

# EYECURE.

NEWS FROM THE QUEENSLAND EYE INSTITUTE FOUNDATION  
ISSUE 10 | MARCH 2019

## WELCOME

Welcome to the latest edition of Eyecure. In this issue, we are delighted to announce a new QEI Clinic which will be opening in Clayfield enabling us to assist and support more patients.


We feature the latest campaign of the QEI Foundation, Last Seen - an Exhibition. We are working with the vision impaired and Australian artists to create a series of artworks which depict the last thing they saw or the moment they hold most dear. We'll be telling the emotive stories behind the paintings, culminating in an Exhibition - please see page 5.

Phoebe's story which we featured in our Christmas Appeal resonated with many of

you and we would like to thank you for all kind support. And last but not least we would like to introduce you to Dr David Gunn, the latest Ophthalmologist to join the QEI Clinic.

**Mark Radford, CEO**



 QEIF COO Kelly Langdon, EA Carmel Johnston and CEO Mark Radford welcoming the New Year.



## AWARDS

**Bette Forgan-Smith  
Postdoctoral Fellowship.**

QEI research associate, Dr Audra Shadforth has been awarded the Bette Forgan-Smith Postdoctoral Fellowship, a three-year program that will support Dr Shadforth's research project for treating age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

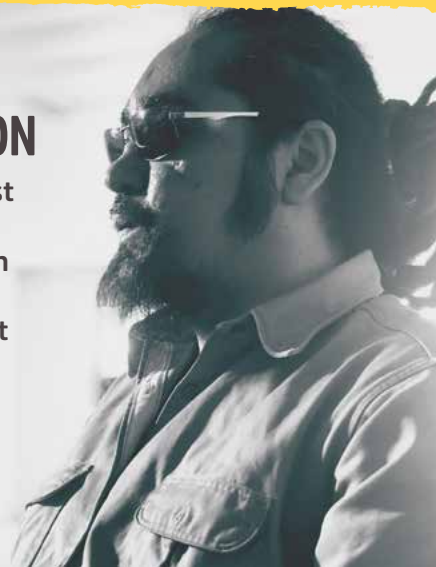
Currently, the leading cause of incurable blindness in Australia is AMD. About one in seven Australians,\* (1.29 million people), over the age of 50 year has some evidence of the disease and approximately 17 percent will experience vision impairment.

## LAST SEEN - AN EXHIBITION

Like many things in life that are just expected, eyesight is one of those things we take for granted. But can you imagine how much you would value what you had seen if you lost your sight?

 SEE PAGE 5

 SEE PAGE 2



## AWARDS - BETTE FORGAN-SMITH POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP

QEI research associate, Dr Audra Shadforth has been awarded the Bette Forgan-Smith Postdoctoral Fellowship, a three-year program that will support Dr Shadforth's research project for treating age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

Currently, the leading cause of incurable blindness in Australia is AMD. About one in seven Australians,\* (1.29 million people), over the age of 50 year has some evidence of the disease and approximately 17 percent will experience vision impairment.

Retinal Pigment Epithelium (RPE) cells are essential for maintaining a healthy retina but are lost during the early stages of AMD. QEI's research focusses

on developing techniques for the production and implantation of new RPE cells to reduce vision loss in patients who have developed AMD.

The Bette Forgan-Smith Postdoctoral Fellowship was established by Dr Ross Forgan-Smith, retired specialist pathologist and his son Dr George Forgan-Smith, general practitioner.

*"Retinal research hasn't been a priority in Queensland and seeing the growing number of Australians affected by retinal diseases such as AMD, I think now is the time to focus on something more substantial by supporting outcome driven research which Dr Audra Shadforth and QEI*


*are undertaking,"* said Dr Ross Forgan Smith.

Dr Audra Shadforth said, *"I am delighted to be awarded this Fellowship. It will enable me to explore promising new ideas for the treatment of AMD. This new work will build on the established track record of eye research undertaken at QEI over the past decade."*

*"I hope that the Bette Forgan-Smith Postdoctoral Fellowship will result in an outcome that enables those who live with vision impairment to improve their eyesight,"* added Dr Ross-Forgan Smith.

\*Source: Macula Disease Foundation Australia



 L-R: Dr George Forgan-Smith, Dr Audra Shadforth, Dr Ross Forgan-Smith, Professor Mark Radford.

## QEI'S NEW WEBSITE

QEI's new website is nearing completion and we are excited to show you the updated design with a more patient and donor focussed site structure. You will find all the relevant patient information under our QEI Clinics pages – Brisbane and Clayfield – with quick links to book appointments and everything you need to prepare for your visit.

The Eye Conditions menu will have detailed information including the procedures and treatments. On

our blog, you will hear all the latest updates on the QEI Clinic, including new treatments and clinical trials, and the QEI Foundation, with updates from our researchers, research projects and upcoming events. The latest patient stories will also feature on the blog and we have built a seamless donation system that will help QEI Foundation donors to process online donations quickly and safely. The new website will be launched early April.



## DR DAVID GUNN JOINS THE QEI CLINIC

We are delighted to welcome Dr David Gunn to the QEI Clinic. David is an Ophthalmologist specialising in medical and surgical diseases of the cornea, complex cataract surgery and laser and refractive eye surgery.

Dr Gunn graduated from The University of Queensland Bachelor of Science and Medicine programs with First Class Honours. He completed his medical residency and ophthalmology training throughout Queensland and was awarded the prestigious K. G. Howsam gold medal for obtaining the highest results in the Australian and New Zealand final ophthalmology examinations.

Dr Gunn undertook fellowship training at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital followed by further subspecialty training in corneal, advanced cataract and refractive surgery at the renowned Bristol Eye Hospital in England. Whilst practising at the QEI Clinic he also holds a public appointment at the Mater Hospital in Brisbane where he also offers intermediate surgery to uninsured patients.

He is active in eye disease research and publishes in local and international medical journals and is also involved in the training of surgical registrars, medical students and nurses and is an honorary faculty member of The University of Queensland.

## NEW QEI CLINIC TO OPEN IN CLAYFIELD

We are excited to announce that Queensland Eye Institute is establishing a new clinic in Clayfield. The new QEI Clinic will enable us to welcome new clinicians and more importantly, to assist and support more patients. The lease on our new premises has been signed, the architectural plans developed and the build has commenced.

The 522m<sup>2</sup> facility is located in a centrally located area of Brisbane's Northside, at 695 Sandgate Road, Clayfield 4011.

*"Our latest QEI Clinic is a great opportunity to continue delivering an outstanding level of clinical care to our patients and expand our services,"* says QEI's CEO, Professor Mark Radford. The new clinic will open in early July 2019.



## SPECSAVERS DONATION

We would like to thank Specsavers Bundaberg for choosing QEI Foundation as their local charity to support through the Specsavers Community Program. Their support enables us to continue our sight saving work.



# LAST SEEN

AN EXHIBITION

## LAST SEEN – AN EXHIBITION

Like many things in life that are just expected, eyesight is one of those things we take for granted. But can you imagine how much you would value what you had seen if you lost your sight? Particularly your last, dearly held visual memory before your sight started deteriorating.

That is what QEI Foundation is going to capture.

Last Seen, QEI Foundation's exhibition will take you through the incredible stories of QEI patients, ambassadors and supporters. We have partnered them with influential Australian artists to create a series of artworks which depict their last seen or the memory they hold dear.

The exhibition will aim to raise awareness of taking our sight for granted and all proceeds will go to the QEI Foundation to support our sight saving work and enable us to continue our vital medical research to prevent blindness.

One of the world's leading communications networks, Publicis Worldwide, has partnered with QEI Foundation to bring Last Seen to life. "We're really excited to partner with the QEI Foundation on this project – reminding people of the

*critical importance of eyesight" – says Ryan Petie, Executive Creative Director of Publicis Worldwide. "Particularly working in the advertising and design field, where eyesight is our biggest tool, we're deeply entrenched in this project and making it a world-famous success" – he adds.*

***"I've always thought of this image of being able to see this beautiful face as I open my eyes, with a smile and everything else around."***

It was New Year's Eve, 2008 and Yuma Antoine Decaux was travelling in Cambodia. He was on a beach waiting to welcome the New Year, but a firework launched horizontally, right into his face. This left Yuma without sight in both his eyes.

Yuma has been partnered with Brisbane-based artist Kate McKay to visualise his last, dearly held memory.

We asked Yuma and Kate about the project and why they decided to get involved in Last Seen. "If I can participate in helping spread awareness, education and give inspiration, I'm there in a split second. And just like anyone who had full sight before, I secretly hope to push for research into a bionic eye, since I am still young," Yuma says.

Yuma, who is co-founder of OSeyeris, a Brisbane-based start-up that creates technology that is useful to the sighted but also accessible to the blind and visually impaired, hopes that Last Seen will give him the opportunity to represent the blind community in an artistic context, and perhaps continue to form creative collaborations.

*"I chose to be involved in this project as I found the concept behind the campaign really interesting and I wanted to help share Yuma's story. Yuma's memory is a powerful reminder of the preciousness and frailty of sight, and being a part of the project has made me more appreciative of the gift I have" – says Kate.*

# REMEMBER THESE?

Who remembers these appointment and prescription books? QEI Clinic's long-time patient and generous donor, Ruby McDonald kindly brought hers in during her recent visit and we were amazed how far technology has come in the past 50 years.

An accident in 1967 left Ruby with poor vision which limited her life for over 26 years. In 1993, Ruby attended her regular appointment at the

Princess Alexandra Hospital where she met Professor Lawrence Hirst who diagnosed her with glaucoma. "He made me a promise to give me the best eyesight possible and he has" – says Ruby.

She underwent two operations called Trabeculectomy. Ruby's eyesight was restored to the point where she no longer required medication, and she could read clearly and drive again.



## THANK YOU FOR THE SUPPORT YOU SHOWED FOR OUR CHRISTMAS APPEAL

In our Christmas Appeal we highlighted the story of QEI Foundation Ambassador, Phoebe Young. In 2001 while studying her first year of university, Phoebe was hospitalised with a severe allergic reaction which caused her eyes, skin and lungs to blister and burn, and her extremities

to perish. Her eyes' stem cells (which repair and regenerate the surface of the cornea) have been destroyed, leaving the corneas opaque, dry, painful and highly prone to infections.

Unfortunately, last year Phoebe's left eye became completely blind from glaucoma and there is a

real risk that her right eye will suffer the same fate.

Thank you for supporting preventative glaucoma research that gives Phoebe hope that her right eye can be saved and she will remain independent and have the opportunity to see her children grow up.



## PLEASE DONATE YOUR UNWANTED GLASSES

Did you know that you can donate your unwanted glasses to the QEI Clinic? In 2017 we distributed over 400 pairs of glasses to the villagers of Ndola in Zambia. The QEI team cleaned, bagged and recorded prescriptions of the glasses, preparing them for the 12,500 km trip to the Zambia Mission Group. The glasses were kindly donated by our patients, particularly those who had cataract surgery and no longer needed them. To the villagers, a pair of glasses means they can read, do tailoring work and other tasks that enable them to seek employment. Thank you to all those who've donated glasses and please do pop any unwanted pairs off at the QEI Clinic on Level 4, or our Ground floor reception at 140 Melbourne Street.

# MACULA DAY – PLEASE JOIN US FOR A FREE SEMINAR

You are invited to QEI Foundation's informative morning tea at **9:30am on Thursday, 23 May 2019**. Please join us for a discussion focussing on macular disease, including **age-related macula degeneration and diabetic eye disease**. The event will support Macular Disease Foundation's Macula Month, an annual campaign which runs for the month of May. QEI's CEO, Mark Radford will open the event followed by a seminar where you can learn about prevention, risk factors and symptoms of macular disease by QEI's Doctors and Researchers.

If you would like to attend the event, please contact QEI Foundation's Community Relations Officer, Jane Dodds on **07 3239 5050** or via email [jane.dodds@qei.org.au](mailto:jane.dodds@qei.org.au)



**Your donation is gratefully appreciated. Help us save money by donating online. Visit [qei.org.au](http://qei.org.au) or call 07 3239 50 50.**

Your donation today will help the QEI Foundation save sight through its research, education and clinical care.

**Yes, I want to help the QEI Foundation.**

Enclosed is my donation of:  \$15  \$25  \$50  Own choice (please specify amount): .....

Please find enclosed a:  cheque  money order (made payable to Queensland Eye Institute Foundation).

Please debit my card:  Visa  Mastercard  Amex

Card Number:                 Expiry:   /

Name on card:

Signature:

Please send me information on leaving a gift in my will

I intend on leaving a gift to the QEI Foundation in my will

Please send me information on joining 'SightFund', QEI's monthly giving program

Please send me information on joining QEI's Workplace Giving Program for immediate pre-tax donations via payroll

**Thank you! Your gift of \$2 or more is tax deductible. Please complete this form and return it in the reply paid envelope. Please help us keep our records up to date by making any changes below:**

Phone: .....  Mobile: .....  Email: .....

I would prefer to receive all future updates and campaigns from the QEI Foundation via email

The QEI Foundation respects your privacy. Your personal information will not be disclosed to any third parties and all information is treated in confidence. Our full privacy policy is available at [www.qei.org.au/page/privacy-policy](http://www.qei.org.au/page/privacy-policy)

**QUEENSLAND EYE INSTITUTE FOUNDATION** ☎ 07 3239 5050

✉ [info@qei.org.au](mailto:info@qei.org.au)

🌐 [www.qei.org.au](http://www.qei.org.au)

📍 140 Melbourne St, Sth Brisbane Qld 4101

ABN 37 009 737 384



NL032019