



NEURONEWS

FUNDING LIFESAVING | NEUROSURGICAL RESEARCH

Cherry on Top for Brain Tumour Research

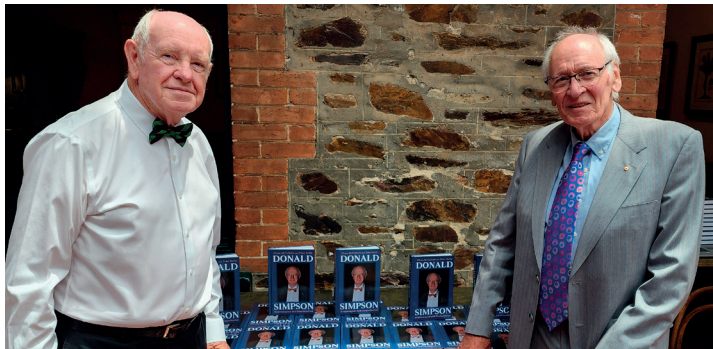


Bache Bros, Scalzi Produce, Foodland Supermarkets, SA Produce Market, Market Fresh, SA Chamber of Fruit and Veg, Ceravolo Orchards, William Buck Foundation

The 2024 Cherry Auction at the SA Produce Market was nothing short of spectacular, raising a record-breaking \$100,000 to fuel cutting-edge research into brain tumours. This remarkable success will have a lasting effect on the fight against glioblastoma.

This year's winning bid of \$85,000 came from Donna Mercurio of Bache Bros, crowned Cherry Queen, with a generous top-up from Scalzi Produce with several sponsors, see full list below photo. These funds will directly support groundbreaking personalised therapies for glioblastoma patients and facilitate the acquisition of a state-of-the-art PCR machine. This vital tool will empower researchers to study tumour mutations and test targeted treatments, bringing us one step closer to life-changing breakthroughs in brain cancer care.

Prof Stuart Pitson, Chair of Brain Tumour Research SA, said, "It was a huge honour to be involved in this event. Such generosity from an incredible community! These proceeds will make a real difference to improving outcomes for brain tumour patients in South Australia."



Neurosurgeon & Humanitarian: Donald Simpson

The Donald Simpson High Tea was a resounding success, raising an incredible \$137,500 to support scholarships for South Australia's next generation of neuroscience leaders. The event celebrated the life of Donald Simpson, a pioneering neurosurgeon, and marked the launch of his inspiring biography Donald Simpson - Neurosurgeon and Humanitarian. Written as a labour of love by two former students, Glenn McCulloch and Peter Reilly, the event launched the new Donald Simpson Neuroscience Scholarship.

Thanks to the generosity of attendees, these funds are already making a tangible impact by connecting young researchers with global experts and advancing their skills. The inaugural scholarship has already enabled 10 promising neuroscientists to attend the 2024 Australasian Neurotrauma Network Annual Symposium, providing them with invaluable opportunities to further their careers and contribute to the future of neuroscience.

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Generous Gift Supports Groundbreaking Brain Tumour Research

We are excited to share that the **Sovereign Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, Knights of Malta** has made a remarkable donation of \$20,000 to support the future of brain tumour research.

This generous contribution will enable Dr. Morris Hanon to attend two internationally renowned workshops on FRET imaging and Image-Based Multiomics in the USA and Germany in June 2025. Dr. Hanon will receive advanced training in correlative temporal multi-omic analysis of patient-derived brain tumour organoids—an area of expertise currently unavailable in Australia.

These advanced skills will boost SA's research capacity, helping to develop more effective treatments for aggressive and recurring tumours. We are deeply grateful for their generous gift and the transformative impact it will have on advancing research, offering hope, and improving outcomes for patients and their families.

NRF Vacation Scholarships

This year, the NRF awarded 7 Vacation Scholarships to South Australia's brightest young minds. Over the summer, these students worked alongside leading researchers giving them hands-on experience in groundbreaking neurosurgical research – inspiring the next generation of trailblazing neuroscientists.



Characterising Age-related Brain Inflammation in Neurological Disease

Jack Hawke

"This study will characterise how brain inflammation changes with age - insights that are vital for understanding conditions like Parkinson's disease and stroke, helping identify new treatment targets."

SUPERVISOR:

Associate Professor Lyndsey Collins-Praino, University of Adelaide.

Protecting the Brain After Stroke

Chantelle Patterson

"This project is essential in determining the efficacy of APP96-110 as a treatment for ischaemic stroke."

SUPERVISORS:

Associate Professor Renée Turner and Dr Rebecca Hood, Translational Neuropathology Laboratory, University of Adelaide.

Anthony Walsh Traumatic Brain Injury Vacation Scholarship

Hasini Kapuwelle

"I'll work across several projects investigating how brain injuries evolve and testing new therapeutics to improve outcomes after injury."

SUPERVISORS:

Associate Professor Renée Turner and Dr Rebecca Hood, Translational Neuropathology Laboratory, University of Adelaide.

Bright Minds, Bold Discoveries



Tackling Childhood Brain Cancer

Mahshiat Tahsin

"This project uses genomics, stem cell and organoid disease modelling to identify new genes predisposing children to high-risk brain cancer. Understanding disease origin paves the way for improved therapies that increase cure rates and decrease treatment toxicity."

SUPERVISOR: Associate Professor Quentin Schwarz, Neurovascular Research Laboratory, Centre for Cancer Biology, UniSA.



Chris Adams Research Grant - Targeting Tumour Weaknesses to Fight Glioblastoma

Ruhi Polara

"By targeting CD47, we can exploit glioblastoma's metabolic vulnerabilities, offering a novel therapeutic approach to improve patient outcomes."

SUPERVISOR: Professor Stuart Pitson, Molecular Therapeutics Laboratory, Centre for Cancer Biology, UniSA.



Tracking Glioblastoma Evolution to Personalise Treatment

Martin Wong

"We're identifying biomarkers that predict tumour changes after treatment, helping tailor therapies to improve outcomes for patients."

SUPERVISOR: Associate Professor Guillermo Gomez, Tissue Architecture and Organ Function Laboratory, Centre for Cancer Biology, UniSA.



Richard Buttery Glioblastoma Research Vacation Scholarship

Seonghan (Matthew) Lim

"We aim to understand how patient glioblastoma cells resist chemotherapy. This work will improve our world-leading preclinical models - aiding future evaluation of new experimental therapies."

SUPERVISOR: Professor Stuart Pitson, Molecular Therapeutics Laboratory, Centre for Cancer Biology, UniSA.



Teaming Up to Tackle Childhood Brain Cancer

Supported by our latest partnership with the Adelaide Crows Foundation, NRF brain tumour researchers prove they're trailblazers in and out of the lab!

In October 2024, Professor Stuart Pitson, Associate Professor Quenten Schwarz, and with Markus Orchard took on the Heysen Trail to raise vital funds for childhood brain tumour research.

Originally set for the Kokoda Track, the team's plans shifted due to unforeseen closures, but their determination never wavered. Together, they raised thousands to support groundbreaking research into childhood brain cancer, focusing on identifying genetic predispositions and testing innovative drug combinations to target aggressive tumour mutations.

Every step brings us closer to better treatments.



NRF Team Neuro: Running for Research

NRF Team Neuro raised \$42,000 at the 2024 50th City to Bay Fun Run, with over 80 participants and 4 teams running in honour of loved ones and to support life-changing neurosurgical research.

Team Tony Tony Tony were our star fundraisers this year, raising \$6,390 and funding the Anthony Walsh Traumatic Brain Injury Vacation Scholarship (see p2).

Our newest team, Surfcon SA, demonstrated the incredible power of community support rallying behind one of their own battling a cancer diagnosis and raising over \$6000!

Pat ran in honour of her sister for team Running for Mel, raising vital funds for brain cancer research.

A big thank you to our wonderful long-term sponsors Jones Radiology who always put together a great team and make sure we stand out in our NRF Team Neuro shirts.

We are so grateful to everyone who participated, volunteered, and supported us in 2024.



Tony Tony Tony



Surfcon



Running for Mel



Jones Radiology

Sunday 21st Sept

Join NRF Team Neuro in 2025!

Whether you're running, walking, or wheeling to the finish line, fundraise with us to make a lasting impact!

Sign up today!

