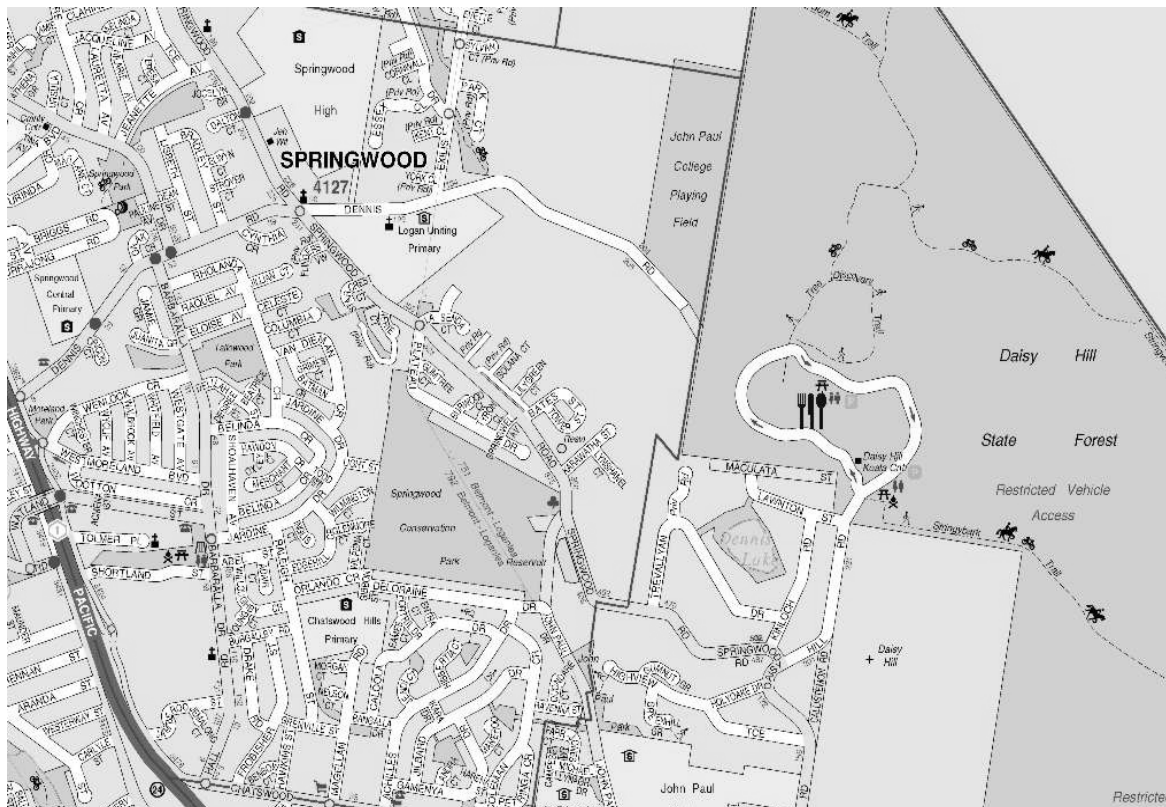


# Spine Tingles

Newsletter of the Scoliosis Support Group of Qld Inc.

April, 2003

## Picnic Map



**Daisy Hill State Forest  
Monday May 5**

**Details on page 3**

## Scoliosis Support Group of Queensland Inc

Inc Number IA17199

Mail: 37 Oleron Terrace,  
PETRIE Q 4502

Phone: 3285 7100  
1800 722 257 (SBACKS)

President: Bill McIntyre  
(07) 3285-6180  
mobile: 0438 594 203

Vice President: Trevor Rogers  
(07) 3711 3907

Secretary: Joan Young  
(07) 3205 1089

Treasurer: Jane McIntyre  
(07) 3285 6180  
mobile: 0403 369 467

Internet:  
<http://www.scoliosissupport.org.au/>

Submissions for either the newsletter or the web site may be made to the above address or by e-mail to:  
[info@scoliosissupport.org.au](mailto:info@scoliosissupport.org.au)

This newsletter is published quarterly. Picnics and meetings are normally held during January, April, July and October.

### Warning:

Information published in this newsletter represents views of the authors and is not to be seen as a recommendation or views of the Society. We aim to inform our members of as many options as possible - It is the decision of individual patients to decide on their treatment in consultation with their doctor.

## "Backs to the Future" Conference: an opportunity to have your questions answered!

The AO Spine Centre of Excellence and the Mater Children's Hospital are holding a conference on Thursday 19, and Friday 20 June 2003, which focuses on children with scoliosis, on spinal trauma, and on spinal problems in sport. (See enclosed brochure)

The conference program is tailored towards health professionals; however two lectures scheduled for **4pm on Friday, 20 June** are open to members of the public. The themes of these lectures are "Latest Advances in detection and treatment of scoliosis" and "Latest advances in treatment of spinal cord injury".

These lectures will give members of the public an opportunity to hear information first-hand from orthopaedic surgeons and to ask questions.

The lectures to the community are free of charge.

**IMPORTANT!** If you would like to attend these lectures, please contact the Conference Coordinator, so that she can ensure sufficient seating. Contact:

Rachel Luton-Goggins  
Telephone: 3834 7025  
Email: [aospine@boss.net.au](mailto:aospine@boss.net.au)

## Advanced Biostructural Correction

ABC is a "subluxation"-based system that uses postural analyses to determine a patient's problems. It was developed by a chiropractor, Jesse Jutkowitz. ABC is centered around the idea that poor posture, caused by anterior displacement (subluxation) of vertebrae, causes compensatory misalignments that predispose the spinal cord to injury from excessive stretching of the meninges (the membrane that surrounds the brain and spinal cord).

ABC's promotional material claims:

- vertebrae that get displaced forward are stuck because there is no muscle to pull them back, and that other vertebrae compensate for this by twisting
- to relieve the problem by "unlocking the meninges" which are likened to a twisted rubber band compressing the spine, preventing chiropractic adjustments from realigning it
- to alleviate musculoskeletal, neurological, and organic pathologies through "applying spinal cord relaxation"

Dr Mark Whitfield, of the Vincent Chiropractic Centre, Queen St, Brisbane, is attending an ABC seminar in Sydney in May 2003. Dr Whitfield will contribute notes from this seminar to the next edition of *SpineTingles*.

Visit the Advanced Biostructural Correction website:

<http://www.advbiostructuralcorr.com/index.htm>

## Bookmarks

In March we took delivery of 20,000 bookmarks, costing \$1,397, from Nicholson Printers, Caboolture. We have nearly completed the distribution of them to every public library in Queensland. Did you know that there are just over 300 public libraries in our state?

As you can see from the enclosed sample, the bookmark illustrates the "bend test", and is targeted at parents of children aged 8-15.

Our rationale for publishing and distributing the bookmark is as follows:

- Screening for scoliosis in state schools has largely been discontinued, so it is important that parents test for scoliosis in their own children
- Public libraries are places that are visited by families with young children, as well as grandparents
- The bookmarks are brightly coloured and attractive
- Readers will use their bookmark for a considerable time, and hopefully pass them on to friends and family

Feedback from public librarians indicates that our bookmark has generated interest.

## Brochures

A few copies of our brochure were included with each parcel of bookmarks, for those readers seeking more information. Our supply of brochures is now less than 100 (after a print run of 30,000 in April 2002). We aim to organise another print run in the new financial year.

## New web pages

We are extremely grateful to Mr Aaron Turner-Jones for donating his time and skills to updating our website. By the time you receive this newsletter, or shortly after, the new pages will have been uploaded. Thank you very much Aaron, for our attractive and modern-looking website.

Below is an advertisement for Aaron's company, Thinking Cap Studios:



**thinking cap studios**  
affordable digital media and design

Thinking Cap Studios is a hat-box full of high quality creative services, ethically driven, realistically priced and guaranteed to turn heads.

We believe that creative services don't have to cost a fortune, design does not have to be of low quality in order to fit a budget and that with clever thinking, strong commitments and clear direction any endeavour can be socially responsible while still turning a profit.

[www.thinkingcapstudios.com.au](http://www.thinkingcapstudios.com.au)

**services we can offer:**  
web design & site redesign  
graphic & multimedia design  
logo generation  
business cards & letterheads  
posters & presentations  
illustration & animation  
web hosting services  
custom software applications

**email**  
[info@thinkingcapstudios.com.au](mailto:info@thinkingcapstudios.com.au)

**phone**  
0409 343 507

## Next Picnic

### Daisy Hill State Forest

Monday 5 May 2003  
11.00am

Map Reference:  
UBD Map 223 D18

Look for the Support Group's  
calico banner with blue printing

BBQs available

Please support the Group and  
attend the Picnic

**There will be a notice on  
4KQ if the picnic is  
rained out.**

## **Justine's story**

Hi, my name is Justine. I am 14 years old, and this is a little story about my scoliosis experience.

In May 1998 my Mum took me to a naturopath to see if he could help my tummy pains. He gave me a look-over, feeling my tummy etc. He then looked at my back and drew a line with a felt marker down the top part of my spine. Off for x-ray number 1, and there it was, a funny looking curve.

My doctor referred me to Dr. Bruce McPhee who visits Cairns and is a scoliosis specialist. He measured my x-ray - top curve 9°, and bottom curve 25°. I found out one leg was shorter than the other and my right shoulder was more noticeable than the left. This visit to Dr. McPhee was a learning experience for all of us.

After that first visit to Dr. McPhee I understood what was happening to my spine and if my spine did not improve I would have to wear a brace.

March 1999 and x-ray number 2 - top curve 26°, bottom curve 30°, so I went to be measured for my brace. I was not very happy, but I must try the brace before surgery.

Shopping for cotton singlets became Mum's number 1 item. After school (grade 7) I would change into my t-shirts and shorts, which were all loose fitting. I was only allowed out of the brace for a shower or swim. My waist was different, one side went in like a little dent in my side, so I was aware just what the scoliosis was doing to my body. My brace became part of me and I felt not quite right when it was off being washed.

X-ray number 3 in brace - top 25°, bottom 13°, so I knew the brace was helping to keep my spine straight. We did some funny things to my brace, stitched some padding to the high part under my arm. Dad had to cut some off under my chest. Close friends knew about my brace, although I would often get some strange looks if someone bumped into me.

I think my next x-ray was August 2000. Dr. Bruce kept this x-ray. He said "Well, this brace has not worked for you, Justine." My body was growing very fast at this time and I was nearly as tall as Mum. Dr. Bruce talked to me and said that this was my decision. Harrington Rods will correct the scoliosis before it gets too bad. I could have my operation in early December.

I just wanted to be the same as everyone and have a straight spine, have my operation, put this all behind me and go to school, go to Beauty School and then go to work. All my family were very positive and gave me lots of support. Dr. Bruce gave me the address of an internet site which was very helpful and we all read about the operation.

The operation was booked for 5 December 2000. It was my first plane flight to Brisbane. Mum and Dad took me into the city for some great shopping. The first top I bought had only two straps to tie at the back and was all shiny. Mum said "Are you sure that you want that one?"

On December 4 I had an appointment with Dr. Bruce. On the wall in Dr. Bruce's rooms were photos of other people who had had the operation. One lady had a baby and one girl was on a horse. There were so many. My x-ray was not good with 52° curve, so the rods had to go a little longer down. "See you in the morning, Justine", said Dr. Bruce.

The Wesley Hospital was so huge, you could get lost. I had my own room with TV, videos and great food. I did not eat too much, but the menu looked good.

Mum came with me to the pre-surgery room, and then it was time to go, with a big hug from Mum.

It was not until mid afternoon before I saw Mum again. I do not remember too much of the next few days and I don't like talking about it. Thank goodness for my morphine drip.

There was a lovely sister in the children's ward called Julie, and she even washed my hair. My log rolls worked very well. Mum slept beside me for the 13 days that I was in hospital.

Dr. Bruce came to see me, but no smiles from me! Day 4 - stand up day. After that, a few steps, more steps and longer walks everyday. I found the gift shop, then the chemist and even bought some make-up and had my hair done at the hairdresser. Every day was better than the day before.

On day 13 I left hospital. All the staff were very special ladies. A slow walk across the road to Wesley Lodge. I weighed 44 kgs, but I was now 3 cm taller, taller than my Mum.

A long flight back to Cairns, and then an hour drive up to Kairi. My two big brothers were at the airport to meet me. I missed Stephen and Shaun very much.

It's all behind me now, and I am very straight. Some girls ask me how I stand so straight while they slouch over. Well you see I have two special rods that keep me so perfectly straight. I wear anything now, halter neck tops, tie back tops, hipster jeans. I love close fitting clothes and I don't mind my 39.5 cm scar showing, and I ride my Honda QR 100 motorbike with all my gear.

Dr. McPhee is very pleased with me. He is a very special Doctor.

I know that there are certain sports I can not play, but I was never very sporty. No more quiet little Justine, the girl with the scoliosis. I love going to the movies with my friend Sarah, motorbikes, swimming and shopping. I must remember to bend my legs when picking up, and I get out of making my bed.

We are very grateful that this operation is available to help people with scoliosis.

Mum helped me with this letter. I prefer not to talk about it, and grow up just like all my friends and go to Beauty School.

Love

Justine



Justine and her family live in Kairi, on the Atherton Tableland. You can contact them via their email address: [debelc@cyberwizards.com.au](mailto:debelc@cyberwizards.com.au)