

## Accommodation Centres – Helping Those in Need, John Opie House

Since the opening of the first accommodation centre in 2003 – BMDI Rotary House, the Foundation has strived to help relieve some of the burdens faced by patients and carers by providing them with safe, comfortable, low cost accommodation whilst they are undergoing hospital treatment.

In 2008, the Foundation, with support from the Tasmanian government, opened John Opie House, named in memory of our founding President and Chairman, John Opie AM. The House is a low cost, quality, accommodation centre for patients and carers attending Hobart's hospitals. Since opening, more than 360 people have stayed in the House. Andrea and Kurt Carey made the House their refuge in their time of need.

Andrea and Kurt live in Ulverstone, more than three hours from Hobart. Andrea was 26 weeks pregnant with

their first child when her pregnancy became compromised and she was airlifted from Burnie Hospital to the Royal Hobart Hospital to give birth to their baby prematurely. Baby Tiana weighed only 900g and was immediately taken to the neonatal intensive care unit. Having no family or friends in Hobart, and wanting to be close to their baby, the Careys moved into John Opie House. The House provided Andrea and Kurt with a comfortable, affordable and friendly place to live whilst Tiana faced her own struggle to survive. Tiana's progress was steady and after seven weeks in hospital, she was ready to go home.

“Without the house we would have found it extremely difficult financially for me to stay in Hobart and be so close to Tiana. We believe that the time I spent with her in the early weeks certainly



*Kurt and Andrea with Tiana*

helped with her progress. The House was my 'home way from home' for just over seven weeks. Sam (House Manager) was fantastic in making sure that my needs were met whilst in the House.”

Today, at nine months, Tiana is doing extremely well and growing quickly. Her doctors and her doting parents are thrilled with her progress.

**For more information about Fight Cancer Foundation accommodation centres, please call 03 9342 7888.**