

## Meet Grace Johnstone



*We warmly welcome Grace Johnstone as a new member of the society. Ed Jones and I recently visited with Grace & her family and thoroughly enjoyed meeting her and the family who made us most welcome in their lovely home. Grace is keen to attend GIAG next year in Wellington and we will be doing all we can to make this happen. This is Grace's story: As an aside Grace, has met young Lucy Holdaway at a Parafed function.*

Hello everyone, I'm Grace Johnstone and I am 15 years old. For my birthday this year I did a tandem skydive in the Abel Tasman National Park. I totally recommend it!!!!

I was the first child to my parents Mark and Tracey, a much loved and wanted fertility treatment baby. I was given a very poor prognosis after antenatal scans and although I was born with twisted legs and a malformed spine, I was alert and well and my parents celebrated. After many operations, I walked at the age of three and a half with a built up boot, AFO splints, and a truck to balance on. When I started school I was the size of a petite two year old and was adept at using crutches and could zoom around in a wheel chair when needed. Hospital trips for ongoing corrective surgeries to re-angle bones, sort tendons and lengthen my smaller leg were a big part of my childhood. Orthopaedic surgeries involve a lot of pain and unfortunately epidurals never worked for me.