

Star of the Sea welcomes star of the screen

BY JESSICA NICOL

LAST week, Ocean Grove's Our Lady Star of the Sea welcomed Gold Logie-winning actor, philanthropist and *Dancing with the Stars* winner Samuel Johnson.

Johnson won the hearts and wallets of Australians in 2012 when he launched the "Love Your Sister" campaign and uncycled his way around the country to raise awareness and funds for breast cancer.

Inspired by his sister Connie's battle with terminal cancer (which ended with her passing in 2017), Johnson has raised \$10 million to date and is on a two-year tour with a simple message: "Get your mum to check her boobs".

"The school visits are without doubt the best part of my job, kids are where it's at. They're very good at awareness raising," he said.

"Local mums in Ocean Grove are much more likely to listen to their kids than me when it comes to breast cancer awareness, which is why I visit schools.

"So... I ask the kids to go home and have a conversation with their mums about her boobs."

As kids giggled, Johnson laughed alongside them but again reiterated the importance early detection played in saving lives.

"I hope that your teachers remind you at the end of the day to go home and have the conversation with your mum tonight."

Johnson told the crowd he'd received lots of letters from mums whose children had come home after one of his visits and told them to do a breast check.

"Most recently I had a mum write to say thank you because of her child prompting her they'd discovered her cancer early. She's undergoing treatment and is going to be okay.

"It's equal parts funny and awkward, but

really it's the core of what we do basically. I'm trying to get cancer detected early and the way I can do that is through these kids who help me.

"It's definitely the most rewarding aspect of my job and the most effective as well."

Johnson was presented nearly \$800 raised by the school community, spearheaded by the Maud family, Caitlin (grade 3) and brother Joshua (grade 1), who raised \$205 selling honey joys they'd made themselves.

"Love your Sister is currently raising \$75,000 a month so I need to do a lot more work before I can go home. I won't stop until I'm raising a million a month," he said.

"I want people to take away that there is a better way to treat cancer than what we are using now.

"We're using a trial and error method at the moment and we can be far more precise with personalised treatment, which is based on treating every patient individually according to their genetic makeup."

For more information, head to loveyoursister.org.

The Gold Logie-winning actor took to his unicycle to wow the crowd.



The Maud family, spearheaded by OLSOS students Caitlin Maud (grade 3) and Josh Maud (grade 1) handed over nearly \$800 to Samuel Johnson. Photos: JESSICA NICOL



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