





# MALARIA VACCINE PROJECT NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE



**PDG Sandy Doumany**  
Chair



**Gerard Brennan OAM**  
Committee Member



**Laraine Brennan**  
Committee Member



**Nina Kristensen**  
Development Manager  
Institute for Glycomics

## OUR HISTORY

In 2015 Sam & PDG Sandy Doumany attended a Rotary Against Malaria Conference, with Dr Danielle Stanisic as the Guest Speaker on Research for a Malaria Vaccine. She mentioned that the Laboratory needed a Separator which would cost \$8000.

Sam took that on board and approached PDG Graham Jones to see if we could raise the money required. Within a week, Graham, Sam & other Rotarians had raised the funds.

The Griffith Rotary Satellite Club was in the formation period and the cheque was presented to Dr Danielle Stanisic (a prospective member) at the next meeting. We all felt this sent a message to the new members " THIS IS THE POWER OF ROTARY "

On learning more about the journey for Professor Michael Good and Dr Danielle Stanisic with their research, there was a core of Rotarians who developed a passion to be part of the quest to save the lives of so many men, women and children and eliminate Malaria from the world.

### Committee Chair Committee

PDG Graham Jones AM  
Neil Jones (Treasurer)  
Laraine Brennan (Secretary)  
Gerard Brennan OAM  
Hon Sam Doumany  
PDG Sandy Doumany  
Teresa Dawson  
Karin Kolenko  
Mervyn Powell  
PDG Ross Smith  
PDG Dai Mason



### CHAIRMANS' MESSAGE

In my last message I talked about the eerie feeling of living under the spectre of COVID- 19 and likened it to living in countries where malaria is endemic and ever-present. COVID-19 is still threatening us but, as forewarned by WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom, it has created an even more problematic situation for countries with endemic malaria. Dr Adhanom observed in May of this year that "progress in malaria prevention in endemic countries may even reverse as the COVID-19 pandemic disrupts malaria control programs." Other scientists talk about a ballooning of malaria during the pandemic that will take years to rectify. This whole scenario amplifies the need for an effective malaria vaccine and makes our endeavours to support PlasProtect® even more critical than they were when we started in 2016.

The news is good with PlasProtect® as you will read in Professor Good's lead article in this Newsletter. He is delighted by the excellent results of his vaccine in the Phase 1(a) Clinical Trials at the Gold Coast during 2018-19. Even though the sample was small, this is the first time that a chemically attenuated whole-parasite vaccine has been shown to protect multiple subjects in a trial. He will also talk about the steps ahead as they move from the vaccine encased in a human blood cell to the vaccine encased in an artificial membrane that can be cryo-preserved and transported anywhere in the world. There are a number of preliminary studies that need to be undertaken before the cryo-preserved form is ready for efficacy trials and I am just delighted that, thanks to your generous help, we are in a position to fully fund those preliminary studies.

With some recent donations from long term supporters including the Reuben Peleman Benevolent Foundation, the Malaria Vaccine Project has now raised over \$1.2 million including a matching grant of \$500,000 from the Federal Government Department of Health. In spite of 2020 being an extremely difficult year for Rotary clubs and donors of all kinds, our Project has raised over \$80,000 this year.

THANK YOU everyone for your incredible support and humanitarian concern for the over 400,000 children and pregnant mothers who die from malaria every year. We are on the way to eliminating that terrible statistic! Please continue to help us make the dream of a malaria-free world come true.



**PDG Graham Jones AM**



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# MALARIA VACCINE PROJECT UPDATE

## PROFESSOR MICHAEL GOOD AO

Thanks to the commitment and dedication of the Rotary community, we have had excellent results with our 'whole parasite' malaria vaccine, PlasProtect. This is an 'attenuated' vaccine made by treating cultured malaria parasites, in vitro, with a chemical to stop them growing.

We have shown that the vaccine is safe and induces a strong immune response in volunteers. Furthermore, for the first time a vaccine has been shown to protect some individuals completely from the blood forms of a malaria infection – very exciting data! The vaccine, however, is very difficult to preserve and store. For this reason, we are putting efforts now into a 'liposome' vaccine. In this formulation, an artificial lipid membrane is used to encase the malaria parasite molecules. This form of the vaccine is very easy to freeze-dry and store. In our animal model, this induces excellent protection.

Our plan is to manufacture this vaccine in Brisbane and then test it in animals prior to undertaking a formal 'toxicology assessment', which is a standard procedure for all vaccines in development. We would then move to a Phase I clinical trial in Australia that would assess safety and immunogenicity, prior to testing the vaccine in a malaria-endemic country.

It is an exciting time for vaccine research. COVID has provided many distractions, but it has underscored the importance of vaccines in the fight against serious infectious diseases. A vaccine for malaria is needed now more than ever as the WHO estimates that the number of children and young people that will die from malaria will increase dramatically as the COVID pandemic continues to spread.

I thank all Rotarians for their commitment and hard work in making our research possible and helping in the fight against malaria.



## INSPIRATIONAL SUPPORTERS



### Denis and Jill Hallworth Rotary Club of Murwillumbah Central

When the announcement was made that Rotary District 9640 was to support the development of a vaccine to prevent malaria, Jill and I discussed the matter and decided to help by making a regular contribution to the fund.

As a Rotarian, opportunities become available to participate in worthwhile projects that are not commonly available in the community. We have contributed to the Polio Plus campaign since the commencement and have seen the fantastic results that can happen with Rotary support.

When the matter of a vaccine against malaria was proposed, this was of special significance as we lived in Papua New Guinea for eight years and had witnessed the effects of malaria in the villages.

*"We have contributed to the Polio Plus campaign since the commencement and have seen the fantastic results that can happen with Rotary support."*

Jill had suffered dengue fever while we were in Papua New Guinea. Dengue and malaria have similar effects in many ways, and this personal experience made us more aware of the serious effects of a malaria infection.

Many people infected by malaria die soon after infection, and people who seem to recover from the infection have a lifetime of continuing pain and debilitating effects. These problems prevent them working and they become dependant on family and community support for the rest of their lives.

In Papua New Guinea a significant number of the population suffered malaria, and although attempts such as mass spraying of villages with insecticide and distribution of mosquito nets to villages have been used, malaria continues to be a serious problem.

Our experience while living in various parts of Papua New Guinea, and witnessing the difficulties created by the malaria infection, gave us an appreciation of the urgent need for a vaccine. The involvement of the Rotary organisation gave us the confidence that the research would be conducted properly.

While we could not be involved personally, we are happy to be able to provide ongoing financial support in the hope that the vaccine will be a success and that malaria will become another disease eradicated from the world.





## Spotlighting our new District Governor Andy Rajapakse - Rotary District 9640

20 years ago, I contracted Malaria while holidaying in my Sugar Cane plantation in Sri Lanka. It took me almost one year to fully recover from this killer disease that was caused by a parasite and not a virus. I recall getting high fever every 3 days and my body would shiver for hours. A severe headache followed the fever and I felt as if my head would burst. For months, doctors gave me two kinds of tablets called Chloroquine that left a long lasting, bitter taste in my mouth and no appetite. I was advised that as a Malaria patient, I could no longer donate blood. Since recovering from Malaria I never wish any human to contract this killer disease. If one does not get immediate and good medical help, it can be a killer.

In this light it is no surprise that I fully support and admire the tireless efforts of Dr Michael Good, Dr Danielle Stanisic and their team of researchers at the Institute for Glycomics, Griffith University to find a vaccine to prevent humans contracting Malaria. Past Rotary Governor Prof. Graham Jones AM, the Chairman of the Malaria Vaccine Project who is leading the fundraising campaign through our Rotary network of Rotary Clubs and Rotary Districts, Corporate & Individuals, very rightly says, "It is an intimidating feeling to contract malaria and generally foreign to us because of the wonderful medical facilities and expertise that is available in Australia.

By way of contrast, people in malaria-endemic countries like Uganda, Kenya, and PNG feel like this every day and see no end in sight to the malady. In a sense, we are currently living the experience with them; however, thanks to you we are doing more than that, we are making things happen!"

May I commend the Rotary Team of Sam Doumany, Past Rotary Governors Graham Jones, Sandra Doumany, Ross Smith & Dai Mason together with Rotary leaders Neil Jones, Teresa Dawson, Karin Kolenko, Mervyn Powell, Laraine Brennan and Gerard Brennan OAM for their commitment to create better awareness of the efforts of the ground breaking research of the Institute for Glycomics team and help raise the much needed funds for the human trials.

This is key to taking the vaccine where it is sorely needed. WHO believes we need to expedite the research into a malaria vaccine as a result of growth in malaria cases and deaths during coronavirus pressures on medical facilities.

As one of the first donors to the Malaria Vaccine Research Project, may I invite all men and women who have a purpose in life to make this project your number one choice to donate.

Together we can prevent human beings like us contracting Malaria and save millions of lives.

Let's make the malaria vaccine a reality.

**Andy Rajapakse**  
**Governor**  
**Rotary International District 9640**  
**Australia**

"We are delighted to have District Governor Andy support this Rotary District 9640 project."

**PDG Sandy Doumany**



# THE POWER OF ROTARY

## FUNDRAISING ACHIEVEMENTS THROUGHOUT A PANDEMIC-FILLED YEAR

From \$60,000 at the official launch of the Malaria Vaccine Project by General Sir Peter Cosgrove, the former Governor-General of Australia on 27th March 2015, our fundraising total has surpassed \$1,200,000 and now stands at \$1,203,706.

Fundraising through COVID has been very difficult across the board and whilst Rotary have also witnessed these difficulties, we are pleased to report that from January to November 2020 a collective total of \$87,547 has been raised.

Rotarians and Rotary clubs across Australia have contributed 68% of these funds:

Rotary Clubs	\$22,393
District 9640 DG Partner Project	\$18,965
District 9640 Conference	\$9,070
Individual Rotarians	\$8,789.

We are indebted to all Rotarians for their continuing support, including District 9640 Rotary Club of Mermaid Beach and District 9675 Rotary Club of Engadine, who each contributed \$5,000. A special thanks is extended to District 9640 2019-2020 District Governor Harry Bolton and his wife Shauna for their magnificent support.

The balance of this year's fundraising, totalling \$28,330 came from private donors, to whom we are extremely thankful.

Millions of people, particularly children, will be the beneficiaries of the successful development of a malaria vaccine and we look forward to your continued generosity and support in 2021.





# HOW TO DONATE

The Malaria Vaccine Project committee, Professor Michael Good AO, Dr Danielle Stanisic and the research team at Institute for Glycomics, Griffith University are extremely grateful for your support.

## Development of a Malaria Vaccine Rabs Project No.16 (Year Registered 2016–17)

Every donation helps, small or large donations of any amount can be made as a one-off donation or fortnightly, monthly, annually or biannually. A tax-deductible receipt will be sent to you!

For online donations (credit card, direct transfer):

[malaria vaccineproject.com](http://malaria vaccineproject.com)

By cheque payable to:

Rotary Australia Benevolent Society (Malaria Vaccine Project)  
PO Box 84  
Southport QLD 4215

(For receipting purpose please include name, address and postcode).

## For more information about the project please contact:

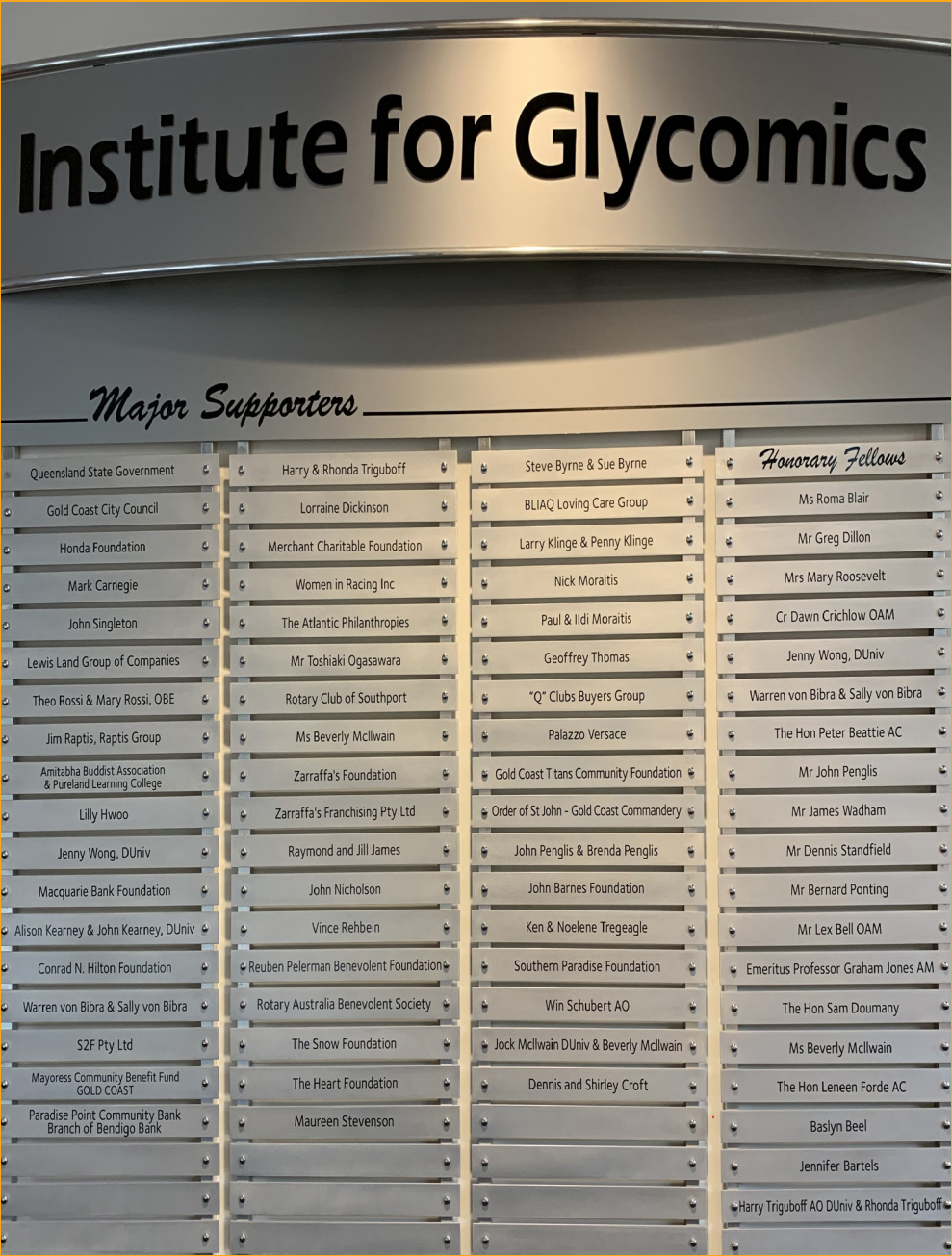
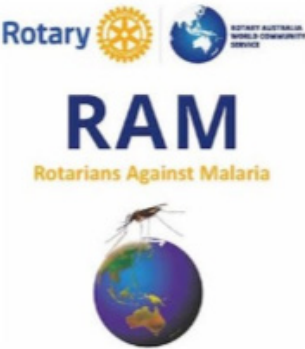
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