

## EGYPT BY TOUCH

UNIQUE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION  
HOSTED BY RVIB OPENS IN MELBOURNE

The *Egypt by Touch* exhibition is a collection of 35 ancient Egyptian replica artifacts gathered together and managed by the Rundle Foundation and Macquarie University.

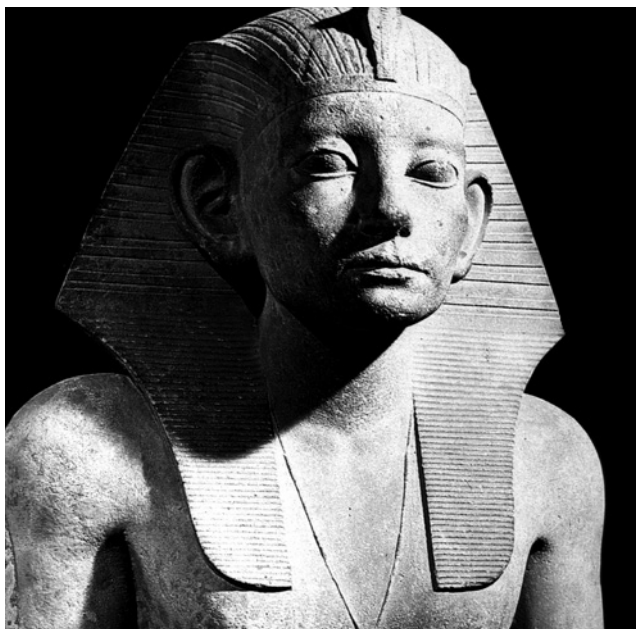
The collection takes an original approach providing a truly unique experience to all its visitors. It opens up the exciting world of Ancient Egypt to people who are blind or vision impaired by allowing visitors to handle the artifacts which include Nefertiti's Bust, Old Kingdom

Scarab and a Late Period Bronze Cat.

***“This exhibition will open a new world of pleasure that has not previously been available to the sight impaired. It will open doors to those touching and feeling Egyptian antiquities for the first time.”***

*Dr. Val Rundle, Rundle Foundation*

The exhibition has been shown all around the world including London, Prague, Cairo and Sydney. For the first time this collection will be available to the people of Victoria to enjoy during the three-week exhibition from 3 to 21 June, 2002, in The Foyer, 101 Collins Street, Melbourne. There is no entry fee although a gold coin donation to RVIB would be appreciated.



## Thank you

RVIB thanks major sponsors Channel Nine, Qantas and 3AW for their continued support. Thank you also to Qantas, Revlon, Caw Marketing, Four Sisters, Telstra and Costplus Liquor for their support of **Aqua**. The **RVIB Fair** was possible thanks to the support of Hocking Stuart, Pacific Brands, Malvern Star, Cadbury Schweppes, Tip Top Bread, Don Smallgoods, Donut King and Safeway. Thanks to Tattersall's and Dymocks Booksellers for their support of the **Early Childhood Storybook Kit Project**; Melways Australia; and the Bank of Melbourne for their commitment to assisting people who are blind or vision impaired.

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I hope you enjoy the new look of the RVIB newsletter. This newsletter

aims to keep you up to date with all the RVIB news and let you know how your support and donations are being used in our work to assist Victorians who are blind or vision impaired. RVIB continues to lead in the provision of services, training and technology. A new Orientation and Mobility Course was launched at RVIB recently with the assistance of Seeing Eye Dogs Australia and Blind Citizens Australia. The aim of this course is to train people to assist those who are blind or vision impaired to be mobile and independent in the community. In this edition of RVIB News we take a further look at this new leading service.

RVIB continues to stage events and run campaigns to increase awareness of the services provided by RVIB, and of the importance of caring for your eyes. Regular checks can detect diseases such as glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy. I encourage all of you to look after your sight and your eyes; don't lose sight of your vision!

Thank you for your continued support of the much-needed work that we do at RVIB.

Yours sincerely,

Doug Kent,  
Chief Executive Officer

# Braille book project

## THANKS TO THE GENEROUS SPONSORSHIP OF TATTERSALL'S, THE WISHES OF A FAMILY'S BEQUEST WILL BE REALISED.

The development of the Early Childhood Storybook Kits library for children under six who are blind is progressing well.

The 100 storybook kits being prepared will each consist of a specially selected storybook with braille, tactile elements to enhance the reader's experience, and a CD with an audio version of the storybook, all kept in a small suitcase.

An added boost to the production of this library came when Dymocks Booksellers agreed to support the project with assistance in sourcing and supplying the books needed to achieve the 12 month project goals. Their support helps enormously as some books needed are out of print, or very old.

The selection of the storybooks is managed by the RVIB Early Childhood Education team and is critical for the success of the project, now and for the long term. Having the support of Dymocks and their Children's Book buyer will be invaluable.

As the books arrive, sourcing tactile props and audio production will be started to complete the kits. It is proposed that the storybook kits will be available for loan to children early next year.

The Project Manager of the Braille books is **Louise Curtin**, who is located at the St. Kilda Road Head Office. For more information, Louise can be contacted during business hours on **(03) 9522 5222**.

## You can now donate online

RVIB now has an online donation facility, making it even easier for you to support RVIB.

Visit the RVIB website at [www.rvib.org.au](http://www.rvib.org.au) and follow the 'Donate Now' link on the Home Page. If you have any questions about making a donation, please contact **Kerri Guyett** on **(03) 9522 5229**.

# MUSIC to our ears

THREE YEARS AGO BETTY AMSDEN  
DECIDED SHE WANTED TO DONATE TO  
RVIB. BUT SHE WANTED TO DO MORE.



Betty Amsden with Maree Littlepage,  
principal of the RVIB School

Impressed by the RVIB School at Burwood, and particularly the importance of music to the children there, Betty decided to set up a scholarship.

The Betty Amsden Music Scholarship is awarded annually to a deserving student. Last year's winner, 16 year-old Lauren Hayes

from Ballarat, went on to perform at RVIB Carols by Candlelight, and is well on her way to a singing career.

“Some vision impaired children do miraculous things; even watching a child successfully use a white cane, or a guide dog is incredible,” Betty says. “But they need encouragement, and I am always keen to encourage youth.”

Betty, who worked in aged care before her retirement, lives in Kew with her Labrador Baillie. She says she's privileged to be able to help charities including RVIB.

“The future of young people is very important, and relies on people like me making donations,” she says. “I am very lucky that I have the means to be able to help others.”

## Go for Gold Saturday 29 June

Join Silvie Paladino and Vince Sorrenti at the RVIB Gold Ball. The exclusive black tie dinner will feature a 12 piece band, celebrity artists and a live auction. Auction items include unique hand crafted gold artwork and an adventure flight in a military jet. For details or tickets telephone **Nathan McEwan** on **(03) 9522 5295**.

## Your invitation to high tea at the Windsor Hotel

To celebrate RVIB and its work over the past 138 years, you are invited to attend the Windsor Hotel on 10 October for high tea in the Grand Ballroom. You will be served with a traditional Windsor afternoon tea in the historic hotel on Spring Street, Melbourne, and a guest speaker and other entertainment will add further highlights to this day we know you will enjoy. The cost per person is \$40. For details and advance bookings call **Ian McDonald** on **(03) 9522 5218**.

## Getting fishy

This year's inaugural Aqua fundraiser held at the Melbourne Aquarium was a great success, and looks to become a fixed event on Melbourne's social calendar. Telstra Dolphin Matt Welsh lent his support in the lead-up to the event, and radio announcer Dave Hughes of Nova 100 drew the raffle and mingled with guests.



## Queensland holiday package

RVIB and Young at Heart Holidays are offering our supporters a fantastic eight-day trip to Queensland at a very special price. See Brisbane, Coolangatta, Byron Bay and attractions such as the Ballina Maritime Museum, Springbrook National Park, Canyon lookout, Purlingbrook Falls and Lamington Rainforest. You can even go on a 4 wheel drive tour!

**RVIB receives a generous commission of \$200 per person from every booking that our supporters make with Young At Heart Holidays.**

This fully inclusive holiday, including home pick-up and return, is \$2,195 per person twin share, with a \$130 single supplement. This offer applies to tours departing August 22 and September 19, 2002, with 15 passengers per tour. For a brochure, or to book this terrific holiday, call Young at Heart Holidays on 9894 1811, and tell them you are an RVIB supporter.

**RVIB WOULD LIKE TO THANK YOUNG AT HEART HOLIDAYS FOR THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT.**

# The many ways of GIVING



HOW OUR AUXILIARIES MAKE A HUGE DIFFERENCE TO THE LIVES OF PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND OR VISION IMPAIRED.

The Kyneton Auxiliary hasn't been very active over the past years because of declining membership. But when Jean Hedington retired she decided she had just enough time on her hands between gardening, going to country music festivals with her husband Doug, and helping out in an op shop to take it on.

"I concentrated on one big event - a month long door knock," she says.

Having lived in Kyneton all her life, Jean, 62, was well placed to rally volunteers and oversee the logistics of the fundraiser.

"Almost 40 people volunteered their time," she says. "Some were auxiliary members, but for others it was their first contact with RVIB."

Jean divided up the streets of Kyneton and armed all volunteers with tins, badges and RVIB receipt books, and despite the terrible rain, they came back one by one with generous donations from residents.

The event raised over \$3,850, and this month, Jean and Doug and six

other Kyneton ladies visited Melbourne for a tour of RVIB to see exactly where their money goes.

"We've always known that our contribution to RVIB was valuable, but until the tour, we had no real idea what the money was spent on," she says.

"The library, that provides thousands of people with books on tape or in braille, was a real eye opener. I hadn't known that it was such a huge operation."

Jean's group also visited the RVIB School at Burwood, and was shown around classrooms, including the art room and the gym.

"We realise now how much difference our money makes to the children and other people who are blind, and have already decided to aim extra high in this year's door knock."

If you would like to see how valuable your contribution is, please call **Sue Parkes**, Auxiliaries Coordinator on **(03) 9522 5232** to arrange a tour of RVIB.



# Bank of Melbourne Staff Training Program

## RVIB HAS HELPED BANK STAFF IMPROVE THEIR CUSTOMER SERVICE AT BRANCH LEVEL.

Banking can be challenging for citizens who are blind or vision impaired, and historically these customers have had no choice but to visit a branch to complete certain transactions.

The aim of the training is to introduce staff to the common barriers faced by people who are blind or vision impaired when accessing personal banking.

They can then develop strategies to overcome these barriers and create an equal banking environment.

Westpac / Bank of Melbourne acknowledged the importance of the initiative and agreed to implement training across the Melbourne metro region and potentially into some regional centres over the rest of 2002.

RVIB Orientation and Mobility staff and a speaker from our Vision Impaired Speaker's Panel present the sessions to the staff at the branches.

The feedback from the first training session was positive, with staff recommending that it is included in all sales training. Bank of Melbourne has also shown a commitment to its blind and vision impaired customers

by manufacturing an audio ATM.

The first in-branch operational machine in Melbourne was introduced at the Bank of Melbourne, Prahran, in May 2002.

This initiative is an example of corporate Australia helping to improve independence for citizens who are blind or vision impaired.



*Launching the audio ATM in Melbourne*

## CONGRATULATIONS!

RVIB Auxiliaries raise thousands of dollars every year on behalf of RVIB. Some of these groups have been tin rattling, baking, sewing and hosting lunches and holding raffles for over half a century, and their contribution makes a very real difference to people who are blind or vision impaired in Victoria. Congratulations and heartfelt thanks to **Murtoa Auxiliary**, who reached their 70 year milestone on May 10<sup>th</sup>. **Barwon Heads Auxiliary** celebrate their 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of fundraising on behalf of RVIB on May 29<sup>th</sup>. **Gisborne Auxiliary** will celebrate their 70<sup>th</sup> fundraising birthday in July.

## DID YOU KNOW?

**RVIB has a rich history spanning over 138 years of providing services to people who are blind or vision impaired.**



In November 1866, in rented premises on Commercial Road, Prahran, an institute was founded to take care of the needs of people who are blind or vision impaired in Victoria.

**RVIB**

The following year, land was purchased on St Kilda Road and a bluestone building for residential occupancy by children and adults was constructed at a cost of around £6,000.

On Saturday 25th January 1868 at 3pm the foundation stone for the "Victorian Asylum and School for the Blind" was laid by the Mayor of Melbourne the Hon. George Harker. There were more than 50 people in attendance and a time capsule containing newspapers and currency of the day was buried under the foundation stone.

# RVIB services explained: Orientation and Mobility

FOR SOMEONE WHO IS BLIND OR VISION  
IMPAIRED, THERE IS MORE TO GETTING AROUND  
THAN WHITE CANES AND GUIDE DOGS.

Orientation and Mobility Officers at RVIB see most RVIB clients at some point in their lives.

Children who have been blind since birth will have very different requirements to someone who has lost some of their vision through an age related condition. The child will have no concept of the 'background information' that sighted people are able to observe for themselves. For instance, that there are streets which are arranged in blocks, that houses are arranged along the streets, that there are nature strips and footpaths, and gates and letterboxes outside each house.

This 'conceptual development' is followed by outings to enable the child to test their knowledge, and training in how to use mobility devices, such as the white cane. When they start school, or change schools, an Orientation and Mobility Officer can help the child adapt to the new surroundings.

People who lose some of their sight later in life often need new

strategies for dealing with vision loss, and training to make the most of their remaining vision.

Having to use public transport after a lifetime of driving can be worrying, and training is invaluable in keeping independence.

Some clients learn to use a white cane to explain why they don't necessarily recognise their neighbours in the street anymore.

Employers too use RVIB Orientation and Mobility Services. A visit can often identify the need for simple modifications that can make a huge difference to employees who are blind or vision impaired. Highlighted strips on the edge of stairs can increase their visibility and the way the furniture is arranged can often be improved.

Like all of the services RVIB provides, Orientation and Mobility Services have one overall aim: to give people the skills to maintain their independence and quality of life.

## News from the RVIB School

The RVIB School is holding weekly assemblies on Monday afternoon from 3.15 to 3.30.

These assemblies give our students a chance to come together to share information, news, achievements and music.

We sing the National Anthem with great enthusiasm, followed by the RVIB School Song.

The music and words have been written by the Senior School students, and describe the qualities of the School.

We have a tactile Australian flag designed by art teacher Michael Donnelly and the students at the school.

## RVIB School Song

We are here to sing our school  
song,  
We sing with pride, and voices  
strong.  
This school is special,  
this school is good.  
We come because we want to,  
not because we should.

We are grateful for our teachers;  
they help us every day.  
We work hard and we play well.  
We grow and learn to  
do our best.

*Chorus:*

**Students, staff and friends  
We're a small community.  
Yes, we are the School  
of RVIB.**



**RVIB**

**Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind** 557 St Kilda Road, Melbourne VIC 3004

Telephone (03) 9522 5222 Facsimile (03) 9510 4735 Website [www.rvib.org.au](http://www.rvib.org.au) Email [rvib@rvib.org.au](mailto:rvib@rvib.org.au)