



Rebecca Garlick

Board Member, Volunteer & Committee Member for The Arts for All

My South Street journey began as a one-month-old going along with my family to the calisthenics. Mum had to watch the Graceful Girl of 1981 through the little peep hole in the door as I was not a happy baby that night. Well that has certainly changed as I have attended 'The Comps' every year of my life (except obviously last year) which is 40 years this year.

RSSS brings back so many fond memories... such as dancing in the back corner of the theatre whilst the dancers were up on stage and trying to copy their moves; running up and down the middle aisle before the refurbishments; being scared of the toilets as a young kid due to hearing footsteps from the upper level; having to walk down the steep steps to get to the toilets too; spending my October's with my family watching calisthenics and some of the dance; meeting so many amazing people who I now call friends; assisting in coaching and watching the team from side stage; seeing the theatre totally packed for Senior Champ weekend and being one of those lucky ones to have an awesome ticket; watching whenever I could as I am a VIP holder (the youngest one to hold one); getting fit running and up all those stairs from auditorium to the dressing rooms (walking 25000 steps) and performing in the Prize Winners Concert. Other fond memories include being evacuated from the theatre in the pouring rain along with hundreds of other people, when the roof sustained damage during a freak storm on Senior Champ day, being the busiest day of the RSSS calendar; seeing many performers fall off the stage and of course winning many aggregates.

My competing days were in calisthenics including 7 years with Ballarat Calisthenics College, 6 years with Sovereign Calisthenics and 5 years with Westcoast Calisthenics. Each year my team would work so hard to build up to our final comp for the year - South Street. There is something special about that stage, the size, the rake, the wings, the age of it... I really do not know but as soon as I step into the theatre, I get nostalgic and feel 'at home'. It was awesome how we used to be able to decorate the dressing room in our team colours and get special gifts from the coaches as a good luck. It's so exciting to hear your number getting called especially in your own hometown. Having that nervous tension when in the Green Room waiting to go on stage, hearing that bell ring from the adjudicator to signal she was ready and the music starting and putting your foot up to the stage line or getting your photograph taken by Lorraine each year. I also loved trying to beat the bell after being on stage to run up to the auditorium and not miss any performances.

Once my competing days were behind me I continued to come and watch the local Ballarat clubs as well as Westcoast and catch up with everyone. I also decided to try my hand at

volunteering, choosing to volunteer both front of house where I am able to watch the other disciplines such as debating, school bands, instrumental section, singing and even the Sun Aria (opera) and of course dance and calisthenics. I then started volunteering later backstage where I loved being a timer or on registration.

I love watching anything and everything. After my Nan passed away I was honoured to become a sponsor of a section (Tinies Song with Action) in memory of her. We donate a trophy in her name and I love presenting this year each. I had also become a member of the calisthenics committee for two years and also taking my passion for people living with a disability by becoming a member of the Arts for All committee since its inception. As a member of the Ballaraat Solo Committee I also love donating the prize money and watching the Senior Calisthenic Solo each year.

As I had already been an audience member, competitor, volunteer, sponsor and committee member, I decided to join the Board of RSSS and was elected at the end of last year. I am enjoying this side of things as well and look forward to this new challenge.

I am now also looking forward to another South Street milestone this year by being a Cali Mum and watching my daughter Charlotte perform in her first year of calisthenics with Jayde Calisthenics Tinies team.