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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Welcome to the winter edition of Retina Australia News for 2018. This year marks the 35th anniversary of the formation of our national organisation which was established by five very dedicated volunteers who represented approximately fifty members living in various states of Australia.

Since then, the organisation has grown considerably with now in excess of 2,000 members, their families or friends located in all states or territories. Over the years, Retina Australia has continued to be driven by committed volunteers who have served on the national and state, or territory, boards or committees. We have also had the loyal support of many additional volunteers who have assisted our cause by raising funds for research.

During the previous two years, the Retina Australia Board has been discussing the future direction for Retina Australia in great detail. Directors are keen to raise the profile of the organisation, increase our membership and donor base, improve our fundraising capacity, and as a result raise more money for research and be able to provide increased support for our members. In order to achieve these outcomes, directors believe that Retina Australia will need to become a fully national organisation that provides direction across Australia.

As you are aware, we now have a national newsletter, and we have been moving slowly towards launching a revamped national website which will also include details of activities in each state or territory. Retina Australia has also joined the social media community with its Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts. By providing these services nationally we are able to utilise the skills and talents of some members who can now dedicate their voluntary time Australia-wide, instead of splitting it between their local and national commitments.

Another advantage with establishing a national base for Retina Australia would be the significant reduction of government reporting and a removal of the costs

associated in maintaining offices in a number of states and territories. Above all, having a totally national body would also give us the opportunity to fundraise with a national focus and potentially gain more support from corporates and other benevolent institutions. We may also be more eligible for government grants or sponsorships which are available to assist national charitable organisations, but not state-based groups.

You can be assured that throughout our discussions, directors of Retina Australia have had the members, and in fact all Australians affected by inherited retinal disease, in the forefront of their minds. We see that nationalisation is an exciting opportunity, and with the potential of establishing a more powerful national voice, we would be hopeful of reaching out to, and supporting, many more individuals and families.

As the years have progressed, and Retina Australia has developed, the fundamental reason for our existence has remained unchanged. Consequently moving forward, the goals of the national organisation would remain as follows.

- To facilitate support to individuals, families and friends affected by inherited retinal diseases.
- To be a credible and preferred source of information related to inherited retinal diseases.
- To raise and distribute funds for research into the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and cure of inherited retinal diseases.

Overall, I am certain that the suggested changes will not impact on any member at all. In fact, the Board truly believes that with consolidation, there will be opportunities to support and assist all members in a better way. As well, fundraising would be more co-ordinated with the potential for national fundraising projects to raise increased funds thus enabling more research to be undertaken in Australia. Our relationship and involvement with Retina International would

remain strong and unchanged with continued representation on a number of its working parties and committees.

I will keep you informed of the development in progressing the change from the current situation of a federation of member states and territories to a single united national organisation that will be the “new-look” Retina Australia. It is envisaged that members will be given the opportunity to have their say on these proposed changes during the next five months. The Board is hopeful that with the support of members, we can take the necessary steps to bring this concept to fruition by the first day of January 2019.

I look forward to continuing to work with you all as we endeavour to streamline the organisation, reduce the duplication of workload for many of our volunteers and to provide opportunities for Retina Australia to grow.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind you all that it is time to renew your annual membership. If you have not already received a reminder, please contact your local state or territory organisation to complete this task. If you only subscribe to the national newsletter, we would be most appreciative if you could forward your annual subscription of \$25 to Retina Australia directly.

If you have any enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact me by phoning 1800 999 870 or emailing admin1@retinaaustralia.com.au.

Thank you for your continued membership and support,

Retina Australia

Chairman

Leighton Boyd



LONG TIME SUPPORTERS OF RETINA AUSTRALIA AWARDED THE *ORDER OF AUSTRALIA*.



Photo: Marg Veltheim, OAM, Roy Veltheim, OAM and Guide Dog, Alanna.

On 22nd May 2018, Roy and Marg Veltheim were presented with Medals of the Order of Australia by His Excellency the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC, Governor of Queensland, at a ceremony at Government House in Brisbane.

As founding members of Retina Australia (Qld) Inc. (formerly the Retinitis Pigmentosa Association of Queensland) as well as the Beaudesert (now Scenic Rim) Vision Impaired Persons Support Group, Roy and Marg have served the vision impaired community since 2001. Both Roy and Marg have been committee members of Retina Australia (Qld) Inc. and Marg served on the national board of Retina Australia from 2013 – 2016.

Roy and Marg are a team supporting one another and assisting others. They are well-known in their home town of Beaudesert in Queensland as can be seen if you ever walk through town with them. Their door is always open. They counsel and educate, support and just have fun with anyone who needs it. Marg has always thought nothing of long drives to speak to a group, to fundraise for Retina Australia's research, for Guide Dogs Queensland or just to help out in the Queensland office where they offered friendly advice and encouragement to people who are navigating this difficult journey. The only thing that may take precedence is their family – children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, several of whom are affected by Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP).

It is people like Roy and Marg, whose selflessness, kindness, good-humoured optimism and wise counsel, assists so many people. Roy has RP and Marg is his eyes. She shares that job with Dog Guide Alanna and, previously, Andy.

RETINA INTERNATIONAL WORLD CONGRESS

The Retina International World Congress in 2020 (RIWC 2020) will take place in Reykjavík, Iceland from the 4th to the 6th of June 2020 and will be held during the Nordic Ophthalmology Congress. The event promises exciting news on the development of research including updates on clinical trials that are progressing towards treatments. Over 800 participants are expected.

Harpa, the architectural award winning concert and conference hall at the harbour, in the city centre of Reykjavík, will be the venue. There are many good hotels in Reykjavík and there are frequent flights from Europe and North America.

It is now to time for you to start planning to 'Meet us in the Middle' and enjoy the magical summer nights with the midnight sun in Iceland.

You can follow the preparation and registration dates on <https://www.riwc2020.is/>

RIWC 2020 welcomes you to Iceland!

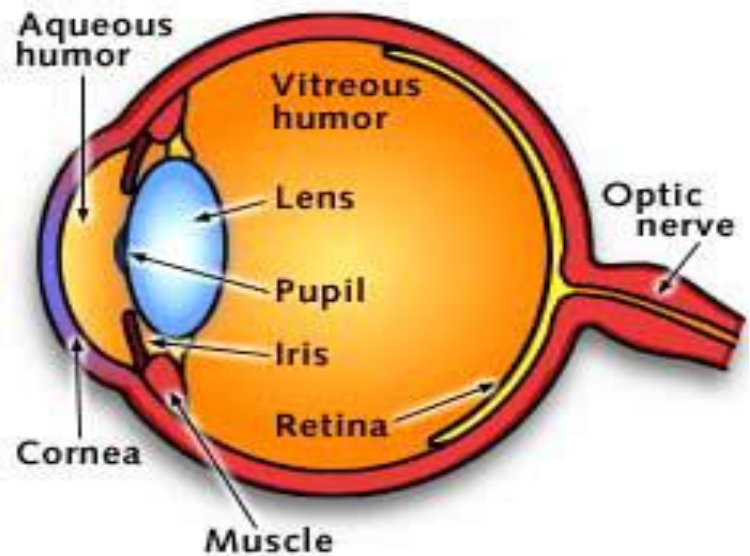
Mr. Kristinn Halldór Einarsson
CEO - Icelandic Association of the
visually impaired (BIAVI)



THE RETINA

The retina is a thin layer of neural cells that lines the back of the eyeball of vertebrates and some cephalopods (predatory molluscs such as octopuses, squids etc).

In vertebrate embryonic development, the retina and the optic nerve originate as outgrowths of the developing brain. Consequently the retina is part of the central nervous system (CNS).



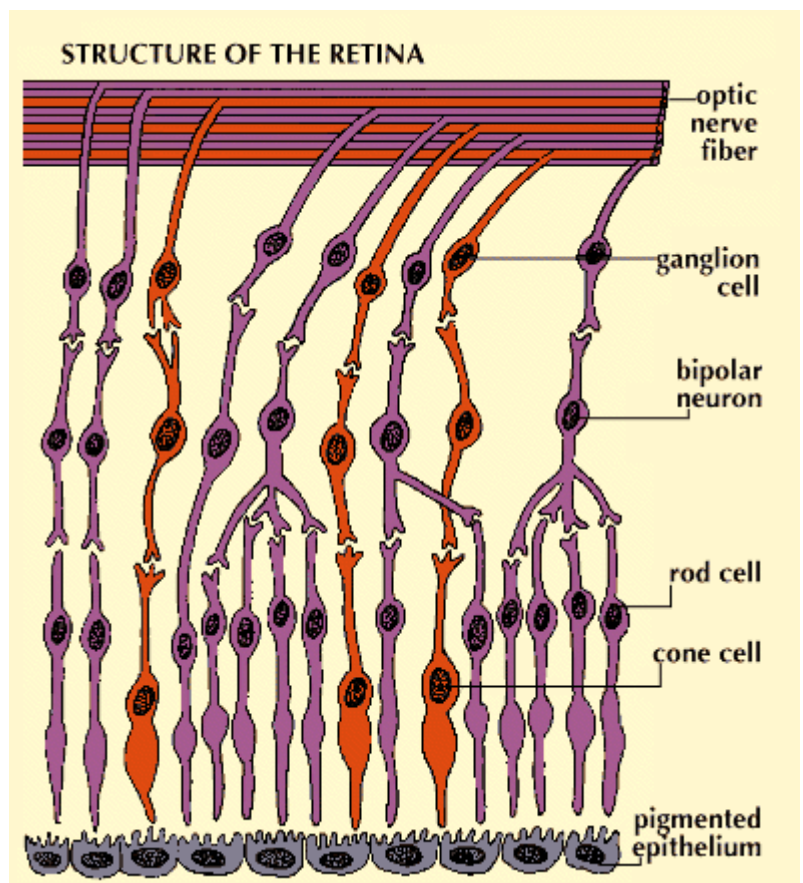
The retina is the only part of the CNS that can be imaged directly.

The vertebrate retina contains photoreceptor cells (rods and cones) that respond to light; the resulting neural signals then undergo complex processing by other neurons of the retina.

The retinal output takes the form of action potentials in retinal ganglion cells whose axons form the optic nerve.

Several important features of visual perception can be traced to the retinal encoding and processing of light.

The unique structure of the blood vessels in the retina has been used for biometric identification.



HOW DOES RETINITIS PIGMENTOSA PRESENT?

Source: National Organisation for Rare Disorders, USA

Website: www.rarediseases.org/rare-diseases/retinitis-pigmentosa

Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP) usually begins as night or dim light vision impairment (that is, difficulty in seeing in dimly lit environments or at dusk, or adapting to, or recovering function in, dim light after being in bright light for any length of time). Typically, this is followed by the affected individual's growing awareness of a loss of peripheral vision. Symptoms are more often noticed between the age 10 and 40, but earlier and later onset forms of RP exist.

Characteristically, symptoms develop gradually over time. The sudden onset of these same symptoms should point to a different cause, such as an autoimmune process. Older people with sudden onset of these symptoms are especially at risk for experiencing them as a result of having cancer (so called paraneoplastic retinopathy, which can occur with an optic nerve involvement).

The rate and extent of progression of vision loss in RP can vary. The way that peripheral vision is lost in RP has been especially well characterized by various authors. It has been reported in various studies that the most variable aspect is the age of onset of the symptoms. This can vary not only between families and between subtypes of RP, but also within families. However, after that, the rate and modality of progression tends to follow a fairly predictable and stereotyped exponential pattern. This pattern signifies that, during the first decade of symptomatic disease patients experience a slower rate of disease progression, which then accelerates during the subsequent two decades, to slow again during the remainder of life. When other members of a family are affected, the rates of progression are often similar within that family, but this varies as well.

Some patients with RP or related disorders present with complex manifestations affecting other organs, termed "syndromes". The most common associations of RP with general health (so called "systemic") problems causing these more complex syndromes are hearing loss and obesity.

STRATEGY PREVENTS BLINDNESS IN MICE WITH RETINAL DEGENERATION

Date: May 2, 2018

Source: Duke University Medical Center

Summary: New research outlines a strategy that in mouse models significantly delayed the onset of blindness from inherited retinal degeneration such as retinitis pigmentosa.

More than 2 million people worldwide live with inherited and untreatable retinal conditions, including retinitis pigmentosa, which slowly erodes vision.

Developing treatments is challenging for scientists, as these conditions are caused by more than 4,000 different gene mutations. But many of these mutations have something in common -- a propensity for creating misfolded proteins that cells in the eye can't process. These proteins build up inside cells, killing them from the inside out.

Now Duke University scientists have shown that boosting the cells' ability to process misfolded proteins could keep them from aggregating inside the cell. The researchers devised and tested the strategy in mice, significantly delaying the onset of blindness. Their findings are outlined in the journal *Nature Communications*.

Their approach potentially could be used to prevent cell death in other neurodegenerative diseases, such as Huntington's, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's, said Vadim Arshavsky, Ph.D., senior author of the paper and Helena Rubenstein Foundation Professor of Ophthalmology at the Duke University School of Medicine.

"You can offer almost nothing in terms of treatment to a patient with retinitis pigmentosa or other inherited blindness today," Arshavsky said. "This investigation provides evidence that enhancing the capacity of the cell to process

misfolded proteins is worth pursuing. Another important piece is that inherited blindness is just a subset of a larger category of neurodegenerative diseases, so this concept could be tested in other conditions, as well."

The Duke team collaborated with colleagues from the California Institute of Technology. They focused on the proteasome: machinery inside all cells that eliminates misfolded proteins. Arshavsky compares the barrel-shaped structure to a paper shredder, with the cutting elements hidden inside.

Misfolded proteins must pass through a "lid" on the shredder to be processed, but cells in diseased mice do not have enough lids, enabling the build-up of the damaged proteins.

Instead of trying to alter the shredders, Arshavsky and his team genetically increased the quantities of lids for the shredders, allowing cells to process more misfolded proteins.

In trials, mice with added proteasome lids retained four times the number of functional retinal cells by adulthood than mice with the same form of retinitis pigmentosa, which went blind as adults.

The lids were introduced genetically in the line of lab mice. In humans, lids could potentially be added through gene therapy or drug compounds.

"If you can retain four times the number of the functional cells in the eye, that would mean decades more vision in a human patient," Arshavsky said. "It's not a complete cure, but it's a tremendous delay. This type of treatment has the potential to defer the onset of blindness beyond the human lifespan."



LIGHTLY SWEETENED CAKE WITH BLUEBERRIES, BANANA AND A WALNUT TOPPING

Blueberries are loaded with Vitamins A, C, E and minerals zinc and selenium... all of these are powerful antioxidants – aka eye superfood!

Ingredients

- ¾ cup chickpea flour
- ¼ cup buckwheat flour
- ¼ cup buckwheat grouts
- ¼ cup chia seeds
- ¼ cup hemp seeds
- 2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ⅛ teaspoon nutmeg
- 1¼ cup non-dairy milk – I used almond milk
- 2 large eggs
- 1 cup banana, mashed [about 3 bananas]
- ¼ cup coconut/coconut sugar
- 2 tablespoon ground flax seed
- 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup frozen blueberries
- ¼ cup chopped walnuts



Instructions (continued over page)

1. Preheat your oven to 190°C and line 20cmx20cm pan with parchment paper across both sides for easy lifting and set aside.
2. In a large bowl combine flours, whole buckwheat, chia, hemp, cinnamon, baking powder, and nutmeg. Set aside.

3. In a separate bowl, whisk milk, eggs, mashed banana, sugar, ground flax, and vanilla. Once incorporated, pour into dry ingredients. Stir until combined before adding in blueberries.
4. Pour mixture into prepared pan and even out with a fork. Sprinkle walnuts over top.
5. Bake for 45-50 minutes until a toothpick inserted comes out clean. [Mine took 50 minutes].
6. Allow to cool for 5 minutes before removing from the pan and then cool on a wire rack for an additional 10-15 minutes.

Thanks to Leanne Vogel, Foundation Fighting Blindness Canada



Find us on
Facebook

Stay up to date with the very latest information, including research, events and notice of the Retina Australia website launch, by 'Liking' the [Retina Australia Facebook page](#).

You're always welcome to make your own contribution to the newsletter or to the Facebook page. If you have an issue to raise, a question, some information to share, a new aid or device that has assisted you, or anything you feel would be of benefit to others, send it by email to admin1@retinaaustralia.com and mark it attention: editor.



We're always on the lookout!

CONSUMER ELECTRONICS SHOW 2018

VISION RELATED ROUND-UP

The Consumer Electronics Show (CES) is the world's largest consumer technology exhibition and showcases the products likely to appear in our shops in the coming months. While the products are not specifically designed to help people who are blind or vision impaired, there are some interesting implications from some of the new products and prototypes.

The announcement that received the most attention was LG's rollable 65" OLED TV. The prototype could be useful in a house with limited space whereby you could use it as a full-sized TV for watching movies or shrink it down to be used as a computer monitor. From a vision impairment perspective there are significant benefits to making a TV screen instantly bigger to see text and images on the screen, then instantly put the screen back to a smaller size for other users. However, the implication I see as being particularly exciting about this is its portability. Imagine having a mobile phone that can fit in your pocket, but with the press of a button turn into a screen the size of a home TV. As a vision impaired person, I see this as a great step forward and I'm looking forward to seeing how this proof-of-concept evolves.

Another big theme is the evolution of digital assistants, both in our phones and as standalone smart speakers. At last year's CES Amazon's Alexa stole the show with the digital assistant being integrated into a variety of different devices. This year Google has struck back with its integration of its Digital Assistant now reaching 400 million different devices. While Alexa digital assistants such as the Amazon Echo have had tremendous success in the US, it's Google that has been the winner this year due to its international push, beating out Amazon in markets such as Australia where the Amazon Echo has only just been released.

From a vision impairment perspective, the ability to achieve everyday tasks with verbal commands such as turning on a dishwasher or finding a radio station is

very useful and at CES 2018 there were a multitude of devices that could work with the Google Home – even the ability to cook popcorn! As the devices become more advanced, it'll make home automation even more beneficial to people with vision-related disabilities.

While there were many other products that are likely to have a profound impact on people with disabilities such as driverless cars and drones that deliver people to their destination rather than packages, their availability to the public is unlikely to be this year. However, there are a few minor improvements to existing products which will have a benefit to people with disabilities such as the domination of wireless charging.

Although wireless charging may not seem particularly exciting and not particularly new, its inclusion in the latest iPhone models has been flagged as a time for industry to include the feature in more affordable devices rather than just the high-end phones. The other good news is that the charging technology is standard across different devices meaning that charging mechanisms are likely to become more affordable. From a digital access perspective wireless charging can be very helpful, especially for a person with a vision impairment as the phone can just be placed on a table to charge rather than having to find and plug in a cable.

So that's a brief round-up of some of the developments at CES 2018 for this year. As more products emerge throughout 2018 I'll endeavour to keep you updated.

Dr Scott Hollier

If you would like more information on digital access please contact me by email on scott@hollier.info or on Twitter @scotthollier.



RETINAL IMPLANT TO REPLACE DAMAGED CELLS IN AGE RELATED MACULAR DEGENERATION

Date: April 4, 2018

Source: University of California - Santa Barbara

Summary: Researchers have published preliminary results of a first-in-human clinical trial for dry age-related macular degeneration (AMD). Four patients received implants consisting of human embryonic stem cell-derived retinal pigment epithelium (RPE), which support light-sensitive photoreceptor cells critical to vision.

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) affects more than 1.75 million individuals in the United States. Because the population is aging, that number will increase to almost 3 million by 2020. Between 80 and 90 percent of cases in this country are the dry version of the condition, for which no effective treatment exists.

Now, a team of doctors, engineers and scientists -- including UC Santa Barbara stem cell researchers Dennis Clegg, Lincoln Johnson, Sherry Hikita and Britney Pennington -- has published the preliminary results of a first-in-human clinical trial for dry AMD. Four patients received implants consisting of human embryonic stem cell-derived retinal pigment epithelium (RPE), which support light-sensitive photoreceptor cells critical to vision. The phase 1/2A trial, led by Dr. Amir Kashani, is being conducted at the University of Southern California Roski Eye Institute at the campus's Keck School of Medicine.

Trial participants have advanced disease with geographic atrophy -- considered a late stage in dry AMD -- and very poor visual abilities. The implant, which was shown to be safe, improved the vision of one patient while the condition of the others remained about the same. The trial results appear in the journal *Science Translational Medicine*.

This publication comes on the heels of a British clinical trial for wet AMD published last week in *Nature Biotechnology*.

"Our goal is to implant healthy RPE to revive remaining photoreceptors and prevent any further loss of these light-sensing cells," explained Clegg, who holds the Wilcox Family Chair in BioMedicine at UCSB and is co-director of the campus's Centre for Stem Cell Biology and Engineering. "Eventually, we would like to be able to provide implants at an earlier stage to prevent patients from losing photoreceptors in the first place."

In dry AMD, the RPE support cells in the macula become dysfunctional and die. Soon after, the light-sensitive photoreceptors begin to perish. When that happens, clear vision in the direct line of sight is lost while the surrounding vision remains normal. The implant, which was developed by a team of researchers led by Dr. Mark Humayun of the USC Roski Eye Institute, Dr. David Hinton USC's Keck School of Medicine and Clegg, consists of a single layer of cells on a synthetic scaffold. Other participating institutions include the California Institute of Technology, City of Hope National Medical Center, CamTek LLC and Regenerative Patch Technologies, Inc. Additional funding was provided by the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine and the Garland Initiative for Vision at UCSB.

"Using advanced imaging methods, doctors can see evidence of integration between the implanted RPE and the host photoreceptors," said Clegg, who is also co-director of the California Project to Cure Blindness, a collaborative effort aimed at advancing stem cell-based therapy for AMD.

The trial is ongoing and the team continues to analyse more patients. While the preliminary results are encouraging, Clegg said it is still very early in the study.

"We are thankful for the patients that volunteer to do this," Clegg added. "We explain to them this has never been done before in people. They are almost like astronauts going to the moon for the first time. It takes a lot of bravery on their part."

FROG EMBRYOS REGROW THEIR EYES

Date: April 19, 2018

Source: University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Summary: Scientists have found that frog embryos can fully regrow their eyes after injuries, a breakthrough that may lead one day to the ability to orchestrate tissue regeneration in humans.



The study by UNLV scientist Prof. Kelly Tseng, Ph.D., "A Model for Investigating Developmental Eye Repair in *Xenopus laevis*," was recently published in the journal *Experimental Eye Research*.

Xenopus laevis, or the South African clawed frog, are studied due to their highly regenerative traits that allow them to regrow tails, limbs, and even their brain.

"In this study, we found that removing the majority of eye tissues in an embryo resulted in rapid regrowth to a normal sized eye within 3 to 5 days," Tseng said.

"Some studies suggested these embryos didn't have this ability, but we've shown conclusively that these frog embryos can regenerate their eyes."

Tseng and her students were able to confirm successful regeneration via two methods. First, the researchers saw that injured eyes were able to generate many new cells within 3 days, a key to cell regrowth in these frogs. The second clue was that *Xenopus* tadpoles show a strong preference to swimming in a white background as opposed to a black background. And after eye regrowth, Tseng's tadpoles showed the same functional preference.

The team also found that apoptosis (programmed cell death), a process used in regeneration of other organs and tissues, is needed for successful eye regrowth.

"These results suggest the embryonic *Xenopus* eye is a powerful model for studying developmental eye repair," according to the study. Now scientists can

study the regeneration abilities of frogs and figure out what developmental mechanisms are used to repair a damaged eye.

Tseng said that because frog eye development is similar to human eye growth, it could eventually lead to a blueprint on how to induce such regrowth in humans. By figuring out how frogs regenerate tissue, Tseng hopes she and other scientists can learn how to get stem cells to better repair or regrow tissue in humans. Of course, more research is needed, she said.

DONATIONS

Every year about this time Retina Australia holds an annual appeal to raise funds specifically for research. The timing is critical in order to take advantage of the end of financial year and the opportunity to receive funds from donors who are preparing for the end of their tax year.

Donations from these annual appeals are directed towards the Retina Australia research pool which each year provides grants for new and innovative research. Over the years we have supported more than forty-five researchers, and their respective teams, with grants totalling over five million dollars. Everyone at Retina Australia is most appreciative of the generous response to these appeals and the support of Australian researchers.

If you are not in a position to donate through your local state or territory organisation, you may like to take advantage of donating through the Retina Australia website <http://www.retinaaustralia.com.au> using your credit card.

Alternatively donations can be made by mailing a cheque, made payable to “Retina Australia”, to The Bookkeeper, Retina Australia, 4th floor Ross House, 247-251 Flinders Lane, Melbourne VIC 3000. If you prefer, you could leave a message on 1800 999 870 and you will receive a call back to assist you with your donation.

EVENTS IN YOUR STATE -

Western Australia



Photo: Lyn Lapore with her family

Retina Australia WA was once again, 'chasing a cure for blindness' in this years' HBF Run for a Reason held on Perth on Sunday 27 May 2018. "The Visionaries" Team pounded the path and have raised over \$6,000 this year to help us strive for our goal.

This is a tremendous effort which would not have been achievable without the support of each and every one of their sponsors. So once again, a massive thank you from the Management Committee and Members of Retina Australia WA.

Our Team Members were: Committee Members: Joy and Murray Witham, along with Lyn Lapore supported by her family: Simone Lapore, Yasmine Lapore, and Caterina Knubley. RAWA Member, Katherine Chivers and her partner Gavyn McCartney. We must also thank our team sponsor [Stirk Medical Group](#) for their ongoing support. "The Visionaries" were a real stand out in their lime green T Shirts and caps.

YOUTH FOCUS FOR THE FUTURE

On **Sunday 26 August 2018**, Retina Australia WA is hosting a “**Youth Forum**” to empower young people who are blind or have low vision to make a difference in their community.

The focus of the forum will be focusing on the skills, ideas and knowledge young people have and how they can make a valuable contribution to not for profit organisations.

There will be 4 guest speakers, 3 of whom are blind or have low vision and Professor Fred Chen, Lions Eye Institute speaking on current research.

When: Sunday 26 August 2018

Where: State Library of WA, 25 Frances Street, Perth (room to be confirmed)

Time: 10:00am to 12:15pm

RSVP: by 15 August 2018 on 08 9388 1488 or fundraising@rawa.com.au

Afterwards, there will be a social get together at Street Eats Eatery, Horseshoe Lane, Yagan Square, Perth.

Bookings essential as places are limited!

South Australia

Luncheon

On the **3rd Tuesday of every month** at the Strathmore Hotel in North Terrace, members of RASA get together for lunch arriving between 12 noon and 12.30.

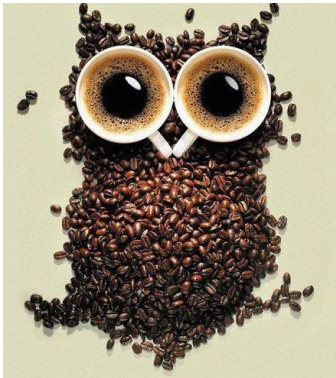
This event has been going on for many years and not only members attend but sometimes ex-staff members also.

The group welcomes new members and encourages them to come regularly.

Further information can be had from Chris Hicks, telephone 0497 491 115.



Coffee Morning



Held on the 4th Tuesday of the Month, this is an opportunity for members and friends to get together and share a morning tea in a friendly, congenial atmosphere.

As well as the Community Meeting Room of the Brisbane City Library, there will be some other interesting venues this year, so make sure you keep in touch by phone or email.

On 26th June we will be meeting at the BCC library at the top of Queen Street, opposite the casino, from 9:30 until 11:30ish. There is a \$2 charge to cover morning tea.

All welcome, but for catering, please let us know you will be coming through any of the above contacts.

The next dates are: 26th June, 24th July and 28th August.

Out and About Lunch

Doug's Seafood Café on the waterfront at Sandgate was the meeting place for our lunch in April. Easily accessed by train, it made a great venue to get together with friends who had not been able to attend the city coffee morning. There was lots of conversation, fun and laughter.

Planning is already underway for the next lunch in July, so make sure you are on the email or phone list to be notified.

If you would like to be on the email list to be notified of upcoming events, or to make your own suggestion, or notify your attendance, email retinafriends@gmail.com, comment on the Retina Australia Facebook page or phone Graeme Ferguson on 07 3849 7752 by the Sunday evening prior.

Victoria

Morning Tea

Retina Australia (Vic) would like to invite all members and friends to share in their regular Morning Teas. These social events have proven to be very popular as they provide a means to network with others. Hope to see you there.



NEXT DATE: Tuesday 14 August 2018 between 10:30 am & 12:00 noon

PLACE: Hayden Raysmith Meeting Room, 4th Floor Ross House
247-251 Flinders Lane, Melbourne VIC

RSVP: 03 9650 5088 by Thursday 9 August 2018 to confirm your attendance.

ORDER YOUR ENTERTAINMENT BOOK 2018/19



Support Retina Australia and you'll be rewarded with amazing discounts on restaurants, travel, arts, entertainment, shopping and much more.

Each book sold contributes towards Australian research into inherited retinal disease as well as supporting people affected by retinitis pigmentosa and other blinding conditions. You can contribute to this important work by purchasing your book or digital membership at www.entbook.com.au/180p232, and passing this on to family, friends and work colleagues throughout Australia and New Zealand.

HOT OFF THE PRESS

WORLD RESEARCH UPDATE MAY 2018

Summary by Dr Cathy Civil

Real treatments are so close we can almost touch them..



Some more gene mutations have been identified in Usher syndrome.



The jury is still out on whether fish and fish oil supplements are helpful for Stargardts, but in the meantime the advice is to take it.... especially for children.



Curcumin (found in turmeric) supplements seem to be helpful in a range of retinal degenerative diseases in animal studies. However, as we cannot digest curcumin, scientists are looking at different ways of giving it.



New and more complex types of RP gene combinations have been found



Pixium Vision in Paris has announced its first successful bionic vision implantation into a patient. PRIMA Bionic Vision System, is a new generation miniaturized, wireless, photovoltaic system which uses a sub-retinal implant.



A 62-year-old lady who was legally blind secondary to RP developed visual storms following implantation of the Argus II bionic eye. This reminds us that there are still hurdles to overcome with bionic eyes, even though the technology is very exciting and progressing rapidly.



It seems that if a fish's retinal cells die, their Muller glial cells can change into visual cells to restore vision! How about that! Humans currently can't do that but some clever scientists have shown that it can be engineered in mice..... so this looks like a new avenue of research.

We really are at the cutting edge of a whole new era in sight. Every month brings new and exciting developments. Watch this space....



Volunteers
Fighting Blindness
With Your Help, Hope is in Sight.



Retina Australia National Contact Details:-

Enquiry Line – 1800 999 870 This is a Toll free number.

Email – admin1@retinaaustralia.com.au

Website - <http://www.retinaaustralia.com.au>

Facebook – Retina Australia@ RetinaAustralia

Our Vision

We have a vision we want people to see.

Our Mission

We will assist those affected by vision loss through inherited retinal diseases while working towards the global eradication of such diseases.

Our Goals

To offer support to individuals, families and friends affected by inherited retinal disease.

To be the central source of information related to inherited retinal diseases.

To raise and distribute funds, in association with states and territories, for research into the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and cure of inherited retinal diseases.



Retina Australia needs your support in fighting blindness. You can help by subscribing to our quarterly Retina Australia National News Newsletter, fundraising and or making a donation to Retina Australia or your local state RA Group.

Your donation enables Retina Australia to support the great work by Australian researchers; it also provides information and peer support within Australia for those 1 in 3000 affected by inherited retinal disease.

RA NATIONAL BOARD MEMBERS – 2017-2018

CHAIRMAN: Leighton Boyd

DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:

Jeremy D'Souza

COMPANY SECRETARY:

Rosemary Boyd

DIRECTORS:

Noel Burton

Robert Craft

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