

DON KINNERSLEY celebrating hearing

12 month old Ehrfan is deaf.

On Tuesday 4 April 2006, he had his cochlear implant switched on at SCIC.

But what makes this special is that it has only been made possible by Don Kinnersley's generosity.

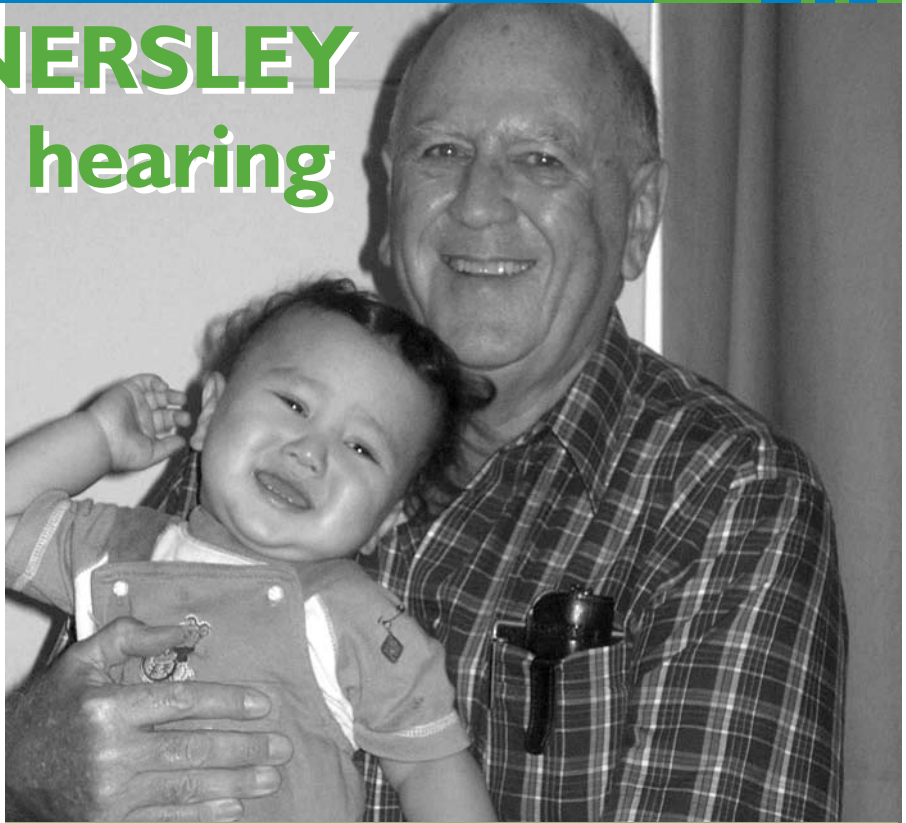
Don has agreed to purchase the device for Ehrfan at a cost of \$24,070, as a 70th birthday present to himself.

Don said "A year or so ago I heard of a Western Australian man who wanted to pay for a cochlear implant for someone for whom not only would the implant make a great difference but who also was a person whose restoration of hearing would, in the judgement of the WA Cochlear Implant Centre, benefit others."

The person selected was an aboriginal art teacher who found that as her hearing failed it was getting difficult to continue with her teaching. This would have been to the detriment of her many young aboriginal art students.

He went on to say that "While I thought that this was a great thing to do at the time, I didn't give it further thought until late 2005 when my wife and I were talking about my 70th birthday and what plans we should make to celebrate it.

After checking for implant centres on the Internet and sending emails to a few of them, I arranged for the two of us to visit the Sydney Cochlear Implant Centre (SCIC) at Gladesville,



Don Kinnersley with cochlear implant recipient, Ehrfan.

where we watched the "switch-on" of a young boy from Mudgee.

My wife and I were so moved by the experience that I decided immediately to make a gift of an implant to a child, whose parents were not so well-off and who would have to compete with others for a place on the waiting list for a government provided implant. I've realised that the sooner a child receives a cochlear implant, the more optimal the outcome.

After discussions with the SCIC people, I agreed with their selection of an 11-month old boy, the son of Afghan refugees, who was born in Sydney and found to be profoundly deaf through

the "SWISH" program that screens babies for deafness at birth.

My 70th birthday has been a very special birthday for me and I am really keen to let people know what a great honour it is to be able to help a deaf child to hear.

I'm going to tell all my friends and former work associates about it and suggest that they consider doing something similar."

On 4 April, Don and his wife Jan joined Ehrfan and his family to cut a cake not only celebrating Don's 70th birthday, but also Ehrfan's first birthday and the day for switch-on of his cochlear implant.