THEN AND NOW REVISITED

By Jimmy Pozarik OAM

SCHF
Sydney
Children's
Hospitals
Foundation

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

I have been a volunteer at Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick (SCH) for 20 years - first in oncology, then in emergency, and now in outpatients. Since 2012, I have also been the photographer in residence for Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation (SCHF). It has been, and continues to be, the most rewarding experience of my life.

I have seen it all. Things no one should see. Things no one should hear. In the beginning I naïvely tried not to get involved, not to get emotional. I failed. SCH is a magnificent institution where dedicated staff support families through life-changing healthcare journeys. Every day I am humbled by the fortitude and dignity of all involved.

My goal as a photographer has always remained the same – for 'outsiders' to see what I see. To feel the depth of emotion that never lets go. So, you, the 'outsider,' can have a higher understanding of what your family and friends go through when you enter their world – and then be better able to support them during their often harrowing journey.

This exhibition is the third instalment of documenting the journeys of a varied group of children I began photographing in 2012. An entire spectrum of narratives is told. Fleeting hospital encounters that were barely thought of again, traumatic accidents, miracle survivals, and medical odysseys that will last a lifetime. And one that ended too soon. Happy or sad, every story and every photograph is significant, and together they are a true reflection of the diversity that graces SCH.

To see a once seriously ill oncology patient experiencing a full life as an intelligent, poised, world travelling, adventurous 19-year-old young woman – is such a relief!

To visit the home of a 15-year-old boy who spent the first two years of his life living full-time in hospital now being schooled, loved and cared for at home by his family – is beyond belief!

To enter a senior technical school auto mechanic workshop and watch a 19-year-old strapping young man who beat brain cancer repair a car engine and begin exploring a life in an area he loves – is insanely awesome!

To visit the grave of one of the most courageous humans I have ever had the privilege of knowing, with her family, is heart wrenching.

To the kids, parents, grandparents, relatives, teachers, clinicians, and employers who so enthusiastically welcomed me back into your lives, I thank you so much! You shared your stories, you fed me, you chauffeured me, you worked as my photo assistant, and you comforted me when I crumbled. But most of all, once again, you befriended me, you supported me, and you trusted me. Bless you all.

Then and Now Revisited is dedicated to the memory of my friend May Somerville.

Jimmy Pozarik OAM

ALPER

SYDNEY, NSW

- Age 4
- Age 10
- NOW Age 16

Appendicitis

My hospital memories are patchy: small flashes of watching movies on a little DVD player, feeling calm despite being unwell. For Mum, though, it was very different. I was young, but I could sense her worry and the weight she carried.

At the time, we had only just moved to Australia. We didn't know many people, and support was limited. A burst appendix wasn't part of the plan, but we got through it together.

Those ten days were tough, but the care I received made all the difference. We even bought a painting of a horse from the hospital, which still hangs in our home. It feels special knowing it also supported SCHF's Art Program, bringing joy to other kids. Mum still talks about how the nurses made everything warmer and friendlier for the children.

Now, biology is one of my favourite subjects, and I hope to study science after high school. This experience showed us how vital it is to support SCHF and invest in paediatric healthcare. Seeing the hospital's redevelopment is exciting, it means more families will feel supported, just like we did.

ALYSSA

SYDNEY, NSW

- Age 2
- Age 8
- NOW Age 14

Infant acute lymphoblastic leukaemia

Before I could even take my first steps or blow out a candle on my birthday cake, I was diagnosed with leukaemia.

My diagnosis came out of nowhere and terrified my parents. They navigated treatment together while caring for my older sister, Madeleine.

I don't remember much about treatment but have a few happy memories like visits from Fairy Sparkle, the lollipop drums and doing arts and crafts.

Since ringing the bell and getting the all-clear, I've made it my mission to help other children with cancer too.

I have hosted multiple fundraisers for charity while juggling a casual job at IGA and my passion for dancing.

I know I'm one of the lucky ones. Not every family has a positive outcome, and some kids are still waiting to hear the word "remission." The care I received has made holidays and Taylor Swift concerts possible.

Supporting research through philanthropy is how we're going to make cancer treatment safer and easier for kids. It will help improve success rates so that every child is able to live a long and happy life, and no family has to live without a loved one.

My long-term goal, however, is to one day be a paediatric oncologist just like my doctor, Professor Tracey O'Brien AM. I want to help sick kids get better and make sure they have access to the same extraordinary care I received.

I know it's not going to be an easy path, but I'm dedicated to my studies.

CALEB

PORT MACQUARIE, NSW

- Age 9
- Age 12
- NOW Age 18

Medulloblastoma – brain cancer

Caleb recently finished work experience as a mechanic through his school. Repairing motors and fixing vehicles is his dream. He is determined to overcome every roadblock to get there.

Although Caleb is now cancer free, he still experiences challenges from his permanent disability, like working a full day.

As his mum, I often wish I could have taken brain cancer instead of him. I'll never be able to accept what happened, but I appreciate how strong we've become together.

Cancer had a significant toll on our family financially. I had to leave my job and become the main carer almost overnight. It's taken us a long time to get back on our feet.

That's why I'm so immensely proud of the young man Caleb is today. He spent so much of his childhood in the hospital, undergoing invasive tests and relearning everyday skills. Still, he's grown into a kind and passionate young man.

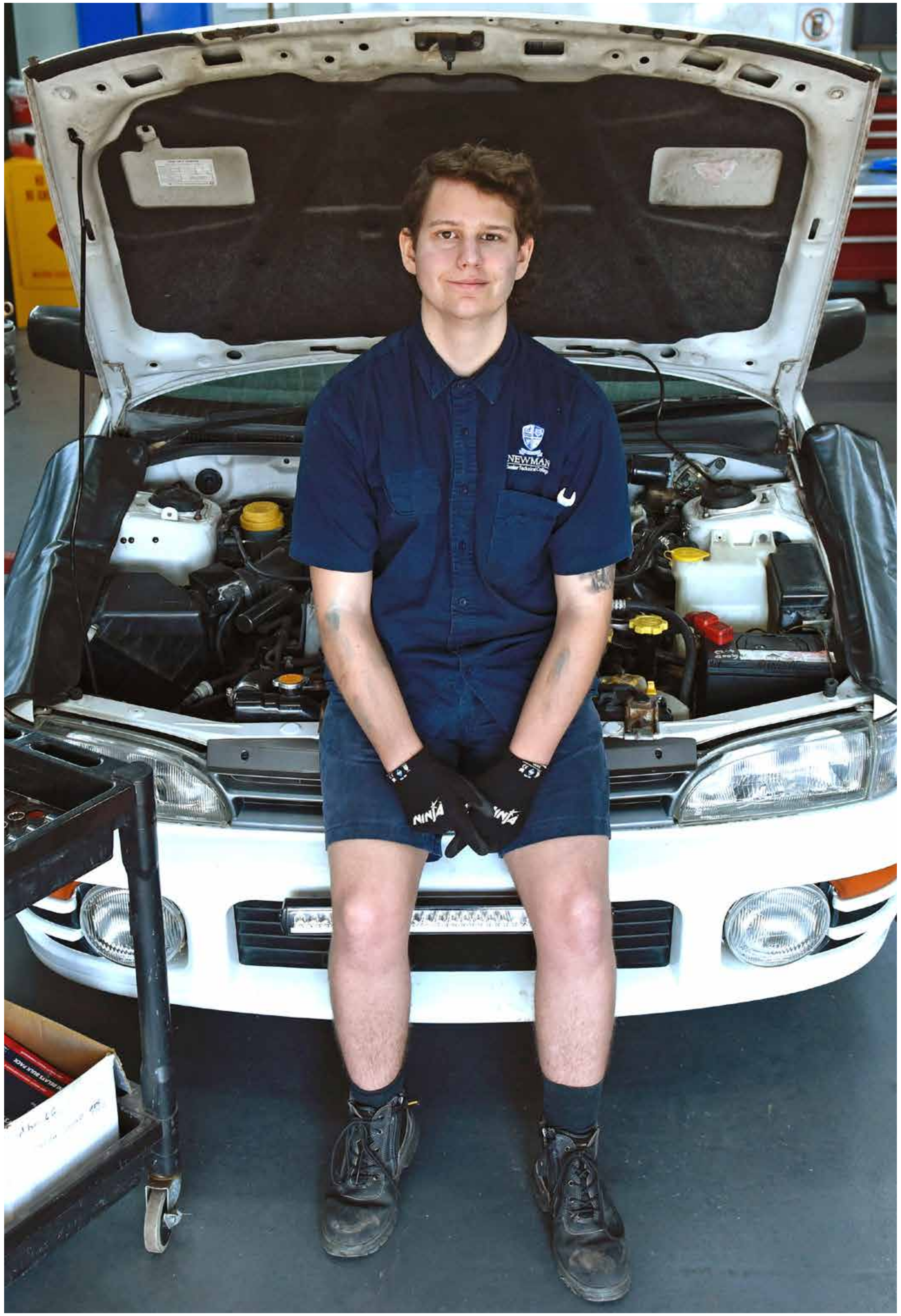
Today, Caleb loves to cook spicy food and adores his pets.

I'm so grateful for all the staff who got us here – particularly Kylie, his child life therapist. She was a consistent and stable presence throughout some of the hardest moments in our life.

Without Kylie's support and guidance, our journey would have been so much harder to navigate. She was patient, kind and just so friendly every day.

These healthcare heroes truly are special humans.

Suzanne, Caleb's mum.



COOPER

SYDNEY, NSW

- Age 6 weeks
- Age 2
- NOW Age 7

Enterovirus myocarditis

Ten days after our son Cooper was born, our world collapsed. He contracted a life-threatening virus that made him critically ill. His tiny heart became inflamed and could no longer pump blood properly.

Nothing could have prepared us for what followed. Words don't capture how close we came to losing Cooper. He spent 176 days in the intensive care unit, and every day was a fight for survival. At one point, he went into cardiac arrest. We stood there, helpless, as doctors performed CPR on our beautiful baby boy for 26 agonising minutes. Time stood still, and we didn't know if we'd ever see our son open his eyes again.

We refused to leave his side. Even the 15 km drive home felt impossibly far – too risky, too uncertain. We lived in the hospital, clinging to any sign of hope, terrified of the next moment.

Over time, appointments shifted from daily, to weekly, to monthly. Thankfully Cooper turned a corner.

Today, he is a happy, thriving boy. Despite ongoing complications, he has reached every milestone – his first steps, his first words, and now, Year 3 at school. He is a miracle of life.

Life with Cooper and his little sister, Jersey, feels even more precious. We exercise, travel, ride, dance, sing, laugh and play sport together, and we never ever take any of it for granted.

We thank our lucky stars that Cooper survived. We'll always be grateful to the hospital that gave us the gift of his life.

Jess, Cooper's mum.

DEE-ANNE

BRISBANE, QLD

- Age 15
- Age 21
- NOW Age 27

Scoliosis

When I was 13 years old, I was diagnosed with scoliosis, which meant my spine curved sideways. To help stabilise it and prevent the curve from getting worse, I had a seven-hour operation called a spinal fusion.

Looking back at that moment before surgery, I can see how scared my mum and I were. It was my first surgery and there were so many people and lights everywhere that crowded my thoughts and vision.

The surgery went well, but recovery was tough. I dreaded walks with my dad, and wearing a brace to school filled me with anxiety.

Fast forward to my second photo, when I was 21, scoliosis was rarely on my mind and I had come to embrace my scar. My energy was dedicated to completing my university degree, and I am so proud of achieving this milestone.

It's thanks to my surgery that I can walk into the gym confidently, without the same fear of causing injury. Fitness has become a huge part of my life.

Now, I also better understand the emotional and financial toll on regional and rural families accessing care. I'm so grateful for my parents who took leave and travelled 6 hours by car for my treatment, all while finding care for my siblings. I wish I could tell my teenage self to be more patient and understanding.

Today, I've made it my mission to help others through difficult times by working as a counsellor.

That surgery changed my life. Scoliosis is now just one chapter of my story - not the whole book. I hope that by raising awareness and funds, I can help other families reach their goals too.

EMILIA

CANBERRA, ACT

| Age 12 months
| Age 6
| NOW Age 13

Complications from ischemic trauma in utero

Sport is a huge part of my life. It's how I connect with people, and it gives me the rare chance to meet other kids living with disabilities.

I was so young when my arm was amputated that I don't remember ever having two hands. My parents have always patiently explained the condition that caused my injury.

I had no idea what they had gone through during my birth. But I've heard it was the most terrifying moment of their lives.

At 35-weeks pregnant, Mum had an emergency C-section because I had a blood clotting condition. Mum still remembers the moment the doctors suddenly went quiet as they realised I had a serious tissue injury in my left arm. I was rushed for scans and emergency surgery. Local doctors worked hard to restore blood flow, but I was transferred to Sydney by the Newborn and paediatric Emergency Transport Service (NETS) for specialised care.

Everyone's experience with disability is different, but I've never let mine stop me from enjoying life or chasing my goals.

I've moved on from Brazilian jiu-jitsu to taekwondo. Now, I'm also loving swimming and water polo.

If I could talk to my younger self in that old photo, I'd tell her to stay strong and brave, especially during those lonely moments. There aren't many upper limb amputees in Canberra and the ACT, which makes it even more important for me to share my story – so other kids don't feel like they're the only ones.

EVE

MELBOURNE, VIC

- Age 9
- Age 12
- NOW Age 18

Osteosarcoma – bone cancer

I remember when Jimmy visited the ward and captured my first photo during treatment for osteosarcoma, the bone cancer I was diagnosed with.

Back then, a life of freedom and independence seemed out of reach. This time, Jimmy took my photo just 24 hours after I landed home from my gap year in Europe – something I could only dream of nine years prior.

At the time, experiencing new cultures, seeing famous sights or eating pasta in Italy felt too far out of reach. Even the idea of moving away from my hospital bed and mum to study in Melbourne felt a world away.

Cancer taught me how precious and fragile life is. During treatment, I spent hours people watching, imagining life outside of the hospital. When I got the all-clear in 2016 I made a promise to take advantage of all opportunities and to be present in every moment.

The challenges and side effects of treatment have lingered, but they've made me more empathetic, resilient and determined to advocate for others. My journey has also shifted the way I perceive the world, with gratitude now being such a large part of my life.

Mum always told me to pay kindness and generosity forward.

I was proud to help raise funds for SCHF through the Gold Telethon appeal and today, I'm honoured to share my story again to help the next early teen on the oncology ward.

FLYNN

GRIFFITH, NSW

| Age 5
| Age 11
| NOW Age 17

Acute lymphoblastic leukaemia

I was diagnosed with a fast-growing blood cancer called acute lymphoblastic leukaemia the day before my fourth birthday.

I don't remember too much about treatment in the early days, but I know it was a sad time for my family – especially my mum.

I have memories of being hungry all the time and easily angered. Thankfully, mum was always there to catch every curve ball life tossed my way.

The smile you see in my photos as I run down the hospital hallway is a testament to her, and the extraordinary support I had around me – from the doctors and nurses to my friends and family. Their emotional support was my anchor during times of stress.

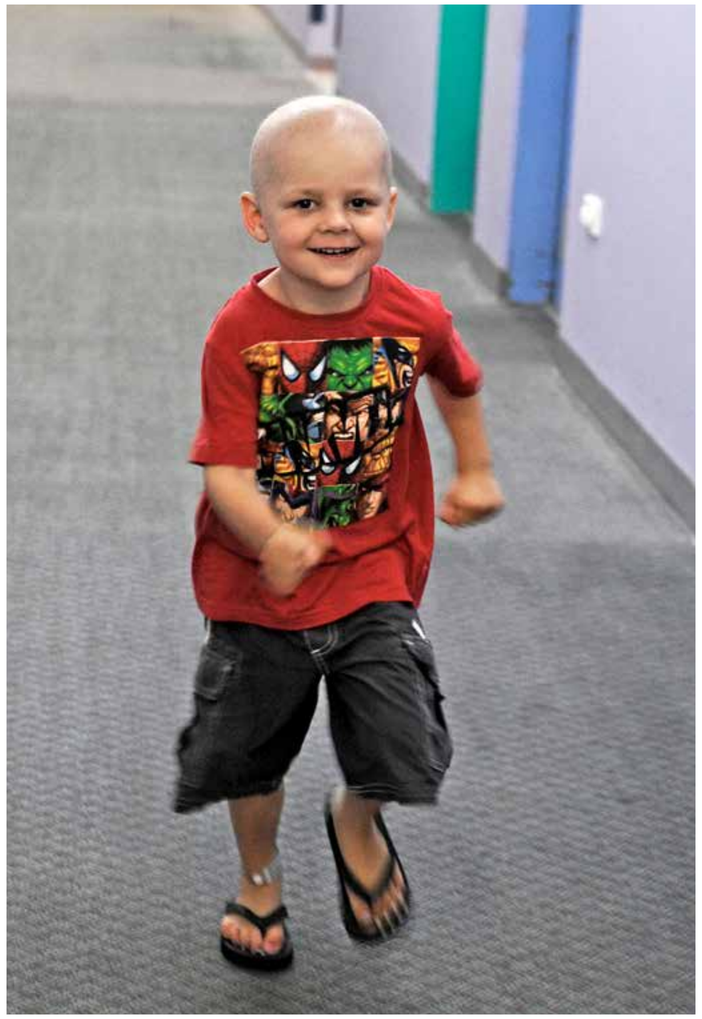
For kids like me, hospital is more than just a place where children are healed. There, lifelong bonds are made over a cup of tea, and friendships with fellow patients develop as you navigate the highs and lows together.

Cancer may have delayed my growth and puberty, but thanks to the remarkable care I received, today I'm thriving as a telecommunications apprentice living in Griffith.

I'm proud to reflect on my journey and see how it's shaped me into the man I am today.

I know growing older is a privilege. I want to share my story to cast a spotlight on childhood cancer and its impact on the whole family unit. Cancer doesn't only affect the patient, but their parents, siblings and friends. I hope my journey gives them hope that everything will be okay.

Over time, I've also learned more about the role of philanthropy in supporting my care, and I want to pay it forward. I hope together we can eliminate childhood cancer.



GEORGE

SYDNEY, NSW

- Age 5
- Age 8
- NOW Age 14

Glioblastoma multiforme – Grade 4 brain tumour

It's hard to remember George so small, floating in the physiotherapist's arms during his hydrotherapy session.

At two years old, he was having daily seizures and life was centred around his cycle of episodes, recovery and sleep. Playing and having fun with other kids was not at the top of our agenda.

The early days were really hard while we navigated the unknown of a brain cancer diagnosis. When George was gravely ill, our one wish was to see him smile someday. If only I could flash forward to see our future.

That's why looking at these three photos side by side brings up so many emotions – they capture the most important chapters of our journey.

What goes unseen are the countless hours, therapy appointments and meetings, all dedicated to giving George the best possible chance of a healthy life.

In 2016, George had a major brain surgery that changed everything – his seizures were effectively gone. This meant he was able to start playing with his big sister, read books and learn.

In recent years, hospital visits have become less frequent and now George is focused on learning at school.

We were thrilled to even travel internationally in 2017 and 2019, to visit the Pope in Rome and family in Hong Kong. While coordinating everything from equipment to care with airlines and accommodations was challenging, the memories we created are cherished.

There was a time when a trip like that felt impossible. I hope by sharing our story, we can inspire other families to stay positive, take it one day at a time, and hold on to their dreams.

Lewis, George's dad.

HASSAN

SYDNEY, NSW

| Age 5
| Age 8
| NOW Age 14

VACTERL association

My healthcare journey began before I was born. During Mum's pregnancy, doctors saw that my organs and systems weren't developing as expected.

Born with VACTERL association, I spent the first six months of my life in hospital and had my first surgery when I was only hours old. Now, I've had too many to count.

My first photo was taken during a test to see why I was waking up with croup and having breathing difficulties throughout the night. While I was too young to remember having my picture taken, I now know that I still carry the same smile to this day. The hospital has become a home away from home for us.

I've spent most of my childhood visiting the hospital. Even now, we're there almost every week for appointments. When I walk through the sliding doors, I embrace the journey ahead, cherish the challenges I have already overcome and await my vanilla ice cream on the ward. These photos are special because they show more than just a smile. From the outside, no one would know what I've been through, but the scans reveal my story.

We don't know what the future holds, but I'm grateful for the care I've received. My dream is to keep playing soccer and eventually open an ice cream shop to bring joy to other sick kids.

JAKE

NOWRA, NSW

- Age 3
- Age 7
- NOW Age 13

Brain injury

When Jake was three years old, he was critically injured in a head-on car crash. The accident caused severe brain damage and left him paralysed from the chest down.

Doctors placed Jake in a coma for nearly six weeks. I sat by his bedside every day for hours, hoping and watching for even the smallest sign of improvement. We came close to losing him more than once, but he pulled through with the incredible help of the hospital staff.

Rehabilitation was also incredibly tough. He had a tracheostomy and was tube-fed. The photo of him with our amazing occupational therapist, Cath, brings back memories of the hardest time in our lives. But it also shows the courage of a young boy relearning how to sit, eat, and speak. The simplest things became huge milestones.

Four years later, we were still travelling 2.5 hours from Nowra for regular check-ups and therapy. We didn't mind the long trips – the staff, like Cath, had become family.

Without access to the hospital's extraordinary care and expertise, Jake may not have survived the crash. It's thanks to these amazing healthcare heroes that Jake is now a strong and resilient young man who loves practising archery with his Pa and diving into debates.

Above all, I'm so proud of Jake's empathy and how he always checks in on others to make sure they are okay. I can't wait to see my son hit every target he sets for himself.

Sarah, Jake's mum.

KELERA

SYDNEY, NSW

- Age 10
- Age 13
- NOW Age 19

Juvenile idiopathic arthritis

I was only five years old when I found out I had juvenile idiopathic arthritis: a group of autoimmune conditions where my body attacks its own healthy cells.

When I tell people I have arthritis, they're usually surprised. They think it's something only older people get. Some kids outgrow it, but I haven't been that lucky.

I spent countless hours of my childhood sitting in a hospital chair getting infusions. Even now, I go to my local hospital every two weeks for treatment. It helps ease the pain, swelling, and stiffness in my joints so I can walk, hang out with friends, and play sports.

The nurses and doctors always did their best to make those appointments bearable and fun. Still, when I look back at my "Then" photos, I feel a bit sad.

I often felt lonely in the hospital, thinking about all the fun I was missing out on with my friends. The steroids made me feel bloated, and I became really self-conscious about how I looked.

That's why I chose to take my third photo in my happy place – at home, surrounded by family. My cousins, nieces, and nephews have always been there for me, and their support means everything.

Today, it's exciting to know world-leading scientists are researching my condition and offering new hope to kids at the start of their journey.

KENNETH

COFFS HARBOUR, NSW

- Age 4 months
- Age 5
- NOW Age 13

Heart surgery

Kenneth was born with a small hole in his heart, which caused a murmur.

We lived in Coffs Harbour, so doctors had to travel from Sydney to treat him. Eventually, they decided he needed heart surgery.

That was one of the scariest times of our lives. To make things even harder, my mum had breast cancer surgery on the same day as Kenneth's operation. Life didn't stop for us – we had to lean on our family and friends to get through it.

I still find it hard to look at the photo of him in the operating theatre. He was such a tiny baby surrounded by tubes, machines, and doctors.

Thankfully, the surgery went well, and we were able to move forward. He had regular check ups, but after our five-year post-surgery check in, doctors said he didn't require any further treatment. The only reminder of it all is the big scar on his chest.

Now, Kenneth is 13 years old and loves football and school, which includes a great program for Aboriginal boys to improve their education, life skills and self esteem. He's thriving thanks to the incredible care he received.

Karina, Kenneth's mum.

LIBERTY

SYDNEY, NSW

- Age 1
- Age 7
- NOW Age 14

Dilated cardiomyopathy with SVT

My long hospital stay happened just after my first birthday, so I was too little to remember much of it now. I know my heart couldn't pump well on its own, so I needed a lot of medicine to treat it and a pacemaker to coordinate its rhythms.

As I got older, I had checkups every 6 months that Mum, Dad and Granny would take me to.

Then, in November 2020, something amazing happened. My heart was healthy enough to work on its own. So instead of replacing the pacemaker, my doctors removed it completely. After surgery, they said, "We hardly ever get to say this in the heart ward, but you're discharged."

Now that I'm in high school, I understand more about what I went through. I don't take my health for granted. A lot of people my age haven't had to think about that, so I realise how precious it is.

I can see how far I've come in my journey and how much healthier I am now. It means I can do the things I love like performing, acting, singing, dancing, being creative and coming up with stories.

I also appreciate the little things a lot more. I can run, skip, jump, pump blood around my body, breathe – all things that for part of my life I couldn't do. And because of the hospital, I can.

LIZZIE

SYDNEY, NSW

| Age 9 months
| Age 7
| NOW Age 14

1p36 deletion syndrome

When Lizzie's first photo was taken, she was being fitted for a helmet. She used to have seizures, and the medication made her sleep more than usual, leading to a flat spot on her head.

While Lizzie looked calm, we were shattered. We had just found out our baby girl had a chromosomal genetic disorder for which there is no cure.

Being told your child may never walk or talk is devastating. However, Lizzie has proved us all wrong, defying the odds every day.

Since then, we've shaped our lives around making things easier for her – from toys to weekend plans and daily routines.

As she's grown, new challenges keep coming. Her low muscle tone makes her more accident prone, though she's much stronger now than before. She has been in a cheerleading team with other people living with a disability for five years now and it is a wonderful community for her.

These days, we focus on helping Lizzie gain the skills to live independently. We hope she'll one day hold a casual job too.

Kids like Lizzie have complex needs and rely on support from many hospital departments. That's why donations are vital – they allow organisations like SCHF to fund what's needed most, whether that's allied health, therapy, or research.

It's important for us to raise awareness about the challenges many families face.

Georgina, Lizzie's mum.

LUKE

SYDNEY, NSW

- Age 3
- Age 9
- NOW Age 15

Cystic fibrosis

When Luke was a newborn, he was diagnosed with cystic fibrosis (CF), a genetic condition that affects the lungs and digestive system. Back then, treatment options were limited and we were living with a lot of uncertainty.

I still smile when I look at Luke's first photo, giving a little thumbs up before a procedure. That was so typical of him, a cheeky preschooler who loved playing outside with his friends.

All these years later, Luke hasn't changed much. He still loves his Xbox and soccer. But now his future looks so much brighter thanks to life-changing medication.

Recently, new drugs called modulators have become available in Australia. They have transformed the lives of children with CF by targeting the faulty protein that causes the disease.

Since starting the medication, Luke has hardly had a cough or cold. It's amazing to think how far we have come. The hope we once held onto is now our reality.

I hope sharing our story comforts another family navigating their own journey. Children's healthcare is continuing to evolve and treatments and therapies are improving all the time.

Medical research is truly incredible, and we will always do whatever we can to support it.

Melinda, Luke's mum.

MAY

SYDNEY, NSW

1995 - 2018

Age 17
Age 21

Leukaemia

May was our daughter, a sister, a best friend, and a proud godmother. She was born in Sydney, attended hospital school, and went on to study occupational therapy. Melissa and I lost her just before she could graduate, so her sister Peta walked across the stage, shook the dean's hand, and accepted the degree on her behalf.

Everyone adored May. Even a brief meeting was enough for people to be struck by her presence. She never complained and always helped put the nurses at ease. Her inner strength was incredible – it was impossible not to admire her.

When May was diagnosed with the most aggressive form of leukaemia, my first instinct was to fix it. That's what fathers are supposed to do. But I couldn't. Every dad I met on the ward felt the same helplessness.

When cancer takes your source of sunshine, it shakes everything you believe in. You can choose to sit in that grief, or you can try to live in a way that honours them.

Today, we are pseudo-grandparents to May's godson. She was so proud to be chosen for that role, and I've done my best to maintain the relationship. He visits our home and we make pizza from scratch every other Wednesday.

I haven't spoken much about May in a long time. I hope our story encourages others to live fully and cherish every moment. Life's too short not to.

Craig, May's dad.

MIA

SYDNEY, NSW

- Age 9 months
- Age 7
- NOW Age 13

Whooping cough

When Mia was six weeks old, she caught whooping cough. It's a lung infection that's usually mild for adults but can be very dangerous for babies.

We spent so much time at Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick when Mia was a baby. I lost count of how many times we were admitted. Every time she caught even a small cold, she would stop breathing in her sleep. It was terrifying. We hardly slept ourselves, always watching and listening.

We were lucky to live close to the hospital, but managing the juggle of Mia's siblings was tricky. I often think about families who live hours away and how hard that must be. We could rush to the hospital whenever we were worried, and I could pop home for a break when things calmed down.

Taking part in special projects like Then and Now reminds me how lucky we are today. Mia got the all-clear at one year old and hasn't needed to go back since.

Now 13, she dreams of becoming a real estate agent when she finishes school. Her future looks so bright thanks to the incredible care she received.

Ashleigh, Mia's mum.

MOUSTAFA

SYDNEY, NSW

| Age 2
| Age 8
| NOW Age 15

VACTERL association

My son, Moustafa, was born with a rare condition called VACTERL association. He lives with one kidney, one lung, and ongoing bone and bladder disease.

For the first two and a half years, we lived in hospital. No one thought he'd make it, and doctors had never discharged a patient like him before.

Today, Moustafa is 15. Every day with him is a gift and keeping him well takes a village – from doctors and nurses to our family.

The reality is that Moustafa spends most of his time in his room. We've tried to make it his haven.

Moustafa can't enjoy the sunshine because sweat makes the tape around his tracheostomy loose. He also learns from home to avoid illness and keep his medical tubes safe.

Despite all this, Moustafa is happy and has the brightest personality. In some ways, his developmental delay has protected him from the reality of his condition.

Our family lives one day at a time, and we try not to plan too far ahead.

We share our story to help other families feel less alone, and to support the life-saving research that makes a difference.

When Moustafa was eight months old, his doctors performed a surgery they had just learnt at a conference. It was their first time.

It's this type of groundbreaking care that has gifted us more time with Moustafa. If there was a heaven on earth it would be Australia – we are so lucky to have access to the best possible care. My son wouldn't be alive without it. This, in part, is thanks to the generosity of donors.

Thank you.

Eman, Moustafa's mum.

ZAK

SYDNEY, NSW

- Age 8 months
- Age 4
- NOW Age 10

Necrotising enterocolitis

After two miscarriages and years of IVF, our rainbow baby, Zak, arrived at just 26 weeks, weighing only 970 grams.

When he was a newborn, Zak caught necrotising enterocolitis, which attacked his bowels and caused lasting damage.

Looking back at his first photo, when he was just four months old in the Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick is still painful. We all felt helpless and vulnerable.

By the time Zak turned four, things had mostly settled down. Hospital visits were less frequent, and his bright personality started to shine.

Last year, life took an unexpected turn. Zak was rushed to surgery after a sudden bowel blockage, where doctors uncovered scar tissue entwined between his organs – the likely cause of his ongoing pain.

To remove the adhesions, surgeons had to cut across his body. Recovery was tough, and he struggled with the physical pain.

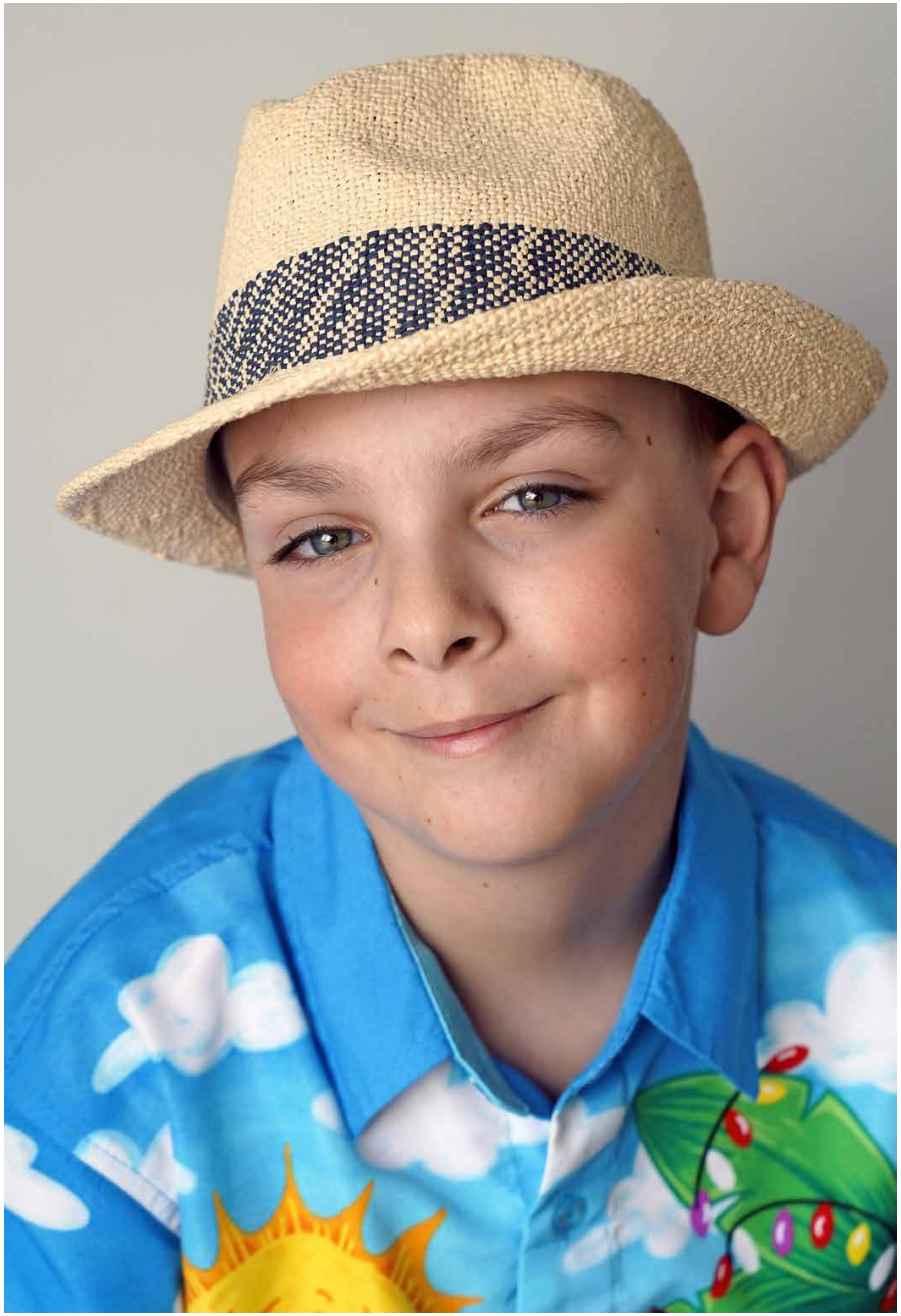
This journey has left scars on both of us: his body, and my heart. I often carry guilt, like my body somehow failed him.

Still, even though this experience broke us in many ways, it also made us stronger.

Before the surgery, Zak was too anxious to swim. But afterwards, something changed. He found his courage and took off like a fish.

Now, swimming and dancing are his favourite activities. I'm so proud of him.

Filippa, Zak's mum.



Then and Now is a photographic project that captures the human moments of hospital life for children, young people and their families. It tells powerful stories through the lens, and bears witness to care, vulnerability and hope.

The project started in 2012, when Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation (SCHF) appointed photographer Jimmy Pozarik OAM as photographer in residence. Over twelve months, he spent extensive time at Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick, with rare access to wards, waiting rooms and other hospital spaces. His visual storytelling resulted in *A Year in the Life* – a powerful exhibition that gave the public an honest and intimate view of life inside the hospital.

During this time, Jimmy built strong relationships with families. As their stories continued beyond the hospital walls, he felt drawn to reconnect. Years later, he wondered how their healthcare journeys had shaped them.

In 2018, SCHF and Jimmy launched Then and Now. The project featured photographs from Jimmy's original residency with new portraits and personal reflections from families. Each story revealed the lasting impact of childhood illness and care, and how time reshapes memory, identity and gratitude.

For some families, their hospital experience involved life-changing surgeries and treatments. For others, it became one chapter of childhood, with memories that were sometimes clear and sometimes fading. For a few, their relationship with the hospital was only just beginning. What connected them all was a deep appreciation for the care, compassion and expertise that supported their children and families.

Now, SCHF and Jimmy are proud to present **Then and Now Revisited**, a moving return to the children and families featured in the first edition. This new chapter offers a rare and heartwarming look at their lives today.

20 returning patient families have shared their stories with SCHF's Patient Supporter Program to help other children access the same extraordinary care through philanthropy.

This project stands as a testament to the power of human connection and the role of philanthropy in helping shape the future of paediatric healthcare.

About Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation

Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation (SCHF) is one of Australia's largest and most trusted kids' health charities — and one of the largest hospital foundations in the world.

As the exclusive fundraising partner of the Sydney Children's Hospitals Network, we support a comprehensive network of care that includes:

- Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick
- The Children's Hospital at Westmead
- Bear Cottage
- Newborn and paediatric Emergency Transport Service (NETS)
- Kids Research

Whether it's funding new equipment, specialist training, ground-breaking research or building state-of-the-art facilities, the money raised through SCHF is changing the future for sick kids.

Acknowledgment of First Australians

Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation acknowledges First Australians and recognises their continuous connection to country, community and culture. We are committed to helping close the gap to achieve equality in health and life expectancy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

"In Unity We Heal."
Artwork by David Williams of Gilimbaa.

SCHF

Sydney
Children's
Hospitals
Foundation

schf.org.au