

## A TRIBUTE TO THE LATE BRIAN WATTERS

Brian Fletcher Watters was born in 1935 in Perth, WA, the spirited son of a large and lively family. He grew up surrounded by the warmth and noise of his siblings.

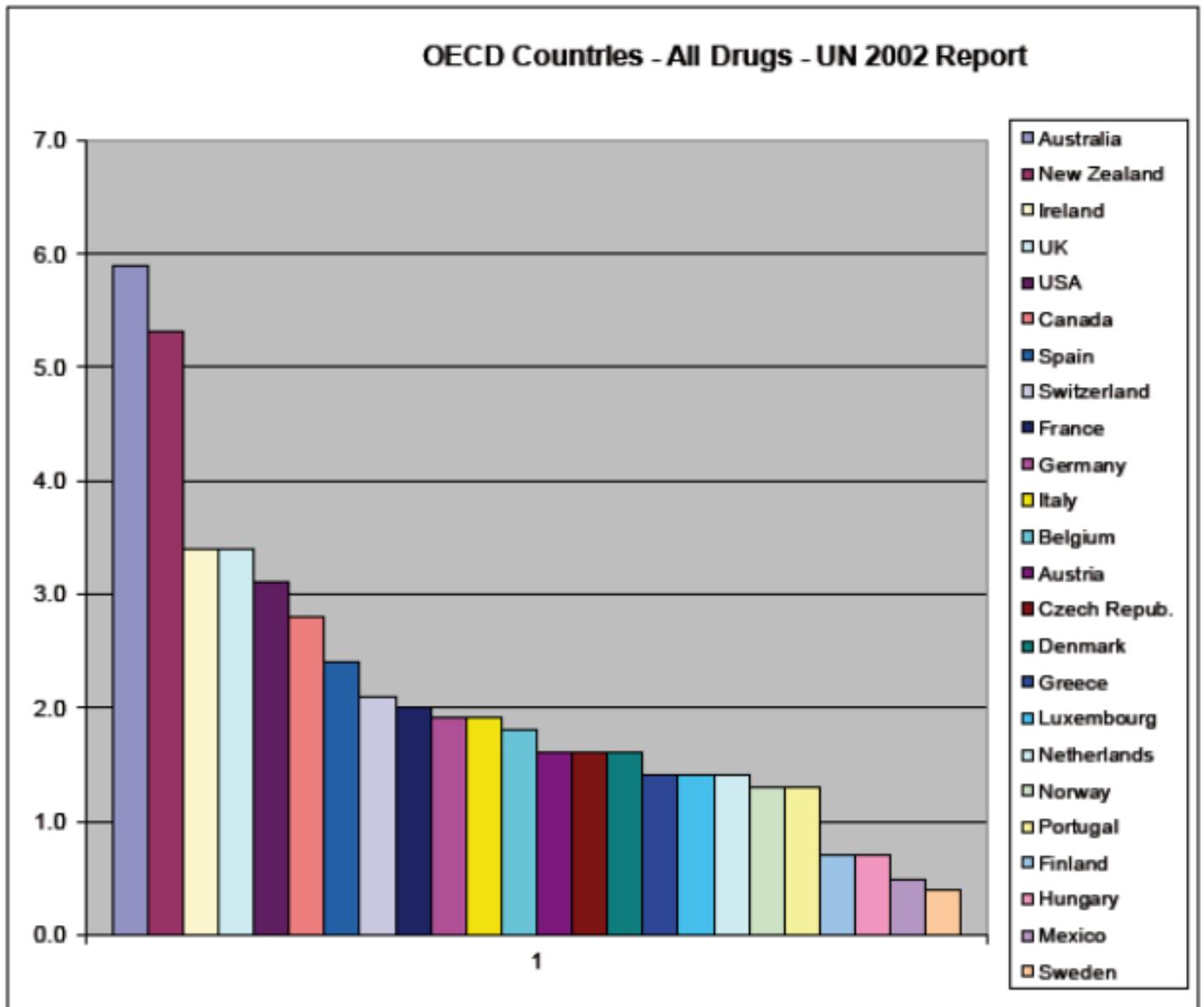
In 1955, Brian's path led him to Sydney, where he met Margaret Powell at the International Youth Congress – a meeting that would shape the rest of his life. They married in 1959 and raised three children and delighted in the joy of their 9 grandchildren.

A man of steadfast faith, Brian served as a soldier, corps cadet counsellor and bandsman of Sydney Congress Hall. Brian and Margaret's ministry took them across Australia – to West Wyalong, Dubbo, Tamworth, Townsville and Brisbane City where they touched countless lives through their leadership and compassion.

In 1983, Brian served as Commander of Rehabilitation Services for the Eastern Australia Territory. He was also involved with numerous boards and Committees related to addiction services.

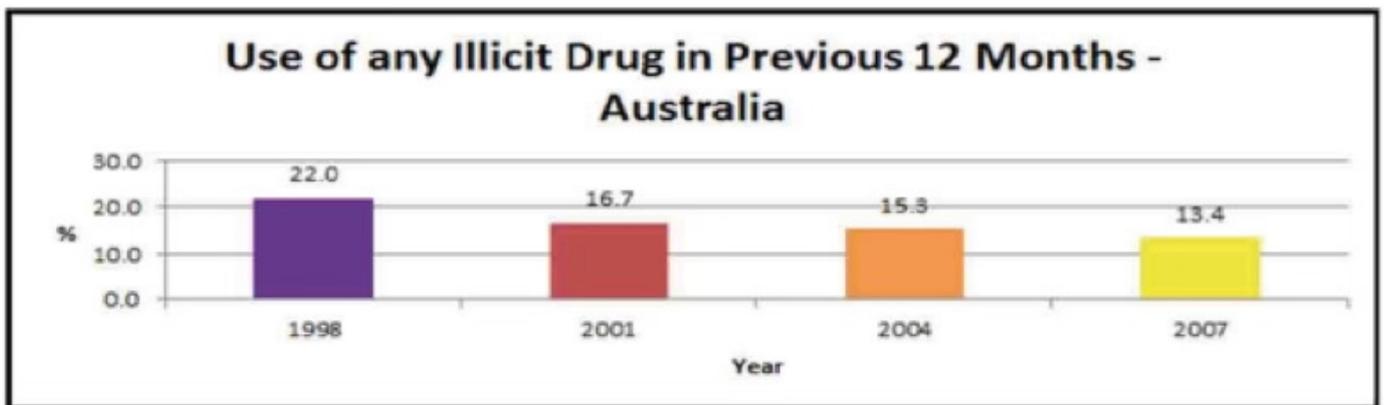
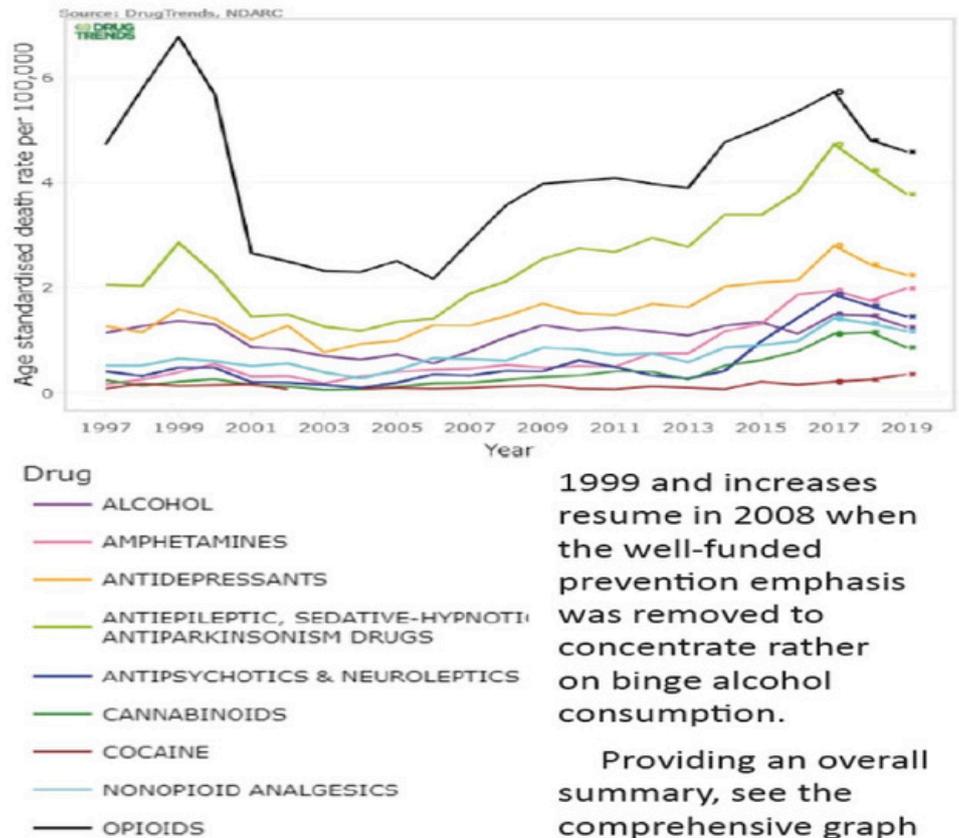
In 1998, Brian was seconded as Chairman of the Australian National Council on Drugs, serving as advisor to Prime Minister John Howard. The Federal 'Tough on Drugs' policy was a highly effective result of Brian's experience, compassion and professional knowledge when dealing with people 'on the streets' and saving countless lives. Many of these people spoke openly at Brian's funeral, which was indeed a 'Celebration of Life', testifying to his genuine concern for their safety and wellbeing.





In 2002, Australia’s drug use statistics revealed the highest use in the OECD.

Thanks Major Watters’ policy direction for the Federal Government, by 2007 the use rates had decreased, due to a drug policy that informed all Australians of drug harms via graphic Television advertisements and information posted to each household. It was known as ‘Tough on Drugs’ and revealed just how powerful and dangerous these substances were.



In 2005, he was appointed to the United Nations International Narcotics Control Board, becoming the first Australian in 25 years to hold that role. His work took him across the world to Vienna and beyond – advising global leaders on drug policy with wisdom and integrity.

Brian’s legacy of service, music and love will continue to echo in the hearts of all who knew him.

Drug Free Australia, in partnership with Rotary would like to continue to honour Brian’s legacy by offering young people opportunities to share their drug prevention ideas both locally and at the UN’s Commission on Narcotic Drugs in Vienna in 2026.

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# THE MAJOR BRIAN WATTERS YOUTH PREVENTION INFLUENCERS' AWARD



COULD YOU BE THE NEXT **YOUTH INFLUENCER SCHOLARSHIP** RECIPIENT?

Drug Free Australia (DFA) is an NGO that is working in close cooperation with the Rotary Action Group for Addiction Prevention. In partnership, DFA announced an award to be offered in honour of the work of Major Brian Watters AO, to young people between the ages of 17 and 25 who are interested in training to be Youth Prevention Influencers.

## WHAT'S ON OFFER

- 1) Financial assistance for YPI training, up to \$500 as follows:
  - the first \$100 being awarded at commencement of training as a YPI;
  - \$100 awarded upon successful completion of the training; \$300 awarded upon completion of practical policies and practice to help prevent addiction to nominated community groups/ individuals.
- 2) Training – either a 4 hour online or a 1 day face to face session in the nature of addiction and current strategies being used to prevent and/or help people deal with their addiction.
- 3) Mentoring to encourage the development the YPI's own strategies for drug prevention in their communities.
- 4) Assistance with travel to Vienna to be part of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) at the United Nations headquarters – held in mid-March each year, to join other like-minded young people in their endeavours to influence world governments in drug prevention.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

Individuals between the ages of 16-29 can be nominated by Rotary Clubs, Senior Secondary Schools and Tertiary Institutions OR they can nominate themselves and seek the backing of their local Rotary club or other body.

Submit a registration of interest, giving reasons for applying. This should include:

- (a) Resume with at least 2 referees including those involved in a Rotary Club or other community body.
- (b) A minimum 500-word statement/essay/video entitled – 'Why and How we could stay Drug Free'

## KEY DATES

Registration of interest due - November 21, 2025

Scholarship recipients notified by Friday 5 December, with training sessions confirmed by mutual agreement in early 2026.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND TO APPLY CONTACT: **Jo Baxter** International Board Member  
Rotary Action Group For Addiciton Prevention - [admin@drugfree.org.au](mailto:admin@drugfree.org.au)

## Call to return high impact Drug Prevention Policy - Gary Christian

Following up on the high impact 'Tough on Drugs' Strategy, President of Drug Free Australia is calling for a return to the principles of this initiative by seeking the Federal Government to consider:

- A high impact media and social media campaign to reach young people and families, demonstrating the harsh reality of how much drug abuse can harm individuals, families and communities.
- Providing a letterboxed information brochure with facts on drug use and how parents and carers can support their young people before they become addicted or lose their lives.

(A similar process has recently been used to inform about the Algae Bloom affecting South Australian beaches and sea life.)

- Funding more prevention-focused health facilities and recovery focussed rehabilitation services.



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Advocacy

Integrating a Gender  
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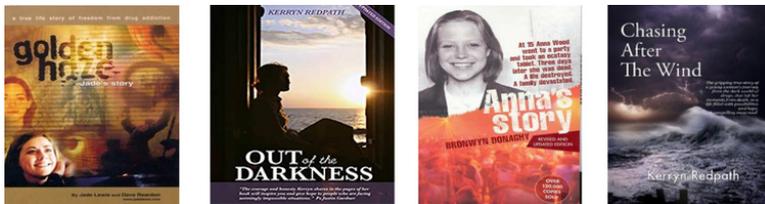


RESOURCES

Click on the images below to access the online resources



Books and more...



For WCTU Primary & Secondary programs contact Dawn Stark: [drug-free@bigpond.com](mailto:drug-free@bigpond.com)

DAESY



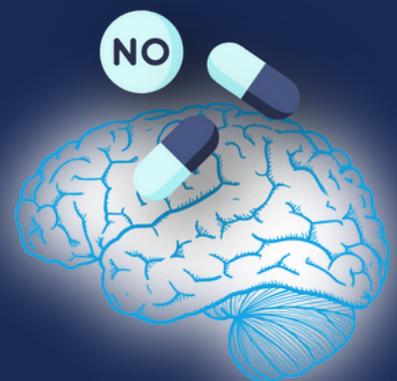
For more information on any of the above, contact: [admin@drugfree.org.au](mailto:admin@drugfree.org.au)

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