

The Ophthalmic Research Institute of Australia



Mr Richard Humbley

ORIA RECEIVES SIGNIFICANT BEQUEST TO FUND RESEARCH INTO MACULAR DEGENERATION

The Ophthalmic Research Institute of Australia (ORIA) was thrilled to learn of the generosity of Mr Richard Humbley, who sadly died towards the end of 2014. We were fortunate to spend time with Richard during 2009. As part of his estate, Richard stipulated the formation of the Richard and Ina Humbley Foundation with the sole beneficiary being the ORIA. Ina had suffered from macular degeneration and predeceased her husband.

Richard was Managing Director of Cockatoo Island from 1971 to 1981. Prior to that he joined the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) volunteer reserve in 1941 after graduating from the University of Sydney with a Bachelor of Economics degree. His last RAN post was director



Dr Danuta Bukowska

general of naval production at the Navy Office in Canberra. Richard reached the rank of Captain in the RAN.

The income from this Foundation will be used in the future to support the ORIA's annual funded research into macular degeneration in the hope of both assisting in alleviating symptoms for sufferers of the disease, and helping to add to the knowledge in finding a cure. We are indebted to the Humbles and, along with the Trustees of the Richard and Ina Humbley Foundation, proud to carry out their wishes.

This is a perpetual Foundation and once it commences, will have equity of around \$1.7 million, with the intention of building up the capital to \$5 million.

The ORIA will receive income from the new Foundation from 2016. It

is an example of the generosity of individuals in Australia who believe in the benefit of providing funds for research for a blinding disease affecting so many people.

During 2015, the ORIA is funding six projects investigating macular degeneration to a total amount of \$300,000. In the last four years, the ORIA has provided over \$1 million for macular degeneration research alone.

One of the current funded projects is being undertaken by an up and coming investigator who was awarded an ORIA New Investigator Grant.

Dr Danuta Bukowska arrived in Australia from Poland after completing her PhD and is now working at the Lions Eye Institute in Perth. She describes her research project, titled "Investigating the mechanism of visual scotoma and metamorphopsia due to macular disease using multimodal imaging", as follows:

"Macular diseases are common causes of blindness. Therefore, detection and quantification of the first symptoms of these diseases, such as metamorphopsia and visual scotoma, present great interest and remain a challenge. In this project we will use advanced optical methods for imaging the macula and its cellular structure in patients with macular diseases. We believe that this study will bring us closer to understand the mechanisms of these visual defects so we can predict how various types of metamorphopsia and visual scotoma respond to early intervention."

Anne Dunn Snape,
Executive Officer, ORIA