

RVIB

Out and About

Auxiliaries Newsletter - September 2001

*Editors: Bob Stater
Elizabeth Davies (03) 9743 2923*

BOB'S COLUMN

Hello Everyone,

Firstly, thank you to all those auxiliary members and members of RVIB staff who contributed items. I was happily overwhelmed by your interest and have tried to include all information given to me. However some newspaper items just couldn't be scanned. Please forgive me if an item you sent hasn't appeared.

This issue features articles by several RVIB identities. It is intended that these writers, and others, will have regular columns in future issues of Out and About to keep you informed.

Elizabeth Davies, Hon. Secretary of Sorrento Auxiliary, and a couple of RVIB volunteers have offered to assist with Out and About. A big thank you to those willing souls.

I have now met members from almost all auxiliaries, and I am indeed grateful for the way you are responding to some of the ideas being floated involving the wider community. It is vital to the ongoing success of RVIB and the continuation of high quality services provided free of charge to RVIB clients, that we have people like yourselves raising awareness and funds throughout your communities.

By involving RVIB in local quality events it should be easier, with the influence of the years, the seniority and the wisdom you all possess in abundance, to attract younger generations to help. Awareness comes first, and where there is positive awareness, funds will follow, simply by asking.

On a personally sad note, I have to advise that I am leaving RVIB at the end of August. I have been offered a position with the Smith Family, which was

impossible to refuse. My decision was made very difficult because it meant leaving RVIB auxiliaries and the members I have come to admire and respect so much. I have every expectation that RVIB support for auxiliaries will only increase, and that the ideas we have started to explore together will, one by one, become a reality. Please keep up the enthusiasm. Our clients are an inspiring lot, made all the more confident and independent by your support.

For many of us I have no doubt our paths will cross again.

Goodbye for now,
Bob Slater

Details later - Volunteers Day lunch, Melbourne Town Hall, Sat 24.11.2001.

Deadlines for *Out and About* articles are Friday 16th November 2001 for the Christmas Edition and 4th March 2002.

RVIB Auxiliaries: We are currently recruiting a new Auxiliaries Coordinator. In the interim, please direct enquiries to Ken Gilkinson at RVIB on Tel: (03) 9522 5218.

NOTICES

VOLUNTEER DAY – Saturday 24 November 2001

Because this year is the International Year of the Volunteer, the traditional Volunteer Lunch in May, and the Auxiliary AGM and Christmas Party in December, are being combined into a single Volunteer Day to be held on Saturday 24th November in Melbourne Town Hall. The RVIB AGM and Auxiliaries AGM will be held first, followed by a fabulous lunch and entertainment. Every volunteer and auxiliary member will be given a commemorative certificate in appreciation of service, signed by the Premier Steve Bracks. Full details will be advised in the October Out and About. There will be no cost to volunteers and auxiliary members, and guests may be invited at a cost yet to be determined. Secretaries are requested to let RVIB know by September 28th how many members and guests are likely to attend.

It is likely that transport will be provided to and from Spencer Street Station & St. Kilda Road. Could secretaries please state their transport needs at the time of booking?

HELP!

Maldon Auxiliary has recently received a large quantity of wool, and members have been very busy making all sorts of things including jumpers and knee rugs.

They also have many beautiful craft items: appliquéd bear rugs, beaded Christmas stockings and cot quilts.

But they have no way of selling them, and are looking for help. They will happily share their profits with an auxiliary that can provide a sales outlet.

All ideas welcome! Please contact June Singleton on 5475 1761.

THE REBECCA RYAN MEMORIAL CONCERT

Every two years the Burwood Education Centre hosts a student concert where all the performers are blind or vision impaired. While some of the students attend the Burwood Education Centre, most are integrated into local schools. Performers come from all corners of the state for this special evening of music.

The concert is held in memory of Rebecca Ryan, a talented blind musician who died when she was 15. Her love of music was an inspiration and all monies raised from the evening are put towards music scholarships. At the last concert, three \$500 scholarships and two \$200 encouragement awards were presented.

Historically music has featured prominently in the education of children who are blind and vision impaired, and this evening is an excellent example of how much it has to offer socially, academically and vocationally.

Performers of all ages highlight their musical talents, and several artists who have chosen to take up music as a vocation are featured.

As this is the year of the volunteer a limited number of free seats are available to RVIB Auxiliary members in recognition of your valuable support to the school and children over many years. If you would like to attend please contact Rachel who will handle your bookings.

The concert is at Ormond Hall, on Friday 19th October at 7.00 p.m.
If you are unable to attend but would like to contribute towards Music Scholarships please contact Maree Littlepage at the school.

General admission tickets are on sale Monday 3rd September, and prices are:
\$16.50 - children and concession holders '

\$22.00 - adults

\$66.00 - family ticket (two adults, two children)

Please contact Rachel Grealy, RVIB Burwood Education Centre, on 9808 6422 for general bookings or more details.

AN ENTERPRISING ENTERPRISE

RVIB Enterprises, the industrial division of RVIB, may well be able to help you with your next homeware purchase.

Chopping boards, mug trees, paper towel holders and bread bins are sold to the public through Target, Mitre 10, Myer Grace Bros, Grocery Holdings and Coles.

These items and others, including magazine racks, folding tables, CD storage towers, shelving and tea trays, are all sold at competitive prices through the RVIB VisEquip shop at 201 High Street, Prahran.

For a catalogue, or to order, call VisEquip on 95205583, fax: 95205585
email: visequip@rvib.org.au

CHRISTMAS MERCHANDISE INFORMATION

This Christmas VisEquip will be selling cards and calendars. VisEquip would like to apologise to the auxiliaries who experienced problems with their orders last year. To overcome these problems all auxiliaries will be mailed the catalogue before it is mailed out to the public.

A special order form for auxiliaries will make identifying auxiliary orders easier. There will also be a change to the payment options on the order form to include 'Included in contribution'.

FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

All fundraising activities in Victoria are governed by the Fundraising Appeals Act (1998). Each year RVIB lodges an application for fundraising activities for 12 months. The application covers street collections, door knocks, volunteer fundraising, merchandise sales and all other auxiliary activities. There is no need for auxiliaries to lodge an application.

RECENT STAFF CHANGES AT RVIB

Following a major review of RVIB Marketing and Fundraising departments, there were a number of staff changes. Ruth Rosh and Mary Smyth have both left RVIB, and Mareita Doughty has retired after 26 years as Volunteers Coordinator.

New faces are:

- Liz Trefeli – General Manager Corporate and Community Relations
- Gill Baker - Major Donors
- Ken Gilkinson - Bequests
- Michelle Bourke - Public Relations

New Regional Rehabilitation Officers have been appointed in:

- Wangaratta - Chris Ballantyne
- Swan Hill - Amanda Heighway
- Horsham - Janet Robbins

NEW BEQUESTS OFFICER & AUXILIARIES CONTACT

Ken Gilkinson recently joined RVIB from the Red Cross. He is looking forward to meeting as many auxiliary members as possible, and learning about the tremendous work being done at the 'grass roots' level to support RVIB.

Ken is concerned with the long-term financial stability of RVIB. Planned Giving [sometimes referred to as Deferred Giving or Bequest Program] is a term used to cover gifts that are promised for sometime in the future. The most common form is a Bequest made in a Will, to be received after the death of the donor.

Ken will be asking RVIB donors and supporters to consider the possibility of leaving part or all of their estate to RVIB, so that its vital work can be continued in the future.

RVIB Auxiliaries: We are currently recruiting a new Auxiliaries Coordinator. In the interim, please direct enquiries to Ken Gilkinson at RVIB on
Tel: (03) 9522 5218.

THE CHANGING SCENE

Sadly Rochester and Quambatook have closed down. I thank Flo Anderson and Ella Munday for volunteering to act as RVIB liaison secretaries for such matters as local donations and the sale of calendars. Rochester recently made out its last cheque for \$529.22 to RVIB. Outgoing President Flo Anderson said the reason for the closure after 70 years was lack of members and the advancing age of the group. Mementos will be stored by the Rochester Historical Society, and Rochester Senior Citizens have agreed to keep selling the large print calendars through Seniors President Tom Hanrahan.

Benwick is closing and several others have reduced their activities to relatively small fundraising gatherings and points of contact for local donations. The contribution of these auxiliaries over the past 70 years has been immense and it is sad for all of us to see them go.

The primary reasons for closure involve aging members and difficulties in finding office bearers and recruiting new members. I would ask that auxiliaries consider operating in a limited way (such as just keeping the bank account open), rather than closing down completely. Thus for example, Kyneton and Koroit Auxiliaries, who ceased operating a few years ago, will operate again on a restricted basis. Thank you Jean Headington and Maureen Gavin for your support.

AUXILIARY BIRTHDAYS

Korumburra and Leongatha Combined 70th Birthday, May

President Kath Lawford thanked all members for their support, and Leongatha Auxiliary for sharing the celebrations.

The first meeting at Korumburra was held on 19th March 1931, and the first minute book still survives.

Kath explained that the majority of funds are raised through coffee mornings, luncheons and raffles. Every year Dorrie Ricardo donates a Christmas cake to raffle, which raises \$500 - \$600. A get-together at Christmas for afternoon tea and gifts rounds off the year and is a great way to say thank you for the years' effort.

Kath thanked Vice President Beryl Nicholas, Secretary Joyce Proudlock, Treasurer Jean Lewry, Publicity Officer Beth Mackay, and Isobel Drysdale who looks after the sales table. Kath concluded her speech with a poem.

HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN YOU ARE GROWING OLD?

Everything hurts - what doesn't hurt doesn't work,
The gleam in your eye is the sun hitting your bifocals,
You feel like the morning after but you haven't been anywhere,
 You get winded playing cards.
Your children begin to look middle-aged,
 You join a health club but don't go,
You know all the answers, but no one asks the questions.
 You look forward to a dull evening,
 You need glasses to find your glasses,
You turn out the light for economy rather than romance,
 You sit in a rocking chair but can't make it go,
 Your knees buckle but your belt won't,
 Your back goes out more than you do,
 You put on your bra back to front and it fits better,
 You sink your teeth into a steak and they stay there,
Your birthday cake collapses from the weight of the candles,
I want to live long enough to be a problem to my KIDS

The Leongatha Auxiliary commenced on March 5th 1931 with only eight members. The group was very active and sent donations of 50 –100 pound every few months to RVIB.

Until the early 1960's, an annual egg appeal was held and up to 102 dozen eggs were sent to Melbourne. Many of the Leongatha members were awarded Life Governorships for their work through the Auxiliary.

Now, the auxiliary comprises 30 members, and the major fundraiser is the Annual Rose Show, started in 1970. Originally entry was five cents, and although there was no charge for looking and smelling, donations rolled in. In the second year men were invited to enter roses for competition, and last year alone over \$5000 was raised from this event.

Portland 70th Birthday, July

The 70th birthday party was held in St Stephen's Anglican Church Hall, the venue for the very first meeting. President Olive Williamson welcomed guests including Cr Geoff White, Mayor of Glenelg Shire and Mayoress Aileen White.

Olive read the minutes of the first meeting held on July 14, 1931, which described a Monster Children's Plain & Fancy Dress Dance in 1932 with prices fixed at children 6d, and adults 1/-.

Cr. White presented badges to new members Peg Upton, Pearl Benson, Nancy Barclay, Margaret Cook, Joan Lewis and Dawn Bateman.

Olive and longest serving member Jess McDonald cut a special birthday cake, and the Mayor and Mayoress joined the Auxiliary.

Traralgon AGM and 70th Birthday, May

Traralgon has raised \$69,950 to support RVIB with a total this year of \$2200. Fundraising activities in 2001 include fashion parades, raffles, auctions and birthday lunches.

The current 17 members (average age: 80) are very happy with their efforts. 'It is hard raising money in this day and age,' says President Dot Rees but the group is still as relevant today as it was 70 years ago. We will keep it going as long as we possibly can and hope there will be others to take over."

Winchelsea 70TH.Birthday, July

Thirty members and friends gathered at Winchelsea Senior Citizens building to celebrate.

Secretary June Alston read excerpts from various past minutes and Bob Slater presented Coral McCallum with an engraved cake server to mark the occasion. Longest serving member Grace Leigh (whose mother was a founding member) cut the birthday cake made and beautifully decorated by Beryl Read. It was agreed that the Auxiliary should continue with the current office bearers as leaders and to conduct one function a year to ensure awareness and for fundraising. At the close of the meeting two visitors signed up as members.

AUXILIARY NEWS AND REPORTS

- **Anglesea**
Hamper raffles, a trading table, crazy whist afternoons, video shows and a Christmas luncheon all help raise funds. Thanks to Evelyn Brooks who made and sold Easter gifts. The Saturday Craft and Needlework Group Exhibition was also a great success. The 28 members have had a very enjoyable year and donated \$1300 to RVIB. Thanks also to "Maid Marions" who have a collection tin in their shop.
- **Benalla**
Benalla hosted the annual conference on Tuesday 29th May at the CWA Hall. Many RVIB Auxiliaries attended. The Mayor of Delatite Shire, Cr Don Cummins, officially opened the conference and presented a Certificate of Appreciation to long time Benalla President Mary Burns. Chris Ballantyne, who recently assumed the position of RVIB Regional Rehabilitation Officer at the RVIB Wangaratta Office, gave a report on RVIB district officers and their activities.
- **Boort**
Boort Auxiliary loves elections – our last five have raised \$1,100!
- **Charlton**
Funds were raised through a Gold Day and Bowls Day, and a spinning wheel raffle. The Lions Club carried out the Annual Door Knock. The highlight in 2000 was the passing through Charlton of the Olympic Torch when all local organisations catered and attended the Town Party in the Shire Hall.
- **Colac**
Age is no barrier in Colac. One member just turned 90 and another will be 89 this year. They have a market stall; Christmas and Easter raffles and kind friends and relations are generous with donations, raising \$1,500 this year.

Doubt sees the obstacles, Faith sees the way; Doubt sees the darkest night, Faith sees the day. Doubt dreads to take a step, Faith soars on high. Doubt whispers, "Who believes?" Faith whispers, "I".

- **Coleraine**

The regional conference at Coleraine was opened by the Deputy Mayor of Southern Grampians Shire, Cr Marcus Rentsch, who spoke of his high regard for volunteers in the community.

- **Cressy**

President Sue Stares welcomed RVIB Auxiliaries from Cressy, Cobden, Colac, Winchelsea and Terang, and special guest Senior Constable Ted Ivermee, Citizen of the Year 2000. Ted officially opened the conference and presented long service medals to members from various Auxiliaries present.

Marie Younan, blind since a childhood infection, spoke of her secluded life in Lebanon where only wealthy people could receive any help for disabilities and her gratitude to the RVIB for the help she needed to become independent and educated since coming to Australia. Marie has learnt how to use computers, and speaks four languages. She hopes to obtain employment as an interpreter at a Melbourne hospital after her present studies at RMIT University.

Jane Rossiter reported on the reasons for closing the RVIB Warrnambool office and the ongoing effectiveness of support from offices in Ballarat and Horsham.

- **Castlemaine**

Our annual bus trip fundraiser to the pokies at Echuca was popular this year as always. Many attending have been with us since our first trip.

Castlemaine is combining the Regional Conference and their 70th birthday on 19 October 2001. As always, locals are responding very generously to the annual collection.

- **Dimboola**

Dimboola raises funds through Blumes Fashion Parades in September and May, and through raffles. Gweneth Elliot thanks her secretary, treasurer and members, who have made her first year as president a most enjoyable one.

- **Donald**

Donald recently had a successful afternoon, raising \$250 and being reported in the local 'Times'.

- **Echuca**

Our Mother's Day Raffle was hugely successful and raised \$673. Rita Hendry, who has been in the Auxiliary for 30 years celebrated her 90th birthday this year and Norma Alexandra celebrated her 100th birthday in July.

- **Gisborne**
Member Faye Pattinson received a Commendation Certificate from the Rotary Shine On Awards at a ceremony held in Ballarat recently.

These Awards celebrate the achievements of people with disabilities who have made an outstanding voluntary contribution to the community.

Faye began losing her sight at the age of seven and became totally blind at the age of 32. As well as having four children and being actively involved in a family business, Faye has given many hours of her time to committee work. Congratulations Faye.

- **Heathcote**

The Heathcote Regional Auxiliary was opened by His Worship the Mayor of the City of Greater Bendigo Councillor Barry Ackerman.

- **Jeparit**

Food sales, Bingo events and raffles, as well as a 'Cent Day' help to raise money.

- **Kaniva**

The Mayor of West Wimmera Shire Councillor Bruce Meyer opened the conference at Kaniva. He also presented long service medals to members from various Auxiliaries present.

The Kaniva Auxiliary runs a Door Knock each year. They have 15 full members and around 40 helpers, most of who are not young, raising \$1400 this year.

- **Minyip**

A Morning Coffee Party coincided with Channel 7 News being in Minyip to film the Bendigo Bank. The crew visited our party, filmed the tea drinkers and left a generous donation. Thirteen dedicated collectors raised \$1200, a tremendous result from a small community. Several members who are over 90 continue to support every effort. Mollie Olney, a collector who also audits the books, is one fine example.

- **Maffra**

Special guests were Cr Gordon Cameron and his wife Pat. Cr Cameron officially opened the conference and presented awards to a number of members present. People from Maffra are extremely generous despite the competition for fundraising in a town of around 3,000 people.

Main fundraisers are raffles, a Soup and Sandwich with the Vision Support Group, and Coffee Afternoon. Jenny thanked the small band of workers, who sit in the main street and sell tickets and work hard to cater for all events. Maffra is looking look forward to the challenge of the next decade of fundraising.

- **Mooroopna**
Secretary Beryl Maskell reports that Mrs. Nicholas, a member for over twenty years, has only ever missed one meeting. Well done!
- **Newborough**
Newborough is having a winter hibernation period but the wheels of fundraising are still turning.

Thanks to Joy Mitchell who has taken over as secretary. The youngest member of the auxiliary is Phoebe who is just one. Keep up the good work Phoebe.

- **Nhill**
Competitions and donations form the bulk of our fundraising. Our Christmas luncheon with sighted and vision impaired guests is very popular and the day is always enjoyed by all.
- **Ocean Grove**
Offered a poem:

'The Gift of Sight'

We Members of the RVIB,
Know about those who cannot see.
We hear and learn of their difficult plight,
Where the light of day has turned to night.

We watch in wonder and feel in awe,
As they conquer their blindness, and what is more,
They go about life in a business like way,
But coping with difficulties every day.

But some folk now could be able to see,
With an eye from someone, like you or me –
Hey isn't there help that we could send?
When our time has come and we reach life's end?

So give it some thought, I hope you'll agree,
And leave a Gift, for a person to see.
Your loved one's left will be PROUD of you,
Of what you have thought and requested to do.

What a wonderful Gift that we just might,
Give our eyes and restore a sight.
To think that a person now blind as can be,
Will come out of the darkness,
And be able to see.

- **Rainbow**

With 13 financial members, three major fund raising activities are held a year - a grocery hamper raffle, street collection, and annual Carols evening. They also sell RVIB pens, diaries, cards and calendars.

- **Sale**

Sale has trouble recruiting new members, but has had a busy year visiting the elderly in hostels, holding an annual garden party, and keeping a monthly stall at the Sunday Market.

Thanks to all supporters who make their homes available for functions and to those who supply handcrafts and edibles for the stalls.

- **St Arnaud**

The Mayor of Northern Grampians Shire, Cr Colin Hall, officially opened the conference and presented long service medals to members from various Auxiliaries present.

The Auxiliary has nine members and meets in a member's home. Coffee Mornings in May and October raised \$450.00.

- **Sorrento**

With the crackers in place and the tablecloth tweaked, the room was ready for the Sorrento 'Christmas in June' lunch.

There was a beautiful Christmas tree, presents, and a groaning trading table. Pina and Bob represented the RVIB and other guests came from all over Victoria.

Willing volunteers worked in the kitchen for the day to provide a delicious lunch and there was even a surprise visit from Santa.

Evelyn Bertrand was welcomed officially as a new member. Everyone had a wonderful day so it looks like the same time next year.

- **Swan Hill**

With \$6885.00 raised this last year, Swan Hill is always busy. Crazy whist afternoons, spinning wheel at the Tooleybuc Hotel, and an annual social afternoon, which raised \$749. Thanks to retiring treasurer of eight years, Loris Smith for a job well done. Thea Bryan will now take up the mantle.

- **Terang**

With a hard working and dedicated membership of 18, Terang has raised \$2020 this year. Noorat also gives a generous donation to RVIB each year.

- **Trentham-Woodend**
President Norma Proctor and husband Alan hosted the 2001 Spud Lunch in their home, raising over \$600. Sixty members and friends enjoyed a huge variety of different potato dishes while a guest speaker recounted her experiences of travelling through Turkey. Even the school ordered take-away.
- **Warracknabeal**
With three new members, Warracknabeal raises funds through a Bowls Charity Night, an annual street collection, casserole luncheon, and a lamington drive.
- **Winchelsea**
The Auxiliary is having difficulty with keeping on going but will be having a morning coffee in July to celebrate their 70 years.
- **Yarram**
Yarram is a small group of 5 people who raise money by having raffles. They are very well supported by the people from Yarram and raised \$1,000 this year.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

- **Berwick AGM, May**
The meeting was well attended but the normally high spirits were missing from the Berwick members as much of the discussion was about closure. On the brighter side, Russell Short spoke about his career in athletics, the Sydney Paralympics, and his pending crossing of Bass Strait in a one man kayak. Koo Wee Rup Auxiliary was presented with their 70th Anniversary cake server and their Secretary Christine McMillan talked on the history of the Auxiliary.
- **Colac AGM, July**
President Audrey Rankine welcomed twenty-two members and friends. Guest speaker was Mayor of Colac Otway Shire, Cr Warren Riches. Bob Slater presented Irene Curtis with a badge for 25 years service.
- **Dimboola AGM**
Dimboola has 26 members including two men. Eleven are Life Governors and the oldest will be 90 in November.
Funds are raised from fashion parades and raffles, a Christmas luncheon and stocking raffle and the sale of calendars and diaries, raising \$2,000 this year.
- **Mentone AGM July**
Mentone celebrated 71 years in July and averages 18 to 20 members each meeting. Tess Bone and Rose Brown will have been members for 20 years. Hilda Thurgood and Roma Joyce have been members for 15 years. A very warm welcome was extended to new members Barbara Naylor, Joan Caddy, Dot McKenzie, Joan Jones and Jeanette Meredith.

- **Ocean Grove AGM, May**

Beth Gray was elected as President, Lisa Snowden as Treasurer, and Dianne Sapwell as Secretary.

Ocean Grove plans to hold a potato growing competition to be judged at the Annual Fete. They also plan to publish a recipe book, which will be for sale to all Auxiliaries at around \$2. The book would have soup, sponge, slice, casserole and even potato recipes. If any Auxiliaries have recipes they would like published please send them to Dianne Sapwell at 138 Thacker Street, Ocean Grove.

- **Port Fairy AGM, July**

Recently elected President Jessie Campbell welcomed members and RVIB Regional Rehabilitation Officer Vivian Bradbury from the Ballarat office. Members were still dismayed that the RVIB Warrnambool office had closed, but Vivian explained how services would still be provided to clients in the same way.

- **Portland AGM, May**

A decision to hold two extra meetings during the year really stimulated the Auxiliary. An outstanding year saw \$3,000 raised. What success! Current membership stands at 39, an increase of almost 50% for the year. Six new members joined following the AGM

- **Skipton AGM, May**

The AGM was held in the historic Skipton Mechanics Institute. Bob Slater spoke about the challenges facing providers of community services and some options for RVIB Auxiliaries for the future. Members brought delicious casseroles for lunch.

- **Wangaratta AGM, July**

Secretary Marjorie Sartori retired and was thanked by all for her efficient and tireless performance. Helen Slater was elected Secretary. Attracting new members has been difficult, but Wangaratta raised \$3,150 through calendar sales, street stalls, card parties and the raffle of a well-stocked grocery basket. Their success would not be possible without all the cooking and craftwork done by members. The "500" card club also donate their Tuesday proceeds to the auxiliary. Each year the auxiliary meets for a Christmas Lunch with family and friends.

- **Willoura AGM, June**

The Annual Street Stall and Little Op Shop funds raised \$2000 for RVIB. Congratulations and well done.

THERAPY AT RVIB EDUCATION CENTRE

This is an overview of how the paediatric team, based at Education Centre, Burwood operates. There are two physiotherapists, an occupational therapist and a speech pathologist who work with babies, preschoolers, school aged children and their families, both in groups and individually.

Physiotherapy

Sally Allison, Physiotherapist says 'Children who are born with severe vision impairment can have difficulty learning to move, because movement is encouraged by vision. Vision also gives you information for balance and knowing where you are in space. An additional problem is that many children also have to cope with other disabilities such as cerebral palsy and intellectual impairments.'

Lack of vision and other disabilities greatly impacts on the way a child learns to move and explore. Therefore the RVIB therapists will see children as young as only a few months.

Physiotherapists work on gross motor activities, such as learning to roll, sit or walk. They also organise specialised equipment such as seating, standing frames and walking frames.

Speech Pathology

Many of the children can also have difficulty in areas of communication, and learning to eat and drink adequately. 'It can be very distressing for families if their child is not feeding well as nutrition is essential for further development,' says Speech Pathologist Meredith Prain. The speech pathologist can assess feeding and give advice to parents and other staff who work with the child.

Occupational Therapy

If a child can't see an object, there is less motivation to reach towards and grasp it. The child relies on others to provide a range of interesting objects to feel and grasp. Occupational Therapist Duppy Critchley encourages children get to know their hands and how to grasp and manipulate objects to gain useful information. The development of these fine motor skills is essential for later learning. The occupational therapist also helps children become as independent as possible in activities such as dressing, organisational skills and making snacks.

Babies and toddlers

Therapists work with RVIB Early Childhood Educators, aides and parents. Parents learn specific skills to help their children at home. Nicola Goss, Physiotherapist, says even a seemingly small thing such as a child reaching out to touch his mother's face for the first time at the age of 12 months is a huge step in positive communication for the families.

School aged children.

Therapists work with orientation and mobility instructors, the music therapist, teachers and teacher aides.

Matthew, eight, is vision impaired and suffers from cerebral palsy. He is an enthusiastic participant in the sessions. He has difficulty using his hands to touch different textures or to grasp various shaped objects. He finds walking on uneven surfaces or balancing to get up a small step very scary. He is working on improving his eating; communication and self- help skills. Matthew's mother Michelle says 'Last summer Matthew enjoyed crawling on the sand and in the water at the beach for the first time'. Now Matthew will attempt to use his vision and he will ask his younger brother to come and play with him. At the end of the group he chirps up, 'I've got to go now'.

THE YEAR TO DATE

• Sensory Garden, April

There has been some interest in developing a Sensory Garden for RVIB. It could be a mobile garden with all kinds of herbs and fragrant shrubs for display at Auxiliary functions and fetes. Cuttings could be struck for potting by volunteers and RVIB clients and sold by Auxiliaries at stalls and other events.

• Daylesford Fair, April

As a new initiative we set up a stall at the Daylesford Fair with free vision screening by RVIB staff and merchandise and raffle ticket sales by members of the Trentham-Woodend and Kyneton Auxiliaries. The weather was miserable and as a result the event was not a financial success. However the experience was useful as a model for stalls at other fairs and field days around Victoria.

• Mornington, April

We held the first meeting with the Mornington Chamber of Commerce and Industry regarding live crossover Carols by Candlelight on Christmas Eve. We are also talking with a number of rural communities about a possible community linkage throughout Victoria on Christmas Eve. We will keep you posted.

• Federation Parade, May

RVIB was given rights to sell tickets for seating at the Federation Parade. Thanks to the volunteers from Ford Credit who helped make this a nice little fundraiser.

- **Trivial Pursuit, June**

We are looking at opportunities for conducting Trivial Pursuit functions as a means of raising awareness and funds within communities. It is hoped that through such events new Auxiliaries may form, especially in Melbourne and major towns.

- **Mansfield Rotary, June**

Bob Slater talked about RVIB, the ongoing need for services provided, and the need for community support.

- **Association of Gerontology, June**

Bob attended a talk on vision loss in elderly people, based on the recent study by the Centre for Eye Research in Australia (CERA). Despite advances in medical science our community lifestyle and longer life expectancy will ensure a dramatic increase in the number of people who will be blind or vision impaired in 20 years time.

- **Appin Park (Wangaratta) Rotary,**

Bob Slater spoke at Appin Park Rotary. Thanks to Marjorie Sartori for organising the meeting.

- **Country Carols Meeting, July**

This was a significant meeting towards a Victoria-wide Carols by Candlelight on Christmas Eve, involving Service Clubs from Mornington, Echuca, Ocean Grove and Wodonga.

- **Barwon Heads Regional Conference, May**

Deputy Mayor of the City of Greater Geelong, Councillor Barbara Abley, opened the meeting and praised RVIB for the way it provided support for her own daughter. Jan Doran enlightened us with an uplifting story and Jane Rossiter, General Manager for RVIBs Western Region spoke of all the work RVIB is doing in our own area. Bob Slater who gave us very helpful and encouraging ideas for the future.

FUTURE CONFERENCES

- **Glen Thompson**

Thursday 13 September. Glen Thompson Memorial Hall.

Secretary Valerie Clarke 5577 4315.

Visiting Auxiliaries include: Skipton, Willaura

- **Castlemaine**

Friday 19 October RSL Hall, Moyston Street. Secretary:

Lyla Davis 5472 2307.

Visiting Auxiliaries include Avoca, Maldon. Speakers: Barbara McKenzie (RVIB)

BENEFACTORS' CORNER

Carol O'Reilly – Estates Manager at RVIB

'It is many years since I had the pleasure of putting together Out and About for our Auxiliary members. I have seen it grow from a double-sided page into a newsletter, and the loveliest complaint I had was from a member who said she used to read O & A with her morning coffee and now she had to read it with lunch!

'My next role with RVIB was, as Bequest Officer where I visited people who wanted to mention RVIB in their will. This was a wonderful time in my career. I became a friend, a social worker, a resource finder and a maintenance person to many, and I met with so many generous people.

A gentleman in his nineties gave us a great donation thinking we were another organisation. On explaining the problem, he dismissed it by writing a similar cheque for that group. We became firm friends. I attended his 100th birthday and on his death he left RVIB more than \$100,000.00

'Now I am Estates Manager. My role is to administer bequests. Once a Solicitor or Trustee company notifies us of a gift, I manage these to their conclusion. I ensure that the funds come in as quickly and cost effectively as possible, so that the wishes of our benefactors are met.

'Auxiliary members, their families, and friends also continue in a major way to support the work of RVIB through wills and bequests.

'A fine example is that of tireless worker Mabel White, Secretary of Hamilton for many years. Her friend Carmel White inspired by both Mabel's dedication and the work of the auxiliary in general, left over \$300,000 to the Institute. This money has been spent in the Western region providing services for many people throughout the area.

'Jess Nutting (former Essendon and Central Council member) recently left a legacy to RVIB. Mrs. Lynn who worked for years through the Newborough Auxiliary also left a generous gift. Florence Helyar, who had worked tirelessly for Rainbow Auxiliary was our most recent benefactor.

'Recently Edna Martin left \$5000 to the Institute. On speaking with Wangaratta Auxiliary, it seems likely that she was impressed with the work of the auxiliary who visited St John's Village selling small items to support RVIB's work in our Northern region.

'Over the past ten years, Auxiliary bequests have reached over \$600,000. I find this truly inspiring. Even in their passing, these caring people continue to assist those who face the daily challenge of vision loss. How lucky I am to work in a job that shows the best side of human nature. Keep up your good work. Of course, we don't want to lose any of you for a long time yet!

'I look forward to providing more stories of our magnificent benefactors in future editions of Out & About.'

PS: I 'm delighted to tell you that I'm a grandmother. Our first grandchild, Jaimie Grace, arrived on 24th June weighing 8lbs 7oz. Now my husband has to contend with five females in the family plus a female dog!"

RECOGNITION and AWARDS

New Members

RVIB welcomes the following new members. We are delighted that they have joined our very special group of supporters.

Mrs. Jean Kelly	Korumburra Auxiliary
Mrs. Evelyn Bertrand	Sorrento Auxiliary
Mrs. Lisa Middleton	Heathcote Auxiliary
Mrs. Sylvia Harris	Heathcote Auxiliary
Mrs. Norma Close	Warracknabeal Auxiliary
Mrs. Judith Clark	Warracknabeal Auxiliary
Mrs. Bev Hobbs	Warracknabeal Auxiliary
Mrs Peg Upton	Portland Auxiliary
Mrs Pearl Benson	Portland Auxiliary
Mrs Nancy Barclay	Portland Auxiliary
Mrs Margaret Cook	Portland Auxiliary
Mrs Joan Lewis	Portland Auxiliary
Mrs Dawn Bateman	Portland Auxiliary
Cr Geoff Portland	Portland Auxiliary
Mrs Aileen White	Portland Auxiliary

Life Governors

Congratulations to the following members who have been awarded Life Governorships for their outstanding involvement and support to RVIB. Life Governorships are RVIB's highest accolade.

Mrs. Hazel Bartlett	Charlton Auxiliary
Mrs. Sylvia Bishop	Maffra Auxiliary
Mrs. Jennifer Toma	Maffra Auxiliary

Service Badges

RVIB congratulates the following members for achieving significant milestones in their accumulated dedicated service:

25 Years

Mrs. Dot Clymo	Korumburra Auxiliary
Mrs. Pat Mariner	Colac Auxiliary
Mrs. Pearl Paterson	Charlton Auxiliary
Mrs. Mavis Blythman	Traralgon Auxiliary
Mrs. Ruth Lucas	Colac Auxiliary
Mrs. Irene Curtis	Colac Auxiliary

20 Years

Mrs. Doris Mickie	Korumburra Auxiliary
Mrs. Victoria (Queenie) Cossar	Charlton Auxiliary
Mrs. Evaline Newell	Warracknabeal Auxiliary
Mrs. Wesley Burgess	Traralgon Auxiliary
Mrs. Annie (Nance) Dickinson	Charlton Auxiliary

10 Years

Mrs. Lorna McDonald	Barwon Heads Auxiliary
Miss Joan Wilkie	Barwon Heads Auxiliary
Mr Don Walker	Anglesea Auxiliary
Mrs. Pam Fry	Cobden Auxiliary
Mrs. Kathy Merrett	Cobden Auxiliary
Mrs. Heather Ogilvie	Maffra Auxiliary
Mrs. Joy Freeman	Charlton Auxiliary
Mrs. Mary Walklate	Charlton Auxiliary
Mrs. Alys Sturrock	Warracknabeal Auxiliary
Mrs. Pat Brotheridge	Barwon Heads Auxiliary
Mrs. Elsie Timmins	Traralgon Auxiliary
Mrs. Lillian Hamilton	Euroa Auxiliary
Mrs. Heather Pillar	Cobden Auxiliary

Mrs. Gladys Buckingham
Mr Arthur Glazner
Mrs. Doris Graham
Mrs. Peg Coates

Cobden Auxiliary
Sale Auxiliary
Chariton Auxiliary
St Arnaud Auxiliary

Service Plaques

Congratulation to members reaching the following very special milestones.

Mrs. Dorrie Ricardo
Mrs. Kath Lawford
Mrs. Joyce Cross

Korumburra Auxiliary 45 years service
Korumburra Auxiliary 45 years service
Korumburra Auxiliary 45 years service

Certificates for Dedicated Service

RVIB recognises special service rendered by the following members:

Mrs. Doris Gilbert
Mr Mary Burns
Mrs. Elva Shingles
Mrs. Vi Wadsley
Mrs. Joyce Horne

Sorrento Auxiliary
Benalla Auxiliary
Maffra Auxiliary
Koo Wee Rup Auxiliary
Cressy Auxiliary

Certificates of Appreciation

RVIB recognizes with gratitude the contributions made to RVIB and to RVIB Auxiliaries by the following organisations and businesses:

Box Hill Golf Club
Barwon Heads residents who have helped the RVIB Barwon Heads Auxiliary:
Mrs Moira Armstrong, Mrs Max Cooper, Mr Bernard Napthine, Opportunity Shop Volunteers.

OBITUARIES

Mrs Ivy Starick from Jeparit has died, aged 89. She will be greatly missed.

Sadly, Florina Perry of Minyip passed away recently.

Portland was saddened by the loss of a devoted member, Mrs. Betty Learmonth. Betty had been a member for 27 years.

Mrs. Ruby Elsbury was an energetic worker for RVIB for 53 years. She was well known and loved by all and was presented with the McIvor Shire Citizen of the Year Award several years ago. She will be missed by all.

Daisy Dawe was a past president and current vice president of Skipton at the time of her death. Although ill she still gave her support and faced her illness

with great courage. Members looked to her for advice and she will be greatly missed by us all.

Mrs. Vi Allen from the Jeparit auxiliary passed away in June. She and her husband Kevin (current Auxiliary Treasurer) have both been keen supporters of RVIB and attended all meetings and activities.. She was the organist at her church and was involved in many town activities. Vi will be sadly missed.

Mrs. Maureen Mahony had been an active member of Yarrawonga for 21 years and President since 1993. She was a very bright, happy and efficient lady who will be greatly missed by Auxiliary Members.

Mrs. Nancy Burghess of Korumburra, will be much missed by many of her friends.

Betty Learmonth of Portland will be much missed by the auxiliary.

Mr John Davies passed away after a long illness. John was the husband of Sorrento Auxiliary Secretary Elizabeth Davies and a keen supporter of the auxiliary. John's service was held on the beach at Sorrento looking out over the bay he loved.

Mrs Irma Eckerman will be much missed at Rainbow. She was a member for 14 years.

Echuca Auxiliary was deeply saddened by the death their secretary Isabel Glasson. She was well respected and a most competent secretary and her shoes will be very hard to fill.

Lena Cuthbert, a life member and past president of Swan Hill passed away in May. She was a great cook to the end and will be sadly missed.

BOOK REVIEW

'On Mount Emu Creek' by Mary Turner Shaw; Robertson and Mullens Pty Ltd, 1969.

I discovered this book when stationed at the Australian Staff College at Fort Queenscliff in 1976. It is a concise account of the conditions, politics and lifestyle of the Victorian Western Districts in the mid to late nineteenth century.

The book is set in the area bounded by Campertown, Darlington, Mortlake and Terang, and based on the early days of the sheep station Wooriwrite located on Mount Emu Creek near Mount Elephant. There are also references to the following towns where there are Auxiliaries: Corio Bay (Geelong), Colac, Skipton, Portland, and Port Fairy.

The narrative is vividly illustrated, both by early photographs and by landscape drawings and sketches by Eugene von Guerard”.

In all respects the book is very entertaining, particularly so for residents of long standing in the region.

Bob Slater, July 2001

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together with
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- 2 Mar 2002 Discover Vietnam 12 days *\$3569
- 28 May 2002 Canadian Rockies/Alaska 13 days *\$5606
- 12 Oct 2002 Wonders of the American West 15 days *\$4419
(inc 7 night cruise)

*Prices include airfares, accommodation (twin share), transfers, taxes and most meals

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***Make sure you mention RVIB when you make your call as this is a RVIB
fundraising initiative***

RVIB and Collette tours are offering fantastic holidays to over 120 destinations. RVIB receive a generous commission from every booking. So if you're or your family or friends are planning a holiday, please give the toll free number a call.



RVIB



December 2001
Christmas Edition

Out and About

Auxiliaries Newsletter

Hello to Everyone

Firstly allow me to introduce myself. My name is Elizabeth Trefeli, my position is General Manager Corporate and Community Relations / Fundraising. (Yes it can be a mouthful). I've been with RVIB since April this year and am pleased to be working with an organisation that offers such wonderful services. And the focus really is on supporting the services as only 19 cents in the dollar is spent on administration. Since October 2001 providing support for Auxiliaries became part of my responsibilities and I look forward to meeting and working with you to make 2002 a successful year for us all.

This is the time of the year when we think of our friends, particularly those who partner us in our mission. Your support provides us, RVIB, with a daily reminder of the power of philanthropy at work in the community, and we are most grateful.

Auxiliaries make such a difference in helping RVIB provide the services that give confidence to people who are blind or vision impaired, to lead, or continue to lead, quality and independent lives.

Last financial year, you, the Auxiliaries raised over \$134,00 that was put toward services RVIB provides. Not many charitable organisations are blessed with this kind of contribution. We would like to say thank you, for this reflects the caring and effort of thousands of Victorians across the state.

Changes in staffing of the role that supports Auxiliaries has meant it's been a rather turbulent year for both Auxiliaries and RVIB. Unfortunately earlier in the year, Auxiliary Coordinator, Bob Slater accepted a position with another organisation, and then for the interim Ken Gilkinson, Bequest Officer, happily took on the role. Sadly Ken died on 18/1/01. He is greatly missed by us all. Even though Ken was only with RVIB for 6 months, in that time he made a big impact with his enthusiasm, dedication and sense of humour. I know these staff changes resulted in some confusion for you in knowing who to work with in RVIB, however, the good news is, we now have a great team in place.

We advertised the **Community Relations & Auxiliaries Officer** position and received over 80 applications from people keen to fill the role. ▶ Continued page 6

From all staff at

RVIB
MERRY
CHRISTMAS
and a
HAPPY NEW
YEAR!



RVIB Annual Day - A big thank you to our Auxiliaries - 24 November 2001

To the majestic sounds of the Melbourne Town Hall Organ piping out Bach, RVIB Auxiliary members and volunteers joined together in celebration of the International Year of the Volunteer at the inaugural RVIB Annual Day.

The display area showcasing RVIB Regional Services, Training & Technology Services, Library & Information Services, RVIB Enterprises, Community Relations & Fundraising and RVIB Education Services was met with enthusiasm by the volunteers and auxiliaries. Many of them were unaware of the range of services we offered.

Seated, with a glass of wine in hand, guests were welcomed and thanked by RVIB CEO Doug Kent. His theme of 'Volunteers are Vital' was continued by RVIB client Jan Doran, who talked about the role RVIB volunteers and Auxiliaries played in her life, and how she was repaying the favour by volunteering herself.

Trudhi Westh, President of the Central Council of Auxiliaries, presented the Auxiliary report for the 2000/2001 financial year. Trudhi happily reported that RVIB Auxiliaries, many of which have been established for over 70 years, raised \$134,000 for RVIB this year.



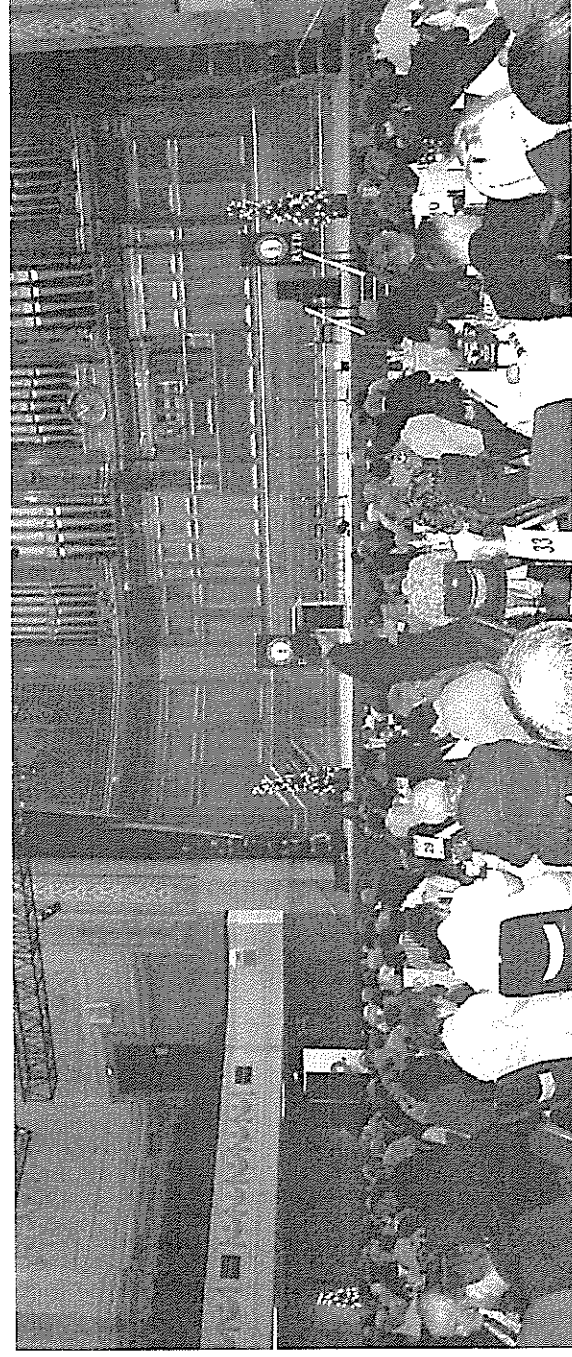
After an elegant lunch, service awards in recognition of ten, 20 and 25 years service were presented by George Dyer. The Leo Hartman Young Achiever Award went to Diane Filipovich for her work in the Information and Referrals Unit, and the Louise Homfrey International Year of the Volunteer Award to Chris Boyle for exemplary volunteer service.

Plum pudding accompanied the magical sounds of the RVIB Children's Choir. Music Therapist Emily Shanahan selected a combination of songs that truly showed the talent of the children and brought tears to more than a few eyes.

After the penetrating sounds of the Town Hall Organ (the biggest instrument in the Southern Hemisphere) played by world-renowned organist Thomas Heywood, the guests left having made new friends and found out more about RVIB.

Thank you to everyone who helped out behind the scenes and on the day...a great day was had by all.

By Jo Ann Matthews



▲ RVIB Annual Day at the Melbourne Town Hall

2001 RVIB Carols by Candlelight

RVIB continues the tradition as once again it is time for RVIB Carols by Candlelight on Christmas Eve. The line up this year is absolutely fantastic! It will be the first major event at the magnificent Music Bowl since its \$21 million refurbishment.

The telecast will begin at 8.30pm with a special **Children's Christmas Concert** hosted by **Livinia Nixon** and featuring the enormously successful **Hi-5**, 17-year-old Queensland singing sensation **Tali**, Melbourne-born 12-year-old dynamo **Eran**, with visits from **Humphrey B. Bear** and **Santa Claus**.

Ray Martin, in his 12th year as host of **RVIB Carols by Candlelight**, will be joined from 9.00pm by musical director **Geoff Harvey** and the cream of Australian talent.

Then an array of stars including **Marina Prior**, **Roger Lemke**, **Rachael Beck** and **Todd McKenney**, direct from their smash hit stage show, **Singin' in The Rain**, will make special guest appearances to sing their favourite carols.

King of rock **Billy Thorpe** is set to bring the house down, and in a very special performance **Lauren Hayes**, one of our RVIB students, will take the stage for her debut performance, with a voice certain to make an impression on the nationwide television audience. Country music stars **Gina Jeffreys** and **Adam Brand** will be in fine voice, as will pop stars **Human Nature**, **Bardot** and **Joanne**, all fresh from their appearances at the recent Rumba music festival. Carols stalwart **Denis**

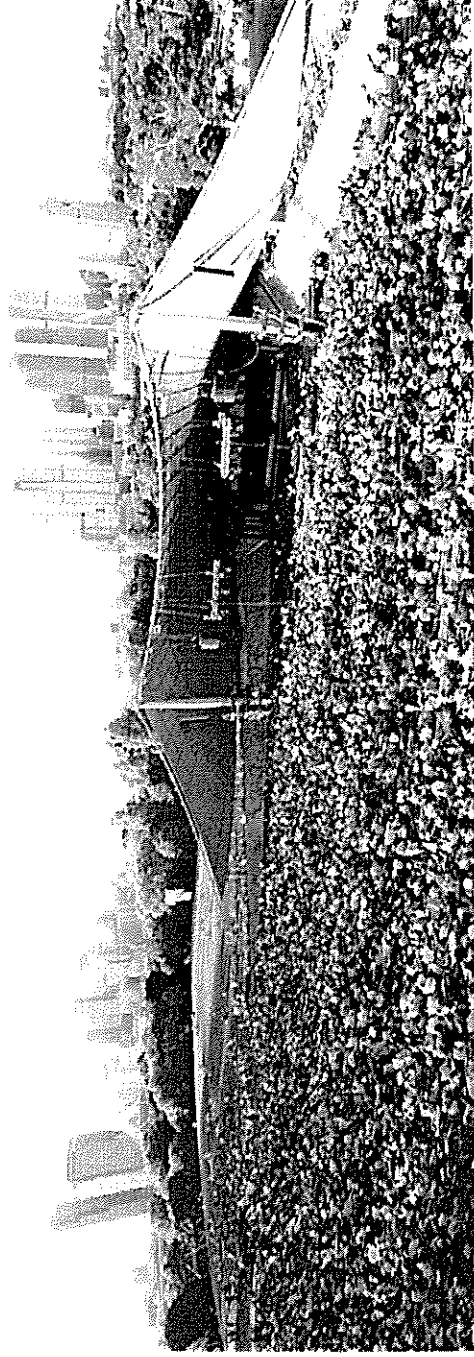


▲ **Doug Kent, CEO and Ray Martin at RVIB Carols by Candlelight 2000**

Walter will be on hand, as will fellow Carols veteran **Peter Cupples**.

Rhonda Burchmore, currently on stage in Melbourne with the hit musical **Mamma Mia**, joins the Carols team, as does **Suzanne Johnston**, acclaimed for her performances on the opera, music theatre and concert stages.

Tickets are on sale from Ticketmaster7 on 136 100.



▲ Each year over 30,000 people come to the Sydney Myer Music Bowl for Carols by Candlelight

Auxiliary Member Profile

Jean Hedington, Kyneton Auxiliary

Not a lot of things stop Jean Hedington in her tracks, but she had to have a little sit down when she heard how generous the people of Kyneton had been towards RVIB in her latest fundraising initiative.

'We had a door knock during October,' she explains, 'I haven't quite finished totting it all up, but we've raised over \$3,500.'

The Kyneton Auxiliary hasn't been very active over the last few years because of declining membership. So when Jean retired recently she decided she had just enough time on her hands in between gardening, going to country music festivals around Victoria with her husband Doug, and volunteering in an op shop to organise one large event the RVIB Door Knock.

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

She is incredibly grateful to everyone who donated money, but also to those who volunteered their time to help collect.

'Almost 40 people offered to help,' she says.

'Some were regular 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 throughout October, one by one they came back with generous donations from residents.

It doesn't sound much like retirement, but Jean says she takes plenty of time off.

'Doug and I get away to Queensland for a few weeks in the sun every year, and while our daughter Lynlee lives nearby, we have to go to Peak Hill (NSW) to see our other daughter Carol and her family.'

Tips on Writing for the Press

In the last few months, press coverage of RVIB has been plentiful and positive. Much of the coverage is generated from the Public Relations / Press Department at St Kilda Road, but many Auxiliary Groups approach their local newspapers independently and achieve fantastic results.

All Auxiliaries do a marvelous job in promoting RVIB in the press. However, to avoid confusion we need to ensure that we all refer to RVIB in the same way.

Therefore, when writing a letter or article for newspapers, please observe the following:



The first time it is mentioned in an article or letter, the Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind should always be written out in full, with RVIB in brackets afterwards. EG: 'This month the Port Fairy Auxiliary of the Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind (RVIB)...'



For the rest of the article or letter, it can be referred to as RVIB. This should NOT be written with full stops in between.



When using the abbreviated RVIB, there should NOT be a 'the' before RVIB.

If you have an event and would like help with approaching the press, writing press releases or preparing press packs for journalists, please call Sophie Jarman at RVIB on 9522 5296.

Join "Ugly Dave Gray" and experience a once in a life time holiday.

Enjoy 13 days including a 7-night cruise exploring the Canadian Rockies & Alaska

Departing on the 28th May 2002 you'll experience a fully guided tour of the Canadian Rockies and a 7-night cruise of Alaska for 13-days. Celebrity Ugly Dave Gray will have you laughing as you enjoy:

Calgary?Banff?Lake Louise?Icefields Parkway?Jasper?Vancouver
?Inside Passage?Glacier Bay?Juneau?

***Price including airfares, accommodation (twin share), transfers, taxes and most meals is only \$5,606pp**

Also departing 20th February 2002 experience a fully guided tour to Beijing City for seven nights for only \$2299pp. Hosted by Magic 693 presenter Peter Van, highlights include The Great Wall, ?Tiananmen Square,? The Forbidden City?Peking Opera

For all enquiries and bookings please call
Collette Vacations toll free 1 800 663 660

This is an RVIB fundraising initiative

Upcoming Events for 2002



RVIB Fete

Continuing the tradition, the RVIB fete will be held over two days - March 23 and 24, 2002.



Alaska and Canada Tour

As a special fundraising initiative in collaboration with Collette Vacations, Ugly Dave Gray will be hosting a 13 day tour of the Canadian Rockies and Alaska in May 2001.



Egypt by Touch

In March, there will be a unique opportunity to explore the ancient Egyptian civilisation by touching authentic replicas, listening to audio or reading brailled descriptions.



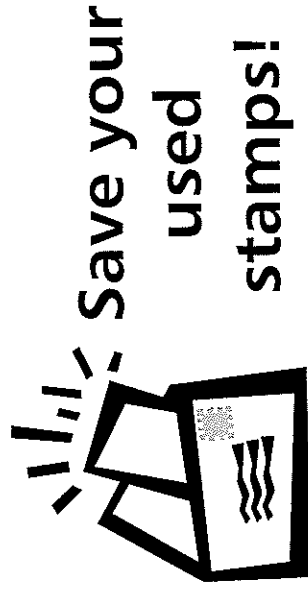
Victorian Music Festival

Set over the Easter weekend, this new music festival, located in Mornington, promises to be a great showcase of music and entertainment.



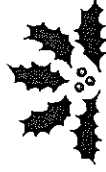
Bass Strait Crossing

On 14 April, RVIB client and paralympic gold medal-winner, Russell Short, will defy the odds and cross the treacherous Bass Strait in a custom-built kayak.



Last year RVIB made \$600 by collecting and reselling normal everyday used stamps. So start collecting, get your family and friends to do the same.

Sue Parkes will keep a record of what you send in.



Sue Parkes has been appointed as the **Community Relations and Auxiliaries Officer** and commences with us on January 21 next year. Sue has many years experience in supporting auxiliaries and community groups, so we are very pleased she will be able to add value immediately by assisting you with any inquiries, administration or activities you have planned.

Working closely with Sue will be **Ian McDonald**, Bequest Officer. Ian has great experience in working with local government and community groups and had serviced three terms as Mayor of the City of Dandenong. Most importantly he is also keen to offer any assistance possible to auxiliaries. Ian starts with RVIB on 7 January 2002.

Kerri Guyett is our Donor Relations Administration Assistant, she commenced with us on December 17, 2001. (As you can see we've been a little stretched with the vacant positions we've had.) Kerri's role is to provide support to Sue, Ian and Gill Baker, the Donor Relations Manager. Kerri will be the second point of contact for you if Sue is out on the road.

We can be contacted using the 1800 335 588 number and simply ask for Sue, Kerri or Ian.

Their direct phone numbers are: Sue Parkes (we're in the process of organising her number); Kerri Guyett (03) 9522 5229; and Ian McDonald (03) 9522 5218.

It's been a challenging year for Auxiliaries and it's important that we plan the future. In November members of the Central Council for Auxiliaries and I met and agreed on two key items:

1) That we need to increase the current membership of the Central Council to allow it to be more active in supporting Auxiliaries; and 2) That we need to meet with representatives from as many auxiliaries as possible at a special meeting to discuss how auxiliaries would like RVIB to support them in the future.

The Central Council for Auxiliaries and I would like to invite each Auxiliary to have representation at this special meeting.

The Way Forward Meeting is being held to look at how we can:

- Support you better
- Increase the representation of auxiliaries on the Central Council
- Encourage new auxiliary membership
- Encourage younger age groups to become part of auxiliaries efforts; and
- Present a number of special projects we would like to suggest.



Where possible, it would be great if a representative from your auxiliary could attend, not only to have your say but to meet Sue, Ian, Kerri and myself and of course each other. It's understandable that some of you may not be able to attend, with distance or timing, yet we would love to hear from each auxiliary on what you would like to see done differently.

The Way Forward Meeting is on **20 February 2002, 10:00am to 2:30pm at RVIB St Kilda Road**. Lunch will be provided, Sue, Kerri, Ian and I will be the chefs - could be interesting!

More information, attendance and feedback forms will be sent to you in the New Year.

The Christmas Shop at RVIB has been open for the past 6 weeks and closes on Wednesday 19th December for another year. Business has been terrific, and much improved on last year. I'd like to thank all of the ladies who volunteered their time to run the shop for us, you've never met such a lovely, cheerful and business savvy group of ladies.

I'm pleased to say that the year finished off in a lovely note with RVIB Annual Day on November 24 at the Melbourne Town Hall. It was an entertaining afternoon with a terrific turn out by Auxiliaries and volunteers. I was fortunate to meet many of you. If you would like to give any feedback on the day or suggestions for the future please send us a letter or contact Kerri Guyett. All suggestions are welcome.

Well I'd better finish here. On behalf of RVIB I'd like to wish you and your families a safe and happy festive season, and may 2002 be your best year yet!

Regards

Liz Trefeli
General Manager,
Corporate & Community Relations