

**The Fred Hollows
Foundation NZ**

20 years of restoring sight

NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2012



Ten years of restoring sight in Vanuatu

Photo: James Ensing-Trussell/Topic

0800 227 229 | www.hollows.org.nz



Photo: James Trussell/Topix

You are restoring sight and transforming lives

With your support we are keeping Fred's work alive



Photo: James Trussell/Topix

MARCH

Specsavers' ambassador and TV celebrity chef Peta Mathias attended a surgical outreach in Ba, Fiji, where she followed patients on their journey to sight. In the last year alone, Specsavers raised over \$90,000 for our sight-restoring work in the Pacific. You can read about her experiences at www.hollows.org.nz



Photo: James Trussell/Topix

APRIL

Our surgical outreach team is returning to Savai'i, Samoa, where Foundation-trained eye nurse Tasi Leo has been screening patients in preparation for our visit. We hope to restore sight to 100 people in just four days.



JULY

Our surgical outreach team will visit the remote nation of Kiribati for the first time ever. Ophthalmologist in training, Dr Rabebe Tingaru, is looking forward to returning home for a week to restore sight to people on her own island.



AUGUST

Our surgical outreach team will visit the Solomon Islands to support Dr Mundi Qoqonokana, a Foundation-trained ophthalmologist who is now the country's chief eye doctor and leader of the national eye care program. Dr Qoqonokana will soon have the permanent support of two more of our ophthalmologists in training, Dr Nola Pikacha and Dr Claude Posala, both Solomon Islanders.

A message from our Executive Director, Andrew Bell



In February this year, I was delighted to accept the position of Executive Director following 18

months managing our sight-restoring programs across the Pacific. Although my role has changed, my vision remains the same; a world where no one is needlessly blind.

I believe that through our collective actions we can make this vision a reality and the role you play cannot be overstated. As Professor Fred Hollows once said, "You don't need to be a surgeon to restore someone's sight."

You see, Fred knew that the miracle of sight was made possible by people like you. He knew that your donations would allow an eye surgeon in a developing country to perform sight-restoring surgeries. Our success in Vanuatu, which you can read about on page four, is testament to this and you should be proud of what you have helped us achieve. Thank you.

We have another busy year ahead of us training Pacific eye health workers and restoring sight to the needlessly blind. I look forward to updating you on our progress.

Thank you for your support.

Andrew Bell
Executive Director

Your results from the field



Photo: James Ensing - Trusec Pacific



Photo: Helen Petherford

A year of success

In 2011 we trained 44 Pacific eye health workers, restored sight to 4,786 people, screened and treated 6,357 people at our diabetes eye clinic in Suva, held 14 surgical outreaches in remote communities, and dispensed 11,203 pairs of spectacles. Thank you for making this work possible.

National Eye Centre sees first patient

In 2011 The Foundation officially opened the National Eye Centre in Dili, Timor-Leste. We are delighted to report that in February our surgical team successfully operated on the Centre's first patient, a young boy with a piece of wood embedded in his cornea.



New diabetes eye centre

A spacious new diabetes eye centre is currently being built at the Pacific Eye Institute in Suva (a training initiative of The Foundation pictured above). It has been specially designed for the comfort of patients receiving laser treatment for diabetes related eye disease.

Global highlights

• Expanding our work in Rwanda

The Fred Hollows Foundation is planning to tackle cataract blindness in two remote districts of Rwanda where around 2,000 people are blind. The Foundation will provide sight-restoring cataract surgery, support the training of eye health workers and dispense spectacles.

• Restoring sight in Nepal

The Fred Hollows Foundation recently restored sight to 254 people living in and around the village of Rajapur, in far west Nepal. The surgeries were carried out in partnership with the Tilganga Institute of Ophthalmology.

The Fred Hollows Foundation NZ – CC23722 – is a registered charitable entity in terms of the Charities Act 2005. Donations to The Fred Hollows Foundation NZ are used to support our programs in the Pacific. The information contained in this publication is accurate at the time of printing. For more information contact info@hollows.org.nz

ISSN 2253-3796 (Print) ISSN 2253-380X (Online)



Changing the face of optometry

The Fred Hollows Foundation NZ thanks Specsavers for their corporate partnership which raises awareness and funds for our Pacific programs.



Australian Government
AusAID



NEW ZEALAND
Aid Programme

The work of The Fred Hollows Foundation NZ is funded in part by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade New Zealand Aid Programme and the Australian Agency for International Development.



Photo: James Ensing - Trussell/Topic

Ten years of restoring sight in Vanuatu

After her successful cataract surgery, the first thing Johanna said was "I have white hair now!"

Ten years ago Vanuatu had no eye doctor and just one part-time eye nurse. Today, the beautiful island nation is one of The Fred Hollows Foundation's success stories.

In 2001, aware of the desperate need for eye care services in Vanuatu, The Fred Hollows Foundation launched the country's first national eye care program. Under the leadership of Solomon Islander Dr John Szetu, an ophthalmologist and world leader in blindness prevention, the program was a huge success. In just five years:

- One eye doctor and ten eye nurses were trained
- 28,000 patients were assessed and treated
- Two stand-alone eye clinics with operating theatres were set up in Port Villa and Loganville
- Four provincial hospitals were equipped with their own eye care clinics

Since then, four more eye nurses from Vanuatu have graduated from the Pacific Eye Institute in Suva, Fiji, a training centre for Pacific eye health workers established by The Foundation in 2006.

Every year, a surgical outreach team from the Pacific Eye Institute visits Vanuatu for two weeks to support the Foundation-trained eye health workers and provide sight-restoring surgery. Since 2008, our visiting teams have screened more than 4,000 patients and performed over 1,000 surgeries. Last September, the team visited Norsup Hospital on the island of Malekula, where Foundation-trained eye nurse Basil Aitip has been working since 2010.

Committed to the cause



Nurse Basil Aitip with Adam, a 24-year-old patient with cataracts in both eyes. Adam had his sight restored by The Fred Hollows Foundation's surgical outreach team.

Nurse Basil Aitip graduated from the Pacific Eye Institute at the end of 2009. He is now the sole eye health worker on Malekula where he provides vital eye care services at Norsup Hospital. In preparation for visits from the surgical outreach team he travels door-to-door finding patients in need of sight-restoring surgery. Every day he faces huge challenges: the hospital where he works is under-resourced, it can take hours to travel to remote communities on potholed gravel roads, fuel is incredibly expensive, and his car repeatedly breaks down.

"Sometimes it is so hard I want to give up, but then I see someone get their sight back and it's all worthwhile. I'll always be an eye nurse. My training at the Pacific Eye Institute was so good and made me such a good nurse. I am so lucky to have had the training."

The challenges of restoring sight



Left: Many patients travelled to Malekula by boat from neighbouring islands. Right: The surgical team setting up a temporary eye clinic at Norsup Hospital on the island of Malekula.

Access: Vanuatu is an archipelago of 82 volcanic islands with a scattered population of around 234,000. The high cost of land and sea transport makes access to eye health services extremely difficult, especially for the 76 per cent of the population who live in remote, rural areas.

Language: There are three main languages spoken in Vanuatu: Bislama, English and French. However, there are 80 recognised indigenous languages spoken throughout the country which can be challenging for both visiting and local eye health workers.

Resources: The provincial hospitals are often under-resourced and The Foundation's outreach teams bring in the surgical equipment they need by boat.

Eye facts



There are three main causes of blindness in Vanuatu.

Cataract blindness: This occurs when the natural lens of the eye becomes cloudy, causing gradual loss of vision and ultimately blindness.

Corneal blindness caused mainly by trauma: The cornea is the transparent front part of the eye that covers the iris, pupil, and anterior chamber. If the cornea is damaged by a foreign object it can cause infection, inflammation, scarring and even blindness. Sadly corneal blindness is not treatable in developing countries.

Diabetic retinopathy: A condition where blood vessels in the retina are damaged as a complication of diabetes, causing reduced vision and even blindness.

The joy of restoring sight: lives transformed on Malekula

Last September, The Foundation's surgical outreach team performed 110 sight-restoring surgeries in just four days.



Johanna

When Johanna lost her sight she had to leave her home and move in with her son. Renowned for her culinary skills, she yearned to make 'lap lap' (the national dish) again. Getting to the eye clinic was difficult and expensive; she had to travel by truck and was very worried the rain would wash the road away. The first thing she said when she could see again was "I have white hair now!"



Eseple

Eseple went blind from cataracts in 2001 and became reliant on touch to move around her house. A proud woman, she was humiliated that her husband had given up his job to look after her. She could no longer see her six children or her grandchildren. She travelled by boat to Malekula for cataract surgery and on the trip home she marvelled at the things she could see after 10 years of being blind: the sea, the sky, her island.



Daisy

Daisy was 101 years old when she had her sight restored. She is pictured here with Foundation-trained eye doctor Nola Pikacha. Daisy was very reserved and quiet when she arrived at the eye clinic with her daughters, but following her sight-restoring surgery she came out of her shell.

All images in this story are courtesy of James Ensing-Trussell/Topic



Photo: Frank Vohll/Telegraph Mirror



Memories of Fred

Fred's work inspires the next generation

Top right: Fred Hollows attended Palmerston North Boys' High School. He is pictured here with his class (font row, far right).

Photo: The Fred Hollows Foundation.

Fred grew up in Palmerston North and as a teenager attended Palmerston North Boys' High School. He did well academically and played First XV rugby, although his smaller stature meant he spent "a good few Saturday nights" getting stitched up at the hospital. After graduating from Boys' High Fred returned to Dunedin, his birth place, to attend university. Little did he know that he was one old boy that would never be forgotten.

In February this year, in memory of his sight-restoring work around the world, Fred was named a founding member of the Palmerston North Boys' High School Business Alumni, which was set up to recognise the pre-eminent contribution of former students to business, commerce and the community.

"It is the school's belief that men who are inducted as Business Alumni will act as role models for our current young men," says Tim O'Connor, Rector of Palmerston North Boys' High School. "It is our hope that their actions and deeds will inspire our students for years to come."

Gabi Hollows, Founding member of The Fred Hollows Foundation, was delighted by the announcement.

"I know that Fred would be extremely proud to be named a founding member of the Business Alumni. The Fred Hollows Foundation is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year and it's wonderful that Fred and his sight-restoring work are being recognised in Palmerston North where he spent his formative years."

The Fred Hollows Foundation is very grateful to Palmerston North Boys' High School for recognising Fred's work and keeping his legacy alive. Since 2005 the school has raised over \$12,000 for The Foundation through their annual Fred Hollows day.

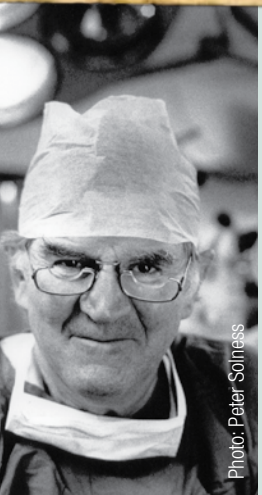


Photo: Peter Scinness

Share your memories of Fred

We always love hearing your memories of Fred and his work. Please feel free to contact us if you have something you would like to share with us and other supporters. You can email us at info@hollows.org.nz, mail us at The Fred Hollows Foundation, Private Bag 99909, Auckland 1149, or call us on 0800 227 229.



Photo: Kristian Friries

You don't need to be a surgeon to restore someone's sight

Why not consider leaving a gift in your Will to help Fred's work live on? Your bequest will help us restore sight, dignity and independence to people blinded by disadvantage. For more information on leaving a bequest visit hollows.org.nz or call Debbie Thomson for a confidential chat on 09 304 0772.



Photo: Hugh Rutherford

Kiwi innovation will restore sight to hundreds more

Fred Hollows Foundation staff in front of the shipping container which has now been moved to Viqueque.

You may remember that throughout 2010 and 2011, our Timor-Leste surgical team performed hundreds of sight-restoring surgeries in a shipping container converted into an operating theatre with help from the New Zealand Defence Force. Our team is now treating patients at the newly opened National Eye Centre in Dili (funded and built by The Foundation), and the container has been moved to

the Viqueque district where a backlog of patients are desperately in need of cataract surgery.

The container was transported to Viqueque on the back of a truck by a team of brave Foundation staff; the roads were unsealed and riddled with potholes and the 180km journey took 12 hours. The director of the Viqueque District Health Service, Sr. Julius

Soares, was delighted to receive the container as the local community health centre is not equipped with an operating theatre. Our shipping container will now be used as a much needed general theatre and as a base for our surgical outreach team who will be able to reach hundreds more people in need of sight-restoring surgery.



Photo: James Ensign-Trussell/Topic

Celebrity Chef Peta Mathias visits Fiji

Specsavers' ambassador and celebrity chef Peta Mathias attended our surgical outreach in Ba, Fiji, in March where 102 patients had their sight restored in just four days.

"I have travelled to all kinds of amazing places in my career but having a chance to go and see the work that The Foundation and Specsavers are doing together in the Pacific was a once in a lifetime opportunity," says Peta.

"People come from miles around to attend these clinics and many of them have been blind for years. They lie on the table, the surgeon spends about twenty minutes working on their eyes and overnight they can see! Just like that! It blows me away," she continued.

Peta flew home just hours before a severe tropical storm lashed the country, leaving Ba under six feet of water. The surgical outreach team were not so lucky, and spent four days trapped in their hotel with no electricity or running water.

For more information and images from the Ba outreach visit www.hollows.org.nz or join us at facebook.com/fredhollowsNZ.

Specsavers have raised over \$91,000 in the past year to help fund our surgical outreaches in the Pacific and are hoping to reach their \$100,000 target by June. The Foundation is grateful to all the New Zealanders who donated at their local Specsavers store.

Restore sight through payroll giving

Payroll giving is a simple and efficient way for employees to donate to The Fred Hollows Foundation NZ.

By donating directly through the payroll system, you can obtain the tax benefit immediately, rather than applying to the IRD at the end of the financial year.

- Your nominated donation is deducted from your pre-tax salary on each pay day and the benefit to you is immediate; if you make a \$15 payroll donation only \$10 will come out of your pay, as you get a third back in tax straight away. The Fred Hollows Foundation will get the full \$15!
- You can donate as much or as little as you like
- You can change the amount of your donation or opt out any time

With your on-going support through payroll giving we can reach even more people in desperate need of sight-restoring surgery. To find out more visit our website or contact Louise Wightman on 09 304 0525, 0800 227 229, or donations@hollows.org.nz



Photo: Kristian Fritres

Two small boys waiting to have their eyes tested during a surgical outreach in the Solomon Islands.

Thank you

3 EASY WAYS TO DONATE

Mail the coupon below to
PO Box 99909, Newmarket,
Auckland 1149

Call free on
0800 227 229

Donate online
www.hollows.org.nz

YES, I will make a gift to restore sight and prevent blindness.

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\$25 \$50 \$100 \$200 Other \$ _____

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