



BLIND SPORTS & RECREATION VICTORIA NEWSLETTER – JUNE 2018

Blind Sports & Recreation Victoria (BSRV) are thrilled to welcome Mr. Charlie Pickering as the new co patron of BSRV alongside Mr. John Landy AC, former Governor of Victoria. Mr. Pickering is an Australian television presenter and comedian. He currently hosts *The Weekly with Charlie Pickering*, a weekly news satire television show on ABC. Mr. Maurice Gleeson, President of BSRV was invited to be interviewed by Mr. Pickering last year on *The Weekly with Charlie Pickering*.

Photo below: :Mr. Charlie Pickering



Co patron of BSRV Mr. John Landy said *"I am delighted to welcome Charlie Pickering to the role of co-patron of Blind Sports and Recreation Victoria. I thoroughly enjoy my involvement with Maurice, the executive and our members and I look forward to working alongside Charlie and sharing the honour with him."*

On hearing of the appointment of Charlie I thought it was a perfect fit as both Charlie and Maurice share a compassion for others and a great sense of humour."

While we have enjoyed an exciting growth period over several years, the addition of Charlie, his expertise and his networks will help develop future sport and recreation opportunities for members of our community who are blind and vision impaired”.

Here's Charlie's reflection on what the role means to him.

“I was introduced to Maurice Gleeson through a work colleague. He said Maurice could be an interesting bloke to interview - he’d had a few setbacks in life but was a cheerful bloke who’d found something he loved doing. That something was Blind Sports.

I went along to a practice session for a group of blind and vision impaired tennis players who were getting ready to head to Spain to represent their country. I was made to put on goggles that completely blocked my vision, given a racquet and a handful of instructions and proceeded to embarrass myself swinging wildly. I was no doubt a danger to those around me, but I didn’t care. I had a ball. So did everyone I met. All of them told similar stories about how their vision impairment had made them feel disconnected from the world and how Blind Sports & Recreation Victoria had helped them to reconnect.

We spend a lot of time, money, airtime and ink on professional sports in Australia. Our sports people are held up as not only role models, but heroes as well. I was a sports mad kid. I played every sport I could – cricket, football, hockey, basketball, tennis, even golf for crying out loud! I dreamed of opening the batting for Australia and kicking the winning goal in a Grand Final. Preferably in the same year and preferably both at the MCG so my mum could be there. Succeeding in sport loomed large in my idea of what a life well-lived would look like.

But what I didn’t realise at the time is that the true value of all the sport I was playing was how much I enjoyed life while I was playing it. I made friends, felt connected to a community, breathed a whole lot of fresh air and was having fun every minute.

That’s what I felt when I played blind tennis with Maurice and his players. And it’s a big reason I’m delighted to be a patron for Blind Sports & Recreation Victoria. When sport is fun, it brings people together. And that should be available to everyone”.

Charlie Pickering

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Thank You Volunteers

National Volunteer Week is the annual celebration to acknowledge the generous contribution by all our wonderful volunteers.

On behalf of executive members and staff of Blind Sports & Recreation Victoria, I would like to thank all past and present volunteers for the ongoing support you have given to our organisation and members.

Without your input, we would not be able to provide sporting and recreational activities for people who are blind and vision impaired.

Thank you to all our wonderful volunteers!

Maurice Gleeson OAM, President

Blind Tennis Tournament – Ireland

The dlr TAKEI tournament took place in Ireland in May 2018.



Blind tennis is an extremely skilled form of the sport. It is played on a standard court and the players locate the ball by the sound made by a bell in the middle of the ball. They are allowed either two or three bounces depending on their level of vision.

13 countries participated in this tournament with three of them making their debut in the blind tennis community - Pakistan, South Africa and Israel.

It was a wonderful opportunity for some Australian players including Sandra, Michael, Chris and Adam to attend the event and showcase their skills against competitors from around the world.

In addition to the competition, an umpire training course was held and three new IBTA classifiers passed the first classification course successfully. Coaches also had the opportunity to get together to discuss best practice and teaching methods to assist people who are blind and vision impaired.

The skill level of competitors was at a very high level and the Australian team played against some of these elite sportspeople. The tournament itself was a round robin with four separate categories being B1, B2, B3 & the Open Category.

Meeting old friends from the previous tournament in Spain was wonderful and meeting many new competitors from around the globe showed the increase and popularity of blind tennis.

At the Opening Ceremony, all participating countries were led by their flag bearers in a procession departing from the Royal Marine Hotel to the Dun Laoghaire Council offices followed by a welcome reception and dinner.

Photos below: Opening Ceremony Procession



BSRV was contacted by the Australian Embassy in Ireland and was thrilled to meet with both the Ambassador Mr. Richard Andrews and the Deputy Ambassador Mr. Simon Mamouny.

Photo below: Australian Team with Deputy Ambassador Mr. Simon Mamouny



Photo below: Australian Team members with Ambassador Mr. Richard Andrews



The amazing effort by Tennis Ireland in organizing such a great tournament was appreciated by all who attended. The number of volunteers on hand to assist and support attendees made everything run smoothly.

We look forward to attending more international tournaments in the coming years and hope Australia may be able to host one in the near future!

Government House Visit

Prior to the blind tennis team heading off to Ireland to participate in the international tournament, the players from the Blind Sports and Recreation Victoria Blind Tennis program were invited to Government House.

We were lucky to receive a tour of the state apartments and also had a hit on the Governors beautiful lawn courts.

Thank you Tennis Victoria and the Hon. Linda Dessau AC, Governor of Victoria for this opportunity.

Photo below: Participants aft Government House



Melbourne builds Australia's first soccer pitch for the blind

Article from City of Melbourne website

Thursday, 29 March 2018

The City of Melbourne today unveiled Australia's first blind soccer pitch as part of a \$1.5 million redevelopment of the North Melbourne Recreation Reserve.

The exciting new facility will be capable of holding B1 international level soccer competitions, an internationally recognised Paralympic sport.

Acting Lord Mayor Arron Wood said a heartfelt letter from the President of Blind Sports and Recreation Victoria, Maurice Gleeson OAM, convinced the City of Melbourne to fund the blind soccer pitch.

"Mr Gleeson wrote to Council in July last year to articulate his case for a blind soccer facility to better cater for the city's blind and vision impaired community," the Acting Lord Mayor said.

"We want our city to be accessible, inclusive and engaging while promoting health and participation for people of all ages and abilities so this proposal struck a chord with us and led to this exciting announcement.

"Blind soccer is played outdoors with two vision impaired teams of five players. An audible ball is used, which makes a rattling noise to allow players to locate it by sound. Outfield players wear eye-shades to equal their sight, but the goalkeeper can be fully or partially sighted."

People City Portfolio Chair Councillor Beverley Pinder said the pitch was an important step in making sure Melbourne's sports facilities are accessible to everyone.



"This new pitch is a meaningful way we can provide access to people who are visually impaired," Cr Pinder said.

"It is also another way the City of Melbourne is meeting the growing community demand for sport facilities.

"With our city on track to reach a population of eight million by 2050, it is vital we continue to look at new ways to maximise community access to sporting facilities."

Mr Gleeson said he was delighted blind soccer will soon get underway in North Melbourne.

"On behalf of Blind Sport and Recreation Victoria we would like to thank Melbourne City Council for recognising the importance of providing a facility for the visually impaired," Mr Gleeson said.

"We are making real progress, and I hope this pitch will provide a template for other Councils to follow."

The multi-purpose sports pitch will also provide for basketball, futsal and netball and has been built alongside a new community picnic area and public exercise equipment.

Boxing Classes

BSRV in conjunction with Hawthorn Aquatic & Leisure center (HALC) are offering boxing classes to people who are blind or vision impaired.

These classes are for fitness and there is no physical contact with each other.

When: Tuesday evenings
Time: 5.30pm – 6.30pm
Venue: Hawthorn Aquatic & Leisure Centre
1 Grace Street Hawthorn
Cost: \$5.30 for pensioners

If you would like to join these classes, please contact Sandra Knight on 9822 8876 or email sandra@blindsports.org.au

Kids Road Safety Education Session



Blind Sports & Recreation Victoria invites primary school aged children who are blind or vision impaired and their families to a Road Safety Education Session.

When: Friday 13th July
Where: Kew Traffic School
Cnr Cotham & Grange Roads, Kew, VIC
Time: 2pm – 3.30pm
RSVP: Miriam Bilander
miriam@blindsports.org.au
9822 8876

Optional BYO helmets, bikes & scooters

Siblings & Friends Welcome

Learn to Swim Intensive Program



Hawthorn Aquatics & Leisure Centre together with Blind Sports & Recreation Victoria will be providing a FREE intensive swimming program for all ages.

Classes will be held from 12 June – 5 July on Tuesday & Thursdays at 2.15pm or 3pm.

To register for this great program, call Susan at the BSRV office on 9822 8876 or call Hawthorn Aquatics & Leisure Centre on 8393 9500.

Vision-impaired triathlete changing lives by getting more blind people running

BY KATHY MCLEISH SAT 19 AUG 2017, 10:42 AM AEST – ABC News

<http://mobile.abc.net.au/news/2017-08-19/vision-impaired-triathlete-changing-lives-blind-people-running/8821934>



Photo of runners & guides courtesy of Casey Hyde

Running has been called the world's most accessible sport, but elite para-triathlete Casey Hyde says in reality it is not open to everyone.

Hyde runs, rides, and swims while tethered to a trained guide to keep her on track, and was the first blind woman to complete the Ironman Western Australia.

Her quest to get more vision impaired people out in their running shoes has been changing lives.

"If I can give them encouragement to show them how to walk, jog and run, that's a new activity for them," she said.

"Exercise is great for depression and anxiety and stress," she said.

"We get a lot of 'your guide dog's not allowed,' 'you're not allowed,' the no's are quite overwhelming, when someone says 'Yes, you can do it, here's a guide,' that is a new friend you make and the anxiety and stress disappears."

She helped kick off two new vision-impaired (V-I) running groups in Brisbane as part of Parkrun — an organisation that holds free timed runs every week for several million people in 15 countries around the world.

V-I runner Barbara Clarke has been amazed with the difference a 5-kilometre walk makes.

"It finishes at around 8:00am and I think I've got the whole day ahead of me, what can I do with my day?" she said

"Before I came to parkrun I would be in bed until 11:00am and then get up and think, the days' gone now I might as well sit down and watch TV and do nothing, but I've joined the gym now, I've got two gym buddies."

She said when blind runners join the groups, it is a big a step into the unknown.

"Every time you walk out your front door you're walking into an unknown obstacle course."

How to run without having ever seen someone do it

Casey Hyde said one of the biggest challenges is that many blind people have never seen anyone running — and if you haven't seen it, you can't do it.

"Mostly I teach the blind people how to run on a hill so they don't fall over, but if they run on a flat they fall over," she said.



It can be scary for the running guides too.

As part of their training they run blindfolded.

Guide Wendy Crompton said it was terrifying.

"It was a path I know like the back of my hand and I could not run," she said.

"I salute these visually impaired runners — I couldn't do it."

Organiser Gareth Saunders said 170 people have signed up to help out.

"We have way more guides than V-I's which is an incredible problem to have, the

response has been great, surprising but incredible," he said.

Batesford Bash

A huge thank you to Caroline, Jon and the van de Pol family for hosting the 'Batesford Bash' fundraiser a few weeks ago which was an overwhelming success raising over \$1,200!

With many friends, family and supporters enjoying the wonderful weather, fun games, music and great food, we couldn't have asked for a more enjoyable day!

Thank you to everyone who attended and supported BSRV.

This support will help us to continue to deliver our sporting & recreational programs.

Pictures below: Guests enjoying the BBQ & activities



Students take to Spin & Swim

As part of their Lasallian Service, BSRV was pleased to host 3 students from De La Salle College with their placements.

Jack, Liam and William worked with BSRV for 8 weeks with the 'Spin & Swim' classes that are held at Hawthorn Aquatics & Leisure Centre.

Students assisted with the 'Spin & Swim' class, which is a program specifically designed for people who are blind and vision impaired at Hawthorn Aquatic and Leisure Centre.

Picture below: Students at Spin & Swim



ABBA National Championships

By Maree Fenech, Blind Bowls Victoria Inc.

Victoria was the host State for the ABBA National Championships and the event was held at the Mooroolbark Bowls Club, from 30th April to 7th May 2018.

The outcome of the championships for our Victorian members was nothing short of extraordinary, we were represented by 10 bowlers and their directors with 9 bowlers being medal winners as follows:

Trophy for best overall individual performance was won by Tony Scott.

Trophy for best male performance overall was won by Tony Scott.

Trophy for best female performance overall was won by Maree Fenech.

Maree Fenech, directed by Joe Fenech

B.1 Ladies singles, Gold medal

B.1 Open pairs, Gold medal

B.1 Mixed pairs, Silver medal

Mary Price, directed by Joe Pugh

B.2 Ladies singles, Bronze medal

B.2 Mixed pairs Gold medal

Margaret Rosewall, directed by Brian Rosewall

B.2 Open pairs, Gold medal

B.2 Mixed pairs, Bronze medal

Lisa Condry, directed by David Condry

B.2 Mixed pairs, Silver medal

Len O'Brien, directed by Kath Orford

B.2 Men's Singles, Silver medal

B.2 Men's Open pairs, Bronze medal

B.2 Mixed pairs, Gold medal

Ivan Shortis, directed by Roy Jones

B.2 Men's Singles, Bronze medal

B.2 Men's Open pairs, Bronze medal

B.2 Mixed pairs, Silver medal

Tony Scott, directed by Lisa Critten

B.3 Men's singles, Gold medal

B.3 Open pairs, Gold medal

B.4 Mixed pairs, Silver medal

Mike Donnelly, directed by Liz Donnelly

B.3 Men's singles, Bronze medal

B.3 Open pairs, Gold medal

Peter Campion, directed by Greg Orford

B.4 mixed pairs, Silver medal

Greg Kennedy, directed by Debbie King was just outside the medal count but looks forward to the Nationals next year in Western Australia.

Mr. Maurice Gleeson, President of Blind Sports and Recreation Victoria presented our medals and shared in dinner and celebrations, our thanks to Maurice for making himself available.

Maurice congratulated BBV committee, Berneice and Peter Stevenson for organising the event with the assistance from many other people at Mooroolbark and congratulated all bowlers and directors on a very successful championship.

Maurice commented on the wonderful camaraderie between members from all 5 States and trusts the championships will continue for many years to come.

Walk in the West

Organ Pipes National Park

By Miriam Bilander, BSRV Program Coordinator

On Thursday the 5th of April, fifteen of us headed to the Organ Pipes National Park in Keilor North for a bush walk and picnic lunch.

Picture below: Participants touring National Park



We were lucky enough to have the knowledgeable park ranger, Laughlin Stewart, accompany us on our walk. Laughlin began by showing us a taxidermy possum, ancient basalt rock and Australian paper bark. Everyone enjoyed touching these objects.

As the sun came out we began our steep descent into the valley, listening to bird calls and river rapids as we walked. At the bottom we made our way to the Organ Pipes, Rosette Rock and the tessellated pavement - all rock structures made 3 million years ago by a volcanic eruption.

We also learnt about the conservation being done to attract sugar gliders to this special area. After the walk we sat down on shaded picnic tables for a relaxing picnic and Program Coordinator, Miriam Bilander, brought Easter hot cross buns for everyone!

If you would like to receive information on any upcoming walks, please don't hesitate to email info@blindsports.org.au and we will put your name on the mailing list.

St. Albans Market Tour

By Miriam Bilander, BSRV Program Coordinator

BSRV's Program Coordinator Northwest, Miriam Bilander, organised for a group of twelve vision impaired members of the community and their carers to attend a degustational food tour of the St Albans Market in late March. The tour was called 'Scrumptious St Albans' and was part of the Melbourne Food & Wine Festival.

Flamboyant and friendly market owner, Nick Lopresti, took the group to seven different stall holders to hear their migrant stories and sample their delicious cuisine. Mouths watered and bellies ballooned as we tasted European deli goods, Italian crumbed chicken filled with cheese, Serbian cabbage rolls, Turkish coffee and Middle-eastern falafels. To begin and end the tour the group was serenaded by a vibrant African duo, which inspired some members to get to their feet and groove to the music.



Everyone had a wonderful time and a special thanks goes to Simon McCuskey from the City of Brimbank Council for welcoming us on the day and ensuring the market was access-friendly and safe.

BVIT National Championships 2018

The Blind and Vision Impaired Tenpin Bowlers (BVIT) National Championships were held in Western Australia in late March.

Attendees from the 4 states were:

NSW - 4, Queensland - 1, Victoria - 4 and W.A. - 12. There were also various volunteers and family members supporting the tenpin bowlers throughout the championships.

The results from the competition were:
 Female Bowler of the Year – Marilyn Luck
 Male Bowler of the Year – Rhian Patching
 Female Encouragement Award 2018 – Hazel Hockley
 Male Encouragement Award 2018 – Joel Swindail

Scout Monster Raffle

The Scout Monster Raffle is on again for 2018! With 75% of the proceeds given back to Blind Sports & Recreation Victoria of what we sell, this is a great opportunity to raise some much needed funds.

Last year we raised over \$1,000 and hope to increase this to at least \$1500 this year.

To reach our goal, we need supporters, family and friends to purchase a book (or two, or three...or even more.....) of tickets from us. Can you help us achieve our goal?

Great prizes to be won including –

1st Prize - Kia Sportage SUV car

2nd Prize - Gold Coast Family Holiday includes five nights' accommodation at Turtle Beach Resort, Gold Coast for a family of four in a two bedroom apartment plus flight vouchers

3rd Prize - \$2,000 Gift Voucher

4th – 13th (10) Mountain Bikes

14th – 23th (10) Family Camping Packs

24th – 33rd (10) Winter Warmer Clothing Packs
 34th – 43rd (10) Children's Bikes
 44th – 53rd (10) Z506 5.1 Surround Sound System Logitech
 54th – 63rd (10) UE Wonderboom Wireless Speaker Logitech
 64th – 73rd (10) G231 Gaming Headset Logitech
 74th – 83rd (10) Technology Travel Packs
 84th – 93rd (10) Day Walking Packs
 94th – 103rd (10) \$50 Voucher Bunnings



Contact BSRV on 98228876 or email info@blindsports.org.au to order your tickets today!

'Volunteer in Vogue'

***Don't limit your challenges.
Challenge your limits!***

By Peter Tomazic – BSRV Volunteer

In September 2017 I started volunteering with Blind Sports & Recreation Victoria. I was fortunate to be paired up with a young lady named Adua to ride a tandem bike. Adua is an extraordinary person that hasn't let her disability hold her back, she is a real inspiration. Adua has ridden for a number of years and needed a training partner to help

her prepare for her 130km Around the Bay ride in October 2017. She completed the ride with a friend that travelled down from Darwin.

Adua and I try to ride at least every second weekend. We are currently training for the "MS ride", a 50km trail that will have us ride, (but I think push), the bike over the Westgate bridge!!

We try to mix up our rides, visiting places such as Williamstown, City or Kew. On most occasions we manage to fit in a café stop, our justification, "we need the energy to get us home"!

There is always lots of talking that goes on while we are riding. I now consider Adua a friend, not a person that I volunteer for. At Christmas, we went out for a pre-Christmas dinner with Adua's husband, my daughter and I almost forgot, Adua's guide dog Zabrina.

I would thoroughly encourage anyone that is active to consider becoming a volunteer with Blind Sports & Recreation Victoria. It's very rewarding and who knows, you may even make a new friend as I have.

Photo below: Adua & Peter



Everywhere is within walking distance if you have the time

By Yvonne Newton – BSRV Volunteer



As my daughters have been involved with BSRV as volunteers for a few years, I decided to become a volunteer myself after seeing how much they enjoyed the many and varied programs offered by BSRV.

My daughter told me about a program in Melton called Walking with Willpower. It took me a while to contact BSRV as my busy life included bringing up 5 children which didn't leave much free time.

As my family became more independent, I had some available time so contacted BSRV about the Walking with Willpower program. I felt this would be a great challenge for me to learn something new and hopefully help someone along the way.

So here I am today - I have been volunteering for 8 months now with a lovely lady named Jen.

With Jen's ever increasing confidence, we have walked around many of the parks in the area and I have learnt so much history about Melton. Jen is very keen to learn and

explore about all the places we visit so I have to ensure I have done my homework beforehand so I can answer all her questions.

We now take her next door neighbour with us and her little dog when we go on walks. It makes Jen feels good in helping her neighbour also get out of the unit once a week.

From our first few walks with Jen being extremely apprehensive to walk out the front gate, we now go shopping and walking with other people and dogs, we have both come a long way. Jen now feels great because she can get out and about and is able to help her neighbours as well. I thoroughly enjoy the time spent with Jen and her neighbour and look forward to many, many more walks.

My next step is to get Jen to feel comfortable enough to come along with me on an outing organised by BSRV. I love volunteering for BSRV and meeting and learning new skills with such beautiful adapting people.

Yes, I would like to support Blind Sports & Recreation Victoria

Name: _____

Address: _____ Suburb _____

P/Code _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please debit my credit card for \$ _____ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐

____ / ____ / ____ / ____

Name on card _____

Expiry Date ____ / ____ Signature _____

Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible Inc. A2644V ABN 42 609 420 605
Blind Sports & Recreation Victoria, 454 Glenferrie Road, Kooyong 3144



For all your travel requirements contact
Jane Underwood on 03-9833-4519
or email jane@acatravel.com.au



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