# Blind Foundation News February 2017

Welcome to your Blind Foundation News update for February 2017.

If there is anything within this update that you would like to know more about then please get in touch with the communications team, whose details are at the end of this update.

## Happy Birthday Louis Braille

* Over the break we celebrated the anniversary of Louis Braille’s birth 208 years ago.
* Louis Braille invented braille in 1824 when he was just 15 years old.
* Louis Braille once said, "Braille is knowledge and knowledge is power."
* People around the country marked the occasion by creating Braille on their local beaches around the country.

## Red Puppy Appeal

* Red Puppy Appeal 2017 is coming up on March 24 to 25.
* This Appeal will help us raise the valuable funds that we need to breed and train guide dogs and help our clients achieve greater independence.
* Thank you so much to those who have already signed up to collect or coordinate on the day.
* If you haven’t yet signed up and are able to spare a couple hours of your time to collect or coordinate collectors, you can sign up today by visiting [**redpuppy.org.nz**](http://gisborneherald.co.nz/csp/mediapool/redpuppy.org.nz) or phone 0800 PUPPIES.

## More books for Blind Foundation library thanks to new ‘Book Club’

## We are excited to announce the launch of ‘Book Club’, a regular giving programme that will support the Blind Foundation library.From 1 February, our telemarketing partner Unity4 has been recruiting Book Club supporters to start an ongoing monthly donation to support the Blind Foundation library. Unity4 have been calling people who have expressed an interest in supporting the library via an online survey.These vital funds will help fund the Blind Foundation library – a service that many of our clients have said is an absolute lifeline for them.With the help of our Book Club supporters, we are looking forward to having a bigger selection of books and continuing to provide an essential, life-changing service for our diverse range of clients.

## Other news

* [February eNewsletter](http://us3.campaign-archive2.com/?u=dd4b1ee76be8b65f81df3ed1a&id=484407bae6)- The February eNewsletter is now available, you can find the stories featured in this issue on the Blind Foundation website under “News and Views.”

## Staff Profile

This month we get to know Sharon Jefferies, Employment Consultant based in Hamilton.

Sharon has been working at the Blind Foundation for three years now, covering a wide variety of responsibilities over that time.

Sharon’s job covers career development including providing assessment tools, CV, and cover letter support, mock interview tips, networking and job search strategies.

Sharon also supports clients on a range of challenges in their workplace including advocacy, disability rights, restructuring and job support processing for Workbridge.

In her role as Employment Consultant Sharon also works with BLENNZ on Tertiary Planning workshops and provides study and training support for clients in Waikato, New Plymouth, and Bay of Plenty regions.

Sharon has held many leadership positions in numerous committees and projects. She previously ran her own small company in career setting with staff, held and still holds several head coach roles, and led and developed the careers team at the University of Waikato.

Bringing this experience with her to the Blind Foundation, Sharon has worked on passing these leadership skills to clients. At January’s Taupo Summer camp Sharon held a session for the young leaders focused on the qualities of a great leader and how to develop those skills over the week.

Sharon loves being able to see clients put their leadership skills into action, “my favorite part is seeing clients motivating other members to achieve; mentoring and supporting each other and gaining confidence in communicating and self-advocating.”

When Sharon isn’t busy making a difference for clients she enjoys being involved with horses and sports, “I love X-country, jumping and dressage, I coach at pony club and for Riding for the Disabled and also mountain bike, run and go to the gym.”

## Equipment Display Days

The following equipment display days are for now until 11 April 2017. As these may be subject to change, please call your local Blind Foundation office to confirm details.

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| **Area** | **Venue** | **Date and Time** |
| Greymouth | United Church Hall, 203 tainui Street, Greymouth. | 1 March 10am-1pm |
| Westport | Westport/Buller Working Mens Club. | 2 March 10am-1pm |
| Waipukurau | 30 Jellicoe Street, Waipukurau. | 2 March 10am – 1pm |
| Balclutha | St Marks Anglican Hall, 19-21 Renfrew Street, Balclutha.  | 7 March 10am – 1pm |
| Kapiti  | Senior Citizens Hall, 2 Utauta Street, Waikanae.  | 9 March 2pm – 3pm |
| Tauranga  | Blind Foundation, 160 Seventeenth Avenue, Tauranga South. | 16 March 11am - 1pm |
| Central  | St Enoch's church, 12 Centennial Avenue, Alexandra | 21 March 1pm- 2:30pm |
| Hamilton | Hamilton Social Cebtre, 15 Liverpool Street, Hamilton. | 22 March 10am - 12pm |
| Blenhiem | Blenheim Bowlilng Club, 65E Weld Street, Blenheim. | 29 March 9.30am 1pm |
| Nelson | Elim Christian Centre, 625 Main road, Stoke, Nelson. | 30 March 9.30am to 1pm |
| Rotorua | Distinction Hotel & Conference Centre, 390 Fenton Street, Rotorua | 7 April, 1pm – 3pm |
| Palmerston North | Blind Foundation, 49 Walding Street, Palmerston North | 11 April, 10.30am – 12pm |

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For further information on any of the above, please contact the Communications Team at comms@blindfoundation.org.nz or 0800 24 33 33.