



Media release

22 November 2019

Launch Ballarat Cycle Classic 2020 for Cancer Research

Announcements made at the launch include.:

- **Goal for the event is to raise over \$300,00 to establish a new breast cancer research program in Ballarat at the Fiona Elsey Cancer Research Institute.**
- **Introduction of new 160km SPUD100 mile road ride in honour of long-term Ambassador Danny Frawley.**
- **The event Sunday 16 February 2020 from Ballarat's Lake Wendouree**

Today the annual Ballarat Cycle Classic was launched, and the community challenged to get on board and support cancer research in Ballarat in 2020.

Fiona Elsey Cancer Research Institute Director, announced at the breakfast event hosted by the North Ballarat Sports Club, that the 2020 Ballarat Cycle Classic will raise funds to see the establishment of a breast cancer research program in Ballarat.

Professor Kannourakis challenged the community to “help us raise over \$300,000 to establish a Breast cancer research program right here in Ballarat.”

“A breast cancer project is an encouraging extension of the world class research currently undertaken at FECRI in the role of immune cells and cancer. We are aiming to have over 2000 people participate and if everyone can have five of their friends and family sponsor them \$20 we can do this research right here in Ballarat ” said Professor Kannourakis.

This program has already received a generous seed funding donation from philanthropist Mrs Mary-Paula Williamson, that will allow the recruitment of an international recognised researcher to join FECRI in early

2020. An announcement regarding this appointment will be made in the new year. The aggressive fundraising target is required to set up this program and commence research in 2020.

Breast cancer is one of the most common cancers in women with 20,000 new cases diagnosed in Australia each year. It is the second most common cause of cancer related deaths in women with over 3,100 deaths per year. It also affects a small number of men, and the incidence of breast cancer is increasing predominantly due to our ageing population.

The Institute is well placed to undertake research into the immunology of breast cancer with special reference to high risk breast cancers, such as triple negative breast cancer. The research will try to determine protein targets on breast cancer cells that may be involved in evading the immune system, by creating a “fog” around these cells. By identifying these proteins we hope to produce antibodies that would “lift the fog “ from these cells and allow the patients immune system to attack the cancer. This work is currently being undertaken in FECRI in other cancers such as, chronic lymphocytic leukaemia (CLL) and ovarian cancer.

The 2020 Ballarat Cycle Classic event will see the introduction of a new road ride. A distance 160km road ride will join the extensive options available for participants. This ride is to be named in honour of long term Ambassador, local boy and AFL legend, Danny Frawley. A fitting way to pay tribute to a man that had been a supporter of this community event since the start.

Cycle Classic committee member, Rob McClure said “Danny had a huge heart and was an active part of our team. He will be immensely missed at the Classic and we’d like to remember him and his contribution to cancer research in a way that might encourage others to give generously”

The 160km SPUD100 mile ride is a true test of grit and determination and participants are encouraged to challenge themselves.

To support cancer research, community members of all ages can participate in a variety of events, on and off the bike. Events include:

- Distance Road Rides
 - Eclipse Ford 160km SPUD 100 mile ride
 - Protect 100km, 85km, 60km and 50km road rides
- BJT Legal Mountain Bike Challenge, 30km, 40km and 50km.
- Eclipse Ford Fun Rides
 - Lake Ride around beautiful Lake Wendouree
 - 28km Adventure ride.
- *PETstock Family Lake Walk and Run.*

Registrations are now open at www.ballaratcycleclassic.com.au

About the Fiona Elsey Cancer Research Institute.

The Fiona Elsey Cancer Research Institute is a world class cancer research facility based in Ballarat, Victoria. As Australia’s only regionally based cancer research centre, we are non-government, and rely on the generous support of the community to continue research into more effective ways to diagnose and treat cancer.

Opened in 1998, the Institute was inspired by Ballarat teenager, Fiona Elsey who lost her fight with cancer in 1991. Today, led by Professor George Kannourakis, the Institute is making a world class contribution to cancer research, with recent recognition for achievements into immunotherapy targets for ovarian cancer and histiocytic disorders.

The Institute currently has 10 PhD students from Federation University and 11 senior scientific staff.

Recent achievements of FECRI have included:

- Identification of potential new immunotherapy targets for ovarian cancer
- Discovered that immune cells in the walls of the bowel can misbehave and release chemical messengers promoting Bowel cancer.
- Identification of a new immune cell subset in histiocytic disorders.
- Further immune studies in various cancer and leukaemias.
- Identification of a new method for isolating new viruses.

Photo opportunities and interviews available.

All media enquiries, please contact Sarah Stapleton – Marketing and Fundraising Manager at FECRI on 0475 383 687 or sarah@fecri.org.au

