

## BIOGRAPHIES



**JP Bell**  
**Co-Founder, Creative**  
**Director & Dr B. Looney**  
**The Humour Foundation**



**Dr Peter Spitzer**  
**Chairman, Medical Director**  
**& Dr Fruit-Loop**  
**The Humour Foundation**

As a 19 year old, JP Bell worked as an orderly in St Vincent's hospital and found he was skilled at lightening hospital atmosphere and diverting the attention of children about to go into surgery.

Following this, JP focused on his career as a mime artist and comedian. He has performed in theatres, comedy venues, festivals, schools and on television for the past 25 years.

Dr Peter Spitzer is a GP who takes a holistic approach to treating patients. He was the Founder of Wintergarden Medical Centre in Bowral and now practises in the NSW country town of Bowral.

JP and Peter met in London in 1975 and formed a friendship that continued when both returned to live in Australia. Over the years they discussed ways to marry medicine and art.

When both men met Patch Adams in 1993, they were inspired to utilise their complementary skills in a joint venture. JP and Peter spent all of 1996 setting up the Humour Foundation.

Sydney Children's Hospital became the first hospital to host the Clown Doctors in January 1997. Today, the program is hosted by all major children's hospitals in Australia and also visits regional hospitals. Clown Doctors also play a role in palliative care for adults and children plus regular visits to nursing homes.

Both JP and Peter give speeches and present workshops on humour and health as part of the LaughterWorks project. JP also uses his experience in teaching mime, movement and clowning to select and train the Clown Doctors.

The Clown Doctors program has led both men to travel extensively during which they have brought smiles to those all around the world. In the past few years, both JP and Peter visited East Timor and JP visited Afghanistan as a part of the 'Smiles around the World' project.

Peter was awarded a Churchill Fellowship following a study of hospital clowns and the health care setting in USA and Europe.