

An action-packed trip Down Under

Some people lounge on the beach when they go on holiday, but not **Nicole Wall GCF(APF)**. When she visited Australia, she represented Great Britain in an international triathlon event and then travelled to meet one of her framing mentors, the inspirational framer, educator – and boomerang throwing record-holder – David Schummy in Brisbane



Nicole racing in the bike section (top) and (above) reunited with the Australian couple she first befriended in Southampton almost 20 years ago

WHEN I'M not picture framing, I'm training for my sport of triathlon. Arqadia (now Larson-Juhl) were kind enough to sponsor me in the form of a GB tri suit, after I qualified for a place in the World Age Group Triathlon Championships being held on the Gold Coast in Australia.

There were several other reasons besides racing to travel so far, the most important of these being to visit my son Howard, who I had not seen for two years.

It was lovely to have both my husband and Howard supporting me on the day of the race. I was one of 5000 athletes from around the world competing in sprint or standard distance triathlons.

Never in my wildest dreams would I have imagined that I would end up racing alongside an Australian couple who I had met and made friends with nearly 20 years ago when they were living in Southampton for a few years.

The 1500 metre swim in the warm seas off the Gold Coast was wetsuit optional, followed by a two lap, mostly flat but extremely windy closed road 40km cycle. My standard distance race concluded with an equally windy two lap 10km run.

I was one of five ladies in the GB team in my age group and finished in two hours, 43 minutes – 39th out of 58 over all.

I was pleased with my race as in reality I knew I was there to compete and not be a front runner. You always wish you'd been faster but it was a privilege to represent my country



Brisbane framer and educator David Schummy perfects the unique Aussie framers' sport of chevron-throwing

in a sport and returning to Australia made it very special.

After the race, we had another three weeks' action packed holiday, at the end of which we returned to Brisbane. It was here that I had one last place and person to visit.

FRAMING MENTOR

When first starting out as a picture framer four years ago, a customer brought in a football shirt for framing. Unsure how to approach this, I turned to YouTube. The video I selected led me to an internet/email connection with David Schummy and his store, Fix-A-Frame in Brisbane.

I became a member of his Framers' Club, giving me access to all his instructional archive videos covering a huge range of

framing challenges. David also broadcasts a monthly webinar, which often goes out live although for me in the UK it means watching at 4.30 in the morning. During these, you are able to ask questions and I always found I learned something new, with different subjects and challenges tackled every time.

David has followed my journey with the Guild and gaining my qualification, and has always answered questions I may have had when unsure how to tackle something difficult.

So it was a visit to Fix-A-Frame and to finally meet David before flying home. He was generous with his time and I was able to give him a gift of a picture I had framed. I also had a framing task rolled carefully in a tube for David



David with the completed framed scarf he made for Nicole as a gift for her son

to complete as a gift for my son's birthday. We used his visualisation software to compare mountboards and frames, which was fabulous and I could really appreciate how this must help the customer with their decision.

BOOMERANG CHAMP

David is not only a picture framer but has another unique Aussie skill. He holds the world record for the longest boomerang throw of 237.2 metres and has competed all over the world in competitions. He generously signed a special wooden handmade boomerang made by another famous boomerang thrower, Bob Burwell, and presented it to me as a gift.

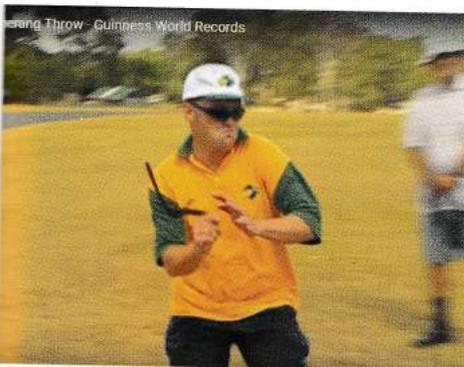
David has built Fix-A-Frame up into a busy, successful business,

employing a handful of friendly, knowledgeable staff. He has also developed, written and published training for college courses, adult education and the Australian government when they needed to develop and train picture framers during their apprenticeships.

Along with books, DVDs and his framers' club, it was an impressive setup and a far cry from my cold, small, pre-war, prefab, one-woman-run industrial unit. It was a special meeting that completed a wonderful time in Australia for me.

Nicole Wall. GCF (APF) is the owner of WeFrameIt picture framers in Southampton www.weframeit.biz

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David's world record boomerang throw can be found on YouTube