



PROUDLY SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH
ALL NEUROLOGICAL CONDITIONS

January 26, 2018

Golden Girl honoured with Order of Australia

Legendary Australian track and field Olympian Betty Cuthbert, AM, MBE has been posthumously honoured with a Companion AC in the General Division of the Order of Australia for eminent service to athletics at the national and international level, particularly as a gold medallist at the Melbourne and Tokyo Olympic Games, and as a role model, fundraiser, and advocate for research into finding a cure for multiple sclerosis (MS).

“We are all very proud to celebrate Betty’s achievement and it is fitting that she has been recognised in this way. Her role as an advocate was an inspiration for people living with MS. Betty described MS as a dark cloud but even in her later years she was urging people to never, ever give up and her determined, unwavering spirit has offered hope to so many,” said MSWA CEO, Marcus Stafford AM.

“Betty leaves behind an incredible legacy. She was a strong supporter of MSWA and MS Australia and regularly appeared at events and generously donated auction items to help raise money for research into MS. In 2010, there was a rose named in her honour, as a tribute to her tireless work for people living with MS and raising the profile of MS and even today, \$1 is donated to MS Australia for every rose sold.”

Ms Cuthbert was diagnosed with MS in 1974, after experiencing symptoms for five years. The Golden Girl then became an advocate for people living with MS and used her profile to support the cause. Betty jointly launched MS Research Australia in 2004 with former Prime Minister John Howard AC at Parliament House. Aged 79, she passed away in Mandurah in August last year.

Two research grants have been created in Betty’s name, the Betty Cuthbert Scholarship and the Betty Cuthbert Fellowship. These awards are jointly funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), MS Research Australia and the Trish MS Research Foundation, to assist research into the causes of MS and speed up the development of new treatments and therapies to reduce the effects of the neurological condition.

Betty Cuthbert was the first Australian to win a gold medal on home soil, at the 1956 Melbourne Olympics, winning three gold medals. Betty then went on to win gold at the Tokyo Olympic Games, and during her career she set nine world records. In 2012, Ms Cuthbert was one of 24 inaugural inductees into the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) Hall of Fame.

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