

## The Foundations Reception

27 July 2009

Vice-Chancellor

Distinguished Councillors, members and supporters of our University of Sydney Foundations

Colleagues and friends

It is a particular pleasure to welcome you all tonight on an occasion when we honour and thank the splendid Foundations of our University, whose generosity, encouragement and indeed vision – have added a special dimension to the continuing achievements of a great University.

For some time, I have looked forward to an opportunity to express our profound appreciation. I have long been aware, both as an academic, and more recently, as Chancellor, of the far-reaching effect of the work of the Foundations, now across a generation.

Only this month I was privileged to participate, albeit on the fringe, in the visionary efforts of our University's Science Foundation for Physics. This was established in 1954 by the peerless Professor Harry Messell, who continues to inspire fine young minds gathering here from around the world to experience, through the Foundation, a will to continue their higher education in physics and related sciences, and contribute to the common good. Countless participants have gone on to fulfil such a promise. Not only was this Foundation the first established at an Australian university, it was the first across the British Commonwealth.

Some of you may also be astonished to learn that the Dairy Research Foundation, based at Camden, has just celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, as has the Medical Foundation.

Legendary names come to mind, – individuals who worked assiduously to draw the private sector into these creative partnerships – Sir Victor Coppleson, Sir Robert Crichton Brown, Sir Frank Packer and Sir Vincent Fairfax to name just a few. In more recent times others and now **you**, whom we honour tonight, have continued this precious tradition.

Across the sciences, pharmacy, engineering and the humanities, like generosity and inspiration have grown. And there are the Foundations with strong international links which further enhance the University's prestige across the world. And how could we forget our energetic and enthusiastic extended family of the Nepean Foundation. Also the Peace Foundation and the Conservatorium. There are 41 Foundations, each highly valued.

Without this support it is difficult to imagine the vast horizons of important research underway at this University.

Following the model of the Foundations, there are other valuable University groups and Institutes who have made outstanding contributions to the continuing culture of service to our nation and beyond - this defines the University of Sydney.

I thank you all.

**HE Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO**  
**Chancellor**  
**University of Sydney**  
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