

# DOWN THE TRACK

## Magazine



### THE 11TH HOUR

NT Government hears our calls - bringing our kids home for the holidays without penalties

### GENEROUS DONATIONS

Support for ICPA NT from Hospitality NT helps us to continue doing what we do

### 2021 WRAPPED

Looking back and looking forward - MAJOR MILESTONES for ICPA Australia and Northern Territory



# Isolated Children's Parents' Association NORTHERN TERRITORY STATE COUNCIL Inc 2021 Positions

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## PORTFOLIO POSITIONS

<b>Allowances / Boarding Assistant</b>	Sarah Cook Kerrie Scott	<b>Rural/Remote Schools Special Needs Assistant</b>	Moira Lanzarin Suzanne Wilson
<b>Communications &amp; Technology Distance Ed / Curriculum Assistant</b>	Sarah Cook Juliane Vlach	<b>Tertiary Training</b>	Juliane Vlach Suzanne Wilson
<b>Early Childhood Katherine Branch</b>	Rebecca Mohr-Bell Kerrie Scott	<b>Miscellaneous &amp; Across the Border Alice Springs Branch</b>	Suzanne Wilson Moira Lanzarin Lisa Kimlin

# A WORD FROM THE STATE PRESIDENT

## Dear Members

**If it takes a crisis to remind you** why ICPA is so valuable, I pose to you the 10<sup>th</sup> of December 2021 – when the Territory Government announced zone restrictions that required only regional and remote (returning) residents to spend 14 days in Darwin, Katherine or Alice Springs before heading home.

**If it takes a win to remind you** why ICPA is so valuable, I pose to you the 15<sup>th</sup> of December 2021 – when, faced with backlash and pressure including from ICPA, the Territory Government changed their directions in our favour.

If you participated in this **win** by sending a letter to government or calling your



local member for example, you deserve to share the congratulations, because these changes certainly do not come easily.

Any change to government policy requires hard work – and some **clout**.

In the bush **we have two choices to enact change**, do it ourselves - or hope like hell it affects someone else, who can share the load. In this case, we were lucky that regional towns, tourism and industry were equally affected.

The clout of ICPA and NTCA, the tourism sector, our local members, industry and business, coupled with a roar from citizens, played out in our collective favour ... but you know as well as I do that **issues affecting regional towns & remote properties are often not government priority**.

The question for members is, how does ICPA maintain its clout?

1. Is it paying your membership?
2. Is it supporting your branch?
3. Is it supporting state council?

In my experience, ICPA has 'clout' because we have all three things together – and **without all three, our clout is diminished**.

If you benefit from and appreciate the advocacy of ICPA, **how can you ensure ICPA remains strong?**

On 9 March 2022, ICPA will celebrate forty years of advocacy in the Territory.

I made a promise to the Katherine Branch Convening Committee, **here's my**

**promise to you**. You be there - and I will make sure the right people from government are there for ICPA.

On Tuesday, State Secretary Juliane Vlach and I met with an Executive Director from the Department of Education, seeking advice on who we should invite to conference and who might be best to address some of the motions that have been on your mind – and on state council agenda - for far too long.

By the time you receive this edition; state council will probably have received your branch motions. I'm guessing some of the big issues – student assistance scheme, support for boarding students – will once again be on the agenda and rightly so.

If a new or related issue pops up, you haven't missed the deadline for motions - get in touch with your branch executive, you may still be able to submit a supplementary motion.

Branches held their AGMs recently and it's terrific to see membership and attendance that keeps the branches strong. But that's not all branches need. Mostly, like any association, our **branches need appreciation from their community**, of what it takes to make things easier.

If we think about **what makes our personal lives easier**, we can apply the same principles to supporting our branches.

- Kind words, not criticism please. If you have concerns, take the time

## A quick note from the editor...

And didn't we think LAST YEAR was a big one!?

It was, in a lot of ways. However this year has solidified the Covid-19 reality that we now live in. In a conversation I had with a friend yesterday we discussed how through the isolation, uncertainty and ever shifting 'goal posts', we are learning to reach out and grab the joyful moments around us, feed our inner child, connect more with those who we may not have been in touch with due to busy schedules and lifestyles, and generally return to our roots. I certainly have been doing this—sharing in the simple joys that my children show me, putting up the Christmas Tree and decorations in November (lets be honest it's a big job, might as well get a bit more time out it), and do more of what brings me happiness—stop feeding what does not serve me and my family.

**WHAT YOU'LL FIND IN THIS EDITION:** The end of 2021 | Goodbyes, both forever and see you later | Reflecting on the past as we embrace a changed future | Wins for remote dwellers—restrictions easing at the Eleventh Hour, and access to better health assessment in the bush | Marking an ICPA Australia Milestone whilst looking towards our own State Milestone of 40 Years next year | Recognising the Unsung Heroes among us | Generous Donations and Support that keep us going.

Please enjoy this edition of Down the Track—the contributions within its pages are rich and full of what we stand for and stand up for! Thank you to everyone who took the time to submit something—it was delightfully overwhelming the number of items I placed and as a result we are up to 40 pages of ICPA NT GOLD.

The next DTT will be our 90TH EDITION and will coincide with our 40th State Conference—how's that for timing!! So jump on board and be part an auspicious moment in ICPA NT history! **SUBMISSIONS DUE: 14 MARCH 2022**



Anni

Annika Bell  
DTT Editor

FRONT COVER - Photo Credit: Central Australian Tracks by ICPA NT State President Sarah Cook  
BACK COVER - Call out for 40th ICPA NT State Conference -

# CONTINUED ...

## A WORD FROM THE STATE PRESIDENT

to share them with the person who can fix them. Having a crack and unkind gossip makes a volunteers life very unenjoyable.

- Replying to emails, letters & generally providing some feedback, to recognise you've got the message, or to share thoughts around a question or idea.
- Turning up & doing your bit to help out. It doesn't have to be the whole gig, just give a hand.

To a person who sits on the executive or committee, **these acts of support** go a long way to enjoyable volunteering. For state council, the same principles apply... we are branch members first, it's just that state council have a different function to branches.

I can honestly say that, for all the voluntary work I do for ICPA, a quick email or a few kind words of **support from members goes a bloody long way.**

One last thing before I sign off; I'd be really grateful if you could read my Federal Conference report. There is a lot of good stuff going on, as well as the annoying stuff, so have a read and I hope it encourages you to love ICPA just a little bit more – or a lot more, if you aren't already a fan!

**See you on the 9<sup>th</sup> of March, probably the night before at the Pre-Conference event. Between the convening**

**committee and state council, we have some big plans in play.**

Book a few days in Darwin with family or friends and enjoy the celebrations in store for our very special past, present and future members and supporters.

**“Before and beyond,” my friends.**

**PS** - If the path before you is clear, you are probably on someone else's (Carl Jung). Let's just make it happen!

Sarah

Sarah Cook  
ICPA NT State President



### CONGRATULATIONS

**Below:**  
2021 ASSOA Grant Winner Bridie Krebs with Lisa James

**Right Top:**  
2021 Junior Personal Development Grant winner Ruben Driver with Candice Krebs

**Right Bottom:**  
2021 Secondary Grant Winner Sonny Driver with Candice Krebs





# ICPA NT ALICE SPRINGS BRANCH

Lisa James - President

## Welcome to all our readers!

This is always an exciting time of year for our Branch as we welcome new and current members to our executive and committee for the year that lies ahead.

## Federal Conference 2021

Four of our branch members attended the 2021 ICPA Federal Conference in Longreach virtually after making the tough decision not to attend in person due to the worry of any kind of COVID-19 lockdown.

Although this did bring some challenges with internet connections, delays due to storms etc, I still felt very fortunate to be able to attend from afar.

*All of Alice Springs branch motions were carried and supported which was fantastic!*

## Fundraising

Our annual fishing shirts have now arrived for dispatch and I would like to once again thank Vikki McGlynn for all her hard work in making this happen again.

There have been a few ideas brought to me regarding fundraising next year and I will go into more detail about this in the meeting.

*Anyone who has any other fundraising ideas please let us know so we can look at all our options.*

## State Conference 2022

Our executive have been working on motions for the 2022 NT State Conference held in Darwin on March 9th 2022 (hopefully you have all had a chance to read through these motions before the meeting as we will be discussing them) and any new motions are open for discussion :)

This conference is going to be an exciting one, as it is the 40th NT State Conference, and we invite any members who are interested in attending to please express their interests as all financial members are welcome to attend.

## Memberships

It is that time of year again (already) when memberships are due for renewal for the 2022 year, please make sure you renew these and invite anyone else in the community who might be interested to join. This can be done by simply going to the ICPA website, clicking on your state, then the Alice Springs Branch.

I would like to wish you and your families all a happy, safe and joyful Christmas and New Year!

**See you all in 2022**

Lisa

**Lisa James  
Alice Springs Branch  
President**





## ICPA NT KATHERINE BRANCH

### Kerrie Scott - Branch President

#### **2021 was a really long year.**

I am starting to forget the pre-Covid world. How lucky we were to be able to do what we wanted, when we wanted. Now, every decision, every event, has the dark cloud of Covid hovering above it, and it is a world that we couldn't have imagined when we had first heard of this strange flu coming out of Wuhan.

That initial explosion turned into a slow burn and whilst the Territory stayed in its Covid free bubble, and we had the freedoms most of the country did not, it is now our turn to experience the isolation of lockdowns and lockouts in our own way.

#### **We had prolonged the inevitable, and it is now on our doorstep.**

This would be the very first time, and lets hope the only time, our Branch has had to have a remote AGM because of a pandemic.

School of the Air contact events are our lifeline, our way of giving our kids that important connection with their school, their peers, and their friends. Whilst many of us parents just get on with it - and in fact after 7 years of swim weeks for me, there's certainly an element of relief of not having to take that week away from my other responsibilities -

#### **I am grieving for everything they will miss.**

This year our Year 6 kids have missed out on their Interschool excursion, their final Swim Week where they get to finally be king of the Primary kids,

and their Graduation, where they can stand up and be proud of what they've achieved and share their nervous excitement of what lays ahead of them.

Our year 4 and 5's have missed the opportunity to stand up, with their very well written speeches, in front of their whole school and develop the confidence to say why they'd like to be Student Leaders for 2022.

Our little kids are missing those precious moments of independence being away from their home school room, experiencing a conventional classroom with a real teacher, and making friends.

Most importantly, these kids are missing the one and only chance they have for the year to participate in a consistent string of water safety and swimming lessons – life saving skills. Swim week marks the finale of our year, and it has been taken from us.

#### **It feels like we just got double barrelled by the isolation donkey.**

Sad as all this may be, it is with so much pride I can say our Branch has powered through, offering all of our grants and bursaries, and supporting our families however we can.

Having quite a few Katherine Branch members on State Council enables us to be on point with the most up to date information on Border restrictions impacting Boarding students returning from school, as well as changes to Department of Education Allowances and information that directly affects our

isolated families. When you can't physically see what we are doing, or have those face to face conversations, it is easy to think everything is on hold, but rest assured, the branch is still working, still getting down to business, and we still need all hands on deck.

*If you can spare some time, put up your hand, pick up the phone, send an email – there is always something to be done.*

#### **2022 will bring a new year of hope and challenges, and one of the most exciting times for ICPA NT, celebrating its 40th Anniversary!**

Katherine Branch have the honour of convening the state conference in Darwin, under the careful instruction of our head Convenor, Katherine Branch Vice President and Fundraising Co-Ordinator, Julie Richter.

This will be an event not to miss, and we cannot wait to be a part of this auspicious occasion. Get involved – mark your calendars now for the 9th of March – you need to be there to support your kids, and your branch.

#### **I also would like to take this opportunity to thank Katie Payne for her years of support as branch Secretary.**

Without Katie, I would have been lost on many occasions, and I am very pleased that she is staying on as our Branch Assistant Treasurer and look forward to continuing to work together.



# Alice Springs Branch

**We would like to Thank and Acknowledge our many Volunteers, Sponsors and Donations made to our ICPA Branch in 2021.**

Our Branch has raised over \$25,000 during 2021, across a number of events including running the Canteen at the Bronco Branding, looking after patrons at the Tennant Creek Rodeo, The annual ICPA Fishing Shirt sale and donations made to the Branch at the 39th State Conference, held and hosted by our Branch.

In 2021, we were able to donate \$5000 to ICPA NT for their ongoing support of our Branch at State and Federal Level. We awarded a total of \$5500 to the successful recipients of 4 out of 5 Grants available to Members Children each year. Our Branch were able to support ASSOA with a \$500 donation for their Christmas Concert Lunch. **Thank you for supporting ICPA.**



I read an amusing quote the other day,

**“The bad news is time flies. The good news is you’re the pilot!”**

So pull up slowly on that collective, put your foot down on that left pedal, and get light on the skids as you leave the ground...

**2022 is going to take us places!**

## Kerrie

**Kerrie Scott**  
Present Katherine Branch



PHOTO CREDIT: Shutterstock Image ID: 1887301678 “Katherine Gorge morning cruise in Nitmiluk National Park. Katherine, Northern Territory”



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ICPA NT delegates attending Federal Conference

## ICPA NT PRESIDENT REPORT Federal Conference Longreach 2021

On behalf of Northern Territory Life Members, our Branch Committees, our Membership and our State Council, I feel very honoured to be presenting my third Northern Territory State President Report at the 50th ICPA Australia Federal Conference.

And what a wonderful occasion, and a marvellous organisation ICPA is. The Convening Committee, together with Federal Council, deserve a colossal congratulations for hosting this auspicious milestone. Thank you for enduring through the many challenges this year and last, to bring us together today.

Territory members are so very proud that several of our own sit on Federal Council. NT Vice President Suzanne Wilson has been the Federal Secretary for four years; our distinguished Sally Sullivan is your Vice President; and our Sue Shotton is your Web Manager. I am delighted that the Territory continues to support Federal Council and our members nationally, in this way.

So much has happened since I initially drafted my report, but we've got a lot to get through, so let me try and keep this brief, I'd like to start by sharing what I think is the essence of ICPA's reputation, that helped the Territory state council be here today.

**Two weeks ago, it looked like we, and certainly I, wouldn't make it.**

State Council had earlier booked seats on a charter flight ex Alice Springs together with the Alice Springs Branch. It was the cheapest and quickest option for seven Territory delegates to get to Longreach.

Recently 4 delegates swapped-out to online attendance, so the remaining three of us reconsidered our options. By then, commercial flights were around \$3500, so we conceded that the online option was inevitably best for us as well.

On the day we conceded, I met a valued ICPA stakeholder and we had coffee. She excitedly inquired about our plans for federal conference and I shared the news that we probably wouldn't be able to attend in person. As we stood to say goodbyes, this beautiful woman casually asked me to raise an invoice.

**"Confirm the charter" she said "I've been texting my husband. We will sponsor State Council to attend conference in person. You've just got to be there, this is so important".**

And it is important. There is a lot of goodness in being here today.

For fifty years this organisation of generously spirited volunteers has freely given and continues to give, all they can to improve education in the bush.

Today's conference is generously supported by businesses and industry who believe in our cause, and many of you have been supporting ICPA for countless years.

**This, coupled with TCA Accounting's humble gesture of sponsoring the spare seats and allowing my Territory colleagues and I to be here in person today, swathes me in poignant humility.**

**I am overwhelmed.  
And the timing couldn't be better.**

We can all agree it has been a long-slog of a year, and today is exactly what I needed to remind me that ICPA is not just about the challenges.

**We have so much good stuff to be proud of.**

Despite Geographically Isolated enrolments in Territory schools of the air declining; despite staff working on cattle stations, farms, boats and tourism outfits diminishing; and although we have a comparatively small population to other states; membership in the Northern Territory has experienced a steady organic increase over the last few years.

I gratefully acknowledge our Branches and Branch Executive for the work they do in attracting and supporting new members, and without a doubt this growth is also in some part due to the work our state and federal councils are doing for our community more broadly.

As volunteers, perhaps our biggest barrier to advocacy is funding, and being super-active in the broader community has its dividends.

Recently I received a random call from a lawyer. "My client is developing a significant tender" he said. "If the tender is successful we'd like to donate to ICPA. We don't know much about your organisation, but my friend assures me you do good work for isolated families and we'd like to support that".

These arbitrary acts are pretty special in what can otherwise be a tedious remit, advocating to the incumbent Territory government, let me tell you. NT State Council is really keen to garner extra clout and we're exploring ways to partner with organisations who advocate on similar issues to ours.

I recently addressed the Police Union Conference in Darwin. They are also looking for ways to improve access to education for their police families who are posted at remote and very remote stations, and I'm excited about the synergies we have between us.

Below: Moira Lanzarin



Like our colleagues, ICPA NT continues to cherish a good reputation and benefits from the legacy of Territory State Councillors as far back as 40 years before me.

Such a strong reputation also continues to ensure State Council receives nominations from energetic, connected, innovative and inspiring State Councillors - which for me, is possibly the most enjoyable aspect of this very privileged journey we share. Indeed, ICPA are a mighty force for an organisation who, in the Territory, represents a cohort that hardly rates in statistical terms, which is the bane of my constant frustration.

**While we get a seat at the table, the process of converting motions to positive change for our members is utterly frustrating, if nothing else.**

To be fair, it is probably just as frustrating for our stakeholders, because let's face it, advocates just like us can be pretty annoying with our case studies, survey results and so forth.

As President, our ability to get runs on the board is something I think a lot about, and I'm certain my frustration has nothing to do with my impatience.

Even if we aren't converting motions to positive outcomes, we must continue to engage with our members, so they understand the work ICPA does, and so they continue to support us in return. **Convincing members you are doing your utmost can be painfully hard work.**

Sometimes I feel so vexed I wish government in particular, would take pity on me, and just give us a win. Even a small one would be good news to share with our members.

I thought we had a big one across the line with the National Boarding Code but our excitement in the Territory quickly turned to dismay, then exasperation, but that is another story.

After three years as President I have this weird dichotomy of narrative going on, where I truly believe that raising children in the bush is Australia's best kept secret...

**... but I am so damn disenfranchised about the sum of our collective contribution to accessing and delivering education in rural and remote Australia; which is enormous and incredibly out of balance both in financial terms and in personal contribution, when compared to urban families.**

Just last night someone asked me "why isn't everyone a member of ICPA". That is a very good question and here's the thing.

Continued on next page

**The bush is a small community. Let's support the cause if the cause is worth supporting, regardless of who/what/why is driving it.**

**We are simply not big enough in numbers or votes to let a single opportunity pass.**

At our next delegation, NT State Council will discuss if our brand is reaching maturity, and if so, where to from here.

**Whether it has to do with our brand, our transient population or our capacity, I feel very passionately that ICPA NT continues to be incredibly relevant in representing a cohort who has no significant voice besides us - and there is still so much that needs to be done.**

I'm also incredibly frustrated that about 40% of the Territory's population live either remote or very remote, yet so many existing policies designed to support us are ill-fitting, inadequate or inequitable.

In September I spoke at the Chamber of Commerce Women in Business Lunch, and recently, the Chamber asked if ICPA would provide input into a plan for developing the regions.

Of course we will. ICPA of all people know what families need to populate the regions.

We need equitable education, access to supporting services and we need good roads. We need telehealth and fair airfares and a subsidy for a home tutor. We need the AIC to increase with CPI and we need to consistently improve telecommunications in the bush.

**Most of all, we need our governments on all levels to realise these requests are not excessive, they are simply necessary to raise children, support our regions, develop our industries and strengthen our communities.**

Next year, our State Conference will be held in Darwin and we will celebrate 40 years of advocacy in the Northern Territory.

Katherine Branch are hosting, and together, we are planning a cracker. **If you are - or if you know an ex-Territorian who was involved with ICPA, please let us know so we can add you to the invitation list.**

Thank you so much for listening. If you'd like to read my full report, it is included in the conference handbook. As I said, I wrote it many months ago but not much has changed, so far as issues.

In closing, may I please pass on my heartfelt appreciation to my State Council for being so brilliant. And may I please once more, congratulate our Federal Council on 50 years and going strong.

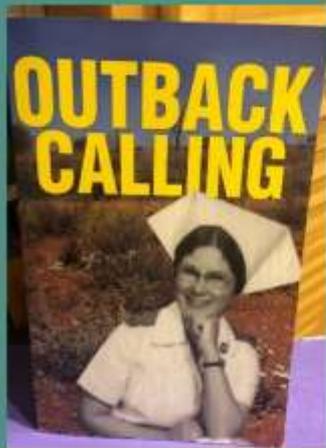
**Sarah Cook  
NT State President**



**Right:** Suzanne Wilson

**Below: (Centre) Moira Lanzarin,  
Juliane Vlach, Sarah Cook.**





## BOOK REVIEW

“ I enjoyed this book so much just about every page has a sticky earmark tag indicating passages that were so beautifully and graphically written I had to go back and read them again

OUTBACK CALLING

Release 2011 By Janet Fletcher

10

★★★★★

### REVIEW BY ROYELENE HILL

Outback Calling by Janet Fletcher, is a story of a young Australian Inland Mission (AIM) nurse and her life's journey which eventually brought her and her family to the NT where she administered health care in Indigenous communities through the Remote Nursing Health Service - all the while championing the beneficial role of Aboriginal Health Workers (AHW) in these communities, never losing sight of nursing care.

A very enlightening read as the story unfolds amidst loss, courage, determination, achievement, and a strong, personal faith.

*" In 2005 Janet was awarded the NT Regional Local Hero in the Australian of the Year Awards, NT Barnardo's Mother of the Year and Remote Nurse of the Year. Her work is recorded in 'Who's Who of Australian Women' and 'Who's Who of Women of the World' along with 1000 intellectuals of the World."*

Janet's children were also enrolled with Katherine School of the Air for many years.



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# 40 YEARS OF ADVOCACY IN THE NT

## Sue Shotten - Territory Wide

### ***What an achievement for a remote part of Australia.***

The dedication that is displayed by determined and passionate parents with one common goal; to ensure their children and their grandchildren can have an education that is on the same playing field as their urban counterparts, is commendable and should be celebrated.

### **But why do we need to be a member when we already get benefits to help educate our children in allowances such as the Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC)?**

This is a common thought and a reason why sometimes it is hard to encourage parents to become members. It is true that the AIC is there but this allowance wouldn't be there if it wasn't for our ICPA founders who lobbied hard for the introduction of this.

In 1993 when my daughter first enrolled in Katherine School of the Air, in pre-school, I had a lengthy discussion with Canberra regarding why my daughter wasn't eligible for the AIC even though the program was a structured one. Unfortunately this still is not recognised within the AIC scheme but the NT Government has recognised the structure of this course. *This is why we continue to advocate for these allowances.*

### **I have always said that it is not the children's decision to live where we do but the parent's decision and the responsibility of this should be shouldered by both the parent and the education system in conjunction with the State and Federal government.**

If regional and remote families do not live where they do then the majority of Australians will suffer as a consequence with constraints on the supply chains due to limited amounts of food, fibre and minerals. Does the country ride on the sheep's back nowadays? No it rides on the production from rural and remote family businesses and workers.

In order for our children to have an equitable education as what is expected by urban families, we as parents,

need to ensure all educational opportunities are available for our remote situations. That might mean that one parent needs to spend a large amount of time supervising, preparing and teaching their children in the classroom and, in my case as my children did secondary distance education, be prepared to do a weekly 5 hour return trip to Darwin to allow the girls face to face sessions with their Year 12 tutors in that all important last part of the year.

### **I can hear you say, that all the work is coming from the parents in this situation and nothing from the governments.**

This is where the parents have to start having a loud voice and continually lobby governments so they can see the inadequacies that exist when a child is not in an urban setting.

Something I have learnt whilst on State and Federal ICPA councils is that what you lobby for now might not help your children but it will help another family in the future. You need to keep chipping away at the rock which then becomes pebbles that are small enough to sweep under the carpet with the issue being resolved.

### **When I first joined Federal Council in 2008 we were lobbying hard for a Tertiary Access Allowance and recently a Territory Access Payment became available.**

### **It does happen.**

I think one of the most challenging issues affecting education in remote settings and small rural schools is technology. This is forever evolving, becoming outdated, is expensive and is something that is now always required in the education of our children.

During my time as a distance education tutor I have utilized; correspondence material only, radio lessons, telephone lessons and the interactive distance learning (IDL) computers - and all means of delivery have issues.

Recently I was without internet, scant mobile coverage

and a landline with “noise”. This lasted over 4 months and you realise how the modern world just does not work without technology and people’s expectation is that everyone has mobile coverage and you are contactable at all times. I was only thankful this did not happen during my tutoring years. I would not have survived and I think the girls would have probably run away from home to someplace that was more civilised!!

**So are you going to join ICPA and better still are you going to join your branch or state council?**

Other than the obvious benefits of that being the education of your children, there are great benefits for you personally. You receive great personal development and utilise skills you might have thought you didn’t possess and take on jobs you probably thought you would never do.

Never a dull moment.

**You work with a great group of like-minded people who end up being lifelong friends. The networking and social outings is what makes all the serious stuff fun.**

40 years is a milestone but the work is only half done and requires young enthusiasm to shine the light on issues and make the next 40 years dazzle.

**Come on,  
ICPA needs YOU!**

Sue

**Sue Shotton  
Territory Wide  
ICPA Federal Life Member**



## 2022 ICPA NT KATHERINE BRANCH EXECUTIVE



**President:** Kerrie Scott  
**Vice President:** Julie Richter  
**Secretary:** Sally Dyer  
**Treasurer:** Helen Harding  
**Assistant Treasurer:** Katie Payne  
**Public Officer:** Helen Harding  
**Publicity/Media Officer:** Amanda Murphy

**Fundraising Co-ordinator:** Lauren Hoar  
**Bursary/Grants Officer:** Helen Harding  
**Committee:** Cassie Cox, Hanna Blokland, Lisa Dyer, Beki Bull, Katie Payne

2022 HERE WE COME

## ALICE SPRINGS BRANCH

*Bronco Branding | September*



## 2022 - ALICE SPRINGS ICPA BRANCH

### *Executive & Committee*

PRESIDENT - LISA JAMES  
 VICE PRESIDENT - DANYELLE HAIGH  
 SECRETARY - CANDICE KREBS  
 TREASURER - KELLI MCLAUGHLIN  
 PUBLICITY OFFICER - AMBER DRIVER  
 GRANTS SECRETARY - BENJ QUILLIAM  
 PUBLIC OFFICER - BENJ QUILLIAM

COMMITTEE  
 MARY BAYLY  
 KIYA GILL  
 SONYA CONNELLAN



### MIKE O'BRIEN

*REST IN ETERNAL PEACE*

*Mike O'Brien, Coodardie Station 16 June 1943 to 12 Dec 2021*

*Husband to Clair.  
 Father to Patrick, Dinah, Felix, Moira.  
 Father-in-law to Mark, Sisi, Colin.  
 Poppy to Josphine & Phillip (PJ); Madison & Imogen (DY);  
 Savanna & baby bump (FS); Caleb & Anton (MC).*

*Mike passed away peacefully Sunday 12 December, only hours after additional family members had arrived from interstate and gathered round.*

*Mikes legacy lives on in his children, grandchildren, wife Clair and his beloved Coodardie Brahmans.*

#### IN LOVING MEMORY

*ICPA NT passes on their deepest sympathy and thoughts to Clair O'Brien, Moira Lanzarin and family at the passing of*

### MIKE O'BRIEN

*16 June 1943 - 12 December 2021*



# Landcare Networking Dinner hosted by ICPA NT



*L-R: Setting up.  
Sarah Cook and Liz Bird.  
Pre-dinner drinks on the dam wall.  
And then, for the 'stayers', the  
Nutbush challenge under the stars!  
Great fun!*



## What a perfect fundraising opportunity!

In October, Landcare NT partnered with CLMA to hold a 2 day Sustainable Land Management field event at the Aileron Racecourse and on Aileron Station. This also happens to be the home of the NT State President, so the 'Networking Dinner Under the Stars' catering opportunity quickly turned into a fundraising event for ICPA NT State Council!



Thank you very much to the Aileron Station crew for volunteering their time, Cold Zap in Alice Springs for the free cool-room hire and 'MRS' Mt Riddock Station for donating locally produced cheese, which starred in our pre-dinner platters. We all had a great night, the weather was perfect, and some of us stayed a little later than we planned!



## Motions: due 11 Jan. 22

**Do you have the tools, processes, programs and support necessary to access a fair deal to education where you live?**

**If you have a request to improve equity and access to education in rural & remote NT, submit a motion through your branch by 11 January 2022.**

Branches put motions to Conference, recommending or requesting State Council to take a particular course of action.

**'Carried motions' form State Council policy.  
State Council advocates on that policy.**

This means, Branches tell State Council what needs improving, changing, or introducing. The explanation tells State Council why you are asking for this motion, 'what is happening on the ground', so anyone reading the motion can understand the issue and reason for the motion. ICPA NT advocates for equity in education for rural and remote students.



# WHICH MINISTER?

IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY WE HAVE A...



CHIEF MINISTER  
TREASURER  
MINISTER FOR MAJOR PROJECTS AND TERRITORY ECONOMIC RECONSTRUCTION  
MINISTER FOR STRATEGIC DEFENCE RELATIONS  
DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER  
MINISTER FOR POLICE, FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES  
MINISTER FOR MINING AND INDUSTRY  
MINISTER FOR NORTHERN AUSTRALIA AND TRADE  
MINISTER FOR DEFENCE INDUSTRIES  
MINISTER FOR AGRIBUSINESS AND AQUACULTURE  
MINISTER FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION  
LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS  
MINISTER FOR HEALTH  
MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY  
MINISTER FOR NATIONAL RESILIENCE  
MINISTER FOR MAJOR EVENTS  
MINISTER FOR RACING, GAMING AND LICENSING  
MINISTER FOR ALCOHOL POLICY  
MINISTER FOR RENEWABLES AND ENERGY  
MINISTER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANNING AND LOGISTICS  
MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT  
MINISTER FOR WATER SECURITY  
MINISTER FOR CLIMATE CHANGE  
MINISTER FOR ESSENTIAL SERVICES  
MINISTER FOR EDUCATION  
MINISTER FOR CHILDREN  
MINISTER FOR YOUTH  
MINISTER FOR SENIORS  
MINISTER FOR WOMEN  
ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER FOR JUSTICE  
MINISTER FOR TREATY AND LOCAL DECISION MAKING  
MINISTER FOR ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS  
MINISTER FOR PARKS AND RANGERS  
MINISTER FOR SMALL BUSINESS  
MINISTER FOR JOBS AND TRAINING  
MINISTER FOR RECREATIONAL FISHING  
MINISTER FOR VETERANS' AFFAIRS  
MINISTER FOR PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT  
MINISTER FOR CORPORATE AND DIGITAL DEVELOPMENT  
MINISTER FOR TERRITORY FAMILIES AND URBAN HOUSING  
MINISTER FOR DISABILITIES  
MINISTER FOR SPORT  
MINISTER FOR MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS  
MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
MINISTER FOR CENTRAL AUSTRALIAN ECONOMIC RECONSTRUCTION  
MINISTER FOR REMOTE HOUSING AND TOWN CAMPS  
MINISTER FOR INDIGENOUS ESSENTIAL SERVICES  
MINISTER FOR ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE

# TIMBER CREEK YOUTH DAY

Sponsored by Katherine Branch

This year the Katherine Branch of the ICPA became a major sponsor of the Timber Creek Youth Day, held at the Timber Creek Campdraft in September. The weather was extremely harsh with temperatures soaring up towards 40C.

With so many of our members kids living in remote locations in the NT, the idea of the Youth Day was to give children the opportunity to gain practice and tuition from top level instructors. By covering the dry work patterns, kids are exposed to other equine disciplines they may not normally be exposed to.

Kids enjoyed a full one day program of tuition and competition. Instructors Kim and Jack Harries, Kate Everett, Gary Faulks, Kate Townsend and Hannah Hayes donated their time to share knowledge and skills with 45 children.

Katherine Branch generously donated shirts for all the kids to wear on the day. Charlie Brown Catering made sure the kids were well feed throughout the day, with plenty of icy cold slushy's to keep the kids cool.

CAIT's - Auvergne Station donated a good line of cattle for kids to learn the fundamentals of campdrafting, along with developing their stops, roll backs, control and campdraft rules.

All kids like competition, at the end of the training the kids competed in a challenge, campdraft and gymkhana.

Much fun was had by all the kids, a huge thank you must go to our facilitators for braving the heat to donate their time.

We are looking to make this event bigger and better in 2022, moving to a new venue at the Katherine Show Grounds running over the 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of April to coincide with school holidays.

If you wish to get involved in this great event we are looking for sponsors and helpers to come on board. Get in touch with the Katherine Branch for more information.

## Julie

**Julie Richter**  
**Katherine Branch Vice President**

*PHOTOS (From top): 8-12yr group | Gymkhana in action | Winners of Group A | 6-8 years | Youth Day attendees | Mini competitors*



# FEDERAL LIFE MEMBERSHIP AWARDED

**PRESENTATION MADE AT FEDERAL CONFERENCE IN LONGREACH BY NIKKI MCQUEEN—ICPA FEDERAL WEBMASTER**

Since retiring from Federal Council in 2014, Sue Shotton has been instrumental in the establishment of two ICPA websites starting both from scratch, assisting with the development of an online membership system beginning in 2017, database upkeep, as well as the maintenance of the ICPA website by assisting both Federal and State Councils to ensure that up to date information was available and current at all times.

In addition to her website role, Sue also supports ICPA (Aust) by attending the Federal Conference as the AV assistant, sets up AV assistance for presentations, motions and portfolio reports and assists the AV person at the Conference with the numerous PowerPoint presentations, slides, videos and other technological wonders that helps make Federal Conference more engaging.

Sue not only assists with all aspects of the website, she also establishes and maintains email addresses and mailboxes, organises hosting and diverts emails to ensure that the correct ICPA email gets to the right person. This is an onerous task and one that has to be done correctly, every time. There are many email addresses between all of the Federal and State Councils and Sue has the responsibility of making sure each email, of which there would be hundreds daily, is delivered into the correct mailbox.

At the 2019 Federal Conference in Adelaide, Sue presented Federal Council with the news that our former website hosting company Clear Pixel no longer wished to continue with the

ICPA website as the content editing program they used called Breeze had become obsolete. Due to the complex nature of our structure of 7 websites within 1 site, extremely large database and an online payment system that was going to take a lot of mapping, not just anyone could do the job. To say that this news left us despondent is an understatement. Federal Council knew how much work had gone into setting up the first and second website and to tackle that again was disheartening.



## Congratulations Sue Shotton

In true Sue style as our Webmanager she took the job of investigating a new website developer on with gusto and after discussions with Federal Council she began researching into who we could entrust with such a task. Many hours of pouring through suggestions, phone calls, emails, zoom meetings (being stood up and those businesses who were completely

underprepared), budgets and liaising with Federal and State ICPA as to wish lists. We began the process at the end of 2019 and it all came to fruition in May 2021 and not a day in between did not have a website thought or process in it.

Sue narrowed her list down and presented prospective website companies to Federal and State ICPA Councils at the beginning of March 2020, as COVID hit. In an organisation of volunteers who have businesses and families to maintain, with children to educate along with ICPA demands, as the world was flipped on its head, the timing was not ideal. Sue had her work cut out and after much deliberation and pouring over Project Briefs, the company Enrega was appointed as our web developer using the source management system Drupal.

Sue, this Federal Life Membership is in part because this project would not have even begun without your expertise. You and Mark have had numerous meetings to discuss "back-of-house" technicalities and your in depth knowledge and understanding has enabled this process to happen smoothly. Without your expertise and willingness to unselfishly devote so many hours to ICPA, with the support of your husband Pete, ensures our organisation maintains a digital presence. ICPA State and Federal Councils would not be in the favourable

position that we are currently in with a state of the art, cohesive website for our members to enjoy for many years to come.

**I would like you all to welcome ICPA Australia's newest Federal Life Member, Mrs Sue Shotton**

**Congratulations Sue.**

ISOLATED CHILDREN'S PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

*Alice Springs Branch*

'Equity of Access to Education for all Geographically Isolated Children'

**NOTICE BOARD**

ICPA NT - 40th STATE CONFERENCE  
Tuesday 9 March 2022 - Darwin  
"Before and Beyond"

2022 Branch President - Lisa Kimlin  
president.as.icpa@gmail.com

2022 Branch Secretary - Candice Krebs  
secretaryasicpa@gmail.com  
#ICPA #alicespringsicpa



*Congratulations!*

**SUE SHOTTON**



AWARDED WITH ICPA FEDERAL LIFE MEMBERSHIP

- LONGREACH 2021 -

CONGRATULATIONS



*Lisa & Luke*



10 October 2021

# OUTBACK MAIL

Connellan Airways Trust

## Hello friends,

Firstly, a huge thank you to ICPA NT for allowing the Trust to provide our little bits and pieces throughout the year.

I hope you enjoy reading them.

Secondly, another thank you to ICPA NT for the shared charter to attend the ICPA Federal Conference in Longreach. It was a great opportunity for the Trust to reconnect with state branch members and see where the national focus for geographically isolated education continues to be for ICPA. I sincerely take my hat off to all ICPA members who play a vital role in advocating for bush education equity.

As you start to think about 2022, I thought it timely to provide a round-up of what is offered by the Trust to remote people like yourselves.

**General Grants** – available four (4) times a year and aiming to support education and health (wellbeing) outcomes. Typically, these grants don't fund living expenses, but instead fund travel, education, health and communications. Check the website for application due dates.

**E.J Connellan Award** – Applications are considered once a year and open 1 December, closing 31 January 2022. This prestigious award of up to \$20k supports a remote person to undertake further studies or research. (Remember, the more detail in your application the better!)

**Roger Connellan Award** – Applications are considered once a year, and open 1 June and close on July 15 of each year. This one is designed to support outback aviation goals.

**School of the Air Accommodation Grants** – A grant provided to families to subsidise some of the costs for paid accommodation during in-schools. Speak to your school to see if you are eligible. If your school isn't part of this program, apply for a general grant instead.

**Outback Major Grants** – for organisations addressing a specific challenge in Outback Australia, relevant to the annual theme. Opens in March 2022, with the new theme to be announced in early 2022.

**University Scholarships** – The Trust partners with several universities that have geographical footprints in the Outback to provide scholarships for remote students.

Details for all granting options are on our website or give me call for a chat. I'm always happy to discuss which grant would suit your needs better. You can sign up to our e-newsletter on our website and be notified of any grant dates. Plus, see stories from recipients



*Have a fantastic end of year and festive season, and I look forward to working with you in 2022.*

**Jessica Hackett**  
Executive Officer  
Connellan Airways Trust

**OUR GRANTS MAKE IT EASIER**  
*to live the outback life you love.*

**The E.J Connellan Award**

How could the E.J Connellan Award secure your future?

- Honouring our founder, the E.J Connellan Award supports outback people to pursue further education, research and passion projects.
- Up to \$20,000 is granted to an applicant, over the age of 16. Two awards may be granted, a Junior and a Senior.
- Applications Close 31 January 2022
- For full details and to apply, visit our website today.

[www.connellanairwaystrust.org.au](http://www.connellanairwaystrust.org.au)  
FREECALL 1800 733 810



# THE MULGA CHRISTMAS TREE

A BUSH CHRISTMAS STORY  
FROM TANYA HEASLIP

AUTHOR | LAWYER | ICPA NT MEMBER

Heat shimmered off the corrugated iron homestead roof. Pink cockatoos squawked in the gum trees lining the dry creek bed. The pungent leaves drooped as the sun's fierce rays rose through the huge bowl of sky. Dogs panted under the meat-house, having flopped near the old trough. Horses and cattle hid out in the ranges and gullies, seeking shade under thickets of mulga, flicking their tails. It was Christmas morning in Central Australia – with heat already laying heavy across the land.

Yet we kids were filled with energy and raced around in our jeans and boots, yakkaiing, and yelling out “Merry Christmas” to each other, over and over again. All we had to do was gaze at the mulga Christmas tree to feel the moment.

**We kids were so proud of our Christmas tree.**

The previous afternoon, we'd piled onto the back of the Land Rover and Dad drove us out to the long plain where mulga scrub ran for miles. It was stinking hot but we didn't care, such was our excitement. Dad pulled up next to a big thicket and we leapt off the back, running round, while Dad pulled off the axe and decided what was the best tree. The idea

was to take a big branch from one of them, big enough to hang decorations on, but not so big that it would affect the tree's ongoing life. That process took a while, as the mulga had become so thin and scraggly during the last months of drought it was hard to find one that would even look like a tree.

But eventually we discovered 'the one' and Dad brought it down with a huge thwack. We pulled all the rough branches up into the back of the Land Rover, sitting on the grey, green leaves all the bumpy way home, trying not to get scratched too much, elated with our find. Once back at the homestead, we helped Dad pull the branches into the veranda, which he then plonked into a sawn off 44 gallon drum.

'Careful with that drum!' Mum shouted, coming out wiping floury hands on her apron. 'Don't mess up my lovely clean veranda. I've just swept it.'

Dad shoved his hat back on his head, wiped his forehead with his sleeve, grinned, and disappeared, leaving us to the next fun bit. Decorating the Christmas tree!

Mum pulled out two big boxes of decorations that she kept hidden up the top of the cupboards in the ironing

room, and we dived into them. These were home-made decorations that we'd put together over the years – old pinecones that we had once sprayed white, scuffed ribbons to loop around shiny baubles, silver tinsel, home-made sparkles and the big gold star, that despite being faded and now falling apart, would still somehow be affixed to the top of the tree.

We set to work until the scraggly, mulga branch was filled with colour and sparkles.

"Well done, everyone, said Mum, sitting back on her knees and admiring our handiwork. "Now it's time to go and wrap your presents. You're not allowed to look at what you're giving each other, remember that. And no fighting!"

The evening air was filled with the sound of shrieks and yelling, until our gifts were carefully wrapped and placed at the foot of the drum. Of course, there had been secret stolen looks, and lots of fighting, but that happened every day, too. We were bush kids, filled to the brim with energy, and our life was so physical, that fighting was normal. The boys wrestled down the side veranda on the concrete until Mum called out, as she did every night, 'Righto you kids, enough! Time to clean your boots, have a bath, dinner, then bed".

'But it's Christmas Eve!' we chorused.

No matter. Mum had a routine, and Christmas Eve did not change that routine. Polish our RM's to an inch of their life. Then hop in to the bath, little more than two inches of brown water, muddy from the bottom of the tank, and try not to fight while we were in there. Scrub behind our ears and toes. Then big plates of steak – what else would bush kids want?

Well, just to stay up a little bit later, perhaps? 'We have to put out Father Christmas's midnight feast, Mum,' we chorused.

After much discussion, we were allowed to put two Delta Creams (our favourite treat in the stock camp) and one of Dad's beers at the bottom of the tree, next to the parcels. It was exciting, imagining Father Christmas sitting there and having a good old rest mid-flight and enjoying the feast, before he flew off to the next cattle station.

I asked Mum if he'd get froth in his beard, and also whether he'd enjoy Delta Creams as much as we kids did. "I expect he'll think he is *very* lucky," said Mum, reassuringly.

'Bed, Fred in the shed!' Dad's voice came around the edge of the veranda. That was his good night recital, so we hugged him, and Mum led us outside. She helped us unroll our swags on the lawn, as it was too hot to sleep inside, and kissed us all good night. We lay looking up at the sky. It was a mass of silver stars against black ink. In the distance we could hear a dingo howl and our dogs came up and curled up close to us.

The last thing I remembered was one of the dogs licking me on the cheek, and then, before I knew it, the light was peeking over the eastern range and we were up, pulling on our boots, rolling our swags and racing through the house. Mum was already in the kitchen, heaving a huge turkey into the oven. She had ordered it months before from Elders GM, and had picked it up from Alice Springs last week. We thought the turkey the strangest thing. We were used to slabs of dark, brown-red beef hanging in the meat house and this was white and had a funny shape. But Mum always had turkey for Christmas, even though Dad looked at the thermometer outside the veranda and predicted it would be over 40 today.

**'Tradition,' Mum always said firmly. Next to her on the bench were piles of chopped potato and pumpkin in trays lined with foil. I wondered if she had even been to bed.**

Her forehead was pricked with bubbles of sweat, but she swept us all up in hugs and kisses before we raced to the Christmas tree.

To our delight, the beer and biscuits were gone, and in its place were little parcels in a special pile. Good old Father Christmas even knew how to spell our names and had thoughtfully added tags onto the gifts.

'Look what I got!' 'And me!' 'Me too!' 'Oh, look at mine!'

We tore apart the wrapping and ooh-ed and ah-hhed and shrieked some more. We all received Matchbox bulldozers and graders and a set of matchsticks yards (perfect for building roads and dams outside in the mud near the creek) and a horse book each. So exciting!

**I rushed into Mum. "How did Father Christmas know exactly what I would want?"**

Mum reminded me how clever Father Christmas was, as she deftly added the vegetables to the oven, and started making custard for the plum pudding.

Lunch was almost ready, but first, we needed everyone to assemble at the foot of the Christmas tree for the Great Present Ceremony. People arrived – the stockman, the old bookkeeper, family and friends staying with us – and we four kids were tasked with handing out gifts to everyone. It was such a happy time – noise, cries of delight – and all presided over by our marvellous, laden tree.

Outside pungent eucalyptus hung heavy in the late morning air but our mulga tree was as sprightly and upright as if it had its roots in deep creek water. The star, slightly lopsided, shone brightly, the baubles glittered, the tinsel sparkled, and in between, the grey green leaves of the mulga looked as grand to me as any of the big green Christmas trees I'd seen in fairytale books.

**Long live Christmas Day in the bush – and mulga Christmas trees!**

**Be sure to visit Tanya's website and get your hands on a copy of her three books for some more exceptional writing and story telling.**

<https://www.tanyaheaslip.com.au/>



# COLLABORATION IN ACTION

A new model of health service delivery for remote Territorians

AUTORS: MARIANNE ST CLAIR  
& DAVID MURTAGH



**Only 500,000 people live in Australia's most remote locations, but, they have disproportionate access to health services and consequently, poorer health outcomes.**

There are often long waits to access services, and in some cases, people are unable to access the services they need. Telehealth may be part of the solution to this long-term problem and supplement the services currently available.

Our research indicates lack of access to adequate telecommunications is still the main barrier to accessing telehealth for many of our regional and remote people. There have been significant advances in satellite internet technologies and the Sky Muster Plus service has been shown to be adequate for telehealth via videoconferencing with a typical minimum download of 25 Mbps down and 9 Mbps up. A number of ICPA members are now using the NBN Sky Muster in addition to the Stars Network.

Northern Territory based Simbani Research has joined forces with Synapse Medical Services (Sydney based MedTech healthcare administration company) to develop a technology solution that connects doctors, specialists and nurses to patients in the same way ride sharing companies connect drivers. Synapse Medical's mobile phone application is a medical billing system which facilitates clinicians' billing Medicare from their mobile devices and can also be used to connect primary health care providers, specialists

and patients for telehealth appointments.

Nurse Practitioners (NP) are highly qualified Registered Nurses. NPs are educated and authorised to work independently, diagnosing, and treating patients in collaboration with medical practitioners. NPs can provide in person and telehealth consultations, access Medicare rebates, provide prescriptions and access to PBS medicines, order diagnostic tests and refer patients to specialists.

National standards ensure NPs provide high quality, patient centered care working in similar roles as GPs. This technology combined with the NP pathway have evolved to provide access to a wide range of health services for regional and remote people. Additional functionality has been added to the technology for this project so that referrals can be made at the click of a button and administration is reduced. Thus, providing a compliant framework for the project and correct Medicare billing.

## HOW IT WORKS

- Remote patients who are unable to access a clinician, contact the TH4B Concierge (th4b@synapsemedical.com.au or 1300 510 444) with a request to have a telehealth consult with a Nurse Practitioner (NP).
- The NP has a telehealth consult with the patient and refers the patient to

an appropriate collaborating specialist using the in-app referral function in the billing app. The NP may also request diagnostic tests and imaging.

- The specialist receives the referral via the app and arranges a telehealth consultation with the patient.
- The specialist bulk bills the patient using the Synapse MBS app, so there are no out-of-pocket costs for the patient when they have their consultation with the specialist/allied health professional.

Marianne St Clair and David Murtagh have been working in this area of research for over 10 years and advocating for better telecommunications and access to telehealth for regional and remote people through Broadband for the Bush and Simbani Research. This project is exciting as it's an opportunity to increase access to health services for remote people and communities. Some of these initial patients have waited over a year to see a specialist or allied health professional. We thank the wide-ranging specialists and Nurse Practitioners already involved in the project and are delighted to now provide increased access to these services for isolated people.

## SERVICES INCLUDE:

*Allergist, Clinical Immunologist, Anaesthetist, Cardiologist, Cardio-thoracic Surgeon Colorectal Surgeon,*

*Dermatologist, Emergency Physician, Endocrinologist, Exercise Physiologist, Gastroenterologist and Hepatologist, General Physician, General Practitioner, General Surgeon, Geriatrician, Haematologist, Infectious Diseases Physician, Intensive Care Medicine, Midwife Nurse Practitioner, Neonatal/ Perinatal Medicine, Paediatrician, Nephrologist, Renal Physician, Neurologist, Obstetrician and Gynaecologist, Occupational Therapist, Oncologist, Orthopaedic Surgeon, Paediatric Surgeon, Paediatrician/ Paediatric Neurologist, Pain Medicine, Palliative Medicine, Pathologist, Psychiatrist, Physiotherapist, Radiation Oncologist, Rehabilitation Physician, Respiratory and Sleep Physician, Rheumatologist, Speech Therapist, Urologist, Vascular Surgeon.*

**So far, 38 patients over the last 8 months have had an appointment through the TH4B Trial and accessed services which supplemented available services or provided services which were not currently available.**

Some have also had more than one subsequent appointment with a specialist, others have had pathology and diagnostic imaging services provided and 2 required surgery. One of these patients did not have Private Health Insurance (PHI), so they were linked into the public wait-list and they had their surgery within a few weeks. There are other options for patients requiring surgery – through a self-pay private fee at low cost from one of TH4B provider network or through PHI on a no gap basis. In some situations, patients were not able to access these services within a suitable timeframe (eg many months wait time), replaced services where there was no continuity of care or provided access to services that were unavailable to the patient.

**In response to feedback from our networks (including ICPA), a number of child-orientated specialists, including allied health professionals, have been made available for the trial.**

In particular, participants in the case study research and the DH4B Forum have specifically identified long wait

periods (often with significant expense) to have children assessed for developmental issues. This lack of access or delayed access can result in a child not receiving treatment early in their development and therefore maximise their development potential (DH4B 2020).

Through our research we have already identified a number of issues:

- Health professionals do not always share diagnostic results or communicate well to maximise their effectiveness in treating patients.
- Referring specialists are not necessarily providing discharge summaries to the patient's referring practitioner.
- Some health professionals are refusing to upload patient's health data to My Health Record when the patient requests this action.
- Some health professionals are refusing to provide the patient with their health data when the patient requests those diagnostic results. (This poses the question: Who owns the data? Medicare who paid for the diagnostic test? The provider who provided the test? Or should the patient own their own health data?)
- A number of regional and remote people are not getting the care they need in a timely manner and are often experiencing lengthy delays for diagnosis and treatment.
- There is a lack of access to a range of services in regional and remote areas probably due to a lack of available professionals.

The TH4B Trial is attempting to supplement currently available health services in regional and remote areas. TH4B is available to ICPA members and their friends/family. It is a research trial, so the authors would appreciate feedback from participants, and, if any issues arise, please contact us so we can learn from the experience and remedy the situation as soon as possible. Through collaboration, this new model of service delivery may address gaps in

health care for regional and remote Territorians, including remote Aboriginal Communities and cattle stations.

**For further information contact:**

**Marianne St Clair: 0427 555 484 or marianne@simbani.com.au**

**Acknowledgements:** The authors acknowledge the financial support of the Cooperative Research Centre for Developing Northern Australia which is part of the Australian Government's Cooperative Research Centre Program (CRCP). The CRCNA also acknowledges the additional support provided by the Western Australian, Northern Territory and Queensland Governments. We also acknowledge the financial and in-kind support of the project participants:

- Emerge IT Solutions
- Laynhapuy Homelands Aboriginal Corporation
- Puntuturnu Aboriginal Medical Service
- SkyMesh
- Synapse Medical Services
- VisionFlex
- Asia Pacific College of Business & Law
- Biz365
- NBN Co
- With support from the Isolated Children's and Parents' Association & the Broadband for the Bush Alliance.

**PHOTO:** David and Marianne with smart diagnostic telehealth tools at Puntuturnu Aboriginal Medical Service, Newman. David is holding an ECG and the trace is seen on the tablet in the background. Marianne is holding a pulse oximeter and an electronic thermometer. Their research has found the most useful diagnostic tool is good quality video and the Jabra710 or similar integrated microphone and speaker greatly improves audio performance for videoconferencing.

The Jabra 710 (or later versions) combined microphone/speaker has been found to improve people's audio experience when doing videoconferencing. It sells for about \$300 and can be simply plugged in via the USB port, or connected via bluetooth.





Anton Lanzarin

My name is Anton Lanzarin I am Grade 6 and I am 12 years old.

I live at Coodardie station which is near Mataranka. Mataranka is also where I go to school. Next year I will be attending BTC Blackheath Thornburgh College - if all goes to plan. Covid might mess things up! BTC is in Charters towers, and I am really looking forward to going there even though there would be a lot of challenges. One of the main things I'm looking forward to doing in boarding school is debating. Oh, when I found out there is a debate team at the school, I was so excited. I also love doing art, here's one of my recent drawings I did.

I also like doing sport and BTC does sport regularly. But I might miss my family a bit and I know that will be hard to deal with. The longest time I've been without seeing my parents was 10 days on my school camp to Uluru not too long ago. But having said all this, I am still looking forward to boarding school and hope I can still go without Covid messing it up!

My family and I really appreciate the support given to us by ICPA and their supporting sponsors. Thank you.



Caleb Lanzarin

I am Caleb Lanzarin.

I am 13, in grade 7 and have been at Mataranka School/KSA (Katherine School of the Air) and am going to Blackheath Thornburgh College in Charters Towers next year.

I am looking forward to making friends and doing robotics, engineering, and creating designs for different vehicles.

I am also wanting to join the military in the future, and I would like to do cadets or something like that.

I am good at maths, and creativity. Not the best at spelling.

I am nervous of the new school and fitting in and just making a routine of what is happening. I imagine it will be hard for the first 3-4 days with trying to fit in and get the routine sorted out.

Thank you very much to ICPA Katherine Branch for your help and assistance.



Charlie Murphy

Hi, my name is Charlie Murphy I am 11 and I live at Eleanor Pool Cattle Station. I like to play football, ride horses and go pigging. The school I am going to is Blackheath and Thornburgh Collage.

The things I am most excited about are to play football because where I live, I can't play because I am to far out of town. Another thig I am super excited about is to meet new people I have already done a transition day, so I know a few kids. When I did my transition day, we did some woodwork, played football, had a game of dog ball and went for a swim. When we went to the dorms, we had a game of pool and went to bed. When I woke up, we went to the dining room and had waffles. After we had breakfast, we played red, red rover but we had to stop halfway through the game because we had to go home. After I had completed the transition day it has made me super excited to go because all the stuff is new to me and there lots of opportunities for me to do new stuff. I am also excited for boarding school because to do school inside a real classroom with a teacher instead of a computer. But I am a bit scared to go because I will miss home.

These are all the things I am excited for when I go to boarding school in Charters Towers.



# Congratulations Applicants!



Isla Scott

Hello I'm Isla Scott,

And I am currently in Yr 7 and attend Columba Catholic College in Charters Towers.

At my school there are around 74 boarding girls. The thing I love about boarding school is that I get to see my friends every day now and get to do fun activities with them at school and in dorms, like last week all the boarders went on a trip to the Barra Fun Park in Townsville and it was awesome.

Another thing I really love about boarding school is the people I've met. These people have been very encouraging to me when I've had no one and the good thing about it is that we all go through it together.

Another reason why I love boarding is the house parents (dormies) because they always look after us well and they are all really nice since they are there to stand in for our guardians/parents.



Luke Molinaro-Rathsmann

My name is Luke Molinaro-Rathsmann from Mount Ringwood Station near Adelaide River, Northern Territory.

In 2022 I will be boarding at Morcom House at Caulfield Grammar School Melbourne, and I am very excited to be going there next year. I am excited about new opportunities the school has to offer.

At Caulfield Grammar, there is a large range of extracurricular activities that I am passionate about. I am a keen sportsman who enjoys AFL, Cricket and Basketball, all which I hope to play next year. I am a sociable person who can't wait to make new friends and enjoy my education whilst playing my favourite sports. I am excited to live and learn with other kids my age from all around Australia and overseas.

At Morcom house I will be able to sign myself out and explore Melbourne. With the new lifestyle of living in suburban Melbourne I will be able to experience different opportunities such as exploring the city, going to sport events, and making new friends. With boarding being only a ten-minute train ride to the MCG I will finally be able to watch my favourite footy team play (Carn the Hawks!).

I have grown up on Mount Ringwood Station for most of my life and schooled in the Northern Territory. I have had a special childhood, but now it's time to widen my experience and take on the new opportunities available to me at Caulfield Grammar School next year.



Maggie Murphy

My name is Maggie Murphy. I go to Blackheath and Thornbrough college (also known as BTC) as a Boarder. I have attended Blackheath and Thornbrough college for nearly a year now. The school is fantastic and has supported me through all of my educational needs and wants. It has also supported me playing sport which is one of my favorite things to do. Boarding has also supported me with all of my hobbies. Boarding has been so helpful to me. They Staff at Boarding are kind and are always up for a chat even if they have had a bad day. Boarding has lots of activities to do on the weekends in and out of the school.

I really like boarding because of everything they do to help the students. For all of the boarders even just getting out on the oval on a Saturday night or going for an IGA run means a lot. Boarding also always tries to make sure any sport training or game happen with ease. The staff will do anything in their power to help make your hobbies and commitments happen. Boarding also tries to plan fun excursions and camps. We have had 3 Townsville trips this Term, we went ice skating, bowling, and to the Barra fun park. We also went camping near the Burdekin River in charters towers. This is just a few of the things Boarding at BTC can accomplish.

Boarding School at BTC is a great experience and can teach you so many life skills along with making memories and friends for life. I have already made so many great friends at Boarding school that will hopefully be my life long friends. I really enjoy Boarding school and I hope I can continue to live and laugh at this school.



# ICPA NT BENEFICIARY OF HOSPITALITY NT CHARITY DONATION

By Sue Wilson  
State Vice President

ICPA NT was invited to the annual Hospitality NT President's Lunch, held at Mindil Beach Casino Resort.

The event is for Hospitality NT members and industry stakeholders to network and celebrate the festive season and serves as an opportunity to raise funds for worthwhile charities.

Vice President, Suzanne Wilson and Down The Track Editor and Webmaster, Annika Bell attended on behalf of ICPA NT.

More than 200 people attended the event and it was lovely to see everyone frocked up and enjoying themselves. We were seated at a table with the Hon Paul Kirby MLA; Virg Hughes, Principal of Nemaarluk School; and Patricia McAlister, Founder of Smart Pups, among others.

Chris O'Brien of Dreamedia was the MC for the event, who kept us entertained with his witty remarks.

There were carefully crafted, hilarious videos and slide shows to welcome guest speakers to the stage, and to keep us amused – the larrikin spirit was alive and well. We enjoyed a delicious lunch with beverages (see menu) and enjoyed getting to know some of our table companions.

Smart Pups was the primary charity that this fundraising event was working for.

Patricia made a heart-warming speech about the work her organisation does in training assistance dogs for children and young people with special needs. Pass the tissues, please.

Later in the afternoon, Patricia told us that funds raised that day would go towards training a new assistance dog for Nemaarluk School as their special needs dog, "Laddie", a gorgeous golden Labrador was retiring, and a successor was needed. Patricia called Virg Hughes, Nemaarluk's principal to the stage to tell us a bit about Laddie's work and value at the school, which was uplifting.

Fundraising activities included a silent auction for 'small' items and a live auction for the high-ticket items. Both Annika and I made unsuccessful bids on the small items.

Small items included men's and ladies crocodile skin belts, alcohol of various sorts, sporting memorabilia, a Yeti esky, multiple night stays in various hotels, Yellow Waters cruises and trays of mangoes.

The big-ticket items included premium bottles of wine (a Grange red!) and radio advertising. This auction was well and truly out of the budget of both of us!

Kelly Hannus, Events & Corporate Partnerships

at Hospitality NT, was recognised for her 10-year anniversary with the organisation.

Patricia from Smart Pups surprised us all later by announcing that the new "Laddie" would be named "Kelly".

At the end of the afternoon, more than \$40,000 had been raised by the event, which is a truly magnificent result! Over the years, ICPA NT has been very fortunate to be a beneficiary of the President's Lunch auction; we have passed these funds on to the Alice Springs and Katherine Branch to assist in the cost of running sports camps.

ICPA NT are thrilled that again this year, while Smart Pups are the primary charity, we were named as beneficiaries of a proportion of the total funds raised!

Thank you Hospitality NT for a great day and for supporting ICPA!

**"ICPA NT expresses our sincere appreciation to the Northern Territory Hospitality Industry, from small regional establishments to 5 star hotels, breweries, beverage suppliers, furnishings and many other diverse complimentary businesses, for supporting our cause with the proceeds from their charity auction".**



# Thank You



THIS YEAR'S NT HOSPITALITY PRESIDENT'S LUNCHEON AUCTION  
DONATED \$10,000 TO ICPA NT STATE COUNCIL.

THE FOLLOWING COMPANY'S PURCHASES MADE THIS POSSIBLE

- HALIKOS PTY LTD \$7000
- CAZALYS PALMERSTON CLUB \$1500
- PALMERSTON GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB \$1500



**CAZALYS**  
PALMERSTON CLUB  
— *Making a Difference* —



Thank you to Hospitality NT, your sponsors,  
buyers and under-bidders.

We greatly appreciate your support.



**Above:**  
Kids on horseback in the creek

**Right Page:**  
L- Tanya and two others on horseback  
R - Tanya desperately writing home during the pilots strike in the 1970's

Gratitude. It's that time of the year. Nearly the end of school, Christmas on the horizon, holidays beckoning, festivities, happiness, families together, Christmas cheer. Time to be grateful for everything that we have in our lives and the promise of tomorrow.

Especially the beautiful recent rains!

May I suggest it is also time to be grateful for the brilliant work of the indefatigable Sarah Cook and her ICPA team (all passionate volunteers), who have ensured that children at boarding school can be reunited with their families these holidays as well.

For the last (nearly) two school years, families have been filled with anxiety about how to get their children home without the "quarantine systems" trapping them midway. With borders opening and then closing and tightening again on a completely hodgepodge, inconsistent basis, the hopes to get children home for holidays have hung in the balance, caught up in government inertia and its collective lack of understanding of life in the bush.

To address that nightmare, Sarah and her ICPA team have gone to work, reiterating to government (as ICPA has done tirelessly since the '70s) - "equality for the education of bush kids." Their goal this time round? Striving to get bureaucrats to understand that education is not equal if children in towns can go home for holidays without penalty, yet children returning to the bush are locked up first, or can't get home at all.

ICPA working together Australia wide finally secured the comprehensive "National Code for Boarding School Students in September this year. An extraordinary achievement. "Hurrah!" everyone thought, in relief! Hours upon hours of exhaustive lobbying rightly and finally celebrated.

But then the states and territories got their hands on it, the squabbling and power plays with the Feds began, the holes appeared, and the risk of children falling through those holes reappeared.

In the Territory, it's been an ongoing battle. In November, Sarah wrote in desperation, "In the Territory, the National Boarding Code has affectively been 'superseded' by the 'Roadmap' plans. It is not looking hopeful that students applying to home quarantine at the end of term four will be granted an exemption (see conditions below) – and in

# GRAT

By Tanya Heaslip

Our parents and ICPA rose to the occasion back then. They have done so again this time round. Congratulations to Sarah Cook and ICPA for your fierce advocacy and successful outcomes.

fact, it is more likely you will be granted exemption [only] if you live in metro Darwin.”

Sarah urged everyone back to the drawing board. She urgently collected data, stories, examples, to present them to the Territory bureaucrats, trying to get further understanding, toiling to find ways to have the Code instituted here. Why quarantine a child in an institution, when everyone knows they will be so much safer running free in the bush! Let them come home!

Finally, in late November, the stars aligned and Sarah and her team’s efforts paid off. Children will be able to get home, and cross fingers, quarantine back in the bush, without hindrance.

There is something equally important about this outcome. The legacy of boarding school shapes the rest of your life, for better or worse. During the pilot strike of the 70s, my fear of not getting home, back to my blue skies and red earth, to horses and family, to the place I belonged, was burnt into my being.

Our boarding schools didn’t care. The government didn’t care. We cried into our pillows at night, we sent frantic letters home to Mum, we shelled out our precious pocket money on telegrams to her, begging for help, and knew we had no one but Mum to help us.

Our parents and ICPA rose to the occasion back then. They have done so again this time round. Congratulations to Sarah Cook and ICPA for your fierce advocacy and successful outcomes.

And while we’re talking about gratitude, a huge thank you to Annika Bell who keeps bringing out these wonderful, inspiring editions, to keep bush families connected and encouraged. Beautiful work; you keep the stories going.

Go, ICPA! Your efforts are as important today as it has ever been. Out there are boarding school kids who now feel just like we felt all those years ago - when an escape route from the pilot strike was planned and implemented – relief, gratitude, thank you!

# GRATITUDE FOR ICPA





## MEDIA RELEASE

15 December 2021

### ICPA APPLAUDS THE SPIRIT OF WORKING TOGETHER FOR THE BUSH

The Isolated Children's Parents' Association, the Territory's peak advocacy group representing access to education for rural and remote families, applauds the spirit of Territorians working together which resulted in the Territory Government delivering a revamped COVID management plan for the regions, to come into effect on 20 December 2021.

"The first plan, announced late last week, wasn't workable - not for bush families, not for access to education, not for tourism, not for regional towns, not for remote businesses or industry working outside of the Territory's major centres", said ICPA NT State President Sarah Cook.

"But regional, rural and remote Territorians, Territorians invested in our regions, Territorians who understand how we get along and how much we need each other, we banded together.

"The Territory Government listened and came up with a second attrition; they've come up with a plan I think most of us will consider reasonable and workable.

"Pulling together and being heard by decision makers is a nice example of consultation and policy working together, as it should".

President of the Katherine ICPA Branch Kerrie Scott has been inundated for the past week with feedback from angry and worried members. Today she breathed a sigh of relief.

"Last week I was so worried about what January would look like for our school of the air and boarding school families, today we can get back to making plans. Everyone is happy to follow the guidelines; we all want to do the right thing".

While individual voices were collectively loud and strong, and many members went to great lengths to write letters to the Chief Minister and speak to media, ICPA would like to also acknowledge the various industry associations, local members and stakeholders who went to great lengths to speak against the initial plan.

"It felt like the regions and the bush stood up at the same time. Everyone was impacted in one way or another.

"As crazy as it sounds, evidently not everyone living in the Territory understands how our regional, rural and remote communities operate," said Sarah Cook.

"I mean no disrespect, but in the last five days many of us have wasted a lot of time, energy and therefore money, in an effort to spell out the consequences of the plan, as it was first promoted.

"I applaud the Territory Government in their decision to revamp the plan, but I'm sure they also appreciate the whole process has left us in the regions - and in the bush - feeling pretty bruised, on several levels.

"There's some lessons here, let's take the opportunity to consider them carefully.

"ICPA thank our friends across the Territory for supporting our calls to have this plan reconsidered, and the Territory Government for listening and responding with a revised plan that doesn't punish Territorians unnecessarily.

"ICPA absolutely supports compliance and safety in our regions. But we also support access to education, family, relationships and livelihoods, access to employment and the right to enjoy a holiday. One must never be punished for being compliant," said NT State President Sarah Cook.

ENDS



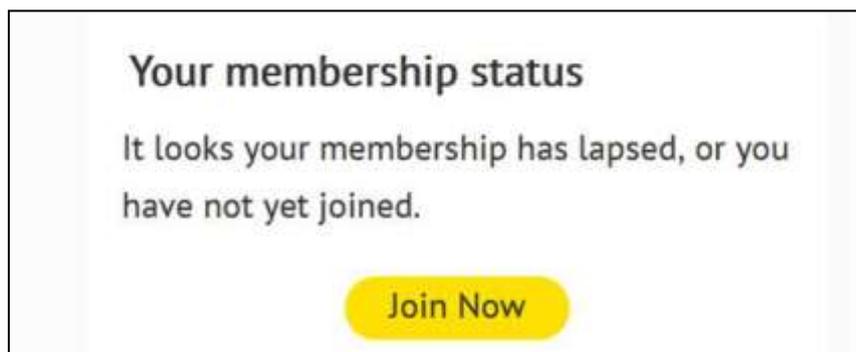
# MEMBERSHIP DUE NOW

To renew your NT ICPA Membership please go to [icpa.com.au/nt](http://icpa.com.au/nt) and log into the website.

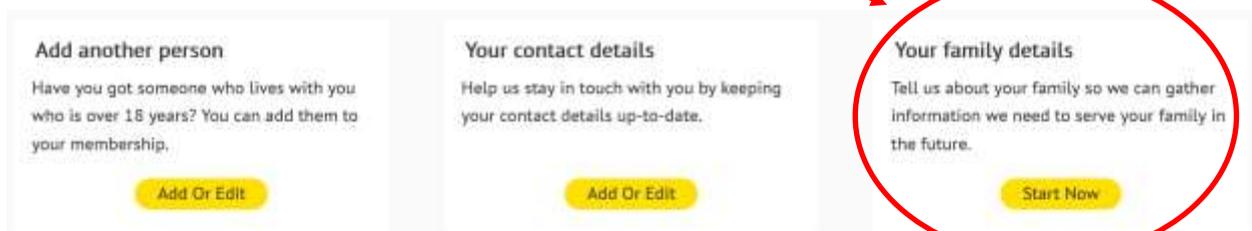
You will need the email address that was used in your previous membership. If you do not know what this was please email [database@icpa.com.au](mailto:database@icpa.com.au). If you have forgotten your password please click on the forgot password link and create a new one.



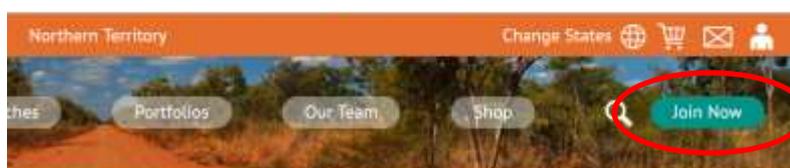
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# REFLECTIONS ON A LIFE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

Author - Patricia Elliott

## An excerpt for a presentation to a national conference in 1997 – How times have changed, or have they?

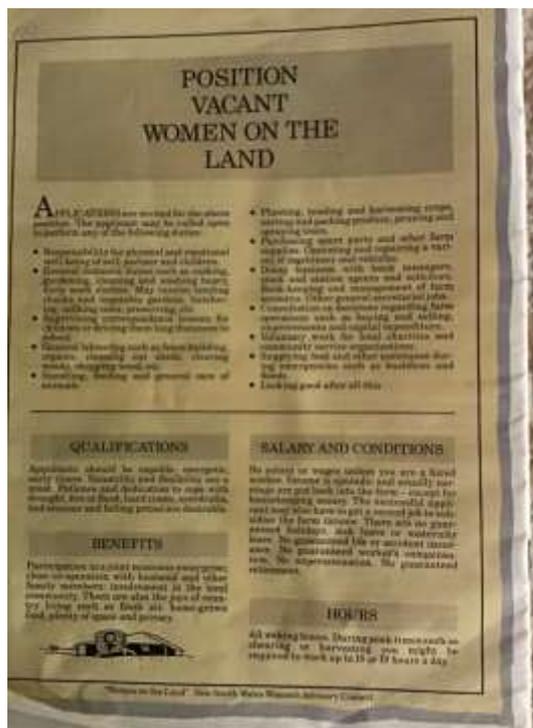
Today is quite appropriate as this year I retired as a mother-supervisor. Our youngest left school last year (1996) and has commenced a career in aviation engineering. For the first time since 1965 I do not have a child of my own at school.

“Home”, according to the Collins dictionary, has approximately thirty-four definitions. Three of these definitions appealed to me as the interpretation of home as I know it

- The place where one lives
- A place where something is evolved or developed.
- A place dear to one.

I found a pseudo ad in a small magazine published by the New South Wales Department of The Arts and Women’s advisory council that may well have input from some of you here today. It beautifully sums up the role of women in the remote and rural regions of our country.

It is a way of life we choose, a way of



life where nature can, within twenty-four hours reduce you to

despair or lift you to inspirational heights. It’s a way of life that allows you to expand and develop as an individual, to use abilities and capabilities you may have never come across had you not made that vital decision to say “I do”, “Wither thou goest I will go”, “ here I will stay and carry on a tradition”, or simply, “lets give it a go”.

An inevitable result of that decision, for many, is guiding children through the valley of school – particularly for the women. I say this as in most cases it is the women who take on the responsibility for Childrens’ education – however, not exclusively. Without the support of the men, the job would be nigh on impossible. The ICPA membership with an active involvement is evident that the men in our lives pay more than lip service to the education of their children.

I remember many years ago in 1964, my Mother, a teacher, (whom I might add was one of the only few

members of my family who did not question the outrageousness of my setting off into the back of beyond with a wild colonial boy, who, horror of horrors, rode buckjumpers, drove cattle from Western Australia across the Murrarji Track to Queensland, did not fit into the academic, theatrical world in which I had spent the first twenty two years of my life,) reminding me that the education of any children would be my responsibility.

My education had been a traditional British grammar school replica that had seen my parents send me off to boarding school at the tender age of four. This was a result of American soldiers being billeted to our home during the second world war. I later had daily access to a Melbourne school where I received an education that equipped me to compete in a world of opportunity. That was the forties, privileged fifties, and liberating sixties; it was then I learnt the value of the upbringing my parents afforded me.

My wild colonial boy had spent months buffalo shooting in the Top End, when Kakadu was just part of Arnhem land as we slept in swags without thought or fear of crocodiles or snakes. We returned to Victoria for the birth of our third child before heading back with two little boys and a baby girl. It was a long drive on a dirt road to Kulgera, then bitumen to Katherine, South-South West to Scott creek and dirt again to the place we would call home for the next thirty years.

The first three months were spent camping by a waterhole on our neighbours station owing to wet season rains making it impossible to access our section of the map. But once we were able to cross miles of black soil plains, we arrived at our own waterhole, set up camp and contemplated our future.

We were fifty miles from the nearest neighbour, no outside communication other than the weekly Connellan mail plane that landed fifty miles to the south of us and only accessible during the dry season. We had no electricity, no telephony, and by 1966 a child due to start school.

“Home”, this wonderful place quickly became very dear to us – initially a fly strung between two trees, followed ten months later by a bough shed with a limestone floor and a spinifex type roof – no walls, no modcoms. We managed to put a bore down with an old mud puncher bore rig obtained how, I have no idea, and run a line to a tap at the corner of the bough shed. An open fireplace, a hole in the ground as an oven,

hurricane lamps and a kerosene frige. We were offered an old copper from top springs dump (maybe?) and a long-drop dunny.

We made a table from timber and chairs were normally twelve-gallon drums. The western wall of the shed was a ‘mile-a-minute’ vine that eventually formed a protective, natural wall; it was pure luxury, it was dry, cool and relatively, clean.

1996 arrived and Peter was due to start school. On one of our biennial trips to Katherine, I was able to contact someone about the process of distance education. Katherine school of the Air was in its infancy and radio contact with a few students was its only function. As our living conditions were not considered suitable to house the latest technology – the valve radio; one step up from the pedal radio - we were not issued with one. I have no clear recollection of how, when, why or where it all happened, but suddenly, I had a son starting school through the Adelaide Correspondence school. Our lives changed; now there was a routine to be followed. Lessons arrived from Adelaide, from our ‘cluster’. Teacher; our beloved Miss Nathalie Chegwidden, who loved and guided my children and me through the first years of early childhood and primary school.

Turnaround of schoolwork was approximately two months during the dry, and longer depending on the wet. School regulations forbad the home supervisor to mark or indeed, correct set materials. Mistakes could be perpetuated for too long and I would make necessary corrections, but, indicating where and how I had done this. I could understand the logic behind the ruling, as the school wanted to ensure the work belonged to the student. Eventually, I felt it came down to the trust between student, supervisor and teacher. It worked for us.

Peter was a keen student, but he had a problem with reading, one about which I seemed to be unable to deal. I tried, cajoled, encouraged, bribed, threatened and finally came close to giving up when Nathalie Chegwidden

identified the problem. Significantly, she also identified my problem. Peter was fine, he was just bored and didn't relate to the readers provided. Who in their right mind would be inspired by Dick and Dora, Scotty and Fluff, when you had already spent almost half of your six years on the back of a horse or in fencing camps? Readers changed to Cowboy Sam and we were up and running!

Mine was a problem of self-esteem. Peter was not achieving because I could not handle him. This brilliant infant who would one day take the world by storm, was not at fault. The realisation that I had to resolve my own doubts would take some time. Thanks to Nathalie Chegwidzen; pages she wrote to me, encouraging me and explaining just how normal this is. I only physically met that wonderful person once at a Federal Conference in Adelaide in 1986 and I owed her so much.

Duncan was now ready to launch into the schoolroom, still in the bough shed, still without a radio, but periodic visits from the newly established Katherine School of the Air head teacher, Ron White, added spark to the school at home.

1970 brought a large shed with living quarters in one end, AND a radio. We now had daily voice contact. Katherine School of the Air became autonomous, began to produce its own materials, and supervise and correct student work. Here were people students could speak to daily and who understood the circumstances in which we lived, and this added a huge impetus to our schoolroom.

At this stage, I had three children at school and a fourth doing what all toddlers do and not being too adorable about it.

The development of the property went on with some time spent in the camps mustering or fencing. School was a series of grotty pages and improvisations. Tables were learnt in the yards or with steel pickets, tie wires and droppers.

It was fun. Of course, it was hard work, but we were young, fit and healthy, with ships laden with jewels and spices lying just offshore waiting to come in at the appropriate moment. Secondary education was to be the best available with prime ministers, doctors, lawyers, philosophers surnamed Elliott dominating the academic world!

Policy changes and a brand-new shed with comfortable living quarters in one end. My role in the camp was confined to chief cook and bottlewasher, bookkeeper, governess and on-the-spot nurse. Teaching became top priority. I do not use the word lightly. Those of you who know me know it is one of my pet arguments that we are teachers.

Teaching is a part of parenting and with school at home, the relevance is significant.

1972, Peter, Duncan, Jacqueline and Campbell were at school with Erica and Kate holding the infant floor. Chaos reigned supreme on most days. The copper was replaced with a petrol washing machine and we were ready to turn off the first bullocks. I struggled with a man who was

"on the road with bullocks when I was fourteen..."

would dearly have loved his oldest son to be a miniature clone. However, I had learned to be positively negative and Peter remained at school unless we were drafting in the yard, in which case we were all conscripted!

Don't always believe that this idyllic situation prevailed. I have not enough fingers and toes to count the times when I was duped, and I would return from my precious petrol washing machine to see a cloud of dust disappearing behind the bull-catcher leaving one lone child sitting at the radio.

You certainly don't always win, but you make sure you don't lose.

Materials developed during this time were ordinary in appearance. The content was good, and kids learnt; however, there was little visual appeal and often it took time and effort to sustain interest. The children, never the less had no basis of comparison, so accepted what was presented to them. It was up to us to create a spark of interest. Technology was a spluttering Traeger radio - that picked up Radio Peking more easily than Katherine School of the Air - who gave us a quotation from Chairman Mao Zedong before being able to contact a teacher from the school.

The mid seventies and out went the hurricane lamps, the kerosene refrigerators and the petrol washing machine and anything with a two-stroke motor! What is it with two stroke motors? They remind of a torch - there's hardly anything to go wrong, but when they do, are they something you can get rid of your inhibitions as you vent!!

The next few years brought more interesting, attractive materials conducive to learning. The recognition to a few more than just a few dedicated teachers in the distance learning facilities, that kids "out there" deserved as much attention and quality as those in towns and cities. The fact of disadvantage because of distance was only just beginning to be recognised.

Prior to the sixties, bush children were relegated to hillbilly status or educable to a compulsory age in order to count sheep or stalks of corn.

Prior to the seventies and the advent of the Isolated Children's Parents'

Association, there was no financial assistance based on disadvantage. In our case, by 1976 there were eight Elliott children, six of whom were at school, and two infants and school totally dominated my life. Their father had become resigned to the fact that kids were not available until after school. He too was keen to listen to reading, writing poetry and reinforcing maths whilst working cattle. Some days he would take the younger ones on a bore run when specific attention was needed for the older children - particularly those who had started their secondary courses. Without his cooperation and effort, things would have been much more difficult.

1982 brought the identification of the youngest as gifted. Oh, what a hassle. He was already way ahead of me. He had a warped sense of humour at a very early age, a comprehension that would appeal to Roald Dahl and an ability to be totally disruptive. Without going into detail about my pet subject of gifted children, and those with physical disabilities, never, never cease to flight for them. No one else will and it doesn't matter what other people think of you - it has been well documented, your perception of your child's special needs, in the majority of cases, will be right.

There are so many variables that influence schooling at home for the provider, the student, and that all-important catalyst, the supervisor.

Obviously, distance and isolation are major influences. The diversity in background and environment in this country is enormous. Climatically we vary from predominantly cold, to predominantly hot; from lush rain forest to arid desert, from physical isolation to crowded streets, influences real and manufactured. For those of us who live in geographic isolation, telephone, facsimile, satellite dishes, black boxes, bitumen roads, all play a role in reducing the perception of isolation, however the singular most important influence in our lives is other humans.

I can sense some of you will say its not all wine and roses, beer and skittles - of course it's not. The loving, nurturing environment you establish will not always be sweetness and light. It can contain thunder and lightning; it can be exhausting and depressing, but never allow it to become destructive. Capitalize on what you can do, rather than what you cannot - nothing new about that.

Back off  
Delay  
Discuss  
Negotiate

Sound idealistic? What's wrong with that? If failure builds character, you have character and if you have

character its because experience has taught you to use every situation to turn negatives into positives.

Respect your child's reasoning and arguments. You may not, and indeed, do not have to agree with them, but be prepared for your child to have opinions, after all you should have been cultivating independent thinking. This precious orchid you have nurtured for years will, one day, put out roots of its own. It is also important to recognize the science that tells us the brain takes some twenty odd years to reach maturity, so we need to maintain our role as adults.

Parents of children in remote areas know the best environment for their children's learning. Suitable materials that are not just a rehash of some suburban syllabus, but a culturally designed for a specific reason, one where the partnership of collaborative learning is its backbone.

Some people in urban areas opt for the home-schooling option for reasons known only to themselves and the relevant minister who gives the approval. We do not normally choose that option; we have a common goal, that is to give the very best of which we are capable to ensure our children experience happiness through self fulfillment and hopefully reaching their academic and personal potential. It is the formative years, early childhood and primary years that will set the stage for your child's future development. You have the privilege of being motivator, facilitator, friend, sometimes foe, collaborator, director, colleague, confessor, whipping boy, and mentor to your child. It is exciting - take it with both hands and enjoy the ride!

A mother in Western Australia once said

"you will wonder what ever you did for fun before you started teaching."

***Wishing one and all a happy, safe and blessed Christmas and a future that shines.***



**Patricia Elliott  
ICPA NT Life Member,  
Mentor and Friend**



Wow what a year it has been!

From our fun activities of Monday Moves, Arty Farty Tuesdays, Wacky Wednesday Science, Thursday Tunes and Foodie Fridays. Waylon and myself have created some beautiful memories over the span of this year.

We have learnt together how to cook camp ovens and discover different cuisines from all parts of the world. Whether it be Vietnamese Rice Paper Rolls, Lamb Yiros from Greece or Butter Chicken from India. We devoured and enjoyed trying new foods we had never had before.

*Waylon, "I really loved cooking the chicken from India!"*

Wacky Wednesday Science and Arty Farty Tuesdays have always been a highlight. We have made ice cream in a bag, slime, a paper mache volcano and many more. Waylon is a very intrigued student and loves discovering why things happen. On the other hand we have made salt art paintings, bubble art paintings, to masks for our school disco.

# 2021 IN A NUTSHELL

## Waylon and Miss Lil's Adventures

“

Once upon a time there was a farm that was called Veggies and Milk, at the farm there were milking cows and crops. My Dad and I went to the farm in the truck. We help the farmers because we deliver seeds to them, so they can grow crops. At seven o'clock the farmers wake up and milk the cows. The milking machine broke down and they had to milk the cows by hand and that is the end of the story.

”





# What makes a good life in the Territory?

my Territory



your Territory



our Territory



Share your story for a chance to win a \$500 retail voucher

[myterritoryconnections.cdu.edu.au](http://myterritoryconnections.cdu.edu.au)

*Northern Institute is a social and policy research institute that is driven to make positive differences to communities through robust and independent research.*



**my Territory Connections** is a survey from Charles Darwin University asking about your social networks, community participation and what it means to be a Territorian. The survey is open to everybody aged 18 years and over living in the Territory now, and takes about 15 to 20 minutes to complete: [My Territory Connections Survey \(cdu.edu.au\)](http://MyTerritoryConnectionsSurvey(cdu.edu.au))



# Isolated Children's Parents' Association

## NORTHERN TERRITORY MEMBERSHIP FORM FOR 2022

DUE - JANUARY 1ST EACH YEAR.

Please ensure payment is received by March 31<sup>st</sup> to qualify for state and branch bursaries



### MEMBERSHIP TO YOUR LOCAL BRANCH IS ONLY \$50/FAMILY/YEAR

- A voice in your children's education.
- Membership voting rights at Branch, State and Federal level (financial assistance to attend State and Federal conferences available).
- Qualification for ICPA grants.
- Free subscription to - ICPA NT 'Down the Track' and ICPA Australia 'Pedals' magazines.

If you're not receiving these publications regularly, check with your treasurer - you may not be a financial member for 2022. If you still want to keep in touch, but not be associated with a particular branch, then Territory Wide Members is for you!

Please fill in this form and forward to one of the below treasurers.

If paying by Direct Deposit, please use your first initial and surname with the word 'Membership' as the reference to help the treasurer. (e.g. 'J Bloggs Membership'), and post or email this form using the details below.

These are important to use for grant qualifications and for ICPA advocacy purposes.

#### ALICE SPRINGS

**Treasurer: Kelli McLaughlin**

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BRANCH:		
TITLE:	FIRST NAME :	SURNAME:
ADDRESS:		
PH:	EMAIL:	

Please advise your Branch Secretary and Treasurer of your change of postal or email address

### Your children's details

*(this information is retained by the Branch and State Council Treasurers and Secretaries and used for Grant qualifications and advocacy purposes )*

Names (of Children)	Age (turning in 2022)	Year Level (in 2022)	School/University/College Attending

I give ICPA permission to use photographs of my children for use in ICPA Publications and Newsletters, including the ICPA NT Facebook Page and Website  Please ✓

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### ICPA NT TERRITORY WIDE MEMBERS

This is a group who wish to be informed of ICPA issues, but do not wish to belong to a 'branch' as such. Anyone who lives anywhere can be a Territory Wide Member.

Territory Wide members do not hold meetings, they are coordinated by email and receive the same benefits as other branch members, including the ability to present motions to both State & Federal Conference, where they hold votes in the same way other branches do. Join Territory Wide today, by contacting our Territory Wide member officer, details above.



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Wendy Ohlsen  
Carmel Wagstaff  
Robyn Peatling

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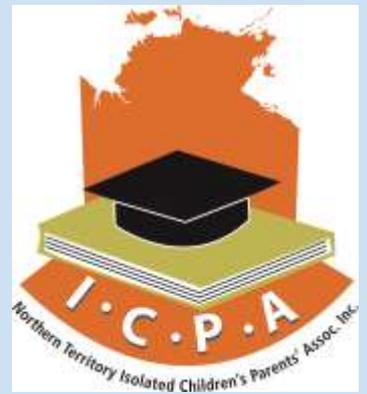
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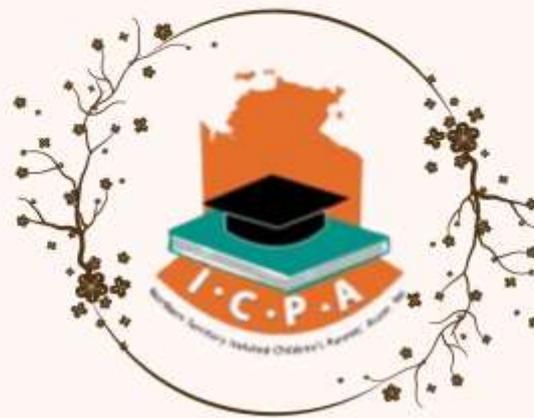


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PO Box 8346  
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# DOWN THE TRACK Magazine

ISOLATED CHILDREN'S PARENTS' ASSOCIATION OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY | EDITION 89 | DECEMBER 2021



## Before and Beyond

40th Anniversary  
Annual State Conference

9 MARCH 2022 | DARWIN