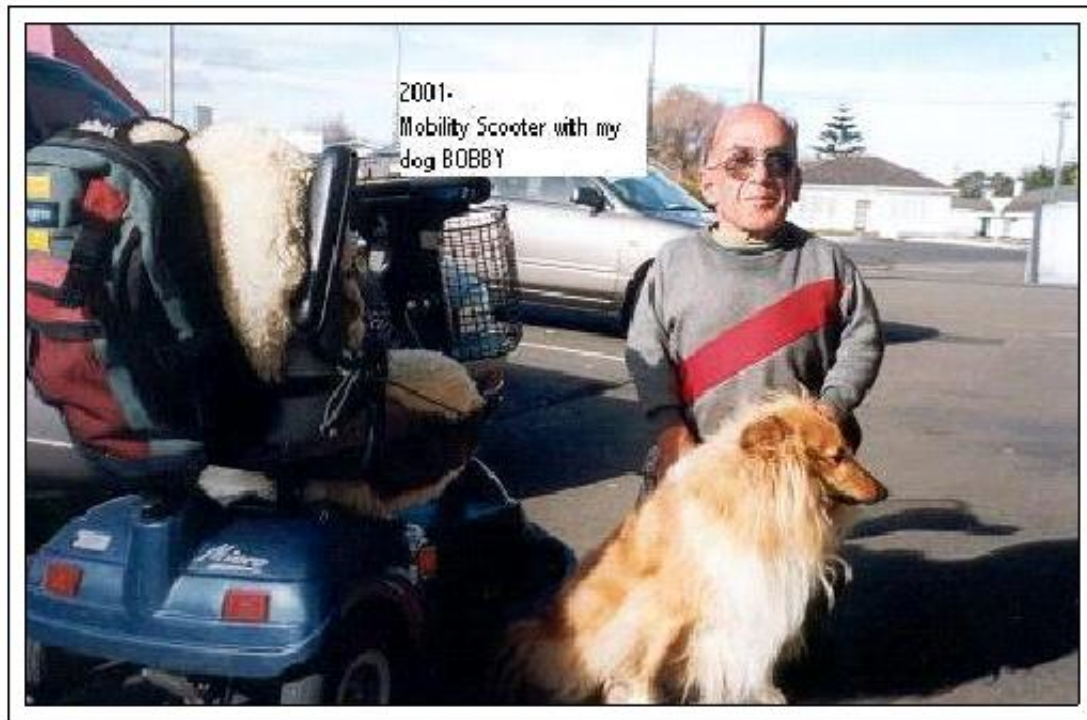


**Written: by Alan Hutchins**

**Hello everyone. Firstly I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dr. Shunji Tomatsu for the research he is putting into Morquio Disease for us today and the children of the future. Secondly Mary Harings and the International Morquio Support Group and to many others.**

**Yes that's me in the photo and my name is Alan Hutchins from Wanganui New Zealand with my loving dog Bobby. I am single, aged 54, and own my home since 1978 (built for my height, yes 94cm in my socks) with my latest way of transport a scooter named Bluebird. I had driven mostly late model small cars minis and Suzuki's with hand controls since 1966 when I learned to drive. What an experience those days were as I had started work as an accounts clerk for the local Tax department. That was the first of many challenging careers to follow.**

**Currently, my interest getting into the computer world in March of last year was to make contacts with Little people of the world and Morquio research in order to share with one another and especially parents with same. I enjoy my home life. I love animals and besides Bobby (Sheltie), he has a great mate a lovely cat called Tibby, I have indoor and outside fish, Roller Canaries. I enjoy gardening and every so often enjoy going out with my friends for a meal and socialings with the local Returned Service Association Club.**



## EARLY LIFE

I was the 3rd child to my late parents having two sisters and my late brother, Ian (lived 4mths), till I arrived. I was a normal child at birth until development at 2 years old showed what we know today as structural signs. And yes as you would appreciate my parents could not understand this and in those days were told I would not grow much and my life could be short, both my parents, sisters and younger brother are all of normal height with no history in the family at all. Knowing this they tried to seek help everywhere until further X-rays confirmed the deformities in bone structure. Prior to going to school at 5years of age, my parents arranged for me to go off to Wanganui to have Therapy in the form of oils rubbed into my body and under heat, for a time this did help me to walk easier but I was still carried around or put into a push chair. Anyway I started primary school when I was 7years old though only half a day for a start and then made to rest . In the afternoons the oil therapy continued for many years. Both my parents encouraged me to do various exercises. My father built what we call monkey bars and helped me to lift my body from the ground to strengthen my arms and chest. I believe today that it helped the upper part of the body. They encouraged me to get into swimming pools, especially at primary school, I would stand on the steps, hang onto the rail, then float and kick my legs out as straight as I could .I loved it .They even bought a swimming pool for our home. We had fun with my mates and family, even though I can not swim to this date.



**My father was a very strong man. He would take us down to the beach and bring me out into the sea. The sea surf salt water, he believed, was good for me and mum was a strong swimmer too. I am grateful my parents cared and family as well, including the school and friends to which many are still close to me and very supportive today . At the age of 10 a young orthopedic surgeon arrived in our city. He wanted to see me and my parents .He knew my condition was called Morquio. This surgeon was very supportive to my parents during the times when I had joint pains. At an earlier age I was taught to ride a three wheeler trike and later learned to ride a two wheeler to help straighten my legs. I was a speed king when I got going on my two wheeler especially when I started secondary school**