

September 2024



Celebrating Great People – All Abilities

Shelley Matheson & The Gliders

Born with a birth defect that led to her becoming an incomplete paraplegic, Shelley (from Bendigo) has never let her disability stop her from doing anything. Chappers, as she's known was first introduced to wheelchair sports at the age of 12 & made her senior international wheelchair basketball debut when she was 17. For the best part of the next 2 decades, she dedicated her life to being one of the best wheelchair basketballers in the world. She competed at five World Championships and three Paralympic Games with the Australian Gliders. In January 2024, Shelley returned to the court for Australia, racking up her long awaiting 250th game against Japan at the Asian Oceania Championships in Bangkok. I'm excited by the talent we have & what we can achieve with this young group." She was thrilled to be back in the green & gold & her lifelong dream to win Paralympic gold was back on the cards. In April, however the Gliders were defeated by the Japanese. Will Shelley be involved & continue on her quest for Paralympic gold? Who knows. But what we do know is that when it comes to Chappers, nothing is impossible.



Extracts from the article above taken from the Victorian Institute of Sports website.

Shelley at the London Paralympics in 2012. Picture courtesy of the Australian Paralympian Committee.



See Page 2 for our **Special Feature** about the Paralympics



AUSTRALIAN PARALYMPIANS IN PARIS 2024

- Australia has competed at every Paralympic Games since the first in Rome in 1960.
- After finishing in first place on the medal table at Sydney 2000, Australia finished fifth at each of the next four Games, and eighth at Tokyo 2020.
- Prior to Paris, Australia had produced 1,126 Paralympians. They had won 1,272 medals – 1,237 at the Summer Games and 35 at the Winter Games.
- Australia finished in the top seven nations on the gold medal tally at the first three Summer Games, however finished outside the top 10 in 1972, 1976 and 1980. Australia reclaimed a top 10 position in 1984 and has not finished outside the top 10 since.

Behind the Scenes:

- Over 30,000 items will clothe the Australian Paralympic Team.
- 350 Team members will visit Paralympics Australia's Uniform Distribution Centre in Paris.
- Over 7000 Pins have been provided.
- Four containers were sea freighted and 20 pallets air freighted.
- 61 personal wheelchairs will be flown to Paris, as well as 38 sport-competition chairs and five SmartDrive power assist devices to support wheelchair users
- Two entire Café set-ups were shipped – one for the Athlete Village and one for the team's out-of-village base.
- 57 bicycles, handcycles and tandems will be transported, as well as three throwing frames for track and field.
- Medical support equipment includes seven shower chairs and one hoist.
- Paralympics Australia processed 228 athletes and 217 staff/officials, across 22 sessions in six states and territories, capturing biographical data and uniform sizes.
- Four site visits were undertaken by Paralympics Australia staff and other key personnel.
- 300 shuttle trips will be undertaken between the Paralympic Village, the out-of-village hotel and Paralympics Australia's Uniform Distribution Centre.

GAMES

GdA wishes all the athletes all the very best for a wonderful outcome and sheer enjoyment at this year's Paralympic Games.

There are 160 athletes taking part, including 90 males and 40 females, and 42 athletes from Victoria.

61 are making their debut.

Games that we are participating in:

Para-athletics
Para-swimming
Para-archery
Para-badminton
Para-cycling
Para-canoe
Para-equestrian
Para-powerlifting
Para-judo
Para-rowing
Para-shooting
Para-table tennis
Para-triathlon
Para-taekwondo
Wheelchair-tennis
Wheelchair-fencing
Wheelchair-rugby
Wheelchair-basketball
Blind-football
Sitting-volleyball
Goalball
Boccia

Games Aug 29-Sept 8





Welcome Matt de Gruchy, GdA Board of Governance Newest Member

"G'day, I'm Matt from Horsham. I have a passion for breaking down the stereotypes & stigmas surrounding disability in our communities.

Through public speaking at schools and events, I aim to educate and promote inclusivity, drawing from my lived experiences with Stargardt's disease.

During my youth I struggled to come to terms with my blindness, doing my best to hide it and "fit in".

A combination of mentorship & counselling helped me to find the confidence to advocate for myself and others, change my mindset & proudly accept my disability, not letting it hold me back!

I spent 10 years in retail, working as a supervisor & shift runner at Cheap as Chips.

In 2018, I launched my clothing brand MDV, designing apparel to raise awareness for blindness & low vision. Since 2021, I have been running my business full-time. I enjoy meeting new people & hearing stories and perspectives from those with lived experience, carers, & allies, as there's always so much more to learn & you might just find out a handy tip to make your life more accessible.

My Hobbies include Dj-ing and music, Art, Video editing & production. I like travel and challenging myself, my zen is going for a walk or run in my spare time."

CONGRATULATIONS TO Tracey Corbin-Matchett

Producer and disability advocate Tracey will be bestowed with the AFFF Groundbreaker Award at the [Australian Women's Film Festival](#) on Sept 17. It's a well-deserved honour for Tracey who has been at the forefront of advocating for greater representation of people with disability in the screen industry, receiving an OAM in 2023 for service to the arts and to people with disability. Tracey is a proud hard of hearing woman with a passion for film, advocacy & inclusion. Her 25-year career has crossed social housing, women's rights and disability employment. Tracey is the CEO of Bus Stop Films and organiser of the [Driving Change Summit](#)



SAVE THE DATE

GdA 24th AGM

October 21st 2-4pm
(being held in Ararat)

Everyone welcome

For more details contact
admin@grampiansadvocacy.org.au

Should you be interested in nominating for a position on the Board of Governance, please contact Admin for details on 1800 552 272

DULCIE STONE WRITER'S COMPETITION 2024

Calling all aspiring writers with intellectual disabilities in Australia! It's time to put pen to paper for the 2024 Dulcie Stone Writer's Competition. We're thrilled to announce that the competition is now open until **September 2nd, 2024**. Get those creative juices flowing and show off your storytelling skills. Writers Victoria and Inclusion Australia are also on board to support you every step of the way. Happy writing!



Dulcie Stone (pictured) was a great disability advocate from Victoria. She was a big supporter of people with intellectual disability and writing. VALID created the ***Dulcie Stone Writer's Competition*** to remember Dulcie and to encourage people with an intellectual disability to be creative. The ***Dulcie Stone Writer's Competition*** is open to any **adult over 18** across Australia, who has an intellectual disability. The competition is supported by Writers Victoria and Inclusion Australia.

The theme for this year, 2024 is:

'DREAMING'

You can write a story or poem up to 500 words

There is an overall first prize of \$400 and then \$200 for state winners

[DOWNLOAD FORM HERE](#)

Or contact **VALID** on 03 9416 4003 for more info

Note Entries close September 2nd



What does GdA do?

- *Help you write a letter or submission to represent your interests
- *Make a telephone call with/for you or help get info to resolve a concern
- *Find information about another agency that may be able to assist
- *Provide information on disability issues
- *Support people to advocate for themselves

GdA Office Locations

- ❖ Ararat
- ❖ Horsham
- ❖ Daylesford
- ❖ Ballarat
- ❖ Golden Plains

Central Intake 1800 552 272

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