

# Eye Museum

At the RANZCO Brisbane Congress 2022, the Eye Museum hosted a large exhibit with video presentations, historic posters and displays relating the methods of glaucoma diagnosis dating from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Rare and curious quack remedies complemented delicate blown glass undines and complex irrigation devices. The winner of the Jim Martin prize for the best poster was awarded to Dr Zelia Chiu tracing the evolution of glaucoma surgery.

## The Ian McAllister collection

Prof Ian McAllister from Perth has been collecting ophthalmic antiques for the last 40 years. The collection is diverse and includes extremely rare and valuable pieces such as the original Helmholtz ophthalmoscope and virtually all the examples that succeeded it. Prof McAllister is working through the task of photographing, cataloguing and val-

uing the vast collection. He has decided to donate the whole collection to the RANZCO Eye Museum.

The first batch of quack remedies and glass undines and eye baths were displayed at the Brisbane Congress and items will be rotated through the permanent display at the RANZCO Sydney office.

The Museum has virtual open access on the web as 'RANZCO Eye Museum', where the McAllister collection can be viewed along with the existing virtual display.

The Museum storage has recently been expanded to accommodate Ian's donation at the CAVAL centre, La Trobe University. His donation is one of the finest private collections in the world which will take the RANZCO Eye Museum to the forefront of eye museums and we are indeed fortunate recipients.

## New arrival

A parcel recently arrived at my practice containing a carefully wrapped text donated by Dr Peter Macken from Bowral, who received the book from a descendant of the owner. Entitled

*'A Handy Book of Ophthalmic Surgery'*, this book was published by Lawrence and Moon in 1866 and is a fascinating read, reflecting diseases as terrible as the cures inflicted on the patients.

I needed a handy dictionary to decipher the descriptions such as "Chancroid of the cornea found in scrofulous individuals who suffered from the Kings Evil!" Translated, this refers to a sexually transmitted ulcerative process occurring in an individual of tainted character suffering from tuberculous cervical adenitis, otherwise known as the Kings Evil.

Much of the infective processes were treated by foment, leeches and when resistant, caustics such as silver nitrate or mercuric oxide pasted were applied. Trachoma was rife at the time, as was lacrimal infection and infective keratitis with ulceration commonly perforating the eye requiring enucleation.

**Dr David Kaufman**  
Curator, RANZCO Eye Museum



