraising functions. She has compassion, and an abiding interest in the lives of others, no matter how different those lives may be from her own. Her generosity cannot be measured in monetary terms alone, because it is her dedication of time and personal energy that makes her so remarkable, and that has enabled her to touch the lives of so many.

This booklet, while by no means a comprehensive record of Dame Elisabeth's involvement, provides a glimpse at the projects and organisations to which she has lent valuable support. We thank all the contributors for sharing their stories, as well as for their role in enriching the lives of Victorians and Australians. We apologise to the many others whose inclusion space would not allow.

We especially thank Dame Elisabeth for her extraordinary contribution, and for setting a wonderful example of giving so much with such thought and care.

A handwritten signature in brown ink that reads "Elizabeth Cham".

Elizabeth Cham

National Director  
Philanthropy Australia

## Section 1. Arts and Culture

### The Australian Ballet and The Australian Ballet School

The generosity of Dame Elisabeth Murdoch is an inspiration. Her willingness to assist, nurture, develop and provide for Australians has made many things possible, particularly for young Australian dancers.

Dame Elisabeth has consistently donated money to The Australian Ballet for the Artistic Director and General Manager to direct into the priority areas of expenditure. The international ranking of The Australian Ballet can only be attained by this kind of support. It allows the company to continue to nurture and develop Australia's talented dancers by bringing in the best teachers in the world, providing world class ballets for all Australians to see and assisting the company to tour internationally.

Dame Elisabeth has also invited The Australian Ballet to her home, Cruden Farm, for special events on some occasions and this has personalised her involvement in The Australian Ballet family.

For The Australian Ballet School, Dame Elisabeth has been a long time supporter, looking to nurture our young talent to prepare them not only for The Australian Ballet, but any ballet company in the world. Her commitment to education is extraordinary and the Ballet School is deeply indebted.

Most recently, Dame Elisabeth endowed a ballet studio in honour of Dame Margaret Scott DBE, who was the founding Director of The Australian Ballet School, in recognition of her enormous contribution to ballet education – a generous and significant gesture.

*Richard Evans  
General Manager*

### The Victorian College of the Arts

Dame Elisabeth has been an inspiration for the Victorian College of the Arts (VCA), both as the Patron and as a generous and meaningful supporter and donor to the institution. From the outset she has been prepared and determined to contribute to the College in a way which gives maximum support, primarily to the students but also to the staff.

Her gentle imprint is manifest in all areas of the College, both physically and spiritually: the main administration building has been named after Dame Elisabeth in recognition of her efforts in support of all the Schools within the St Kilda Road campus.

It was she who endowed the Keith and Elisabeth Murdoch Travelling Scholarships in art, music and drama. They are a biennial award which provides the recipient with travel and living expenses to explore a project of their choice.

Dame Elisabeth has funded the purchase of the spectacular Bosendorfer concert grand piano which resides in Federation Hall where it is available for performances and masterclasses by, and for, students of all levels. She has supported international visual arts projects and has provided much needed funds for the support of students in hardship. Whilst the students are her prime concern, she has also kept an eye on the professionalism of the College administration.

An example of her understanding of the realities of running a tertiary institution was the funding of the purchase of a new telephone system.

Through her efforts, members of her own family have been introduced to the VCA. This is primarily because she understands the importance of continuity of support, along with the need for those close to her to know why it is crucial that she gives to this particular cause.

As a College supporter, she is involved because she has a genuine affection for the Victorian College of the Arts along with a healthy passion for young people and their arts development and training. She has a fine and strong affinity with the students and staff. And of course she is passionate about the many and varied examples of art and excellence created by the outstanding artistic community that is the VCA.

The role of College Patron is something which she takes seriously; as a result she is embraced by the College community and admired and respected by all of us. She has developed strong personal friendships at the VCA. I am proud to count Dame Elisabeth Murdoch as both a supporter and a friend.

*Professor Andrea Hull  
Director*

# Section 1. Arts and Culture (continued)

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## The Bell Shakespeare Company

The Bell Shakespeare Company is Australia's National Shakespeare Company. Since its foundation in 1991, Bell Shakespeare has been entertaining and educating Australians with the works of William Shakespeare and modern classics presented in a style that is relevant to the issues of the day, accessible and vital to new and established theatre audiences across Australia, and internationally.

Bell Shakespeare is committed to presenting productions and comprehensive education programs in capital cities, regional centres and rural locations throughout the country. The Company also has a commitment to developing the skills of actors and directors and to an ongoing examination of the role of theatre in Australian communities.

The Company generates employment for more than 100 actors, directors, theatre workers and educators who travel approximately 100,000 kilometres each year presenting more than 700 performances to an estimated 180,000 people in 250 locations across Australia. Of the total audience each year, approximately 30 per cent are school students. Box office, corporate and private support are critical to Bell Shakespeare's success and the annual income is divided between 57 per cent from box office, 20 per cent from corporate sponsorship, nine per cent from private philanthropy and 14 per cent from government funding.

Dame Elisabeth's interest in The Bell Shakespeare Company covers the full range of its activities, but her support has primarily focused on the Company's education program, and specifically on the in-schools program 'Actors At Work'.

Actors At Work is a unique educational performance program conceived by Artistic Director John Bell. A key element of the Company's activities from the beginning, Actors At Work gives students in every state and territory the opportunity to see and interact with professional actors working on scenes from specific plays by William Shakespeare and exploring themes arising in these works.

The principal idea behind the program is to show how Shakespeare's works were written to be performed, and to demonstrate that even in the 21st Century, his works are accessible, relevant and exciting pieces of theatre. Using minimal sets and costumes and focusing on the language and development of character, Actors At Work is designed to 'open Shakespeare up', and provide an

easy entry point for young people. The director and actors endeavour to find new forms and styles of performance that will engage and captivate students, particularly through visual means, as young people these days are so heavily dependent on visual stimuli.

In 2002, the fast rising demand for the Actors At Work program across Australia led to the establishment of a second team based in Melbourne, allowing the Company to perform to an additional 10,000 young Australians and to tour more extensively within Tasmania, South Australia and Western Australia. We frequently meet young members of our audience who tell us that the first time they realised how exciting and rewarding a theatrical experience Shakespeare's plays could be was when Bell's Actors At Work team visited their school.

In support of Bell Shakespeare's broader Education program, Dame Elisabeth's generosity has helped us to stage our popular Primary School productions for younger children and to expand the reach of our student workshops and teachers' masterclasses to venues the length and breadth of Australia. It has also helped us to present the special schools performances of our touring productions throughout the country and, more recently, to launch our outreach programme 'Shakespeare In Action' working with students at disadvantaged schools in NSW and Victoria.

*"Dame Elisabeth is widely respected for her generosity and concern for the broad community. Her support for The Bell Shakespeare Company is outstanding, reflecting her interest in education and her appreciation of the Arts.*

*"Dame Elisabeth has been a financial donor of the Company since 1995, and a major supporter of our education team 'Actors At Work' since 1996. In 2002, Dame Elisabeth became a founding donor of the BSC Development Fund, thus helping to secure the Company's future.*

*"Her generosity is matched by her tireless enthusiasm, as evidenced by her attendance at so many of the Company's performances and fundraising events where she is a much loved and welcome presence. Dame Elisabeth has set a benchmark for philanthropy in the Arts in Australia".*

*John Bell  
Artistic Director*

## Footscray Community Arts Centre

In 2001, Dame Elisabeth Murdoch generously committed \$150,000 towards the construction of a new performance space at Footscray Community Arts Centre. In her inimitable way, Dame Elisabeth was full of enthusiasm for the vitality and energy generated by the community's participation in a whole range of arts practice at the Centre and the beautiful location on the Maribyrnong River.

The Centre provides facilities for the creation of art by all sections of the community, with support from the Australia Council for the Arts, Arts Victoria, the City of Maribyrnong, VicHealth, Adult Community and Further Education, the philanthropic sector, members and friends. The performance, rehearsal, technical, and administrative spaces, together with studios for visual arts practice, provide a resource for the diverse communities of the Western Region of Melbourne.

Members of the community have the opportunity to express themselves, to create and manage projects in which they can participate across a wide range of art forms. Art form coordinators are highly skilled artists who give advice, support and assistance in strategic development. The resulting performances and exhibitions reflect the community's aspirations and concerns, providing creative outcomes for participants who would otherwise have restricted access to the arts, and an opportunity to work in partnership with professional artists.

Creative projects contribute to the empowerment of individuals, and produce innovative, high quality outcomes in theatre, music, circus, writing, visual arts, new media and dance, providing a platform for shared expression, appreciation and dialogue.

Examples of this include the annual African Music and Culture Festival, now in its fourth year, which brings together local Horn of Africa communities and artists in a vibrant celebration of traditional and contemporary African culture at the Centre.

The Women's Circus is an award winning community and arts company that was conceived as a project of the Centre in 1991. Nurtured by the Centre, the Circus is now an independent company which offers an annual program of workshops and performances for a broad audience and participant base.

The SCRAPY Program operates in schools in the Western Region of Melbourne, with a priority given to those which are disadvantaged and culturally diverse. It supports experienced young professional artists to develop performance based projects with young people.

"What is important to me in my work with SCRAPY is that I give a chance to those kids who don't have the opportunity to get their voices heard in the school – and to create something that they're going to be proud of," young mentor Afshin.

It is the intersection of art and community need that makes the Centre so very different. Many of the groups who use the Centre find that art and expression are the beginning points of change and move on to participate in the wider community on many levels. Finding a voice and a sense of belonging are the two things that are common to so many social problems that don't have an obvious or a quick solution. The Centre helps people to find that voice, drawing them together in a creative environment that provides a sense of belonging and hope for the future.

The Centre can chart the development of its facilities over the last 30 years as a symbol of community building. Over that time, it has worked with the community, government, business and the philanthropic sector to save Henderson House from demolition in 1973, restore the derelict old mansion and grounds, refurbish the adjacent warehouse and further enhance Henderson House (installing a handsome veranda, creating a gallery space, developing disabled access, car parking, heritage gardens, and establishing Henderson House Café).

The new Performance Space, designed by architect Greg Burgess, will incorporate a flexible performance space (seating 250), foyer space for receptions, launches and as an extension to Henderson House Café, riverside foyer space for rehearsals/displays, and an outdoor public courtyard linking with the amphitheatre and gardens.

Dame Elisabeth's generous donation is making possible an important extension to a resource that is enjoyed by a wide range of people. The Footscray Community Arts Precinct on the Maribyrnong River gives the community access to a beautiful location, a diverse and excellent arts program, countless opportunities to engage in arts practice, and a welcoming environment that in 2002 was enjoyed by over 100,000 people.

*Marion Crooke  
Director*

# Section 1. Arts and Culture (continued)

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## National Gallery of Victoria

The National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) has been fortunate to have many committed friends and supporters who collectively have done much to mould the fortunes of our great institution. However, no one individual has consistently contributed more through active personal involvement than Dame Elisabeth Murdoch.

In considering the huge contribution made by Dame Elisabeth to the NGV, one thinks immediately of her partnership with her husband Sir Keith Murdoch who, as Trustee of the NGV from 1933-39, and then Chairman from 1939-52, himself did so much to transform the institution. In 1939, Keith and Elisabeth Murdoch organised, with the assistance of Basil Burdett, one of the most influential exhibitions in the history of Melbourne: the Herald Exhibition of Contemporary French and British Art. Featuring works by some of the great modern masters of the time, including Van Gogh, Picasso, Braque and Utrillo, the exhibition sparked a great controversy, with even the then-conservative NGV declining to host this most radical of exhibitions. (Once Keith Murdoch assumed the chairmanship – which occurred shortly thereafter – things changed!) Notwithstanding, the NGV acquired two important works directly from the display – Van Gogh's *Head of a Man* and Vallotton's *Pont du jour, Banks of the Seine* – and, to this day, the exhibition stands as a defining moment in the cultural life of this city, and indeed Australia.

Together Sir Keith and Dame Elisabeth played instrumental roles in the formation of one of the NGV's most important support groups, the Gallery Society, which they launched over 50 years ago with an event attended by more than 400 guests in the Stawell Gallery at the former Swanston Street premises, now a part of the State Library which will bear their name. Since 1961, Dame Elisabeth has been a Life Member of the Society, and in October 1997 this enduring commitment was commemorated at the 50th anniversary dinner of the Society which she attended as special guest of honour. Dame Elisabeth has also been an active member of the Friends of the Gallery Library and is renowned among staff and patrons for having the longest unbroken involvement with the Gallery's various Support Groups.

In 1968, Dame Elisabeth was the first woman to be appointed to the NGV Council of Trustees, and in recognition of her longstanding involvement with the NGV, was appointed one of only three Emeritus Trustees after her retirement in 1977. Dame Elisabeth also holds the status of Founder Benefactor of the NGV Art

Foundation and as a result of her extraordinary generosity, the Gallery has been able to acquire a number of major works. While these are too numerous to list here, mention must nevertheless be made of the important Rembrandt print, *The Woman with the Arrow*, acquired with assistance from Dame Elisabeth in time for the great Rembrandt exhibition of 1997, and of course, the famous Roger Kemp tapestries woven by the Victorian Tapestry Workshop (another organisation to which Dame Elisabeth is deeply committed) to adorn the walls of the Great Hall.

Over the years, Dame Elisabeth's support has also involved generous donations for, among other purposes, the inauguration in 1971 of the Keith and Elisabeth Murdoch Travelling Fellowship at the Victorian College of the Arts (to replace the original travelling scholarship at the NGV School), and in 1998, the Timothy Potts Travelling Endowment (established to enable NGV curatorial staff to pursue research abroad). Only last year, Dame Elisabeth again provided further support for staff travel and development. When the NGV launched 'The Gallery Campaign' in September 2000 to raise additional funds for the NGV redevelopment, Dame Elisabeth was one of the very first to offer enthusiastic support.

The pivotal role played by Dame Elisabeth in the history and success of the NGV cannot be overstated. In addition, we regard Dame Elisabeth as a significant artist in her own right, because we regard gardening and garden design as a major art form, and in this aspect of visual culture she is rightly renowned. However, above all the achievements mentioned here, it is possibly the example which Dame Elisabeth continues to set through her untiring enthusiasm, hands-on involvement, helpful advice and enlightened philanthropy which represents her greatest contribution. Her constant presence at our events – major and minor – provides inspiration and encouragement to all at the Gallery, and we appreciate immensely the myriad of ways in which she has helped make the NGV the remarkable institution it is today.

*Dr Gerard Vaughan  
Director*

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## Opera Australia

Dame Elisabeth Murdoch has shown extraordinary generosity in her support for Opera Australia and this was recognised in the naming of The Elisabeth Murdoch Studio, the main rehearsal studio at the Melbourne Opera Centre, in February 2000.

Dame Elisabeth has not only supported Opera Australia and its parent companies, The Victoria State Opera and The Australian Opera, in a financial way. Her encouragement and moral support have been greatly valued and are informed by her passion for music and for the operas of particular composers. We love her enthusiasm and appreciation for what we do.

The Elisabeth Murdoch Studio is used for rehearsals of mainstage operas as well as rehearsals of OzOpera's regional touring operas and Schools Company's operas, which are presented in primary schools throughout metropolitan and regional Victoria. It is also used for auditions, for workshops, for recitals, for Opera Insights and for many other events presented for patrons and friends. Many of Melbourne's arts companies also use the studio for rehearsals and auditions. It forms an important part of the Southbank arts precinct.

Dame Elisabeth's support over more than 20 years has enabled Opera Australia to:

- ~ Present two seasons of world class opera at the Victorian Arts Centre including such new productions as *Capriccio*, *The Elixir of Love* and *Lulu*.
- ~ Establish the Melbourne Opera Centre with its rehearsal studios, coaching rooms and offices for the full time administration staff working in the areas of development, marketing, publicity and ticket services. Opera Australia's facilities in Melbourne also extend to a sets and props store in Footscray, which rents props out to other organisations and community members.

- ~ Enhance OzOpera's involvement in a number of important projects aimed at extending the reach of opera to non-traditional audiences. This includes a national tour of a production of *La bohème*, which has been specially created to be able to be performed in the available venues such as community halls, school gymnasiums or local theatres across regional Australia. Opera Australia's access and research arm, OzOpera, is based in Melbourne. OzOpera's mission is to change the way we view opera in Australia, to identify new directions for opera and to develop its national and global audiences.
- ~ Continue to expand the work of the OzOpera Schools Company. The Schools Company has been taking opera to primary schools throughout Victoria for more than 20 years and the productions are seen by over 50,000 students each year. In 2001, we established a second company to tour NSW. In 2003, Opera Australia's Schools Company is touring a production of *The Sound Garden* to metropolitan and regional primary schools in Victoria and *Software* to schools in NSW. Both productions were created in The Elisabeth Murdoch Studio.
- ~ Showcase the Melbourne Chorus, which performs during the Spring Season and also supplements the touring chorus during the Autumn Season. The Melbourne Chorus is made up of local artists, some of whom are starting out on a professional singing career and others who are professionals within the Melbourne community who sing on a part-time basis. There are many long serving members of the Melbourne Chorus, one of whom has been singing with Opera Australia and the VSO, before that, for 30 years.

*Adrian Collette  
Chief Executive*

# Section 1. Arts and Culture (continued)

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## Somebody's Daughter Theatre

Sometimes an act of grace changes everything. There have been many such acts of grace in the precarious history of Somebody's Daughter Theatre and one of the most enduring has been the grace of Dame Elisabeth Murdoch.

Somebody's Daughter is a company that works in drama, art and music with women while in prison and after their release. Since the late 90s the company has also been working intensively with young men and women who are totally outside of the school system in Albury/Wodonga.

SDT was officially born in the early 90s when Tracey, who had worked with our drama group while serving a sentence at Fairlea, found that the arts supported her in a way that nothing else had. Drama was a place of freedom and sanctuary within the prison and for the first time Tracey's dreams of establishing a life beyond drugs and crime became a very real possibility. Tracey found her path to freedom through creative expression and after her release she wanted the same support that the arts had given her inside of the prison walls.

To set up a group on the outside required funding. I found Dame Elisabeth's number in the telephone book and called. I stuttered out something about money, expecting that I would be referred elsewhere, Dame Elisabeth made it very easy and listened.

Within two weeks we not only had a reply but also had received funding.

*Tell Her That I Love Her*, was the first production outside of the prison walls.

It was a story centring on Tracey's struggle to establish a life beyond the cycle of drugs and prison. The play was extremely well received, was placed on the schools list and a return season was called for.

The company has been operating full time since then, with shows both inside and outside prison, post release workshops, community performances and an intensive program for young men and women in regional Victoria. Thousands of lives have been touched and in many cases transformed. It has been an extraordinary testament to both the power and necessity of the arts to human existence.

Dame Elisabeth came to the Playbox Theatre to meet with members of Somebody's Daughter. She gave every one in the room her undivided attention. She also came to the prison. She could have arranged to be whisked through quickly but she stood in line and walked through the grounds on a very cold winter night. Her response to the play was that she felt privileged and humbled to have witnessed the performance of the women. I was struck by her goodness and lack of ego.

Dame Elisabeth directly facilitated the survival of Somebody's Daughter. It was through her that my position has been funded since the mid 90s. The company would not have survived without this.

I stand in awe of the young men and women we work with in Wodonga, all of whom are embracing study even though they all still grapple with lives steeped in violence, poverty and hardship – somehow balancing a life that without intervention is a sure path to suicide or a government institution.

Recently we gathered to do a workshop by the ocean – I looked at the faces of the women who have survived prison and addiction and I marvelled at how we arrived together, at how these young and not so young lives are quite literally finding a path to life.

Sometimes we are given glimpses of what greatness is possible with the human spirit. I feel hugely privileged to have met Dame Elisabeth and to have witnessed the radiance of her being. From all in Somebody's Daughter we thank you.

*Maud Clark  
Artistic Director*

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## The State Library of Victoria

The State Library of Victoria celebrates its sesquicentenary in 2004 and is Australia's oldest free public library. The State Library of Victoria Foundation was established in 1994 in response to the inadequate funding of the institution by governments over a very long period of time.

The role of the Foundation is to support the State Library by raising funds to purchase historically significant items for its collections; underwrite public and educational programs, exhibitions and information technology initiatives; and secure corporate sponsorship.

The Murdoch family has had a long and significant association with the State Library of Victoria. Sir Keith Murdoch was Chairman of the Board of Trustees from 1939 to 1945, of what was then known as the Melbourne Public Library. His contribution and memory are perpetuated through the naming of the Library's major exhibition space, the Keith Murdoch Gallery, and through its biennial Keith Murdoch Oration.

Dame Elisabeth Murdoch has been a wonderful source of support and advocacy for both the Library and Foundation over many years. She was a generous member of the Friends of the State Library since its inception in 1966 and during the years of the Renaissance Appeal leading up to the establishment of the Foundation. When the Friends merged with the Foundation in 1997, Dame Elisabeth, along with Dr Davis McCaughey AC, became a Founding Patron of the State Library of Victoria Foundation. Dame Elisabeth remains a loyal and active member of the Foundation and a Bookplate Donor.

She has willingly lent her support to a number of fundraising initiatives that have enabled the State Library to maintain its vital role as a public repository for historically significant items. An example of this was when the La Trobe Archive was offered for sale through Quaritch Antiquarian Dealers in London in 1989. The La Trobe Librarian, Dianne Reilly, was faced with the considerable challenge of raising \$200,000 to purchase this archive. It was through the enthusiasm of Dame Elisabeth, her personal gift towards this project and her recognition of the importance of this heritage material that spearheaded the drive to realise the rest of the funds. In 1992, the State Library was finally able to purchase the archive, but this task would have been considerably more difficult without Dame Elisabeth's support.

When Governor Hotham laid the Foundation stone of the Library on 3 July 1854, he referred to the Library as 'the people's university'. Dame Elisabeth has long acknowledged the important role of the Library in the cultural and intellectual life of Melbourne. She continues to be an inspiration for all of us here at the Library and is greatly admired by Foundation members, Library management and staff. She remains actively involved in Library events and public programs and her contribution to this great institution is immeasurable.

*Jack Moshakis  
Executive Director  
State Library of Victoria Foundation*

## Section 1. Arts and Culture (continued)

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### Victorian Tapestry Workshop

Dame Elisabeth Murdoch was the driving force behind the establishment in 1976 of the Victorian Tapestry Workshop (VTW), and she has continued to be one of its most enthusiastic and active supporters since that time. As the world's leading tapestry studio today, the VTW owes its very existence and much of its extraordinary success to the vision, drive, and astute dealings of this remarkable woman.

When Lady Delacombe, wife of the State Governor, shared her idea with Dame Elisabeth a daring vision was born – the establishment of a tapestry workshop in Victoria that would provide opportunities for Australian artists to work in the ancient art of tapestry, revivified in a contemporary form in their own country. When the Delacombes returned to England, Dame Elisabeth carried the concept forward, chairing a small but influential committee of Melbourne's art lovers. Over several years of research and negotiation, her dealings with the government of the day, led by Premier Hamer, ensured that the vision was realised with a sound artistic philosophy and a business plan in place.

Meetings were held in the room in Parliament House allocated to the wife of the Premier and business was dealt with purposefully but with all the grace, humility and dignity that we associate with Dame Elisabeth. My first meeting with her took place when I was invited to join this early committee in 1974 and from that moment her bright mind, her warmth and generosity of spirit, and her boundless enthusiasm have enriched my working life at the tapestry workshop.

Today the VTW has created more than 300 mural scale tapestries in collaboration with artists from all over the world. Dame Elisabeth has followed the progress of most of these works in her various roles, first as a Board member for over 20 years, including a term as Chairman, and more recently as a Trustee of the Tapestry Foundation of Victoria. She has shared the creative journey with us, showing interest in the artists, enquiring into the lives and welfare of each of the weavers, and exhibiting her famous exuberant excitement at the completion of weaving.

A determination to share her enthusiasm for the art of tapestry with as wide an audience as possible lay behind her generous funding of two monumental suites of tapestries, one designed by Roger Kemp that hangs in the National Gallery of Victoria, and the other

designed by Mary Macqueen for the Victorian Arts Centre. Like the great medieval suites of the past, these tapestries have already outlived the artists who designed them. They have been amongst the most popular tapestries we have woven, and have attracted the admiration of countless local and overseas viewers. Her latest project is another massive tapestry based on the work of Roger Kemp for Blackwood Hall at Monash University.

Dame Elisabeth's concern that the VTW should be securely housed in well maintained premises appropriate to the needs of the world's leading tapestry studio, led her to provide the major source of financial support for the purchase of our building by the Tapestry Foundation, thus ensuring for the first time the quality and long term security of tenure that we sought. Her benefaction has also contributed in other vital ways to the development and growth of the VTW, and to the promotion of it throughout the world.

Working with Dame Elisabeth for nearly 30 years of my professional life has been a wonderful experience. There are those in the community with vision and drive, and there are others who support through philanthropy and benefaction, but it is a very rare phenomenon to find both attributes in one person. Dame Elisabeth is exceptional for this reason alone.

Her enthusiastic encouragement and her generous provision of financial assistance to the VTW has helped to provide rewarding opportunities for some hundreds of artists and weavers. As a result tapestries are now on public display in many major buildings throughout the country, enriching the lives of millions of Australians and exciting the interest of overseas visitors. But more than that, Dame Elisabeth's support has helped to ensure that the art of tapestry is now a well established part of Australia's cultural life and that Australian tapestries are the most highly regarded in the world today.

*Sue Walker  
Director*

# Community Well-being

## Section 2. Community Well-being

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### The Brotherhood of St Laurence

The Brotherhood of St Laurence works for an Australia free of poverty. As well as providing services and programs for families and elderly people on low incomes, refugees, young people and the unemployed, we research the causes and effects of poverty and advocate for people who are disadvantaged.

Since its beginnings the Brotherhood of St Laurence (BSL) has had a strong sense of empowering people to help themselves. Established in 1930 during the Great Depression, the Brotherhood was the vision and creation of Father Gerard Tucker, a man who combined his Christian faith with a vigorous determination to promote social justice.

Father Tucker was a real pioneer and while his first priority was working in the slums in Fitzroy, he saw the need to look further ahead and built the GK Tucker Settlement for unemployed families in Carrum Downs in 1935.

I am sure Dame Elisabeth can be described as a pioneer in her own right, supporting her husband and family and friends in countless ways, and contributing to the many organisations that have become her family and friends over the past 60 years.

Well known for her forthright views in upholding social justice issues, Dame Elisabeth has been a supporter of our work for many years. She certainly agrees with the Brotherhood's vision of an Australia free of poverty and the long-held principle of giving everyone 'a fair go'.

This is why she agreed to take an active role as Patron for the Capital Appeal that was run to improve the facilities at Carrum Downs in the mid-1980s. Two hundred and twenty men and women now live in small cottages in the grounds of the GK Tucker Settlement, in what we believe was Australia's first retirement village.

This project was dear to Dame Elisabeth's heart as it is close to her home on the Mornington Peninsula. She has always believed in, and still strongly supports, her local community.

In 1998 and 1999 Dame Elisabeth again rose to the occasion and agreed to be one of our Patrons for the Building Better Lives Capital Appeal. She gave a generous donation, hosted a function and set an outstanding example for others to follow.

This appeal raised \$6.5 million dollars. It enabled 65 elderly disadvantaged low-income men and women to remain in comfort and dignity in inner Melbourne, where they had lived all their lives, in the Brotherhood's re-developed rooming house and hostel.

Over the years that we have enjoyed Dame Elisabeth's support, our achievements have included establishing Community Aid Abroad (now independent of the BSL), the first Victorian legal aid centre and the first family planning clinic in Victoria.

Today the Brotherhood continues to be dedicated to helping people into work, caring for older people, supporting communities, assisting families and children and carrying out research and advocacy for change in services and government policies.

We are currently campaigning for action on the need for the creation of more full-time jobs, affordable housing, welfare reform, justice for refugees and reinvigorating communities through enterprise projects.

Thank you Dame Elisabeth, our inspired, enlightened and passionate philanthropist and friend.

*Father Nicolas Frances  
Executive Director*

## Section 2. Community Well-being (continued)

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### Children First Foundation

When Children First Foundation was established in July 1999 to support the humanitarian work of Moira Kelly AO, Dame Elisabeth was one of the first people who agreed to support, promote and be a Patron of the fledgling Foundation.

Dame Elisabeth's commitment to a cause that faced significant obstacles – diplomatic, visas, seriously ill children, travel documentation and language barriers, let alone an empty bank balance – allowed Directors to encourage financial contributions from other sources and trusts and legitimised the Foundation in its initial stages.

Children First Foundation, through Moira Kelly, conducts a medical evacuation program and assists disadvantaged children. Children, irrespective of race or creed, who are living in abject circumstances in war-torn, poverty-stricken lands, and who are suffering debilitating sickness or illness, are physically maimed or deformed from birth, are the tragic casualties of crossfire, land mines or bombing, or are the victims of malnutrition, disease and exposure and even attacks by wild animals, are provided with medical and emotional support.

Through Children First Foundation these children are given the opportunity for life saving/life changing surgery, using specialists who generously donate their expertise, together with the significant spirit of goodwill given by private and public hospitals. In their homelands these children are often deprived of even the most basic health and medical services and facilities and have no chance of obtaining the necessary sophisticated treatment and surgery they may require. Rehabilitation is undertaken at the Foundation's Farm, donated and built by Rotary District 9790, before children return to the country of their birth.

Indeed, at a time when the international situation has again become quite precarious and where there are numerous areas of high volatility, the medical evacuation program stands as an example of what can be achieved, at a very practical level, by people from many nations working together in assisting poor and disadvantaged children.

Dame Elisabeth has always taken a keen interest in the activities of the Foundation, in particular our international children who have undergone very complex operations – one of which was an Australian-first and one a world-first. To date, over 250 children's lives have been

saved or changed markedly through this program. Dame Elisabeth has also visited the Foundation's rehabilitation home near Kilmore where she enjoyed an easy rapport with the children.

Children First Foundation is continuing its program by also assisting disadvantaged young Victorian children. A specific dimension is to help children, in particular siblings, exposed to family dysfunction, parents who are going through a crisis, or parents not able to provide necessary care during school holiday periods. It is believed that interaction with children from war torn countries coping with severe medical conditions will inspire courage, acceptance and understanding.

To replicate Moira Kelly's vision, the Foundation is to extend its international work by establishing the Children First International Medical Registry, which will incorporate hospitals, doctors and support services in a voluntary capacity world-wide. Whilst still in its formative stages it has the potential to make a significant difference to the children of the world, where the passport you carry, or the country you live in, defines whether you are eligible for medical assistance or not.

The Foundation's Board of Directors has greatly appreciated Dame Elisabeth's belief and encouragement in what it is trying to achieve and feels the following quotation best describes Dame Elisabeth's characteristics:

*"For a human character to reveal truly exceptional qualities one must have the good fortune to be able to observe its performance over many years. If this performance is devoid of all egotism, if its guiding motive is unparalleled generosity, if it is absolutely certain that there is no thought of recompense and that, in addition, it has left its visible mark upon the earth, then there is no mistake." – Elzéard Bouffier*

*Margaret Smith  
Chairman*

## Hanover

Hanover is an independent welfare organisation which, for the last 40 years, has provided accommodation and a range of support services to people who are homeless. Hanover's mission is to empower people who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness, to enable them to take greater control over their lives and to stimulate and encourage change in Australian society to benefit them. It achieves this by delivering services, conducting research and by advocacy.

Every day Hanover helps approximately 500 people through the provision of crisis shelter, longer term housing, free meals, financial and material aid, counselling, budgeting, medical assistance, work skills training, employment placement and recreational opportunities.

Approximately one-third of all people assisted by Hanover are families, the majority of whom have young children.

For many years Hanover Family Services had offered services to homeless families. While this had proved most successful in meeting many of the needs of the adult members of the families, staff had become increasingly concerned about the individual needs of children living in the families we helped.

In order to fully understand the impact of family homelessness on children, Hanover and the Royal Children's Hospital undertook a joint research project to examine the issue. The resultant report, 'Can I Stay Here?' showed that children living in this situation were at great risk of suffering lasting damage academically, socially and emotionally. In addition, the children experienced physical health problems at a significantly higher rate than did children in the general population.

The research suggested various strategies be developed to address these issues, including the development of a children's play/therapy room, staffed by a qualified children's worker.

In 1995, Hanover was urgently seeking resources to enable it to furnish a new children's play/therapy room, situated within our Family Centre.

Fortunately Dame Elisabeth Murdoch heard of our struggles and very generously made a personal donation to enable the playroom to be fully furnished with a wonderful range of equipment appropriate to the needs of the children.

Dame Elisabeth also agreed to launch our research report thus generating extensive media coverage and ensuring that the information on the needs of children in homeless families became widely available. This helped a number of services working in relevant areas to focus their attention on children's issues, while at the same time, they continued to work with adult family members.

Dame Elisabeth further supported our work with homeless children by providing resources to allow some of the other issues identified through the research to be addressed. These not only included helping children with their medical difficulties, but importantly, also focused on their social isolation. For example, we encouraged children to join a range of suitable activities in the general community, thus helping them to develop links which could continue after they left Hanover's accommodation.

The play/therapy room not only continues to be regularly used for its original purpose, but is now also the focal point for a highly successful volunteer-run tutoring program, designed to help children overcome some of their academic difficulties which are generally a result of their severely disrupted schooling.

There have been many very positive and long lasting effects of the assistance Dame Elisabeth has given to Hanover. Most importantly, at a time when it was not a community priority, it allowed Hanover to pilot some new and innovative approaches to its work with homeless children and young people. When these achieved positive results, it assisted us to gain financial contributions from other sectors in the community, thus enabling this work to continue.

Dame Elisabeth's gift will live on through the lives of the literally thousands of children who have been helped to overcome their homelessness through her generous support of Hanover's work.

*Tony Nicholson  
Chief Executive Officer*

## Section 2. Community Well-being (continued)

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### SANE Australia

SANE Australia is a national charity working for a better life for Australians affected by mental illness, through education, applied research and campaigning for improved services and attitudes.

A major part of SANE's campaigning work is to ensure that a full 'treatment package' is made available to all those in need. The SANE charter spells out these constituents as access to effective clinical treatment, community support programs, help for family and other carers and an end to stigma. Reducing stigma is integral to all SANE's activities – the award-winning SANE Stigma Watch program, based at SANE's website, fights back against stigma in the mass media, develops ongoing contacts with journalists, scriptwriters and advertisers, and promotes an accurate and balanced portrayal of mental illness in the media.

SANE's busy Helpline service daily receives telephone calls and emails from people in all states and territories, who are seeking information about mental illness and referral to local support. SANE produces a range of highly acclaimed plain English education resources – pamphlets, low-cost booklets and audio-visual materials – which are accessed through Helpline and SANE's site on the world wide web – [www.sane.org](http://www.sane.org) – which is now Australia's favourite mental health website.

SANE is totally dependent on donations and philanthropic support to carry out its mission.

Dame Elisabeth Murdoch's generosity over many years has enabled SANE to develop much-needed education resources to help people understand and make sense of mental illness and its treatment – a critical first step to coping with its effects. Many myths and

misunderstandings exist about mental illness, so it is critical that the facts are available in non-technical, jargon-free English and that everyday questions are answered as clearly and empathetically as possible, for readers who are often distressed and confused by their situations.

An initial education grant from Dame Elisabeth enabled the production of the videos *Rocket and Rollerblades* – for people with mental illness, and *Snapshots and Signposts* – for family members of people with mental illness. These videos (packaged together with the SANE Guides for Consumers and Carers) have made a big difference in breaking down the isolation experienced by people affected by mental illness – particularly valuable for those living in rural or isolated areas. Knowing you are not the only person, or family affected, that the feelings you experience are not unique and learning what helps others, are important ingredients for the success of these videos.

Later support helped with research and production of the SANE Guide to Depression, one of the first plain English resources on the subject to be produced in Australia for this common, yet often misunderstood, disorder.

Most recently Dame Elisabeth's support is contributing to research and production of a resource for young people traditionally neglected by the mental health system – a cartoon-style book explaining mental illness especially for young children who have a relative with the illness.

*Barbara Hocking*  
Executive Director

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## EW Tipping Foundation

EW Tipping Foundation provides support to people with disabilities throughout Victoria. Our primary focus is on residential and community supports: we manage 19 fully-staffed homes, and we support many people in their independent living arrangements. We particularly focus on supporting people with disabilities to be included in the community, as well as being advocates for enhancements to disability services across the state.

Dame Elisabeth's connections to the Tipping family go back more than 50 years. Sir Keith Murdoch was Bill Tipping's employer, and Marjorie Tipping and Dame Elisabeth sat on a number of committees connected with The University of Melbourne together in the post-war years.

Dame Elisabeth supported the EW Tipping Foundation almost from its inception. Dame Elisabeth consented to be a patron from 1971, and organised a number of fundraising and publicity events to help establish the

Foundation. One particular event which Dame Elisabeth kindly hosted was a garden party at Cruden Farm, where Honour Blackman, star of James Bond movies and The Avengers series, was guest of honour.

Dame Elisabeth has been a very generous supporter of the Foundation every year for 32 years, and her contributions to many and varied projects have helped provide wonderful opportunities for people with disabilities throughout Victoria. These projects include capital contributions for new houses, contributions to recurrent projects, and specific contributions for projects such as vehicles for people with disabilities, as well as aids and equipment. She has made a significant – and often unsung – difference in the lives of many people with disabilities.

*Richard Dent  
Chief Executive Officer*

## Section 2. Community Well-being (continued)

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### YWCA Victoria

Long serving YWCA Board member Dimity Reed is a former school friend of Annie Kantor, a member of Dame Elisabeth's family, and through that contact, Dame Elisabeth has been regularly updated on the work of our organisation.

Dame Elisabeth was particularly interested in the YWCA's decision in 1996 to focus directly on creating programs for young women by establishing a Young Women's Centre in the Elizabeth Street building.

Also around the same time the YWCA became the custodians of a body of work entitled 'The Return of the Goddess' created by artist Ruth Lyon, which included a bust of Dame Elisabeth Murdoch. Dame Elisabeth had never seen the bust as part of the collection, and arrangements were made through Dimity Reed to have Dame Elisabeth visit the Y for afternoon tea to view the impressive piece.

During that visit Dame Elisabeth learnt of the establishment of the Girlstorey project with its aims of providing opportunities for skill development, including employment, education, training, self-esteem building and encouraging creative aspirations.

Dame Elisabeth showed great interest in the idea of providing new technology learning opportunities for disadvantaged young women, and in the YWCA's plan to establish an internet training facility within its Elizabeth Street complex.

She made a substantial personal donation which helped the YWCA purchase equipment to create a state-of-the-art computer facility.

Through this generous and unsolicited donation the YWCA was able to introduce the world of cyberspace and computer literacy to many disadvantaged young women through informal teaching and learning at the Ynet Centre.

The Ynet Technology Centre program launch event took place in September 1997 and at the launch, Dame Elisabeth admitted to knowing nothing about computers, but she felt it was a privilege to be involved in a program that would give new skills to underprivileged women.

"Everything requires optimism and determination", Dame Elisabeth said. "Without that, all these splendid young women would not be motivated to become involved."

The 15 computer teaching laboratory was in full operation during the launch and the 150 plus guests who attended were challenged to join Dame Elisabeth and the 'Ynet Chicks' in a fun, interactive net-navigating game.

A year later, YWCA Victoria formed a partnership and strategic alliance with ATEC (Access Training and Employment Centre), expanding access to the Ynet Centre to a much broader community base.

In the four years that followed, in addition to continuing to support the Girlstorey program participants, the Ynet Centre delivered a wide range training courses and classes. It introduced young African women to the world of web page creation and design and it provided e-commerce training to a range of small businesses, industries and professionals. It was used as an activity base for school holiday programs and Vicnet funded courses were also offered to the public from the Ynet Centre.

Today the Centre is still used as an internet access point and as one of the nine conference meeting spaces located within The Hotel Y Conference Centre. The space is now known as The Murdoch Room, as a fitting tribute to a very gentle woman whose generosity 're-booted' the YWCA and moved it further onto the cyberspace-highway of success.

Girlstorey programs continue a strong focus on community arts and other support services as a way of creating opportunities for disadvantaged young women.

*Rosemary Hehir  
Chief Executive Officer*

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## Cottage by the Sea

Cottage by the Sea, Queenscliff Inc. (formerly known as Ministering Children's League Incorporated) was established in 1890 to provide care and accommodation for children recovering from illness. Over the 110 years, relief care and support has been provided for tens of thousands of children from all over Victoria.

We provide short-term relief care in a holiday environment for children in need. Cottage by the Sea aims to support and help children whose families are in crisis situations. This allows a family the chance to cope with their difficulties in the secure knowledge that their children are being well cared for and enjoying themselves. Care is provided in a relaxed holiday environment and opportunities are given for children to develop self-esteem, enjoy life's simple pleasures, learn new skills and make new friends.

For many years now, Cottage by the Sea, Queenscliff Inc. has been supported with annual donations from Dame Elisabeth Murdoch. Dame Elisabeth's donations have enabled hundreds of underprivileged children from around our state to experience a wonderful, much needed holiday at Cottage by the Sea. The Cottage relies heavily on such community generosity and support to ensure this valuable service continues. It does not receive any government funding.

All the children are referred on a needs basis by schools and community agencies and government departments from around Victoria.

We employ nine full-time staff and a number of part-time staff. A number of regular volunteers also assist in the children's program. In addition, hundreds of branch members and auxiliary supporters help with fundraising activities.

Over 640 children enjoyed holidays at the Cottage last year, referred by a network of over 200 agencies. We were also able to provide a small referral service for children who fall outside the Cottage criteria, such as young teenagers, to more appropriate organisations. We undertook staff retraining in paediatric first aid, and catered for the specific needs groups of boys aged 10-13 years old and girls' groups. A part-time paediatric nurse monitored and promoted the health of children at the Cottage.

*Tony Featherston  
General Manager*

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## Lord Somers Camp and Power House

Lord Somers Camp and Power House is a not-for-profit youth organisation which has conducted major camping programs for young people from all walks of life at Lord Somers Camp in Somers, Victoria, since 1931.

Dame Elisabeth has very kindly provided financial assistance to help rebuild the facilities at the camp site and in particular the 'Murdoch Room', a media centre larger than the previous press room. During the annual January camps a daily news sheet is prepared in the Murdoch Room and published for the 100 participants and 150 volunteer staff.

A major rebuilding project, which commenced in 1993, was undertaken over several years until all buildings were replaced or upgraded. Generous assistance from Dame Elisabeth at this time was greatly appreciated, in helping to make this project possible. The buildings and especially the shower and toilet facilities were badly in need of an upgrade. The construction work was undertaken by people who previously were unemployed under the supervision of a qualified builder, so they gained both employment and training through their involvement in this project.

With the improved facilities the programs which enjoy a strong reputation for developing teamwork, self-confidence, cooperation, tolerance and leadership

skills can continue to provide these benefits to youth (16-18 year olds) from a wide range of backgrounds for many years to come. Volunteers also conduct camping programs for the Very Special Kids (children with a life-threatening illness) and Camp Diversity for young people with a chronic illness or disability. These programs also provide opportunities for the self-development of the volunteers (many of them under the age of 25) who are involved in the planning, organising and running of the programs.

The programs have increased in popularity with many applicants having to be placed on waiting lists. The improved facilities at the camp site are a contributing factor and hence Dame Elisabeth's assistance has contributed to a greater number of young people gaining the benefits from participation in the various programs.

All members of Lord Somers Camp and Power House extend their heartfelt thanks to Dame Elisabeth for her generous assistance and great support.

*Ian Gibson  
General Manager*

## Section 2. Community Well-being (continued)

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### Australian Red Cross

Over the past 50 years, Dame Elisabeth has been a consistent and generous supporter of the work of the Australian Red Cross. Although she has not been a member in any official capacity, Dame Elisabeth has supported local units in the Mornington Peninsula in particular, has opened her gracious garden at Cruden Farm for fundraising and has over the years contributed to the Australian Red Cross Murray River Marathon.

A particular project to which Dame Elisabeth made an invaluable contribution was in the early 1950s when she was instrumental in raising funds for reproducing prints for the Heidelberg Rehabilitation Centre Picture Library Service.

*Martine Letts  
Secretary General*

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### The MS Society

Dame Elisabeth has contributed extensively and regularly over a period of approximately 17 years to the MS Society of Victoria.

Her donations have assisted in a number of areas directly benefiting people with MS in Victoria, including:

- ~ The upgrade of supported accommodation services for people with high needs MS.
- ~ The Capital Appeal at Watsonia and The Nerve Centre in Blackburn, the successful completion of which resulted in more supported accommodation and health and lifestyle services for people with MS throughout Victoria.

~ Active participation in the development of research opportunities for research to find a cure for MS.

Dame Elisabeth has been a consistent contributor to the MS Society and we sincerely thank her and applaud her contribution to the lives of Victorians with MS.

*Lindsay McMillan  
Chief Executive*

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### The Order of Australia Associations (Victorian Branch)

Dame Elisabeth Murdoch exemplifies the criteria of Companion in The Order of Australia – eminent achievement and merit in the highest degree in service to Australia and to humanity at large.

Dame Elisabeth's generosity is distinguished by her personal knowledge, passion and commitment to the many causes she supports. Cruden Farm, for example, is her own magnificent creation which reflects her abilities as a great gardener with a 'hands on' approach to everything from herbaceous borders to reflective

gardens. It is a place where various fundraising events are held with Dame Elisabeth as a gracious host and patron of the organisations which benefit from her all encompassing philanthropy.

*Diana Jones, AM  
National Chairman*

*Prue Gillies, AM  
State Chairman*

### Braemar College and Clyde School

As Elisabeth Greene, from 1922-1926 Dame Elisabeth Murdoch attended Clyde, an independent girls' boarding school. "Of all my treasured memories of my school days, the most precious would be that of the beauty and enchantment of our glorious bush and country surroundings. They were at the heart of my happiness in being at Clyde." (from '*Elisabeth Murdoch, Two Lives*' by John Monks).

Established in St Kilda in 1910, Clyde relocated in 1919 to a remote bush campus halfway up the slopes of Mt Macedon, seven kilometres from Woodend. There, in a recently vacated former guest house, Clyde girls settled into school life. Their new home boasted an impressive entrance hall, spectacular gardens and buildings designed in elaborate Victorian architecture topped with a tall tower. They retain pride of place on Braemar's well developed and growing campus.

The conditions at Clyde in 1922 were challenging. The school was isolated, winters were very cold, bushfires threatened in summer and facilities were basic. But strong bonds developed among the girls, and firm and enduring friendships were forged. It was a close and caring school, as Braemar is today. The same camaraderie and loyalty which Dame Elisabeth experienced at Clyde are continuing to be fostered today. It was during her school years that Dame Elisabeth developed her considerable talent and enthusiasm for both sport and music.

Many other Clyde traditions have also withstood the test of time. Year 12 students, on their last day at school, sign their names on the walls of the tower, built in 1890. Dame Elisabeth's name can be found alongside hundreds of signatures of Clyde and Braemar departing students, a tangible reminder of their school days.

Clyde closed in 1975, with the remaining girls moving to Geelong Grammar School. Many 'old girls', and most notably Dame Elisabeth, continued to take a keen interest in Braemar College affairs and to contribute to its growing excellence.

In 1976 Braemar College opened as a low fee, co-educational, Christian ecumenical school for day students. A strong sense of community enabled the school to overcome the challenges of the early years. Braemar College has enjoyed considerable success, establishing itself as a leading independent school in Victoria. Since Braemar's inception, Dame Elisabeth has been Patron, providing generous financial support and encouragement. It was with her backing that the College's Marcel Nyeholt Library opened in 1997.

It is in recognition of Dame Elisabeth's contributions and generosity to the Clyde, Braemar and wider community, that Braemar College is honoured to name its current building project, The Dame Elisabeth Murdoch Centre. At a cost of \$3.3 million, this centre is the largest and most ambitious project undertaken on site. It will be completed in 2003, providing five classrooms, a lecture theatre, a computer laboratory, locker spaces, toilet facilities, student study areas, staff offices and a canteen and cafeteria for the whole college.

When Clyde first opened in 1919, the school motto was 'Spectemur Agendo' – We are judged by our acts. Although the motto was changed when Clyde became Braemar, the spirit of that early motto lives on in 'old girls' like Dame Elisabeth, whose life has been spent in service to others.

*Philip Grutzner  
Headmaster*

## Section 3. Education and Social Research (continued)

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### Woodleigh School

Dame Elisabeth's support for 'her neighbours' – that is, organisations on the Mornington Peninsula – is legendary, and Woodleigh School is only one of countless local organisations grateful for her interest and support.

Woolleigh School is a small but lively coeducational, independent school with a strong emphasis on independence, initiative, and belief in the integrity of the young. Dame Elisabeth's involvement with the School goes right back to the 1980s. One of the School's many features is intensive support programs for students with special needs. Dame Elisabeth provided financial support for such programs over several years and when we moved in the 1990s to set up a unique support centre for students with intellectual disabilities, her support continued. In more recent years, her interest in the arts has led to her involvement in a Performing Arts Centre, an award-winning Visual Arts Centre, and other major projects.

Just as significantly, Dame Elisabeth has shown a lively interest in meeting and interacting with our special needs students and our arts students. She has the remarkable ability to make quick and easy contact with young people, and her recall of people's names and interests is exceptional. The opportunity for our arts students to meet one of Australia's leading patrons of the arts has been a source of excitement and inspiration.

In recognition of her many contributions to Woolleigh School, Dame Elisabeth is a Patron of Woolleigh School and we have named the Dame Elisabeth Art Gallery in her honour. We feel privileged to have had contact with such a remarkable woman of foresight, compassion, and lively intellect. Our students are in her debt.

*Paul Turner  
Principal*

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### Merriang Special Development School

Merriang Special Developmental School, located in Melbourne's northern suburbs, caters for the needs of disabled students. The Secondary Campus is located in Lyndon Street, Lalor, and is part of Peter Lalor Secondary College. The Primary Campus is located in Waratah Street, Thomastown, as part of Thomastown East Primary School. Merriang is an integrated facility, with students accessing classes in the host schools.

Dame Elisabeth Murdoch has been associated with Merriang Special Development School for some time and is very special to our school community. She is an extraordinary woman, a great Australian, whose support of severely disabled students knows no boundaries.

Dame Elisabeth saw the exceptional needs of our small school community and through her commitment we were able to make our dreams a reality. We now have a hydrotherapy pool and a wheelchair access bus, thanks to her caring heart.

We have had wonderful visits to her garden at Cruden Farm where she has shared such special times with us. She has spent time in our school community with the students, parents and wider school community, engaging all of us with her lively mind and quick sense of humour. Her presence is uplifting, and there are many benefits for all of us.

Dame Elisabeth has touched all of our lives in a very special way. We love her and to us, she will always be our very own 'Elisabeth'.

*Maxine Duncan  
Assistant Principal*

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## The Specific Learning Difficulties Association of Victoria (SPELD)

SPELD Victoria was initiated in August 1969 when a group of committed Victorians banded together, determined to help children of average to above average intelligence, who, despite adequate educational opportunity, were under-achieving at school. Today these children are recognised as having learning difficulties and are sometimes called dyslexic.

Dame Elisabeth became the patron of SPELD Victoria during 1970 and began an appeal in April 1972 to raise money to provide a 'SPELD Centre'. Many trusts, estates, and individuals gave generously to the appeal which ran for five years. Dame Elisabeth was a great supporter during that time, and was present at the opening of the centre on the 29th June, 1978, in its current location at 494 Brunswick Street, North Fitzroy.

Since that time SPELD has continued to grow, offering a range of services of excellence to those with Learning Difficulties, their families, and teachers. The building has now been fully renovated and extended to include a conference room. Dame Elisabeth has continued to support the work of SPELD both financially and in person with her attendance at Annual General Meetings.

By 2002 SPELD membership had grown to 531. One of the most popular membership benefits is use of the Dame Elisabeth Murdoch Library that offers borrowing in person as well as by post to members across the State. Annually, approximately 500 attendees benefit from knowledge gained at SPELD seminars, held in our own conference room. Dame Elisabeth made a significant contribution to the conference room addition and her generosity on that occasion was greatly appreciated. The ensuing development of the SPELD seminar program has greatly contributed to the dissemination of knowledge about learning difficulties to the wider community.

Three rooms at the SPELD Centre are now used for diagnostic assessment by the SPELD team of educational psychologists. During 2002, 385 people were assessed. Of that number, 328 were children. The SPELD Learning Centre teaches approximately 50 children at a time operating on Saturdays and Wednesday afternoons. Although SPELD Victoria still values the support of many volunteers, demand for services has required the appointment of a General Manager and an additional part-time staff member.

SPELD Victoria is now in such a position that it can readily fulfil its motto of 'raising awareness' (within the community), and 'acknowledging potential' (of those with learning difficulties'). The support of Dame Elisabeth since SPELD's inception has been essential and pivotal to the growth of this organisation.

Dame Elisabeth, on behalf of all those who have received assistance from SPELD across the last 34 years, thank you for your support and generosity. Your involvement has most definitely made a positive difference to many, many lives.

*Lorraine Graham  
Second Vice President*

## Section 3. Education and Social Research (continued)

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### The Council for Christian Education in Schools

The Council for Christian Education in Schools (CCES) is a 120 year-old ecumenical agency which, by government mandate, provides Christian religious education in government schools. It has 65 state secondary colleges and 12 state primary schools covered by either part or full-time chaplaincy.

Through the vision and generosity of Dame Elisabeth Murdoch, many children and young people at risk have been influenced by chaplains who are positive role models and offer a strong values base across the State.

CCES Chaplains deal face to face with an increasingly dislocated and fragile family structure, which manifests itself at school in such behaviours as bullying, self-abuse, drugs, suicide and low self-esteem. Working as part of a Student Welfare team within the school, chaplains have a distinctive contribution to make because they have more time than most other staff to walk alongside these hurting, confused or even despairing young people – many of whom are just wanting a listening ear or a little bit of unconditional love. Many young people disclose things to chaplains which they are frightened to disclose to others, because they know that their information will be treated confidentially.

Chaplains go on school camps, teach Values for Living classes, act as advocates or mediators with troubled teenagers in the courts, celebrate major events such as funerals and weddings for school families, run self-esteem or anger management workshops and deal one to one with students referred to them by other teachers on a daily basis.

School principals and the very highest authorities in the Department of Education and Training recognise CCES as a 'highly valued partner', because of chaplaincy in schools. More and more primary school principals are turning to CCES for help, because they realise that moral values are being eroded at home and through the media.

CCES is deeply indebted to Dame Elisabeth, who has given generously for many years to the work of chaplaincy.

*Revd Dr Neville Carr  
Chief Executive*

### The University of Melbourne

Dame Elisabeth Murdoch is one of the University's most cherished friends and benefactors. She has made significant moral and financial contributions to the University through her support of medical research, education, landscape architecture and the arts as well as through the active role she played in establishing and supporting three of the University's chairs. In 1982 the University conferred on Dame Elisabeth the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws in acknowledgement of her contributions.

Dame Elisabeth's long association with the University dates back to 1946 when her husband, Sir Keith, established the Herald Chair of Fine Arts and she began a lifelong interest in and commitment to the University. She has continued to support the School of Fine Arts, as recently as last year providing funds for the Building Infrastructure Improvements program and sponsoring projects honoring the first two holders of the Herald Chair, Sir Joseph Burke and Margaret Manion.

The University's Faculty of Education has also benefited from Dame Elisabeth's generosity. As part of her work aiding research into deafness, Dame Elisabeth has funded the Faculty to develop postgraduate training in audiology and education for the hearing impaired.

Perhaps the most well-known of Dame Elisabeth's connections with the University is in the area of children's

health. Dame Elisabeth was a member (1933-1965) and President (1954-1965) of the Committee of Management at the Royal Children's Hospital. In her capacity as founding Chairman of the Research Foundation at the Royal Children's Hospital, she convinced Dame Hilda Stevenson, who was to donate \$100,000 to the University, that the donation should go to setting up a University Chair of Child Health at the Children's Hospital. This ensured the establishment of the Chair at the University under the control of the hospitals Committee of Management. The Chair is known today as the Stevenson Professorship in the University's Department of Paediatrics at the Royal Children's Hospital.

Dame Elisabeth was also instrumental in creating another link between the Royal Children's Hospital and the University. She was a member of the hospitals Committee of Management which brought about the establishment of a second chair in the Department of Paediatrics, held by the director of the Royal Children's Hospital Research Foundation from time to time. Created in 1973, the Chair is known as the Royal Children's Hospital Research Foundation Professor of Paediatrics.

*Professor Alan D Gilbert  
Vice-Chancellor*

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## Trinity College, University of Melbourne

Dame Elisabeth Murdoch is a wonderful supporter of Trinity College. She is a great believer in the value of the 'large and liberal education' that Trinity College offers, and the value of young people, from around the world at both undergraduate and postgraduate level, living and studying together in a community of scholars. Always the encourager and nurturer in her regular visits and in her correspondence, Dame Elisabeth involves herself in the intellectual, artistic, community and spiritual life of the College. It is a lively partnership between philanthropist and institution. Dame Elisabeth's philanthropic support has been wide-ranging and embracing of all the College does.

In 2000, Dame Elisabeth was elected a Fellow of Trinity College – the highest honour the College can bestow to recognise outstanding contributions to the College and the wider community. The Warden of Trinity College, Professor Donald Markwell, in the citation read at her installation, spoke of her enduring sense of service to the community evident in her hard work for the Royal Children's Hospital and in her many contributions, large and small, to health, education and in the arts. In her wonderful unassuming nature she said, "I am very grateful to have received such an honour and only hope that I'm worthy of it!"

In support of the intellectual life of the College, Dame Elisabeth has helped to welcome eminent academics of diverse disciplines visiting from around the world. Her interest in lively intellectual debate and discussion has flowered through her support of the Frank Woods Endowment in memory of the late Anglican Archbishop of Melbourne, Sir Frank Woods. In 2001 this Fund brought to Trinity, the Revd Dr Judith Maltby, Fellow and Chaplain of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. In 2002 it brought from Cambridge Massachusetts, the Australian-born Early Church History scholar the Revd Dr Andrew McGowan. This year it has supported the visit of the Revd Professor Keith Ward, Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford, who engaged students of every discipline on matters of the mind and the heart.

Dame Elisabeth's philanthropy through the Frank Woods Endowment also supports the teaching in the College in the provision of lectureships. This allows the College to attract the very best teaching staff it can. The result of this is that the standard of teaching and learning is greatly enhanced. Frank Woods lecturers have included such leaders in theological education as the Revd Dr John Wright and the Revd Dr David Cole.

'Celestial and uplifting' are words Dame Elisabeth has used to describe the Choir of Trinity College – a choir she has nurtured with her regular support over the years as part of her enthusiasm for the artistic life of the College. She has helped ensure that the Choir is respected internationally. Writing to Director of Music, Michael Leighton Jones, she said of the Choir's latest ABC-released compact disc that, "it is a splendid example of your great choir's excellence – such beautiful music."

The singing of the Choir is complemented in Chapel with an outstanding organ built by Dublin's Kenneth Jones, and premiered in 1998 during the Melbourne International Festival of the Arts. Dame Elisabeth was most enthusiastic in supporting the special appeal for this wonderful instrument for Melbourne. Having a first-class organ has helped in the formation of talented young organists such as David Black, now studying musicology at Harvard University on a scholarship.

Ensuring that music continues to thrive at Trinity forever, Dame Elisabeth was a very early contributor to an endowment fund to support the position of Director of Music in perpetuity.

What has characterised the philanthropic support of Dame Elisabeth is that it is so generously and graciously offered. It is a vote of confidence in the work of the College in all that it does in teaching and learning. We are deeply grateful – as will be students of Trinity College for many generations to come.

*Clare Pullar  
Director of Development*

## Section 3. Education and Social Research (continued)

### The Centre for Independent Studies

The Centre for Independent Studies (CIS) was founded in 1976 by Greg Lindsay. Its mission is to support a free society in Australia by promoting democratic government under the rule of law and an economy based on free markets, and to foster strong, independent civil institutions.

Amongst these institutions, the Centre recognises the importance of families and their central role in nurturing, socialising and educating children.

Dame Elisabeth's association with, and strong support for, CIS began some years ago, but since 1995 has centred upon two major programs of research, namely the *Taking Children Seriously* and *Social Foundations* research program.

The decision to undertake the *Taking Children Seriously* program was prompted by mounting evidence of serious dysfunctions in the major social institutions responsible for the care, nurture, education, and socialisation of children. Under the direction of Barry Maley, this program dealt with three important areas of social research – family structure and the well-being of children, education and schooling, youth and employment.

Within these areas, the program considered social issues such as divorce and its effects upon children, father absence, family law, the costs of children, the impact of high family taxation, child abuse/neglect, children's rights, youth suicide, juvenile delinquency/crime, welfare dependency, youth unemployment, and homelessness.

*Taking Children Seriously* also looked at family structure and children's educational achievement, private versus public schooling, school performance, class size, curriculum formation, school expenditure, and co-educational schooling.

The program produced countless publications, press articles, lectures, seminars, and policy papers analysing the causes of social problems, and proposing solutions, for implementation by governments and non-government/charitable organisations.

The Centre's most popular regular publication, *State of the Nation*, a compilation of statistics, graphs and tables on a variety of social indicators (with special reference to family and children categories) was developed as a direct result of the program.

The *Social Foundations* program was established to continue, and expand on the important social policy work undertaken as part of *Taking Children Seriously*. Under the direction of Professor Peter Saunders, the program aims to identify and analyse the key social institutions that promote a strong and harmonious civil society.

Currently research is focused on four key areas: family life, education, culture and community change, and the welfare state.

Both *Taking Children Seriously* and *Social Foundations* have made a significant contribution to social policy in Australia. In particular, in the areas of education, schooling, and family policy, the CIS has contributed to informed public debate and policy formulation. Evidence for this can be found in frequent references to the Centre's work in policy determination and to the Centre's considerable success in getting crucial social issues into public debate and onto the policy agenda.

The programs were designed to tackle social problems at their core through research and the development of ideas and policy solutions. As such, they rely on the support of those with the capacity to recognise the importance of long-term solutions. Dame Elisabeth's generosity and long-sightedness have been central to the development of this research. Indeed, like so many other worthwhile projects and activities currently being undertaken in Australia, these programs would not have been possible without her support.

*Greg Lindsay  
Executive Director*

### Australian Bush Heritage Fund

The Australian Bush Heritage Fund is a national, independent, not-for-profit organisation that acquires and manages private land and water of outstanding conservation significance. It selects vegetation communities which are under threat, and poorly represented in public reserves. It provides a market solution for saving threatened rural land of high conservation value.

Dame Elisabeth has demonstrated an abiding interest in both the human and natural aspects of rural life. She and her family have been generous supporters, particularly when Bush Heritage purchased Carnarvon Station (Queensland) in 2001. Formerly a working cattle station, this 59,000 hectare property is now managed

by Bush Heritage for nature conservation and protects numerous rare and threatened species and vegetation systems.

At March 2003 Bush Heritage protects 14 reserves throughout Australia, with over 130,000 ha of land. It does all it can to protect these reserves in perpetuity.

We are delighted to have Dame Elisabeth as a supporter. Buying private land for conservation is a recent innovation in Australia, and we are proud to have the interest and support of one of Australia's greatest and long-standing philanthropists.

*Doug Humann  
Chief Executive Officer*

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### Birds Australia

Birds Australia, founded in 1901, is a national member based organisation devoted to the scientific understanding, conservation and enjoyment of Australia's birds and their habitats.

The largest project ever undertaken by Birds Australia is our seven volume encyclopedia titled the *Handbook of Australian, New Zealand and Antarctic Birds* (HANZAB). The handbook brings together and illustrates all that we know of the birds of the Australasian and Antarctic regions. Volumes 1-6 are already published leaving one volume to complete. They have been an outstanding success and have been universally acclaimed for their accuracy, science, thoroughness and scholarship. The seven volumes will cover 952 bird species and document all aspects of bird biology including social and organisational behaviour, field identification, sonograms, plumage descriptions and feeding.

The importance and quality of HANZAB has inspired the participation of Australian, New Zealand and many international ornithologists, who are not only contributing their research material free of charge, but are also assisting by writing, editing and reviewing texts to ensure their accuracy. The project has generated additional research and significant community involvement as ornithologists, both professional and amateur, undertake special studies that are used to supplement our knowledge of the birds in each volume. In addition, the publication features Australia's most eminent bird artists, many providing their services below their real worth. The original plates are keenly sought after by bird art enthusiasts.

HANZAB has won a number of awards including the prestigious Whitley Medal for the Most Outstanding Natural History Publication. It is the most cited publication in nearly all published papers on ornithology in our region and a vital tool used by ecologists, land use planners, wildlife agencies and scientists.

Since the project commenced in 1987, Dame Elisabeth Murdoch has been a wonderful supporter. Through her support HANZAB has been possible and without it we would not have come this far. Dame Elisabeth's contribution to the project has inspired many others to do likewise and Birds Australia is eternally grateful for both this personal support and the example set for others.

Dame Elisabeth has assisted us in a fantastic way to realise a dream first conceived in the late 1970s – to document all that we know about our wonderful birds. The benefits from Dame Elisabeth's support will be with us and the scientific world for a very long time into the future.

*Jim Downey  
Chief Executive Officer*

## Section 4. Flora, Fauna and Heritage (continued)

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### Museum Victoria

Museum Victoria is Australia's largest public museum organisation. It is responsible for caring for the State's collections, conducting research and as a multi-campus educational and cultural institution, providing cultural programs for the people of Victoria and visitors from interstate and overseas.

Museum Victoria has a long history of research and collections and is custodian of Victoria's vast natural science, indigenous, social history and science and technology collections. The size of these collections is estimated at more than 16 million individual items.

Museum Victoria operates three vibrant campuses, Melbourne Museum, Scienceworks Museum and the Immigration Museum. It is also custodian for the heritage listed Royal Exhibition Building, Old Customs House and Spotswood Pumping Station.

Museum Victoria's mission is to improve understanding of ourselves and the world in which we live through the interpretation of collections and the knowledge that makes them meaningful. Dame Elisabeth's partnership with Museum Victoria, via her generous funding of a Gene Testing Computer-Interactive within Melbourne Museum's *Biotech & Beyond* exhibition, contributes greatly towards our mission.

The *Biotech & Beyond* exhibition, situated within Melbourne Museum's Mind & Body Gallery, highlights current and emerging biotechnologies. *Biotech & Beyond* seeks to engage visitors in such a way that they feel comfortable exploring some of the potentially contentious issues surrounding biotechnology.

Applications of biotechnology in food and medicine offer significant benefits, but raise a number of unresolved issues and ethical dilemmas. *Biotech & Beyond* combines a look at contemporary biotechnology and its issues with a view into the future, encouraging discussion and debate about the possibilities and implications of these technologies.

A key component of the *Biotech & Beyond* exhibition is a simulated gene testing unit funded by Dame Elisabeth and developed through close collaboration with the Murdoch Institute Education Unit. The gene testing unit is an interactive educational device that offers valuable insights into the nature of gene testing and the science behind it.

Dame Elisabeth's generous contribution has provided an invaluable tool for educating Melbourne Museum visitors, particularly school groups, on the topic of genetics. The gene testing unit has been designed to help visitors gain an insight into the kinds of options that gene testing now offers, and also assists visitors in obtaining a personal sense of the difficulties posed by some of the options.

A multimedia touch screen allows visitors to follow through the process of having a genetic test, making choices along the way. When a person sits at the touch screen, they choose to take on the role of a person with a particular genetically-inherited disease e.g. cystic fibrosis, Huntington disease, Stickler syndrome, phenylketonuria or haemochromotosis. The 'patient' is invited to explore a little about the disease, its symptoms and their prognosis. As part of this touch screen, the visitor is able to access the viewpoints of people in a similar situation for reference and comparison.

Museum Victoria is most grateful to Dame Elisabeth Murdoch for her support of Museum Victoria and applauds her long standing and most extraordinary contribution to the wider Australian community.

*Dr J Patrick Greene, OBE  
Chief Executive*

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## The National Trust of Australia (Victoria)

Dame Elisabeth has been involved in the National Trust here in Victoria from its outset in the 1950s. More particularly she played a great and generous role in the Trust's first campaign and appeal to save 'Como for the Nation'.

Once this iconic property in South Yarra had been saved in 1959, there was much to do to restore and present it for public viewing. Dame Elisabeth's particular contribution for many years was support for the garden through her membership of the Como Garden Committee. Gardening has been one of her passions throughout her life and her own garden at Cruden Farm is testament to her practical knowledge and skill. All of this experience was made available in the work to reconstruct the Italianate landscape which William Sangster, Melbourne's great 19th century garden designer, had created in 1855.

Enjoyment of garden visiting and gardening is now an important part of community cultural life for Victorians and Dame Elisabeth has been a leader in encouraging this to expand and develop. The work to save and accurately remake our great gardens continues with her contribution to the restoration of the irrigation and drainage technology of the Rippon Lea Estate. Established in the 1870s this technology has been the vital factor in sustaining the great garden in Elsternwick and is necessary for its future. It speaks to the contemporary concern for recycling water and the need to educate succeeding generations in the lessons learnt by our 19th century pioneers.

In 1986 Dame Elisabeth was afforded the Trust's highest honour for 30 years of unstinting support – she was made an Honorary Member of the National Trust. Since this time she has been involved in projects to encourage young artists and financed a program resulting in a suite of pictures of the Royal Melbourne Botanic Gardens held by the Trust.

Over the years she has given advice on a range of topics such as antiques, interior decoration and gardening which have helped the Trust in achieving accuracy and authenticity in its work. Her life experiences and childhood years spent in Toorak and South Yarra contributed to the Trust's understanding of its properties such as Illawarra and Glenfern, as well as Como. Understanding and enjoyment lead to effective education and the Trust takes seriously its responsibility for getting the detail right. On this and other matters Dame Elisabeth has always been available, only a phone call away, a true friend and supporter of our heritage in Victoria.

*Simon Molesworth, AM QC  
President*

*Rodney Davidson, AO OBE  
Chairman Emeritus Council*



*Dame Elisabeth Murdoch*

## Section 4. Flora, Fauna and Heritage (continued)

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### Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne

The remarkable range of Dame Elisabeth Murdoch's philanthropic interests reflects the diversity of her personal interests and passions. High among these are gardens and gardening, and a lifetime of decidedly 'hands on' activity has brought her national and international renown as a gardener. This probably dates from her involvement in the creation of a garden at Cruden Farm, the Langwarrin property purchased by Sir Keith Murdoch in 1928. Over several decades Dame Elisabeth has developed Cruden Farm into one of Victoria's finest private gardens, and she has generously shared it with the public on numerous open days, usually organised to raise funds for a variety of causes.

Beyond her own garden, Dame Elisabeth has been a keen and generous supporter of groups, organisations and individuals associated with plants and gardens, such as the Australian Garden History Society, of which she was a founding member, her endowment of the Chair of Landscape Architecture at the University of Melbourne, and her patronage of Australian botanical artists. But her longest-standing support has been for Melbourne's Royal Botanic Gardens, which she has described as "so much a part of my whole life..."

The Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne (RBG), founded in 1846, is one of the world's finest botanic gardens. It covers 38 hectares and contains more than 56,000 plants, representing over 12,000 different species from every part of the globe. With its historic landscape, designed in the 19th century by William Guilfoyle, the RBG is listed on the Register of the National Estate and the Register of Heritage Victoria.

The National Herbarium of Victoria, established in 1853, houses the State Botanical Collection, an internationally significant collection of around one million dried specimens of plants, fungi and algae from Australia and other countries, as well as a major collection of botanical books, manuscripts and works of art.

In 1970, the Victorian Government established the Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne on a 363 hectare site which displays Australian plants and ecosystems and is a significant area for flora and fauna conservation. A unique Australian garden is being developed, with landscaped gardens showcasing indigenous plants and diverse habitats.

Dame Elisabeth Murdoch has been closely associated with the foundation and development of RBG Cranbourne. She was for 27 years a member of the Maud Gibson Trust which was instrumental in the establishment of the Garden. For more than two

decades she and her family have shown commitment to the display, study and enjoyment of Australian plants through their continued support of the Cranbourne Gardens.

At RBG Melbourne, Dame Elisabeth's support has enabled a number of important initiatives such as the Californian Garden, created in 1992 for the collection and propagation of examples of California's rich plant life. This expanded the diversity of plants displayed in the RBG and is of particular significance to scientists and horticulturists. She has also been a generous supporter of scientific projects carried out by the National Herbarium of Victoria. In recognition, a new species of Boronia has recently been named *Boronia elisabethiae* by a senior researcher at the Herbarium.

In addition to her own sustained and extensive support, Dame Elisabeth has influenced many individuals to support the Royal Botanic Gardens in a variety of ways, through her close association with the RBG Foundation, the Friends of the RBG Melbourne and Friends of RBG Cranbourne.

The significance of Dame Elisabeth's contribution was acknowledged in 1996 when she was appointed the first Patron of the Royal Botanic Gardens.

Over a lengthy period of time Dame Elisabeth's commitment and support has assisted the Gardens in its mission of advancing knowledge, enjoyment and conservation of plants. Her particular interest in RBG Cranbourne has assisted in the protection and conservation of Australian flora and fauna for the appreciation and enjoyment of present and future generations.

Dame Elisabeth's support for the Royal Botanic Gardens exemplifies her belief that "We need to make sure that we cherish this natural treasure and preserve its unique identity..." Her philanthropy contributes to the achievement of those goals and provides enduring benefits to a wide cross-section of the community, from visitors to the Gardens to horticulturists and scientists.

*Dr Philip Moors  
Director*

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## RSPCA Victoria

Dame Elisabeth Murdoch has been a great supporter of the Australian Humane movement through her long and close association with RSPCA Victoria.

Soon after the Peninsula Aid Branch of the RSPCA was founded, Dame Elisabeth was invited to become its Patron, a position she still holds with distinction. This Branch conducts a much admired animal shelter and veterinary clinic at Pearcedale on the Mornington Peninsula close to the home of Dame Elisabeth at 'Cruden Farm' at Langwarrin.

Twenty-five years ago Dame Elisabeth was elected a Patron of RSPCA Victoria. This is very much a personal appointment as the other Patrons of the Society are elected on the basis of the office they hold, the Governor of Victoria and the Premier.

As Patron of RSPCA Victoria, Dame Elisabeth is immensely popular and is a cardinal example of how the role of Patron of a charity should be fulfilled. Her grasp of the founding reasons for the Society, her knowledge of past and current events, and her wide appreciation of the management of the RSPCA are truly amazing. Dame Elisabeth constantly uses this knowledge to advise, to warn, to explain, to correct and to encourage, not only members and supporters of the RSPCA, but community members generally and at the highest levels.

Despite her very busy schedule, Dame Elisabeth has always made time to regularly attend Society functions. She excels at formal functions and readily accepts every opportunity provided to speak publicly in support of the Society's achievements. Dame Elisabeth is, however, equally at home attending smaller functions whether they are fundraising luncheons or highly emotion charged annual general meetings. Her ability to quietly persuade and encourage even the most reluctant person to strive for the success of the organisation is much admired.

During her time as Patron of RSPCA Victoria Dame Elisabeth has seen the Society develop from a small organisation of some 25 employees headquartered in Melbourne, with very little capacity to meet the expectations and aspirations of the Victorian community for the welfare of animals. Now the Society has over 200 employees, nearly 1000 volunteers, and 14 Branches with associated animal shelters in the major animal handling areas of Victoria. In addition, the major Animal Welfare Centre animal shelter and veterinary hospital and Education Centre at headquarters are state-of-the-art and a huge inspiration to all other RSPCA Societies.

Dame Elisabeth's encouragement and support for these major projects has meant that RSPCA Victoria now has the capacity to meet the community's expectations regarding the enforcement of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, providing succour to sick and abandoned animals and their rehousing, and instructing all members of the community on their obligations to animals.

Dame Elisabeth Murdoch is a magnificent Australian whose contribution to the community, and in particular the RSPCA, is simply extraordinary.

*Dr Hugh J Wirth, AM  
President*

## Section 5. Health and Medical Research

### The Baker Heart Research Institute

The Baker Heart Research Institute is acknowledged as Australia's premier cardiovascular research body, and is a World Health Organisation centre for research and training in cardiovascular disease.

Our research program is based around our all-embracing mission to prolong life and the quality of life through reducing death and disability from heart and vascular disease, including stroke.

Statistics show that heart disease is the leading cause of death, being responsible for 40 per cent of all deaths in Australia. It is not only the biggest health problem in our community but also worldwide, and will become even more important in the future as our population ages.

With an international reputation for research excellence, the Baker targets the two ends of the heart disease spectrum – the prevention of heart disease and the treatment and prevention of heart failure.

**Heart disease:** Our research in this area focuses on blood vessels, blood clotting, metabolic factors such as cholesterol, obesity complications and risk factors such as high blood pressure.

**Heart failure:** The Baker's world-renowned expertise in this area ranges from studies of molecular cardiology and physiology in the laboratory through to participation in the elite heart-failure and transplant services at The Alfred Hospital.

**Diabetes complications:** Research into diabetes has also become an important issue, because diabetics are often predisposed to heart disease. The Baker discovered the plasma protein that led to the distinction between Type 1 and 2 diabetes.

Dame Elisabeth Murdoch's incredible generosity in support of our research projects over several decades has been of immense encouragement to Baker scientists.

She has kindly given us the privilege of deciding where her support may best be directed, which has allowed us a welcome opportunity to support the sort of ground-breaking research that is often difficult to interest established funding agencies in until it is further down the track.

During this time, discoveries from Baker research have contributed to a number of significant innovations in patient diagnosis and treatment:

- ~ The Baker developed non-invasive methods to assess the stiffness of arteries, both in specific regions of the body and in the body as a whole. These techniques are now applied to the study of the diseases atherosclerosis and hypertension to enable the reliable and early detection of these conditions before they lead to heart failure.
- ~ Baker research proved that mental stress and cigarette smoking both provide powerful selective and potentially harmful stimulation of the nerves of the heart.
- ~ The Baker developed improved preservation techniques to make long distance transport of donor hearts for transplantation safer.
- ~ The Baker demonstrated that exercise can lower blood pressure.
- ~ Together with The Alfred Hospital, the Baker established open-heart surgery in Australia.

Dame Elisabeth maintains a keen and lively interest in all our research activities and it has been a pleasure to welcome her to the Baker on numerous occasions to hear about current programs, and to meet some of the scientists involved.

We take this opportunity to publicly honour Dame Elisabeth, and to express our sincere appreciation of her past and present extraordinary contribution in support of cardiovascular research at the Baker.

*Professor Garry Jennings  
Director*

## Royal Children's Hospital and Murdoch Children's Research Institute

Dame Elisabeth Murdoch has been intimately involved with the Royal Children's Hospital for 70 years, since 1933. Her involvement was far greater than that of a society patron; it has had an element of incisive intelligence throughout. A patron (and these too are valuable people for a hospital) is motivated by caring feelings for sick children. An intelligent leader inspires those around her to work for research to make sick children better. Dame Elisabeth was an intelligent leader.

She set up the first Research Institute at the Hospital in the 1960s. In about 1962, she decided (correctly) that one of the most important areas for the future would be human clinical genetics, as she realised that many diseases are caused by a mixture of inheritance and environment. She picked out the best young doctor she knew, David Danks, and sent him to Johns Hopkins to train in the new discipline. It is impossible to overstate the extent to which this was a courageous choice, both by Dame Elisabeth and David, because no one predicted then that genetics would occupy the central place in child health research and clinical practice that it does today. David Danks became Stevenson Professor of Paediatrics, and then the first Director of the Murdoch Institute, the leading institute for research in human medical genetics in Australia. Three years ago, the Murdoch re-united with the RCH Research Institute to form the Murdoch Children's Research Institute.

As genetics changed, so did the Institute, and with it the commitment from Dame Elisabeth. She now focuses her support on more complex areas, such as the relationship between genetics and adolescent health. Her family (to the great grandchildren) continues actively supporting many of the Murdoch Children's Research Institute programs.

But for me, as Director, the great thing about Dame Elisabeth is that she is always there when we need her. Just last month, we were overjoyed to receive a very large grant from a New York-based charity, and Dame Elisabeth came along to greet the CEO when he visited Melbourne. How many people at 94 are able to continue to show such commitment to service to our community, and such sharpness of intellect? Victoria and Australia owe a great debt to Dame Elisabeth Murdoch, and no group owes more than the children, for her support for research into infant and child health and genetics over 50 years.

*Professor Bob Williamson, FRS FAA  
Director of the Murdoch Children's Research Institute,  
Royal Children's Hospital*

*Professor David Danks, AO  
Professor of Medical Genetics,  
The University of Melbourne*

## The Bionic Ear Institute

It is a great pleasure to congratulate Dame Elisabeth Murdoch on her wonderful contributions to the deaf field.

When I was Chairman of the Deafness Foundation of Victoria, an inaugural body to bring together deaf organisations for common good, she willingly gave of her time to help establish a sound basis for funding and dialogue between these organisations.

Dame Elisabeth was marvellous in her financial support and willingness to encourage the establishment of Taralye Early Intervention Centre. This was a major step forward in providing educational options for deaf children. The establishment of Taralye's early intervention program was essential in providing the environment in which deaf children who had the bionic ear could flourish.

Dame Elisabeth was wonderful in her support of our research to develop the bionic ear. This started when Sir Reginald Ansett ran a series of telethons in the 1970s to raise seed funding to develop a prototype device to see if this was going to be a possible means of helping deaf children and adults. Dame Elisabeth came regularly to the telethons and gave generously.

Since that time she has been a supporter of the Bionic Ear Institute, has attended many functions, given of her time and of her finances. We now have a Dame Elisabeth Murdoch scholar resulting from her support, who is studying how we might develop improved ways of processing speech for people with the cochlear implant.

The Bionic Ear Institute is committed to providing even better hearing benefits for deaf people. Our research has helped bring hearing to over 45,000 deaf people in more than 100 countries. The commitment of Dame Elisabeth Murdoch has been invaluable in helping us achieve this milestone. Dame Elisabeth's ongoing support will help us realise our dream that every deaf child and adult has the opportunity to hear, speak and communicate in the hearing world.

I am very pleased, indeed, that Philanthropy Australia is especially honouring Dame Elisabeth who is held in such high esteem by so many people, many of whom have benefited enormously from her generosity and commitment to the community.

*Graeme Clark, AO FAA FTSE  
Laureate Professor of Otolaryngology*

## Section 5. Health and Medical Research (continued)

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### Taralye – The Advisory Council for Children with Impaired Hearing (Victoria)

In 1968, a group of parents including Mrs Nancy John MBE, Dame Elisabeth Murdoch AC DBE, Mrs Frances Derham MBE, Mrs Ethleen King CBE, Mr and Mrs Worrall Jones, Mr John Calvert Jones and Mrs Janet Calvert Jones formed The Advisory Council for Children with Impaired Hearing (ACCIH). Dame Elisabeth believed deaf children should have access to the same educational opportunities as hearing children.

Thirty-five years later Taralye – the oral language centre for deaf children – is an internationally recognised state-wide service. It aims to promote the linguistic, educational and social outcomes of deaf children through innovative early intervention services and research. Dame Elisabeth has always been an active supporter of Taralye providing advice, personal involvement and funding for the growth and expansion of projects and programs. She regularly attends functions and events at Taralye taking particular delight in meeting with families and children attending the centre. Whether joining in activities in the kindergarten program or providing advice at Annual Meetings of the Council her attendance is sincerely appreciated by the board, staff and parents.

In 1971, she was appointed Vice Chairman of the Advisory Council for Children with Impaired Hearing. In 1983, she was appointed a Life Member of the Advisory Council in recognition of her contribution to the organisation and to deaf children and their families throughout Victoria.

In 1988, Dame Elisabeth established the Elisabeth Murdoch Scholarship Trust to further develop expertise and knowledge of deafness. The fund is administered by Taralye and provides annual scholarships to educational and health professionals undertaking postgraduate studies in the field of deafness at Graduate Diploma, Masters or PhD level in Victoria. More than 30 scholarships have been awarded since 1988.

With Dame Elisabeth's support Taralye has become:

- ~ The first agency in the State to establish an integrated early childhood intervention program aimed at developing deaf children's oral language skills through the use of residual hearing.
- ~ A leader in the development of the state's teacher of the deaf workforce.
- ~ A leading state wide provider of integrated, multi disciplinary habilitation services for children with cochlear implants – pre and post operation.
- ~ A leader in research underpinning of services to children with hearing impairment.
- ~ A key player in the development of policy and services across the State.
- ~ An innovator in the delivery of services to rural and remote Victoria using video conferencing.
- ~ A provider of services to overseas children in countries such as Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia and New Zealand.

Dame Elisabeth's support was instrumental in moves by the Advisory Council to establish the Chair in Education of the Deaf and the opening of the Deafness Studies Unit at The University of Melbourne.

The children and families of Taralye are enormously grateful to Dame Elisabeth for her generosity, her foresight and her active commitment to advancing the educational outcomes of deaf children throughout Victoria.

*H Russell  
Chief Executive Officer*

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## The Epilepsy Foundation

Epilepsy is the most serious brain disorder facing us as we move into the 21st century. Over 400,000 Australians up to the age of 70 can expect to be diagnosed with it and between 120,000 and 160,000 will not be able to completely stop the seizures which they will be forced to deal with for the remainder of their lives. Three hundred or more of these people will die each year. The World Health Organisation, which counts epilepsy among its top 10 priorities, has stated that epilepsy is arguably the most stigmatised, misunderstood and under resourced of all health conditions.

Four years ago, I approached 24 people who our Management Committee judged as respected leaders in the Victorian community. I asked them to help and to lend us their good standing and their influence. In the end we assembled a group of people who between them possess the confidence of our community. Included in this group is Dame Elisabeth Murdoch.

We meet at least once a year – and some of us more often around particular projects. Dame Beryl Beaurepaire chairs the group.

Dame Elisabeth is probably one of our most celebrated Patron Councillors and is in fact one of the binding elements of the group. She cares passionately about philanthropy – not just as a way of spreading around some kind of noblesse oblige but as a tool for helping the community build its own social and intellectual capital. She is a keen advocate of the volunteer sector. She knows how much has been achieved by volunteers and I think she tries to show by example that volunteering is one of the finer qualities of the Australian character.

Dame Elisabeth is our largest benefactor and her annual contribution helps us accommodate families from all over Australia who travel to Melbourne to deal with weeks of tests, brain scans and, increasingly, brain surgery.

In fact she offers us more than financial support. Her advice, her moral support, her integrity, and her good name – she is generous with all of it. She attends to so many things personally. Among our Patron Councillors she is someone who has universal respect.

She asks for no recognition. She just sends us funds, offers suggestions – always without presumption – and makes things possible in the lives of families who might otherwise never embark on the frightening journeys that so often lead to recovery from intractable seizures. She is attentive to the things we tell her and she is wonderfully intelligent in her responses. How can you thank a person like this?

She is someone whose presence is a guide for the rest of us, a pointer to the higher ideals that make community leadership a duty that is worth the effort. She is not alone in this but she is an outstanding example of that quality that allows all of us to cohere around tasks that need to be done, from facing up to issues like epilepsy to building a strong, open-minded, fairer and more liberal Australia. She cares for people with epilepsy because she cares for all Australians.

All of us at the Epilepsy Foundation wish her great happiness and continued good health. All of us think of her as a decent and generous person. We thank her for the time she spends with us and for the way she enriches our lives by sharing her own.

*Russell Pollard  
Chief Executive Officer, Epilepsy Foundation of Victoria  
National Executive Officer, Epilepsy Australia*

## Section 5. Health and Medical Research (continued)

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### Howard Florey Institute

Dame Elisabeth Murdoch has been a supporter of the Howard Florey Institute for many years, and over those years she has seen the Institute reach international acclaim for its research into areas of physiology, particularly the brain and hormonal control of body fluid balance and blood pressure. When the Institute changed its strategic direction just six years ago to focus exclusively on neuroscience, Dame Elisabeth continued to support us.

She was quick to see that brain research currently represents one of the biggest challenges in medical science. Understanding how the brain functions has fascinated scholars and scientists from time immemorial. Furthermore, the impact of brain disorders on individual and community health is a compelling reason to focus on brain research. Whereas cancer and heart disease remain major killers, disorders of the brain are the main source of chronic disability, inability to work and inability to fully enjoy life. At present, very few brain disorders are curable, but there has never been a better time for optimism with new tools and information such as that arising from the Human Genome Project, a deeper understanding of brain development and advances in functional neuroimaging.

The Institute has many programs that study the brain and its disorders and Dame Elisabeth's support has assisted many of these:

- ~ Neural Development – how genes are involved in normal and abnormal brain development.
- ~ Neurobiology of Homeostasis – how the brain controls basic bodily functions, such as blood pressure, temperature and fluid balance.
- ~ Neurochemistry – the chemistry of communication between nerve cells, with a focus on neuropeptides and their receptors.

~ Neuroimaging and Neuroinformatics – use of advanced imaging technologies and computer systems to acquire, analyse and disseminate information on brain structure and function.

~ Neural Injury and Repair:

- development of drugs and procedures to protect the brain from damage during stroke or other injury; and
- understanding the mechanism of neurodegenerative diseases such as Parkinson's Disease and Motor Neurone Disease.

~ Neuromuscular disorders – understanding the causes of nerve and muscle disorders, including Muscular Dystrophy, in order to devise new treatments.

When the Howard Florey Institute launched a capital raising campaign to acquire functional magnetic resonance imaging facilities, Dame Elisabeth was right behind us, particularly in the acquisition and operation of the small bore MRI facility that is crucial to projects aimed at developing neuroprotective drugs for use in stroke and other forms of brain injury. Today we have neuroimaging facilities that are the best in the country and available for use by scientists throughout Australia and internationally.

Dame Elisabeth's support of the Institute has not only been financial. She has shown her support as a member of the Institute's Animal Ethics Committee for many years in her capacity as patron of the RSPCA. She has also shown a keen interest in neuroscience research by attending many of the Institute's events including the most recent public lecture featuring Jean-Pierre Changeux, Professor of the Collège de France and the Institut Pasteur.

*Professor Fredrick AO Mendelson, FRACP  
Director*

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## The Macfarlane Burnet Institute for Medical Research and Public Health: The Centre for Harm Reduction

The Burnet Institute (BI) is a unique multidisciplinary research and public health organisation, which carries out research on human viruses and carries that research through into public health action, in Australia and the Asian and Pacific regions. Its public health and international health arms have developed special expertise in working with often severely marginalised communities. Much of its work both domestically and internationally revolves around the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), the cause of AIDS, and the hepatitis C virus (HCV). With both viruses, the Burnet Institute's work ranges from laboratory-based molecular biological research to the development of field programs for prevention of HIV and HCV transmission or care of those infected with the viruses.

The Centre for Harm Reduction (CHR) at the BI specialises in working with possibly one of the most marginalised and disadvantaged members of any community – people who inject drugs. Because of their circumstances and behaviours, these people are at extremely high risk of catching HIV and HCV. While our policies and programs have prevented the spread of HIV among drug injectors in Australia, there is still an enormous amount of HCV infection in this group. In Asia, it is a completely different story – in most countries in south and southeast Asia, there are huge and explosive epidemics of HIV among drug injectors which have fuelled and continue to fuel the rapid progression of the AIDS epidemic there.

The CHR works in Australia and in almost every country in Asia on programs to stop the spread of HIV among drug injectors, and from them to the rest of the community. CHR is now the world leader in this area: it is the biggest supplier of harm reduction technical assistance to Asia, and an acknowledged global centre of expertise.

Dame Elisabeth's support has been crucial to the development of CHR's role in Asia and in Australia. She provided support to CHR for the employment of a Development Manager to take CHR through its initial and early growth; CHR could not have achieved this growth without her support. CHR now has an annual turnover of \$3 million, still growing apace, and reflecting the increasing breadth of our involvement in countries from Nepal to Indonesia, China to Iran.

Dame Elisabeth also provided funding for a major local initiative. Many homeless people in Melbourne use drugs to ameliorate their homelessness; many drug users are homeless, for many and complex reasons. Unfortunately, while the provision of primary health care is taken for granted by most Australians, people living on the street, especially those engaged in using drugs, do not have access to high quality, accessible and appropriate health care – which in many cases may be life-saving, and may provide a road for them out of their situations.

In trying to rectify this situation, CHR needed support for research to advocate with authorities for this type of facility – primary health care for street-based drug users and their families. Dame Elisabeth provided CHR with support to carry out a needs analysis of this community in Footscray, and then to do a feasibility study into the design and implementation of such facilities. As part of a wider coalition of community groups in Footscray, CHR was then able to use the information so gained to advocate with Maribyrnong Council and the Victorian Department of Human Services for funding for this facility. This primary health care centre, named Health Works, has now been successfully and independently operating for more than a year. Moreover, the success of Health Works and the concept developed with Dame Elisabeth's support has been recognised by the Department of Human Services, which has begun similar primary health care facilities at six other locations around Melbourne.

These activities are not high profile, and do not emblazon Dame Elisabeth's name across the skyline – but they have brought help and hope to hundreds of thousands of despairing and powerless people, in Australia and across our neighbouring regions.

*Professor Steve Wesselingh  
Director*

## Section 5. Health and Medical Research (continued)

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### The Mental Health Research Institute of Victoria

Dame Elisabeth Murdoch played a leading role in the development of the Mental Health Research Institute (MHRI) by contributing generously to our building appeal in 1993. The success of this appeal and the resulting state-of-the-art research centre provided the impetus for a dramatic expansion of the Institute's research and laid the foundations for what was to become Australia's largest psychiatric research centre.

The MHRI is engaged in fundamental laboratory and clinical research programs investigating the nature, origins and causes of psychiatric diseases. The knowledge gained is applied to improving diagnosis, developing effective treatments and, ultimately, to preventing mental illnesses. Principal areas of research focus are schizophrenia, Alzheimer's disease and depressive illnesses. Other foci include suicide and aspects of addiction. These diverse disorders are investigated by researchers working in such distinct but complementary disciplines as psychiatry, psychology, molecular biology, biochemistry, genetics, pharmacology and biostatistics.

At the time of becoming an independent research centre the Institute consisted of a small group of six researchers working in portable buildings. The newly formed board, Chaired by Richard Pratt AO and the Director of the Institute, Professor David Copolov, began a public appeal to finance the building of a dedicated psychiatric research centre. Fundraising was difficult at this time because mental illness carried with it enormous stigma and psychiatric research was a relatively new concept. However, in 1993, when approached by Institute Board Members – Dame Margaret Guilfoyle and Lady June Zeidler – to support the appeal, Dame Elisabeth did not hesitate to become involved and to contribute generously. Her leadership and support was crucial to the success of the appeal and the resulting new building was opened in 1994. Once established in the new facility the Institute began a period of rapid growth attracting additional scientists and developing new research programs.

Dame Elisabeth maintains an interest in the Institute and continues her support of psychiatric research. Her early belief in the MHRI continues to yield significant results. She can take great pride in the research findings emanating from the Institute. For example, researchers at the Institute have contributed to the identification of the protein bA4 (beta amyloid) that indicates the

presence of Alzheimer's disease. Following this discovery a human trial of a drug for the treatment of the disease was conducted at the Institute during 2002. The MHRI also undertook the first drug discovery program in Australia aimed at developing new antipsychotic drugs radically different to those currently in clinical use. Other research has provided evidence that reduction in the volume of the hippocampus – a brain region involved in memory processes – occurs during the course of the first episode of psychosis. If confirmed, such findings challenge current thinking about schizophrenia as a neurodevelopmental disorder in which brain changes occur early in life and are relatively fixed. This finding has implications for the search for early markers of schizophrenia and the use of such markers as indices or predictors of treatment efficacy.

Beyond such fundamental laboratory research, the MHRI has made direct contributions to the community through the development of Psychogeriatric Assessment Scales for use by Community Assessment Teams conducting field assessments of dementia and depression in the elderly – a tremendous boon in rural and isolated communities. MHRI researchers have undertaken a comprehensive study of auditory hallucinations (hearing voices), a symptom that occurs in approximately 70 per cent of patients and one which often responds only partially to treatment. Results from this study are aiding risk assessment and management of this distressing symptom – understanding and managing auditory hallucinations has major public health, clinical and forensic implications. The Policy and Analyses Group have developed the first objective, funding model – the Mental Health Classification and Service Costs Project – designed to optimise the delivery of mental health services. This project has attracted considerable international interest. Another project resulted in the development of a training package for adult mental health staff working with patients who have children.

These few examples serve to demonstrate the exponential power of philanthropy and to honour one of Australia's leading philanthropists, Dame Elisabeth Murdoch. The MHRI remains indebted to her for her foresight, continuing interest and generous support.

*Professor David Copolov  
Director*

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## The Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research

The Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research, founded in 1915, is one of the world's leading medical research institutes.

The Institute first came to the world stage for its research on viruses and immunology, under Nobel Laureate Sir Macfarlane Burnet and his successor Sir Gustav Nossal. Now home to over 600 scientists, graduate students and support staff, the main research themes of the Hall Institute are cancer; haematology; immunology; infectious diseases – malaria and leishmaniasis; autoimmune diseases – type I diabetes and rheumatoid arthritis; neural development; genetic susceptibility to disease; bioinformatics; and structural biology.

Our scientists are applying the ground breaking discoveries of the human genome project and are in the front line of the biotechnology revolution, using new techniques to help develop individualised therapies and more effective drugs.

The Institute has been extremely fortunate to benefit from the generosity of Dame Elisabeth Murdoch for over 35 years. In the early years donations always went directly in support of medical research projects.

In 1986 Sir Gustav had the inspiration to approach Dame Elisabeth with the concept of using her donation to build a collection of works of art by younger Australian artists. At that stage we had moved to a new building, designed by architect Daryl Jackson, and Sir Gustav felt that the inspirational architecture and the innovative research would be further enhanced by suitable works of art.

Dame Elisabeth, as a great patron of the visual arts, was more than happy to agree to the proposal.

We sought the advice of Frances Lindsay, then Director of The University of Melbourne Museum of Art, who gave us brilliant direction for the collection.

Thanks to the ongoing generosity of Dame Elisabeth Murdoch, we now have a significant collection of Australian contemporary art. Artists in our collection include Bruce Armstrong, Sally Smart, Tim Jones, Stephen Bush, Lindy Lee and Caroline Williams.

Late last year, Dame Elisabeth made a most generous contribution to the building fund for GTAC House, a major new resource for genetics education for all Victorian schools being built at University High School. GTAC, named for the four letters of the genetic code, stands for Gene Technology Access Centre. The program began nearly seven years ago when our Director, Professor Suzanne Cory, and Professor Jim Pittard, then Head of the Microbiology and Immunology Department at The University of Melbourne, started a DNA Science Workshop for VCE biology teachers. In recent years, University High School has become a key partner and a pilot program has been taken into the classroom, with the help of a grant from the Department of Education and Training's Science in Schools Partnership Project.

In 2001, the Victorian State Government announced a grant of \$4.2 million to build permanent premises for GTAC at University High School. Major philanthropic donations have also been provided. Once it is complete, GTAC will be able to reach out to many more secondary school teachers and students around the state, and start an initiative for primary schools. Further into the future it is planned to introduce special workshops for professionals and the general public.

Dame Elisabeth's contribution to this wonderful initiative has ensured that the building project will proceed to provide a lasting legacy for Victoria's students and science teachers.

*Professor Suzanne Cory, AC PhD FAA FRA  
Director*

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