# Kōrero – 25 March 2021

## **How did one of the oldest charities respond during the pandemic?**

[Photograph caption: John Mulka, smiling.]

Today marks the one year anniversary of when our world changed dramatically and we went into Level 4 lockdown.

[Read a piece by John Mulka on Blind Low Vision NZ’s response.](https://bit.ly/3rc4Afc)

## **People**

## **Otago Rail Trail – National tandem bike ride**

[Photograph caption: Team of 20 surrounding the CLYDE end finish sign.]

Clients came from Auckland to Invercargill to take part in the Otago Rail Trail National Tandem event. Supported by our fantastic volunteers from the South everyone completed the 160 km challenge in style and with awesome attitude by the entire team.

[Have a read of feedback from clients who undertook this awesome challenge.](https://blindlowvision.org.nz/our-stories/a-great-time-on-the-otago-rail-trail-national-tandem-bike-ride/)

## **Good luck to volunteers this Red Puppy Appeal**

[Photograph caption: Collectors supporting Blind Low Vision NZ Guide Dogs]

Good luck and a big thanks to our Red Puppy Appeal volunteers who will be out on the streets collecting this Friday and Saturday is 26 & 27 March. Do say hi if you see a collector in your area.

## **Julie Woods presents at Happiness in 20 minutes**

[Photograph caption: Julie with pink balloons.]

Julie’s joyous performance explored happiness from Julie’s perspective after going blind in 1997. Audience members were invited to write down how the performance made them feel in one word and here’s a sample: ‘inspired’, ‘motivated’, ‘contemplative’, ‘aware’, ‘excited’ and ‘uplifted’

This was a koha event with proceeds going to Blind Low Vision NZ.

## **Insider’s Tips:**

## **Alexa – did you know?**

[Photograph caption: Alexa Smart Speaker.]

**Tips and tricks for your Alexa**

Clients of Blind Low Vision NZ can get an Alexa Smart Speaker free of charge. With a few simple voice commands, the Alexa Smart Speaker can open up a world of possibility.

**Try saying this to your Alexa:**

* **“Alexa, what should I cook tonight?”**
* **“Alexa, what time is sunrise?”**
* **“Alexa, what's the weather at 5PM?”**
* **“Alexa, wish me luck”**
* **“Alexa, make me laugh”**
* **“Alexa, who inspires you?”**

You can access more than just our Blind Low Vision NZ library skill on Alexa. You can access public transport timetables, recipes, music and so much more.

If you are interested in an Alexa Smart Speaker, call 0800 24 33 or email [info@blindlowvision.org.nz](mailto:info@blindlowvision.org.nz)

## **Guided Swimming gadget**

We love passing on tips and recommendations from our clients. This one is from Neville Rogers from Takaka (near Nelson). Neville contacted us about an accessible and liberating opportunity for blind and low vision swimmers. The Platysens Marlin a waterproof GPS device designed for guided swimming, both in pool and open water. According to Neville, the device has made it possible for him to resume his hobby of middle-distance independent ocean swimming rather than swimming around in circles.

“I think the Marlin could be a real asset to building confidence and skills in the water for children and youth as well as adults,” says Neville.

[Find out more about the Platysens Marlin.](http://www.platysens.com/marlin)

## **In Brief**

* **Do you know an accessible business that deserve some recognition?** If you know of a business that deserves some recognition or you would like to vote for a nominated business go to  [the 2021 People’s Choice Accessible Business Awards.](https://bit.ly/3spekUA)
* **Website Survey** – If you have visited our website recently you will have been invited to take part in our website survey This short survey is to gather information about who is visiting our site and for what purpose. We are also inviting visitors to provide feedback on the experience and possible improvements. The survey is now closed but if you didn’t get a chance to do the take part and you would like to provide feedback about our websiteyou can do so by contacting [communications@blindlowvision.org.nz](mailto:communications@blindlowvision.org.nz)
* **Get eye health on the political agenda** – [sign a petition calling for a national eye health survey.](https://bit.ly/3sdfDWQ)
* **Ability Summit May 5 -6 May.** This two-day free digital event brings people with disabilities, allies, and accessibility professionals to Imagine, Build, Include, and Empower the future of disability inclusion and accessibility. [Register for ability summit.](https://bit.ly/3rdj9yY)
* **Tim Bray Theatre company have audio described shows coming up in Auckland. *A Lion in the Meadow and Other Stories* is on at the Pumphouse Theatre, 13 April, 1pm and 1 May, 1pm. Call 09 489 8360 to book at the Pumphouse. It’s also on at Managere Arts Centre, 12 May 10.30am and 15 May 1pm. Call 0800 289 849 to book at Mangere Arts Centre. Once booked, please contact Gail at Tim Bray Theatre Company to book your headset and Touch Tour 09 486 2261 or** [gail@timbray.org.nz](mailto:gail@timbray.org.nz)
* **For a list of audio described events,** [please find the attached booklet.](https://image.cloud.blindlowvision.org.nz/lib/fe4415707564057d751174/m/2/37b0fb6b-7bae-4e50-8aa3-4b0b9c229c53.docx) **This is also narrated on Blind Low Vision NZ’s Telephone Information Service, menu 668. If you would like a braille copy contact Mary Schnackenberg mary@aicomms.co.nz**

## **Noticeboard**

* Did you know that you can request Kōrero in braille? Call our contact centre on 0800 24 33 33 if you would like to receive Kōrero in this format.

**News from the RNZFB Board**

* **The next RNZFB Board meeting is scheduled for Saturday 1 May 2021.** If you would like to attend this meeting as an observer in person or by phone, please contact the Board Secretary, Jane Moore, on 09 355 6894 or email [jamoore@blindlowvision.org.nz](mailto:jamoore@blindlowvision.org.nz)
* [**Check out the Chair’s Report following the February 2021 Board meeting on the following link.**](https://click.cloud.blindlowvision.org.nz/?qs=d8acf50d84a177c86352b3439ea6f66d23ed1c1cc84ba00afad6fdb945ecc2a9518c6c4354bf99c3b58f271dbb2e33584485a803037c423d)
* **FY22 Business Plan.** The RNZFB Board along with Management met on 26 February to review the feedback and to group the key themes and initiatives for the FY22 Business Plan. We are now providing one further opportunity for any feedback and input before the plan is adopted by the Board at its next meeting on 1 May. Please call the Contact Centre on **0800 24 33 33** if you would like to receive a copy of the summary feedback in your preferred format. The deadline for any further feedback is **Friday 9 April**.

[**Job Opportunities at Blind Low Vision NZ**](https://careers-blindfoundation.force.com/s/vacancy-details?id=a234a0000002ROXAA2)

* [**Dog Care Specialist (Kennels Facility)**,](https://sforce.co/3rc49BA)Permanent/Full-time, Auckland – closing 09 April.
* [**Dog Care Specialist (Breeding and Early Development)**,](https://sforce.co/317PGfj) Permanent/Full-time, Auckland – closing 09 April.

## **Ka kite ano**

[Photograph caption: John Mulka, smiling]

It’s hard to believe that it has been one year since the country experienced Level 4 Lockdown. I am incredibly proud of the way the team at Blind Low Vision NZ responded. Take a read in the lead story of this issue of Kōrero - **John Mulka, Blind Low Vision NZ Chief Executive.**

Please let us know what you think of Kōrero. We welcome suggestions for what you would like us to include, and of course any tips or stories you would like to share with the community. Get in touch on 0800 24 33 33 or via [communications@blindlowvision.org.nz](mailto:communications@blindlowvision.org.nz).