

• FOR RURAL WOMEN & THEIR FAMILIES •

The Country Web

AFTER THE RAINS

FREE NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 55 SPRING 2011



PHOTO BY EMMA PERRY, MATHOURA



Let's make it happen – together

Rural Women's Network

GLOUCESTER WOMEN'S GATHERING ■ LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF AFTER A DISASTER

THE COUNTRY WEB

The Country Web is produced by the Department of Primary Industries Rural Women's Network (RWN) and is distributed free. For more about the RWN see page 5.

EDITING/DESKTOP PUBLISHING

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CONTRIBUTIONS

Letters, stories, poems and photographs from rural women and their families are welcome.

FREE MAILING LIST

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COMPETITION TERMS & CONDITIONS

1. Information on how to enter and prize details form part of the Terms & Conditions. By entering the competition, entrants accept these Terms & Conditions. 2. To enter, you must provide your full name and postal details, and in 25 words or less answer the competition question. 3. Entries must be posted to the stated address by the stated date. 4. This competition is a game of skill. The best answer as judged by the RWN will win. The judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Prizes cannot be transferred or redeemed for cash. The winner will be notified by mail within 14 days from the judging date.

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editorial: CHANGES, CHALLENGES AND A PHOTOGRAPHERS PARADISE



By Patty Byrnes, Wamberra Station via Gol Gol

Spring of 2009 was a turning point for us that saw some weird and wonderful changes starting to take place at Wamberra Station in far south west NSW. During September we witnessed red rainfall in a thunderstorm that the next day moved on awaking Sydney to a red, dawn haze.

November brought the wettest day we had seen for 12 years and although we were in the middle of our wheat harvest, the rain was welcomed to take the pressure off our depleted water supplies, and to rejuvenate our strained grazing paddocks after 10 years of below average rainfall out of the previous 15 years.

December saw the appearance of Min Min lights in several paddocks. They hovered about and moved over fences and paddocks at night in front of my husband while he carted grain to our silos at the homestead. While Min Min lights had been seen by old stockmen many years ago, we had not witnessed them ourselves at Wamberra.

February 2010 delivered a massive evening thunderstorm that rumbled and swirled until it finally dumped its load over the homestead, filling the house dam to capacity and flowing into the neighbouring property, leaving us with magnificent water views. The big old dam, dug out by teams of draught horses over 100 years ago, had not filled since 1989 – it brought new life and a nightly chorus from frogs who seemed to appear from nowhere.

Our spirits lifted during 2010 when the rains continued and our pastoral country bloomed. The crops grew the best we'd ever seen, cattle fattened quickly and calves danced in the high grass.

Native flora and fauna responded and we saw many species we hadn't seen for years. Some new species emerged and the mallee and woodland trees flourished. It was a nice change to see a 'green summer' when native pastures didn't dry off and stayed lush and green. My husband has only seen this once before in his lifetime on the property.

All the rivers ran. The Darling broke it banks and filled parched billabongs. The Anabranched flowed and the Menindee Lakes filled to capacity. The rivers, wetlands and countryside were a photographer's paradise.

What a load to have lifted from our shoulders. We recorded our 2nd highest annual rainfall of 579 mls since our records began in 1882. The wettest year was in 1889 when 600 mls fell over the property compared to the driest year in 1927 when only 101 ml was recorded. We thought our worries were gone for a while but more challenges arose and property management

changed as new challenges emerged.

The rain kept falling and everything flourished including the mosquitos and locusts. Locust spraying was a daily occurrence for weeks on end as they kept moving towards our crops leading up to the harvest. Stripe rust also appeared and threatened to reduce our yields.

Harvest started well, quality was good and yields lived up to expectation. Rain and storms kept increasing in intensity. One dam burst and washed out part of a crop, the rest filled and overflowed. *continued page 9*

Min Min Light is the name given to an unusual light formation that has been reported numerous times in eastern Australia. The lights have been reported from as far south as Brewarrina in western NSW, to as far north as Boulia in northern QLD. The majority of sightings are reported to have occurred in Channel Country. Stories about the lights can be found in aboriginal myth predating western settlement of the region and have since become part of wider Australian folklore. According to folklore, the lights sometimes followed or approached people and have disappeared when fired upon, only to reappear later on. The light's existence as a phenomenon has been confirmed to be Fata Morgana (mirage), though there remains debate over their source. *Sourced from Wikipedia 12 July 2011*

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2011/12

OCTOBER

8, MURGA

A day with Caroline Jones.

Eugowra CWA are hosting a special day set in the beautiful gardens of 'Clonelly'. Enjoy guest speakers, book launch, entertainment and stalls. Contact Val McGrath on 6859 5274 or valmcgrath@harcourtsat.com.au

14-16, GLOUCESTER

NSW Rural Women's Gathering: Friendship and Dreaming Beneath the Bucketts. Take some time out and make your way to Gloucester for the 19th Annual Rural Women's Gathering. You'll come away inspired, having learnt new

skills and formed new friendships. See pages 19–22 for program and registration details.

14-16, GLOUCESTER

Launch of the 2011 Hidden Treasures Honour Roll. The Honour Roll will be launched at the Gloucester Rural Women's Gathering and will be available to download from the Rural Women's Network website.

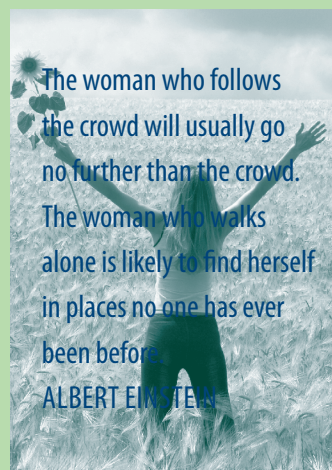
15, WORLD RURAL WOMEN'S DAY

FEBRUARY 2012

DATE TBA, SYDNEY

2012 NSW RIRDC Rural Women's Award Gala Dinner. A special evening to celebrate the 2012

NSW RIRDC Rural Women's Award finalists and to announce the winner.



WHAT'S NEXT?

In celebration of 2012 Australian Year of the Farmer, the theme for the next edition of *The Country Web* will be **Our Farmers, Our Future.** Contributions are required by 16 December for publication in March 2012.

If you have stories, poems, images or other items of interest, we'd love to hear from you.

Send your contributions to:
The Country Web
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allison.priest@industry.nsw.gov.au

A whole new experience

I picked up the Autumn copy of *The Country Web* while travelling through NSW and what a wonderful magazine – the best I have come across. I am a city girl from QLD but have country in my heart. I have a lot of trouble returning to the big city after a few months on the road in country towns.

In that issue of the Web I found an article on making your own laundry detergent. I tried it today and wow, what a lovely feeling the towels, sheets etc had. The minute I took them out of the machine I could feel the difference.

I have thoroughly enjoyed reading every article in your magazine and after subscribing for the next issue, am really looking forward to it. Keep up the great work and many thanks for opening up a whole new reading experience for me.

Rhyl Graham, QLD

With thanks...

Coping on the land has been tough. I so look forward to receiving *The Country Web*. Over time your magazine has helped me so much. Reading the articles is calming and inspiring, giving me many *lifts* of positiveness to continue.

I would also like to thank Caroline Long (Rural Support Worker) and Ray Hynes (Rural Financial Counsellor) who have each helped me so much over the last several years. Their care and concern for myself and my family has been overwhelming.

Dianne Mitchell, Scone

Linking together

About three years ago we started a sewing group, funded through the Linking Together Centre in Inverell, to encourage women to meet and sew and talk. We also managed to fit in morning tea and lunch.

Currently we're making warm quilts to combat our freezing winter. We've also made curtains and school uniforms, altered a dress for a ball and made a Year 12 formal dress. In fact we will attempt most things. June Moir and I do some tutoring and we all

enjoy admiring finished articles. Our response is always – come and join us and we'll show you how – when we are asked to do sewing. Our group is full of energy and determination. Pictured is Mary Stewart with her first quilting square.



Robyn Johnson, Inverell

Across the globe: Agricultural safety efforts

How wonderful it is that you have a program for women in agriculture. Women play a huge part in society especially the farming community, and at times face different challenges to men.

Agriculture has always been a part of my life. I grew up helping on my grandfather's farm and working at horse farms and rescues. My grandfather had a huge impact on my life and always will. Back in 2005 he was out doing what he loved, but he never made it home as the tractor he was on rolled multiple times crushing him to death.

After his death I wanted to help people who have faced, or may face, a similar situation. I was 17 at the time and wasn't sure where to start. Five years on I'm making headway and have numerous endeavours. I'm working on organising a meeting for emergency workers and ag professionals to discuss more indepth farm rescue training, supporting the Rollover Protective Structures Rebate Program, bringing First on the Scene for Farm Families courses to the area, and supporting farm families.

As a young woman I have faced numerous challenges as I embark on my endeavors to save other families from the heartache and tears mine endured and continues to endure. At times the journey is lonely and there seem to be more roadblocks than any headway. Despite this, I keep pushing forward. I cannot change what happened all those years back, but I can share my story and use my passion. If it saves just one life then all the work has been worth it. Farm accidents can happen to anyone, anywhere, anytime, but that doesn't mean we can't prevent them. Together we can make a difference!

Alyssa Fodor, Rittman, Ohio

Women Welcome Women

Women Welcome Women World Wide (5W) is celebrating 25 years of the organisations. There are 86 countries with members around the world. I joined 5W after reading an article in a British magazine in 1986 and writing to 5W's founder, Frances Alexander in High Wycombe UK asking to become a member.

Over the years my late husband Reg and I have hosted and stayed with many members from here and overseas and always felt welcomed. 5W has opened the world to me and many others.

Earlier this year, along with 12 local members, we arranged a four day Gathering in Lake Macquarie to

Competition
Winners

Congratulations to the following readers for your winning entry in the No. 54 book competition. You have each won a copy of *Daring to Dream 2: Stories from inspirational rural women*.

P McDonald, Casino
G Teale – McEvoy, Coonabarabran

celebrate the 25th Anniversary. We had four overseas members and 20 Australian members stay with us. We showed them local areas including Paterson, Nelson Bay and Cessnock and visited Hunter Valley Gardens and an olive grove at Pokolbin, the home of one of our members. We all enjoyed the gathering and for some this was the first they had been to. At our welcome dinner members got a raffle ticket with Eunice Whitcomb from New Zealand and Lorna Hall from Sydney the winners –they helped me cut the birthday cake.

Women Welcome Women World Wide is a safe way for women to travel alone. We also welcome husbands and children travelling with a member. For more information about 5W or to become a member see: www.womenwelcomewomen.org.uk
Gloria Hodgson, Lake Macquarie

RELIEF

After the rains of a broken drought
And the countryside settles its woes
Birds have returned with chattering voice
While the once dry streams now flow
After the rains the grass grows green
Native flowers come alive once more
A bird in a tree makes its presence known
A melodic voice without flaw
The grasslands rejoice, its fresh and new
A time to relish change
The weather has turned full circle again
And we know there is more rain within range.

© JEAN OPPERMAN, PASCOE VALE



*RWN Project Coordinators
Allison Priest and Emma Regan.*

The Rural Women's Network (RWN) is a statewide government program working in innovative ways to share information and promote action on rural women's issues.

What RWN can do for you:

- Promote activities and share information via our networks;
- Give presentations and facilitate workshops or send information for you to distribute;
- Connect you with key individuals, groups and agencies.

Current projects;

- RIRDC Rural Women's Award: a leadership and development Award
- Shaping Our Futures Together: a two-day self-development workshop
- Annual NSW Rural Women's Gathering;
- Hidden Treasures: recognising rural women volunteers; and
- Daring to Dream: stories of inspirational women.

Call 02 6391 3620

Fax 02 6391 3650

rural.women@dpi.nsw.gov.au

twitter.com/nsw_rwn

across my desk ■ sonia muir



One certainty in life is that there will be sunshine after rain.

If you metaphorically look back on your life you'll see downpours and blustery events where life was as awful as a wet week.

Perhaps your feet were constantly caked in 'mud' or you felt cold and drenched finding it difficult to see a way forward through to the next day.

Well the good news is ... if you are reading this then you have weathered those 'storms and cyclones' and probably developed some resilience skills along the way.

Resilience is having an ability to respond positively to change and boost your sense of wellbeing regardless of what is happening around you.

Building personal resilience takes commitment to look at things in a positive way and appreciate what is good in our lives.

If we can build our resilience skills we will feel more in control.

A recent Better Life Index released by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation & Development (OECD) ranked their 34 member nations.

While it doesn't explicitly award any one nation with an overall 'gold logie', Australia's average ranking in all categories brought us out at the top followed closely by Canada and Sweden.

We need to be grateful for the many great things in our lives ... starting with appreciating that we live in the 'lucky country' is a good place to start.

We all have opportunities, abilities and gifts that can

contribute to developing our personal resilience – we just have to look for them.

SOFT WORKSHOPS

The Shaping Our Futures Together (SOFT) personal leadership course developed and delivered by Rural Women's Network (RWN) can help you to get on the right path to learning some tools that build resilience. The workshop runs over two consecutive days and focuses on building self-esteem, confidence, developing personal goals and building support networks.

In June we ran very successful courses in Bethungra and Scone with women of all ages and stages. Scone was held in a Country Women's Association hall and Bethungra was held in a Church ... pews and all!

Give us a call to talk about how to get a SOFT workshop in your region. (There are costs that need to be covered and we need a minimum of 12 participants).

RURAL SUPPORT WORKERS

The new DPI Rural Support Program will operate in the following four areas identified as key to supporting rural communities and building resilience: preparation for future climate events; strengthening of local community networks; delivering development programs; and supporting farm families during periods of dryness and following emergencies. For more details see: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au

MAPPING PROJECT

Are you a member of a rural focussed network or organisation in NSW? RWN is trying to map these key groups. If you know of one or are a part of a network, whether big or small, please let us know.

**SONIA MUIR, MANAGER
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT UNIT**



Call for submissions to host the 2013 NSW Rural Women's Gathering

RWN is looking for interested communities who would like to host the 2013 NSW Rural Women's Gathering. If you have a group of committed women, the capacity to host such an event and can demonstrate strong community support, contact RWN to register your interest and receive a copy of the submission guidelines. Submission will be accepted up to 30 January 2012.

Contact RWN on 02 6391 3620 or see our website for more details: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn/gatherings

Visit the Rural Women's Network internet site at
www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn



Five weeks of isolation

By Dayle Murray, Lightning Ridge

In March 2010 we waited weeks for water to come down from Queensland with the excitement that the Coocoran Lake would fill and we would have somewhere to use our tinny. 2010 made for a fantastic year for rain and the crops looked so promising, until rain continued through harvest and crushed our dreams. My husband Andrew was extremely busy as harvest ran late – he couldn't even have Christmas away with our family. Then, before we knew it, it was January 2011 – shearing time.

People in Lightning Ridge started to talk about more water coming down from Queensland, it was the talk of the town. This time, it came quickly and by January 19 water had started flowing out of the Lake and into our neighbours' place. We weren't concerned as the water would flow into Grawin Creek at the back of our place. But by January 21 water started running up on the red ground; I went into town and purchased food and supplies thinking we could be cut off for a few weeks, but it was a big 'if'.

On the weekend, our biggest fears came true as water came from both ends of our 11200 acre property. The flood water was overflowing at the back from the Lake and the water from a neighbouring property was running around the Ridge and coming down the bore drain as the Big Warrambool couldn't take any more water. By Tuesday, January 25, we were cut off at the front gate.

Andrew was so busy going out every day to check on the stock and monitor the flood waters moving in on us that we hardly saw him. He would leave 5.30 am and return at 2 pm before going

out again at 4 pm until late evening. This meant I was busy with the kids and trying my best to entertain them, having been confined to the house paddock.

Thank goodness for our pool. The kids lived in it day after day. The heat and humidity was unbearable and the mosquitoes were the worst I have ever seen. Snakes were my biggest fear – they were everywhere and I wouldn't let the kids out of my sight. With Andrew gone most of the day I had to worry about the other animals (7 sheep dogs, 5 pigs and 12 chooks.) The mozzies were so intense we were spraying the animals with jungle juice but with no success. We lost our two best sheep dogs, Jaffa and Roy.

The SES were fantastic during this time and we received weekly food drops from Khans IGA. Andrew went up in a Primary Industries helicopter to survey our stock and monitor the flood waters which took over the majority of our property. We had about 800 acres above water which was pretty much the house paddock. The flood water ran through our water tank dam – the joy of bathing in black putrid water not my 'cup of tea'.

My concerns grew and I was starting to feel the isolation when Laura got sick with a high temperature and a bad ear infection. The medical staff at the doctor's surgery were great and organised antibiotics which had to be walked through thigh high floodwater in 40 degree heat by my father in law.

By February 3 we had to cut fences and let the sheep out into neighbouring properties in the hope that they would survive and we would get them back soon.

The next concern I had was schooling for my three children and my work as the School Administrative Manager. Andrew and I decided to send our son Ashton to his grandparents so he could attend school and I would teach the girls at home. It was a huge decision as Ashton was our youngest and didn't want to leave, but it was for the best as the girls were in the same class and I could teach them the same work. The decision not to go into town myself for work was easy as Andrew was exhausted and I couldn't leave him when he needed me the most.

By February 10 we needed to get hay to our stock so a helicopter crew moved some hay to the high ground.

February 12 was the twins 9th birthday. We had a cake and thankfully, Lightning Ridge Electrical organised some presents to be delivered which were even wrapped for me.

I continued to look after everyone at home, teach the twins and do my administration work from home. The days were exhausting and the stress and isolation started to show. I received daily phone calls from my family as this was a first for me and them – we often get isolated with rain for a day or two but never for five weeks.

By February 21 Andrew was able to ride a 4 wheel motorbike through the flood water to get us to school. This was an adventure as water sprayed up everywhere! This continued for two weeks to March 3 when I celebrated the fact that I was finally able to drive on my extremely muddy road, and we could ditch the 4 wheel motorbike rides!



Burraburoon

By Tertia Butcher, Hay

Dust storms, trucks laden with hay bales and scorched earth have given way to rice paddies, lush feed and full dams on the Hay Plains.

The breaking of the drought, the worst in living memory for most, allowed farmers like my husband Ken and I to grow rice again for the first time in nine years.

For almost a decade Ken and I battled to keep our family farm and spent every cent on feed to keep the Dorper sheep stud alive.

The tables turned quickly when rain started pouring last Spring – just in time to prepare a barren block for a rice crop which yielded almost four tonnes on 100 acres seven months later. This was despite a mouse plague which ate 10 per cent of the crop.

In addition, Ken and I were able to maximise the full moisture profile in the soil on our property Burraburoon which had been cracked and dry for years.

Thanks to a Murray Catchment Authority grant, we have planted 8000 trees, saltbush and other native bushes in a fenced paddock to ensure regeneration on a former windswept part of the farm which will act as a future drought-buffer.

It's a real pleasure for Ken and I to drive around the farm now. The sheep are fat, and we no longer need to write cheques to pay for hay. The depressions still have a deep moisture profile where trees and bushes have freshened up after struggling for nine years.



This picture was taken by Donna Cruickshank at Little Topar on the Broken Hill to Wilcannia Road (Barrier Highway). An amazing sight to see such a large 'puddle' of water sitting next to the road on what is usually a very dry landscape. In keeping with the Australian sense of humour and seeing the funny side of life, a shark has also popped up in the water – this temporary 'lake' its temporary residence!

After the rains

Eunice Oakley, Taree

The temperature was soaring across the dry, scorched, arid plain,
Breathless shoots and limpid shrubs cried out unto the rain,
Heat so thick it trembled, mirages all around,
Locals new conditions were ripe and fire bound.

The inevitable happened – a 'dead' cigarette still glowed,
Igniting roadside scrub-line which was ready to explode,
It devoured all the brittle plants, and fed upon the plain,
While raging winds fanned flames and sparks, that scattered across the terrain.

Wafting on the summer air, exudes a sulphure-like smell,
A warming that the townsfolk knew, like living on the edge of hell,
The flames they kept on roaring, leaping higher and much higher,
Thick grasses, dried and withered; now fuelling up the fire.

The flora, exquisite and rare, was beautiful to see,
Now buried in the ashes, swallowed by the enemy.
Watching the vegetation, shrubs, trees one by one,
Exploding, crackling and burning down, all knew it had to come.

Against all odds, the mighty, strong southerly winds came,
Bringing with it lightning, thunder and refreshing rain,
Flames which once were building high, reduced now to a haze,
Giving promise to the land of better living days.

It was like a miracle, the rain came teeming down,
Sodden deeply was the earth, drenched the sunburnt ground,
Soon the little green shoots appeared, wanting to survive,
Large patches of green in the ashes, now coming alive.

A joy to all the townsfolk, their prayers answered at last,
Embracing now the welcome rain, gone is the dry past,
Paddocks of lush green pastures sprung, flourished and then grew,
Once again a riot of colour, a truly beautiful view.

There was overwhelming laughter and much dancing in the street,
Everyone was rejoicing, each had their own true beat,
Swaying to the left, sometimes swinging on the right,
Celebrating the welcome rain, well into the night.

STORM

The lightning lit up the moonless night
Frightening all of nature with its sight
Then a thunderous roar
All the creatures knew what they were about to endure
A stormy night wicked and bold
Is still a story to be told,
Then the next morning all bright and clear
The sun comes up and washes away our fears

© STEPHEN KNIGHT, MURWILLUMBAH



Flood Insurance: Are you covered?

Sarah Walker, Solicitor – Catherine Henry Partners

The recent catastrophic floods in NSW and QLD highlighted a serious shortfall in home insurance and the coverage provided for floods. This article provides practical tips to ensure you're covered for future floods.

Consumer magazine *Choice* recently undertook a review of house and contents insurance in Australia and found that of 43 insurers surveyed only 19 offered flood insurance, five offered flood insurance as additional coverage and 19 offered no flood insurance at all. This highlights the need to determine what your insurance policy covers.

In the aftermath of the floods, the Federal government has undertaken a review of flood insurance. Assistant Treasurer Bill Shorten released a consultation paper in April 2011 dealing with flood insurance reform. This paper acknowledges the 'confusion and heartache' that occurred after the recent flood events and the difficulties encountered in understanding insurance contracts. The paper promotes the use of a standard definition of 'flood' to ensure insurance policy holders understand the nature and extent of insurance cover.

What Insurance Covers Floods?

Flood insurance is a component of home contents, buildings, landlord, strata title and farm insurance. However, many farm insurance policies exclude floods from rivers, creeks, dams, lakes or reservoirs that cause damage. If coverage for flood is not provided, you may be able to purchase supplementary cover as an add-on.

Many farm insurance policies cover livestock and mobile machinery. They may also cover farm buildings such as sheds (not houses), contents, fixed machinery, stock feed, silage, grain, wool. It should be noted that farm insurance policies don't cover crop or fence damage although they often cover business interruption losses.

How Do Insurers Determine Flood Risk?

Insurance companies determine flood risk for individual properties based on the National Flood Information Database which has 11.3 million properties listed. This is used in conjunction with government flood mapping. You can call your local council or flood plan management authority to determine if your property is at risk of flooding.

How Do I Determine Risk?

A helpful starting point is to identify the different flood events that occur and which of these apply to your property. As there is no common definition of 'flood' used by insurance companies, it is essential that you carefully review any existing insurance cover and understand what cover is provided.

The Insurance Council of Australia's publication, *Consumer Tips: Flood Insurance in Australia*, divides flood risk into three categories:

1. Stormwater/rainfall runoff – this refers to water that is the result of high intensity, but short duration storm events that produce very localised flooding. Many insurance policies cover

this type of flood. If you believe you're at risk of this type of flood, you should confirm with your insurer that you are covered.

2. River/inland water course overflow – this is the greatest source of uninsured losses and contentious insurance claims as evidenced in the recent floods in NSW and QLD. Insurers adopt different views on this type of risk and use different definitions. You should be sure that the definition used by your insurer covers the risk posed to your property. To ensure you have coverage for this type of flood event, you must read and understand the definition of flood being used by your insurer.

3. Storm surge or other action of the sea – in light of climate change predictions regarding sea level rises in the future and if you reside in an area that may be affected, ensure your policy covers you for such an event.

It's essential that you fully understand the insurance policy you purchase. Alternatively, if you have an existing insurance policy, make sure you carefully review the details of your policy. This involves reading the Product Disclosure Statement (PDS) which is a document from which all subsequent actions will arise. Pay particular attention to the wording of any **policy exclusions** and if you do not understand any aspects of the policy, direct any questions directly to the insurer. If you have an existing policy, ensure you have adequate coverage by checking your renewal documents.

If you're thinking of purchasing or building a home, it's advisable

to get estimates from numerous insurers as premiums may be unaffordable if the property is a flood prone region. This would be a beneficial exercise for those with existing insurance. It's advisable to contact your local council also.

What if I Live in a High Risk Area?

Unfortunately, some insurers apply a surcharge as high as 1000 per cent for the highest flood risk thus making flood cover unaffordable and unavailable to some people. Approximately 3 per cent of Australian properties are at serious risk of flooding which indicates that insurance cover for properties in these areas is likely to be charged a much higher premium.

MORE INFORMATION

■ *Home and Contents Insurance Comparison and Review*, 14 January 2011, www.choice.com.au/reviews-and-tests/money/insurance/house-and-car/home-and-contents-insurance-review-and-compare.aspx

■ Insurance Council of Australia, *Consumer Tips: Flood Insurance in Australia*, November 2010, www.insurancecouncil.com.au/Default.aspx?tabid=1845

■ Legal Aid Publications, *Turning the Tide – Storm, Floods, Insurance and You*, produced by NSW Legal Aid and *Storms, Floods, Insurance and You – Getting Your Insurance Claim Paid*, produced by Victoria Legal Aid, <http://lacextra.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/Publications/FileUpload/Doc/ImprintFile219.pdf> and www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/vla_floods_factsheet1final.pdf

Said Hanrahan

'We'll all be rooned,' said Hanrahan,
In accents most forlorn,
Outside the church, ere Mass began,
One frosty Sunday morn.

The congregation stood about,
Coat-collars to the ears,
And talked of stock, and crops, and drought,
As it had done for years.

'It's looking crook,' said Daniel Croke;
'Bedad, it's cruke, me lad,
For never since the banks went broke
Has seasons been so bad.'

'It's dry, all right,' said young O'Neil,
With which astute remark
He squatted down upon his heel
And chewed a piece of bark.

And so around the chorus ran
'It's keepin' dry, no doubt.'
'We'll all be rooned,' said Hanrahan,
'Before the year is out.'

'The crops are done; ye'll have your work
To save one bag of grain;
From here way out to Back-o'-Bourke
They're singing' out for rain.

'They're singing' out for rain,' he said,
'And all the tanks are dry.'
The congregation scratched its head,
And gazed around the sky.

'There won't be grass, in any case,
Enough to feed an ass;
There's not a blade on Casey's place
As I came down to Mass.'

'If rain don't come this month,' said Dan,
And cleared his throat to speak -
'We'll all be rooned,' said Hanrahan,
'If rain don't come this week.'

A heavy silence seemed to steal
On all at this remark;
And each man squatted on his heel,
And chewed a piece of bark.

We want an inch of rain, we do,'
O'Neil observed at last;
But Croke "maintained" we wanted two
To put the danger past.

'If we don't get three inches, man,
Or four to break this drought,
We'll all be rooned,' said Hanrahan,
'Before the year is out.'

In God's good time down came the rain;
And all the afternoon
On iron roof and window-pane
It drummed a homely tune.

And through the night it pattered still,
And lightsome, gladsome elves
On dripping spout and window-sill
Kept talking to themselves.

It pelted, all day long,
A-singing at its work,
Till every heart took up the song
Way out to Back-o'-Bourke.

And every creek a banker ran,
And dams filled overtop;
'We'll all be rooned,' said Hanrahan,
'If this rain doesn't stop.'

And stop it did, in God's good time;
And spring came in to fold
A mantle o'er the hills sublime
Of green and pink and gold.

And days went by on dancing feet,
With harvest-hopes immense,
And laughing eyes beheld the wheat
Nid-nodding o'er the fence.

And, oh, the smiles on every face,
As happy lad and lass
Through grass knee-deep on Casey's place
Went riding down to Mass.

While round the church in clothes genteel
Discoursed the men of mark,
And each man squatted on his heel,
And chewed his piece of bark.

'There'll be bush-fires for sure, me man,
There will, without a doubt;
We'll all be rooned,' said Hanrahan,
'Before the year is out.'

© BY JOHN O'BRIEN

editorial:

continued from page 3

Bogging was a daily occurrence and grain movement came to a halt many times. Damp grain started to sprout and our wheat was downgraded to feed quality, reducing its original value by half. Strong wind and rain played havoc on the heavy heads of grain and much of the crop was blown over and lay in water. The harvest continued for weeks and the header was only able to pick up half of the grain that was left. While our crops were insured for hail and fire they could not be insured for heavy rain or wind.

The roads became impassable for vehicles except motorbikes for days at a time and still require a huge amount of resources to repair them.

Feral animal and vermin populations have increased with the extra food source available. Rabbits, mice and feral goats are a concern with baiting, mustering and trapping ongoing to reduce numbers.

Aerial mustering was used for the first time this year for safety because of the high grass that hid obstacles such as logs and holes. Many accidents have occurred in the area this year due to falls from motorbikes while mustering – one fatal.

Repairs to the homestead are soon to start due to water damage and cracking. Hazard reduction has begun to reduce the fire risk. Bushfires are a rare event in the region but summer will see the worst fuel load for bushfires since the 1970s when fires burnt out much of the countryside from the River Murray in the South to Cobar in the West.

The rains have brought many changes to our countryside and daily lives and lots of new challenges have emerged, but the journey has been a photographer's paradise. I hope you enjoy reading the stories in this edition of *The Country Web* that focus on the theme, After the Rains.

Editors Note: Patty is featured in Murray Darlings, a multi-media documentary project about women in the Murray Darling region. View Patty's and other women's stories at: www.murraydarlings.com.au

After a disaster

LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY

In Australia we're accustomed to floods, storms, bushfires, cyclones and prolonged drought. Occasionally, severe disasters occur and can catch even the most conscientious and well prepared people off-guard. Lives and property can be lost with little warning, causing a great deal of heartache and suffering. Immediately after a serious disaster, a person may experience a range of thoughts, feelings and behaviour that can be intense, confusing and frightening. These are common reactions. Most people recover after disasters by drawing on their own strengths and the support of others, and most will gradually rebuild their lives and achieve a sense of wellbeing again. However, some people may go on to develop a psychological problem. It's important to know the difference between a normal reaction to a stressful or potentially traumatic event and the signs that indicate you should seek help.

COMMON REACTIONS TO AN EXTRAORDINARY EVENT

Experiencing a stressful or traumatic event can have a profound impact on wellbeing. People may experience many different emotional and physical reactions which vary in severity, depending on how close that person was to the event and the degree of loss. Common reactions include:

- feelings of fear, sadness or anger
- feeling overwhelmed
- feeling numb, detached or withdrawn
- difficulty planning ahead

- difficulty with focusing attention and concentration
- tearfulness
- unwanted and recurring memories or bad dreams related to the event
- sleep problems
- constant questioning: 'What if I had done x, y or z, instead?' and 'What will happen now?'
- 'replaying' the event and inventing different outcomes in order to be prepared should it happen again.

These reactions can be quite strong and are often at their worst in the first week. They are not signs of weakness. In most cases, they fade, although the person may experience them from time to time for a much longer period. If at any time these reactions seriously affect a person's ability to participate in day-to-day activities, it's important to discuss it with a GP or mental health professional.

Grief

Grief after the death of a loved one, a pet, or loss of property, can be felt intensely for a long time after the event. Everyone copes differently, but the intensity of the feelings usually diminishes with time. A person may feel one or all of the following:

- a short-lived sense of unreality or feelings of detachment from the world
- numbness, shock and confusion
- anger and self-blame or blaming others
- feelings of despair and loneliness

- an inability to find anything meaningful and be able to make sense of the experience
- sleep disturbances and changes in appetite
- emotional distress so severe it feels like physical pain
- fatigue
- flooding of memories or preoccupation with thinking about the person who died
- loneliness or longing for the person who has died
- stress about financial problems, parenting and practical concerns.

Grief reactions can persist and remain intense for a long time. Counselling and support groups can help.

Survivor guilt

Some people connected to the disaster may feel guilty because they survived when others didn't. Survivor guilt can become a problem if the feelings of guilt persist. Guilt can also get in the way of asking for help (e.g. 'I don't deserve help,' or 'Others need it much more than I do.').

THE EMOTIONAL IMPACT OF DISASTER

Following a disaster, it's important to find ways to regain a sense of safety and control. People often need to have access to a safe and secure environment, to find out what happened to family members and friends, and to have access to services. The following steps may help:

Spending time with family and friends is critical following a disaster. Ensure you have regular contact with people who you

trust and who support you. Ask for practical help and support when you need it – people often want to help and appreciate knowing what you need.

Try to get back to a routine

particularly if you have children. It can be hard at first because life may be chaotic, but think of ways you can return to the pre-disaster routine as soon as possible.

Looking after your body

will help you gain the strength you need to get through this time. Try to eat a healthy diet. Regular exercise can improve your mood but rest, relaxation and adequate sleep are also important.

Do things you enjoy. After a disaster enjoyable activities can become low priority as the task of reconstruction is viewed as more important. It's important, despite it all, to do things you enjoy.

Limit the amount of media coverage you watch, listen to, or read. While getting information is important, watching or listening to bulletins too frequently can bring on distress.

Write down your worries and concerns. Try to identify practical steps you can take to address them. Identify the specific feelings you're experiencing and any concerns that may be underlying these feelings.

Express your feelings. Writing or talking about your experience can be helpful. If you find this too distressing or overwhelming, don't continue – drawing, painting, playing music may also be helpful.

Accept help when offered.

Getting help can be uncomfortable and unfamiliar, however there's no reason not to accept the kindness of others – you would help them if the situation was reversed.

Don't expect to have all the answers. There are no guarantees

about the future. It's normal to feel unsure and confused.

Realise you're not alone. Grief, loss and shock, sadness and stress, can make you feel like isolating yourself. Remember many people are feeling the same as you and will share your journey of recovery. Shutting yourself off from others is unlikely to make the situation any better.

Have a plan for anniversaries of the event as these can be upsetting. Limit your exposure to media coverage, plan your day with relaxing and enjoyable activities and make sure you have people to support you.

Plan. Use your experience to be more prepared should you be involved in a disaster again. The Red Cross *Four Steps to Prepare Your Household* booklet is a great resource.

Don't overuse alcohol or drugs to cope. They may make you feel better in the short term, but can cause serious problems for you and your loved ones.

Don't work too much. Keeping busy is good up to a point, but throwing yourself into work or other activities as a way of avoiding painful feelings can be unhelpful in the long term.

Try to avoid stressful family or work situations.

Have some time on your own if you need it but don't withdraw completely from family and friends. Most people find it helpful to talk to someone they

trust about what happened and how they're coping.

Sometimes, after disasters, people feel they should not enjoy themselves in the midst of so much suffering. That doesn't help anyone. It's good for you to **take part in enjoyable activities.**

Don't make major life decisions. After experiencing a disaster or trauma, people often take unnecessary risks or make significant decisions about relationships, accommodation or work. This is not a good time to make those decisions – take your time. Even decisions such as rebuilding are often best left for a year or two if possible.

WHEN THE REACTION OR DISTRESS DOESN'T SETTLE

While it's normal for people who experience a traumatic event to go through a range of emotional reactions, for some the distress persists and they may be at risk of developing a mental health problem, such as: depression, prolonged or complicated grief, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, other anxiety disorders, or problems with alcohol and/or drugs. For more information on these conditions see: www.beyondblue.org.au

People who have experienced deeply upsetting things may take a long time to adjust and regain a sense of normality. There are signs to look for. If you or someone you know experiences any of the following, seek

professional help:

- If the distress feels extreme or interferes with the ability to participate in daily activities
- Feeling overwhelming fear for no obvious reason
- Panic symptoms: increased heart rate, breathlessness, shakiness, dizziness and a sudden urges to go to the toilet
- Avoiding things that bring back memories of what happened to the point where daily tasks can't be carried out
- Excessive guilt about things that were/weren't said or done
- Loss of hope or interest in the future
- Thoughts of ending one's life or self-harming.

WHO CAN HELP?

Psychologists: You may be eligible for a Medicare rebate for up to 12 consultations with a psychologist, social worker or therapist if referred by a GP, psychiatrist or paediatrician.

Lifeline: 13 11 14

MensLine Australia:
1300 78 99 78

Suicide Call Back Service:
1300 659 467

Kids Helpline: Counselling for children and young people aged 5–25. 1800 55 1800

Australian Child & Adolescent Trauma, Loss & Grief Network:

Information, tips and links to other organisation for people involved in the care of children or youth who have experienced trauma, loss and grief.
earlytraumagrief.anu.edu.au

Youth beyondblue: Information on depression, anxiety and other problems young people may experience. 1300 22 4636,
youthbeyondblue.com

Headspace: Mental health information and support for young people and their families.
headspace.org.au

After the emergency booklet: Information and stories from young people affected by disasters. aftertheemergency.redcross.org.au

Australian Psychological Society: Find a psychologist or access resources. 1800 333 497
psychology.org.au

beyondblue: Information and resources on depression, anxiety and related disorders and where to get help. 1300 22 4636,
infoline@beyondblue.org.au,
www.beyondblue.org.au

Reach Out: Information about mental health and wellbeing and getting help. www.reachout.com

Australian Centre for Grief & Bereavement: Counselling and support programs, information and referrals. 1800 642 066
www.grief.org.au

Compassionate Friends: 24-hour information and referral service for anyone who has lost a child, brother or sister. 1800 641 091,
thecompassionatefriends.org.au

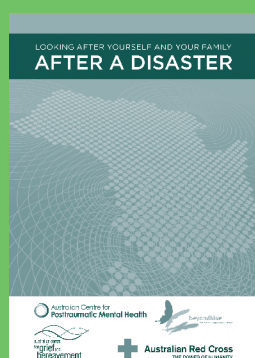
GriefLink: information on grief and loss. www.grieflink.asn.au

Australian Centre for Post traumatic Mental Health: Information on coping with trauma, including fact sheets and advice for adults, children and parents. acpmh.unimelb.edu.au

Australian Government Disaster Assistance: Information on services available after disasters which is updated regularly and lists all major incidents.
disasterassist.gov.au

Red Cross. Practical information for after an emergency, including resources for children.
redcross.org.au

Information in this article is from the Looking After Yourself and Your Family After A Disaster booklet produced by beyondblue. It aims to help adults understand the feelings and reactions they or someone they know may be experiencing following a disaster and includes practical advice and details on how to access additional information and support. Download the booklet at: www.beyondblue.org.au or call 1300 22 4636





Matters for men

Taking care of yourself after a crisis

By John Ashfield, Excerpts from *Matters for Men: How to stay healthy and keep life on track*

Last year's bushfire disaster on Eyre Peninsula demonstrated just how resourceful Australian men can be when 'their backs are to the wall'. Firefighters, landholders and volunteers alike, even when their lives were at risk, or reports were received that their own houses and farms were burning to the ground, pressed on unhesitatingly and relentlessly. They did what men have always done best: they suppressed their fears, and distanced themselves from the emotional content of their own experience, in order to be undistracted in their effort to impose control over the destructive forces and chaos threatening their communities and families.

Few examples better reveal how men 'not being in touch with their emotions', and being able to remain task focused and clear-headed in a crisis, are an indispensable asset to human survival. And, contrary to popular misconception, data on post-disaster mental health problems suggest that the majority of men cope at least as well or generally better than women do, despite equal or greater exposure to dangerous, distressing and life threatening circumstances. Some men do of course run into trouble. Strictly regulating emotions and thoughts that might impede one's capacity to respond to a crisis – putting them on hold, to

be dealt with once threat and danger have passed, can result in some potential psychological challenges later on. Problems that may later emerge include:

- Suppressing or shutting out emotions long after doing so is needed or serves any positive purpose. It may be necessary to make a conscious effort to reconnect with and work through emotions put on hold, by taking time out to be reflective, and allowing thoughts and feelings to emerge and to be fully felt.

- Struggling to relax, or to make time for proper rest; being locked into restless activity. Whilst men resolve emotions often by 'pushing them out'

into physical activity, obsessive activity may be a way of avoiding dealing with feelings that are 'calling out for attention'.

- Staying at home or withdrawing from social activities and social contact, especially with friends, is commonly a sign of not coping, and of emerging depression or anxiety. Confiding in a friend, talking about issues and staying socially involved can be very healing and are vital to maintaining mental health.

- Increased alcohol intake serves only to aggravate the symptoms of not coping, and diminishes the quality of much needed sleep.



Dads in Distress

The Dads in Distress Support Services (DIDSS) was founded by Tony Miller OAM on a verandah in Coffs Harbour over nine years ago when a group of dads in distress met.

'We didn't know what we were doing only that we couldn't find any help for

our circumstances. We met in the 'empty time' on a Sunday night after we returned our children after weekend access and faced the coming fortnight alone without them. It was there we shared our pain. For those of us with thoughts of ending our lives it gave us a reason to continue,' said Tony.

'Sitting on the verandah, telling our story and listening to others gave us hope. We allowed each man to have his say without interruption, without giving advice and without judgement. Somehow that process provided the relief we needed and we were strengthened by the knowledge that our grief was normal and someone understood our pain.

'On our journey we developed our motto of there being three

sides to every story, his, hers and the truth. Somewhere on the journey we come to that truth. It can be very painful for some men to realise that they had contributed to their problems but also very empowering. An acknowledgement of the role they played in the relationship failure is the first step to recovery. Night after night we saw miracles take place. Dads who were filled with anger, remorse, bitterness, depression, loneliness, helplessness and who were often suicidal suddenly turned a corner.'

Ten years on DIDSS has helped thousands of families, saved untold men on the brink of suicide, and seen many children reunited with their fathers, grandparents and extended families.

Dads in Distress provides:

24/7 Helpline 1300 853 437: supporting men and their families around the clock at the cost of a local call.

Support Groups: Weekly evening meetings of men led by trained volunteers.

One-on-one support: Particularly in locations without a group, field volunteers can meet face-to-face or over the phone.

Advocacy: Specific issues and cases are regularly taken up with agencies, government departments and policy makers.

Website: Comprehensive news, resources, information, stories and forums.

www.dadsindistress.asn.au

If, after the experience of a crisis, any of these problems seem too difficult to budge, and especially if they are associated with prolonged stress, anxiety, irritability, anger, depressed mood or fatigue, it is time to seek professional support. Talking to a doctor may be the best place to start.

As men, we can weather most crises and difficulties very well. But there are limits to what we can cope with alone.



Keeping up the maintenance on your relationship

Most men do value their relationships, and not just for sex. But they're not always very organised when it comes to keeping up with the necessary maintenance. Often, in an attempt to do the right thing (maybe after a period of neglect), men mistakenly think that an expensive gift or a grand gesture will put things back on track, when what is needed is some simple daily thoughtfulness.

You don't have to become a doting Fabio or go into hock to buy expensive gifts to keep your partner happy. Some small change, and sincere and thoughtful daily gestures will usually suffice to keep your relationship ticking over nicely. Obviously it's not all down to you, but you just might find some of the following suggestions helpful.

Positive communication is vital. Familiarity unfortunately often does 'breed contempt' in relationships. It's all too easy to fall into bad habits: like being overly critical, rude, short, impatient, angry, or inconsiderate; habits that can



and need to be reversed. Make a ritual of spending time with your partner, perhaps at the end of each day, to share each other's experiences and to give and receive support. Become a genuinely attentive, patient, and interested listener. Avoid the compulsion to lecture, or to try to 'fix' everything. Don't go to sleep before 'clearing the air' of any significant daily annoyances or grievances.

Take the time and trouble to express caring gestures: pay a compliment, cook a meal or do one of 'her' chores (without expecting her to be grateful), hold hands, snuggle, kiss, use gentle touching – and not just as a prelude to sex (which can lead to your partner pulling away, because how genuine is your affection if it's only about sex?). Celebrate your partner's achievements; remember her birthday or any other occasions meaningful to her. Buy a really thoughtful gift; it doesn't have to be expensive to be appreciated.

Find ways to make her feel valued, special, and loved.

Schedule regular dates on your calendar for you and your partner to go out and spend time doing something you both enjoy. Going out with friends is fine, but still schedule dates just for you and your partner without children. Neglecting to spend time together, in favour of the children's needs, ultimately benefits no one. Children grow happy and well developed not because they're doted on, but when they have parents who have a healthy relationship. Holidays are also vital. Deprived of them, couples are generally less happy and more stressed.

Lastly, though stability in a relationship is good, boredom, dullness and routine are pure poison. The only antidotes are fun, passion, laughter, regular new experiences that build strong, positive, lively memories, and a good dose of creative eccentricity.

Water Wisdom

Not all farmers rely on rain to provide water for their crops.

Irrigation farmers move water—mostly from dams and rivers—to their crops and pastures to produce milk, fruit and vegetables, and lots of other crops we depend on, such as wheat, cotton, canola and rice, as well as animal feed. An enormous amount of irrigated produce is grown in the Hawkesbury-Nepean region.

Our variable climate means that irrigation farmers need great skills to keep 'producing the goods' and run a successful business. An irrigation farmer has to know 'truckloads' about soils, plants, scheduling crop water needs, sowing, harvesting, machinery, pest and disease control, finance and marketing.

NSW government staff assist irrigators to maximise production from water by providing advice, conducting research, and delivering irrigation training to keep irrigators up to date with the latest methods.

When you next tuck into a delicious, fresh salad think about the irrigation farmer who grew it—there's one near you. In fact, there are seven main inland irrigation areas in NSW located on major river systems—Murray, Murrumbidgee, Lachlan, Macquarie, Namoi, Gwydir and Border Rivers.

Source: Delve: Transforming our Industries 2011

After the rains

By Jan Russ, Ravenswood

It was 1956 when my family left Holland and landed in Australia's outback – it was a huge shock. After living in Amsterdam, a very cosmopolitan city, we had to get re-established. Dad took a job as a station hand on a sheep stud. He didn't know a thing about farming but it didn't deter him, after all how hard could it be?

We were no sooner settled when the big rains came day after day. (I think the Gods must have been spring cleaning). To everyone's dismay, what started out as a great relief from the drought soon turned into terrible floods.

I remember one day in particular. The station boss needed all hands on deck to move the sheep to higher ground. The only horses I had known were in Roy Rogers cowboy films. When the boss asked if I could ride a horse I said yes with all the confidence I could muster – after all I had sat on the groom's 25 year old horse for about ten minutes and there was nothing to it.

They put a saddle on Ginger, a 17 foot gelding who'd been a racehorse in his early days. I had expected something like a small pony or even the old groom's horse but that wasn't to be. When the men asked where my riding boots were I had no idea what they meant other than that it had something to do with shoes. In broken English I said, 'I never wear them, just what I'm wearing now'. There was a heated debate among the men, of which I understood little, but they were in a hurry so they helped me on Ginger as I couldn't reach the huge beast by myself and we set off. Sitting on top of Ginger I felt good, that was until he started to follow the other riders and I suddenly realised I knew absolutely nothing about riding a horse and that I had no control what so ever over this gigantic beast.

During the muster, the water was up to the horses flanks with my stirrups trailing in the water. After hours of pushing unwilling sheep through the water, which at times was over their backs, the situation soon lost its appeal. I was dead tired and was glad when dark set in and we headed home. I had an extremely sore

behind and chafed legs and having my feet in the water all day soaked my rather dainty shoes, which were never meant for floods or even small puddles. Bit by bit my shoes disintegrated until they fell of all together, leaving my cold feet blistered and covered in burrs.

The light of the homestead winking in the distance and welcoming us back seemed so nice until I realised it was a cue for Ginger and the other horses to get a new lease of life. I was trying gallantly to stop Ginger bolting away with me but with little strength or experience I failed dismally.

Ginger took charge and was on a mission to get home and get rid

of me. In a flash we had passed everyone. I was now screaming which seemed to encourage Ginger to race on even more. In an instant I slipped sideways off the saddle and was hanging on like a circus performer with my leg caught in the stirrup. There was nothing I could do as I saw the shed looming in front of me and I knew my head would be smashed against it as he thundered past. With a stroke of luck the stirrups came off and I fell to the ground with about 10 cm to spare of what could have been a beheading. My fleeting dreams of riding horses soon disappeared into the distance and I took up nursing instead.

DWARFED BY THE 'BIDGEE

In summer
we park under the shade
of shedding river red gums
and tumble down a ridge
towards the muddy Murrumbidgee.
Kids pretend to find
crocodiles and crabs
as galahs cackle a commentary
from nearby trees.

Longing for aqua-marine sea
I take the plunge —
surprisingly, untainted by chlorine or salt,
the water is pellucid glass.
In mid-summer heatwaves
the 'Bidgee is soupy, lukewarm —
relief descends only after we paddle
to overhanging willows.

The river's ebbs and flows
have receded of late, at times to a
dangerously low trickle.
But Sunday past,
our favourite watering hole was submerged
under a fathom of flowing water.
Witnessing the meandering chameleon
I suddenly felt
— very small.

© JO WILSON-RIDLEY, COLEAMBALLY

THE CHEFS toolbox



Inspiring cooking in every home

I know how important it can be to have off-farm income or some extra money, but flexibility is also key to 'having a life'. If you're looking for that balance please read on.

After 11 years of drought and being burnt out by a bushfire I don't know where I'd be if I hadn't gone to a

cooking party six years ago and become a consultant. I had limited computer skills and I'm no chef, but I'm a mum who cooks and enjoys quality products and great people.

Chefs Toolbox parties are fun hands-on demonstrations where guests try the products and eat what we cook. If you'd like to know more about becoming a consultant or want to host a cooking party call me – I'd love to help you do what I do.

Phip Pickette

Group Manager – The Chef's Toolbox

☎ 02 6942 4444 or 0428 434 235

✉ karubah@bigpond.com

www.chefstoolbox.com/my/hippickette

ADVERTISEMENT



In every setting where children come together, whether it is school, preschool, kindergarten or childcare, bullying can be observed. It has always been so. The difference is that these days we're seeing that for some children bullying is a serious problem that needs to be addressed not only by teachers and carers but by the whole community. Parents of young children have an especially important part to play.

If you're being bullied:

- tell the person to stop
- use neutral language to respond to the bullying, like 'maybe' or 'that's what you think'
- walk away
- try to act unimpressed.

If it's been going on for a while and these don't work:

- talk to your friends and ask for support
- talk to your parents
- talk to your teacher.

If you see someone being bullied:

- tell the person acting like a bully to stop
- talk to a teacher
- don't watch or join in
- try to change the subject
- try to comfort and/or include the person who's being targeted
- explain to the person being bullied that it's nothing to do with them—it's about the other person's behaviour.

If you're cyberbullied:

- don't respond to the message or image
- save the evidence
- block and delete the sender
- report the situation to the website or Internet Service Provider
- tell trusted people—friends, adults, teachers, parents and police if necessary.

Bullying can make children feel afraid, lonely, angry, upset or physically ill. If it's not stopped, it can affect a child's health and wellbeing into adult life. Research shows children who are bullied can have a higher risk of mental health problems.

It's important that children learn that bullying is not OK and it can be stopped. They need to know they can play an important role in stopping bullying by telling responsible adults who can do something about it.

Sometimes children find it hard to talk about being bullied but it will show in their behaviour. Children need adults to listen, believe and support them.

So what is bullying?

Bullying is verbal, emotional or physical abuse that is intended to hurt, frighten, or threaten someone, with the intent of gaining power over another. It can happen anywhere, anytime.

Bullying behaviour can include things like teasing, name-calling, spreading rumours, ignoring or excluding someone, playing cruel jokes, taking personal belongings, pushing, hitting and other forms of physical abuse.

Cyber bullying is a new form of bullying where young people use mobile phones or the internet to bully people. The anonymity this gives the bully means they're much bolder in their attacks and it can create a greater fear factor in the children being bullied.

Signs your child is being bullied may include:

- Bruises, scratches or torn clothing
- Damage or loss of personal belongings
- Sleeping problems (e.g. not sleeping, nightmares or bed wetting)
- Changes in behaviour such as being teary or withdrawn
- Not doing well at school
- Finding excuses not to go to a venue or taking a different route to school
- Not wanting to talk about their day

What can you do as a parent?

- 1. Talk.** Start a conversation about being bullied. Don't make it intense or you might deter them from talking to you.
- 2. Listen.** Hear the whole story without interrupting. Ask what they want to happen before you make any suggestions.
- 3. Explain** that it's normal to feel hurt. It's never OK to be bullied, and it's not their fault.
- 4. Find out what's happening.** Ask what, when and where the behaviours occurred, who was involved, how often and if anybody else saw it. Find out if any teachers know and if the school's done something to address the situation.
- 5. Contact the school.** Check the school's bullying policy. Make an appointment to speak to your child's teacher. Be calm! Make

a follow-up appointment in a week or two to make sure the situation is being addressed.

6. Give sensible advice. Don't advise your child to fight back. Don't explain that the bully didn't mean it, they did. Don't tell them it will go away, it probably won't. Don't let your child stay away from school, it won't solve the problem.

7. Help your child work out some things to do. Read *Top Tips for Kids* opposite. Help your child practise some useful strategies and to take action themselves. This way they gain a sense of control and feel more confident.

USEFUL RESOURCES

www.bullyingnoway.com.au
Ideas for children, young people and parents for handling bullying.

www.kidshelp.com.au
Tips and information for parents and carers on topics that young people call Kids Helpline about.

www.cybersmart.gov.au/Teens/Tips_and_advice/Cyberbullying.aspx
Tips to help you safely enjoy the online world and what to do if you're a target of cyberbullying.

www.parentlink.act.gov.au
Information for parents on many of the issues faced by children from birth to adolescence.

Compiled by Emma Regan, RWN Project Coordinator. Sources: Kids Helpline, Bullying No Way and the National Centre Against Bullying: www.ncab.org.au

Farm Debt Mediation:

Are you ignoring your rights?

By Bill Thompson, Solicitor – Commins Hendricks Solicitors and Chair – NSW Law Society Rural Issues Committee

Are you aware of your rights when it comes to Farm Debt Mediation?

I am concerned that some farmers with mortgages to banks or finance companies in relation to land, their business or machinery are ignoring Farm Debt Mediation Notices (FDMN).

'Farm debt mediation' is a structured negotiation process in which the mediator, as a neutral and independent person, assists the farmer and the creditor in attempting to reach agreement on the present arrangements and future conduct of financial relations between them. Mediation is a voluntary, relatively simple and confidential process that is quick, accessible and affordable.

The object of mediation under the Farm Debt Mediation Act 1994 is to provide for the efficient and equitable resolution of farm debt disputes. Mediation is required before a creditor can take possession of property or other enforcement action under a farm mortgage.

If a farmer receives a FDMN they have 21 days from the date of receipt of the notice to advise the bank or finance company that they wish to go to mediation. The mediation must take place within three months of the date of receipt of the notice from the bank or finance company. It is crucial that farmers obtain advice from their local Rural Financial Counsellor and/or solicitor and/or accountant to ensure that they do not lose their right to go to mediation.

If a farmer wishes to enter into mediation they must complete a Form 2 document provided by the bank or finance company and return the completed form within the 21 day period.

If the creditor is threatening legal action then the farmer should ensure the creditor complies with the Farm Debt Mediation Act.

If you ignore a FDMN your creditor can commence legal proceedings for recovery and possession. However if you elect to go to Farm Debt Mediation the process includes:

1. The right to attend mediation with the creditor and an independent mediator. Mediation costs are usually shared equally.
2. There is a grey area as to whether the farmer has to pay the legal costs of the creditor. The Rural Assistance Authority (RAA) and the NSW Law Society Rural Issues Committee has been liaising with the Australian Bankers Association and generally each party should pay their own costs.
3. If mediation is not successful the creditor cannot take enforcement action unless they get a Section 11 Certificate from the NSW Rural Assistance Authority which generally doesn't issue the certificate until 28 days after application by the creditor.
4. Generally, at mediation you can negotiate a time to refinance or sell.

Beware of advisors who indicate they could achieve debt write offs and offer unrealistic promises. If you receive a FDMN a rule of thumb is that it will take at least six months from the date of the issue of the Notice before further legal action can be taken.

MORE INFORMATION

The NSW Rural Assistance Authority has a range of information on Farm Debt Mediation including a Mediation Kit. See: www.raa.nsw.gov.au/fdm or call Freecall: 1800 678 593.

Rural Financial Counsellors can:

- help clients identify financial and business options;
- help clients negotiate with their lenders;
- help clients adjust to climate change through the Climate Change Adjustment Program, identify any advice and training needed and develop an action plan;
- help clients meet their mutual obligations under the Transitional Income Support program;
- Give clients information about government and other assistance schemes;
- refer clients to accountants, agricultural advisers and educational services; and
- refer clients to Centrelink and professionals for succession planning, family mediation and personal, emotional and social counselling.

For more information see: www.daff.gov.au/agriculture-food/drought/rfcs

CELEBRATING 100
WOMEN WHO HAVE
SHAPED THE NATION



Written by Tess Livingston, a senior journalist for The Australian, *The Power of 100* is a wonderful collection of stories which will inspire future generations of women and girls. From early pioneers to social justice fighters, scientists, business leaders, artists, performers, political and community leaders, the book showcases 100 women who have helped develop the Australia we know today. There are many names you will know, however there are others which are not household names and who until now have gone largely unrecognised.

Copies can be ordered at: www.100australianwomen.com.au/promotion (CWEB readers will receive a 20% discount.) Sale proceeds will be donated to the UN Women Australia's Young Women's Leadership Program.

WIN A FREE COPY

Do you know an amazing woman that's helped shaped your community? Tell us who and what she's done in 25 words or less. Send your entry to: *The Country Web*, RWN, Locked Bag 21, Orange 2800. **Entries close 24 October 2011.** See page 2 for Competition Terms Conditions.

Free book
give away

Even the kookaburras aren't fussed

By Nicole Alexander, Author

Watery ways

In the bush there are always water problems and it's usually a choice between two; too much or not enough! Why Australia seems burdened with extremes and why smart people choose to be involved in agriculture sometimes bewilders me. I recall having a conversation with my father about needing a bit more to 'top up' one of the paddocks before contemplating sowing wheat. On the other hand my partner was still picking cotton and with a crew of 12 the last thing they needed was rain!

Over at the homestead the main pressure pump for the house dam stopped mid lawn watering, while the sieve at the end of the pump for the house water supply fell off, sucked up some silt and jammed up the washing machine – again. Normally such watery events are confined to summer months.

In slightly cooler weather everything becomes a touch easier. At least I thought so until I returned to the cottage to find the cupboard under the sink a mess of water and sodden paper kitchen towels. The answer after a day of doing the accounts and water related activities – shut the cupboard door and think about dinner!

After the rains

I try not to think about what happens after it rains. It's a pretty bad habit to get into. After all for nearly ten years there was none, at least not enough to talk about with any great enthusiasm. Everything from the continually crowing rooster (may he rest in peace) to the

cactus, which is supposed to bud when heralding a major weather change, defaulted under pressure.

As I write this there is a large fox patrolling the homestead garden. He has one of those great brushes; however my main concern is that he's growing fat on the cactus buds that have fallen to the ground. He prises the fruit open with his claws, pressing his black buttony nose into the succulent flesh. Rain, what does he want rain for? The buds only fall after there is a tantalising glimpse of precipitation or when a few navigationally challenged drops hit the ground.

Last year there was too much rain. We experienced three months worth of sporadic rises down the Boomi River (a tributary of the MacIntyre) and daily life was structured by quad runners, boats and thigh high water crossings over a low lying wooden bridge: The joys of living on a flood plain. Come January, when the MacIntyre River rushed past Goondiwindi towards us, we were already on our second set of snorkels. We knew it was coming and the usual stock, plant and station supply plans were put into action.

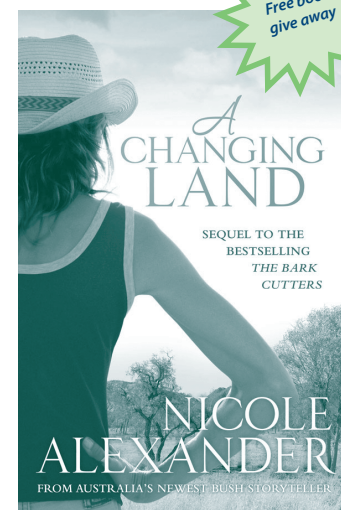
Currently residing on a property with a substantial levee bank we expected our share of water. It was get out or get stuck for quite a few weeks. With the flood waters rising a girlfriend rang to advise, 'You'll know it's bad Nick if you have to take his dog'. As we left our cottage I looked back at said dog sitting patiently at the back gate. Clearly it's not that bad, I thought to myself, is

it? The next minute a deep voice emanated from the driver's side of the vehicle, 'Nick I think you should take the dog'. It was three and a half weeks before I got back in there again.

It's not all bad though. The time away was time spent at the main homestead with my parents. Red wine, lamb roasts, flood tales from years past and a compassionate ear were all on order for the duration of January. I got flooded in there as well of course, albeit briefly, but came away: a) wondering why children do leave home and b) with aspirations of improving my cooking skills. The first query I gave some thought too – the old lamb roast versus Tom Cruise conundrum; the second lasted as briefly as my attempt to make an unpronounceable dish from the Middle East omitting the main ingredient char grilled goat. Well it is a 200 km round trip to Goondiwindi.

This afternoon the kookaburras are laughing again. It's mild after freezing weather. The slater beetles are walking westwards, I spied a trail of ants heading to higher ground and there is a full moon predicted within the week. And of course the '11s have always been pretty good years for rain, especially if you combine that statistic with the sighting of three black cockatoos perched on the eastern side of a belah tree. The Weather Channel is also predicting heavy rain, storms, isolated thunder or chance of showers. Considering some of us have been accused of watching the Weather Channel like you would a movie you'd reckon we'd have cottoned on

to them by now. The fact is they don't know. Nobody knows when, if or even how it will rain, in what area, with what result. That is until it starts raining and then the weather gurus are really knowledgeable. Even with three degrees and software that can spit out roughly seven computer generated models for one area based on assumed or past weather events – it's anyone's guess what's happening next in terms of liquid gold. Even the kookaburras aren't much fussed anymore. I've heard them laugh numerous times as we wait in anticipation for the grey blue of thunder knobs to settle on the horizon. One thing's for sure: they're not laughing with us. They're saving that for after the rains.



Win a copy of Nicole Alexander's *A Changing Land* and *The Bark Cutters* by telling us in 25 words or less, 'What you find most challenging about life on the land'.

Send your entry to: The Editor, *The Country Web*, Rural Women's Network, Locked Bag 21, Orange 2800. **Entries close 24 October 2011.** See page 2 for terms and conditions.

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As I stood where the river bends
Watching water meandering down;
It occurred to me how peaceful it was
As I listened to the river's sounds.

Drought had gone on for nine years
Desperate for water we were again;
And all churches gathered at the oval
Joining voices in prayers for rain.

The Murrumbidgee was so low
That the wish on everyone's lips;
Was for rain to get it moving again
Into tributaries, waterholes, creeks.

There were rumours of heavy falls
Still we had heard it all before;
Eventually it fairly bucketed down
According to BOM reports.

Progress we tracked on computers
Listened to bulletins on the ABC;
Of flash flooding in Sydney, we heard
And the east coast had more than we.

Inland, towns were inundated
As heavens unleashed more rain;
And higher up where it had begun
The 'Bidgee was flowing again.

Well, to cut a long story short
We got more than we bargained for;
Banks burst in nearly every village
High flood levels dutifully recorded.

It was funny in a peculiar way to see
Silted earth coating all in its way;
Debris piled and clinging to fences
As flood waters journeyed to Hay.

Yes, we were inconvenienced for a while
But people smiled, conversed and then;
With prospects for farmers enhanced
Narrandera businesses were trading again.

In contrast to damages floods inflict
Comes new life so vivid and bold;
And grey lifeless, silted earth that was
Now abounds with sights to behold.

May I leave no doubt in your mind
It was majestic, the Murrumbidgee I saw;
Swirling around the bend at Gillenbah
Wide, deep, and surging full bore.

© ROZANNE GILBERT, NARRANDERA

Gratitude

By Ange Clark, Bowral

My life 15 years ago was not what I expected. My son William was born with delays which later in his life we came to know as Autism Spectrum Disorder. The diagnosis did not come until he was 12 and up to that moment we were simply treating the symptoms, researching and navigating our way around the myriad of therapies, treatments and schools.

I slowly had to come to terms with a new unfolding life. Where I was and where I wanted to be were conflicted and came with intense moments of loneliness and isolation. For many years I didn't understand the gift that had been presented to me. Through Will's inability to read or write or express his deepest feelings of pain, fear or frustration, he helped me to change the way I view circumstances and see him. His determination, courage, love, acceptance and wrought iron-will made him way ahead of the game. I began paying more attention and my way of looking at life changed.

When my marriage broke down two and a half years ago after 20 years, I was determined to understand what I had become and create an environment of growth and resilience within and around me sharing the gratitude I had learnt from this extraordinary young man. Because Will, and his younger sister Phoebe, literally forced me to stay in the moment and face the situation, I began to see life differently. I began to understand more about what was happening and not why. I am thankful for this experience.

Each day was different, but the level of anxiety coming from an extremely unsettled and frustrated 15 year old boy was at times more than I could emotionally bear. With the unwavering commitment of my parents based in Orange, the extraordinary support of Will's school and his plea to change the situation, I became more focused on an attitude of gratitude. This grateful attitude resulted in creating a series of Gratitude Postcards which expressed thanks and care. The cards are about connecting with people and communicating genuinely, spontaneously and with authenticity.

From the profound positive response I have received from my community, the postcards have developed into The Gratitude Project. The Project will determine if an increased level of gratitude within our day and business dealings will make a difference to our business growth. It required businesses large and small to create a postcard and importantly write a hand written message which is given to someone daily. In a time where texting, emailing and busyness have taken over, the ability to really connect with people on a personal level is being tested.



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Friendship and dreaming beneath the Bucketts

Program and registration ♦ 13-16 October 2011

Join us!

With the beautiful mountain range of the Gloucester Valley and the wonderful community spirit that supports our lifestyle, I invite you to join us in Gloucester for the 2011 New South Wales Rural Women's Gathering. You will be immersed in the wonderful community we live in and be surrounded by some of the most scenic, beautiful and productive land in Australia. Visit our special places, enjoy our hospitality and be part of a weekend that you will treasure. You will have the opportunity to gather, exchange knowledge and to increase your confidence through diverse experiences and learning new skills.

Julie Lyford
GATHERING CHAIR

LES MURRAY is Australia's Poet Laureate and a local resident! He has published over 30 books globally and has been translated into 18 languages. Les is delighted to be able to attend the Rural Women's Gathering and is looking forward to the experience!



Thursday 13 October

4–6 pm REGISTRATION AT GLOUCESTER RECREATION CENTRE

Friday 14 October – a free day to explore Gloucester and our Shire

12–6 pm REGISTRATION AND TRADE EXHIBITION

1–4 PM OPTIONAL TOUR: HISTORIC COPELAND GOLD MINE

6–9 PM **Welcome to Country Smoking Ceremony:** STEVE BRERETON & WORIMI COMMUNITY.
Poetry evening with: LES MURRAY, Poet Laureate, and local poets, CLAIRE REYNOLDS, GABBY COLQUHOUN and WYATT HALL.
Tastes of Gloucester: Savour locally produced finger food and wine.

Saturday 15 October

7–8 AM OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES: ENJOY A RANGE OF HEALTHY LIFESTYLE ACTIVITIES

8–8.45 AM REGISTRATION & TRADE EXHIBITION

9 AM **Welcome to Country and Official Opening**

Opening Address

Rural Women's Network and NSW Rural Women's Council Address

9.30 AM **Keynote Speaker:** LAUREN ANDERSON, Collaborative Consumption – Youth and Social Networks

10.30 AM MORNING TEA, NETWORKING & TRADE EXHIBITION IN THE MARQUEE

11 AM **Open Forum: Rural Youth – We Can Make a Difference:** FATHER CHRIS RILEY, Youth Off the Streets and panel members. Chaired by REBEL BLACK, CEO of I'm Not Fussy

12.30 PM LUNCH & TRADE EXHIBITION IN THE MARQUEE

2–5 PM WORKSHOP SESSION A

6 PM **Gondwana Rainforest Dinner:** Sumptuous, locally grown food and wine. LORNA TOMKINSON, an inspirational story of resilience for rural women. FISH FRY, Let your hair down and dance the night away.
Optional: Wear your fab 'House of Vinnies' frock. Prizes for best dressed!

Sunday 16 October

7–8 AM OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES: ENJOY A RANGE OF HEALTHY LIFESTYLE ACTIVITIES.

8.15–8.45 AM **Reflecting and Connecting Under the Buckett's Ecumenical Service**

9 AM WORKSHOP SESSION B

11.15 AM MORNING TEA & TRADE EXHIBITION IN THE MARQUEE

11.45 AM **Arts & Culture = Vital Communities:** ELIZABETH ROGERS, CEO Regional Arts NSW

12–1 PM **Keynote Speaker:** MAHBABA RAWI, Mahboba's Promise

1–1.30 PM **Rural Youth Forum Final communiqué:** Take some thoughts back to your community.

Closing Ceremony: Handover to 2012 Parkes Gathering Committee

1.30 PM LUNCH (PACKED FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE)

Note: Program is subject to change

Keynote speakers



MAHBOBA RAWI, Founder of Mahboba's Promise. In 1984 Mahboba was forced to flee Afghanistan and walk for 10 days over the Kyber Pass to escape the threat of imprisonment. She lived in a Pakistani refugee camp for two years before moving to Australia. She continues to raise money and awareness of the plight of widows and orphans in Afghanistan.



LAUREN ANDERSON has played an instrumental role in building the 'collaborative consumption' movement which encompasses the rapid explosion in traditional sharing, bartering, lending, trading, renting, gifting, and swapping using technology as a key tool.



FATHER CHRIS RILEY, founder and CEO of Youth Off The Streets, has worked with marginalised youth for more than 35 years as a teacher, youth worker, probation officer, residential carer and principal, helping young people deal with trauma, abuse and neglect. He oversees over 25 programs that employ over 200 people and 600 volunteers.



LORNA TOMKINSON is a local Gloucester woman who embodies the strengths of resilience and courage. She spent her formative years in Africa before coming to Australia in 1971. Lorna and her husband moved to Barrington for a tree change and say it was the best thing they ever did.

Workshops, tours and forums

1. AQUAROBICS: A great way for you to relax during the Gathering yet come away feeling invigorated! Enjoy the heated pool and a series of fun low impact exercises. Wear swimmers or any loose comfortable clothing. Cost \$12. (Session B)

2. ART FOR BEGINNERS: If you've ever wanted to learn to paint here is your chance. Colleen Minis will give you step-by-step instructions on how to paint with acrylics. Materials provided. Cost \$15. (Session A)

3. BASIC FIRST AID WITH ALTERNATIVE INGREDIENTS: Learn about basic first aid using alternative ingredients and methods to increase the healing of wounds, bruising, stings and your general wellbeing. (Session B)

4. BEEKEEPING TOUR: Travel to 'Hamdon Park' for an introduction to beekeeping. Your visit will include a demonstration of hive and frame assembly and cover hive inspection and marketing requirements. Wear light coloured clothing ensuring you're completely covered. You will need to bring a hat, fly net and gloves for the hive inspection. Cost \$10. (Session A)

5. BELLY DANCING FOR BEGINNERS: Belly dancing is a fun, relaxed form of dance that's good for your entire body. A kit will be provided with everything you need to look and feel the part. Wear comfortable clothing. Cost \$10. (Sessions A or B)

6. THE BORRIS LACE COLLECTION: Marie Laurie's love of lace has taken her across the globe. She's taught lacemaking at the Royal School of Needlework at Hampton Court, in Brussels, Hungary and Northern Ireland. She's researched traditional techniques and compiled them into a book, *The Borris Lace Collection: A Unique Irish Needlelace*. Share her fascinating experiences, books and admire her prize winning creations. (Session B)

7. BROOMSTICK CROCHET: Do you know how to crochet but want another challenge? Learn the skill of broomstick crochet and take home your own creation. Bring a ball of 8 ply wool in your favourite colour and a 4mm crochet hook. (Session A)

8. BUSH POETRY – WRITING & PERFORMING: In this light-hearted session Claire and Gabby will share some principles for writing poetry with good rhythm and rhyme and some tricks of the trade they've learned along the way. They'll share their own work and you'll be able to practise writing. (Session A)

9. CANDLEWICKING: A very old embroidery style primarily based on the colonial knot with other stitches used to add detail. You'll learn the finer points and come away with a small completed cushion. Materials provided. Cost \$5. (Session A or B)

10. CAR CARE FOR DUMMIES – A QUICK PIT STOP: Do you worry about your car breaking down and not knowing what to do? Learn how to keep your car running and change a tyre as well as some basic troubleshooting tips. (Session A)

11. CHEESEMAKING: Have you ever wanted to make your own cheese? Lyn will demonstrate how to make fetta, camembert and ricotta cheeses so you can do it in your own home. Taste testing will be a must! Cost \$10. (Session A)

12. CLIMATE –WHAT IS GOING ON? 2001–2010 was Australia's warmest decade on record. 2010 was Australia's third wettest year on record and the sea surface temperatures were the warmest on record. This workshop will look at why these changes are occurring and what they mean for NSW in the future as well as what can be done in agriculture to adapt. (Session B)

13. CLUTTER BE GONE! In this interactive and fun workshop Di will explore the ways we clutter our lives: physically, mentally and emotionally and how you can break free from it. (Session A)

14. COOK WELL, BE WELL: An entertaining, educational and experiential program to connect, support and inspire individuals who have challenges with their diet to a healthy and well life! Cost \$15. (Session A)

15. COPING WITH GRIEF & LOSS AND HOW TO MOVE ON: Grief affects us all and can result from death of a loved one, divorce, job loss, losing your home, or children leaving home. Run by Marie Bartlett, a National Association for Loss & Grief Facilitator, this workshop will help you understand the grieving process and teach you strategies for moving on. (Session B)

16. CREATIVE WRITING: Do you want to write but don't know how to get started? This workshop will give you some tools and techniques so you can set out on your own creative writing journey. (Session B)

17. CRYSTAL HEALING: Learn about cleansing crystals, making a gem elixir, balancing chakras and more. You'll work with crystals to balance your body's subtle energies and learn to access your own inner knowledge using a pendulum. Discover how unseen energy affects you. Materials provided: crystals, pouch, pendulum, dropper bottle and a CD containing a course booklet to use at home. Cost \$40 (Session B)

18. DARTS: Learn the skills involved in playing darts – a wonderful game for young and old. Enjoy the social interaction it brings. (Session A)

19. DECODING CRYPTIC CROSSWORDS: Learn various techniques required to decode cryptic crosswords. Notes will be provided for support and you'll be actively involved in solving puzzles, collaboratively and independently. (Sessions A or B)

20. DEMYSTIFYING THE GYM: Do you want to go to the gym but you're worried about whether you will look the part and be able to act the part and make it through a class? Cindy will break it all down for you and in the meantime you'll get your pelvic floor where it should be! Wear comfortable clothing. Cost \$10. (Session A)

21. DRAWING FOR BEGINNERS: Renowned local artist and teacher Marion Rounsley will teach you the basics of drawing, proportion of the figure and the human face, and the importance of using your eye to see what is really there rather than what you think or assume is there. You will be able to apply the skills to drawing anything from apples to buildings. Materials provided. Cost \$5. (Session B)

22. AFRICAN DRUMMING: A fun-filled drumming playshop where you'll learn how to play an African rhythm on the djembé – even if you've never played a musical instrument before. You will connect with the rhythms and each other while playing to a common pulse. Create a powerful bond and wonderful memories. Cost \$20. (Session A or B)

23. FABRIC COLOURING BASICS: Learn how to colour different fabrics using a variety of techniques. You'll go home with 6-8 pieces of coloured fabric ideal for patchwork, embroidery or just to add colour to your life. Cost \$40. (Session B)

24. FOOD, FUN, WEEDS, WORMS, CHOOKS & CHILLIES TOUR: Visit 'Misty Ridge' a productive demonstration organic farm where Marjie and Ken Johnson will show you how to turn 'rubbish land' into full food production and explain the principles and theory behind organic farming. You'll learn about: seed saving, propagation, soil improvement, vegetable growing, chooks, 'chomposting', worm farming, biodiversity, frost management and much more. Wear hat, gloves and solid shoes. Cost \$10. (Session A)

25. FREE TO BE ME: Come and have some fun finding out about who you could be, with Maureen and Mary – two dynamic presenters! With a sharing of simple ideas that can help us choose to look at our lives through different glasses, this seminar can suggest practical ways to help you achieve a sense of wellbeing, without placing expectations on others. Cost \$15. (You need to attend **both** Session A & B).

Program and registration ♦ 13-16 October 2011

26. COPELAND TOPS GUIDED TOUR: Enjoy a picturesque bushwalk in Copeland Tops State Conservation Area, guided by a National Parks & Wildlife Services officer. A rare and beautiful dry rainforest, you'll walk along a boardwalk through mossy rocks surrounded by tall trees hanging with ferns, vines and orchids. Tour the Mountain Maid Gold Mine – its relics preserving a fascinating view of the area's history. (Session A: Bushwalk AND Tour. Cost \$20.) (Session B: Bushwalk OR Tour. Cost \$15)

27. GOLF CROQUET ... I REMEMBER PLAYING THAT WHEN I WAS A KID: Well, this is your chance to try it again. It's an easy game to learn and great fun to play challenging both your mind and body but not too taxing on the latter! Equipment provided. Cost \$6. (Session A)

28. GUM LEAVES APPLIQUE FOR BEGINNERS: Join Gloucester's Patchwork and Quilting Group and learn different hand applique techniques. Using the kit supplied you'll complete a small bag to take home. (Session A)

29. HEALING PROPERTIES OF ARTS, BOWEN & TAI CHI: Learn about three very different approaches to healing: 1) Arts for Health helps people heal faster by creating nurturing hospital environments using music and arts. 2) Bowen Therapy is a holistic and multidimensional approach to pain relief. 3) Tai Chi is an ancient gentle form of exercise designed to achieve a state of physical and mental relaxation. (Session B)

30. HERBS – GROWING, THEIR USE AND VALUE ADDING TOUR: Visit Hillview Herb Farm to discover which herb goes well with what dish; what herbs will grow best in your garden; when to plant and pick them and the best way to store or dry excess herbs. You will receive a kit including a fact sheet and seeds or a potted herb. Cost \$5. (Session A or B)

31. HISTORICAL TOUR & FAMILY HISTORY RESEARCH: Enjoy a guided tour of Gloucester Museum and learn about the history behind Gloucester's development and the impact of the AA company. Enjoy a talk on researching your own family history (Session A only) and then tour the local area to take in historical points of interest. (Session A. Cost \$15.) (Session B. Cost \$10.)

32. I'M NOT FUSSY – EXPLORING A GLUTEN FREE LIFE: A workshop for foodies who are not fussy but who are making a choice for wellness. You'll explore the opportunity to cook and enjoy a gluten free life! Cost \$15. (Session B)

33. LACEMAKING: Internationally acclaimed lacemaker Marie Laurie will teach you the basic techniques of Limerick Lace by needle darning on net to construct a small flower. You'll need a small embroidery ring and embroidery scissors to supplement the kit provided. Cost \$5. (Session A)

34. LEAD LIGHTING: In this hands-on workshop you'll make a small item such as a 'sun-catcher' out of leadlight glass and copper foil to take home! Cost \$10. (Session A)

35. A LIBRARY OF LIVING BOOKS FORUM: Listen to local women from different generations share fascinating chapters in their lives. Hear their stories and join the conversation. (Session B).

36. LIVING SUSTAINABLY TOUR: Visit Darcy and Annie's amazing property which was designed using organic guidelines and features solar stand alone, a rainforest, reed bed sewage system, orchard, vegetable and herb garden, heritage poultry and ornamental game birds. You can do it too! You need to be able-bodied. Wear suitable footwear and a hat and bring a water bottle. Cost \$10. (Session B)

37. LONG HAIR STYLING – TRICKS OF THE TRADE: A hairdresser's secrets exposed! Learn some simple upstyles that look like they've been created by a professional but are simple enough for you to do yourself! Get tips to achieve a perfect pony tail, learn how to pin hair securely and much more. Cost \$6. (Session B)

38. MANDALAS: In need of a meditative experience? A mandala is a figure of circles, squares or triangles arranged concentrically around a mid point. Drawing and colouring mandalas is easy, soothing and satisfying. There are no 'mistakes' only variations in design. You'll be amazed at the beauty and variety of mandalas produced. Cost \$5. (Session B)

39. MIND MAPPING: Do you have trouble remembering things? Learn a new technique to solve the problem. Mind maps make it easy to plan projects and goals, remember things, organise your life, discover new ideas and connect with your creativity. (Sessions A or B)

40. PHOTO EDITING WITH PICASA: A picture is worth a thousand words. Picasa is a free photo editing software program from Google that makes your pictures look great. Sharing your best photos with friends and family is as easy as pressing a button! (Session A)

41. PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT – HAIR, SKIN & MAKE-UP: Three in One! Bring along your brushes and blowdryers and get tips to recreate the perfect 'haired' at home and make sure it lasts! Enjoy a professional style consultation based on hair texture, face shape, and skin tone, by an award winning stylist. Learn how to care for your skin with some great tips for creating beautiful eyes and flawless foundation application. Cost \$10. (Session A)

42. PRINTMAKING MADE EASY: Tap into your creative side with local art teacher Marion Rounsley who will teach you how to make personalised cards and artwork. No prior experience is required to create a small lino print, a collograph print and monoprints. You'll take home your gift/greeting card, printmaking blocks made and lots of ideas for completing printmaking projects at home. All materials supplied. Cost \$10. (Session A)

43. READY FOR CHANGE?: It's said that the only person you can change is yourself. In this workshop you'll explore seven questions you need to ask to look at the actions and the changes you need to make daily to build foundations for a healthy and happy life. Cost \$5. (Session A)

44. SCRAPBOOKING USING RECYCLED MATERIALS: 'Upcycle' items commonly thrown away and create a precious keepsake or gift to take home. Bring 8- 12 wallet sized photos with a common theme along with a sense of fun and creativity. Materials supplied. (Sessions A or B)

45. SETTING UP A B&B TOUR: Do you want to supplement your income? Visit 'Earlyn' for inspiration and see how Mary has transformed her home and garden into a beautiful Tea Garden and Bed & Breakfast with home grown fruit, vegetables and flowers for sale to supplement the farm income. Learn the ins and outs involved. Cost \$10. (Session A)

46. SILK PAINTING BASICS: Learn the basic skills involved in silk painting using Australian made, nontoxic, environmentally friendly paints. Take home your creation: a silk scarf, cushion, or silk painting, ready to frame – the choice is yours. Materials supplied. Cost \$40. (Session A)

47. SINGING IN HARMONY: Do you have a love of singing? Join a group of other music lovers singing easy harmonies acapella and enjoy the sound of massed voices. It will be lots of fun and no experience is required. A selected piece will be sung at the Ecumenical service on Sunday. (Session A)

48. SOAP MAKING TOUR: Visit Liz's goat farm to learn how to make your own soap with milk, vegetable and essential oils. Take home a sample of soap and lots of know how. Cost \$5. (Session A)

49. SPRING GARDEN TOUR: Explore two wonderful local spring gardens set in a picturesque landscape. With an interesting range of native orchids on display you'll enjoy a talk on cultivating and caring for your orchids. You'll be treated to a floral art demonstration and you'll learn about bonsai techniques and see a wonderfully diverse bonsai collection. Cost \$20. (Session A)

50. SRI LANKAN COOKING: Visit the de Silva's home and learn how to purchase spices and prepare and serve a tasty Sri Lankan meal. Three dishes will be prepared with a taste test a must! You'll go home with recipes and a collection of spices for your own creations at home. Cost \$15. (Session A)

51. THINKING ON YOUR FEET: Do you fear having to speak in front of a group? This will be a fun, interactive session where you'll come away with a formula to use when speaking 'off the cuff'. (Session A)

52. TURN YOUR HOBBY INTO A BUSINESS FORUM: Meet a group of local women who've started a new business and hear how they got the business off the ground, where help was sourced and the challenges involved. A great opportunity to share ideas. (Session B)

53. WANT TO TAKE BETTER PHOTOS?: Family portraits to landscapes, close-ups to wide angle; with a little help from a professional photographer you'll be on your way and you'll see your photography improve each day. Bring a digital camera. (Sessions A or B)

54. WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?: Have you ever wondered what skeletons are lurking in your family tree? Learn how to delve into your family history through the sharing of ideas, websites and other avenues of information. (Sessions A or B)

55. WINE APPRECIATION TOUR: Visit Mill Creek Vineyard near Stroud – the home of seriously good wine! Your guide Helen Gillard will take you through a general overview of wine including: a brief history, simple wine chemistry, wine types, what makes a good wine, characteristics of different grape varieties and fashion in wine. You'll also get to sample some different styles of wine making. Cost \$20. (Session A)

FREE registrations

The Rural Women's Network has 5 complimentary registration and home-stay accommodation packages available to support NSW women who are experiencing hardship and/or who have never been to a Gathering. Send your Expression of Interest (up to 300 words) with your contact details outlining why you'd like to attend to: RWN, Locked Bag 21, Orange 2800, Fax to: 6391 3650 or rural.women@industry.nsw.gov.au. Expressions of interest close 23 September.

Men's Program

Partners can join a range of local tours highlighting the industries Gloucester is renowned for including: a fish farm, saw mill, rotary dairy, historical tour, winery visit or the historical National Parkes & Wildlife Service Copeland Gold Mine. You can visit the Men's Shed, play a round of golf or enjoy 'The Birds of Gloucester' walk and more. For full details and registration see: www.gloucesterwomensgathering.com



2011 Gloucester Women's Gathering

Registration Form & Tax Invoice

13-16 October 2011

Conference Information

Rural Women's Gathering Gloucester Inc
ABN 34 755 698 302

General enquiries:

Julie Lyford
Ph: 02 6558 1995
Email: julielyford@hotmail.com
www.gloucesterwomensgathering.com

Registration enquiries:

Rural Women's Gathering Gloucester Inc
PO Box 270 Gloucester NSW 2422
Ph: 02 6558 8223 | Fax: 02 6558 8223
Email: marbar@midcoast.com.au

Separate Partners Program
Registration available on our website .

Accommodation and transport

A variety of accommodation has been reserved for Gathering participants and can be accessed by contacting Wendy at Gloucester Visitors Information Centre. Ph: 02 6558 1408 or email your request: wendy.hughes@gloucester.nsw.gov.au

Transport information is available from Countrylink. For train and bus timetables see: www.visitgloucester.com.au or contact Countrylink direct.

Sponsors

This Gathering is made possible through the generous financial and in-kind support of our following sponsors:

PLATINUM: Department of Primary Industries and its Rural Women's Network

GOLD: Westpac, Gloucester Shire Council, Gloucester Visitors Information Centre, Midwaste, Department of Transport

SILVER: Essential Energy, Perenti Catering, Crystal Creek Products, Gloucester Arts & Cultural Council, NSW National Parks, Regional Arts NSW, TAFE NSW

FRIENDS OF THE GATHERING: Best Little Hairhouse, The Gloucester Project, Gloucester Rugby Club

Participant details:

NAME:

ADDRESS:

POSTCODE:

EMAIL:

PHONE: FAX: MOBILE:

SPECIAL NEEDS (DIET, ACCESS)

NOTE: Not all venues are wheelchair accessible

Registration details:

Normal registrations close 5pm September 23

Early bird registrations close 5pm August 26

- ☐ Early Bird Full Registration \$180.00
- ☐ Full Registration \$190.00
(Friday evening to Sunday afternoon incl. workshops*, forum, entertainment, lunches, morning and afternoon teas, Friday and Saturday night dinners. Breakfasts NOT included)
- ☐ Saturday & Sunday \$120.00
(Incl. workshops*, forum, morning and afternoon teas and lunches. Evening meals NOT included)
- ☐ Saturday Only \$80.00
(Incl. workshops*, forum, morning and afternoon tea and lunch. Gondwana Rainforest Dinner NOT included)
- ☐ Sunday Only \$55.00
(Includes workshop*, morning tea and lunch)
- ☐ Friday Night Buffet & Entertainment \$40.00
- ☐ Saturday Gondwana Rainforest Dinner \$65.00
(Seating restricted. Full participants allocated first.)
- ☐ Historic Copeland Gold Mine Tour \$20.00
(NPWS Guided Tour. Friday 1-4pm. 50 participants max.)

TOTAL COST (Prices include GST) \$

Workshop selections:

Select 3 choices for Sessions A and B. Session A workshops run for 2.5-3 hours and Session B for 1.5-2 hours. Write your workshop number next to your preference below. Choose from both Session A and B. Workshop No.25 'Free to be Me' goes across Session A and B. Every effort will be made to meet your preferences but cannot be guaranteed.

Session A Saturday

- ☐ 1st Preference
- ☐ 2nd Preference
- ☐ 3rd Preference

Session B Sunday

- ☐ 1st Preference
- ☐ 2nd Preference
- ☐ 3rd Preference

**Some workshops have additional fees which are not included in your registration. Workshop costs will be noted on your receipt and payment taken at the Gathering Registration Desk.*

Childcare requirements:

Available Saturday (8.30am-5.30pm and 6-11pm) and Sunday (8.30am to 1.30 pm). Contact Sally Higgins on 02 6558 3164 or jhigg@bigpond.com (Charge applies). Name and age of child/children:

Payment details:

☐ **CHEQUE/MONEY ORDER:** Payable to *Rural Women's Gathering Gloucester Inc.*

☐ **EFT:** NAB | BSB 082 595 | ACC 185403489. (Use phone no. as reference). Date: / / 2011

Registration will not occur until payment is received. Cancellations accepted up to 7 October and a refund made (less a \$25 admin fee) after the Gathering. No refund for cancellations after 7 October.

☐ Tick if you do NOT want your contact details given to the next Gathering Committee

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TAX INVOICE: This document becomes a Tax Invoice upon completion of payment. ABN 34 755 698 302. GST INCLUSIVE



Living below the line on \$2 a day

Dimity MacDiarmid, a Project Manager with Accenture, lived for a week below the poverty line on just \$2 a day. She succeeded in raising over \$2000 for the Oaktree Foundation who provide much needed educational resources in Papua New Guinea. So what would make her take on such a challenge?

'Last year while working on a project in East Africa I witnessed first hand the reality of what it's like to live in poverty. So this was one challenge I couldn't resist. I often reflected on the possibility that I could have been born in such conditions. Living like we do is a huge privilege and by no means a right. My experience was hard but it was an awesome way for me to raise money and awareness for the 1.4 billion people who have to live like this every day and who make \$2 cover a lot more than food!'

At the start of her challenge Dimity took to the shops with her \$10 and managed to purchase: a loaf of bread, 1 kg of pasta, six eggs, mandarins, jelly, tinned tomatoes, stock, carrots and soup mix.

Here are some excerpts from Dimity's online blog:

Day 1: This week I'm living below the poverty line! That means I live on \$2 a day for all food and drink. Everything I eat must be purchased – nothing from the cupboard or any additional supplies. This means no coffee, no vino, no rump steak or roast chicken!

Day 3: I have no energy to write – I'm nearly halfway there. I feel surprisingly OK but I notice the lack of nutrition. My diet is so bland and more than anything I crave flavour and good, healthy, wholesome food. Yesterday was tough as it sunk in how repetitive this week will be but I think today I have mentally made the transition from 'food for satisfaction' to 'food for survival!' I just keep thinking of those who do it every day but with no electricity, fridges, microwaves.

Day 5 – the final day: This is the last update of my five day challenge. I'm counting down the hours to indulge in some nutritional goodness at the stroke of midnight. My current state: If I eat more carbs I may turn into one and it would probably be spiral pasta; a colleague commented that I looked pale and wilted; I don't crave food, I crave nutrition and flavour; vagueness, clumsiness and general cognitive functions have diminished; Murphy's Law is prominent in such a condition; Midnight munchies anyone? I'm lucky, tomorrow I go back to living off more than \$2 a day. 1.4 billion people around the world are not quite so lucky!

Words from the dust

By Jasmine Vidler, Central West Libraries



A 'Words from the Dust' writing workshop series for older people was recently held in the Central West towns of Condobolin, Forbes, Grenfell, Cowra, Blayney and Orange. The project was funded by a Positive Ageing Grant and supported by Central West Writers' Centre, Arts OutWest and the NSW Government.

More than 70 people took part in the workshops with writers and workshop presenters Dr Noeline Kyle and Lorraine Purcell. Participants did writing exercises about descriptions, life writing and timelines; discovered memory mapping; learnt editing and proofreading skills; and shared many discussions and stories.

Through the project older people could express their thoughts and share stories as well as record their stories to show other Australians their life experiences matter.

Writing topics included childhood reflections, family history, genealogy, oral history, folklore, songs, creative writing, poetry, memoir, journals, letters, personal essays, diary writing, travel writing, non-fiction, biography and more.

Dr Noeline Kyle said during the workshops everybody learnt from hearing each other's stories which gave participants confidence to go on and work on their own writing.

Noeline explained that life writing draws on experiences and observations of living, but its main focus is on what is learned from the living of it. She said this can be uplifting and positive by telling stories of survival and overcoming barriers or it can be a tragic story of financial struggle, major illness or heartbreak. Life writing may also focus on one aspect or a period of life, ideas or the journey itself.

These workshops were a starting point to help participants reflect on their rural experiences from droughts to floods, growing up, life in the bush, hardships, challenges and achievements.

The beauty of the Words from the Dust project is that you can keep writing and working on your story and it can be added to the website as an ongoing project. **For more information about the project or to read participants stories go to: www.wordsfromthedust.com.au**



Caroline Robinson

2011 Australian RIRDC Rural Women's Award Winner
Woollocutty WA

women in Business

RubyConnection.com.au

Written by Louise Upton

Caroline is the Founder of Solum Wheatbelt Business Solutions, a community development business including the Wheatbelt Business Network; Project and Event Management; Administration Support; Research and Grant Writing. Caroline is also the winner of the 2011 Australian RIRDC Rural Women's Award, proudly sponsored by Westpac.

Caroline is passionate about hockey, facilitating and building strong business and community connections in remote rural areas, sausage dogs and sheep. They're passions that don't come in any particular order and which she cannot rationally explain, except to say that the land and all it stands for stole her heart.

'I have a sausage dog called Frank. He doesn't contribute very much. He's a little overweight and too long. But I love taking him for a walk down the drive or into the paddock and seeing the sheep. I love sheep. They're funny things to be passionate about, but I am.'

In her early twenties, as a commerce graduate working in Perth's CBD, Caroline says she found herself walking in the city thinking there had to be more to life.

The strength of her dissatisfaction was so great it spurred her on to train as a teacher, something she'd always

wanted to do, and then to take a post in Southern Cross, the town centre of the Shire of Yilgarn, a wheatbelt and goldmining community 370 km east of the West Australian capital.

Moving in with a farming family to be close to work, on the first night she sat down to dinner with them, in walked her future husband. The rest, so the cliché goes, is history.

Now 28 years old Caroline lives on a wheat and sheep property that is 'so far out' she and her husband joke that if they stand on the highest point and look east they see Adelaide. She no longer teaches school because of her own business commitments but she does still teach ballet to 130 children across three communities – it's a three hour round trip each week.

'I've run my community development and project management business as much as I can using online tools (like email and skype) rather than travel five hours for a one hour meeting. The nature of the work is people. So, from Tuesday to Thursday I do about 2000 km of driving getting to and from the places I do business.

'I use forums such as LinkedIn to connect with businesses but connecting with the businesses in my region has always been difficult because so many of them do not use the internet as a business tool.'

Couple that with the fact that very few formal and no informal structures existed to market and advertise what businesses existed in the area – where and how to connect with them – and the difficulties running a community development and project management business become apparent.

In the end, the need for communication and basic local knowledge led her to set up the Wheatbelt Business Network, which has been connecting businesses, shires, individuals and communities in the central and eastern wheatbelt regions of WA since 2010.

'When the Wheatbelt Business Network first began we had four member businesses. In a year we'd grown to 50 businesses. At present we operate in three local government areas and they are about 80 km away from each other. The Network is run on a voluntary basis and our primary goals are networking, promotion and advocacy.'

Fifty member businesses may sound small. However, as Caroline points out, if there are 100 businesses in a particular part of the region and 50 of them are in the Network, then that's half of them communicating and connecting through her networking vehicle.

Is it any wonder then that Caroline's Network impressed the 2011 national RIRDC Rural

Women's Award judges so much that she won the national title.

Nominated for the award by a work colleague, Caroline puts her win down to a few factors: her youth, which she believes highlights the fact that the next generation coming through are contributing to rural communities, and that the RIRDC Award is about networking, bringing businesses and people together to communicate and solve problems.

She also believes that her project works in well with a larger community project called Heartlands WA, which has been set up to promote the whole region as a place to live, work, visit and invest.

'The Federal Government has been talking about a sustainable Australia and getting people out into rural and regional communities and revitalising them. The Wheatbelt Business Network is all about that. If we can already prove we have organised, strong communities and support structures with people talking, then industry and people will be more interested in investing and coming out here,' says Caroline.

The \$10,000 bursary Caroline has won as part of the RIRDC Rural Women's Award is being used to further develop the Network, fund a buy/invest local campaign and stimulate the development of e-commerce.

'When a company comes into the area to do a project, such as the wind farm being set up in Merreden, then we want that company to use local people and businesses where they can: send their kids to the local schools, use local businesses to supply uniforms, that sort of thing.

'To do that successfully we need to get connections and communication between business. Developing e-commerce and getting businesses online will support that.'

According to Caroline, to understand what's driving all this work, it is important to get an idea about the physical issues that make doing business in the region difficult. The distances are vast. The population sparse, and historically, people are used to working in discreet units rather than as an amalgamated force. There is also very little Internet uptake. Caroline says the figures show that only three percent of businesses have a website or email address.

'The whole region's the size of Tasmania with about 45,000 people living in it. There are approximately 43 local governments, many of them with less than a thousand people and there are two chambers of commerce in all that.'

Servicing that area are a number of businesses, many of which, Caroline explains from experience, had no way to communicate and share with one another, let alone reach outside the area to know what businesses existed that they might connect and build relationships with.

'The Wheatbelt Business Network business after-hour events, newsletter and information service, as well as providing a voice to advocate for the needs of the local areas with state and federal politicians, just make sense.'

On a personal level, the Rural Women's Award has supplied Caroline with a wider net of contacts to test and argue her ideas and thoughts with, as well as consolidating her knowledge of working on boards and committees.

'The company directors course we did for the week left me feeling much more informed about boards and the roles of directors. I know I can ring and ask any of the women I was with or the RIRDC alumni for advice on a problem right down to what I should consider if I am invited to be on a board.

'I actually sit on a board for a training company, Directions, delivering apprenticeships and traineeships across the wheatbelt region. My role is to look after governance and I certainly feel more confident

about that. Mining has had a big impact on the area. We've lost a lot of young apprentices to the mining boom!'

When asked about her 'pet worries' Caroline says, 'It's not just labour shortages created by mining that's having an impact on rural communities in Western Australia. Farming itself, as more people leave the land and farms become larger and more effectively run, means approaching business in a different way.

'Some towns have benefited and when the company has put money into the town, employing farmers who don't want to farm anymore or providing off-farm employment during difficult times, that has been good.'

What concerns Caroline is whether communities and employment

based on resources that will run out have any real longevity. In areas where mining has not happened or where companies have shown no interest in backing and developing existing local communities, she believes existing businesses need to work out a way of tapping into the chain of supply as well as getting companies and workers thinking about going local.

'The other problem, besides losing workers to the lucrative pay, is our labour costs have skyrocketed to compete and that pushes our costs up,' says Caroline. 'It's lopsided and sets up false expectations about pay for work. There's also the lack of long-range goals and expectations in the work.

'Mining is necessary, I can see that, but we need to be careful.'



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Mind your language

By Alison Manning, Principle – Mindspan Communications*

When you experience a minor setback like misplacing your keys, or a major setback like dealing with the long term consequences of damaging floods, how do you respond?

Think for a moment about the language you use – the automatic words that come to your mind in these situations.

When the keys are missing do you respond with old standards like: 'How stupid', 'I'm so disorganised', 'I always lose things', 'I'm hopeless', or 'No wonder I never get anything done'?

In response to a major setback, think about how you have responded. Was it with a sense of doom or more a sense of needing to find a strategy for recovery?

In other situations, think about how you talk to yourself and how you talk about yourself to others. If your sentences start with, 'I'm only' or 'I'm just', chances are you're discounting your strengths and missing opportunities to recognise and celebrate your skills and achievements.

As a former ABC journalist, I would often have a long, interesting conversation with a rural woman about some aspect of her business. Having admired the woman's expertise and her capacity to articulate interesting aspects of the business, I would request an on-air interview, only to be told, nine times out of ten, 'Oh, no, you'd have to speak to my husband, I'm only the offside here'. Occasionally, I could convince her that she was perfectly suited to the task, but

so often, her beliefs prevented her from imagining herself in such a role.

The purpose of this article is to briefly share some of the benefits of understanding our own patterns of thinking and self-talk and learning to use thoughts and language to promote self-appreciation, hope, purpose, energy and capacity. For years now, widespread evidence-based research** has demonstrated the benefits of personal coaching; not high-fiving, motivational coaching, but artful conversations with a trained person skilled to listen and ask just the right questions. Benefits include improved mental and physical health, improved relationships, and increased hope, optimism and sense of capacity.

Once aware of our habits and of their power to produce limitation or capacity, we can begin to build new habits that serve us well and move us towards meeting our potential.

* A conflict resolution and coaching practice.

**For links to research papers see: mindspancommunications.com

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Some we know, some we'll never meet
They donated things from Civvy street
We know sometimes things may be hard
We thank you all, from our grateful heart

So many friends from all walks of life
Helping rural families, man and wife
We need rain to fill our tanks
For this we give, our eternal thanks

Our children love to play in mud
I love seeing a new flower bud
Kids don't realise how bad things are
When saying 'Are we there yet?' in the car
Life goes on, I feel no regret
Good things re-grow, on this, I bet.

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Our next newsletter Our Farmers. Our Future



Our next edition of *The Country Web* will join in the 2012 national celebration of **Australian Year of the Farmer**.

This very special year will put the spotlight on how important primary industries are to all of us no matter where we live. Farmers contribute to just about every aspect of our life – farming feeds, supports and sustains us and we want to hear your stories about how **women** in particular have played a key role in shaping and building rural industries. Women have often been unrecognised and we are looking for stories of how they have excelled across our rural communities, displaying innovation, creativity, determination and resilience.

2012 also heralds the **20th Anniversary of the Rural Women's Network** and we welcome any reflections or memories of your involvement in Network activities.

Deadline for articles is 16 December 2011.

Life saving actions

By Dr Lane, Bundanoon Medical Centre

I write in response to the article on heart attacks in the previous edition. Many people do not present to a hospital when suspecting or having a heart attack for many reasons. Sometimes they experience only mild discomfort and are not concerned by their symptoms, thereby delaying or postponing any action.

What people need to know is that early presentation within the first three hours (within the first hour is even better) can prevent a fatal attack as doctors now have more medical interventions available to them. They can dissolve clotting, insert stents and administer oxygen to assist breathing and prevent a person panicking and increasing their distress. For those who can't access a hospital within the first three hours, calling 000 for an ambulance is advisable as paramedics can offer the most efficient course of service delivery and some alternative services. In the near future ambulance services will be able to administer life saving anti-clotting medications. In the past, before the availability of these interventions, about 28 per cent of people died, compared to recent statistics of a 97 per cent retention rate if sufferers take fast action at the onset of symptoms.

Common heart attack symptoms can include: central chest pain lasting greater than 15 minutes, difficulty breathing, sweating, pain in the left arm. Less common is pain in the jaw and right arm. Diabetics may experience no pain at all and therefore need to monitor their health with proactive testing.

Risk factors for heart attack include: increasing age, a family history of heart disease, high blood pressure, a smoking history, obesity, high cholesterol, diabetes, lack of exercise and ethnicity. After the age of 50, women are 30–40 per cent more likely to be at risk of heart attack than men, and less likely to present at hospital within that critical hour.

To help reduce your risk of heart disease and heart attack monitoring tests can be performed including blood tests to check cholesterol and blood pressure. Cholesterol checks can alert a risk for potential coronary artery blockage. Behaviour changes such as reducing or quitting smoking as well as dietary changes and exercising 30 minutes a day will help.

In summary, if you or someone you know is suffering from these symptoms, particularly chest pain lasting longer than 15 minutes, call 000 immediately. It's better to find that you haven't had a heart attack than to become another statistic as the following examples demonstrate.

Person A: warning symptoms were quickly recognised, assistance given, and the person entered hospital promptly.

Person B: was alone and mistook symptoms for indigestion. Person presented much later to hospital – increasing risk of fatality, instead of increasing their opportunity for life saving intervention. Person B died 13 days later.

In memory of Beryl Elizabeth Ingold AO, MBE: Sadly, Beryl passed away on Thursday 7 April 2011. A farmer from Cootamundra, Beryl was known by many for her service to the advancement of agriculture, education, women and the community. She was one of the main organisers for the Yanco Women's Gathering and was a life member of the Country Women's Association, patron of NSW Rural Youth since 1990, and member of the Riverina TAFE Advisory Council. Beryl was appointed Member of the Order of the British Empire in 1979 for her agriculture and community work. In June 2001 she was appointed Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) for her service to the rural community in the areas of regional development and education.

Being a Rural Woman, Top Three Challenges

By Lydia Valeriano, Foundation for Australian Agricultural Women

The Foundation for Australian Agricultural Women recently asked this question on our Facebook page and it gave us some insight, if perhaps not 'new' information. Many of the usual topics came up: schools closing due to lack of enrolments, lack of medical services and doctors including specialists, less exposure to training and developments opportunities for one's career, lack of reliable freight options and overpriced and under serviced travel options; all boiling down to a feeling that access to all of these strains our main resources – money and time.

Many of these issues are not new, in fact they are probably the same issues the first settlers must have been concerned about. The underlying theme of these comments is that rural women still feel isolated, under resourced and over-stretched. And unheard.

Another question on our Facebook page prompted good discussion: If there was one thing that you would like as support for easier communication among rural women what would it be? A resounding response – fast, reliable internet. And a fast wireless network would be ideal. If the technology could solve the distance issue many suggested that access to these services could be done virtually, taking out the need for constant travel.

So it seems the issues are old and a new solution is needed. One thing is certain, there is a force of rural and regional women ready to take up all the opportunities new technology might provide. It might also help them become more connected, as we continue to reach out from our rural spheres so that we all achieve voice and presence.

To join in the discussions go to: www.facebook.com/foundation.for.australian.agricultural.women or <http://twitter.com/@faawomen>

The Foundation for Australian Agricultural Women (FAAW) is a national, independent, non-profit organisation dedicated to supporting women in leadership who are increasing information access and career mobility for women in rural and regional communities. For more information about the Foundation visit their website: www.faaw.org.au

Skin cancer is one of the most preventable cancers affecting Australians. Almost all skin cancers can be prevented by changing behaviour towards sun exposure, particularly during childhood and adolescence. Taking action to support better sun protection strategies in schools is known to contribute to reducing the incidence of melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancer later in life.

Our schools can and do play a major and positive role in helping change attitudes about sun protection to reduce the future incidence of skin cancer. Yet many NSW Primary Schools continue to have inadequate caps and narrow-brimmed hats as part of their school uniform. Most of our secondary schools do not even offer a school hat as part of their uniform. Given our knowledge of skin cancer and the importance of skin protection early in life, broad-brimmed hats should be a mandatory part of the school uniform.

SOME FACTS:

- Schools are the primary carers of children between 8.30 am and 3.30pm – the highest UV period of the day
- An estimated 80 per cent of skin cancer damage occurs in the first 20 years of life – an age where children rely on adults to make sensible choices on their behalf.
- Melanoma is the most common form of cancer in young people aged between 15 and 44 years.
- In 2009, more people in Australia died of melanoma and skin cancer than from road accidents.



Help prevent skin cancer. Support a minimum standard for hats in NSW Public Schools. Pictured are Will & Molly Brown, Bathurst NSW.

- It costs the public health system over \$300 million per year to diagnose and treat skin cancer in Australia – a significant burden to already overstretched health services.
- Skin cancer is one of Australia's most preventable cancers.
- NSW has the second highest incidence of skin cancer in the world, second only to Queensland.

Currently, less than 20 per cent of NSW Primary Schools have adopted the Cancer Council's SunSmart Schools program compared to 90 per cent of schools in Victoria. The SunSmart Program supports schools to develop and implement best practice sun protection strategies to reduce children's exposure to ultraviolet radiation from the sun.

In NSW, parents and the broader community have been seeking the introduction of a minimum standard for school hats that can be endorsed as uniform in NSW Public Schools. The minimum standard would reflect recommendations of

the World Health Organisation and the Cancer Council for hats with a brim of 8 cm in order to adequately shade the face, back of the neck and the ears.

Unlike many other cancers affecting our community, skin cancer is preventable and you can do something about it by supporting the introduction of this standard in NSW schools. Effective sun protection policies, including the introduction of a minimum standard for broad-brimmed hats, should be mandatory in NSW schools.

For more information or if you would like to help, email: schoolsunprotection@gmail.com **For more on the Cancer Council's SunSmart Schools program see:** www.cancercouncil.com.au/primary

References: World Health Organisation, 2002. Sun Protection: An Essential Element of Health-Promoting Schools. WHO Information Series on School Health, Document 7. (Available at: www.who.int/ceh/publications/cehessential/en/index.html)

GRANTS & FUNDING

ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY OF NSW FOUNDATION

JB Fairfax Award for Rural Journalism: Encourages talented young writers who are passionate about rural issues. The winner will receive \$10,000 in support of their studies, an internship as well as the opportunity to have their article published in a major rural publication.

Rural Scholarships: For people wanting to make a difference in their community. You can be studying any subject and be of any age. Winners receive either a \$1500 (part-time) or \$5000 (full-time) scholarship.

Applications for both the Award and Scholarships close 30 September.

02 9704 1234
foundation@rasf.org.au
www.rasf.org.au



Yvonne Cohen Award: Awarded to Indigenous Youth under 30 years of age this Award provides \$5000 to the successful applicant to enable them to continue their chosen creative path. Applicants must be nominated by an organisation or individual. Nominations close 30 September.

03 56841582
suedavies@pacific.net.au

Taste of the Liverpool Plains

By Sue Wilmott, Blackville



Following the success of the inaugural Taste of the Liverpool Plains Day, the Save our Soils Liverpool Plains group held another Taste Day at Caroonna in March this year. The organisers are a diverse group of women who share a passion for the Liverpool Plains.

The day showcased the contribution this region makes to the economy of NSW and to Australia's future food security. There was an impressive range of speakers and there were lots of positive suggestions to challenge our thinking.

Special guest speakers included: Julian Cribb, author of *The Coming Famine*, who talked about food security issues; Jack Mundey, one of Australia's most recognised environmentalists; and Matthew Wright, Beyond Zero Emissions and 2010 Young Environmentalist of the Year who spoke about the organisation's solution to make Australia dependent on renewable energy within 10 years. Other speakers included Professor Paul Martin, Director of the Australian Centre for Agriculture and Law at University of New England; Adam Blakester, a noted social change strategist and community planning entrepreneur; and Tim

Wright, an expert on carbon sequestration and sustainable energy.

The diversity and productivity of agriculture on the Liverpool Plains was highlighted by local stallholders promoting locally grown food products such as cheese, pasta, berries, honey, olive oils, wine, cotton and lavender products.

The large crowd of 2000 people enjoyed gourmet lunches, high teas and barbeques, all based on locally grown products.

Local businesses set up stalls to promote their wares with an emphasis on renewable energy sources.

It was a wonderfully inspiring day, showcasing this prime agricultural region while looking forward to the possibilities of a sustainable future focusing on renewable energies and alternatives.

**Realise deeply
that the present
moment is all
you ever have.**

ECKHART TOLLE

Electricity price increases

Adapted from ewonews, Issue 23 May 2011, Pg 6

Annual price increases for electricity came into effect on 1 July. How much you are affected by this increase depends on where you live and the type of contract you're on. A large part of the increase relates to higher network costs. Retailers are entitled to pass on increased network costs, so most will find that your bill increases. Here's some answers to frequently asked questions:

I'm using less, why am I paying more? You may be making significant efforts to use less electricity, however your bills keep increasing. Reducing usage doesn't necessarily mean your bill will be lower, as the annual price increase may be more than you've saved by reducing your usage. However, reduced consumption will still save money and mean that the bill increase will be less than it might otherwise have been.

I thought a discounted rate would mean my bill would be cheaper: You may have signed a market contract which offered a discount thinking it would be applied to your whole bill. Usually the discount only applies to usage. It could be that the annual price increase is more than the discount, so your bill isn't cheaper than before.

Where can I find information on electricity pricing? The Independent Pricing & Regulatory Tribunal has produced consumer factsheets to explain electricity pricing and the increases. Visit www.ipart.nsw.gov.au to download factsheets.

Where can I compare prices? myenergyoffers.nsw.gov.au provides a free electricity and gas online price comparison website for residential and small business customers or you can call the Energy Information Line on 1300 136 888.

Tip: If you're thinking of entering into a market contract: confirm the exact tariff rates with the retailer; ask when these tariff rates can change and when the next change will be; and ask if there are fees for disconnection, early termination or moving house.

PAYMENT PLANS AND SWITCHING RETAILERS: If you're on a payment plan to pay off arrears and you consider switching retailers because you see it as a way of deferring your payment, be aware that when you switch over, your current payment plan will be cancelled as you will no longer hold an account with your retailer. If you're having problems with a debt collection agency you can call the Credit & Debt Hotline on 1800 808 488.

REBATES: A range of rebates are available for people on low or fixed incomes including a Low Income Household Rebate, Medical Energy Rebate and Life Support Rebate. For more information call the Energy Information Line on 1300 136 888 or see: www.energy.nsw.gov.au/customer/rebates

Village women a dynamic force

By Rebecca Lines-Kelly, Extension Specialist – Environment, NSW Department of Primary Industries



This group of women from the village of Empetrieg near Banda Aceh have formed a Kelompok Wanita Tani group to grow vegetables and trial the use of rice husk biochar. Primary Industries biochar researcher Malem McLeod, left, showed the women how to do a scientifically valid trial to investigate whether biochar has any effect on vegetable production. Group leader, Siti Hajar, centre, is very interested in learning new agricultural techniques to help the women grow food and make money.

Over the past six years I have been part of a Primary Industries team working with agricultural scientists and farmers in the Indonesian province of Aceh. Initially we were there to help restore agricultural soils after the devastating earthquake and tsunami in December 2004. The Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research funded this work then in 2008 asked us to stay on in Aceh to help improve agricultural productivity in Aceh's coastal farmlands.

We work with farmers, extension officers and researchers to test new crops and production methods to increase yields and make Aceh's food supply more secure.

One of the most exciting aspects of the project is the women in agriculture component, initially envisaged as a small sub-project, but rapidly becoming a major project in its own right, thanks to the energy of the women.

Traditionally, women in Aceh's rural villages help their husbands in the rice fields in the morning, and spend the rest of their day in their homes doing housework and preparing meals. In our first visits to Aceh, we rarely met or spoke to the village women as they did not participate in meetings or farmer gatherings, except to provide food.

This changed when we travelled to Aceh's west coast, which received the full force of the tsunami damage and where most deaths occurred. At Meulaboh, a female extension officer Supriyani, had established a woman's group to grow vegetables and give the women something to do until the damaged rice fields were restored. She trained them in organic growing methods using compost and fermented fish scraps for fertiliser. The women were active, energetic and

enthusiastic, and told us how much they enjoyed working together as a group.

As a result of their enthusiasm, we developed opportunities for agricultural women in our current project. We provide start-up support for new Kelompok Wanita Tani (Group of Women Farmers), including technical advice on crops and cultivation, operational advice on group structure and operations, 'farmer-to-farmer' visits to other groups, and limited financial support for purchasing seeds and equipment. Each group manages itself, with the goal of achieving financial sustainability and independence.

The small amount of money we provide has been like setting a match to dry grass. More than 400 women have formed 20 women's groups in five different regions of Aceh, and demand for new groups is outstripping

the project's capacity to support them. Group names such as Hope, Great Blooming, New Spirit, and Shoots of Hope reveal the women's dreams for the future.

Each group consists of 10-25 women working together to grow vegetables on shared plots and in home gardens. They take some produce home and sell the rest. Some money is invested in the next crop and the rest goes into a group savings fund which the group uses to microfinance member activities.

The women greatly value the social interaction the groups provide, along with the opportunities to learn agricultural, marketing and leadership skills, improve family nutrition and earn money.

They are keen to establish a network that will strengthen their activities and enable them to continue to expand their activities and influence after the project finishes at the end of 2012. Australian Youth Ambassador for Development Anna Stempel has been working with the women for the past year to help establish the network.

The energy and enthusiasm of the women's groups have amazed us all. Around the world, women in developing countries are being seen as the key to ensuring food security and increasing productivity. These women's groups are living proof of this.

Earlier this year, the Indonesian government introduced a backyard gardens program to improve family food supplies. The women's groups are already well down the track.

If you'd like to know more about the program go to:
www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/research/projects/06P302#Aceh-Women-in-Agriculture

My Special Hug

Helen Lyness, Taree



In 2008 I attended a conference where my emotions were being assaulted as tears flowed in disbelief, repulsion and anger. I was confronted with the horrific realities of Human Trafficking. How could men, women and children be taken, bought and sold as commodities: unfortunately, this is the sad reality for countless thousands who fall victim to the evils of Human Trafficking – a global crime that recognises neither borders nor dignity; a flourishing and profitable criminal industry with an annual profit of \$31.6 billion.

An estimated 600–800,000 people are trafficked each year – the majority into commercial sex trade using force, fraud, coercion and fear. Victims tell of being raped, sold to brothels, drugged, beaten and sometimes left for dead. The average sex trafficking victim is only 14 years old with many as young as four years old.

Last year, after two years of immersing myself in researching the nature and extent of Human Trafficking, I was travelling with a team from the Queensland based aid organisation Destiny Rescue. I had taken advantage of an opportunity to undergo training to equip me to advocate on behalf of victims. In Thailand and Cambodia I saw first-hand the work of a wonderful band of people actively fighting against child prostitution and making a difference, one child at a time.

My special hug came in the north Thailand city of Chiang Rai. I was privileged to share an emotional embrace with one of Destiny's rescued girls (pictured above). All she could say in broken English was, 'I am so happy', and so was I.

Why not consider becoming part of a growing network of caring and passionate people by joining Destiny Rescue – there is much you can do. You can start by visiting Destiny's website: www.destinyrescue.org

To educate a woman is to educate a community

Lina Cabaero, Coordinator – Asian Women at Work



A special fishing workshop for female leaders of Asian Women at Work was held in February as a special way to mark the 100th year of International Women's Day. More than 50 leaders of Asian Women at Work brought their families (partners, children, grandparents – over 50 of them) for a day of fishing adventures where they learnt about safe and responsible fishing, rigging, casting and practical fishing techniques.

George Mannah, Community Relations Manager said, 'Fishing is a passion that crosses gender, language and cultural boundaries.' He believes that education is the best way to help reduce the risks and to ensure that all people, regardless of their language or background, can enjoy fishing in a safe and responsible way.

Asian communities enjoy fishing, however many lives have been put at risk due to being unaware of or ignoring safe ways of fishing. It is important to promote key safety messages and educate at-risk communities about safe and responsible fishing in a fun, informative and interactive way.

Asian Women at Work is an organisation with over 1700 members all over Sydney, especially in Western Sydney. We have over 100 women leaders in the network who play a significant role in their respective communities, inspiring and empowering women to stand up and speak out for their rights.

The idea of women as messengers for safe fishing is brilliant. While some people might think fishing is not really a female pastime, in these communities women play a pivotal role in their families, so if you educate the women, you educate the entire family.

The Fishing for Asian Migrant Women Workers day was organised by the Department of Primary Industries in partnership with the Recreational Fishing Alliance of NSW, Surf Life Saving Australia, the Department of Environment, Climate Change & Water and the Underwater Skindivers & Fishermen's Association. It was hosted by Kamay Botany Bay National Park in Kurnell.

For more information about the Asian Women at Work Inc network see: www.awatw.org.au or call 02 9793 9708.

Women in leadership



Professor Deirdre Lemerle
Wagga Wagga NSW

Professor Deirdre Lemerle (pictured above with Governor General Quentin Bryce) is the Director of the EH Graham Centre for Agricultural Innovation (an alliance of Charles Sturt University and Department of Primary Industries). She sits on a number of committees including the GRDC Southern Regional Advisory Committee. Deirdre has won many awards for her research and extension work and in June 2010 travelled as part of the Governor General's delegation to China participating in the World Expo 'Sisters' exhibit in Shanghai.

WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO BECOME INVOLVED?

I was born in Albury NSW and lived on a sheep farm near Walla Walla. I have always been interested in agriculture and studied Agricultural Science at university and completed a PhD in weed sciences at Sydney University. I really enjoy working in weeds research because weeds always manage to adapt to new systems and challenge us with extra costs.

WHAT DO YOU GET OUT OF BEING INVOLVED IN THESE ROLES?

I am passionate about agriculture and ensuring that science-based information is

available to support farmers increase China's productivity while protecting the environment. As a researcher, I enjoy the challenge of solving problems important to agriculture. I enjoy working in teams, whether it be at a local, regional or national level.

HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY OBSTACLES?

Balancing my professional career with motherhood was a challenge. My son is now 17 and he seems to have turned out OK, but he wants to be an architect and not an agricultural scientist.

Working in a male-dominated environment can be a challenge but also an opportunity. I believe if you are 'useful' and know your 'stuff' gender is unimportant.

WHAT'S ONE OBSTACLE YOU HAVE OVERCOME?

Sometimes it is difficult to be heard in a male-dominated workplace. I don't like to raise my voice but I think I have learnt to be quite assertive and confident to ensure my views are heard.

WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR SUPPORT?

Family, friends and work colleagues. I have worked in a range of different teams and developing trust is essential for teams to be effective.

WHAT IS YOUR MESSAGE TO OTHER WOMEN WANTING TO BECOME INVOLVED IN DECISION MAKING?

- Believe in your decisions and stick with them.
- Speak up with confidence.
- Do a job you really enjoy and you will be excellent.



It all starts with a plan

By Zoe Lamont, Wagga Wagga, Founder & Director, 10thousandgirl Campaign

Increasingly, young women are acting on their desire to live their dreams whilst learning skills to be financially astute. The 10thousandgirl campaign helps young women gain confidence, clarify their plans and learn the basic financial principles to support their goals.

With the fast growing independence of young women, over the next three years the 10thousandgirl campaign aims to support 10,000 young country-based women to live their dreams whilst being financially astute. As part of programs being run in 100 communities across Australia, a special sponsored workshop series was run in Scone and Merriwa over April 2011 in conjunction with Albury based style and image consultant Sandra Martin. The workshops were organised by Caroline Long and supported by the Department of Primary Industries. Here's what two of our workshop participants had to say ...

Allissa, aged 28

Why did you attend?

I attended the workshop because I had been afraid of looking at how to manage my money for a long time. I believed that money controlled my life, that I would never understand how to manage money and therefore made poor life choices because I felt defeated around finances. I was tired of living scared, so it was time to get some education and learn some

tools to make money flow for me, not let money hinder my life flow.

What did you hope to get from the day?

Tools for my tool box!

What did you learn/how did you benefit?

My money matters were demystified, the clouds began to clear and I began to see my dollars a little clearer.

What actions have you taken since the workshop?

I am currently charting my spending and am in observation mode as my needs change.

What are your 'words of wisdom' for other girls looking to get their plans and personal finances on track?

Just go for it! Start somewhere, get brave, find a financial advisor or a 10,000 girl! and ask just one question important to you around money, the answers will come and then they will just keep coming and before you know it you'll be feeling more and more confident and be having loads more fun with your finances

What are your next steps?

I would like to look at getting a 10thousandgirl GIG (Girl Investment Group) together in the Newcastle area. I am really interested in getting some of this amazing information and education out to women who are or have been in situations

of domestic violence. A big question on my mind right now is how to get the same learning and confidence around finance to women before they get to their 'final straw' in abusive relationships.

Phoebe, aged 26

Why did you attend?

Although I am a fairly good saver, anything that involves maths/numbers is not my favourite thing so I procrastinate over these things and annoy myself that I'm not doing more to take charge of what I spend.

What did you hope to get from the day?

I wanted to find ways to make financial stuff not so daunting. I also wanted to learn about what financial advisors do and whether I should visit one.

What did you learn/how did you benefit?

I learnt the difference between accountants and financial advisors. I got some tips on how to manage my money. I got inspired by what other women are doing to take control of their finances.

What actions have you have taken since the workshop?

I got together all the information on my super accounts so that at the beginning of the new financial year I can consolidate them into the best performing

fund. I have outlined payment schedules for all outstanding debts and worked out when they will be paid off. I have spent my savings on a trip to Africa!

What are your 'words of wisdom' for other girls looking to get their plans and personal finances on track?

Get your finances under control because you'll be amazed at the great things you can do with all the money you save! Plus it's the small purchases that really eat up your money, by putting together a budget you realise just how much you spend on the small impulse purchases like an extra drink, ice-cream, chocolate. I'm not saying you have to stop purchasing these, we still need treats but when you realise you're spending a hundred dollars or more a month on these you might not be so peckish!

What are your next steps?

I'm off to use my savings to explore the world – Africa!



The aim of the 10thousandgirl Campaign is to ensure every young woman 15-40 years:

- Has a plan for her life (dreams and goals that are written down)
- Has minimum 3–6 months wages in accessible savings
- Has relevant insurance in place

- Is learning to plan, save and invest for a self-funded retirement
- Is doing what she loves each day
- Is contributing to our world's broader economic prosperity and wellbeing

10thousandgirl creates economic improvement for women through providing light hearted and engaging educational resources and programs in safe accessible environments, including; a 12-month Personal Finance Program delivered via bookclub like GIGs (Girl Investment Groups), one-day Life Planning Workshops, one-hour School Talks, Workplace and Community Presentations and an online resource hub.

Our goal is to raise \$1 million to support women in developing countries to launch their own business . . . this is the ripple effect.

With every two Australian girls who go through the 12 month 'GIG' program, a micro loan is provided to a woman in a developing country to start or support a business and lift herself out of extreme poverty. This element of the program is to raise awareness around the

fact we live in a global economy, and show that as individuals, when we step up, we increase our capacity to assist others. It's a ripple effect!

10thousandgirl is supported by the Australian Government's Office for Women and Economic Security4 Women, providing bursaries for women living in marginalised positions in Australia to take part in the programs. See our website for information on how to apply: www.10thousandgirl.com/apply-for-a-bursary

As part of the tour around 100 regional centres across Australia, the campaign is looking for financial planners, accountants, mortgage brokers, property professionals and interested womens and community groups to assist in running programs in the following areas to December 2011: Canberra, Bathurst, Orange, Young, Dubbo, Tamworth, Armidale, Singleton, Newcastle, Alice Springs, Barkly Tablelands, Wagga Wagga, Albury, Wodonga, Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong and Melbourne.

To participate in or assist with an upcoming event in your area, visit the website: www.10thousandgirl.com or contact Zoe Lamont at zoe@10thousandgirl.com or on 0419 622 968.



Women typically earn less than men; are more likely to have interrupted careers because of child raising and caring responsibilities; and live longer so need to save more for retirement.

Women in Australia can expect to earn \$1million less than men in their working lives. Globally, 1 per cent of the world's women own land.

(Australian Financial Literacy Foundation, National Centre for Social & Economic Modeling, International Center for Research on Women.



The NSW Rural Women's Council (RWC) is made up of women from rural, regional, or remote communities, who come from diverse backgrounds and represent the many interests of rural women. The Council plays a vital role in facilitating information exchange between rural women, NSW Government and significant stakeholders by:

- identifying hot and emerging issues for women and families living in rural, regional and remote communities within NSW and suggesting recommendations to progress these to relevant Government Ministers, agencies and organisations wherever possible;
- being a key consultative reference group on rural, regional and remote issues;
- building strategic stakeholder relationships to advance initiatives for rural women;
- supporting Rural Women's Network projects and providing critical feedback on their effectiveness; and
- advocating on behalf of NSW rural women wherever possible.

The Council is currently co-chaired by

- Dr Richard Sheldrake, Director-General, Department of Primary Industries; and
- Nerida Cullen, Livestock Health & Pest Authorities

Current representatives:

- Joy Beames, Dunedoo Country Women's Association of NSW
- Rebel Black, Lightning Ridge Far West Area
- Patricia Byrnes, Gol Gol Natural Resource Management
- Donna Cruickshank, Broken Hill Aboriginal women's interests
- Nerida Cullen, Goulburn Livestock Health & Pest Authorities
- Kim Deans, Inverell Rural Financial Counselling Groups
- Sally Green, Mandurama Minister's representative
- Angela Martin, Mullaley NSW Farmers' Association

The Council is currently under Review.

rural women's council update

My mother is about to turn 90 and is in remarkably good health. Her generation has lived through extraordinary events that really tested their mettle – the Great Depression and World War 2 – and shaped their perspective on the world they had to bring their children up in. She always put her needs after her family's, a sacrifice we were not aware of as children. We may not have had much when we were growing up and were seldom made aware of the fact that we could not have more or even that we deserved more. It was the way of the world then.

She is a mere slip of a woman but to her young family she was always 6'6" and 16 stone.

The world that we inhabit is very different to the world she brought us into – faster, perhaps less inclusive, perhaps selfish, certainly more centred on the individual, and materialistic. Yet we as women want the same things for our families – health, happiness and enough money to support an attractive life style. We want the world to be fair, tolerant and just – as she did and still does.

It is this continuum from mother to daughter that heals and improves the world even as we know the world will never be perfect.

I tell you this to put into some form of context the discussions of the RWC and our commitment to the quality of life in rural areas and the sustainability of our communities. We endeavour to move mountains slowly yet surely.

The issues we discuss reflect contemporary events whilst others have a more long term perspective. At our February meeting, the effects of the recent floods received an airing as so many people and communities had been affected. Somewhat ironically, we also mused on the long term effects of the drought.

Equitable water usage remains high on our list; as does carbon farming initiatives and the need to reinforce the image of farmers as keepers of the environment to urban dwellers.

Some newer issues include the difficulty in keeping young people employed on farms and in persuading them they have to be patient before they can assume the boss's mantle. This is complicated by the

opportunities they have off farm, including the dollars offered in the mining industry.

The safety of ATV's and the need for roll bars was raised – the problem here is who takes the responsibility for the roll bar. This is an issue that rings true with me. Whilst I have never been on a motorbike, I felt confident the first time I mounted, started and rode a quad bike. I could have been a statistic when we reached a steep dip in the track, the ascent of which was crowned by a tree. The tree and I had a sudden and dramatic friendship. My pride was dented but not my body. We all have stories like this – stories that illustrate the need to ensure the safety of all who work, and play, on farm machinery.

Perhaps one of the most controversial issues facing rural communities is the interface between Mining/Coal Seam Gas and country towns. I was recently in Roma, Qld and a very informative woman in the Visitor Information Centre told me that the Primary Schools Cross Country Competitors and families had little chance of finding accommodation due to the monopoly mining companies had on accommodation – they had to be bedded down in school halls. The motel we stayed in had an application before council for 25 more rooms, such is the demand for mining staff accommodation. The balance between big business and employment and the wellbeing of towns is out of kilter when those employed fly in/fly out (or drive in/out in the case of Roma) as they have family commitments elsewhere and are unable to contribute to the community they work in.

LAUNCH OF DARING TO DREAM 2

This year The Sydney Royal Easter Show put aside a day to acknowledge Excellence in Agriculture. As part of this, the new Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson was invited to launch *Daring to Dream 2* and in turn I was invited to attend the launch.

It was an impressive and formal ceremony in the central arena. I am glad I was warned that I needed to wear a hat and I was pleased that I had a hat of suitable quality to wear as this was such a prestigious event.

The Minister told the crowd how proud she was to be the first woman Minister

for Primary Industries. Somehow I felt prouder when she acknowledged the NSW Rural Women's Council and I knew we had achieved much and would achieve more as our name reverberated around the arena.

One of the women featured in *Daring to Dream 2* is Sharon Dundon, whom I mentioned in the last *Country Web*, for the work she is doing to improve animal welfare in the Middle East. With the current debate about the live animal trade and as the Middle East readies itself for Eid, the Celebration of Sacrifice, her role has gained more importance than she ever realised.

She is just one of the 25 women whose stories appear in this significant celebration of rural women and their achievements. Read their stories with a glass of champagne in your hand and salute them and yourself.

2011 AUSTRALIAN RIRDC RURAL WOMEN'S AWARD

In May, the State winners of the RIRDC Rural Women's Award gathered in the Great Hall of our national Parliament House together with industry representatives, politicians, past finalists and families for the announcement of the Australian winner.

Even though Karen Hutchinson, our State finalist, was not successful, her composure and her belief in herself made her a winner we can be proud of. Sally Martin, our

runner-up, is so enthusiastic about the opportunities that lay before her that she has begun another project to help the sheep industry.

WOMEN'S GATHERINGS

I had the honour of being asked to be one of the speakers at the first gathering of women from the Taralga community. It was organised by Kirstie Chalker who felt it was timely to acknowledge the way women have striven for the recognition of their rights whilst working for the vigour of their communities. She was overwhelmed by the number of women who attended and acknowledged the importance of their presence and friendship. The success of the evening proved the importance of one woman's vision.

The **2011 Gloucester Women's Gathering** is scheduled for 13-16 October and takes the theme of 'Friendship and Dreaming Beneath the Bucketts'. Please come and share the fellowship and the joy with other women.

Even at nearly ninety, my mother remains '6'6" and 16 stone – in my eyes, a colossus who passed on the values so pertinent to her family and so reflective of the changing world she lives in. So remember, all women are 6'6" and 16 stone and can move more than mountains.



On Saturday 14 May 2011, the 1st Taralga Women's Night was held. Organised by Kirstie Chalker and funded by the Department of Primary Industries, 67 local women shared a meal, listened to inspiring speakers and afterwards, danced the night away! A number of women have volunteered to run next year's Taralga Women's Night and to have more regular social events during the year. Pictured above is Kirstie Chalker with special guest speakers: Sophie Cummins, Martha Graham, Nerida Cullen and Anne Muir.

New National Rural Women's Network

The new National Rural Women's Network (NRWN) is an initiative of the National Rural Women's Coalition, connecting rural, regional and remote women around Australia in ways never seen before.

National Rural Women's Coalition Chair Karen Tully said, 'the new National Network belongs to every rural, regional and remote woman in the country, and we need you to help us to develop it into a strong network dedicated to improving the lives of all rural women, their families and communities.'

The Network is being developed in response to the 2008 National Rural Women's Summit which brought together 82 diverse rural and regional women to discuss issues important to them, their industries and the wider rural sector.

A website is being developed along with a detailed social networking strategy to encompass both online and offline communication technologies which will see the network grow and connect women from all over the country to strengthen their communities, expand opportunities and build a better future.

Network staff are currently working on establishing a comprehensive list of key rural women's networks and organisations across Australia. If you belong to a network and would like to link in with the National Rural Women's Network please contact us.

For more information or if you would like to draw attention to an issue, call 03 5422 3238, Email: eo@nrwc.org.au or see: www.nrwc.com.au. Visit the website to sign up as a member and receive a regular newsletter.



information technology ■ protect your privacy online

By Kate Needham, Internal Communications Manager, Trade & Investment, Regional Infrastructure & Services

For many of us, the internet has become part of our daily routine for keeping in touch with friends and family, working, studying, shopping, and paying bills. While the internet has changed our lives and made a lot of these things easier, there are safety and security risks associated with its use. Fortunately, there are things you can do to ensure you stay safe and secure:

Limit the amount of personal information you share

- Treat personal information with care and only give it to people or organisations you know or trust. Don't disclose information that can be used to identify you (e.g. drivers licence, Medicare no., birth date, address) through email or online unless you know or trust the other person or organisation.
- Don't give your email address out without needing to. Consider setting up a separate email to use online, and use your primary account for friends and other people you know.
- Never respond to requests for personal information in an unexpected email, even if it looks

like it's from your bank or an organisation you trust.

- Never send your personal, credit card or online account details via email.

Check the privacy settings of websites that you use

- Read a website's privacy policy before giving your email address or personal information online. Only use websites that at least tell you why the information is being collected, how it will be used, who it will be passed on to, and how you can access the information the organisation holds about you.
- Make sure you are on a secure site before making purchases online; the web address will start with 'https' instead of just 'http', and a key or padlock icon will appear on your browser.

Use privacy settings on social networking sites

- When using social networking sites, such as Facebook, adjust the privacy settings to control the amount and type of information you share, so that people you don't know can only see certain parts of your profile.

- Don't post photos of family or friends without asking them first, and ask them to do the same.

- Remember that information you post online is potentially there forever.

Use strong passwords

- Set strong passwords, and change them at least twice a year, or more regularly for sensitive transactions such as banking.
- Use a combination of numbers, letters and symbols, and never use personal information such as your date of birth or address in a password.
- Use different passwords for different accounts, so that if one password is stolen, not all of your accounts will be at risk.

Secure your computer against security risks

- Install security software that protects your computer from viruses, malware and spyware, and includes a firewall. Ensure it is set to update automatically, and remember to renew your subscription when it's due.

- Update your web browser and enable its security settings.

- Stay up-to-date with the latest security threats. Sign up for alerts at www.ssoalertservice.net.au

- Avoid using public computers or wi-fi connections to access personal information or do online banking. If you do use public computers always clear the history, close the browser and log out.

- Secure wireless networks at home or in your business by setting a password and ensuring network encryption is turned on.

- Think carefully before you click on links or attachments, especially in emails from people you don't know, or on social networking sites. Delete suspicious emails without opening them.

If you think your personal information has been stolen:

- Notify your financial institutions
- Change your passwords
- Lodge a complaint at www.privacy.gov.au

More information on staying safe online is available at: www.staysmartonline.gov.au

WEB WATCH: Compiled by Allison Priest, RWN Project Coordinator

www.sgaonline.org.au

Do your bit for the environment this spring with some great sustainable gardening tips and tricks from Sustainable Gardening Australia. The site features hundreds of useful factsheets, event listings and workshop details, a discussion forum and more. You can also sign-up to receive *Cuttings* – a free monthly e-newsletter.

www.healthforwomen.org.au

For women who continue to put themselves last, it's time to make your health a priority. Health for Women provides information on common health issues that affect women as well as resources, fact sheets, regular health tips, a health topic finder and more. You can also subscribe to their free monthly email updates.

www.biteback.org.au

This new website is targeted at 12–18 year olds and is designed to help them maintain their mental health and fitness by sharing real life personal stories. The site features a blog, a real stories section where they can read about others experiences and a mental fitness centre where they can take a fitness check-up.



itsanhonour.gov.au

Women are still under-represented on the Queens Birthday Honours List. Think about nominating rural women achievers!

Every man needs . . .

The Shed Online

'Every man needs a shed, but not everyone has one, so we're building Australia's biggest shed—and it's online. The more men, the bigger the shed.' JEFF KENNETT

The Shed Online is a place for men to get together, join in activities and talk about what's on their mind. You can discuss interests and issues, share projects, showcase work and learn new skills. You can look around whenever you like and, if you think you'd enjoy hanging out, just register so you can join in the activities and discussions.

The Shed Online aims to replicate the positive things men get from being in their own sheds or a community Men's Shed, with inspiration coming from the 400 plus Men's Sheds which are thriving in Australia. *beyondblue* Chairman Jeff Kennett says, 'we want men who don't have a local Men's Shed to have the opportunity to be part of a community, to socialise, make new friends and maybe work on a project together. The Shed Online ticks all those boxes, but instead of it happening in a real shed, it happens in a virtual shed.'

So for you men out there, even if you're a bit shy at first, you'll be able to chat to mates, get information about a whole range of topics including health, learn about DIY projects and hopefully, eventually, you'll feel like you belong to this community . . . and it doesn't matter where you live.

Joining up and joining in is easy and it's free. Simply go to www.theshedonline.org.au and register to become a member and then you can participate in the discussion forums.

Cut your power bills

There is a range of support available to NSW households and businesses for their energy bills, ranging from rebates and financial assistance to free programs to help cut down bills. To access support, speak to your energy retailer, call the Energy Information Line on 1300 136 888 or go to: www.dtiris.nsw.gov.au/energy/cutyourpowerbills to find out how you can cut your power bills.

We need you to get behind Doctors4theBush

National and international evidence shows that if you train rural students to be doctors and other health professionals in the bush, they will remain working in the bush.

The Doctors4theBush website is for supporters to stay up-to-date, register support and gain information on rural doctor shortages: www.csu.edu.au/doctors/home The companion Facebook page provides an opportunity for people to share their own stories and provide comments: www.facebook.com/doctors4thebush

Rural Australia has half the number of doctors compared to our capital cities, and chronic shortages of other essential health professionals. This shortage has persisted for more than 40 years. In a recent survey, 63 per cent of rural respondents said they weren't able to access a variety of health services in the past year because of a shortage or absence of health professionals in their area.

Sadly 4600 rural Australians die unnecessarily each year in one of the world's most developed nations, simply because of where they live.

Community Connect

Southern Cross Community Connect is a new service that offers organisations the opportunity to showcase community events on radio, TV and online for free. If you're a not-for-profit organisation, or you're holding an event fundraising for a charity group (donating 100 per cent of profits), or your event is community focused, you can use the service. Announcements are subject to approval, however if your event is selected you will receive a 30 second announcement on Southern Cross Ten, 105.9 Star FM and 105.1 2GZ. Announcements are broadcast daily at various times. To get started simply go to: www.mycommunityconnect.com.au



New website encourages teen vaccination against cervical cancer

The Cancer Council is hoping a new website targeting teenage girls will encourage greater uptake of the cervical cancer vaccine. Research suggests that uptake of the vaccine is not as high as it could be, and that some parents have misgivings about the vaccine as they feel that by allowing their daughters to have it they are encouraging sexual activity. The website: www.cervicalcancervaccine.org.au aims to ensure that parents and teenagers are fully informed about the vaccine and its benefits. It can protect against two types of human papillomavirus that cause 70% of cervical cancer. Girls can receive the vaccine free of charge at school at age 12—13.

Source: www.acys.info/yfx/issues/number_175/news/new_website_encourages_teen_vaccination_against_cervical_cancer

Communication for Farm Families

A Guide to Communication for Farm Families looks at the importance of effective communication and building communication skills among family members and their advisers. The guide provides families with real life examples of the challenges and outcomes facing a family business, drawing on family structures and plans emanating from family meetings – how they play out in reality and how they might guide future plans. It also provides tools to put into practice to enhance communication.

Published by the Grains Research & Development Corporation, the guide is available free (you will need to pay \$10 post and handling). Call 1800 110 044 or Email: ground-cover-direct@canprint.com.au

Pro bono legal advice for indigenous non-profit corporations

LawHelp is a new service started by the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations and volunteer lawyers giving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations registered under the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 access to legal help. Through LawHelp, corporations can get help with the contract negotiations, intellectual property arrangements, property management, tax issues and employment management. Eligible corporations include medical services, native title bodies, community stores, art centres, media organisations and those delivering key environmental health, municipal and remote services. **For more information contact the LawHelp secretariat on freecall 1800 622 431 (not free from mobiles), Email: LawHelp@oric.gov.au or see: www.oric.gov.au**

Pregnancy, Birth & Baby Website and Helpline: 1800 882 436

A new website and helpline provides general health information on topics including pregnancy, birthing and parenting in the first 12 months. You'll find advice and helpful hints on a range of topics like: the early signs of pregnancy and trimesters of pregnancy, screening tests, crying babies, safe sleep and growing and learning with babies. The website is an initiative of the Commonwealth Government to increase access to quality health information for all Australians.

For more information call 1800 882 436 24 hours a day or see: www.healthdirect.org.au/pbb

New Quad Bike Rider Guide

Accidents involving quad bikes are now among the leading causes of injury death on Australian farms. Most deaths are due to crush injury from a roll-over or from the victim being flung onto a hard surface. Owners and operators of quad bikes must take steps to protect riders. Visit the Australian Centre for Agricultural Health & Safety (University of Sydney) website to view their new policy statement in relation to rollover protection devices for quad bikes and to download their updated guide, *Safe use of quad bikes and side-by-side vehicles on Australian farms*. **www.aghealth.org.au**

Helping grandchildren affected by family separation



Children go through a range of emotions when their parents separate. They may not know how to ask for help or how to deal with their feelings or thoughts. Grandparents can play an important role in helping their grandchild during this time. It's important to reassure children that they are not alone, that what they are thinking or how they are feeling is ok and, most importantly, it is not their fault.

Grandparents can access two new resources to help their grandchildren better understand separation and the various emotions associated with it. A new activity book, *Our family's changed* is designed to be read by children aged 5–7 with a trusted adult. It encourages younger children to ask questions and talk about how they are feeling or thinking about their parents' separation. The book has fun activities for children to do, which will help them go over what they have learnt from the story.

A computer game on CD-ROM, *A kid's guide to changing families* has been developed for children aged 8–12. It covers some of the questions children may have about their parents' separation, the thoughts or feelings they may have and the changes they may experience. There's also a section for adults, which provides useful information and practical advice about helping children to cope with their feelings, accepting the situation and adapting to change.

To order a copy of *Our family's changed* or *A kid's guide to changing families* call 1800 040 972 or you can access the resources online at: www.csa.gov.au

Source: Centrelink News for Seniors Spring/Summer 2010

Where is the art?

Artists and art lovers wanting to know what's happening in the Orana and Central West regions now have access to a single website dedicated to listing artists, art groups, galleries and art suppliers in an area covering Lithgow to Bourke, Young to Walgett and beyond – covering the three regional arts board areas of Outback Arts, Orana Arts and Arts OutWest. The online directory called Where is the Art? (WITA), is the initiative of Kim Goldsmith (featured in RWN's *Daring to Dream* book series).

For more information go to: www.whereistheart.com.au or to subscribe to receive regular e-news updates from WITA go to: www.whereistheart.com.au/e-news_subscription_17.html

LawAccess NSW

LawAccess NSW is a free and confidential phone service for people who have a legal problem or questions about issues including: debt and credit, family law, fines and traffic offences, employment law, criminal law, domestic and family violence, consumer law, motor vehicle accidents, or planning ahead (wills, powers of attorney, enduring guardianship). The service can provide legal information over the phone, refer you to other legal assistance services and in some cases arrange for a LawAccess Lawyer to call you and provide legal advice over the phone for family, civil and criminal matters. The service operates from 9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays). Regional, rural and remote customers are given priority. Aboriginal Customer Service Officers are also available. **Call 1300 888 529 (calls from mobile phones may be charged at higher rates) or see: www.lawaccess.nsw.gov.au for more information and to access a range of free information and resources.**

Heart

Heart is a new magazine to celebrate and showcase the achievements of Indigenous women. It's available online and in print and covers topics such as sport, health, fashion, beauty, arts, archaeology and heritage, theatre, music, dance, parenting/families, travel, and everything else that's relevant to the heart of Indigenous women. The aim is to encourage, delight, uplift, inspire and respect.

For more information or to subscribe to *Heart* see: www.claritypress.com.au/Resources/Heart-Magazine.aspx

NOW WHAT? A YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE TO DEALING WITH CANCER

This book has practical tips and advice to help young people deal with their diagnosis and the challenges that come with it. There are two versions – one for 12–15 year olds and one for 16–24 year olds.

To order, call 1800 669 942 or email: nowwhatresources@canteen.org.au

DARING TO DREAM 2: STORIES FROM INSPIRATIONAL RURAL WOMEN

Daring to Dream 2 is a tribute to the many women from rural, regional and remote backgrounds who have dared to follow a passion, overcome challenges and make their goals a reality. Their stories display creativity, perseverance and resilience. Twenty-five incredibly diverse women from across NSW share their knowledge and experiences to provide inspiration and ideas for others who may want to start out on a 'daring to dream' journey of their own. Like the first collection of stories in *Daring to Dream*, *DTD2* celebrates and recognises rural women who are playing key roles as innovators and achievers and/or agents of change within a wide range of industries, business, community, sport, the arts and natural resources.

To order, (\$11 incl. GST, Cat no. B930) contact the Department of Primary Industries Bookshop 1800 028 374



Big Rain Coming

Written by Katrina Germein and Bronwyn Bancroft, *Big Rain Coming* is a lyrical story about waiting for the rain to come to an isolated Aboriginal community. Tension in the community builds as the rain clouds thicken and grow dark. Everybody waits. When will the rain come? ISBN: 9780143500452

Grantseeker Manual

Do you have something important that you need to get done in your community and you're looking for funding? The *Grantseeker Manual* is a starter kit to introduce you to the basics of grantseeking. It will help you understand how to research potential funders; make sure you've planned your project well; communicate with potential funders; and write a good grant application.

Writing a good grant application is not easy and you do need to put adequate work, thought and time into preparing it. You also have to be realistic and understand where your idea might fit in with the priorities and needs of those providing the money. But while it's not easy, it's simpler than you might think, and it's always worth applying – nobody's going to give you anything if you don't ask for it.

The manual can be download for free from: www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au/grantseekermanualfinal.pdf



We'd love to hear from you,
so why not send us a postcard
or photo from where you live,
and share your news and views!
Post to: The Country Web,
Locked Bag 21, Orange 2800.

I took this picture looking back towards the house at Kimberley Station, 140 km south of Broken Hill NSW. It was taken around the time of the first major drought breaking rain in October 2010. Little did we know that this flower would be about 4 feet under water by the 11th of January 2011, when we had 420 points of rain in one day and 386 points over the next two days. My parents haven't seen Sturt Desert Peas in the last 15 years, so to see one at the house delighted them. Our paddocks have been matted with Sturt Desert Peas since then and with the memories of the drought still fresh in my father's mind, he drives around them when on the road, preserving these seasonal beauties. *Lee-Ann Bright, Kimberley Station*

Visit the Rural Women's Network internet site at
www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn



Daring to Dream 2

DTD2 features 25 incredibly diverse women from NSW and includes high profile leaders alongside many remarkable 'unsung' heroines. Their stories display creativity, perseverance and resilience. Each freely shares their knowledge and experience to provide inspiration and ideas for others wanting to start their own daring to dream journey.

'Daring to Dream 2' costs \$11 incl. GST plus post & packaging.
Cat No. B930. To order contact Department of Primary Industries
Bookshop on 1800 028 374 or go to: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn/aboutus/resources/bookshop/daring-to-dream-2



Primary
Industries



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NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

P/CODE: _____

PHONE: _____

☐ Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background ☐ Culturally & Linguistically diverse background

Age Group: ☐ <20 ☐ 20s ☐ 30s ☐ 40s ☐ 50s ☐ 60s ☐ 70s ☐ 80s+

The Privacy & Personal Information Protection Act 1998 obliges the Rural Women's Network to make you aware of the purposes for which we might use the contact details you have supplied us with. This information will be used by RWN for the purposes of disseminating information (including mailouts). Any information supplied by you to RWN will not be disclosed to any other person unless prior consent has been given.