

TAD JOURNAL

Vol 32 No 1 2012

Tiffany-Lee's First Ride

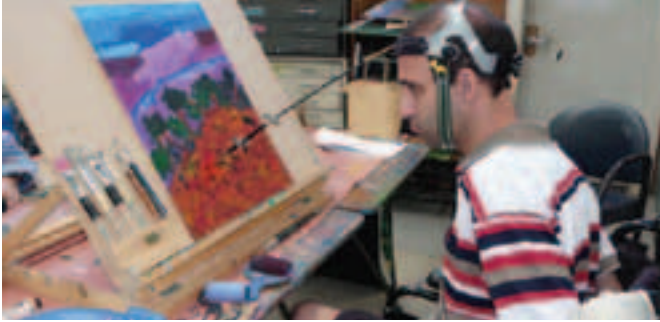


**Meret's hot new scooter
Exciting new sport:
Wheelchair Cricket!**

About TADNSW

Custom Designed Equipment (CDE)

Designs and makes custom-designed devices for our clients where commercial equipment is not appropriate.



Freedom Wheels

Modifies bicycles for children with disabilities.



WHAT IS TADNSW?

TAD Disability Services (TADNSW) was originally conceived of in 1973 by electrical engineer George Winston AM, and formally established in 1975. It was first named Technical Aid to the Disabled since George recognised that customised devices could assist people with disabilities to maximise their opportunities and live their lives more fully and independently. Thirty-six years later, TAD organisations operate in all states of Australia and the ACT. They coordinate the work of volunteers in designing and constructing devices for people with disabilities, and refurbish and supply donated computers.

TADNSW'S MISSION

TADNSW provides personalised equipment and advice to people with disabilities and their carers, through the innovative services of skilled volunteers and staff.

TADNSW'S CORE BUSINESSES

TADNSW's core businesses are the supply of equipment, support in the use

of equipment, and provision of advice and information about equipment to people with disabilities, their carers and the disability sector.

TADNSW'S ORGANISATION

TADNSW is managed by a Board of 13 Directors and has 16 staff. Our offices are in Northmead, Sydney. We have 11 branches and interest groups in regional NSW run by local volunteers with support from Northmead staff.

WHO DOES TADNSW HELP?

TADNSW helps anyone with a disability, including conditions associated with ageing. There is no means test, and a referral is not always necessary.

Clients are charged for costs of materials for custom-designed equipment, and a small purchase fee for computers. TADNSW volunteers donate their skills and labour.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

VOLUNTEER

You can help TADNSW by constructing

Computer Support Service (CSS)

Refurbishes and customises donated computers, supplies them to clients and supports clients in their use.



Volunteers

TADNSW volunteers work in each of the services lending their skills and expertise. They also provide admin support.



equipment for clients, refurbishing computers, or helping with administration, management fundraising or communications.

DONATE

You can donate funds to support the services. TADNSW is a registered charity and contributions of \$2 or more are tax deductible. You can also donate computers and related equipment.

SPONSOR

TADNSW is currently seeking a Major Sponsor for each of CDE, FW and CSS. The funds invested will be used to support the outreach programs to the elderly and people with a disability. In return TADNSW will seek the support of our donors, clients, volunteers and stakeholders for their goods and services.

BECOME A MEMBER

You can become a member of TADNSW, which brings various benefits including copies of the *TAD Journal*, or subscribe to the journal without becoming a member.



From the CEO

Part of living in a free society is the ability to do the things you love. No one should be denied leisure time; time spent doing the things that make you happy.

Too often it is too difficult for people with disabilities to pursue their hobbies. This can be due to physical barriers that could easily be removed or superficial barriers derived from old attitudes which are often the most difficult to face down.

This edition of the TAD Journal tells the stories of people who are determined to pursue their interests no matter what barriers they face. And it is the mission of TADNSW to assist in removing these barriers.

These inspirational stories destroy any notion of people with disabilities being unable to take part; you can read about a group of mates in motorised wheelchairs playing a game of cricket, Meret who has cerebral palsy zooming around the local cycle paths on her scooter, Tiffany-Lee riding a bike when it was never thought possible and Michael who has paraplegia going to meditation class despite the flight of stairs.

Browsing the pages you will also discover the innovative skills of the volunteers who dedicate their time to solving these problems for the individuals. Their skills teamed with the individuals' determination removes the physical barriers. You will also see the wonderful support given by generous organisations and individuals which makes the work of TADNSW possible. To them we are very grateful.

I hope you enjoy the stories and are encouraged by the remarkable people involved. Only when we remove the physical barriers can the old attitudes be dissolved.

Alan McGregor
Chief Executive Officer

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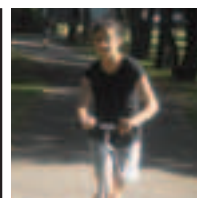
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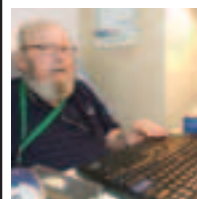
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OUR COVER

Tiffany-Lee gets to grips with her new Freedom Wheels bike.

The Joy of Freedom Wheels

New bike lets Tiffany-Lee ride with her friends

Sometimes it's difficult to put into words the difference a Freedom Wheels bike makes to a child's life. But the smile on Tiffany-Lee's face says it all.

Eight year old Tiffany-Lee has Cerebral Palsy. Since she was just 13 months old she's had a lot of physiotherapy and botox. She often finds it difficult to use her hands. She only began walking when she was four years old, two days before Christmas which was a special present for her family.

Tiffany-Lee's mum, Lindie-Lee explains, "Tiffany finds it hard to do the regular things other children can as she is limited in the use of both hands. It affects her daily, from school life to home, to regular play. But she has an amazing attitude and tries her very best regardless."

Tiffany-Lee has friends who live next door who she regularly plays with. The other children have bikes and cycle on paths near their houses together and Tiffany-Lee was never able to join in.

"This was tough to see as a parent," says Lindie-Lee. "That she couldn't enjoy a fun activity that her friends were able to do. Watching them at that age and not being able to join in the fun was quite hard for us all, especially Tiffany."

Lindie-Lee bought Tiffany two bikes over the years, hoping that she might be able to learn to ride. But she could never hold the handle bars or push the pedals. Tiffany-Lee didn't let this get her down.

"She has a great attitude; she is a positive girl and very determined. She refuses aid and tries most things with no help at all. She is a happy-go-lucky child and growing up with her autistic brother who doesn't talk, she is an understanding little girl, with a beautiful heart," adds Lindie-Lee.

Tiffany-Lee came to TADHouse for a Freedom Wheels bike clinic after a referral from her Occupational Therapist at Cerebral Palsy Alliance. The clinic was successful and she was able to ride the Freedom Wheels bike.

Tiffany-Lee's bike was funded by Joe Hockey MP as part of his personal initiative to support children in difficult situations. When he heard about the Freedom Wheels program he was keen to help. Lindie-Lee and Tiffany-Lee went to his office to collect the bike which was a huge surprise for Tiffany-Lee.

"I was amazed that someone could be so generous and do something so kind for my daughter. To see the look on Tiffany's face when she received it and to watch her ride a bike for the very first time made it a day I'll never forget," says Lindie-Lee.

Now the only problem is getting her off her bike! She has been riding so often that Lindie-Lee is hoping to get a bike rack soon so they can ride together as a family.

"She has enjoyed it so much," says Lindie-Lee. "I cannot explain the joy or admiration I felt to watch her finally be able to ride a bike with ease, and enjoy the milestone memory!"



SUMMARY

Client Profile: Right Hemiplegic Cerebral Palsy / Dystonia

Description of Project: Modified Bike

Age Group: Children

Volunteers: Freedom Wheels workshop

Project Number: SO11-0582



Above: Tiffany-Lee takes her bike for a spin around her street and below getting to grips with the bike for the first time.



Catch Me If You Can

Wheelchair cricket bat forms part of new 'Adaptive Cricket' game



On the Up: Ben Keyte from Northcott's Recreation Service tests the bat

It's the perfect Aussie summer sport. Whether it's dressing up in whites and going to the oval or getting a group of mates together for a quick game in a car park, cricket is a great sport for people of all ages. It is in a car park outside Northcott Disability Services in Parramatta where we find a group of guys, some in motorised wheelchairs, some on foot, playing what looks very much like cricket. In fact, it's a first-of-its-kind Adaptive Cricket game, which allows people of all abilities to play a new style of inclusive cricket.

The game has been five years in the making and developed by the Recreation Service at Northcott. Earlier last year Northcott physiotherapist Mitchell Taylor got in touch with TADNSW to find out if it would be possible to invent a cricket bat that would work for people who use a wheelchair and have no upper body use.

The task was given to TADNSW volunteer Alan Stone, who after meeting with the team at Northcott, got to work making prototypes of the bat. After each prototype the bat was trialled and then further developed.

"The only thing that didn't change was the bat itself," explains Alan. "It was the mountings that needed to be developed, as we wanted it to be able

to attach to every kind of motorised wheelchair." This is what proved the most challenging. Alan says, "There are so many different wheelchairs, each with its own unique construction, which made conventional clamping or bolt on methods impractical." So Alan worked out a one size fits all solution.

"I borrowed my wife's yoga mat and glued that to an MDF board to protect the wheelchairs. Then I routed some slots into the MDF and used double sided Velcro to hang the board off the chair's arm rests. For further stability I put tie downs through the slots and strapped it to the chair – which is much preferable to bolting it on."

Alan mounted the bat on a rail and onto the MDF board which allowed the bat to slide through roughly one metre. This enabled it to be used for left and right handed batsmen.

Interactive Box

To see film footage of the bat in action in the carpark check out the TADNSW youtube channel - www.youtube.com/tadnsw

To see Channel 9's report on Adaptive Cricket visit Northcott's youtube channel - www.youtube.com/northcottsociety

The bat is also able to tilt which gives the batsman many more stroke options and when the bat is fully forward, batsmen without much head movement are able to see the ball no matter where their head is positioned.

The bat was being trialled with a commercially available bowling machine. Alan is modifying this to enable a wheelchair user to run their chair up a customised ramp, allowing the force of the wheelchair to tip the trigger switch and launch the ball. At the time of print, Alan is still fine tuning this component, widening and lengthening the ramp to give the wheelchairs better access.

The bat itself is about twice the width of a regular cricket bat with a similar shape. "Originally I was designing the bat purely to deflect the ball off the bat," says Alan. "But I've been amazed at the skill of the guys in the wheelchairs, they have quick manoeuvrability and are able to control the bat's positioning very well."

Ben Keyte, pictured left and below, has Arthrogryposis, a condition characterised by the immobility of one or more joints. He has been instrumental in developing the concept for Adaptive Cricket. He said, "It's been exciting to develop a new wheelchair sport that everyone can play. I'm proud that we've been able to take it this far. We're hoping that someone out there will see what we've done and give us the support to ultimately start a competition. I know I would definitely play. I'm looking forward to being able

to experience the camaraderie that comes with playing in a team sport."

For Alan, being involved in the project has been very worthwhile, "I think the best part of the project has been seeing the enthusiasm from people – these are fiercely competitive athletes – and it's exciting to develop something that they will take even further."



Above: TADNSW Volunteer Alan and Northcott's Kurt Sorensen bowl the ball

SUMMARY

Client Profile: Motorised Wheelchair Users

Description of Project: Adaptive Cricket Bat

Age Group: All

Volunteer: Alan Stone

Project Number: SO11-0307



At the Interval: Peter Dalrymple, Corey Webster and Ben Keyte

Scooter Time

Extra wheel helps Meret join the latest trend



Above: Meret riding her scooter in the park

It's almost impossible to walk around streets and parks without seeing someone on a scooter. Whether its children out with their friends or businessmen speeding to the office, the scooter has become a common sight on the streets of Australia.

Fourteen year old Meret Hassanen is a bubbly and determined girl who has wanted a scooter for years. Meret has Cerebral Palsy with hemiplegia on the right side which affects her control and balance.

"Meret was very keen to get a scooter but was unable to balance with just two wheels," explains mum Jane. "We talked to Meret's physio Eliza from the Cerebral Palsy Alliance to see if she thought there would be any possibility for Meret to ride a scooter."

The trio went to their local skate shop to find out what was available but could only find three wheeled scooters for children and none for teenagers. Physio Eliza got in touch with TADNSW to find out if a regular scooter could be modified to have an extra wheel on the back.

Volunteer Bruce Watts and TADNSW physiotherapist Brendan met with Meret at TADHouse to assess her ability on the regular scooter and afterwards Bruce got to work on the modification.

Below: How the back of the original scooter looked.



Below: With the extra wheel at the back.



Below: With the added brake above the right wheel.



The Technical Bit

Bruce cut off the back of the scooter and made an axle to connect the original back wheel to a second spare wheel with pieces that he fabricated from scratch. He also added a footcup to the base of the scooter so that Meret's foot would not slide back into the wheels.

Once this was complete Meret came back to try out the scooter. "The trial went really well," says Jane. "I didn't want the scooter to be too balanced because I wanted Meret to be able to work on her balance and build it up and it was stable enough for her to do that."

The scooter has therapeutic benefits as Meret is required to hold herself in a straight position and balance on one leg which will improve her muscle strength and balance.

After the trial it was decided the scooter would need a brake over the back right-side wheel for when Meret was able to build up her speed.

Now Meret is thrilled with her scooter and rides with her family often – even mum Jane has a go! "We recently managed a three kilometre trip with Meret on her scooter which was wonderful and often we go out together on the bike path near our house, Meret loves her scooter!"

SUMMARY

Client profile: Right side hemiplegia (cerebral palsy)

Description of Project: Modified scooter

Age Group: Teenager

Volunteer: Bruce Watts

Project Number: SO11- 0388

Freedom for Lilian

Benefits to wheeling around the house

No matter how old you are it's important to have some freedom.

This was the case for Lilian Dyball who has Arthrogryposis, a congenital disorder, which causes joint contractures and also muscle weakness.

Lillian's mother Natalie contacted the TADNSW branch in Albury/ Wodonga when Lillian was just 14 months old to see if they could provide an adjustable table and chair set for Lillian. After this was completed, the group were asked to make a chair on wheels for Lillian similar to the TAD Chailley cart.

This is a mobility device for children who don't walk but do have good upper body strength. The child can sit on the cart and propel themselves forward by pushing on the wheels.

TADNSW volunteer Geoff Permezel completed the cart and named it 'The Lilycart' after Lilian who instantly took to it. Soon she was wheeling herself through her house much to the relief of mum Natalie who could take a break from lifting her between rooms.

Lilian's Occupational Therapist was also pleased noticing a big improvement in Lilian's muscle tone.



SUMMARY

Client Profile: Arthrogryposis

Description of Project: Mobility Cart

Age Group: Children

Volunteer: Geoff Permezel

Interactive Box

To hear an interview with the volunteers in Albury visit -

www.abc.net.au/local/stories/2011/08/19/3297676.htm

To learn more about TADNSW's individual solutions visit

www.tadnsw.org.au/tadaid

Playing Together

Sensory table brings children together



Children play together with sand



The table can be used for many games

From an old fashioned townhouse in the sleepy grounds of the War Memorial Hospital Waverley comes the sound of children's laughter. This is the home of the Matilda Rose Centre, part of the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children, which provides an early intervention program for children with visual and hearing impairments and other associated disabilities.

One the centre's main goals is to get children interacting with one another, playing together and forming relationships. However, as Speech Pathologist Caren Matthews-Lane explains, this was a challenge. "We wanted the children to integrate more, but because of the different levels of abilities and support needed, it was hard to get them all playing close together. I had an idea for a sensory table which I'd thought about for a long time so I contacted TADNSW to see if it was possible."

TADNSW volunteer Bob Bunton took up the challenge to create the table and visited the Centre to take a look at Caren's sketches.

Bob found an adjustable table within the centre that was rarely used. It had a round wooden top and a metal frame with adjustable legs which he took back to his workshop.

"I removed the top of the table from the frame," explains Bob. "Then I cut four indents into the sides of the table. This would allow four children to stand supported at the table."

The biggest challenge was to find a container of the most suitable size to fit through the square metal supporting frame on the bottom of the table top. Once he sourced what he needed he filled the plastic box with five inches of Styrofoam to reduce the weight of the box should it be filled with water or sand.

He then cut a hole in the table top and inserted the plastic box.

"It was pretty simple in the end," says Bob. "But it seems to be working out well!"

Caren was delighted to see her idea become a reality. "I couldn't believe I had been thinking of this for years and almost immediately it was finished. The table is a real hit with the kids, in fact, whenever any of the staff's own children come in it's the first thing they go to. It's a real success."

SUMMARY

Client profile: Hearing or Visual Impairment

Description of Project: Sensory Table

Age Group: Children

Volunteer: Bob Bunton

Project Number: SO11-0476

Interactive Box

To see a short film of the children playing with the table visit the TADNSW youtube channel - www.youtube.com/tadnsw

Standing Tall

Two Standing Frames for Freyja

Many of TADNSW's Branches and Interest Groups have clients and families that come back again and again looking for solutions to different problems.

One of these clients is Freyja Hines. Freyja is almost four years old and has Migrating Partial Epilepsy in Infancy (MPEI). The TADNSW Interest Group in Port Macquarie have completed many projects for Freyja over the years from bilateral wraparounds to support her knees, to a Lazy Squirrel standing frame to enable her to stand straight (see TAD Journal Vol 31 No 2 p14). She is also getting a Michelle Tilt-In-Space chair; a seat and tray combination allowing her to sit comfortably.

"We have a small group," explains co-ordinator John Brumby. "Each member has different skills so we all tend to have a hand in each project the group does."

Since Freyja outgrew her Lazy Squirrel Frame, her most recent piece of equipment from TADNSW is two Supine Standing frames; one for home and one for pre-school. This will enable Freyja to stand up and hold her weight upright which is good for her muscles and enables her to engage more actively with the world around her.

Retired food technologist John Wallace completed the woodwork of the standing frames and metalwork was done by retired toolmaker Detlef Czerniejewski and retired civil engineer Mike Atkinson.

The adjustable padded supports on the frame that support Freyja's head, thoracic, hips and knees and the straps were made by co-ordinator John and his wife Mayo – completing a true team effort.

"The frames are great and Freyja loves them," says mum Lee. "She was really happy to stand in her



frame while the volunteers made some final adjustments."

"Now that she can use one at school, she can see the world from the same level as the other kids. It's lovely to see her standing up as she is really tall for her age!"

SUMMARY

Client Profile: Migrating Partial Epilepsy in Infancy (MPEI)

Description of Project: Supine Standing Frame

Age Group: Children

Volunteer: Port Macquarie volunteers

Project Number: SO11-0251 and SO11-0411

Since the completion of this project Detlef Czerniejewski passed away. Detlef gave many hours of his time to TADNSW projects over his two years involvement with the group from bed modifications to complex solutions that enabled people with disabilities to live more independently. Detlef was an integral part of the TADNSW team and he will be sadly missed by all the volunteers, clients and staff.



Stairway to Meditation

Stair-climber modification enables Michael to get back to class

Everyone needs a hobby; something to enjoy away from life's responsibilities. But sometimes living with a disability can make it much more challenging to do the things you want to do.

Michael Magro goes to a regular meditation class in Sydney. He is paraplegic and uses a wheelchair to get around. His meditation class is held in a space above a flight of 20 stairs. To tackle this problem Michael used a commercially available stair climber, a device that clamps onto a wheelchair and lifts it up the stairs. This was working well until Michael got a new wheelchair which was not compatible with the stair climber.

"The new wheelchair has a cross bar behind it to support the back of the chair," explains Michael. "This prevented the arms of the stair climber from reaching the wheelchair to lock onto the sides."

Michael contacted the manufacturer to see if there could be a solution to the problem but they couldn't help. During this time he had to crawl up the flight of stairs and back down again when the class was over.

Michael got in touch with TADNSW and came to TADHouse for an assessment with TADNSW physio Brendan and volunteer Jim.

The Technical Bit

The cross bar on the wheelchair was thrusting the chair forward and making the sides of the chair too far away from the clamps on the stair climber. Jim's solution was to move the clamps on the stair climber forward in a simple manner.

"I got a piece of aluminium and cut a bar of about 40mm by 40mm to make a spacer," explains Jim. "I then had to cut the spacer to match the profile of the stair-climber's existing arm to make a tight fit." Jim then riveted a clip onto the stair climber to ensure that the spacer couldn't fall off. The second part of the problem was the adjustable bolt that slides the clamp back and forth to adjust. This needed to be longer.

"Luckily someone from the mediation centre had long bolts that could easily be inserted," says Jim. "This completed the job off well. However if that hadn't worked I had a second solution to add clamps to the cross bar of the wheelchair. Luckily we didn't have to do that – but I've found there are always many ways to get the job done!"

Michael was pleased with the result, 'I got the stair climber back within a week which was great because I was due to go to a retreat in two weeks time so I was able to use it there which was excellent!'

SUMMARY

Client Profile: Spastic Paraparesis

Description of Project: Modification to Stair Climber

Age Group: Adult

Volunteer: Jim Barrett

Project Number: SO11-0382

Below: The original arm, clamp and bolt on the stair climber



Below: The spacer matched to the profile of the existing arm



Below: The spacer clipped into the stair climber's arm



Trouble Free Bath Time

Volunteers create fantastic solution to bath time troubles



Making the Mould: Volunteer John Saunders



In the bath: No more back pain for Naomi

SUMMARY

Client Profile: Hyptonia/Epilepsy/Paralysis

Description of Project: Bath and Frame

Age Group: Child

Volunteer: John Saunders and Peter Cork

Project Number:11/12 066H

Bath time is a huge part of a young child's daily routine. Yet it can be difficult if a parent or a child has a disability. The volunteer team at the TADNSW Hunter Branch have come up with a brilliant solution to bath time troubles.

A therapist in the Hunter region approached them on behalf of a client who has back problems and was struggling to lift her child out of the bath. She needed a bath that was supported by a stand at table height. The therapist had a second-hand bath but it needed a frame to set it at the correct height.

Volunteer Peter Cork designed and fabricated a frame using square steel tube. This worked well and soon word spread around the parents' network resulting in more requests for the bath inserts.

One of these clients was Naomi. She was having problems giving her son Ethan a bath. Ethan is almost one year old and has Hypotonia, Epilepsy and paralysis from the waist down. Naomi was finding it hard bathing him in a standard bath as she had to bend to put him in and lift him out. "Ethan's limbs are very floppy and he can't hold up his own head," explains Naomi. "It was becoming very painful to get him into the bath."

Since the original bath was no longer available, the group took the decision to make a male mould to create a concave shape which could be used to produce many baths if required.

The Technical Bit

Volunteer John Saunders, who had completed a

TAFE course on basic fibreglassing, took on the challenge. John used the dimensions from the original bath and changed the design to make the frame construction simpler. He also included a standard 50mm waste outlet.

After making the mould, he laid up the bath which was made in the same vain as a general purpose fiberglass construction. John laid a gel coat of about 0.45mm thick onto the mould. The lay up was made up of three layers of CSM (Chopped Strand Mat) laid with a general purpose resin. This resulted in a strong but light bath.

Peter made another stand and the combined unit was tested by the group for safety. The first bath became a demonstration model and further baths had either a painted steel frame or stainless steel.

When Naomi's urgent request came through for a bath, the team quickly made a frame and gave her the demonstration bath while they made another. "The new bath is wonderful," says Naomi. "I have other children with disabilities and the volunteers at TAD have made different things for them like toilet steps and modified tables. It's so great to have things modified exactly to my needs."

The baths were designed and built by volunteers at TADNSW Hunter branch who have the specific skills for fibreglassing. If you cannot find a commercially available bathing solution you can contact the TADNSW team to see if they can help.

In the Spirit of Mateship

TADNSW Illawarra Group joins forces with local Men's Shed



At the shed: Far left, TADNSW Illawarra Coordinator Ken Kirwood and Col McIntyre. Second from right volunteer Keith McKay and Men's Shed joiner Lothar Pirnke

In a corrugated iron building, behind the Corrimal Regional Uniting church, comes the sound of power tools, saws, drills and the companionable noise of men talking.

The Men's Shed in Corrimal has been in existence since 2008 and offers a well equipped place for men to go to and practice their wood and metalworking skills and spend some time with their mates.

"We were aware of the great work that the Men's Shed was doing," explains TADNSW Illawarra coordinator Ken Kirwood. "Col McIntyre, one of our volunteers has been a member of the Men's Shed for a while, helping to maintain their machinery. We were finding it difficult to recruit new members to the TADNSW group so we began to discuss the potential of making a connection between the two groups."

In the Men's Shed members are able to work on individual projects, for instance, gifts for family or grandchildren; rocking horses and jewellery boxes. There are also community projects to work on such as outdoor furniture and sandboxes for pre-schools and Myna Bird traps for Wollongong Council. It was these

community projects that seemed most relevant to the work of TADNSW.

"I can work on projects in my own shed at home," says Col. "But I really enjoy going to the shed and talking to the other men – they are from all different backgrounds from high school teachers to ministers of religion, and of course, there are joiners, carpenters and labourers."

After Col had joined the Men's Shed, he encouraged the other volunteers, Garry Scott, Tony Oyston, Ken Kirwood and Keith McKay to join as well. Tony organised a presentation to raise awareness of the work that TADNSW does in the community.

Once the relationship was established the first projects collaborations began.

When Col received a project to modify a bed, he realised he needed the help of a good joiner and took the idea to the shed's supervisor. The project was for a young girl who has a brain tumour which affects the functioning of her left side. She bangs her head on the sides of her bed and her mother was concerned about her rolling out of bed.

Left: The bed gate in production at the Men's Shed. **Centre:** The completed bed gate closed. **Right:** The completed bed gate open.



"The project was really going to benefit from an expert joiner and I was able to get Lothar Pirnke from the Men's Shed on board to work under my supervision," explains Col. "We needed to add a gated bed rail to the open side of the bed and add foam padding to the sides to protect the child's head. This was then covered in vinyl and secured into place with Velcro and safety ties."

The Men's Shed supervisor at Corrimal, Bob Richardson, had no hesitations joining forces with the TADNSW group, "It's great to help people with disabilities in the community and the TADNSW men have become an integral part of the Men's Shed here."

For Bob, who has been involved in the Corrimal Men's Shed from the beginning, the benefits are clear. "We often get single fellows or widowers who barely say a word when they first arrive, then after a few weeks you'll find them amongst the other men in the kitchen gabbing away and that communication is so important."

For Ken, this skilled involvement is a great part of the relationship, "It's fantastic to see the men get involved with TADNSW projects and we hope even more will in the future."

SUMMARY

Client Profile: Polycystic Astrocytoma, left sided hemiplegia.

Description of Project: Bed modification

Age Group: child

Volunteer: Col McIntyre and Men's Shed Corrimal

Project Number: SO11-0304

Interactive Box

To find out more about Men's Shed visit www.mensshed.org

To find out more about the Corrimal Men's Shed visit www.corrimalmensshed.weebly.com

Thank You Deutsche Bank

For years now, Deutsche Bank employees have supported TADNSW through their workplace giving program - Deutsche Community Care - a program that enables staff to donate to charities automatically through their payroll office.

"Deutsche Community Care started in 2004 after an extensive employee survey to identify cause areas of interest. TADNSW was one of our original workplace giving charities and continues to be a firm favourite among employees at the Bank," explains Amy King, Communications & CSR, Deutsche Bank. "We now support five charities in New Zealand and 19 in Australia, over 340 employees in Australia participate in the program."

Workplace Giving is hugely beneficial to charities since it involves no administration or receipting costs meaning that the full donation goes directly to the charity. It also gives the staff donors an immediate tax benefit as tax is calculated on their net amount after the donation.

Each company involved can opt to match their employee's donation dollar for dollar, which Deutsche Bank very generously does.

Not only do the staff donate through workplace giving but they are also given the opportunity to volunteer their time and skills. "Deutsche Bank runs a volunteering program called Initiative Plus where staff are given two days leave to

volunteer. They are also able to apply for a \$500 grant to give to their chosen charity as we appreciate that it is sometimes difficult, and costly, for a charity to provide volunteering opportunities," says Amy.

Employees at Deutsche Bank did just that when they visited the TADNSW's Computer Support Service donating computers, money and time. Sixteen people refurbished 16 computers in just one day - this was equivalent to two weeks work for one of TADNSW's regular volunteers. It also enabled the Deutsche Bank staff to spend time together as a team away from the office, learn new skills, help the community and have a great time competing to see who could refurbish the most computers.

"Our CSR initiatives are focused on five areas of activity that form the foundation of our social responsibility - education, social investments, art, sustainability and corporate volunteering," says Amy.

"Deutsche Bank regards corporate social responsibility as an investment in society and its own future and recommend every other business to do the same."



Deutsche Bank

If you are interested in contributing to TADNSW via Workplace Giving please contact us on (02) 9912 3406.

How to Apply for Custom Designed Equipment

It's as easy as 1,2,3

TADNSW's mission is to provide customised equipment and advice to as many people with disabilities as possible. This article is the first in a series explaining how you can turn problems into solutions by using TADNSW. Here we explain how to apply for Custom Designed Equipment and in the next issues we will cover how your equipment is built and how it will be delivered.

STEP ONE: Project Application Form

The first step is to tell us a bit about yourself or your client and the problem you or they are having. To do this, download a Project Application Form from the TADNSW WEBSITE

www.tadnsw.org.au/Services/Devices/deviceapply.php

This can be filled in by a therapist, a client, a family member, a teacher or any other relevant person involved in the client's life. It is desirable to have a therapist involved in the application due to the complexity of some projects, however, for more simple solutions, a therapist's involvement may not be necessary.

It can save time by including photos of the equipment which needs to be modified, or of the environment where equipment needs to go. Sketches, plans and other visual information can be really helpful for the initial application. The more information we have at this stage, the more quickly we can move through the process.

The form can be returned by email, fax or post (contact details are on the form). If you don't have access to the internet, call TADHouse on 1300 663 243 and choose option #2 to get a copy of the form.

STEP TWO: Application Review

Once your application form is received, TADNSW's Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist and Rehab Engineer meet to review the project looking at safety and viability of the project and discuss the most suitable way to progress towards a quote.

READY TO GO / EASY TO ORDER ITEMS

If the application is for a 'Ready to Go' or an 'Easy to Order' item and all the required dimensions have been included in the application, a quote can be sent out very quickly. Information and dimension sheets can be found on the TADNSW website www.tadnsw.org.au/tadaid

INDIVIDUAL SOLUTIONS

If the application is for an individual solution, it is possible that the TADNSW team will want to collect more details. This could just be a call to the applicant or referer for more information. Or they may want to carry out an assessment; this could mean a visit from a TADNSW volunteer, therapist or engineer or perhaps all three. If possible, the client and therapist are encouraged to come to TADHouse in Northmead to meet with the team which speeds up the process.



Ready To Go Item: 'Sit to Stand Ladder' allows children to practice standing up from a sitting position

OUTSIDE SYDNEY

For clients outside Sydney, the process is generally the same, however TADNSW Branches and Interest Groups sometimes work slightly differently. If you are unsure please contact us at TADHouse. Should an assessment for an individual solution be required outside of Sydney; it is most likely that a TADNSW volunteer will come to meet the client and therapist if we have a local volunteer available in your area.

For all rural clients, the referring therapist plays a central role, in most cases they will act as the point of contact for the local TADNSW volunteer and be on hand to provide extra information and set up meetings with the client.

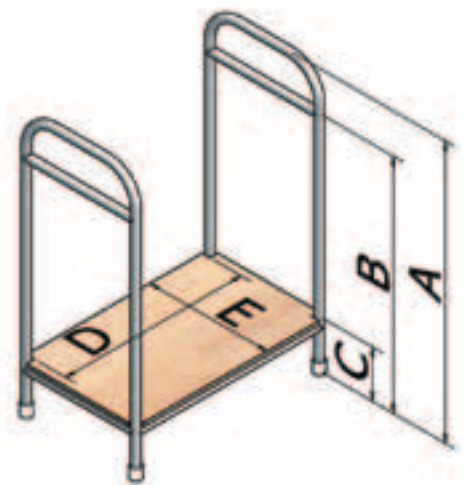
OTHER OUTCOMES

Occasionally the team will receive applications that they cannot take forward. This could be because there is a commercially available item or the request is unsuitable, unsafe or outside the skills or scope of TADNSW volunteers.

STEP THREE: Designing the Equipment and Providing a Quote

Once all the information has been gathered, the team confirm the design specifications and costs and will provide you with a quote. Some TADNSW projects are more complicated than others, and for this reason this step can take a little longer.

If you have any questions about the application process or are interested in getting Custom Designed Equipment give TADNSW a call on 1300 663 243 and choose option #2



Right: A sample drawing used by TADNSW volunteers to create an Access Platform and Rail

Get Measured for Freedom Wheels



Freedom Wheels bike clinics take place regularly throughout the year.

Clinics are held at TADHouse in Northmead in Sydney every two weeks. Regional clinics are also held throughout the year.

To find out when the Freedom Wheels clinic is coming to an area near you or to apply for a Freedom Wheels bike visit the TADNSW website and visit the Freedom Wheels section

www.tadnsw.org.au



A Life of Helping

Kaye dedicates her career and spare time to making a difference

"I think if you're in a position to help people – then why not?"

Kaye Russell has been involved with TADNSW since the very beginning.

"I worked as an Occupational Therapist (OT) for what was then known as the NSW Society for Crippled Children but what is now Northcott Disability Services," says Kaye. "TADNSW was just a godsend for us – a place where we could get things for our clients when there were no other solutions or options."

After she retired from Occupational Therapy in Sydney, Kaye moved to the Blue Mountains where she volunteers with TADNSW's Penrith group. She is the only female member in the group but that isn't a problem for Kaye. "The other volunteers are lovely retired gents – typical TADNSW volunteers; really good talented blokes."

Over the years Kaye has been involved in lots of projects many of which involve sewing and fabric work although she's not adverse to a bit of woodwork.

"When I was training as an OT they taught us a bit of woodwork and metalwork," explains Kaye. "I think as an OT you need to be able to come at things from different angles and think outside the box so to have these additional skills was such a bonus."



TADNSW Volunteer
Kaye Russell

One of her recent projects was for Erin, a young woman with an intellectual disability who would not shut her eyes while having her hair washed. This caused a great deal of distress as shampoo would run into her eyes. She also has colour put in her hair which needs a good deal of rinsing and therefore a longer period of irritation.

In a quest to find the best solution, Kaye made three different shower hats. The first from a heavy plastic curtaining similar to the kind used in outdoor sections of cafes to keep the rain out. She cut a hole out of this material and then lined the inside with t-shirt ribbing. This created protection all around Erin's head enabling her mother to wash her hair without shampoo irritating her eyes. The other two hats were made from wet suit material, one of which she cut into four sections and overlapped on the joins to give it a bit more strength to hold it up off Erin's face (left). On the other, Kaye sewed strong fishing wire into the brim to hold it upright off Erin's face.

Erin's mother was delighted, "Kaye was a delightful lady to work with. We are forever grateful."

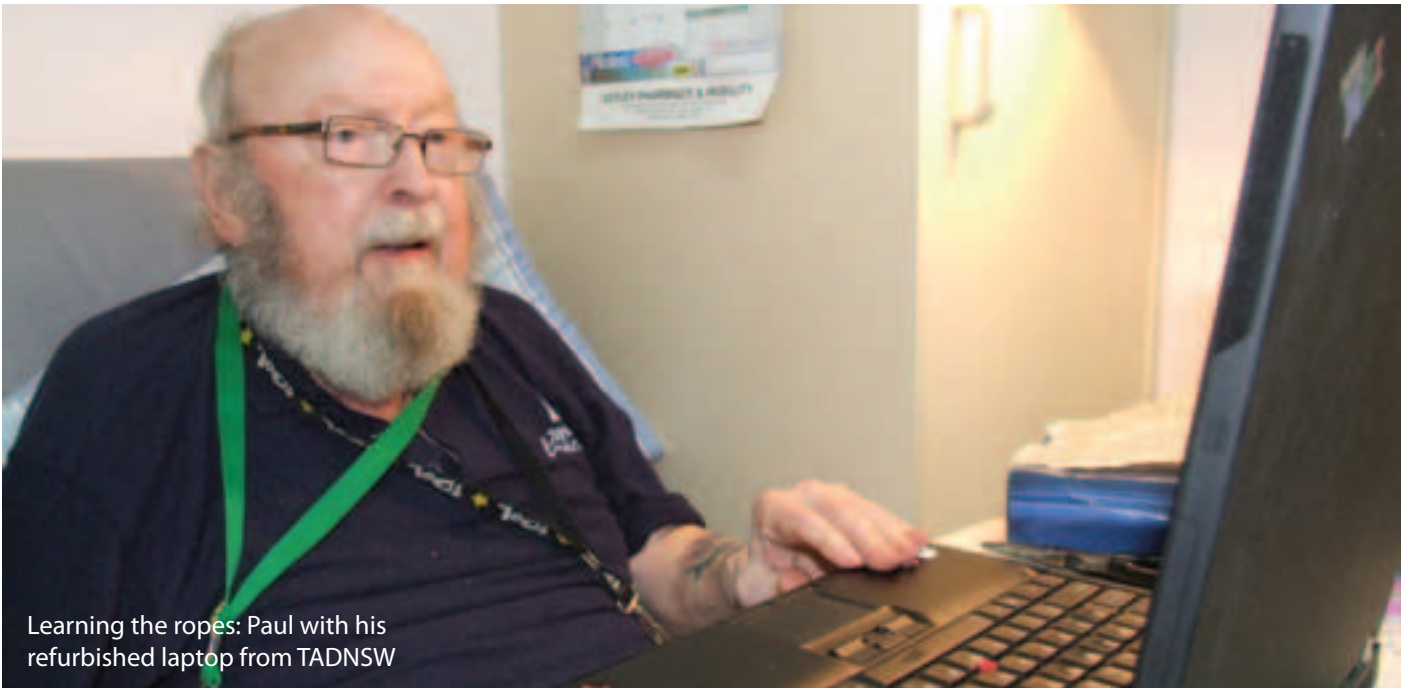
For Kaye it is making these improvements to people's lives that makes it all worthwhile. "Volunteering for TADNSW shows people another side of life. It opens people's eyes to disability issues and we get a real buzz from it."



No tears: Erin in the shower cap made from wet suit material.

A Long-lasting Friendship

Robert goes to great lengths to help friend Paul communicate



Learning the ropes: Paul with his refurbished laptop from TADNSW

Anthropologists are sure to look back on the early 21st century as the Communication Age. Advances in technology make it easy to arrange meetings from a train carriage or work on office reports from a local cafe. Wherever we go we are connected. As technology moves so quickly it is important to use its potential to empower people with disabilities and elderly people to electronically communicate.

Nine years ago Robert Harbin was visiting a friend at a nursing home and got talking to his roommate Paul Allen. The two men had a lot in common and when Robert's friend moved to another nursing home, Robert continued to visit Paul on a weekly basis.

"Paul is a remarkably knowledgeable man," says Robert. "I always found myself learning a lot when I spent time with him. He knows something about everything and has a very creative mind."

Paul has Parkinson's Disease which causes problems with his motor skills and a visible shakiness. His speech is also affected so he finds it easier to express himself by writing things down. Using a pen, paper and an eye-glass to strengthen his vision, it would take a long time to write a page and his resulting handwriting would be hard to read. Paul was able to use a typewriter for a while but it continued to malfunction and eventually broke down.

Paul was determined to carry on writing; sometimes creative pieces about historical periods, sometimes lengthy jokes and sometimes tips and facts about subjects that interested Robert.

"I had told Paul that I was interested in gold prospecting," says Robert. "The next time I came to visit him he had hand-written pages of notes on how to prospect for gold and had even drawn diagrams that were very accurate and helpful. It must have taken a great deal of time."

Robert realised his friend's determination to carry on writing no matter how difficult it was and sought a solution to make the process easier. He wrote to IBM to request a laptop for Paul. Soon after, IBM replied to his letter suggesting that he get in touch with TADNSW.

"I had heard about TADNSW before as they fixed a walking stick for my wife years ago," says Robert. Compelled by Paul's story, the volunteers in the Computer Support Service set to work refurbishing a computer for him. When the team delivered the computer to Paul he was keen to show off his photographs of the HMAS Melbourne on which he served as part of the Royal Australian Navy.

Now with Robert's help, Paul is learning how to use the laptop and communicate in the digital age.

To find out more about volunteering call 1300 663 243 or visit www.tadnsw.org.au

Computer Packages from TADNSW

The Computer Support Service at TADNSW has been refurbishing computers for 17 years.

These computers are available at affordable prices to anyone with a disability or in receipt of Centrelink or Veterans Affairs benefits. They also come with 2 years FREE support and FREE delivery within NSW.

Take a look at the packages available below and if you're interested either give us a call on 1300 663 243 or email us at css@tadnsw.org.au



XP PACK: \$250

- Pentium 4 CPU up to 2.8 GHz and above
- Memory 1GB
- Hard Drive 80GB and above
- Keyboard/mouse/cables
- Speakers or Internal Speakers
- Microsoft XP Professional
- Microsoft Office Home and Student 2007
- 19" LCD Monitor
- 2 years support
- FREE delivery

WINDOWS 7 PACK: \$380

- Core 2 Duo
- Memory 2GB
- Hard Drive 500GB (new)
- Keyboard/mouse/cables
- Speakers or Internal Speakers
- DVD Burner (new)
- **Microsoft Windows 7 Professional**
- 19" LCD Monitor
- **Microsoft Office Home and Student 2007**
- 2 years support
- FREE delivery

Laptop: \$250

- Pentium 4 CPU
- Memory 1GB
- Hard Drive 40GB and above
- CD or DVD Burner
- Internal Speakers
- Microsoft XP Professional
- Microsoft Office Home and Student 2007
- Laptop Carry Bag
- 2 years support
- FREE Delivery

TADNSW is a Microsoft® Registered Refurbisher.



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Westlink M7 Freedom Wheels Ride 2011



And They're Off: The Westlink M7 Freedom Wheels Ride 2011 begins

The most important part of the Freedom Wheels program is getting children outside, exercising and joining in with everyone else. The Westlink M7 Freedom Wheels Ride 2011 allowed children and their parents to do just that.

For the second year running a group of Freedom Wheels families and other keen cyclists met at Lady Penrhyn Park in Kings Langley to ride a loop of the Westlink M7 shared path. Balloons and registration numbers were given to riders as participants got to know each other.

Then they were off! Children sped off as the parents who opted to go on foot, jogged alongside

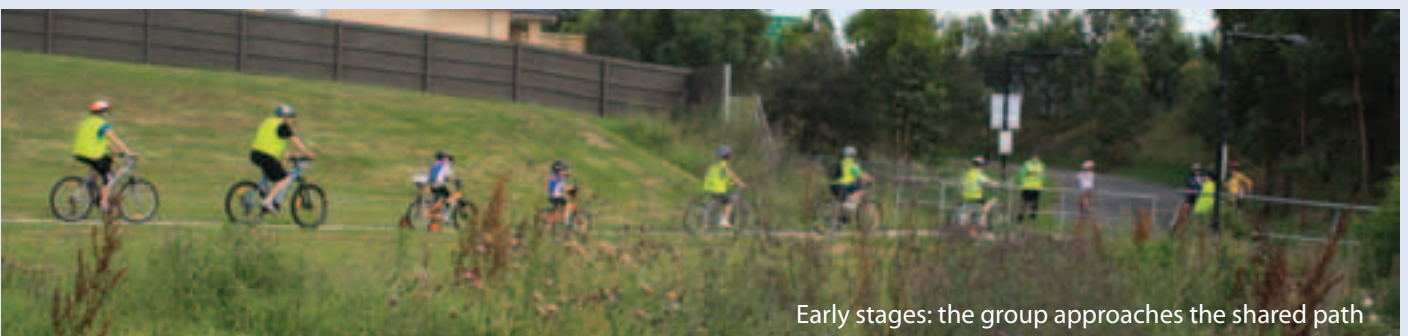
hanging onto highrisers and tow-bars. Once all the kilometres were clocked up, the group returned to the park for a sausage sizzle and a well earned rest.

A big thank you to everyone who raised money for the event, sponsored a rider and volunteered. Also a special thank you to Weslink M7 who helped promote the event with signs all along the shared path.

Interactive Box

To see a film roundup of the ride check out our youtube channel - www.youtube.com/tadnsw

To see more photos, visit TADNSW on Facebook www.facebook.com/tadnswdisabilityservices



Early stages: the group approaches the shared path

TADNSW VOLUNTEER YEARS OF SERVICE AWARDS 2011

presented at the TADNSW volunteer Christmas Lunch
9th December 2011

25 YEARS SERVICE

Eric Davison

20 YEARS SERVICE

Douglas Blakey
John Dixon
Adrienne Fitzsimmons
Robert May
Kevin Simkus
William Todd

16 YEARS SERVICE

Reg Hespe
Robin Price
Neale Taylor

12 YEARS SERVICE

Robert Bunton
Romesh Dharmalingam
Dion Kentwell
Max Langworthy
Sid Limbert
Ian McClelland
Stephen McNamara
Anne Rickersey

8 YEARS SERVICE

Bob Cook
Richard Cox
Ian Hancock
Hugh Howell
Martin Lightbody
Colin McIntyre
Phil Nelson
Chris Scott
Kevin Springett
Geoff Winsley

4 YEARS SERVICE

Geoffrey Biggs
Matthew Blessington
Richard Conville
Colin Davis
Bernard Doherty
John Faryna
Betty Gill
Geoff Grayhurst
Warwick Hempel
Leslie Lancaster
John McWhinnie
Mark Meintjes
Betty Millson
Con Novitski
Allen Pidgeon
David Pratt
Robert Pretty
Grahame Short
Roman Szych
John Taylor
Kenneth Webb
David Welch

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Thank You for the Smiles



Strike a Pose: Caitlin is presented with her Freedom Wheels bike from Live for Kids

Over the past year, children's charity *Live for Kids* has been raising money to fund almost 30 Freedom Wheels bikes mainly in the Newcastle and Hunter Regions.

The charity was set up by Simon and Gwendalyn Burt in memory of their daughter Olivia who passed away from respiratory failure in 2001 when she was only five days old. Their primary and original aim was to fund and purchase equipment for the John Hunter Children's Hospital in Newcastle, which is still very much a part of their work. When one of the charity's directors was looking for a bike for his daughter Caitlin, he discovered Freedom Wheels and thought a connection could be made.

When Caitlin rode her bike at a local school the reaction was good. "Everyone was completely hooked by the concept. Board members, friends, teachers, the principal and the kids, all very quickly realised the significance of what they were witnessing, and the smile on Caitlin's face was just priceless."

The *Live for Kids* team then decided to support the purchase of Freedom Wheels bikes for children in the Hunter.

Live for Kids raised over \$70,000 by cycling from the Gold Coast to Newcastle in September 2011. It's called The Cycle Classic and each rider raises

an allocated target. They also got some help from generous sponsors GHD Ltd and Coal Services.

For Simon, everyone gets something out of giving a bike. "For some it's seeing a child with a disability doing something that their parents may have not thought possible. For our riders, it is seeing a child with a disability enjoying the simple pleasure of riding a bike. We also know that there are significant therapeutic benefits which are important, but social as well, as it allows the kids to play with other children, which without their bike they may not be able to do."

To find out more about *Live for Kids* visit them online at www.liveforkids.com.au



Customised Freedom Wheels: Live for Kids added their logo to the bikes. The hand and foot prints are those of their daughter Olivia made before she passed away - giving Simon and Gwendalyn a personal connection with each bike they fund.



Ensuring your legacy with TADNSW

TAD Disability Services (TADNSW) is a unique charity that uses technology and the creativity of our volunteers to provide solutions that improve the lives of people with disabilities. If you would like to leave a lasting reminder of your support for TADNSW's services, please consider leaving a gift to TADNSW in your will. This will help to ensure that these invaluable services continue and develop in the future.

A gift to TADNSW will help ensure a long-lasting legacy. To leave a gift for TADNSW, you should nominate the TAD Foundation as your beneficiary.

When you decide to make a gift to TADNSW, please let us know. This will allow us to thank you personally for your generosity. It will also allow us to plan for the future knowing that we will have the financial resources to continue helping people with disabilities and develop our services.

There is no need to tell us the amount if you do not want to, and we will treat any information you give us in the strictest confidence.

You could also leave a memorial gift to TADNSW by including in your will a request to family and friends to give a donation to the TAD Foundation in lieu of flowers.

For more information on bequests and wills, please see your solicitor

or estate planner. You can also access information online at www.pt.nsw.gov.au.

For more information on leaving a bequest or memorial gift to the TAD Foundation, please phone Fundraising on (02) 9912 3406 or email fundraising@tadnsw.org.au

You can also find information at www.tadnsw.org.au/support/bequest.html



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(Phone 1300 663 243
for details of your nearest group)
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Illawarra, Manning/Great Lakes, Northern
Rivers, Port Macquarie, Shoalhaven.

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