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Natalie Payne

Making a difference





Working with
MS Research Australia
to find a cure for MS.

**Every dollar
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into research.**

The Trish Multiple Sclerosis
Research Foundation is staffed
by a team of volunteers, and
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 www.trishmsresearch.org.au

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 0410 410 491

All donations of \$2.00 and over
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IN BRIEF

Garage Sale

Tania Beck held a very successful Garage Sale on Saturday 2 June 2007, the proceeds of which she donated to the Trish Foundation. Tania worked tirelessly, gaining generous support from her local Waverton community. Residents and businesses rallied to the cause ensuring a very successful day.

Thank you to Tania and to all those who contributed to the \$1,200.00 raised for our research.

City to Surf

Team Trish again participated in the City to Surf and sincere thanks are extended to **Bob and Helena Allison** for obtaining sponsors and raising funds for the Trish Foundation's research.

The Wardrobe Rebate

A reminder to Trish Foundation supporters who wish to clear the clutter from their Wardrobes that the Wardrobe Rebate continues to gain momentum.

Thank you to **Lynette Gooding** and **Bronwyn Shakespear** for your significant support.

MS Mate will get the flick!

By **Bobby Barter**,
Oz Knockabout Storyteller

Them years ago in past of time
When Shakespeare wrote
His verse 'n rhyme
I bet for sure 'n certain true
This MS stuff mate
No one knew

But here this MS thing we got
It sows its seed
We know how not
And Oz fair dinkum dinky di
Mate –
I never tell a lie

That MS sure has gotta go
Right bloody how
We do not know
But reckon if you donate good
That MS will be understood

And –
Sure as dogs got fleas 'n scratch
Or –
Trish she played a cricket match
Your money sure will do the trick
And MS mate
Will get the flick!

Starry Starry Night

The Trish Foundation's magnificent and very generous supporters banded together to raise \$160,000 at the Foundation's Starry Starry Night – MS Gala Music Ball.

THE FOUNDATION'S MAJOR fundraiser this year was 'the place to be'. **Guy Sebastian** fans rubbed shoulders with the Foundation's Patron **Dr Brendan Nelson**, NSW Opposition Leader **Barry O'Farrell**, Corporate sponsors, **Ken and Wilma Rosewall**, **Michael Willesee**, **Allison Langdon**, Australia's premier harmonica player **Jim Conway** and the wonderful supporters who continue to come from far and wide to support multiple sclerosis research.

"We are humbled by the very generous support we continue to receive as we strive to deliver Freedom from MS," said Foundation Chairman **Carol Langsford**.

Tickets to the Trish Foundation's Starry Starry Night – MS Gala Music Ball, held at the Hilton Sydney on 15 September 2007, were snapped up very early, the Foundation's major fundraiser again this year being a 'sell out'.

Dr Brendan Nelson gave a memorable speech and **Professor Graeme Stewart** spoke of the significant contribution the Trish Foundation is making to MS research in Australia and of a recent exciting and significant breakthrough in MS research.

Those present were privileged to enjoy a wonderful performance by Guy Sebastian,

who was supported by the great talent of **Tom Jordan**, both freely donating their time on the evening. Guy and Tom both gave a great boost to the funds raised for research, Guy agreeing to give a private performance and Tom agreeing to auction himself for a Corporate performance.

Guests were also entertained by the beautiful music of Sydney Ensemble and **Maxine Gourley** and the band, 'So What'.

Master of Ceremonies Michael Willesee read out a moving message from **NSW Governor Professor Marie Bashir** which said in part, "Multiple Sclerosis is a disorder which so often declares its presence in those all important years of young adulthood when energy levels, plans and dreams for the future are at their height. I would like to extend my appreciation and best wishes to Carol Langsford and her dedicated team of volunteers for their contribution and commitment to this cause."

Foundation Director **Roy Langsford** expressed his deep appreciation to the many contributors who ensured the success of our Starry Starry Night – MS Gala Music Ball.

"Trish would be so proud and very grateful of the contribution so many generous people and organizations are making to eradicate this debilitating disease."

The Trish Foundation would like to specially thank our major Corporate Sponsor, Symbion Laverty Pathology, particularly **Tracey Jordan**, our other Corporate Sponsors, Guy Sebastian, Tom Jordan, our Auctioneer **Craig Marshall**, our MC Michael Willesee, Sydney Ensemble, the band So What, all the generous donors who contributed to the funds raised for research and our wonderful supporters who endlessly continue to support our cause.

'2008 Crystal Ball – A brighter future for people with MS'

Having sold out our 'Starry Starry Night – MS Gala Music Ball' over two months before the event, the Trish Foundation is planning an even bigger Ball next year in an attempt to cater for all those who wish to attend.

The Foundation's major fundraiser will be held in the Parkside Ballroom, Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre Darling Harbour on **Saturday, 20 September 2008**.

The Foundation wishes to thank Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre for granting a generous Sponsorship Package for our 'Crystal Ball'.



▲ Patron of the Trish Foundation **Brendan Nelson**, Foundation Chairman **Carol Langsford**, Executive Director MS Research Australia **Jeremy Wright**



▲ **Craig Astridge**, Manager NSW & ACT Singapore Airlines, **Margaret and Peter Sheean**, highest bidders for the Singapore Airlines Package



▲ Master of Ceremonies **Michael Willesee** and **Allison Langdon**



▲ **Graham Bryce**, **Fionna Guy** and **Tony Maddox**, Vodafone



▲ **Guy Sebastian** – what a performance!



▲ Auctioneer **Craig Marshall**, Century 21 Cordeaux Marshall



▲ **Sarah Ross Smith's** thank you on behalf of people with MS



▲ NSW Opposition Leader **Barry O'Farrell** and his wife **Rosemary**



▲ **Michael Brown**, **Scott Macdonald**, and Foundation Director **Roy Langsford**



▲ **Sue and Doug Meredith** DMC Digital



▲ Sydney Ensemble performing during pre-dinner drinks



▲ **Maxine Gourley** and the band 'So What'



▲ **Tom Jordan** and his fans

Sincere gratitude to the Trish Foundation's major sponsors and supporters for their generosity and significant support of the Foundation and of multiple sclerosis research.



Major Corporate Sponsor





Rotary Club of Strathfield cheque presentation 2007 (left to right) Roy Langsford, Carol Langsford, Niall King, President Rod McDougall



Tania Beck's Vietnam adventure



The cost for each participant is \$500, with the balance being obtained by fundraising efforts, at least half of which is donated to the participant's chosen charity. Memorable Challenges in 2008 include The Great Ocean Walk, cycling in Cambodia, Vietnam, Southern China or Mongolia, the Great Wall hiking challenge, the Kokoda track and more. More information is available at www.memorablechallenges.com.

Contact **Chris Harrison** from Memorable Challenges at 0423 780 716 if you have any questions or would like to get involved. If you want a participant's perspective, please feel free to contact Tania as she has just returned from a similar experience cycling Vietnam in July and is already preparing for next year's adventure, either Cycling Cambodia or trekking Nepal after being involved in a local community project.

It is a great opportunity for individuals with a passion for giving, meeting people, travel and adventure to get involved with both the Trish Multiple Sclerosis Research Foundation and Memorable Challenges. What a great way to get inspired, motivated and raise money for important MS research simultaneously. You are encouraged to take the challenge and don't worry, assistance is available with ideas and support for your fund raising efforts. Just ask Tania, it is easier and more fun than she ever anticipated.

Memorable Challenges push personal boundaries with exhilarating adventures, enable you to make new friends, fulfil your dreams, get fit, discover more about the world and yourself, and most importantly, 'make a difference' with the money you raise!

Strathfield Golf Day

The Rotary Club of Strathfield has significantly supported the Trish Foundation since inception, raising an enormous \$118,000 towards our research.

On Thursday, 21st February 2008 the Rotary Club of Strathfield will dedicate its Golf Day and Dinner to the Trish Foundation for the seventh successive year.

Hole Sponsorships are available for \$1,000 providing generous sponsors with the following benefits:

- Golf and dinner for four people
- Light lunch for four people
- Signage on one of the golf holes
- Recognition, acknowledgement and exposure
- Golf shirts for the four players
- Gift pack

Individual registrations are welcomed at a cost of \$75 for golf only, \$55 for dinner only or \$110 for golf and dinner.

Entry forms for individual players or groups are enclosed. For information about Hole Sponsorships or any other details please contact Niall King, mobile 0418 235 400.

Thank you to **Niall King, Ray Wilson** and all the members of the Rotary Club of Strathfield.

Memorable challenge

Tania Beck continues her significant and very generous contribution to the Trish Foundation and multiple sclerosis research. Tania is planning a Memorable Challenge next year and has chosen the Trish Foundation as her dedicated charity.

Tania's fundraising for her Memorable Challenge will give the Foundation's funds for research a great boost. At least half the funds raised at Tania's Memorable Challenge fundraisers will be donated to the Trish Foundation. In addition to dedicating her 35th birthday to the Foundation and accepting donations in lieu of gifts, Tania is organising a Trivia Night on 26 October on the lower North Shore. Anyone interested in attending should contact **Carol Langsford** at 0410 410 491 or Tania at 0414 773 988.

The Foundation invites other supporters to consider taking an adventurous Memorable Challenge whilst fundraising for our research. Memorable Challenges are packed with adventurous overseas expeditions, pushing you to the limit whilst you raise vital funds. The participants are both guys and girls, young and old, and are from every walk of life. Motives come in all shapes and sizes, but for many it's about breaking the mould of routine and doing something completely new, exciting and worthwhile.

Workplace giving

The Trish Foundation is grateful to some of our supporters for generously supporting multiple sclerosis research by way of Workplace giving. You may think that giving a small amount every month isn't enough to be of assistance. In actual fact, it's incredibly important, every dollar 'making a difference' and contributing to the funds available for Australia's dedicated MS researchers.

Why bother? Well, if you're an employer:

- it gets employees involved – increasing commitment, morale, recruitment and retention;

- it demonstrates commitment to the cause your employees care about, in our case of course, multiple sclerosis research.
- it improves company image.

If you're an employee:

- you can support the Trish Foundation and multiple sclerosis research on a regular basis;
- you have full control over your giving, it is easy to opt in and out and you have complete flexibility as to how much and how often you want to pay;
- Donations are tax deductible.

Christmas cards

The Trish Foundation is selling Christmas cards again this year.

The Foundation is indebted to **Matthew Conway**, The National Grid – creative design network for again designing pro bono new and unique Christmas cards for the Trish Foundation.

Thank you to Matthew Conway for your ongoing professional contribution to the Foundation.



Julianne Brennan (left) and Sarah Ross-Smith

Castle Cove Golf Club's great support

The Foundation has been the recipient of significant support from **Julianne Brennan**, Nth Degree Care Turrumurra. Julianne approached the Board of Castle Cove Golf Club with a request to dedicate the Presentation evening for the Ladies Weekend Pennant to the Trish Foundation.

"I met the Foundation's Chairman Carol Langsford at Network North and thought that this wonderful person represented not only a great cause but actually inspired me to see what I could do to help in some small way. Instead of holding just another dinner like every other year I thought we could have a change of format and get energized with something a bit different and was astounded by the support of not only my Club but the other golf clubs involved," said Julianne.

Castle Cove Golf Club approved Julianne's request and her dedication and leadership of a hard-working committee resulted in a very successful fundraiser which raised \$5,100 for the Foundation's research. Significant donations from Castle Cove Golf Club, as well as the Club's Ladies Committee made a great contribution to the funds raised.

Sarah Ross-Smith, Blake Dawson Waldron was Guest Speaker, giving a moving speech about multiple sclerosis, research break-throughs, her diagnosis and the challenges of living with the disease.

Thank you to Julianne Brennan and the committee, Sarah Ross-Smith, Castle Cove Golf Club, the Club's Ladies Committee, the other participating Golf Clubs and the generous people and organizations who donated items.



MS Brain Bank

As reported in our Winter newsletter, the Trish Foundation, firstly underwrote, and then provided funds for MS Research Australia's platform Program the MS Brain Bank to be established. Funds were also provided by the Collier Charitable Fund.

Executive Director of MS Research Australia, **Jeremy Wright** said, "You have been instrumental in enabling the MS Brain Bank become a reality as we took the step earlier this year of starting the pilot operation on the basis of your pledged support."

The MS Brain Bank has been given a great boost with the announcement by the NSW Government Minister **Hon Verity Firth**, of a contribution of \$500,000.

"Once again, this great partnership – Trish Foundation and MSRA – achieved what we couldn't otherwise. Having the confidence to start what we knew was needed to solve this great puzzle – in this case initiating the MS Brain Bank – and the Trish Foundation support, helped us convince the NSW Government of the great merit of this project," Jeremy Wright said.

Neurologists Australia-wide agree the MS Brain Bank is vital to finding answers – first the cause and then a cure – for MS. Small brain collections exist throughout Australia

but are of limited use. This new centralized MS Brain Bank is establishing one large, manageable resource for all Australian scientists doing advanced MS research.

Researching MS with human tissue also has many advantages over research using animal models. These models do not accurately reflect all aspects of MS in people, so using tissue from the MS Brain Bank will help accelerate our knowledge and our progress towards a cure.

The samples collected Australia-wide by the MS Brain Bank will complement those already obtained by **Professor John Prineas**, the world's foremost MS pathologist. It was Professor Prineas' observations which led to a reappraisal of the theory of early injury in MS.

The MS Brain Bank was set up in January 2007 by MS Research Australia with support from the University of Sydney in coordination with the Australian Brain Bank Network (in Melbourne). The Director is **Dr Peter Patrikios**, a neurologist and MS neuropathologist, who chairs an advisory committee which includes **Professor John Pollard** (Head of Neurology, University of Sydney), a member of the Trish Foundation's Scientific Research Committee, **Dr Bill Carroll** from MSRA's Research Management Council and Jeremy Wright, MSRA's Executive Director.

Novel radiolabelled peripheral benzodiazepine receptor (PBR) ligands for imaging and treating neuroinflammation

David Linares Bandin, Neurosciences Research Unit
The Canberra Hospital

MS is an inflammatory disease of the CNS with a complex etiology. However, it is believed that macrophages and microglia cells play a key role in the progression of the diseases. In this research project, we have used novel ligands for the peripheral benzodiazepine receptors (PBR), which are expressed in activated macrophages and microglia, for the early detection of these cells in two animal models of neuroinflammation (Experimental Autoimmune Encephalomyelitis (EAE) and cuprizone demyelination). Since PBR receptors as well appear to be able to modulate cell death, we will also use our novel ligands in attempts to treat the two animal models mentioned.

We have performed several imaging studies using EAE in rats. Our results were satisfactory in regard to in vitro and ex vivo studies, showing that our leading compound (CLINDE) was suitable for the

detection of neuroinflammation. Moreover, our preliminary in vivo studies demonstrate that CLINDE is suitable for detecting neuroinflammation in the cuprizone model of demyelination. These results clearly show a potential in vivo application for the clinical use of CLINDE and its derivatives in the detection of inflammatory cells in the CNS. Finally, we have undertaken several experiments aimed to evaluate the anti-inflammatory properties of our novel PBR ligands. From our results, it can be concluded that some PBR ligands are able to modulate several macrophage functions, suggesting that the use of these compounds may represent a reasonable alternative for the treatment of some forms of neuroinflammation.

The results derived from this investigation will help in the improvement of the MS diagnosis and management and also in the development of new therapies focused on the suppression of the pathological mechanisms of MS.

Trish Foundation's research funds doubled

It is with great pleasure we announce that the Australian MS Genetics Consortium, known as AusGene has recently received a special Linkage Grant from the Department of Education, Science and Training and the Australian Research Council (ARC). The Trish Foundation's contribution of \$200,000 was matched, along with the contribution by the John T Reid Charitable Trusts and the research facilitator, MSRA enabling a budget of over A\$1million to be established.

Professor Graeme Stewart, University of Sydney's Professor of Medicine and Director of Clinical Immunology at Westmead Hospital said, "This grant, and the research opportunities that it opens up, would not have happened without the large donation from the Trish Foundation and the generosity and efforts of the many people who work so hard in Trish's memory."

"The ARC Linkage Grant cements the national collaboration across Australia and provides us with the very real prospect of discovering new genes that contribute to MS and, through this, providing new insights into the cause of the disease and pathways towards more effective treatments. The research community is deeply indebted to the Trish Foundation."

No less than 8 Australian research institutions, coordinated by the University of Melbourne and the Westmead Team, are currently collaborating in the biggest Australian genetic experiment ever for any disease. When linked with the overseas MS studies, the international collaboration will be the most comprehensive research ever on MS.

The researchers will have access to the MS AusGene Bank, one of MSRA's research platforms, which has already collected more than 2,000 blood samples and MS patient profiles. The MS AusGene Bank's collaborators (together with Melbourne and Westmead) include Flinders University, the University of Tasmania's Menzies Institute, the University of Queensland, Griffith University, the University of Newcastle and the University of Western Australia.

The project's kick-start is well-timed, according to **Jeremy Wright**, Executive Director of MSRA. "Advances in technology will enable us to do genetic testing on a large scale and do it economically. Also Australia is closely linked with the international MS genetic research consortium so now, with this funding, we're in a position to directly compare the Australian results with the international studies."

Professor Stewart, said "The project is the best chance we've ever had for discovering new genetic factors in the causes of MS. It's also possible that different genetic factors are at work in MS in Australia and we can only discover those by comparing results from elsewhere."

As a major difference between the newly funded Australian study and international research is Australia's focus on different courses of MS such as relapsing-remitting MS or the more aggressive primary-progressive MS. The MS AusGene Bank's sample profiling made this possible.

"We're looking for genes which cause the disease and influence the clinical course and severity or rate of progression. No one is looking at these nuances overseas," said Professor Stewart. "New knowledge from this gene mapping project will benefit other areas of MS research including epidemiology, immunology and neurobiology."



"The ARC Linkage Grant...provides us with the very real prospect of discovering new genes that contribute to MS. The research community is deeply indebted to the Trish Foundation."

The Australian MS Genetics Consortium, known as AusGene was well underway, with the successful ARC linkage grant approved, when 30 July 2007 became a remarkable day in the history of research into Multiple Sclerosis and in particular for Australia's part in unravelling the complex genetic factors in this crippling disorder. The first MS gene (HLA) was found back in the 1970s. Definitive evidence of the second MS gene took until now.

Few scientific discoveries appear simultaneously in prestigious scientific and medical journals, as occurred in The New

England Journal of Medicine (NEJM) and Nature Genetics. Each publication points to a genetic association with a protein essential to all immune function, interleukin-7 receptor (IL7-R). The definitive nature of the researchers' findings points to a critical role for IL-7R in MS and provides great impetus for further studies on this association. In NEJM, the paper was afforded the rare distinction of being accompanied by an editorial. Nature Genetics published two papers simultaneously on IL-7R, one from the USA/UK and one from Scandinavia.

Combined, these three papers involved testing the DNA of over 20,000 people in experiments made possible by international collaborations, the mapping of the human genome, remarkable advances in 'rapid throughput' genetic testing and multimillion dollar funding by governments and other agencies.

Australian science takes pride in this milestone discovery. The world was first alerted to the role of IL-7R in MS in 2003 by a team led by Professor Graeme Stewart and **Dr David Booth** in the Westmead Millennium Institute, Westmead Hospital.

Professor Stewart was the recipient of a grant in the Trish Foundation's inaugural round of funding in 2002.

"It took the size (and funding) of the overseas experiments however, and confirmation by results in multiple countries, to make this finding internationally accepted," said Professor Stewart. "This provides the potential, albeit perhaps still years away, of better treatments for the many people who live with this dreadful disease and who are long overdue for more effective therapy."

How might IL-7R be contributing to the cause of MS? It is an essential molecule for the functioning of the immune system's protagonists, the T-lymphocytes. T-cells have long been identified as an important player in MS; the genetic finding will quicken the pace of searching for the exact role played by IL-7R and through this, direct new approaches to the development of effective treatments.

If the Australian and International research is successful, the real winners will be people living with MS.



In 2006 **Natalie Payne** became the recipient of the **Trish Foundation's Postgraduate Research Scholarship**.

Making a difference

A BRIGHT YOUNG GRADUATE of La Trobe University with Honours in Biochemistry, Natalie's interests include music, reading, running and cricket.

Natalie graduated from Tintern Anglican Girls Grammar School, Victoria in 2000, achieving a Certificate of Merit for Academic Achievement.

"At high school I completed a Diploma of the International Baccalaureate which included higher level biology. I had a fantastic biology teacher who sparked my interest in diseases and how the body defends itself against infection," Natalie said. "Human diseases and how they can be treated is an interest I wanted to pursue."

Natalie's personal experience with being touched by multiple sclerosis was the diagnosis of her friend's father fifteen years ago.

"My friend's Dad hasn't been able to work for a while and his health has started to deteriorate," Natalie said.

"I feel very privileged to be the recipient of the Trish Foundation Postgraduate Research Scholarship. MS is a devastating disease for

which there is no cure and this scholarship has not only given me the opportunity to pursue a career in scientific research but also contribute towards finding new treatments that will help the millions of people that suffer from MS worldwide."

Natalie's research is being carried out at the Monash Immunology and Stem Cell Laboratories as part of Professor Claude Bernard's group. MISCL is the world's largest stem cell and regenerative medicine research facility and is a centre of research excellence, dedicated to achieving major advances in stem cell research. This internationally competitive research facility is providing the opportunity for Natalie to complete her research work in a scientifically stimulating environment.

Natalie's supervisor, Professor Claude Bernard said, "I have had the opportunity to gauge Natalie's commitment and enthusiasm to perform as well as present her research. I am so impressed by her capacity that I invited Natalie to join our group at Monash Immunology & Stem Cell Laboratories to undertake her PhD work. I am delighted she accepted our offer."

A day in the lab with Natalie is very busy, her commitment and her strong work ethic really shining through.

"I arrive at the lab with lots of experiments planned, however it is also important to keep up with my reading so I can learn what people in my field are doing. There is a lot

of lab work and I often have a quick lunch break of ten minutes."

"Over the past 30 years Claude has made significant discoveries that have helped us to understand more about MS. The work our group is now undertaking, which involves the use of stem-cell based therapies to reverse the effects of MS, is very exciting. Being such a competitive field, I feel very lucky that I have the chance to work with Claude, an internationally renowned scientist who is at the forefront of MS research."

A chat with Natalie reveals her passion and enthusiasm to make a difference to people with MS.

There is no doubt the world is a better place with bright young researchers such as Natalie striving so hard to make the important breakthroughs which give great hope to people with this debilitating disease.

Acknowledgements

The Trish Multiple Sclerosis Research Foundation wishes to sincerely thank the following companies, people and organizations for their generosity, sponsorship and support and for their contribution to the funds raised for multiple sclerosis research:



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Teez Catering
Tennis Australia
Tennis New South Wales
Tennis Ranch Allsports,
Gladesville
The Bankside Waldorf
Apartment Hotel,
Auckland NZ
The Byron at Byron Resort
and Spa
The Federal Group
The Swanston Hotel,
Mercure Grand,
Melbourne
The Tearoom
Queen Victoria
Building
The Wiggles Shop
Vanessa Thompson,
Roseville Tennis
Coaching

John Tognolini, Mounts
Bay Waters Apartment
Hotel, Perth
tonic hotel Lovedale
Triple M
Kostya Tszyu
Lote Tuquri
Typequik
Upper Level Hairdressing
Adam Ventoura
Vintage Golf Course
Vivendi
Vodafone Australia
Lesley Vogel
Volunteer workers
Waldorf Apartment Hotel,
Canberra
Waldorf Apartment Hotel,
Parramatta
Waldorf Apartment Hotel,
The Entrance
Dr. John Walsh
Watermark Restaurant,
Balmoral Beach
Paula Waugh, Big W
Western Plains Zoo
Westmead Millennium
Institute, Researchers
West Lindfield Chinese
Licenced Restaurant
West Pymble Cellars
West Pymble Village
Butchery
Western Plains Zoo
Rodney Wikstrom
Michael Willesee
Andrew Wills, Wills Design
Winter-Rose Cottage B &
B Bathurst
Jenny Wolf
Geoff Wolf, Waldorf
Apartment Hotel
Group
Grahame Wolfe
Woolloomooloo Waters
Apartment Hotel
Sydney
Jeremy Wright,
MS Research Australia
XYZnetworks
Philip Zajac, The Swanston
Hotel, Mercure Grand,
Melbourne
Zoological Parks Board
of NSW