



Short Statured People of Australia Inc.  
**THE NATIONAL JOURNAL**

Winter Edition 2021

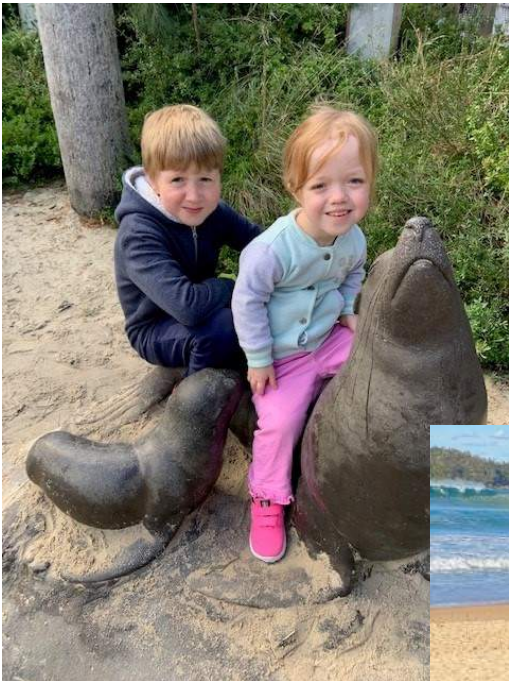
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[www.sspa.org.au](http://www.sspa.org.au)

Est: 1968

Co-founders: George and  
Rosemary Whitaker

## SCHOOL HOLIDAY FUN



For more school holiday pics, turn to page 28

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# National President

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Dear members,

I was hopeful that this edition of the Journal would not be coming to you from lockdown, but alas, it is where many of us find ourselves. Extended lockdown can be overwhelming and take its toll; this has undoubtedly been true for me at times. However, I have found that daily exercise and meditation have been valuable tools to maintain my equilibrium during this challenging time. I would love to hear from you if you have found any hobbies or techniques that have helped throughout lockdown; the more we can help each other through, the better. So please reach out and check in with each other, and if you are struggling, speak up. We are all in it together.



## Remembering Malcolm Paton

Malcolm's memorial was held on the 20th of August. Thank you to Laurice, Rob, Alistair, Bruce, and family for allowing us to help celebrate Malcolm's life. It was beautiful to hear his sons share many great memories from his work with the SSPA and beyond. Malcolm served as SSPA treasurer and on Victorian and National committees for many years. He also served as a faithful trustee of the careers and vocational guidance fund of the SSPA, allowing countless members to pursue artistic, sporting, and educational endeavours. Malcolm was a true friend and a constant source of knowledge, guidance, and support while championing equality of opportunity at every turn.

## National Convention 2021

One way that we can stay connected is the upcoming Virtual Convention. As you will have seen by now, unfortunately, we have made the difficult decision to cancel the 2021 physical convention due to be held in Belair, South Australia, 2nd – 8th of October.

The SSPA's decision to cancel the physical convention was not one made lightly. We understand how much everyone has been looking forward to being together and seeing one another face to face again. However, in the interest of safety and with the uncertainty over lockdowns and border closures, we feel this decision had to be made.

Fortunately, we have learnt a lot about connecting online over the last 12 months and look forward to building on last year's Virtual Convention to hold an event that brings all of us together to share many of the things that make national conventions so special. Please check out the program in this edition of the Journal for all the information and details on registering. We look forward to seeing you there!

## SSPA Annual General Meeting

This year's AGM is on **Sunday the 26th of September at 10:00 am**. Members will have the ability to join online via Zoom.

Information on National Council roles and responsibilities and details of the nomination process will be available in this journal. In addition, before the AGM, office-bearers will be providing reports that will be circulated, highlighting the achievements of the past 12 months and the vision for the next 12 months.

The AGM is your opportunity as a member to help shape the future of the SSPA, and we would love to see you there.

### **National Council**

Being the last Journal for the 2020/21 National Council, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the entire National Council for all your work over the past 12 months. There have been many challenges with the ever-changing landscape we find ourselves in, and the flexibility you have shown to deal with it should be congratulated. On a personal note, I appreciate all the support you have given me throughout the year and on behalf of the SSPA I would like to recognise all the work you have put in throughout the year. You should be incredibly proud of what we have accomplished, as it will serve to support our members for many years to come. That being said, we have not stopped working, and I am looking forward to what the next 12 months have in store.

**2020/21 National Council:** Jo Bracknell, Julie Dickson, Kobie Donovan, Marta Eyles, Vicki Fallon, Suzann Franklin, Rosemary Hobbs, Maree Jenner, Rachael Johnson, Beck Kim, Anthony Koedyk, Graci Lynch, Oliver Lynch, Sam Millard, Carly Myers, Nathan Nass, Katrina Reynolds, Jess Steyn, Pete Stone, Emily Vozzo, Keiran Watson-Bonnice, Meredith Young.

**Youth Representatives:** Lucia Bruce-Gilchrist, Kaed Dawber.

I am looking forward to seeing you all soon!

Kind regards,

**Sam Millard**

National President – SSPA

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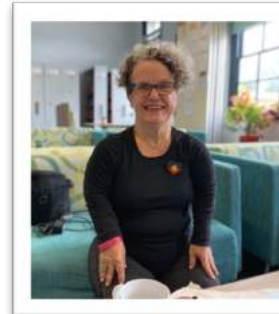
**The last date to receive material for the next edition of the National Journal will be the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2021.**

**Please send all reports, news, stories, and articles to:**  
[journal@sspa.org.au](mailto:journal@sspa.org.au)

## A message from our VP/PAB liaison

Dear members,

You would now be aware that the convention committee had to make the difficult but right decision to cancel the national convention this year in Adelaide. As I write this, looking at current numbers of COVID-19 infections in NSW and around the country, it is not a good picture. The good news is that although we will not be together in person, technology enables us to be connected “virtually”, so the convention committee is busy putting together a great program of events for us to be connected online. So please check out the information on the Virtual Convention elsewhere here in the Journal. Thank goodness for social media and technologies such as Zoom which enable us to stay connected. For those members who are not connected in this way, please let us know if we can assist you with connecting, etc.



Some good news that I would like to share is the fabulous opportunity I currently have, in talking with young children about being inclusive of difference. In previous communications I have mentioned that I am facilitating a school inclusion program in my area. I'm currently mainly talking to children in Years 5 & 6 at Stage 3. And as part of the program we give the school a copy of the book *I'm Just Small, That's All* (<http://imjustsmall.com>). The book features Kali, a young girl (now a young woman) with dwarfism, which was written by her mum, to inform other children (from about 3 to 9 years of age) about dwarfism. After I have finished speaking to the Stage 3 students, I go back to the school and read the book to K-Y2 classes. I have also started visiting preschools. It is such a great experience to engage in conversation with the young ones, answering their questions and hearing their thoughts and their understanding of difference. As part of the program for the preschools, I have been given permission to use the Bluey clip: [Bluey Season 2 Episode 28 - Seesaw \(Part 3\)](#) which showcases difference by highlighting the different breeds of dog such as Pompom the Pomeranian who is quoted as saying “I'm a small but hardy breed!” I am now working on a High School program which we hope to begin next year.



Speaking of young ones, I recently attended the SSPA online parent chat which was organised by Katrina, our membership secretary. It was lovely to connect with three new parents and their little ones and to answer questions and chat about a range of topics. As I don't live far from Sydney, I offered to travel to the preschools or schools attended by the children of these parents, in order to talk about dwarfism. I have free days during the week so I'm happy to do the same for any members living in the Greater Sydney area whose little ones may be heading off to preschool or school or starting at a new school.

Another interesting project that I am currently involved in is with a group of UNSW Rehabilitation Engineering students who are designing a prototype for a compact "Reacher" for people with short stature to use when shopping, so we can safely get heavy items such as cans and jars down from a supermarket shelf. As the current reachers/grabbers on the market are not strong or secure enough to do this task without chance of dropping. I often ask another shopper to do this for me but there are times when I am the only person in the aisle, and it takes so much extra time to search for someone to help you. Hence the thinking behind the Reacher.

Below is the online focus group with the students and several members representing different ages and types of dwarfism. Each had the opportunity to give feedback on the design and provide suggestions on how it could be helpful to them. Vicki Fallon & Tiana Holt also joined but had to leave before the pic was taken. The students have submitted the design, which will be refined next term and a prototype will be made by the end of the year. If anyone would like to be involved or provide input let me know.



Once the prototype is made, we will then have the task to get a manufacturer onboard, so if anyone has connections in this area, please let us know. This type of assistive technology (AT) is disability specific so individuals would be able to use NDIS funding to purchase it.

## **Virtual Convention 2021**

**PAB Medical & Professional Advisory Day 2021:** as mentioned in the previous Journal, we have good representation from the SSPA Professional Advisory Board this year; Professor David Sillence NSW; Professor Ravi Savarirayan VIC, Dr Penny Ireland QLD, Alison Wesley & Tracy Tate NSW, Dr Lesley McGregor SA, Dr Louise Tofts and Associate Professor Verity Pacey NSW, have offered to record a presentation and attend the live Q&A.

**NDIS presentation:** Exceptionally good feedback was received after Kim Henderson (NDIS Coordinator) presented at the Albury Convention in 2019, so we have invited Kim to present once again. Kim will prerecord a presentation and then attend a Q&A session where you can send in questions prior or ask in the chat. Contact me at [pab@sspa.org.au](mailto:pab@sspa.org.au) if there is a particular topic that you would like Kim to include in her presentation.

**Virtual Expo:** After watching more of LPA's Virtual Palooza, I got the idea of adding a 'Virtual Expo' to the 'Made to Measure' segment we have planned. In the Virtual Expo, businesses would be able to showcase products and services designed for the short stature community. I have reached out to Kail to talk about her book <http://imjustsmall.com> also <https://www.aufaugenhoehe.design/en> - a fashion design company for the dwarfism community who are based in Germany, and <https://www.thelittlehoestore.com> – Grown Up Shoes for the LP Foot. Fingers crossed it all comes together.

## **Update ILC Individual Capacity Building Grants**

We are in the process of directly reaching out via email and social media to prospective participants for both the **Mentor Program** and the **Parents Peer Support Network**, to seek their interest and support to be involved in one of the programs. Again, don't hesitate to contact me on [pab@sspa.org.au](mailto:pab@sspa.org.au) if you are interested in being involved in one of these great support programs as it's a fabulous way to give back to the short stature community; giving support to our younger generation and parents raising a child with short stature; plus it looks good on your CV 😊

To assist the Project Management Committee with the administration and implementation of the above grant, we are pleased to have on board Susie Roczo-Farkas who answered the EOI for the volunteer support role. We would not have been able to reach Susie without the help of Monica Ferrie from Genetic Support Network Victoria (GSNV) who enabled us to do a call out to the genetic counseling students. Many thanks, Monica. I asked Susie to write a few lines to introduce herself to the membership. See below.



Hi, I'm Susie Roczo-Farkas, and I'm a lab rat that works in the Murdoch Children's Research Institute (Coordinator of the Australian Rotavirus Surveillance Network). When I'm not in the lab, I am studying genetics so that one day I can apply for the Masters of genetic counseling program.

My life outside of work and study is full, with a hubby, young daughter, a cat, two chickens, and a passion for photography which I express through my company 'The Wolf and Oak'.

**Reconnection & Recognition:** Last month I was searching online for custom shoemakers, and I came across the website for McHugh's Shoe business in Sydney ([www.mchughshoes.com.au](http://www.mchughshoes.com.au)), which was a nice reconnection as the late Jenny McHugh and her parents Frank & Dorcas were one of the first LPAA families to assist Rosemary and her late husband George to establish SSPA. Another connection with Jenny was that in 1970s I

lived in the same suburb as the McHughs, I was often mistaken for Jenny when out and about. 😊 **The McHugh – Henderson Award** is in remembrance of both Frank McHugh and Jim Henderson’s contribution towards SSPA. The award is made to short-statured people who are considered to have made a significant contribution and achievement. In 1977 I was the first recipient of the award and pleased to see that it was just the beginning of people with short stature achieving great things as there have been many deserving recipients after me. If you know someone whose contribution and efforts deserve recognition, please look out for the call out for nominations for the McHugh-Henderson award in this Journal; plus check out SSPA website for more information. Speaking of reconnection, I look forward to seeing you online at the Virtual Convention 24/9-28/9.

**Maree Jenner**

Vice President and PAB Liaison Officer, SSPA

E: [pab@sspa.org.au](mailto:pab@sspa.org.au)

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## From the Editor's Laptop

Hi everyone,

The past few months have been full-on for me. In my last report, I spoke about how I’d just gotten a new job in a call centre and how I wasn’t particularly a fan of that type of work. I’ve been actively looking for another job—one that’s more suited to my passions and strengths. So, I’m excited to announce that I’ve got a new job and I’ve quit my old job. I’m now a part-time studio coordinator for a creative writing studio that provides story writing clubs and mentorships for kids. My role mostly involves admin work, but I also get to lead a few creative writing workshops each week which is exciting—I’ll be giving the kids writing exercises to do and providing feedback on their work. I’m super excited to have a job in a field I’m passionate about.



In my last report, I spoke about the upcoming six-week challenge at my gym. Thanks to multiple lockdowns, the challenge has been delayed numerous times. And just when we’re hopeful it’s about to finally start ... we’re plunged into another lockdown (I’m starting to think this challenge is cursed).

I’m lucky enough to be a member of the Women with Disabilities inaugural Youth Project Co-Design Group. The group is made up of two moderators and nine participants who identify as female or non-binary and have a disability. The purpose is for us to help design leadership opportunities that WDV can host for young people. For the first stage of the project, we met up on Zoom one night a week for eight weeks. It was nice forming friendships and having this social interaction considering we were in lockdown for the majority of the sessions. I’ve learnt a lot about myself and others—I’ve learnt that it’s okay if I’m not as extroverted as the others and it’s okay if I don’t always have an answer straight away to every question (it’s okay to take time to think about things and email through some written responses later) and I’ve learnt about internalised ableism—something I hadn’t



realised I'd subconsciously been doing to myself (and maybe something I can write about in a later edition of the Journal). I'm grateful to be part of this amazing group of people working together to make a change. I'm excited to commence stage two of the project within the next few months.

As part of my involvement with student politics, I attended the National Union of Students Education Conference (informally known as Ed Con) a few months ago. It's a national conference with workshops and sessions run by students about important topics for students. It's usually held in-person and I was looking forward to reuniting with the people I had befriended in Canberra, but due to restrictions, it was moved online. There was also a three-day Pre Conference run by National Labor students. It involved small, intimate sessions in different groups. For example, I was in the disability caucus and this opportunity allowed me to chat with other students with disabilities about how the other students can better accommodate our needs (such as providing more breaks). While this was happening, all the other students talked about what they thought they could do to better accommodate our needs. Then we all came together and shared our ideas to see if our ideas aligned and to talk about what they could do better. It was an eye-opening experience, and I learnt a lot about what we can all do better to make society more inclusive of different groups.

Then it was time for EdCon which had been shortened from a five-day event to a two day online event. It was supposed to be in-person at Melbourne Uni and people from different universities around Australia were supposed to attend but due to COVID-19, that couldn't happen, so states had state hubs where people could hang out. I always steered clear of politics because the space always seemed to be occupied by angry privileged white males and I preferred to stay in my little bubble with my creative friends. Thanks to my friend who exposed me to the world of politics, I now understand why she's so passionate (or 'angry' if you're a male describing a female) all the time, cause now I am too. There's so much injustice in the world that it seems like we don't have enough time or enough power in the world to fix it, but we can make a start, right? Well, Ed Con brought to life my stereotype of angry privileged white males. Luckily, I elected to stay at home instead of going to the Melbourne hub, as many of the students at the hub did not hold back with their opinions and shouted over the top of everyone and bordered on emotional abuse. It made me super grateful to be a member of National Labor Students and Stand Up because they're not like that at all. It's possible to be outspoken and fight for what is right and have a debate while still being respectful.

Speaking of student politics, we are in the thick of student elections. Last year I was only slightly involved by helping write the policy, but this year I'm one of the seven main organisers. I'm running for the position of Burwood campus Accessibility and Services representative. Since we're the opposition, elections require a LOT of work ... especially if there's only six main organisers! We're at a disadvantage to the incumbents as they're already in position so they get paid to prepare for elections. We, however, have to fit election prep in around uni, work, and other life commitments. So it's been very easy for me to fall into the trap of taking on too much and saying yes to everyone whenever they ask me to do something for them, which leads me staying up to all hours to get everything done and sacrifice sleep and my hobbies and relaxation. It's important to prioritise self-care as two of my friends didn't do this and became physically sick with one having to go to hospital. Self-care is something I have to keep reminding myself to do. Self-care is not a reward—it's a necessity. Self-care can often be monetised in the media like getting a facial or a message, but that's not always possible, especially in COVID times. Self-care can be as simple as going

for a walk or practicing deep breathing or taking a bath, and it can be as simple as taking five minutes out of your day here and there. So, this is a reminder to take some time out for yourself each day to practice self-care.

I hope you enjoy this edition and hopefully I'll see you at the online convention!

Kind regards,

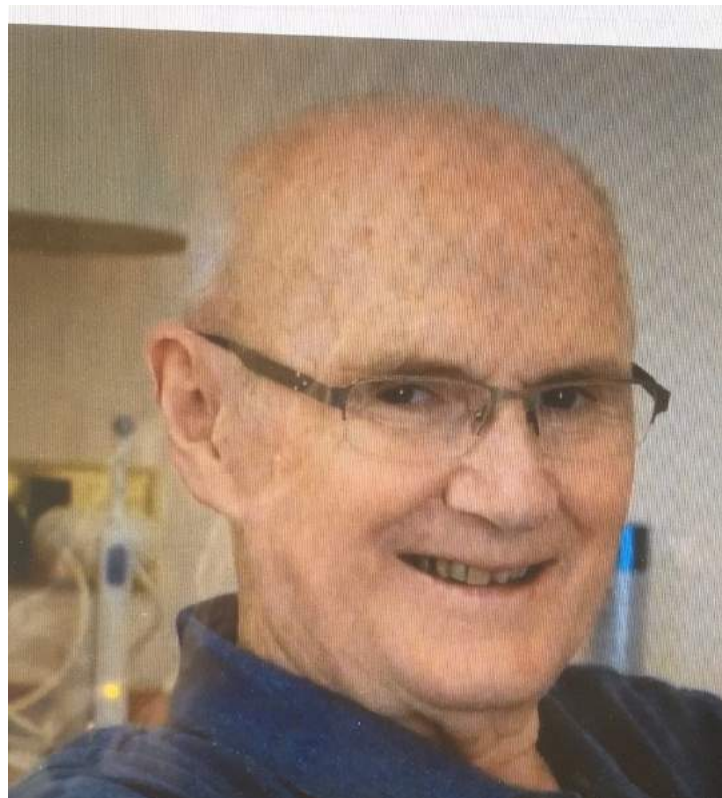
**Julie Dickson**

Journal Editor SSPA

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## MALCOLM PATON MEMORIAL



Thank you, Laurice, Robert, Alister, and Bruce, for asking us to present a reflection of Malcolm's impact on the LPAA/SSPA and what he meant to all of us. This is adapted from Malcolm's Life Membership nomination composed by Francis Kelly with some additional personal reflections from myself and Merry Young

Malcolm Paton, along with his wife Laurice, their sons, Robert, Alistair, and Bruce, joined the Little People's Association of Australia (LPAA) in 1979.

Within a year of joining, he had become an active member of the Victorian Branch and was elected treasurer in 1979 and Branch Secretary in 1981 – an early demonstration of his dedication and generosity.

By 1980, Malcolm was elected to the National Council. This was the beginning of his remarkable service to the Council – which amounts to a total of 28 years.

By 1984, Malcolm had become the National Chairperson of the LPAA – an office he held for six consecutive years. His tenure coincided with a period of change and reform within the Association, and his role was critical to its ongoing development. His skills at chairmanship set a standard for future chairpersons to follow, and his abilities to deal with complex issues, particularly those of a legal and financial nature, helped to make the National Council an effective decision-making body.

Malcolm's value was further recognised when he was co-opted as a member of the Committee for Constitutional Change, along with the late Jim Henderson and the late Stephen Hobbs. This committee implemented the changes to the LPAA's administrative structure over the period of the 1980s which set in course the SSPA and the National Council as we see it today.

By 1991, Malcolm was again elected National Chairperson for a further two years, bringing a total of eight years of service in that role. In 1995, he replaced the late Ruth Henderson as National Treasurer – no mean task considering Ruth had been in the position for the preceding 23 years! Given Malcolm's occupational background in accountancy, the role was tailor-made for him, and he served in the role in both a professional and meticulous manner for 15 years.

Malcolm's ability as an advisor within the SSPA at both a national and state level was one of his main strengths, and he was always a great asset to the association – which has been vital to its success and continued smooth running.

Malcolm was always passionate about giving people opportunities, and he achieved this time and time again through his role as trustee of the Careers and Vocational Guidance fund.

Malcolm also played a significant role in supporting the inaugural Australian World Dwarf Games team in their successful feat at the 2009 Games. He worked as convention treasurer in the organisation of several state and national conventions and assisted with the establishment of Victoria's first short statured basketball team.

Another role Malcolm played alongside Laurice was welcoming new families into the LPAA/SSPA. Together they made themselves available to reach out and support new families as they navigated their way through the early years of their child's diagnosis. So many families benefitted from Malcolm and Laurice's ongoing support and advice over the years that they became dear friends to many of them. Then there are those of us who were fortunate enough to grow up alongside Robert, sharing milestones, experiences, and friendship, meaning that Malcolm and Laurice were a part of our lives too.

Malcolm always had the SSPA's interests foremost in his mind and was never one to aspire to any personal glory or credit. Whatever the task, Malcolm showed true loyalty, dedication, patience, and kindness; and his tireless service was formally recognised by the SSPA in 2004 when he was awarded a life membership.

We are so fortunate to have known Malcolm, and we will be forever grateful for his never-ending contributions to the SSPA and for the influence he's had on our lives. The SSPA and its members, including many of us here today, have all been touched by Malcolm's generosity, leadership, guidance, and friendship. He will remain in hearts and minds always. Our hearts and thoughts are with Laurice, Robert, Alister and Hanna; Bruce, Pasanna, and Malcolm's beloved Grandson Roshan.

We would like to share a couple of personal reflections by two of our members who worked closely with Malcolm over the years. These words represent the way all of us SSPA members felt about Malcolm.

#### **A personal reflection by Francis Kelly**

I first met Malcolm when I was a teenager. He became an influence for me later when I was elected to National Council, and I learnt a great deal from him about administration and how to chair meetings.

He was honest and a man of integrity, but he also had a sense of humour. He loved the Bombers (Essendon in the AFL). Every time I had a conversation (I had hundreds with him over the years both on the phone and in person) about National Council business, he would invariably want to talk to me, as a fellow supporter, about the team's performance or their prospects for the upcoming season.

I admired his skills as both the National Chairperson and later, National Treasurer. Although his approach was formal, he recognised moments in meetings that could be met with levity.

So, how do you encapsulate the qualities of someone who contributed so much towards the development and sustainability of the SSPA, and through his efforts directly or indirectly improved the lives of short-statured people and their families? It is in reality almost

impossible. However, when I think of Malcolm, the qualities which most come to the fore are his integrity, his principles, his honesty, but above all, his commitment to what he believed to be right for the SSPA in every way possible. Not just the organisation but the members it supports. So much of his knowledge and his energy was poured into finding the right approach to solving problems that he was often the 'go-to' person on National Council when a complex discussion point arose during a meeting. "What do you think, Malcolm?" was often the refrain when a perplexing scenario reared its ugly head.

In my personal opinion, Malcolm was one of the best administrators in the SSPA's history. In his respective roles as National Chairperson, National Treasurer, and more recently, as a trustee with the Careers and Vocational Guidance Fund, he was someone who was universally respected and appreciated. He will be missed, but his influence lives on in the progress the SSPA has made during his time on National Council, and more specifically, with some of the initiatives that he either introduced or was a part of. However, in saying that, there is no doubt we in the SSPA are poorer for his passing.

#### **A personal reflection by Vicki Fallon**

I will remember Malcolm as a fair-minded and caring man who exhibited wisdom, dedication, sincerity, good humour, and modesty.

The SSPA family was privileged to have had Malcolm working behind the scenes on their behalf for so many years, whilst he served in various roles on both National and Victorian committees and of course in his last role for many years as the National Treasurer. In addition, Malcolm also served as a trustee of the SSPA's Careers & Vocational Guidance Fund, where his compassion and concern for others contributed in enabling members to access artistic, sporting, educational, and other endeavours.

On a personal level, I learnt much from Malcolm, and although he more than likely never knew it, he became a mentor to me. In my role as secretary and later as membership secretary, I found Malcolm was someone I could always turn to for guidance, knowing that he would offer a considered and measured response. I wish I had let him know how much I appreciated that guidance.

Whilst all of us reflect on how lucky we are to have known Malcolm, my sincere thoughts are with Laurice on the loss of her husband and with Robert, Bruce, and Alistair on losing their father.

Carly, Merry, Francis, and Vicki.



**SHORT STATURED PEOPLE OF AUSTRALIA  
53<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Meeting**

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Short Statured People of Australia Inc will take place at **10.00am on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

and will be conducted via ZOOM during the Virtual Convention.

Members wishing to attend the AGM will be able to nominate their intention to do so when completing the convention registration form for our 2021 Virtual Convention. The registration form can be found elsewhere in this Journal.

Nominations for positions on National Council may be made on the nomination form below. It is suggested that the following be considered when nominating a member for election to the SSPA National Council:

- that all states are represented
- that male and female representation is equally spread
- that the nominee has knowledge of, and experience within the SSPA

The following positions must be filled: *President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Journal Editor, Membership Secretary, Overseas Liaison Officer, Sports Coordinator, Short Arts Collective Coordinator and a minimum of three Ordinary National Councillors.*

To enable members to decide whether they or another member would be suitable for a National Council position, reference can be made to the “Responsibilities and Obligations of National Councillors” that appears below.

## **WHAT IS EXPECTED OF AN SSPA NATIONAL COUNCILLOR?**

The following is a summary of the responsibilities of SSPA National Councillors. The job description for each of the office bearer positions.

*Note: National Council positions are served on an honorary basis.*

### **RESPONSIBILITIES AND OBLIGATIONS OF SERVING COUNCIL MEMBERS**

- Councillors are expected to attend at least two of the four council meetings per year. Meetings may be conducted via the use of technology.
- Councillors are required to submit an apology in the event of non-attendance at a council meeting.
- If councillors commit to a sub-committee, they are expected to carry out their duties promptly.
- Councillors must familiarise themselves with the Constitution of the SSPA, as well as the Mission Statement, Code of Ethics, Code of Behaviour, Publicity Guidelines and the Rules for State Branches.
- Outgoing National Councillors must ensure a smooth transfer of responsibility by providing all relevant documentation to their successors.
- All councillors must ensure the privacy of SSPA members. Obsolete documents whether digital or hard copy, must be shredded and/or deleted when no longer required.

*These responsibilities and obligations apply to all council members, whether they hold “council appointed”, “ordinary councillor” or “office bearer” positions.*

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### **JOB DESCRIPTIONS OF OFFICE BEARER POSITIONS**

#### **DUTIES OF PRESIDENT/CHAIRPERSON**

- Must be a person of short stature and a positive role model for the association.
- They must be a capable advocate for the SSPA and the short statured community in general and a confident spokesperson for the association, able to communicate and liaise with relevant organisations and individuals.
- The President acts as the Chairperson of each national council meeting.
- Required to present a written report to the Annual General Meeting of the SSPA and contribute a regular report to the SSPA Journal.

**The President has the normal “*Responsibilities and Obligations of Serving Council Members*”.**

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#### **DUTIES OF VICE PRESIDENT**

- The Vice President is the understudy to the President.
- Like the President, the Vice President is required to be a person of short stature and a positive role model to other members of the SSPA.
- Good communication skills and ability to liaise effectively with relevant organisations and individuals.

- The Vice President is required to present a report to the Annual General Meeting of the SSPA as well as reports to the Journal.
- Assist to keep webpage and social media updated in regard to current events and relevant information.
- Respond to queries.

**The Vice President has the normal “*Responsibilities and Obligations of Serving Council Members*”.**

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#### **DUTIES OF TREASURER**

- The Treasurer is responsible for the receiving and banking of all association monies and ensures that all payments authorised by the SSPA are made.
- Ensures that correct accounts are kept regarding the financial affairs of the association.
- Ensures that the association maintains a solid financial position.
- The Treasurer prepares a brief financial statement for each Council meeting as well as the yearly financial report for the Annual General Meeting.
- Respond to queries.

**The Treasurer has the normal “*Responsibilities and Obligations of Serving Council Members*”.**

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#### **DUTIES OF SECRETARY**

- Like the President and Vice President, the Secretary is required to be a person of short stature.
- At least 14 days prior to each AGM, the Secretary must post notice of the forthcoming AGM in the SSPA Journal, along with the Responsibilities & Obligations of National Councillors doc and a nomination form for election of national council members.
- Ensures that National Council reports, State Branch reports and minutes of the previous AGM are posted at the venue of the AGM at least 2 days prior to the holding of the meeting.
- After each AGM the Secretary must notify all newly elected National Councillors of their positions and forward relevant documents to them.
- The Secretary must record minutes of each National Council meeting (including the AGM) and forward them to all councillors, along with the agenda for the next meeting, within the time frame accorded by the SSPA Constitution.
- The Secretary attends to correspondence received and is responsible for outgoing correspondence as directed by National Council.
- The Secretary is required to give a “Correspondence” report to each National Council meeting and prepare a “Secretary’s Report” for the AGM.

**The Secretary has the usual “*Responsibilities and Obligations of Serving Council Members*”.**

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#### **DUTIES OF OVERSEAS LIAISON OFFICER (OLO)**



- The OLO is responsible for maintaining international contacts with groups for people of Short Stature.
- Notifies National Council of relevant information; posting same to the Journal, the SSPA website and SSPA Face Book page.
- The OLO prepares a brief report for each National Council meeting as well as a more comprehensive one for the AGM.
- Respond to queries.

The OLO has the usual “*Responsibilities and Obligations of Serving Council Members*”.

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#### **DUTIES OF JOURNAL EDITOR**

- The Journal Editor is responsible for the preparation, publication and dispatch of the SSPA Journal approximately four times a year.
- The Editor prepares a brief report for each meeting of National Council as well as a more comprehensive report for the Annual General Meeting.
- The elected Journal Editor must have access to appropriate computer programs such as:
  - Minimum of Windows 98, preferably XP, OR
  - Mac OS
  - Microsoft Word
  - Microsoft Publisher

**The Journal Editor has the normal “*Responsibilities and Obligations of Serving Council Members*”.**

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#### **DUTIES OF MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY**

- Maintain membership database, keeping accurate record of financial members of the association plus details of short statured children of members.
- Liaise closely with the Treasurer who is in receipt of membership fees.
- Ensure that renewal reminders are forwarded to members at the end of each financial year.
- Letter of welcome to be sent to new members.
- Liaise with National Councillors, state branch secretaries and parent representatives regarding relevant membership information.
- Supply the printer and Journal Editor with members’ contact details when each Journal is ready to be distributed.
- Email complimentary Journals to PAB members.
- Provide a brief report to each National Council meeting and a more comprehensive report to the AGM.
- Respond to queries.
- Ensure the security of the personal details of members.

**The Membership Secretary has the normal “*Responsibilities and Obligations of Serving Council Members*”.**

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#### **DUTIES OF SSPA SPORTS COORDINATOR**

- The Sports Coordinator is responsible for the sub branch, Short Statured Sports Australia (SSSA).
- Works in conjunction with the SSPA State Sports Coordinators.
- Liaise with international sporting associations such as the DAAA and DAAUK to remain informed about international sporting competitions for people with short stature, e.g. the World Dwarf Games.
- Liaise with the Australian Paralympics Committee to remain informed about participation opportunities for people of short stature.
- Access appropriate grants.
- Investigate mainstream sporting opportunities for people of short stature and investigate opportunities to participate in national/ international disability sporting events.
- Assist in organising SSPA national sporting weekends.
- Create and maintain a national database of people with short stature who are interested in or currently competing in sport.
- Develop a relationship with peak sporting bodies.
- Regularly inform members of the SSPA about forthcoming national and international sporting events through state newsletters, the national Journal, SSPA website, social media and email.
- Provide a brief report to each National Council meeting and a more comprehensive report to the AGM.

**The Sports Coordinator has the normal “*Responsibilities and Obligations of Serving Council Members*”.**

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#### **DUTIES OF SSPA SHORT ARTS COORDINATOR**

- The Short Arts Coordinator is responsible for the sub branch of the Short Arts Collective (SAC).
- Provides support for members to develop artistically by providing funding, mentoring, exhibition, performance and educational opportunities.
- Provide opportunities at SSPA conventions to nurture creative skills.
- Provide regular correspondence and display of works/ideas via print and electronic media.
- Provide a brief report to each National Council meeting and a more comprehensive report to the AGM.

**The Short Arts Coordinator has the normal “*Responsibilities and Obligations of Serving Council Members*”.**

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*Revised 2021 by National Secretary, Vicki Fallon.*

#### **NOMINATION FORM FOR ELECTION OF 2021/2022 SSPA NATIONAL COUNCIL**

**The following positions will become vacant:**

***President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Membership Secretary, Journal Editor, Overseas Liaison Officer, SSPA Sports Coordinator, Short Arts Coordinator and at least 3 ordinary councillors.***

POSITION	NOMINEE	NOMINATED BY	SECONDED BY	SIGNATURE OF NOMINEE
e.g. Treasurer	Joe Wilson	Margaret Chew	John Brackenshaw	<i>Joe Wilson</i>

**Please note:**

- All nominees must be financial members of the association and over the age of 18.
- The nominee must be willing to accept the nomination and sign accordingly.
- Also, the nomination must be “Seconded” by another SSPA member otherwise the nomination will not be valid.
- Nominations must be received by the Secretary no later than Friday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

*Nominations may be emailed to:*  
**secretary@sspa.org.au**

*OR posted to:*

**Vicki Fallon**  
**SSPA National Secretary**  
**96 Abercrombie Drive**  
**Abercrombie NSW 2795**



**2021**  
**NATIONAL VIRTUAL CONVENTION**

Welcome to the Short Statured People of Australia, we are pleased to announce the details of our 2021 Virtual Convention. The SSPA endeavour to deliver a successful program with convention favourites still at the core of our programming. We understand the significant impact conventions have on our members, from social interactions to educational opportunities. Therefore, our convention committee has gone above and beyond in planning a fantastic free event, which we hope you can support through attendance and participation.

The Virtual Convention will be run through Zoom. However, this isn't any regular Zoom 'meeting'. We have practised, employed, and developed creative ideas to ensure these sessions are interactive, social, supportive, and a worthwhile experience. The SSPA is here to help all members, and therefore committed to ensuring members can access, use, and/or participate without barriers. Are you unsure about how to use Zoom? Does internet access restrict you? Does technology limit you? Would you feel comfortable doing a practice run? Do you have additional needs or requirements to participate? If you said yes to any of these, please don't hesitate to contact us – we are here to help you.

**Who can attend:**

Open to all members, short-statured people, and or relatives and friends of short-statured people. Initial registration is required by completing an initial form here:

Registration: <https://forms.office.com/r/BUFj40cuPa>

A Zoom link will only be sent to those who register, the link will be sent out closer to the convention. Please note a separate link will be provided for Youth only sessions.

Registration is a compulsory element for all participants. No registration = No Attendance

**Privacy and Online Safety:**

Privacy and safety are at the forefront of our production throughout the entire five days. The SSPA will not tolerate privacy breaches, online bullying, session recordings, or content sharing by members and or the wider community. Steps we will take include SSPA registration form and a follow-up Zoom. Registration Form to cross-check participants. Each participant will receive a unique link to access Zoom; links shared to outsiders will be blocked. Those caught sharing links will be banned for the remaining sessions. All sessions will have SSPA appointed moderators and supervisors to act or assist if necessary. Finally, all sessions involving kids will have a strict admittance standard, with additional protocols in place to protect our young people. Ultimately, we wish everyone an enjoyable, worry-free convention experience.



## FRIDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER

7:00pm

### **WINE & CHEESE OPENING NIGHT**

The traditional convention opener transformed with BYO Wine and Cheese, social chats, and an evening of spectacular artistic display. Attendees will get the chance to catch up with old friends, meet new ones, and go on a breakout room adventure. Come and view works by emerging and established artists, speaking about and sharing their creative practice. This evening will specifically feature static art—which may include artworks such as paintings, ceramics, graphics, etc. Please contact Short Arts Coordinator Graci Lynch via email: [graci.lynch@sspa.org.au](mailto:graci.lynch@sspa.org.au) to express your interest.

## SATURDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER

9.00am:

### **MINDFULNESS WORKSHOP**

Amelia Donnelly is passionate about helping others. Amelia's love of wellbeing, resilience, and mental health is born from personal experience. Amelia has completed training in Positive Education at Geelong Grammar, Mindfulness Teacher Training with Dr Craig Hassed at Monash University. The session is open to all ages - kids, young adults, and adults alike!



10.00am:

### **PEP TALK**

VIP Guest speaker - to be confirmed

1.00pm:

### **SPORTS CHAT**



Room 1: Parents of Short Stature - School Sport (modification and tips), Junior Club Sports, and Para Sport Programs/Classification.

Room 2: 'How do you keep fit' and 'All things sport for Short Stature'.

3.00pm:

### **MADE TO MEASURE**

Back by popular demand, a webinar to share products, ideas, and the latest assistive technology/aids. Additionally, we are also going to show products which short stature and average height parents have found to make looking after your baby easier.



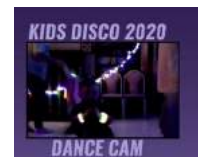
5.00-6.00pm:

### **KIDS DISCO**

Kids, it's time to rock it out in the living room!

Dance Cam is BACK! Bring your best moves...

Theme: Bright Colour – Neon Outfits or Glow Sticks



7.00pm:

### **TALENT SHOW**

Our second annual Virtual Talent Night will feature performance artists using all types of performance mediums - could be sport, cooking, singing, dancing, comedy, etc. All artists must pre-record their piece and save it as an MP4 file. Pieces cannot be longer than 3.5 minutes in length, to allow for as many performance pieces as possible to display their works. Please contact Short Arts Coordinator Graci Lynch via email: [graci.lynch@sspa.org.au](mailto:graci.lynch@sspa.org.au) to express your interest and discuss your submission.

## SUNDAY 26<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER

9:00am  
**SIP N ZEN  
YOGA**



A perfect way to start your Sunday morning; bring a cup of tea or coffee as you complete a Short Statured (18+ Age) Yoga/meditation session. Relax the mind, recharge the body, and socialise prior to the 2021 AGM! Requirements: BYO Tea, Coffee or Water, Space to sit on the floor (yoga mat or carpet), clothes you can stretch in, and a sense of fun!

10:00am  
**AGM**

SSPA AGM – More information available in the SSPA Journal and on the Website. Non-members are welcome to attend but remember you must be a member of the SSPA to vote at the AGM and be eligible to stand for a position on National Council or nominate someone else. Members of short stature may vote at an AGM if they are over the age of 16 and members of average stature must be over the age of 18 to vote at an AGM.

1.00pm TBC  
**LPNZ & SSPA**

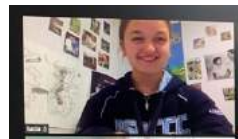
Little People of New Zealand and the SSPA are co-joining for a Trans-Tasman session. From getting to know our fellow neighbours to sharing each other's past stories and celebrations. A session not to be missed!



3:00pm  
**EMPLOYMENT  
TIPS/ADVICE**

SSPA Patron Tina Zeleznik CEO Disability Works Australia, will co-host the presentation to talk about employment topics and answer questions such as: When to disclose your disability/dwarfism to an employer? What makes an inclusive employer? What supports are available to assist us with applying for work and support within the workplace?

4.30-6.30pm:  
**YOUTH  
SESSION**



Short Statured Young people aged 12-20 are encouraged to join SSPA hosts Lucia & Kaed online. A safe place for young people to socialise, reconnect to friends and meet new people.



6.30pm  
**GUEST SPEAKER**

Simon Minty (UK). Simon co-runs a disability training and consultancy business. He frequently talks to large companies about employment and customers who have a disability. Simon also produces comedy show called - Abnormally Funny People, and currently co-host two podcasts, one for the BBC called 'Ouch', and one called 'The Way we Roll'.



7.30pm:  
**ADULT ONLY  
BINGO WITH  
ROSE HOBBS**

With the wonderful Rose Hobbs calling the numbers and commentating, this bingo session promises many laughs and a good chat as we play multiple games of bingo. Please register for this event as bingo cards are emailed to you in the days prior to the game. There will be a separate bingo event for the kids to participate in as we are keeping this one 18+.



## MONDAY 27<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER

10:00am

### **MEDICAL DAY & PROFESSIONALS Q&A**

Our PAB Presentations/ Medical Day will be PRE RECORDED and available to view online one week prior to the Convention. On Monday 27th September at 10am we will be hosting a live Q&A via Zoom, where members can send in their questions. Questions are due by Sunday 26th of September - prior to the Q&A. Email Questions to [pab@sspa.org.au](mailto:pab@sspa.org.au) Viewers will also be able to ask questions during the live session through the “chat” section on Zoom or contact us privately.

We are pleased to confirm that we have the following PAB members presenting:

**Professor David Silence** – Consultant Emeritus, Children’s Hospital Westmead.



**Professor Ravi Savarirayan** – Group Leader at Murdoch Children’s Research Institute and Head Consultant Clinical Geneticist at Victorian Clinical Genetic Services.



**Dr Penny Ireland** – Senior Physiotherapist within the Queensland Paediatric Rehabilitation Service (QPRS), at the Queensland Children’s Hospital (QCH), Brisbane.



**Dr Louise Tofts** – Paediatric Rehabilitation Specialist, Sydney Children’s Hospital Network.



**Alison Wesley** – Senior Occupational Therapist and **Tracey Tate** - Senior Physiotherapist, Children’s Hospital, Westmead.



**Dr Lesley McGregor** – Clinical Geneticist, Women’s and Children’s Hospital, Adelaide.



**Dr Verity Pacey** – Associate Professor and Head of the Department of Health Professions within the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Macquarie University.



1.00pm  
**NDIS Q&A**

Kim Henderson; NDIS Transition Coordinator who successfully presented her informative/user friendly presentation on the NDIS at the SSPA Albury Convention will be joining again, to provide helpful information to assist with accessing and utilising NDIS supports. Kim’s presentation will be online and available for viewing a week prior to the Q&A. Questions can be sent to [pab@sspa.org.au](mailto:pab@sspa.org.au) prior to the presentation or through the live chat during the presentation.



2.30pm:  
**Transition to school/Q&A**

Another popular session from last year which we are repeating, chaired by Krysten (mum to Maggie) and joined by Alison Wesley OT and Tracey Tate, Physio. Together they will identify and discuss what needs to be addressed for a positive transition to school. Recommended that members view Alison and Tracy’s informative presentation from last year prior to attending the session. Questions for the Q&A can be sent in to [pab@sspa.org.au](mailto:pab@sspa.org.au) prior to the presentation or through the live chat during the session.



## TUESDAY 28<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER

### 9.30am – 10:00am: **LIVING ROOM WORKOUT – KIDS**

Aimed at Kids 4 - 12 years. A living room PE style fun workout for all. This session can be performed in your living room or any other safe space inside/outside (with aid of a portable device). Essentials: Water Bottle, and One ball for each participant (any shape or size – no ball, try a tin foil ball). Siblings are welcomed!

### 11:30am **KIDS BINGO**

After the success of the kid's bingo during the last convention, this event will be happening again in 2021. This year there will be Winners Certificates to be won for each game. If you will have multiple players from the same family, please advise Katrina at [membership@sspa.org.au](mailto:membership@sspa.org.au) after registering to ensure that you receive the correct number of bingo cards.

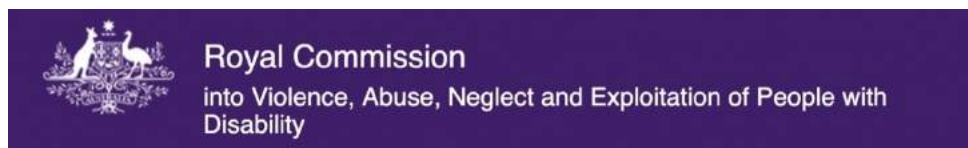
### 2.00pm: **MINECRAFT**

A new event for this year the Minecraft Challenge is a children's event where the participants will be teamed up to complete a set of building challenges in the Minecraft creative mode while talking within zoom breakout rooms. We will then re-join as a large zoom session to show what has been created and if you wish to you can then blow up your creations. A great way to have the kids working together, this event is sure to be a hit. More details such as which Minecraft version is required to participate will be emailed out after registering.



### 5.30pm:

### **DISABILITY ROYAL COMMISSION - SUBMISSION WORKSHOP**



SSPA has approached the Disability Royal Commission (DRC) to present this workshop which will be chaired by Fiona Strahan who is a writer, advocate and leader in the disability community in Tasmania.

We are aiming for the session to cover: The purpose, processes and influence of the DRC; The battle to get the DRC and the opportunities as a result; the different ways to tell your story; Know why it's important for the experiences of as many people with disability to be heard; Provide information about the support services available to assist individuals with telling their story in preparation to making a submission presenting at a hearing and/or having a private hearing. And what happens once the DRC finishes and makes its report and recommendations. We hope that the session will be engaging and that SSPA members will feel free to ask questions and will leave with an understanding of opportunities available to talk about experiences, their impact and be provided with solutions/recommendations SSPA members feel free to ask questions and leave with an understanding of opportunities to talk about experiences, their impact and provide solutions/recommendations.

*If we want things to change, we need to contribute to this long fought for opportunity. Our stories matter and have the power for change.*

### 7.00pm: Farewell





# Made to Order and Alteration Footwear

*Rod McHugh*

Maree Jenner brought back fond memories when she contacted me recently, as my father Frank McHugh and sister Jennifer were very involved with the L.P.A.A./SSPA in its earlier days. The yearly conferences in Port Macquarie were a must go event. The photograph below was taken in 1968; with my father Frank on the left at front, my mother Dorcas at the end, on the right is myself at the front and sister Jennifer in the middle.



Getting back to the subject though, the family company trading as McHugh's Shoes in addition to being a shoe store, we make made to order footwear and make alterations to off the shelf footwear to fit wider than average feet, such as stretching across the width.

Made to Order Footwear first involves measurements of both feet and from these we adjust a last to copy those dimensions. A last is made of plastic and it determines the shape of the finished footwear. The upper or footwear design is then pulled firmly over the last to deliver the final shoe shape.



(Above left, Normal Last and Last adjusted for broader fitting, Centre Rod McHugh & daughter Annie; Right Machined boot upper for Small Stature Woman needing ankle and footbed support)

However, before this happens, the style of footwear has to be chosen, lace up, slip on or boots etc. Once the design is chosen, a pattern is made to fit the last. This is a skilled task and takes several hours to achieve. A mock upper is then stitched up and tested on the last. Once this is checked as OK, we machine the leather upper in the colour chosen.

The completed upper is then lasted with the insole, the soles attached, the shoes cleaned, polished and boxed ready for the final fitting. The whole process takes about four weeks.

For children with growing feet a less expensive path is to alter off the shelf footwear. This mainly involves sandals where we can extend straps to cater for wider feet. We can also add straps with a buckle or velcro to give the feet more support.

Made to Order Footwear prices are \$550.00 and for boots depending on the height start from \$600.00.

To assist with payment for Made to Order Footwear individuals may be able to access their NDIS funding, private health fund, or local Podiatrist; as they could be eligible for a grant or part subsidy. Unfortunately, as we do not have a Degree in Podiatry we are not eligible for these grants.

Should you have any questions, visit our website [www.mchughsshoes.com.au](http://www.mchughsshoes.com.au) or contact me at: [rod@mchughsshoes.com](mailto:rod@mchughsshoes.com) or phone: 02 9518 0276.

# PARENT CATCH-UP

*Katrina Reynolds*



On July 31<sup>st</sup>, we held a parents catch up via Zoom as a part of our endeavour to expand the Parent Rep program. Everyone who attended found the session very helpful and we were able to discuss many areas such as school, the NDIS, inclusion, and social and emotional challenges. We hope to hold more of these sessions in the future which we will advertise in the Journal and on social media.

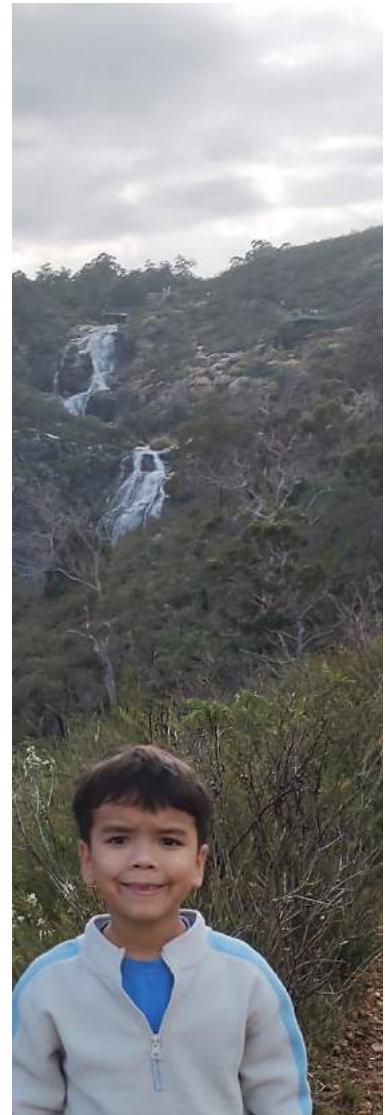


# Happy Snaps from the July School Holidays



Mia loved climbing trees with her siblings during the July holidays.

Rowan went bushwalking with his family to Lesmurdie Falls in the Perth Hills. He walked the whole 3+km circular route over rocks and through mud.



Tilly was able to spend the holidays in Merimbula with her family. Though it was cold, nothing could stop her from splashing in the water.



Aaron's July holiday plans were cancelled due to COVID lockdowns, but he was still able to get out and about.

Mia and her family went bushwalking out on their uncle's farm.



Maggie and Archer wanted a photo with a real seal at Melbourne Zoo. They settled for the next best thing.





Maggie enjoyed the Royal Victoria Markets.



Mia finished the Queensland State Cross Country where she finished in first place for the under 11 girls multi class event. Congratulations, Mia!



Maggie was able to hang out with friends while at the Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne. Mum Krysten says that they wreak havoc during their down time.

# YOUTH CATCHUP!

Hi everyone!

Recently on the 5<sup>th</sup> of July, the SSPA held a catchup zoom for the youth (12-20s) in the SSPA. It was a great to see everyone again and to meet new people. We all had lots to catch up on since it had been ages since we had formally “met up”. We ran some very fun activities, and we all learnt something new about each other.

It certainly is safe to say that we all know what it feels like to be locked down at home. This shared feeling and experience allowed us to further reconnect with our friends, especially since many of us were in/coming out of lockdown at that point in time.

We had a great time running it, and we learnt many valuable tips and tricks in regards to holding online events.

Hoping to see you all soon and stay safe,

Kaed and Lucia

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## KTM Kollections

*Lucia Bruce-Gilchrist*

Hi everyone!

Recently I zoomed with Tiana Holt to discuss her business KTM Kollections. She and her sister, Shae, create handmade hair accessories—currently their products entail scrunchies and bows, including bows made specifically for babies.

The idea of starting a business had been in the air between them for a long time before they officially started in April. Since then, they’ve landed their products in a store in Townsville and have their scrunchie range in a Price Attack in Brisbane. Currently, KTM Kollections are taking orders on direct messages on their social medias (@ktmlollections on Instagram) and will soon be launching an online store. Sometime in the future Tiana would like to see KTM Kollections expanding into more stores across Australia and perhaps one day once they’ve got enough products, have a store of their own. She and her sister are also interested in expanding the types of products they sell, with the vision of branching into clothing for both boys and girls.



When I asked what the most enjoyable part of running her own business was, Tiana was quick to answer with a smile – ‘Being my own boss.’ Other parts include seeing a result come out of her hard work, and to be a part of something bigger than she is.

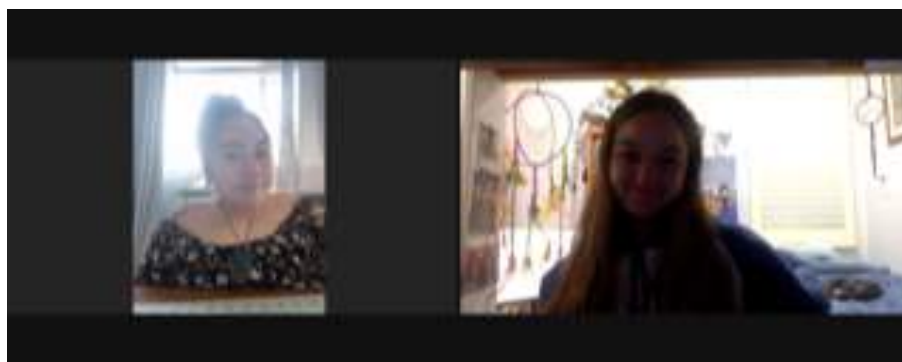


into the world.

To maintain their want to be 100% proud of what they’ve created, KTM Kollections makes sure to source only good quality materials that they would be willing to buy themselves as a customer. This can prove to be difficult at times but it’s all worth it in the end. All their products are also handmade, to further allow them to be happy with what they’re putting out

Tiana’s tips and tricks for starting a business:

- Even though you’re going to start off with a million ideas, don’t go crazy and move too fast
- Take your time
- Be 100% sure of what you’re selling—if you’re not happy with your products, neither will the people who buy them
- Don’t settle for less than your goals and your vision





# Words of Wisdom for Short Statured Parents Expecting Their First Baby

Having your first baby is an exciting time for soon to be parents. It can also be an overwhelming time as you try to choose baby items which will work well for your family. To help new parents, I have asked some short statured parents what their favourite items are and why, to help parents when making these choices. These are the products they have recommended.



This is the Joie spin 360 isofix car seat. This car seat can be turned to face the door of the car or towards the interior of the car to help when you are positioning your baby in the seat. It can then be rotated back to the rear facing position and fixed back into place easily. This helps with reach and protects your back. Suitable from birth to four years old. There are other isofix car seats on the market.

A breastfeeding pillow helps to hold your baby securely while you feed them. The pillow can be fastened so that you can be sure that it will not slip from under your baby. This will help with reach and encourages you to keep your back straighter making breastfeeding more relaxing for both mother and baby. While in hospital, post birth, ask for a lactation specialist to visit you. They will talk about the best positions for feeding and what pillows, chairs, and stools to have available.





The Troll Sunside Bassinette has one side which completely lowers to enable parents to reach the baby easily. This bassinette can also be lowered to a height which works best for parents. Another feature is that it can be placed beside the bed of the parents in a co-sleeping position for easy access when baby wakes during the night.

tad.org.au has created a cot with a sliding gate. This cot was created for parents who are in wheelchairs but would also be a useful feature for short statured parents. Reaching over the gate can be difficult especially once the cot is lowered for a toddler.



The Snuz Pod 2 made by Edwards & Co also works as a co-sleeper with zip down sides. This bassinette can be lowered to match your bed height enabling parents to bring their baby into bed with them for feeding and then easily be placed back in the bassinette.



Many changing tables contain draws which would make them difficult to lower. There are others which have shelves instead of draws which could have the legs shortened by someone handy with a saw. This one from IKEA would be easy to shorten as it comes flat packed and could be altered before putting it together.

A more versatile idea is to have a changing pad which you can place on any table or bench top or also on the floor. Shown left is the Keekaroo Peanut Diaper Changing Pad which has anti roll sides and a safety strap.



To help with bath time it helps to have a baby bath with an optional infant position. This leaves both of your arms free and enables easy bathing.



Another option is a baby shower seat. You can place this on the shower floor and bathe baby while you shower, or you can use this in a larger bath to keep baby secure.

There are many bathing options available, some of which convert your kitchen sink into a baby bath.

The Baby Jogger City Tour 2 (shown right) weighs a low 6.5kg. The handle can be lowered to 76cm. This stroller can be used from newborn until 22kg.

Other recommended strollers and prams are the Bugaboo Fox 2 Pram made by Bugaboo, and the Oscar MX made by Edwards & Co. Both of these are light weight and have the option of 3 large all-terrain wheels. They can also both be paired with removable bassinets. The removable bassinet can be very useful when visiting family and friends.



The Britex Flex is another light weight option. The basic stroller weighs 12kg and a tandem seat can be added when more babies join the family. The stroller features a telescopic handle with eleven different heights available.



## **CAREERS AND VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE FUND**

The Careers and Vocational Guidance Fund is a Trust Fund especially set up to receive donations, invested in a capital fund, and to utilise these donations, and income generated from those donations, for the assistance of short statured people. The following circumstances would indicate generally the areas in which assistance would be granted –

but these are not exhaustive:

1. An allowance for a child who requires special coaching in a subject or subjects whilst still at school – this applies to either primary or secondary school
2. TAFE courses that are oriented towards a job situation
3. Business College
4. Vocational Guidance Test
5. University courses – assistance where necessary
6. Any other course of instruction which would lead to improvement of individual employment
7. Assistance with texts and/or technology required at school
8. Modification of assets (cars, home etc.)
9. Assistance to attend events such as Conventions, sports meetings (The Trustees also consider that courses or other assistance that help to improve self-esteem, and a sense of accomplishment, would be considered along with the original guidelines).

It should be noted that assistance is only available to a short statured person or a child of a short statured person.

As part of the concessions allowed by the Australian Tax Office, the Fund is required to assist those applicants who are in “necessitous circumstances”, that is, that the applicant would find it difficult to finance the above listed activities, due to limited income.

Applicants who feel they would qualify for assistance under the above guidelines are invited to apply to the trustees for assistance. The current trustees are: Rosemary Hobbs, Linda Henderson, Megan Lilly, and Robert Millard. Decisions of the trustees are final.

**Prospective donors are also reminded that the Fund is a Deductible Gift Recipient Fund, and so donations to the fund are tax deductible.**

Rosemary Hobbs, Trustee, on behalf of the trustees.

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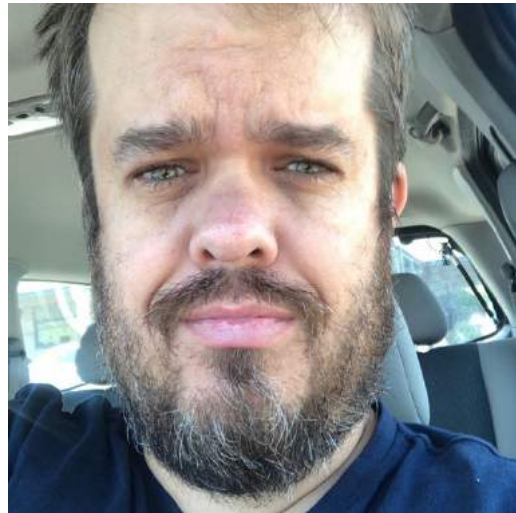
# Love Your Work

*Vicki Fallon recently spoke to Pete Stone regarding his work as a Support Worker in the Disability Sector, and this is what Pete had to say*

...

I have been working as a support worker in the disability sector for the last six years, supporting people with special needs. Prior to that, I was employed as a school chaplain and previous to that a youth worker.

My work in this area really started when I participated in some volunteer work in northern NSW at the age of seventeen. I was working with Indigenous youth for an organisation called Fusion, and it spiralled from there. I kind of fell into this work as I saw a need for working and talking with kids, particularly youth at risk.



I went from volunteer work to paid employment and worked for Fusion as a youth worker for ten years in both Sydney and Launceston and other areas around the country as well as overseas.

After about ten years, I moved to NSW and tried a few different jobs for a while. However, I found I missed Tassie a bit too much, so I moved back to Hobart when I was offered a job there as a School Chaplain working closely within the school community with students from Prep to Grade 10.

I loved the job of a school chaplain. However, I must stress that there is a lot more to Chaplaincy than simply a focus on religion. It's not about being a 'religious nut job' and 'preaching' or anything like that. There's so much more to School Chaplaincy than people think. For example, some of my duties included running basketball programs, lunch & recess hangout, participating in drama groups, trips to Uluru, and helping to support kids at risk. I enjoyed the work and was successful in the role because I always tried to be "real" and not "fake" with the kids, and I didn't tolerate them pushing boundaries or showing disrespect. I believe that when youth know and feel they are respected, they will show respect in return.

After eight years, I started to feel a bit burnt out, and one day I realised that I had been sitting in the office at lunch and recess instead of joining the kids. That wasn't good. I decided a change was needed. So, while taking a break over the Xmas period, I applied for a position via SEEK, and within the New Year, I found myself in a new job in the role of a support worker.

My new job was with OAK Possibility, an agency providing a full range of disability care services in Tasmania. I was employed to care for four clients needing full-time support in a group home. Seven other clients who lived on the premises in semi-independent units didn't require care all the time, only individual support as needed. I worked in that position for approximately eight more years until leaving Tassie.

As far as training goes, I completed a Certificate IV in Youth Work to be employed in that field of work. There is a Diploma course available that I undertook some years back, but despite having completed almost every subject, I made the rather silly decision to drop out ... something I wouldn't advise people to do, especially when you only have a short period of time left before finishing! However, over the years, I have also completed a number of short courses that have definitely helped me in my work as a personal support worker by providing very practical instruction whilst actually being on the job. For example, I've learnt a lot from participating in short courses on first aid, delivering medications, using epi pens, diabetes, leadership, mediation, and crisis management.

Despite having to witness sadness and difficult life situations, I find a lot of joy in this type of work as I love helping others, and I see myself as being a role model. I have always had a positive attitude to life, and my personal philosophy is that there is so much to be grateful for. As a person living with dwarfism, I feel the need to share and show people that life is about living, despite the setbacks and problems that we may all face. My approach is by demonstrating that I will always have their back. Building confidence and resilience in young people is one of the aims I have in being a youth support worker. I feel the need to reinforce with young people that despite the terrible circumstances that they may have experienced, or be experiencing, life is great, life is wonderful, and there is much to look forward to.

There are massive employment opportunities in this field, and I would recommend this type of work to other people of short stature, whether it be with youth, old age care, disability, mental health, or addiction. If anyone wants to contact me regarding work or just for a chat, feel free to email me at [pete.stone@mysupports.com.au](mailto:pete.stone@mysupports.com.au)

Since moving to Western Australia to be with my girlfriend and her three children, I have managed to find work in the same sector, and I am now self-employed as well as working for another company. In looking ahead to the next five or ten years, I see myself still employed in the field of Youth Work as I am currently happy and contented and feel I have a calling for this type of work.

My story isn't over, there's more to be written. One thing is for certain, though I'm a person of short stature, that has never held me back and it's never going to!



Hi everyone,

I thought it was best to open this report with an apology. I haven't given enough effort or time to supporting the growth and development of the Short Arts group or the individuals that are currently in the group or looking to be involved in the group this year. We did have a catch-up post-Convention last year and even attempted to hold an AGM, which didn't progress unfortunately. I don't want to see the Short Arts group fade into the background and need your assistance to keep it going.

I thought we could start simple—as we really need to consider building our membership first before we progress with projects, as projects require people and action from these people to help get them off the ground.

Please join us for a Zoom Catch-up to discuss how you can be involved and what we could do or see the Short Arts Program doing over the next twelve months, regardless of whether we're in a Lockdown or not. Individuals of all ages welcome to join in the discussion.

**SSPA Inc. is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.**

***Topic: Short Arts Brainstorm Session***

***Date and Time:*** Sep 19, 2021 03:00 PM Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney

***Join Zoom Meeting***

***<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86773682107?pwd=RTFVVHRqUG9JYy95eityL3J0YzFXZz09>***

***Meeting ID:*** 867 7368 2107

***Passcode:*** 007899

Short Arts still has a presence at this year's SSPA Virtual Convention. We will again host the annual Wine and Cheese Evening—this year presenting and displaying artists showcasing all types of static art (paintings, drawings, ceramics, etc). We will then play host to the Talent Night—where talent of all types will be on display for all to admire and enjoy. Talent is not limited to dance, song, theatre or comedy. Have a hidden talent? Want to share it? Maybe you are a rad skateboarder—or a mean cook! Talent comes in all forms, so why not share it?

All details on how to get involved at this year's Short Arts events as part of the SSPA Virtual Convention are included in this Journal. Please have a read and consider getting involved!

Looking forward to hearing your thoughts on the future of the Short Arts Group at the Zoom catch-up on the 19<sup>th</sup> of September, followed by your attendance at the Short Arts events at this year's SSPA Virtual Convention.

Kind regards,

Graci



## LIVING THE DREAM

*Leisa Prowd*



FIGURE 1 SKIN BETWEEN CREW FROM FRONT - CLOCKWISE TSUKI, LEISA, PO-NIEN, RAFF, TAMAE

[profil/](#)

[thumbnail\\_220283565\\_224113442823745\\_1717277317463138152\\_n](#)

Every day I would go to the Werkstatt für Theater und Kunst (workshop for theatre and art) and attend dance, movement and music workshops to research inclusive theatre making practices to discover new ways of working with different bodies and artists with disabilities. My time with them was both amazing and challenging. Although most people in Berlin can speak English as a second language, many of the artists at Thikwa did not. My German is rudimentary; I can understand it reasonably well but struggle with the grammar. However, by

At the beginning of 2020, life for me was looking really exciting. I had everything planned out. I was resigning from my job of twelve years to concentrate more on my flourishing artistic practice. I had already been cast in three different dance and theatre productions and had a big interstate speaking engagement booked. After this, I was going to travel to Indonesia to participate in a two-week artistic residency before heading off to Berlin, Germany, to do a three-month internship with Theater Thikwa—an inclusive dance, theatre, and arts studio.

Then, COVID hit, and Melbourne was in the first of a series of lock downs. Like many other artists, I received several phone calls and a number of emails and within 24 hours everything had been cancelled. I was devastated. However, I remained determined to still travel to Berlin to take up the internship with Theater Thikwa and as I was going to be out of Australia for over three months I applied for and received a travel exemption. I was so excited to be able to go that I didn't even mind having to wear both a mask and a full face shield for the entire flight!

Theater Thikwa is one of Germany's well known inclusive theatre companies.

<https://www.thikwa.de/en/about-thikwa/about-thikwa->

the end of my time there we had all worked out a way to communicate, especially through dance and movement.

I had an especially funny incident with one of the Thikwas on my first day. On meeting me she looked at me and said, *'Sie sind zu klein. Ich mag nur große Menschen. Ich mag keine kleinen Leute. Du solltest wachsen!'*

I couldn't help but laugh. My rudimentary German was enough that I understood perfectly well that she was saying, *'You are too small. I only like tall people. I don't like small people. You should grow!'*

We both laughed together. She wasn't really that much taller than me! We ended up being very good friends who communicated despite neither of us being able to speak each other's language.

After my internship, Thikwa staff employed me as an emergency replacement trainer for dance and movement classes. I led dance and movement several times during my eight months in Berlin. My two-hour classes involved breathwork, Kundalini yoga, and improvised dance. An interpreter would be present during the classes. However, because it was all body-based practices everyone was able to follow along and the interpreter would often just join the class as well!



FIGURE 2 REHEARSING WITH PO-NIEN



FIGURE 3 EXPLORING MY FASCINATION WITH BODY IMAGE IN THE BUTOHSPIELPLATZ WORKSHOP

I also had the privilege of being involved in two dance residencies at Trauma Bar und Kino in Berlin, along with my friend Tsuki and three other artists—Tamae Yoneda, Po-Nien Wang, and Raff Donnaloia. Together we spent a total of four weeks exploring different ideas of dance and movement with a curiosity that involved different bodies in response to each other and the space between us. At the end of the two residencies, we had a showing to a small audience to present our discoveries. The piece, called *Skin Between*, was also filmed by both an external videographer and also by our own mobile phones carried by each of us as we were performing. We were so happy with the result and had great feedback from our audience.

can find it by clicking this link:  
<https://youtu.be/UZJI0iR1dQQ>

If you would like to see an excerpt from the piece you

While in Berlin I also heard about an amazing opportunity to audition for an upcoming production with Theater Bremen. They were looking for a handful of dancers of different ages and body types to join their ensemble for the creation of a new work. My audition was successful and I was offered a place in the work which was supposed to start its creative development in February this year. However, it was decided to put the process on hold until

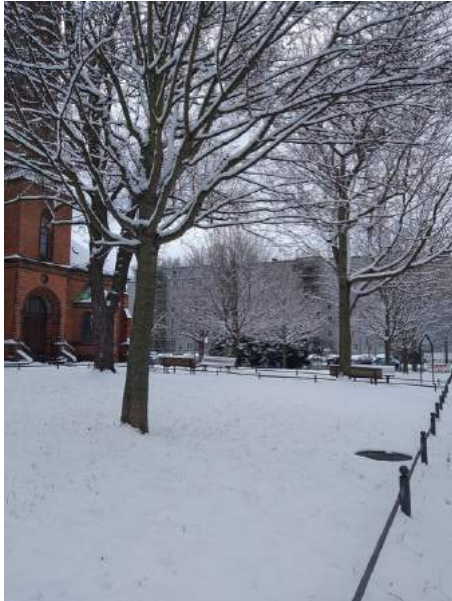


FIGURE 4 IN MY NEIGHBOURHOOD!

November 2021 so I will be returning to Germany then to join the ensemble in Bremen. We will be having a performance season in Bremen in February, followed by a short tour to Budapest in Hungary. I am so excited.

It was an amazing experience to live for eight months in another country. At first, I kept pinching myself when I got there, not being able to believe that I was there. After months of being locked down in Melbourne it was a surreal experience to be out and about, attending workshops, eating in cafes, and being able to see friends. Life eventually settled into a routine that was interspersed with grocery shopping, paying bills, and finding a new place to live every month or so. I experienced what it was like having snow as a daily weather forecast. My excitement at seeing snow every day slowly turned in to, 'Oh dear, it's snowing again!' and having to make sure I was dressed appropriately and negotiate icy footpaths and melting slush!

I returned to Australia on a repatriation flight at the end of May this year and spent two weeks in quarantine at Howard Springs NT. It felt strange to hear Australian accents all the time after eight months in Germany and I even found myself answering questions with, 'Ja, genau' 'Entschuldigung' or 'Danke'. I am now in my third winter in a twelve-month period and by the time I return Germany will be heading back into winter again! My body is rather confused at the moment!

I am so grateful to have these opportunities. I have always wanted to dance and perform, ever since I was a little girl, so it is wonderful to be able to live my dream even at this age! I keep saying to people that it is NEVER too late to pursue what you have always wanted to do. I am looking forward to seeing what else life has in store.

## **Munro/Boyd Memorial Award for Creative Writing and Artistic Endeavours**

The Munro/Boyd Memorial Award for Creative Writing and Artistic Endeavours is an annual award presented to a short statured individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the arts in their chosen field. The award celebrates and acknowledges the artistic excellence of both emerging and established short statured artists.

This award is in memory of two short statured individuals who were artists in their own right, Tony Munro and Lynelle Boyd. Both of them lead creative lives, Tony was a successful writer and journalist; Lynelle Boyd was a visual and performance artist and co-founder of Short Arts Collective.

This award was initiated by Scott Munro, Tony's brother and is supported by Wilma Steain, Lynelle's Mother.

The award will be presented annually at the SSPA Annual National Convention. Winners will receive a trophy and their names will be recorded on The Munro/Boyd Memorial Award for Creative Writing and Artistic Endeavours plaque.

### **What are the aims of this award?**

The Munro/Boyd Memorial Award for Creative Writing and Artistic Endeavours aims to:

- Recognise short statured individuals for artistic skills and/or achievement
- Raise the awareness and profile of short statured artists
- Provide a forum for recognising short statured artists who have made a significant contribution to the arts

### **Who is eligible to be nominated?**

The award is open to short statured artists who are members of the Short Statured People of Australia Inc.

### **How to nominate someone for this award**

*In 500 words or less*, please tell us about the artist you would like to nominate i.e. their specific art practice, how long they have been practicing their art form, and what they have accomplished so far in their contribution to the arts.

To support your nomination, please include evidence of the nominee's art practice this can include (and is in no way limited to): Pieces of creative writing; published written work, poetry, theatre performance, musical performance including singing and/or instrument, photography, painting, drawing, sculpture, ceramic/glass, mixed media, craft, and/or textile. This can be demonstrated by either, photographic, video and/or audio recorded evidence.

Keep in mind this award celebrates and acknowledges the artistic excellence of ***both*** **emerging** and **established short statured artists**.

**For further information, please contact either: Vicki Fallon** on ph. (02) 6332-4474 or **Graci Lynch** on 0423 613 082

**Nominations close:** 19th of September 2021

**Please send your nominations to:** [graci.lynch@sspa.org.au](mailto:graci.lynch@sspa.org.au)

# What's happening around our Nation?



## Victoria

Hi everyone!



The Vic Group have had quite a successful year, despite facing seven lockdowns all whilst riding the crazy COVID wave! We've had several Zoom catchups having had the opportunity to catch-up with past, present, and emerging SSPA members. Thank goodness for modern technology, eh? We also held two successful face-to-face events in Indented Head (30<sup>th</sup> of January) and Castlemaine (7-9 May). We have met many new families and established some lovely connections with them during the last twelve months too. Our last event of the year ahead of the second Virtual Convention was our Christmas in July Zoom catch-up, held on the 10<sup>th</sup> of July. We aim to continue connecting with individuals and families over the next few months—hopefully organising another face-to-face event before the end of the year, COVID permitting. We hope that those who have received communication from us over the last 12 months have found benefit in our contact and pursuit to keep connected with you. It's so important for us to ensure that we continue to reach out to everyone within the group—especially where support is needed. It's especially important now more than ever, that no one feels alone, isolated or left out from being included or involved—where possible. We are organising another two Zoom Catch-up, for anyone who wishes to connect. You don't need to specifically be a part of the Vic Group—so all members welcome. We know we all need support and an opportunity to connect across the country—especially now. Details are below.

### ***Topic: Vic COVID Wave Party***

**Date and Time:** Sep 12, 2021 02:00 PM Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney

### **Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81155591979?pwd=b21WRytHQVZSNESyQlpETTEybDM1UT09>

Meeting ID: 811 5559 1979

Passcode: 523018

### ***Topic: Post Convention Vic Catch-up***

**Date and Time:** Oct 3, 2021 03:00 PM Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney

*Note: This is the first day of daylight savings! Spring forward.*

### **Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87010040932?pwd=Znp6ZzJ3bjNiNWt4WThXQmtNVzhLdz09>

Meeting ID: 870 1004 0932

Passcode: 158628

### **Graci Lynch**

SSPA Victorian Branch

**E:** [graci.lynch@sspa.org.au](mailto:graci.lynch@sspa.org.au)

## New South Wales/ACT

Hello everyone,

Well, we are certainly experiencing strange times, aren't we? For the second year in a row the COVID virus has interrupted our lives, making it difficult if not impossible for social interaction. However, NSW/ACT branch did well earlier this year to hold two face-to-face social events amidst the ever-changing conditions. The first being the meeting and lunch held at Blaxland in the Blue Mountains and the second being the late summer pool party at Bronte, in Sydney's eastern suburbs.

Unfortunately, due to lockdowns in the second half of this year, we've had to cancel the weekend get-together we planned to hold at Umina on the Central Coast, as well as the Bunnings BBQ fundraiser that was planned for October.

However, one of the more positive effects of COVID is that we've all become very familiar with online communications and the word "Zoom" has now become commonplace in our lexicon. Prior to COVID, I doubt many of us would have heard "Zoom" mentioned in the context that it is now referred to!

And speaking of Zoom, our NSW/ACT youth member Lucia Bruce-Gilchrist together with VIC youth member Kaed Dawber, recently held a very successful Zoom catchup for young members (see report elsewhere in this Journal). Well done, guys.

I was also really impressed to hear of another Zoom story last week when the Eyles family from NSW, they utilised Zoom to overcome lockdown restrictions by holding an online group-cooking session with extended family members. What a great idea! The family's grandad gave an online lesson on bread-making. You can see how proud the girls are here with their effort! After the cooking lesson, the family shared an online dinner with the rest of the extended family. How wonderful!



Another lockdown story relates to Tilly Reynolds from the ACT who has been spreading a little joy whilst exercising with her family on their daily walks. Tilly definitely seems to have a flair for entertaining. Lovely to see all those great costumes, Tilly, you no doubt brought smiles to many faces!



### **NSW/ACT Annual General Meeting**

The NSW/ACT branch held their AGM on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> August, online of course, and the meeting was well attended. It was great to catch up with everyone and lovely to see Prof Sillence and Dr Jenny Ault in attendance.

The result of the election of our new committee is as follows:

*Chairperson:* Maree Jenner

*Treasurer:* Troy Parker

*Secretary:* Vicki Fallon

*Youth Coordinator:* Lucia Bruce-Gilchrist

*Social Coordinators:* Dawn Bos & Sue Palmer

*Committee members:* Michael Blair, Emily Blair, Katrina Reynolds

The NSW/ACT Parent Reps are Dawn Bos, Jenni Bruce, Vicki Fallon, Katrina Reynolds, Wilma Stein, and Alma Weber.

During the meeting, Dr Jenny Ault paid tribute to the late Malcolm Paton and acknowledged the support that he and Laurice and the Paton family gave the SSPA over the many years she and Prof have known them. The committee acknowledged Malcolm's passing and paid their respects and sympathy to Laurice, Rob, and the Paton family.

The next meeting of the NSW/ACT branch will be an online meeting scheduled for Tues 16<sup>th</sup> November at 7pm.

A reminder email will be sent to members beforehand.

### **Congratulations**

To end my report on a happy note, congratulations go to Emily and Michael Blair on the edition to their family with the birth of baby Hugo 3 months ago.

### **Vicki Fallon**

NSW/ACT Secretary

**E:** [secretary@sspa.org.au](mailto:secretary@sspa.org.au)



## NDIS and people with dwarfism

Maree Jenner

Email: [pab@sspa.org.au](mailto:pab@sspa.org.au)

SSPA continues to advocate and work with NDIA/NDIS to assist with increasing their awareness of supports for people of short stature. A tip is that when you are applying for access please use the terms dwarfism & short stature as well as the diagnosis of your condition. If anyone has any questions or would like support with accessing the NDIS feel free to email [pab@sspa.org.au](mailto:pab@sspa.org.au)

I had a recent enquiry about custom made shoes for children, I found this website of a company located in suburban Sydney. <http://www.ajroldan.com.au/children-shoes/> Regarding shoes, as they are an everyday expense for everyone, but due to our disability/short wide feet we may require custom made shoes. Therefore, the price difference between “off the shelf” shoes and custom-made shoes is a disability expense. Not unlike the alterations/modifications we need to have done to items of clothing before we can wear them. As cost of clothes are an everyday expense, alteration/modification costs to clothing because of our body shape or limb length are disability related expenses.

### SSPA Facebook

#### groups:

#### SSPA NDIS Discussion

**Forum** - is a place to ask questions, offer advice and share experiences of people of short stature on your NDIS journey.

#### SSPA Hacks & ideas group

- is a place to ask questions, offer hack ideas and share them with others in the short statured community. Ideas/hacks that will make our vertically challenged lives that little bit easier. Please check it out and feel free to add your ideas or ask for suggestions etc.

#### Maree Jenner

VP/PAB Liaison Officer

E: [pab@sspa.org.au](mailto:pab@sspa.org.au)

Hi SSPA Members,

I am an NDIS Support [Coordinator](#) and I work for Supports2u Support Coordination and I have capacity for NDIS Participants. We at Supports2u are NDIS Registered and can provide Support Coordination Australia wide. If you are not local to the Riverina, NSW I am able to be creative in supporting you and can look at options such as phone calls & zoom.

Let me tell you a bit about myself, my name is Nikita & I am 18 years old.



I was diagnosed with Achondroplasia at 5 weeks old, I am 4 foot 1. I enjoy, Roller skating, swimming, motorbike riding and league tag. I have 2 older sisters and 1 younger sister along with both an older and younger brother.

My NDIS Support Coordinator helped me out so much with things I couldn't have imagined doing! She helped me to be able to drive with getting car modifications, get minor modifications done to my house e.g. A lower bench so that I can cook, google home because I can't reach the PowerPoints & Smart light switches that I can control with my voice, she helped find a new bed (custom made pallet bed, so that I don't have to run and jump into bed... I absolutely love it!! And much more). I would like to help you guys get what you need and achieve your goals the same way I was helped to achieve my goals!

This is some of the stuff I can also help with:

- Work with you to find a service that can help you with your needs
- Work with you to purchase the supports you need and help you with any documents such as agreements and quotes
- Help you to obtain assessments, equipment, and other requirements to assist you
- Help you budget within your NDIS plan
- Help you with reaching your NDIS plan goals
- Encourage you to have choice and control over your supports
- Support you to get ready for your new NDIS plan

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or would like to know more!

Look forward to speaking with you 😊

Email: [nikita@supports2u.net](mailto:nikita@supports2u.net) Mobile: 0452 338 004  
Kind regards,

Nikita Macintosh



NDIS registered provider number - 4050059063



*Picture reads:*

Hi SSPA members,

I am an NDIS Support Coordinator, and I work for Supports2U Support Coordination and I have capacity for NDIS participants. At Supports2U, we are NDIS registered and can provide Support Coordination Australia wide. If you are not local to the Riverina, NSW, I am able to be creative in supporting you and can look at options such as phone calls and Zoom.

Let me tell you a bit about myself. My name is Nikita, and I am eighteen years old. I was diagnosed with achondroplasia at 5 weeks old. I am 4 foot 1. I enjoy roller skating, swimming, motorbike riding, and league tag. I have two older sisters and one younger sister along with both an older brother and younger brother.

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- Help you to budget within your NDIS plan
- Help you with reaching your NDIS plan goals
- Encourage you to get ready for your new NDIS plan
- Support you to get ready for your new NDIS plan

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or would like to know more!

I look forward to speaking with you! ☺

Email: [nikita@supports2u.net](mailto:nikita@supports2u.net)

Mobile: 0452 338 004

# BOOK REVIEW

Julie Dickson

**Title:** *Short* by Holly Goldberg Sloan

**Recommend age:** 8-12

*Short* by Holly Goldberg Sloan is a middle grade novel about Julia, a girl who is short for her age. She is still grieving the loss of her beloved dog Ramon.

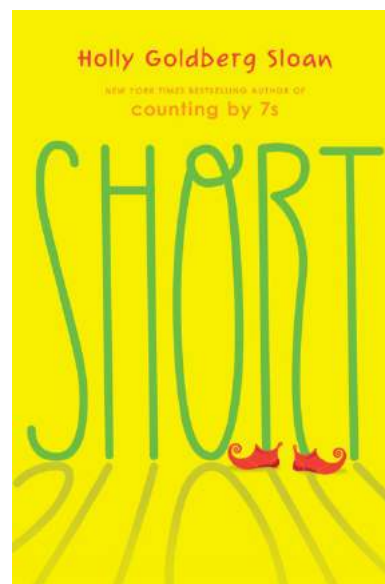
At the beginning of the summer school holidays, Julia's mother enrolls her and her younger brother Randy in their local theatre's production of *The Wizard of Oz*.

Julia is cast as a munchkin and takes a fondness to Olive, a woman with dwarfism who is also cast as a munchkin, as she thinks they can bond over the fact they are both short for their age. Over the course of the summer, Julia learns to embrace who in this heart-warming story laced with humour.

It was fantastic to see adults with dwarfism positively represented in a middle grade book as unfortunately it's quite rare. Apart from Olive, two other adults with dwarfism, Quincy and Larry, are also cast in the play. The author did a great job of portraying these characters positively. Everyone is quite accepting of their physical differences which is nice to see. Olive becomes a mentor to Julia, and they form a great friendship. However, there is one scene where Olive makes a speech about how sometimes she gets discriminated against for her height and this felt unnatural and forced, like I was being lectured.

We spend a lot of time in Julia's head reading her observations and inner monologue. Her humour and quirkiness shines through. However, at times her voice seems a bit condescending. She went on a lot of tangents, which made me feel detached as it pulled me out of the story. I would have liked to have seen more interactions and dialogue in the present.

This book has a heart-warming message—growth on the inside is what matters, not growth on the outside. In saying that, it's also about learning to be proud of being short. This is a great book for children of short stature to see a protagonist who is short represented and to also see adults with dwarfism represented. Siblings would also enjoy the story.



**PARENT REPRESENTATIVES OF SSPA 2020-2021**

<b>ACT</b> Katrina Reynolds membership@sspa.org.au 0430 123 116	<b>NSW</b> Jenni Bruce jennib@pobox.com 0412 415 498	<b>NSW</b> Alma Weber almaweb28@yahoo.com.au
<b>NTH NSW</b> Wilma Steain (02) 6554 8163	<b>NSW (REGIONAL)</b> Vicki Fallon* secretary@sspa.org.au	<b>NSW (HUNTER REGION)</b> Dawn Bos* dbos153@gmail.com
<b>NTH QLD</b> Tina Glenwright * tgm761@bigpond.com	<b>SA</b> Emily Vozzo emily.vozzo@sspa.org.au	<b>TAS</b>
<b>VIC</b> Jenny Zeuschner brett@vigorella.com.au	<b>WA</b> Suzann Franklin suzann.franklin@sspa.org.au (08) 9041 3220	

\* Denotes person of short stature

**SSPA Patron**

Tina Zeleznik  
 Chief Executive Officer  
 Disability Works Australia  
 Tel: 08 8276 0900 or 1800 356 670

**SSPA Professional Advisory Board**

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<b>SA</b> Dr. Lesley McGregor; Clinical Geneticist	
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<b>WA</b> Dr Fiona McKenzie; Clinical Geneticist	Ms. Stephanie Broley; Genetic Counsellor
<b>SSPA PAB Liaison Officer:</b> Maree Jenner	

**Got a question for our Professional Advisory Board? Send it to:**

★ E-mail: [pab@sspa.org.au](mailto:pab@sspa.org.au)

**SSPA NATIONAL COUNCIL 2020-2021  
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**NB:** QLD, SA and TAS are not officially formed branches. They are informal groups with the above named coordinators.

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