

• FOR RURAL WOMEN & THEIR FAMILIES •

The Country Web

WOMEN OF INFLUENCE

FREE NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 59 SPRING 2013



rural women's network
connecting regional & remote NSW

HOW TO BE HEARD ■ SCONE WOMEN'S GATHERING PROGRAM ■ A GIRL'S WAY

contents

THE COUNTRY WEB

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

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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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FEATURES

6 Changing lives one sister at a time

Winner of the 2013 People's Choice Community Hero Woman of the Year Award, Jessica Brown, is the CEO of Life Changing Experiences Foundation and it's SISTER2Sister mentoring program. Through her work she is positively changing the lives of future generations by turning walls into bridges.

9 Tanya takes the lead

Tanya Cameron is the new State President of The Country Women's Association of New South Wales. She says she plans to approach future challenges with creative thinking, and open mind and frank discussion, maintaining the association's heritage, value and reputation.

10 Different shades

Alison Page is a well-known artist, teacher and award winning designer. She is also the Executive Officer of the Saltwater Freshwater Arts Alliance—a group which supports elders to pass on cultural knowledge to young people. She has worked hard to get to where she is and is passionate about sharing her learning and knowledge with others.

25 How prepared are you? Farm business succession planning

Sometimes it can seem like a huge task with too many difficult decisions to address, however the sooner decisions are discussed, the more choices are likely to be available to the family—it's never too late to start!



15

The choices your daughter makes now will build the foundation for the woman she will become. Guest article by Catherine Gerhardt of Kidproof



19

Program and registration details for the 2013 annual NSW Women's Gathering to be hosted by Scone this October.

REGULAR FEATURES

3	Editorial	15	Parenting	32	Women Leaders
3	Calendar	24	Communities in focus	36	Social media
4	Letters	28	Health	37	What's on, What's new?
5	Across my desk	28	Grants/Funding	38	Resources
12	Men's Matters				

editorial – women of influence

I'm delighted to have been asked to write the editorial for this particularly special edition of *The Country Web*, which will focus on women of influence. And—as the cover suggests—there are some incredibly talented and influential women featured.

There is a story on Jessica Brown, the founder and chief executive of the Life Changing Experiences Foundation and its Sister2Sister mentoring program. This program has changed the lives of hundreds of young women across NSW and Jessica has been recognised for this achievement by being named the Premier's 2013 People's Choice Community Hero Woman of the Year.

The other two remarkable women on the front cover are Alison Page and Tanya Cameron.

Alison is an award-winning designer and the Executive Officer of the Saltwater Freshwater Arts Alliance, and was a regular panellist on ABC's *New Inventors*.

A descendent of the Walbanga and Wadi Wadi people of the Yuin national, Alison has also participated in an expert advisory panel appointment by former Prime Minister Julia Gillard as part of the constitutional recognition of indigenous people.

Tanya Cameron is the new State president of the Country Women's Association of NSW. This not-for-profit association is still going strong, close to a century after it was first formed in 1922.

A notable article in this edition—and one I am particularly looking forward to reading—is a piece on the importance of succession planning by the 2013 NSW-ACT RIRDC Rural Women's Award winner, Isobel Knight.

Isobel is empowering farming families right across NSW through her online succession planning platform. The positive effects of successful succession planning will be long term, resulting in stronger, more vibrant communities.

As I announced recently, applications for the 2014 RIRDC Rural Women's Award are open until October 31. I encourage anyone with a commitment and desire to making a real difference to their industry and the community to nominate for this rural leadership award.

The award is an important celebration of women achievers who are helping to create sustainable and dynamic primary industries and are making an enormous contribution to rural communities across Australia.

The award has now been running for 14 years, during which time we have discovered more than 180 extremely focused women who are driving innovation and building resilience within primary industries and their rural communities.

The winner of the 2014 award will receive a bursary of \$10 000 and both the winner and runner-up will participate in the RIRDC Australian Institute of Company Directors' Course.



The Hon. Katrina Hodgkinson MP
Minister for Primary Industries
Minister for Small Business

Away from the Rural Women's Award, the Parliamentary Secretary for Natural Resources, Troy Grant, will launch the 2013 Hidden Treasures Honour Role at the annual NSW Rural Women's Gathering in Scone from October 25-27. The Honour Roll recognises rural women volunteers and will contain about 100 women who have been nominated by members of their community.

Thank you again for the opportunity to write this editorial, and I hope you enjoy this issue of *The Country Web*.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2013

OCTOBER

15, WORLD RURAL WOMEN'S DAY
This special day recognises the critical role and contribution of rural women, including indigenous women, in enhancing agricultural and rural development, improving food security and eradicating rural poverty. Find out more at: www.un.org/en/events/ruralwomenday

16, CANBERRA
2013 Australian RIRDC Rural Women's Award Dinner.
This special dinner will bring together our 2013 State and Territory winners and runners-

up to celebrate their remarkable achievements and to announced the 2013 Australian winner and runner-up.

25-27, SCONE
Annual NSW Rural Women's Gathering. With a fantastic line-up of speakers, over 70 workshops and tours on offer, and a host of other great activities you don't want to miss the 2013 Women's Gathering! Program and registration details are included as a special 4-page pull-out—see pages 19-22.

26, SCONE
Launch of the 2013 Hidden Treasures Honour Roll. This annual Honour Roll acknowledges the

important volunteer roles women play within NSW rural communities and provides a platform to pay tribute to rural women volunteers who donate their time and energy to help others. About 100 women will be featured in this year's Honour Roll—available to download from the RWN website after the launch.

31, NATIONAL
Close of applications for 2014 RIRDC Rural Women's Award.
Encourages women's contribution to primary industries and rural Australia by providing skills and resources to build leadership and decision making capacity. To apply or for more information see the RWN website or call 02 6391 3620.

WHAT'S NEXT?

The next edition of *The Country Web* has the theme 'Tomorrow's Leaders'. It will showcase young rural, regional and remote women who are actively involved in their industry and communities. We invite stories from younger women (15-35) and from people who work directly with younger women.

Contributions are due 18 November for publication in March 2014. Send your contribution to: *The Country Web*, Locked Bag 21, ORANGE 2800 or email: allison.priest@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Congratulations

Sonia and Allison, congratulations on your continuing great work with the Rural Women's Network. Please also extend my congratulations to the other two members of your team. The Network has contributed significantly to the rural population over the past two decades, and not only to the rural women. My rural connections frequently mention the Network and I am always interested to read *The Country Web* which I pass on to other family members. I was particularly pleased to see in the last edition that Fran Rowe has been named 2012 Woman of the Year. She certainly deserves the recognition after the many years of significant contributions to the rural community. Please pass on my sincere and heartiest congratulations to her.

Kevin Sheridan AO, Orange

Pride in our past

Just a note to express my sincere thanks for the book *Silver Plains* that you sent me as a result of my winning entry in your book giveaway

Book competition winners

Congratulations to our winners in the Number 58 Autumn 2013 reader giveaway.

TWO FARMS by Bett

Taylor: Grace Brown, Lower Belford; **Catherine Chaseling,** Rutherford; and **Jenny Magner,** Tenterfield.

SILVER PLAINS by

Doreen Angove: Dorothy Caldwell, Deniliquin; **Anne Hayes,** Goulburn; **Dale McIntosh,** Stockinbingal; and **Elvy Quirk,** Forbes.

YUM, YUM, WHERE DOES IT COME FROM by Cathie

& Emily Colless: Carole Corbett, Parkes and **Donna Nevin,** Killarney.

competition. Being an avid reader I am thoroughly enjoying this delightful novel. It was a lovely surprise to receive your package in the mail, it made quite a change from the mundane mail (window faced variety) that normally gets left in my mail box.

Dorothy Caldwell, Deniliquin

Pride in our past

My grandmother Lucie Brewer was a very prepossessing lady. Lucie was tall, well built and a very strict woman. Although a Victorian 'transplanted' to Sydney, Lucie has achieved much in her life; including at one time holding the record for a woman to ride a two-wheeled bicycle from Sydney to Melbourne (in a skirt!).

Lucie has always been very much involved in her community. Just before World War 2, she and her husband were involved in the foundation of the Manly Golf Club. Lucie's official roles were Treasurer and Club Ladies Captain for several years; however, she involved herself fully in the club. Over the years Lucie has been involved in numerous other organisations carrying out either official or volunteer roles of some description, one of which was the Catholic United Service Auxiliaries' Voluntary Aide Detachment's making camouflage nets for the soldiers in the war.

Lucie and her husband had two sons—Peter who died in WW2 and my father who visited his mother every Sunday to see if she needed anything done (her husband had died by this time). When I stayed overnight with her we nearly always had pressed tongue for tea. Needless to say it is not a favourite of mine today. I certainly had to do as I was told!

Lucie's strength has not waned over the years and even at the age of 92 she flew up to visit with us and helped me with her four month old great grandson. She also helped to feed the poddy calf and did other country jobs! Lucie's core values of inner strength, completing a job and to care for others have been instilled in me

over the years and I have learnt that in the end you are the only one who can help yourself prepare for a life in the west of NSW to handle all life throws at you.

Julian Campbell, Warren

Parkinson's Disease support and resources

About 15 months ago I was dealing with what I thought was an old football injury to my finger/hand. Due to the expertise of a Riverina Hand Therapy staff member I was referred to a neurologist who diagnosed me, at 54 years of age, with early stage Parkinson's Disease.

I have since benefitted from seminars organised by the Wagga Wagga Parkinson's Support Group. They produce a newsletter and can be contacted through Sue Ryan on 02 6926 2004. You can also contact the NSW Parkinson's Group who organise excellent seminars and have some great publications at: www.parkinsonsnsw.org.au

Following one of these seminars I booked in to attend a monthly Parkinson's Clinic at Aged Care Services, The Forrest Centre (Ph: 02 6932 3015) where I was interviewed by a physiotherapist, dietician, speech therapist, occupational therapist and social worker. Arrangements were then made for an occupational therapist to visit my office to review my seating. I also undertook a four-week specialist LSVT (Lee Silverman Voice Treatment) BIG Program at The Forrest Centre by Physiotherapist, Merrin Moran. This program aims to change perception and thought processing so that there are improvements, both mentally and physically, including my left hand, arm and side. (Refer to: www.lsvtglobal.com for program details).

The other good news is that Murrumbidgee Medicare Local have employed a Parkinson's Nurse (Ph: 02 6923 3100).

Thank you to all those people who have shared their knowledge about Parkinson's Disease.

Bill Thompson, Coolamon



Country Care Link

CARING FOR COUNTRY FAMILIES

A confidential family information and support service for Country NSW, *Country Care Link* provides:

- a volunteer to meet country people in Sydney (48 hours notice necessary for transport: exceptions in emergency situations)
- assistance to find short-term accommodation for country people in the city
- a referral service to find information
- referrals for confidential personal counselling
- a friendly voice for a chat
- visits (on request) for country people in hospital.

Country Care Link

Monday to Friday

9.30 am to 3 pm

Ph: 1800 806 160 or

02 8382 6434



across my desk ■ allison priest



RWN Team: Novelle Hasling, Sonia Muir, Emma Regan and Allison Priest

Rural Women's Network is a statewide government program working in innovative ways to share information and promote action on rural women's issues. RWN can help 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 2 day self-development workshop
- Annual NSW Rural Women's Gathering
- Hidden Treasures: recognising rural women volunteers

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W: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn

Blog: <http://nswruralwomensnetwork.wordpress.com>

Twitter: @NSW_RWN

YouTube: youtube.com/nswrwn

This *Country Web* has a special focus on women and celebrating the many and varied roles they play—it celebrates daughters, sisters, mothers, grandmothers, great grandmothers—women who inspire us through their own lives and who encourage us to live our lives to the full and to take an active role in our families and communities.

In putting together this special edition I recall the influence my Grandmother, Millie, had on me. She was a big hearted woman with so much love and affection to share. Throughout her life she displayed courage and determination and could put her hand to anything.

It wasn't long after my grandparents married that they lost everything they possessed, except the clothes they stood up in, when their house burnt to the ground. Not one to dwell on the 'negative' she picked herself up and started to rebuild their lives.

Grandma and Grandad did everything together. Grandad once told a story about her being mistaken for a mechanic! He said she was under the truck dressed in overalls helping him with the maintenance. He said she was a good mechanic and could turn her hand to anything.

For me, Grandma's speciality was her cooking. I remember happily so many family gatherings where she had the table piled high with scrumptious food—two of the favourites were her homemade sausage rolls and her cream puffs.

Grandma used to cook for the shearers and worked catering for the saleyards' canteen in Orange.

She would think nothing of preparing breakfast for 40 and then cooking dinner for 100, all on her own. When she started work she eared 10 shillings (one dollar) a week—and out of that she helped her father register his car, bought shoes for her sisters and helped the family, as well as paying her own way.

Gardening was something Grandma and Grandad enjoyed together. They always had a good vegetable patch and a magnificent flower garden. I spent many hours going up and down the isles of the huge vegie plots picking fresh produce—the strawberries were my favourite.

Throughout her life, Grandma had strong pride in her church and community and at times I would join her and Grandad as they delivered Meals on Wheels. They would always take a little extra time to have a chat and make sure the people they were delivering meals to knew there was someone out there who cared and would take the time to sit and talk.

I hope that I can live up to the example she set for our family and that my daughter will too grow up to be a strong, independent and caring woman.

The Rural Women's Network team are always working to support women and their families and communities and to provide access to information and opportunities. By doing so we hope to build resilience within communities and to assist women to develop their skills and knowledge. Some of the ways we do this is through key initiatives including the RIRDC Rural Women's Award,

the Hidden Treasures Honour Roll, the annual NSW Rural Women's Gatherings and Rural Women Connect (RWConnect). To find out more about these initiatives, or to apply for the 2014 Rural Women's Award visit our website.

RWN now has Twitter, Blog and YouTube accounts so we invite you to connect with us and stay up to date with the latest news and information. There is a great article by columnist Kate Needham in our 'social media' feature that will give you ideas and tools to do this (see Pg36). You can also read about our RWConnect initiative (see Pg34).

I hope to see some of you at this years annual Rural Women's Gathering in Scone. If you do make the trip make sure to visit the RWN display and say hi!



Fancy hosting the 2015 NSW Rural Women's Gathering

RWN is looking for communities interested in hosting the 2015 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. **Submissions will open 1 January and close 31 March 2014. For more details contact RWN.**

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



Changing lives one sister at a time

Jessica Brown is the founder and CEO of Life Changing Experiences Foundation and its SISTER2Sister mentoring program, which has changed the lives of hundreds of young women across NSW. She is also the winner of the 2013 People's Choice Community Hero Woman of the Year Award.

For most people, it is easier just to be a bystander but not for this young powerhouse. Jessica is committed to helping disadvantaged and underprivileged young girls by giving them the chance to break the cycle of destitution and abuse. The SISTER2Sister mentoring program is designed to empower 'at risk' teenage girls to make positive choices for a better future. Each Little Sister is matched with a Big Sister role model who is a professional woman from the community.

Jessica oversees up to 50 Big and Little Sisters each year, along with a team of leaders and volunteer psychologists. Her passion and determination for this generation to have a better future is what drives her. She is the one on the end of the phone in the middle of the night, finding emergency accommodation for the girls, or counselling them through experiences no person should ever have to endure.

Jessica has encouraged young women to complete school and to pursue university studies, with some SISTER2Sister graduates being the first in their family to have a job.

In 2010 Jessica suffered her own personal tragedy when her younger brother was killed in a violent crime. Her extraordinary compassion was further established when she found out the man convicted of killing her brother had experienced a life of poverty, violence and abuse. This fuelled her passion to ensure that vulnerable teenage girls are given the necessary support to overcome domestic abuse, strive for an education and are prepared for motherhood.

In 2011, Jessica co-wrote her first book, *Cooked with love: Recipes my mother taught me*, with all the proceeds from sales of the book going to the SISTER2Sister program.

'By helping one vulnerable girl at a time, we are positively changing the lives of future generations to come by turning walls into bridges.'

No matter what the obstacle, Jessica finds a way to ensure her work continues. As she says, 'By helping one vulnerable girl at a time, we are positively changing the lives of future generations to come by turning walls into bridges.'

Jessica's goal is to roll the SISTER2sister program out nationally so that they can help as many teenage girls as possible to make positive choices for a better future. She says they are fortunate to have long waiting

lists of volunteers throughout Australia who wish to be Big Sister mentors.

Jessica hopes to raise the necessary funds through a national campaign called Step up for SISTERHOOD—a day where women all over Australia can kick off their normal work shoes and slip into their most

statement shoes. The campaign is all about "Stomping out abuse and neglect". The inaugural event will take place on December 6 and it is hoped that it will grow each year.

Jessica has changed the course of hundreds of young women's lives—making her a true community hero. So how did this powerhouse, who is an inspiration to many younger women, come to this point in her career? We asked Jessica to tell us about her childhood growing

up in the Northern Beaches of Sydney, what led her to her current career, and where she gains her inspiration from.

'I am the eldest of four children and grew up in the Northern Beaches of Sydney. All four of us attended the local high school and played in the school band, which led me to pursue a career as a music teacher after completing a Bachelor of Music Education degree at the University of NSW. After teaching high school for 10 years, and loving every minute of it, I realised that I had an entrepreneurial spark inside of me that wasn't going away.

'After much soul searching and contemplation I kept coming back to what I was most passionate about and what I was good at. It always came back to making a difference in the community and taming unruly teenagers! I then had a light-bulb moment and realised that I knew exactly what I wanted to do and Life Changing Experiences Foundation was born that day.

'I founded the SISTER2sister program so I could make a difference and follow my dream of working with troubled teenagers.

'In terms of where I draw my inspiration from, apart from my wonderful mum (which is a given), one woman who does stand out and that I was honoured to meet on numerous occasions before she passed away was Barbara Holborow. She changed my life after I read *These Lines On My Face*, and although I was already pursuing a career in child protection, if I had the choice of who I wanted to be when I grew up it would be her.

'Barbara gave so much of herself throughout her life and never gave up fighting for the rights of children. She presented each year to my Little Sister mentees in the SISTER2sister program and each time you could have heard a pin drop. I can only dream of making the mark she did on the lives of others when it is my time to leave this world.

'One of the greatest pieces of advice I have heard was Barbara's motto: "Everyone in a community has responsibility for every child". I live by this each day and try to be the best advocate I can be.

My personal motto is: "The past does not equal the future". I believe the only reason you should look back is to reflect on how far you have come. You are a success story waiting to be written—so start writing. The only one who needs your approval is you—so go ahead and impress the pants off yourself!

My favourite quote is by Daniel Dennett: "The secret of happiness is to find something more important than you are, and dedicate your life to it." ■



Woman of substance

Walhallow's Mary Slater is the only daughter in a family of five and was bought up on an Aboriginal Mission. She later attended Quirindi High School before leaving in Year 10 to work at the local Walhallow Public School for five years. Mary then gained employment at Tamworth's Commonwealth Employment Service. Since then she has held various positions including Regional Women's Advisor with the Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Commission, Senior Training Officer with the Aboriginal Housing Office and as an Aboriginal Coordinator for the Tamworth Aboriginal Community Justice Group. She is currently employed as a Community Program Officer with Aboriginal Affairs.

Mary's words, 'Respect your elders, respect your peers, but most importantly, respect yourself', echo her incredible journey to transform her community's attitude towards domestic and family violence and child sexual abuse.

Never one to shy away from difficult or controversial

issues, Mary has galvanised her community to tackle critical issues, common to all of Australia, head on. And having grown up in Walhallow she knows the only way to effect change in attitudes among these communities is by adopting an integrated approach.

Mary established a number of different groups providing avenues for everyone in these communities to have their voices heard. She played a key role in setting up the Gurruma Women's Support Group, formed the Aboriginal Men's Group engaging Elders to ensure their input into decision-making and she oversees the Malagan-Yinarr Girls Mentor program at Quirindi High School—a program which helps more than 30 Aboriginal students with issues including health and wellbeing and career development.

A graduate of the University of Technology Sydney, Mary has successfully brought together representatives from government and the non-government sector to ensure a community approach is taken to address community issues.

It is Mary's unwavering support and passion for the welfare of the people of Walhallow, Werris Creek and Quirindi that makes her a household name in these

communities. She promotes trust among everyone that she brings together.

When asked to sum up Mary's impact on these communities, her friends and colleagues describe her as "a quiet achiever, instrumental in driving change, in particular around Aboriginal child sexual abuse, family and domestic violence."

When we asked Mary who the most influential person in her life has been she cites her Mother. 'I was raised in a very disciplined way. Mum grew up with a very strict upbringing being raised in the Aboriginal Protection/Welfare Board days. This had an impact on my upbringing in terms of school attendance and having a clean place to live.

'My two brothers and I often wonder how we have all come to have good jobs and work most of our lives. My answer is simple, because we were raised with standards, values and respect. Having this upbringing has given us a good education and a very strong work ethic.

Mary says one of the greatest pieces of advice she has received is to, 'be positive and stay strong'. She says she has applied this advice to all areas of her life including the various career paths she has taken and the goals she sets for herself.

Her favourite saying is a quote by Pamela Vaull Starr: 'Reach high, for stars lie hidden in your soul. Dream deep, for every dream precedes the goal.'

Her best piece of advice for others ... 'You are put on this Earth for a reason, so dream big and reach out and find the strength in you to reach for that goal'. ■



Dirty Girl Kitchen

Safeguarding 'granny skills'

Rebecca Sullivan is a self-taught cook and has worked with some of the world's best producers, environmental academics, activists, chefs and restaurants. As an ecoagronomist, activist, sustainable food writer, urban farmer and entrepreneur, Rebecca has worked on many a project any food lover would envy. From launching the Real Food Festival in London to working on Slow Food Nation in San Francisco, farming coffee in Uganda to teaching scientists the art of communications in the Maldives for the United Nations. Rebecca's obsession with food began in Italy, so it followed that she would become interested in the Slow Food Movement whom she spent two years working with in the UK and US organising events, campaigns and, of course, eating. She is extraordinarily passionate about heritage, tradition, sustainability and the things that we all love ... good, clean and fair produce.

Having recently re-settled in Australia Rebecca has become a popular presenter for her

simple dishes, great advice and wonderful ideas for simple sustainable recipes we can all try at home. She is also an OZ Harvest ambassador and sits on the board of the Regional Development Agency in South Australia. Her first book *'Just Like Grandma Used to Make'*, was released in April 2013.

One of her latest projects—Dirty Girl Kitchen Australia—is a community-supported cooperative inspiring women to be more in touch with the land and old crafts. She says, 'it is about bringing those communities of women from our Multi-cultural Australia together through skills that involve getting 'dirty', from growing food to making soap, brewing stock to weaving baskets.' These are what Rebecca has called "Granny Skills".

Rebecca says the idea for Dirty Girl Kitchen was dreamt up one afternoon as she stirred a boiling pot of strawberry jam staring out her window watching the autumn leaves full outside of her Cotswold cottage in Gloucestershire.

'More than just a kitchen, our mission is to safeguard our "granny skills"; by protecting food heritage, culture, skills, knowledge and tradition, passing down what grannies know best.

'Our grannies are from all sorts of places (our own included) such as the country, the city and refugee communities. We are planting kitchen gardens, making jam, curing meat and pickling every cucumber insight!

'As well as all of the exciting collaborations we are cooking up a storm and are selling their goods in delis and farmers markets, catering for all kinds of events, restaurants and people, serving up nothing but the best seasonal, nostalgic goodness.

'Our Dirty Girls are keen to help you save money by passing on ways to be thrifty and in turn helping protect mother earth.'

'In a fast-paced world, tradition and worshipful skills are being lost. We are all finding it hard to even have time to ourselves, let alone each other. Amongst the blur of daily lives, the elderly are left lonely with no-one to pass down their stories and skills to and yet a whole plethora of women young and old; and often lonely too, are crying out for a way to connect with each

other and the land again. Dirty Girl Kitchen is about bringing those women together and taking a step back.

When asked who has been the most influential women in her life Rebecca says her mother, Grandmother and Great Grandmother have definitely been a strong influence.

'They are all incredible women who have worked so hard for their families. They are all so generous, kind and loving—perfect role models for any girl growing up.

'Their influence has definitely played a role in me setting up the granny skills movement! I would like to think that people see me in the same light I see them too.'

Rebecca says the greatest piece of advice she was given was from her Great Grandmother Lil who said, 'if you don't ask, you don't get'. Rebecca says she 'always asks'.

So what advice would Rebecca pass on to other women? 'Learn from your elders, ask them questions, treasure the moments and then pass it all on!'

Rebecca is always looking for grannies to teach, and girls to learn, so if you are keen to be part of this social project you can find out more at:
<http://dirtygirlkitchen.com>

CHANGE

Nature is about diversity
Everything is about to change
But us humans get caught in doing
Everything just the same
Every day the same old thing
Time and time again
Then one day it all goes array
Your whole world changes in a day
So nothing the same
Is nature's way to say
Everything is about to change.

© STEPHEN KNIGHT, MURWILLUMBAH

Tanya takes the lead



Part of the largest voluntary women's organisation in Australia, The Country Women's Association of New South Wales (CWA of NSW) is a not-for-profit association formed in 1922. CWA of NSW works to support and improve the conditions and welfare of all women and their families in country and city regions through representation to all levels of government, fundraising events and the teaching of life skills.

In May of this year the CWA of NSW announced the appointment of its new State President, Tanya Cameron.

Based near Rowena, Tanya grew up around Moree and in addition to working with the CWA Tanya has been heavily involved with local community groups such as the Progress Association, School Council and is the current secretary of the Rowena Precinct Committee.

In her CWA career, Tanya has held office at every level and has represented the Association on the NSW Farmers' Rural Mental Health Network and WorkCover Farm Safety Field Days.

Although much has been achieved by the CWA during her 27 years of involvement, Tanya feels there are still issues that need to be addressed. She aims to approach these challenges with creative thinking, an open mind and frank discussion, while importantly, maintaining the CWA's heritage, values and reputation.

Both Tanya and the members are passionate about rural Australia and are hoping to engender interest in younger women to help the association move forward. Tanya believes women play an important role in the agricultural industry and she hopes she can continue to support the work of women across the state.

For Tanya, the importance of the CWA is its voice to government and the platform it offers to lobby for country people. She believes that a lot of progress has been made in the past few years in modernising the association's processes, but not necessarily their image or how the CWA approaches things, because sometimes that's where the respect for CWA comes from—their 'sensible' approach. The CWA makes its points by using personal stories to show how policies affect people.

RWN wanted to find out a little more about Tanya and the factors that have influenced her in becoming the inspirational woman she is today.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND?

The first six or seven years of my life were spent on a property near Fox's Lane north of Moree that my father share-farmed. School was one classroom, one teacher and one bus, which the parents took turns driving. The bus run was east and west of the school and one week

those on the west side would be picked up and dropped off first and vice versa for the east side the next week. Then he drew a block south of Moree, I can still remember listening to the radio on top of the refrigerator when the announcement was made and how excited my parents were. We built a house and moved there in 1967 and I left the one class, one teacher school for much larger surroundings in Moree until Yr 9, when I went to the New England Girls School (NEGS) in Armidale to complete my schooling.

As of May this year my role has been President of The Country Women's Association of NSW and it has been a huge learning curve as well as a very busy time. I have not held a position at state level for a few years and have had to play a bit of catch-up. Part of the 'job' is visiting the members in their branches and groups and I am looking forward to embarking on my first tour next week. Touring involves meeting members and listening to their concerns and local issues; a State President cannot truly represent her members unless she knows their circumstances.

I am also looking forward to representing those same members when we voice their concerns to government, participate in consultations or make submissions as well as the myriad of other activities we are involved in.

WHO HAS BEEN THE MOST INFLUENTIAL WOMAN IN YOUR LIFE?

I don't think I could risk singling them out, but most have been strong, independent women that I have met during my time in CWA. They have taught me to believe in myself, to never give up, to challenge and question, to try and stay calm and most of all to laugh.

HOW HAVE THEY INFLUENCED YOU IN LATER LIFE?

Their counsel, support, encouragement and friendship has most definitely influenced the person I am now. When I was younger I was quite self-absorbed and not very sure of myself and what I could do. I wouldn't say I am an overly confident person now, but I am more inclined to at least 'have a go' than I was before. Being involved with CWA and having the opportunity to meet, listen, work with and get to know these women has put me in positions that I never thought I would be in and it has made me a stronger person.

WHAT'S THE GREATEST LESSON/ BEST PIECE OF ADVICE YOU HAVE RECEIVED FROM THESE WOMEN?

That everyone benefits from words of encouragement, that you need to learn to laugh at yourself, that you should seek your own answers and that the person doing the most menial job is the one who knows exactly what is going on.

... I like the saying 'life is short, dance naked!' Not that I'd take it literally, but it's like the universe saying don't pass up an opportunity to flash what you have!

WHAT ADVICE YOU WOULD PASS ON TO OTHER WOMEN?

Be yourself, that way you can't be caught out. I'm not much into quotes, but I like the saying 'life is short, dance naked!' Not that I'd take it literally, but it's like the universe saying don't pass up an opportunity to flash what you have! ■



Different shades

Excerpt from Alison Page's speech to the ANU Reconciliation Lecture

Alison Page is a real dynamo and no doubt has a strong influence on everything she puts her hand to. An artist, teacher and award-winning designer, Alison is also the Executive Officer of Saltwater Freshwater Arts Alliance—a group which supports elders to pass on cultural knowledge to young people. Alison has worked hard to get to where she is and is passionate about sharing her learning and knowledge with others.

When asked who has been the most influential person in her life Alison cites her mother and sisters as being the most influential. She goes on to say, 'if you had visited my house growing up and stayed for five minutes you might pass negative judgements on how we were living. A house with a single mother with six daughters you can imagine got a little crazy. But if you had stayed and heard the conversations around the kitchen table—they were conversations about leadership, about knowing your self-worth and being self-determined.

Regardless of your socio-economic status, empowering your children costs nothing—just time and passion!

Alison says her sister Tina had a massive influence on her younger years in High School. 'She was a really strong influence on me. She kept telling me to be a leader, not a follower. To 'swim against the grain' in public school meant that you could try hard at school, not get distracted by the social scene and set yourself up for the future.

'Growing up mum always said, "it's your attitude, not your aptitude that will determine your

altitude". Skills can be learnt, but what is in your heart, your values, what you believe, this is what guides you in life.'

Alison recalls her time growing up in Coffs Harbour and her journey to piece together her own identity.

'Butter, peanut butter and vegemite—that is how the kids on my school bus in Coffs Harbour described me and my sisters Tina and Billie Jean. I am not peanut butter—I am Alison Page—a proud Aboriginal woman and descendent of the Walbanga and Wadi Wadi people of the Yuin nation.

It was made clear to me by the kids at school that I am a half-caste because I wasn't black enough to be Aboriginal and too brown to be white. For others, that term put me neatly into a category, when to me, it caused confusion and alienated me from either world. Within our house though, I felt no different to my older, white sisters or my younger, dark skinned sister Billie Jean. With the same mother, we were all raised with the same values. We had the same sense of belief in our abilities, the same lust for life and the same positive attitude that was instilled by my outgoing mum.

When my parents separated and we moved to Coffs Harbour on the NSW Mid North Coast, my feelings of isolation grew. As a third grader at school, I had to play with my kindergarten sister because no-one would play with her because she is black. I soon realised that Aboriginal people in this part of the world were disrespected, and that indifference was being passed on to the young people we would grow up with.

When I meet people now, I can't wait for the opportunity to tell them that I am Aboriginal, and I feel a little taller when I do.

Most of that change has happened within me and my own journey but a big part of that change can be attributed to the growing appreciation of Aboriginal culture within our broader community.

Without Dad and our koori family at La Perouse, Billie Jean and I had little opportunity to connect with the Aboriginal community in Coffs Harbour, which I think would have made a big difference to our feelings of pride about our Aboriginal heritage. Privately, we felt pride for our culture. We knew that at the heart of our culture there was something beautiful that would bring meaning to our lives. We just didn't know how to find it.

I am Aboriginal but I wasn't born 'disadvantaged'. My dad was and still is (at the age of 70) a really hard worker who provided well for my family. I was nine when my parents split and we headed up north and that's when we became well and truly disadvantaged. A single mum, raising six kids on her own, often had to get food parcels from St Vinnies to survive.

We had a really old house that the local newspaper once described as 'derelict'. I would never let my friends from school come over because I was ashamed of my house. I would spend hours rearranging the furniture and trying to make it look pretty, which is probably what sparked my interest in interior design.

But we were only disadvantaged on paper. I had a fun and happy childhood. Although we were physically poor, because my mother was such a powerhouse of positivity, in actual fact, we were very wealthy. Even though she couldn't afford to invest in school excursions or Saturday morning classes; every day,

she would remind us that we could do anything in the world. All we needed was guts and determination.

Subsequently, my sister Tina and I were the first in our family to go to university and earn a degree. I studied a Bachelor of Design at the University of Technology Sydney. It is almost cliché, but education really has broken a cycle of poverty and disadvantage within my family.

University was the time in my life where my sense of pride for my Aboriginal heritage really took flight. There I met many other young Aboriginal people of mixed heritage that never questioned their cultural identity and their place both within their own communities and wider society. They helped me piece together my own identity.

In my final year of university, I met Dillon Kombumerri and Kevin O'Brien, Australia's first Indigenous architects. Together we worked with rural and urban communities in designing buildings as part of Merrima Design Group. Through this work I have come to understand that contemporary Aboriginal culture is world leading in merging traditional and contemporary definitions of identity as 'old stories are told in new ways'.

Through my practice, I have reached a level of understanding about what it means to be Aboriginal and my confidence and pride in my cultural identity is strong and continues to grow.

Coffs Harbour, thankfully is a different place today.

We come to know our home and our connection to country through our family—our extended network of relatives that make up our mob. Our cultural values are taught through our Lore and through storytelling.

continued page 17 ...

It takes a village to raise a child

Contributed by Jocellin Jansson, Royal Agricultural Society (NSW) Foundation

When Hilary Clinton famously said 'It Takes A Village to Raise a Child', she was not wrong. We gain inspiration and courage from those who encourage us and take an interest in our life, goals and human needs.

Testament to the power of this is a young rural NSW woman named Sharni to whom, until one of her high school teachers took an interest in the direction of her life and the choices she was making, things were looking a lot different to how they do today. With an inspirational teacher, a loving mother (pictured above with Sharni) and the support of a Sydney couple who are helping to back Sharni and her goals with a scholarship, Sharni is now in the final semester of her Bachelor of Education studies.

Passionate about teaching in rural and remote communities, Sharni is determined to be a teacher who helps enhance and enrich her student's lives. With her permission, we share with you a letter of thanks she recently wrote to the Sydney couple, who through the Royal Agricultural Society Foundation, gave Sharni a scholarship to help her achieve her education goals. On reading, you quickly realise the inspiration and courage she has gained from their kindness and that of her mother and teacher.

Dear Rob, Paula and Heather

2013 has been a year I have had in mind for quite a while. When I first made the decision four years ago to go to university and make my dreams of becoming a teacher a reality, this moment seemed so far away. But now 2013 is here and already it has brought the best news, that I was the recipient of a RASF Scholarship—a scholarship that you have so kindly donated.

Thank you doesn't seem to sum up the appreciation and gratitude I have towards you for this kind gesture. This scholarship is making a huge difference not only in my life but also the lives of my family. With this scholarship I am able to travel to Broken Hill to do my nine week internship for teaching. I am able to concentrate on my studies and less on the financial burden of university. My dream is to teach in rural schools, which is why I have chosen Broken Hill as my last placement



school in the hope that I will be able to obtain work out there next year, however, I have only been able to make this decision because of you and your kindness. Without the scholarship I would not have been able to afford to go there.

My mother is a fulltime carer to my father who has a severe head injury; she is very much the strength in our family and pushes me to achieve my dreams. When I first told her I wanted to become a teacher and help shape the lives of children in rural areas she encouraged me the whole way, saying we would make it work and find the finance somehow. Never in our wildest dreams did we ever think that people would be out there willing to donate money to make my dreams become a reality. You have not only helped me, but you have also helped my family. Thank you!

I grew up in a rural area, which I am guessing is where my passion stems from. To be honest I never really liked school until I got to my senior year, which is when my thoughts started to change. My year 12 English Teacher got me thinking that I could achieve more—no-one in my family had ever attended university and I didn't ever consider it as a possibility. I am so grateful every day for his words and I am hoping that I can allow rural children to believe in themselves and do whatever it takes to make their dreams come true.

It is hard to explain the difference this scholarship is making to my life. I am now filling out applications to teach which is somewhat scary but also very exciting. Your kindness is allowing me to enjoy this process. Instead of having to travel home to work, I am able to sit down, look at different rural areas that I may want to teach and take the time out to think of the possibilities. Text books have been brought this year instead of borrowed, accommodation is no longer a worry and my stress about finance has lessened.

I am so truly honoured to be the recipient of this scholarship and I look forward to you being a part of my journey. Again, I thank you, your kindness and generosity has made the biggest difference in my life.

Real men don't sing

By David Kennedy, Orange Male Voice Choir



Talent shows such as The Voice have unearthed some exceptional singers among young men but the singing talents of too many 'lesser lights' often remain confined to the ute or tractor, perhaps with an audience of a quizzical dog.

Towns including Orange, Bathurst, Wagga Wagga, Albury-Wodonga and Inverell boast excellent choirs of men who enjoy singing together, and do it well ... and many of these fellows didn't really think they could sing, let alone have fun and make good friends doing it. Men's choirs are also strong in Canberra, Wollongong, Newcastle and Sydney.

The choirs may not be on prime-time television, but their deep and rich four-part harmonies bring big smiles and warm flutters to audiences, around the bush and in the cities.

The Male Choirs Association of Australia holds a mass concert of over 300 men every second year. Last November the premier Welsh conductor and arranger Dr Alwyn Humphreys led the Melbourne concert.

In front of the Brumbies and Tahs faithful, the Orange Male Voice Choir joined with the Australian Rugby Choir to celebrate Canberra's 150th Anniversary in

March and is also performing with the Ku-ring-gai and Waratah Male Voice Choirs this year.

Bathurst's Macquarie Male Singers founded in 1994 sing a wide variety of music, accompanied by piano, double bass and guitar.

Formed in 1996, Inverell Male Choir performs regularly in the northern tablelands and slopes.

Wagga Wagga City Rugby Choir is planning a 'Tour Around the World', covering Canada, USA, Europe and Asia in 2015.

Albury-Wodonga's Con Men are new boys on the block, having recently been formed from the Murray Conservatorium Choir.

So why not come along and check out your local men's choir ... but please leave the kelpie or border collie in the ute. ■

MEN'S CHOIR CONTACTS

Orange: David Woodside
02 6362 8218

Bathurst: Roland Auguszczak
02 6331 4826

Inverell: Bill Bruce
02 6721 0346

Wagga Wagga: Dave Mundy
02 6925 5048

Albury-Wodonga: Chris Morrow
02 6025 4887

malechoirsassociation.org.au

MEN'S MATTERS WITH GREG MILLAN

Depression: don't go it alone



A lot of men can think that depression and anxiety are signs of personal weaknesses but they are serious medical disorders just like heart disease or gout. They can darken your thoughts, undermine your personal and professional life, and place you at increased risk of other illness. Depression affects people of all ages and backgrounds with 25 per cent of the population suffering some form of depression at some time in their lives.

Each year, depression will affect one in eight Australian men and anxiety affects one in five men. But these numbers may not tell the whole truth as a great deal of male depression goes undiagnosed.

Men are different from women who more readily seek out help and support for these conditions. Most men tend to not want to talk to someone or seek out appropriate treatment and may turn to alcohol and drugs or other ways of coping when they are in a depressed or anxious state of mind.

Men can overvalue independence and self-control and they can wrongly believe that it's unmanly to express pain, weakness, uncertainty, helplessness and sadness. They think that if they can't deal with these difficult emotions that they are somewhat less of a man. Nothing could be further from the truth however as many men exhibit strength and grit by dealing effectively with depression and leading productive and rewarding lives—but these are the ones who do something about it.

Often men feel more threatened than women do by rapid social, political and economic change. When such change affects traditional male roles in the home and workplace, men may experience a profound loss of identity, status and dignity, which increases their risk of depression or anxiety.

If you suspect you have depression, talk to someone about it—partner, friends, family, counsellor or the doctor. Some medical conditions such as a viral infection, thyroid disorder and low testosterone levels can produce symptoms similar to depression so it's good to check out that these are not the cause of your symptoms.

It's important to remember there are many things you can do apart from or alongside taking medication, like talking strategies, and new exercise, diet and lifestyle changes. The simple message is don't go it alone, talk to someone about the way you are feeling or visit the beyondblue website: www.beyondblue.org.au ■

Greg Millan is a Men's Health Consultant. To contact Greg phone/sms 0417 772 390, email: greg@menshealthservices.com.au or see www.menshealthservices.com.au



'Follow your bliss'

By Lissa-Jane de Sailles, Nowra

When Judith Reardon, coordinator of East Nowra Neighbourhood Centre, suggested that I apply for a personal development grant from the Shoalhaven Women's Conference Inc. (SWC) I had no idea how much my life would change.

In 2010 I attended a workshop in basketry in the Southern Highlands where I was immediately drawn to the contemplative and meditative process of creating and making a basket from natural materials. I attended two more workshops in random weaving and I was so inspired that I decided to volunteer to demonstrate my newly found skills at the Shoalhaven Women's Wellness Festival in 2012.

A staff member from the Shoalhaven Women's Health Centre (SWHC) approached me and we discussed the possibility of running some classes in random weave basketry. Dates were arranged, the workshop happened and the participants agreed to meet on a bi-monthly basis. The group meetings provide an opportunity for women to gather and talk, and

create using age-old weaving techniques. But don't think for one second that we are old fashioned, because some of our group members are very innovative and highly creative!

Joseph Campbell, a noted American mythologist and writer said, 'Follow your bliss'. The Shoalhaven Women's Conference personal development grant and my passion for learning has enabled me to do this. I am able to spend my time in 2013 focusing and developing my skills.

As a child, I lived and explored the natural environment of Sydney's Sutherland Shire. Wandering and exploring the bushland from Cronulla to the Royal National Park gave me a sense of belonging to the land. My father used to say to me, 'never walk around in the bush with your eyes closed', and so I wandered and explored, observed and enjoyed the feeling of being in nature.

Oh, and did I mention that I am a bower bird? I have been collecting things from nature since I was a very young child. I have a shell collection that dates back to the early 1970s

and I have mementos from places that I have visited throughout my life. Basketry now gives me an opportunity to utilise these artefacts to make useful or beautiful sculptural pieces for my art practice.

The grant has enabled me to undertake formal training with local basketry artists in a number of techniques, including tuition with Jim Wallis, a highly respected and skilled basket maker. I have been able to incorporate traditional techniques to build on my existing skills, and expand my ability to create and make baskets more consistently.

My project for the SWC grant, 'Seeking the Silence', will explore the transformative and contemplative process of turning something that has been discarded or found in nature into something that is decorative and useful in the home. Our SWHC group is also benefitting from my studies and we hope to exhibit our work next year during the International Women's Day program in the Shoalhaven.

Over the last three months I have been harvesting and

identifying plants in the Shoalhaven. I was a speaker at the Shoalhaven Women's Conference in May. I have also recently acquired some studio space and am exhibiting my work at the Muir Gallery in Berry. I am happily following my bliss, working with some incredibly dedicated and inspiring people and opening up to new possibilities.

This is only the first step on the path for me as I plan to run workshops and teach and involve myself in many more projects in the future. ■

Be yourself, not someone else's ideal. Commit to what renews your energy and to relationships where you can be real and vulnerable.

DR SAUNDERS,
DULWICH SA

(From 'Women's Words of Wisdom' booklet produced by Jean Hailes)

Adele's legacy

By Susie Deegenars, Banora Point



My siblings, our children and now their children are reminded daily of our remarkable Mother, grandmother and great grandmother, Adele. She paved the way for us in many ways and left with us many wonderful qualities.

Adele (pictured above with her Son Jeff in 2002) was a strong backboned female—she had to be. At times she had to fight for what she had, wanted, or wanted for her family. Sometimes this feistiness showed as Irish grit; sometimes as a strong Catholic belief; and sometimes it showed as a streak of stubbornness.

Adele married young to a farmer and moved to the country from the regional town where she attended boarding school. Farm life was not, as she told me many times, what she had wanted to do and that her

daughter was not going to marry a farmer (as she had done).

Adele had 10 children—I am the eighth child. I have wonderful memories of living on the farm watching her cast a spell over our day and what then seemed like miracles just happened. Being older now, I realise that a lot of hard work went into just one day.

Adele told us many a time that our father had been working away from his parents' property and they had asked him to come back to work the property with them. There were times when my father sought work off the property (maybe this was financial, maybe it was because his passion for farm life was waning as well) but Adele was there to keep the family together and the farm thriving. Not only did she milk morning and night, but she also had a

collection of feathered friends. There were of course the laying hens, then turkeys, geese, and bantams. We did have for a short time a goat that ate anything and everything, but when it got into the house garden, its time was short lived. There was the house dog, Adele's loved black Labrador named Blackie, as well as the working dogs. There were riding horses and two family favourite Clydsdale horses that had been part of our working farm. We had pigs, as my father was a champion pig breeder and exporter in earlier days, and this also took him away from our property to regional and city shows. If it was a good show, or when the breeder pigs were sold, apparently my Dad expressed his gratitude to Adele by allowing her to treat herself to a much sought after piece of crockery, silverware or new outfit.

Adele was a tall, slim lady. Even after 10 children she was fiercely proud of her appearance and her strict upbringing never allowed her not to be appropriately dressed for each occasion. My dresses, pyjamas, play clothes, school clothes and underpants were sewed by Adele, as were those of my sisters. The boys had shirts, shorts and pyjamas sewed for them when younger, but, as they grew older, they had "shop" purchased clothes.

Looking at Adele now in photos, she was always stylish and fashionable, both in clothes, hair and especially her shoes. Her love of shoes has been passed onto her daughters and her love of getting dressed up for whatever occasion has been passed on to all her children.

Adele did not drive. She was not a great sportsperson, could not swim and definitely could not ride a bicycle. She

tried often to conquer bicycle riding and much to the laughter of us children, would often hop on and try, wobbling all over the place while we ran behind hoping she would not fall off. She was a passionate sportsperson from the armchair, sideline or delivering the children to a sporting event—there was never a prouder non-sports person. Of course, she had learnt all the rules for football, tennis, netball, basketball, swimming and running.

My dad had a serious accident and Adele received that call late one night. My Dad was alive but was seriously injured and had been taken to Sydney, his life hanging in the balance. At the time Adele didn't drive, had five young children at home and was running the property. My older siblings and neighbours rallied to enable her to travel to Sydney by train to be with my Dad, from the Queensland border—a daunting experience as she had never been to Sydney. She left us younger children in the care of a wonderful neighbour so that we could still attend school. My Dad remained in hospital in Sydney for six months. This required Adele to return home, make arrangements for a manager to take over the property and take the four youngest children to Sydney to be with our Dad. My older siblings had left the farm, either for university, apprenticeships or living in the regional town for their education. We stayed in rented accommodation until my Dad was well enough and had been rehabilitated.

The farm was eventually sold and my parents moved to the coast. Some 10 years later my Dad passed away suddenly, leaving Adele alone for the next 30 years.

... continued page 18



'The choices they make now will help build the foundation for the woman they are going to become!' CATHERINE GERHARDT

Raising teenage girls was never meant to be easy. With two pre-teen daughters myself I am keenly aware of the challenges ahead. Already there are circumstances with friends, and there will be situations with boyfriends, work and online relationships, then add into that mix possible issues with body image and self-esteem. Whew! That sounds like a potential minefield.

Girls can tend to be too trusting when it comes to relationships and may not pay enough attention to their instincts, that intuition that helps keep them safe. In general girls are more inclined to want people to like them and have a greater desire to be accepted. It is important that we open up conversations around values and beliefs.

IMPORTANT SAFETY DISCUSSIONS FOR GIRLS:

Friends versus cliques

Friends are people who we share a lot in common with. We enjoy hanging out with them and supporting each other. Friendship

groups share values and beliefs and welcome new friends.

Cliques are more restrictive. They have rules that set out who can be 'in' and how they should behave. There can be a lot of pressure to conform to a clique and it's usually controlled by a leader.

Have discussions with your daughter about knowing what they want and what they believe in, and emphasise the importance of keeping true to themselves. Are they being true to themselves in their friendships and activities when in a peer group? One of the messages we use in our home is 'Who is the boss of you?' Does your daughter have the skills to be the boss of herself or will she easily allow someone to take that position?

Peer Pressure

Almost everyone finds themselves in a peer pressure situation at some point. Help your daughter understand that when something makes her feel uncomfortable, this means the situation is wrong for her.

Encourage her to know who she is and keep to her values. Take some time out this week to sit down with her and write down some values and have them as discussion points for when you need them. Is she living in a way that respects her core values?

It is also worthwhile to have a plan and build discussions around potential peer pressure situations, such as those involving alcohol, drugs or sex? Think ahead and discuss what she can do and even have her practise what she can do or say. A lot of families have a code phrase that teens can use if they are feeling pressure and want to get out of a situation.

One family I know uses 'mother' as their alert word; if they hear that word or have it written in a text that is their cue to mobilise.

No means no

Believe it or not, NO is a word I want to hear my daughters using a lot as they navigate their way through their teenage years. The word NO is a powerful word. NO is a complete sentence. It is the most important word they can use to keep themselves safe. If someone does not listen to their NO, then that person is trying to take control of them or the

situation. Help your daughter to understand that if they let someone talk them out of their NO, they are letting them take control. No means no—you do not need to say anything else. Let's say, for example, someone approached your daughter and asked to help carry her school bag and she says, 'No, thank you. I can do it myself. I don't have far to go.' This tells the person that she may be open to conversation and may be able to be convinced. NO means no negotiation.

The need to be noticed can be strong enough to lead girls into risky behaviours or behaviours that do not fit in with their core values. As parents, we need to support our girls to find and know their core beliefs and values and empower them to be true to these ideas and standards. If the way your daughter wants to be remembered does not match the way she thinks others will remember her, then it is time to make some changes. If your daughter finds herself questioning what she is doing, get her to reflect on her list of core beliefs and values. The choices they make now will help build the foundation for the woman they are going to become. ■

The healthy sex talk

Teaching kids consent from age 1 to 21

The Good Men Project has some great tips for parents to raise empowered young adults who have empathy for others and a clear understanding of healthy consent, hopefully resulting in a generation of children who have less rape and sexual assault in their lives. The creators believe parents can start educating children about consent and empowerment as early as one year old and continuing into college years. There are three sections based on ages—preschool, grade school, and teens and young adults. While American-based the message is relevant to us all. Read the full article at: goodmenproject.com/families/the-healthy-sex-talk-teaching-kids-consent-ages-1-21



Postcard from Tonga

Our year without a jumper

By Sonia Muir, Leader – Community Engagement & Support, NSW DPI

Living for a year on a dot in the Pacific Ocean has its ups downs and even a few shakes! We have slipped into the quiet pace of Tongan life very easily and even took the 7.6 May earthquake in our stride ... it is so flat here anyway that if a tsunami did hit there is nowhere to run.

I think the biggest challenge is access to technology, which we tend to take for granted in Australia unless one lives in the outback or a mobile shadow.

Nuku'alofa, the capital, is where we have been posted to a tertiary college (think simple rustic 1950s TAFE).

I suspect we take much for granted in the West and this experience is reminding me to take the time to reflect and be more grateful.

The dynamic principal, Sister Kieoma, is an inspirational Tongan born Marist missionary sister who works tirelessly to get the best outcomes for her students regardless of their financial or social background.

It is a refreshingly inclusive environment where difference is accepted and nurtured.

My husband Gordon ('Kotoni' in Tongan) is under an AusAid funded project to boost the capacity of catering teachers.

This role has extended to evening cooking classes for locals which has been lots of fun and successful in getting them to have a more healthy approach to meals.

At 'Anhopanilolo Technical Institute' students study fashion, design, art, hospitality and cookery, with very basic facilities but with five star results.

Onsite bi-monthly Pot Luck training restaurant dinners are an opportunity for students to build their English proficiency, confidence and skills in a 'real-life' setting.

Guests pay only \$13 AU to enjoy a delicious gourmet three-course meal and be entertained by students with an array of cultural dances and musical items.

Life for women here is changing slowly although I get the impression their role is still tied very much to home duties.

Family is a priority for most Tongans with married women moving to live with their husband's family until they can build their own home ... usually right next door to the in-laws ... which certainly helps with childcare, which is nonexistent. They also adopt their husband's religion and church.

Men are granted land from the government and also through a somewhat complex family inheritance arrangement which does have bonuses as no-one really has a mortgage or has to pay rent.

Family living overseas often finance building materials and a skilled relative oversees construction with everyone pitching in.

Funerals are huge events involving a number of days of mourning, praying and communal singing before the actual burial.

Visitors come to pay respects to the body at the family home before sitting down to long tables where they are served endless amounts of food and leave with takeaways. It can be a very expensive affair.

Gifts of money, woven mats, quilts, bark tapa cloth or floral arrangements and garlands are presented to the grieving family and redistributed through another complex family/community obligatory system.

The eldest sister, or aunty, is held in the highest esteem at all functions and always takes a major role in formalities.

At funerals it is also her job to cut the hair of certain female relatives as a sign of respect to the departed.

Food is the centre of Tongan life and even in the workplace meals are shared and regularly a focal point for gathering together.

I don't think there is a word in Tongan for 'leftovers' as there never seems to be any ... and guests usually leave carrying a 'doggy bag' of goodies.

Sundays are sacrosanct for most Tongans and most businesses are closed. A typical Sunday starts with donning traditional tupenus ('skirts') accessorised with a woven 'ta'ovala' mat which is secured around the waist with twine.

Churches are ubiquitous and the choirs can be quite awesome ,although the very early morning bell-tolling takes a little getting used to.

We actually have a church right outside our bedroom window so can attend without even leaving the house!

After prayers it is home for umu, sleeping, movie-watching and maybe a second or even third trip to church later in the day for the really devout Christians.

The weekly 'umu' feast comprises of taro leaves filled with a range of fillings and coconut milk teamed with boiled root vegetables such as taro, cassava, breadfruit and yam freshly harvested from the plantation and cooked on hot coals. This is usually served with 'ota ika', a raw marinated fish salad.

We have seen the King a few times at his church and again for the opening of parliament, which was a grand spectacle of parading bands, marching school students and dignitaries.

Knowing that winter clouds are draping and drenching the Australian continent a mere four and half hours' flight away as we discard the woolies and enjoy sun-filled days makes our year without a jumper seem even more surreal and sun-filled but we are coping! ■

Different shades

... continued from page 11

Whether through architecture, dance, music, a painting or the written word, stories reveal the values at the heart of our culture and these are the stories the world now needs to hear.

On the Mid North Coast, I now work with 10 Aboriginal communities who, three years ago, came together to host a Festival on Australia Day to celebrate Aboriginal culture as a part of the national identity. The Saltwater Freshwater Festival attracts 10,000 people and moves each year to one of the communities that are part of the Alliance. The 2014 Festival will be held on Dughutti Land in Kempsey and will showcase local and nationally renowned Aboriginal talent. To find out more or to get involved on the day, visit our Saltwater Freshwater Festival website: saltwaterfreshwaterfestival.com.au

I spent the first part of my life being ashamed of my Aboriginality, but I now shout pride for my heritage from the rooftops.

Butter, peanut butter and vegemite. Yes we are all different shades but we are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, we are the first people, we are Australian, and we are proud. ■

Meeting challenges, celebrating milestones

By Marion Rak, Immediate Past President - Australian Women in Agriculture Ltd

Australian Women in Agriculture (AWiA) is Australia's peak organisation for women across all areas of agriculture. Members are part of a recognised and dedicated national network involved in the development of Australian primary production, rural industries and communities.

2013 marks the 20-year anniversary of AWiA—an organisation that has met many challenges over the past 20 years—so it is wonderful to be able to celebrate this milestone.

The AWiA organisation was formed in February 1992 when the Victorian Rural Women's Network invited 50 women from across the State to attend a meeting in Ballarat with the idea of forming a statewide organisation. On 14 February 1993 the Organisation became Incorporated with Dorothy Dunn the first President. Two months later Jan Darlington from Queensland became the first interstate member, and so the National Organisation developed.

During that first meeting in Ballarat, a proposal for an International Conference was discussed. This plan turned into a reality in Melbourne in June 1994. Since then, AWiA has been involved in organising international conferences in Washington DC, Madrid Spain, and Durban South Africa. The 5th International Conference is being planned for New Delhi India in October this year.

In the early days AWiA developed five commitments which, after 20 years, still form the basis of our organisation. They include:

1. Uniting and raising the profile of women in agriculture.

This has been achieved through the support of our friends from the media, in particular the ABC National and local programs, *The Weekly Times* and other printed press and the Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation Rural Women's Award which has been critical to this process.

2. Addressing rural and agricultural inequities

is achieved by continually encouraging women to take part in relevant industry and community bodies.

3. Working to ensure the survival of agriculture for future generations.

With the help of government grants we have been able to mentor and up-skill young women through programs such as the Next Generation Leadership & Decision Making program which continues to this day and is driven by participants of the program, using social media channels and workshops.

4. Securing local, regional and international recognition

continues through participation in the international conferences and our relationships with women in other countries such as Papua New Guinea, through the PNG Women in Agriculture Development Foundation.

5. Achieving the status of a political and economic force.

AWiA meets with politicians and government departments at least once a year to raise issues and discuss solutions that are important to and affect our members and their communities.

With technology and social media constantly changing AWiA will endeavour to continue to upskill members by running workshops around the country and creating natural avenues for networking and supporting rural women. It is wonderful to be able to pick up a phone, send an email, SMS, tweet or Facebook message to the many members around the nation. Through the AWiA website members can gain access to each other, and as a Board we have a representative in each state responsible for arranging meetings and communication sessions.

I was fortunate to become a member of AWiA just prior to the 2nd International Conference in Washington DC. This experience opened my eyes to Australian agriculture and the world. The women I have met throughout my 16-year journey have been all inspiring and have become lifelong friends. I have had opportunities to learn new skills and I will cherish the memories and recognise the resilience of women who live and work in rural and remote communities. Australia is a challenging country and the agricultural women are essential in making it a rewarding place to live.

I look forward to the next 20 years with excitement as the younger women who are being mentored through AWiA grow into wise women who will take this organisation into a challenging and prosperous future. ■

Adele's legacy

By Susie Deegenars, Banora Point

... continued from page 14

Adele had to seek fulltime employment at the age of 57. She worked as a carer for the elderly in their homes, doing general cleaning, ironing and washing and made some wonderful friends. She joined the Civil Widows and was made President of her local group. This enabled her to travel throughout the State to branch and regional meetings and to go on bus tours throughout the country with the wonderful friends she had made.

Adele loved to sew and to sit on her verandah and look at her garden. If you could not find her in her home, she would be outside, bent over her garden, trimming, planting or pondering over some wonderful bloom. She exhibited in the local flower shows, grew her own vegetables and enjoyed cooking and baking—especially baking a fruitcake when family were coming for a visit. She has taught us all that to enjoy a cup of tea, you must have a nice tea cup, pot of tea, a fresh table cloth and of course, something nice to eat.

At 71 Adele thought she would like to travel overseas to visit family so my brother obtained a full birth certificate so she could apply for a passport. It was then that Adele discovered her parents were not who she thought they were. The shock of the discovery of her parentage remained with her for a long time, with her seeking comfort in her church and religion.

Adele taught me to be strong, stand tall, work hard and be true to one's self. She loved her family, was a wonderful caring Mother, singing her babies to sleep, reading stories at bedtime, sewing, baking and cooking, and participating in her children's lives. If she had abundant love for her children, then there was no measure for the pride and love she had for her 15 grandchildren. These grandchildren could do no wrong and had inherited all the family intelligence.

Adele passed away at 87, leaving a remarkable legacy. During her life she buried her husband, her youngest and eldest sons. These times were devastating for her but it was her strong nature that pulled her through.

I see my other siblings, and of course myself, being a lot like Adele—her ways, her love of the garden, her love of reading, the football, the Melbourne Cup horse race and her general interest in local government and community events. Although I am now 62, I still feel Adele's influence, her interest and her motherly advice every day and I can proudly say that she played a huge role in building our family into what we all are today. ■

"[My grandmother] was the only person I could ever put into that category of being a mentor. [She taught me] you can do whatever you want to do if you really are focussed and dedicated enough. That little focus I shared with everyone today: If it's to be, it's up to me. It's not for somebody else to do it for you. You're in charge of your own life."
IMELDA ROCHE

Outback Links

By Davida Melksham, Coordinator – Frontier Services | Outback Links



'Nothing prepares you for how dry it can get in the heart of Australia until you've experienced it yourself', say Gwen and Ron Hellyar. Earlier this year the couple from Northern Rivers in NSW were lending a hand on a sheep and cattle station which had not seen rain for two and a half years. They are volunteering with Outback Links, a program run by Frontier Services which matches people who can offer their time with families in need in rural and remote Australia.

Like many parts of Australia faced with worsening drought, an exceptionally dry summer has left the station parched with the property owner moving some cattle (to agistment) and is bulldozing scrub to feed his sheep. Only a few weeks before, Gwen and Ron were helping on another property further north, little more than a day's drive away. They were swept by flood waters earlier in the year. The contrast is stark. 'Everything was so lush and green as we drove through the flooded valleys. The cattle were in peak condition and there was grass everywhere. Just a day's drive, state to state, can be such a contrast!'

Gwen and Ron have made a big difference at both places. At their current placement, Ron, a former dairy farmer, is working alongside the owner on the property. Meanwhile, Gwen has taken over the running of the home, greatly assisting the owners wife who spends each week in town with her children so they can attend the local school.

'It was during the last drought that I started thinking about how I'd like to help people on the land and give them a break.' Since signing up in 2010 Gwen and Ron have done 11 volunteer placements. They say the families they visit appreciate both the help they give and their companionship. 'We enjoy it. It's better than sitting in a caravan park and you get to know more about an area and what the people are like', says Gwen. 'Everybody is so grateful for the few weeks you can give!'

If you could use a hand from someone like Gwen and Ron, visit: www.outbacklinks.org or call 1300 731 349.



NSW Rural Women's Gathering

Horsin' around the Upper Hunter

Friday 25 - Sunday 27 October, Scone

Keynote speakers



ROBYN PULMAN

Design Your Destiny! Every day you make choices that impact your destiny. Find out how to turn your daily actions and interactions into life-changing habits. Robyn has experience in national and international management and marketing and for the last 10 years has researched the power of habits in our lives and how to change them. She currently resides on a cattle property in western QLD and is studying how to apply principles of animal handling to her corporate clients. She claims there is much outback wisdom to be gleaned for the city slicker.



ISOBEL KNIGHT

2013 RIRDC Rural Women's Award winner and Director of proAGtive, Isobel is a trained counsellor and mediator. She has helped more than 400 farming families navigate the complex field of succession planning and in doing so has observed that women often feel de-powered. Isobel will show you how to realise your worth and understand the power you have to make a difference in the roles you play in your family and community.



DR KAYE CUSSEN

Kaye graduated from the University of Tasmania in 1987 and over the next few years combined work and study gaining further skills in General Practice, Obstetrics, Anaesthetics, Child Health, Musculoskeletal Medicine and Acupuncture. In 1993 she began working in Scone as a GP taking leave in 2010 to volunteer for Medecins Sans Frontières. Kaye will explain the work of MSF and share her experience in Pakistan setting up a Maternal & Child Health Unit.

Program FRIDAY 25 OCT

- 1-5 pm Registration and light refreshments
(Upper Hunter Shire Council, Liverpool St)
- 5.30 pm Welcome by **Committee President Cr. Lee Watts**
Welcome to Country. Local stalls.
Complimentary drink and fabulous food incl. hot box. Local performances, live equestrian demonstration (weather permitting). Fashions on the Field with some fabulous prizes.
(Scone Race Club, 434 Bunnan Rd, Scone)

SATURDAY 26 OCTOBER

All activities will be held at Scone High School, Gundy Rd Scone, unless stated otherwise.

- 7 am Heartmoves morning walk accompanied by Heart Foundation staff. (Meet at Scone Post Office)
- 8.30 am Registration (School High School)
- 9 am Mayor's Welcome – **Cr. Michael Johnsen**
OFFICIAL OPENING & LAUNCH of 2013 Hidden Treasures Honour Roll
ROBYN PULMAN: Design your destiny through creating winning habits
ISOBEL KNIGHT: 2013 NSW-ACT RIRDC Rural Women's Award Winner
- 10.30 am Morning tea
- 11 am WORKSHOP SESSIONS A & B
- 12.30 pm Lunch
- 1 pm WORKSHOP SESSION A cont. and SESSION C
- 2.30 pm TOURS
- 6.30 pm Gathering Dinner. **Dr Kaye Cussen** will talk about her work with Médecins Sans Frontières, followed by entertainment from Susan Davis, the Scone Singers and Bush Poet Greg Scott.

SUNDAY 27 OCTOBER

- 7-8.30 am Breakfast by Rotary & Westpac Rescue Helicopter Committee (Scone High School)
- 7.15 am Heartmoves (St Mary's School Hall, Waverley St)
- 8 am Ecumenical Service (Scone High School)
- 9.00 am WORKSHOP SESSION D
- 10.45 am Morning tea
- 11.15 am WOMEN OF INFLUENCE SESSION:
Kelly Foran: Friendly Faces Helping Hands
Trisha Thomas: Empowering women through education
Sandra Martin: The three questions everyone asks no matter their gender, age or nationality
- 12.15 pm Handover to 2014 Coolamon Gathering Committee
- 12.30 pm Closing Ceremony led by Susan Davis. Showcasing the 'Singing in Harmony' workshop participants.
- 1.00 pm Lunch (packed for those travelling)

Tours see website for extended tour descriptions

A. HUNTER THOROUGHBRED STUD: The Hunter Valley is one of three international centres of thoroughbred breeding excellence alongside Kentucky USA and Newmarket UK. This is an amazing opportunity to visit Arrowfield, Darley and Vinery Studs with world-class facilities and famous stallions. [www.htba.com.au]

B. MULAWA ARABIAN STUD: A heaven on earth for horses. Enjoy an afternoon meeting the latest foals, and learn about their embryo transfer program and Mulawa's story from humble beginnings to the realisation of a dream. [www.mulawaarabians.com.au]

C. ELMSWOOD FARM: Patrice Newell will talk about her biodynamic garlic, beef, olive oil and honey, what sustainable agriculture means, why biodynamics works and how our food choices are central to the development of a better land management system. There may be a hands-on garlic planting demonstration. [www.patricenewell.com.au]

D. BELLTREES STATION: Home of the White family since 1831 Belltrees is one of Australia's most famous rural properties. Enjoy a historical tour of the station including the Homestead. Afternoon tea provided by Belltrees Public School. [www.belltrees.com]

E. AUSTRALIAN STOCK HORSE SOCIETY HERITAGE CENTRE, SCONE EQUINE HOSPITAL, & INVERMIEN: Tour the ASHS Centre and learn about the Society's history. [www.ashs.com.au]. Visit the world-class Scone Equine Hospital, the largest equine veterinary practice in Australia. [www.sconequinehospital.com.au] Afternoon tea at historic Invermien homestead.

F. BURNING MOUNTAIN NPWS GUIDED WALK: An underground coal seam burning for 5500 years. The only known example in Australia and one of three globally. The first section is moderately steep with beautiful views at its peak. Walking shoes, hat and water required.

G. SCONE HISTORIC WALK & GERALDTON GARDEN: Tour Scone's historic sites and enjoy high tea at the beautiful historic property Geraldton. \$5 donation to Friends of Strathearn for Scone's aged care facility.

H. GARDEN TOUR & BLAIRGOWIE: Stroll through Jane Barnett's fabulous garden which was featured in the ABC Open Garden Scheme. Next visit Blairgowrie, home of successful local artist Sarah Bishop. Visit her studio and enjoy afternoon tea in Blairgowrie's delightful surrounds. [www.sarah-bishop.com]

Workshops

1A. MOSAIC MAKING: Join one of Upper Hunters leading Mosaic Artists Joanne VanHees and create your own take home mosaic piece. Cost \$10.

2A. WORKING WITH FIBRE: Scone Spinners & Weavers will demonstrate a variety of skills using wool, spinning, weaving, crochet, felting (wet and dry), embroidery and knitting, then you can try some out for yourself.

3A. DRAWING THE HORSE: A drawing session on horses led by award-winning artist Roberta Wiseman and assisted by Gilly Paterson. Funded by Arts NSW's Country Artist Support Program all equipment is provided.

4A. UNDERSTANDING YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE: Are you left scratching your head when you hear the words Twitter, LinkedIn or Facebook? Is your business getting the best out of the opportunities today's technology presents? Are you personally struggling to get connected? Alastair Rayner will teach you what it all means and help you create your own social media presence. Cost \$5 (includes workbook).

5A. CHEESE MAKING: Hunter Belle cheese maker Natalie Daniel will show you how easy it is to make cheese in your home kitchen. Bring an esky to take your cheese home or purchase one for \$8 (in addition to workshop cost). Cost \$15.

6A. WATERWAY HEALTH THROUGH CITIZEN SCIENCE: Having completed a major river rehabilitation project, Cressfield stud will demonstrate how to assess the health of a local waterway and share their experience and the impact of waterway health on their property.

7A. T-CAKE BASICS: The secret to creating beautiful cupcakes lies in the tools and techniques used. Join the T-Cakes team and learn how to pipe butter cream and mould fondant to create perfect designs with ease. You will decorate six cupcakes to take home. Cost \$10.

8A. TOASTMASTERS: Gain skills and confidence to effectively express yourself in any situation. By learning to effectively formulate and convey your ideas you open a world of possibilities and will be more persuasive and confident when speaking with colleagues, community and family members.

9A. BOOT PUTER 'ONIRER' (METALWORK): Make and take home your own hip high metal boot-tag hook designed to help you put your boots on easily.

10A. BOOT TAKER 'OFFIRER' (WOODWORK): Make and take home your own wooden boot jack for boot removal.

11A. PAINTING AROUND: Learn how to use water colours and pastels.

12A. HORSES DOOVERS: International Chef Susan Swanson will show you how to make fresh innovative hors'd'oeuvres to tantalise your taste buds. Cost \$5

13A. COMPOSE SCONE: Bring your camera and learn how to create good composition in your photographs, while horsin around in Scone by bus.

14A. INTRODUCTION TO FUSED GLASS: A presentation on the history of fused glass and different types of glass making followed by a demonstration of creating a fused glass piece. You will then get to create your own fused glass piece using ready cut glass pieces. Cost \$15.

15A. HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN HEALING PRODUCTS: An introduction to natural remedies where you will learn how to make your own healing products using herbs and weeds from the garden.

1B. FREE TIME: Explore Scone, do some shopping or sit and have coffee with a friend.

2B. INTRODUCTION TO GOLF CROQUET: The fastest-growing version of the game owing largely to its simplicity and competitiveness, golf croquet is easier to learn and play but requires strategic skills and accurate play. Learn how to play with Don Gardiner. (Wear flat shoes or sneakers).

3B. SERVICING SMALL MOTORS: Regularly servicing your small engine (ie fire fighting pumps and lawnmowers) will save you money and time. Learn the fundamentals in small engine repair, how engines work, elements of basic engine care and how to use the tools required to perform a service.

SESSION A (3 HRS - 11 AM TO 2.30 PM INCLUDING LUNCH)

SESSION B

Highlights ...

- * 2013 Hidden Treasures Honour Roll Launch
- * Friday night Fashions on the Field. Come dressed in your best. Fabulous prizes for best outfit and best hat/fascinator.
- * ABC Open Photobooth. Women's Gathering 21st Birthday celebrations—be part of a lasting legacy.
- * Amazing live equestrian demonstrations: Vaulting, Trick Riding by 'High Velocity' and more.
- * Inspiring speakers, magical music, tours showcasing the beautiful Upper Hunter and a huge choice of workshops.



Partners Program

On Saturday 26 October, partners can enjoy a day in beautiful Murrurundi starting with a 9 am bus pick-up in Scone. The Tour includes visits to Cressfield Stud, Wingen, and Paradise Park, followed by a BBQ lunch at the Golf Club provided by Murrurundi Lions Club. There will be a special Men's Health presentation and then it's on to the Museum and Pioneer Cottage and the 4 Bridges Walk. You will also get to view the 2013 Photographic Exhibition in the RSL Hall. Bus returns to Scone @ 4 pm. Be prepared ... it's known as Frontier Country and there are bushrangers about!



4B. WOMEN'S HEALTH FOR OLDER WOMEN: Discuss tips and tricks for coping with menopause through this interactive workshop run by health nurse professionals. Other general women's health issues will also be discussed.

5B. BRIGHTEN MY DAY: Put some colour in your day by painting an original silk scarf. Elizabeth Birch will show you quick and easy ways to colour your scarf. Cost \$20

6B. WHAT PLANET ARE YOU FROM: Mid conversation have you ever thought to yourself, 'What planet are they from?' Would you like to have better relationships, stronger connections, trusted friends and loyal followers who are your biggest advocates? Learn how to converse and network magically so you are engaging and memorable and how to ask the right questions to ensure you get the right answers, plus more.

7B. COLOURS CLARIFIED: Colour is the first thing people notice about you. Enjoy time with style and image consultant Sandra Martin and learn what colours flatter you and enhance your appearance.

8B, 7C & 8D. SHARING STORIES THROUGH DRAMA: Drama is an active and interactive way in which we can create, explore, share, enact and understand ourselves and others through the safe distance that operating in role offers. Experience how story drama is a powerful learning and teaching medium.

9B. ANYONE FOR TENNIS: Local tennis coach will be on hand to share tips and help you improve your serve and volley during a hit of tennis. (Wear a hat and appropriate footwear).

10B. COMMUNICATING BETWEEN GENERATIONS: Isobel Knight's business proAGtive is the only business in Australia purely focussing on family farm succession. Explore women's roles in a family-run enterprise.

11B. ORGAN DONATION AWARENESS: You are 10 times more likely to need one than to give one, and you never know when YOU might need one. Get the latest information to ensure your organs count!

12B. DAILY HABITS TO DESIGN YOUR DESTINY: Presented by Robyn Pulman you will complete a 100 point checklist to take control of your relationships, finances, environment and health and learn the secret to controlling your emotions so your partner can hear your feelings.

13B. TAIZE MUSIC FOR MEDITATION, PRAYER & REFLECTION: Taizé music is generally a line or two from scripture or the Psalms sung in repetition using simple harmonies or rounds. People from all over the world make pilgrimages to Taizé each year and as a result it is sung in many languages. Learn some Taizé music followed by a short reflection with prayer and scripture readings.

14B. SAVEUR DE PARIS (A TASTE OF PARIS): Enjoy a taste of Paris through language, food and culture. Cost \$10

15B. SHARPENING YOUR GARDENING SKILLS: Bring your own secateurs (or purchase a pair for \$8) and learn the art of sharpening. Other gardening skills also discussed.

16B. BLOOMING MORE THAN HORSE FEED: Learn about flower arranging with local Florist Alice Carter.

1C. WOMEN'S HEALTH FOR THE YOUNGER WOMAN: Discuss modern contraception and tips during pregnancy. Other general women's health issues will also be discussed.

2C. BEATS AROUND THE BUSH: Acute Care Unit Clinical Nurse and Educator Helena Sanderson will speak with one brave woman about her experience with heart disease and provide you with simple steps to reduce your risk of heart disease. The biggest killer of Australian women, 90 per cent of women have at least one risk factor for heart disease. The good news is it can be prevented.

3C. STYLE SIMPLIFIED: We all have a signature style. Does your signature style work for you? Does it complement you and make you feel great? Style and image consultant Sandra Martin will show you how to dress to suit your body type and ensure you love your signature style.

4C. PLANNING AHEAD: Everything you need to know including the who, what, when, where, how and why it is important to plan ahead. Veronica Antcliff will discuss legalities we often put aside but should attend to.

5C. BASIC ITALIAN FOR TRAVELERS: Planning a trip to Italy? Learn basic Italian to make it more fulfilling. Get to know Italian greetings, question words, numbers, and the days of the week. Be sure to know how to ask for help in Italian so you're prepared for emergencies, and something very important, how to order food and drink!

6C. MY FAVOURITE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN FLOWERS: Come and hear about the native flora of Western Australia from Linda Posa.

7C. SHARING STORIES THROUGH DRAMA: See description at 8B

8C. SIMPLE HARMONIES: A workshop for people who don't have a lot of musical knowledge, probably can't read music, but who love to sing. All you need is a good ear and a love of singing. Do some singing exercises and learn songs with simple harmonies. Bring your voice and a sense of fun.

9C. COMMONWEALTH BANK FINANCIALS: Financial Planner Sharnie Kent will discuss planning for retirement and the role of superannuation, including options for generating superannuation to meet individual needs and ensuring financial security into the future – recommended considerations in business and personal financial security.

10C. ORGAN DONATION AWARENESS: See description 11B.

1D. PUPPY HANDLING: Everyday in Australia unsuitable dogs are surrendered to pounds – many are for unwanted behaviours which have been caused by the owners themselves through poor training of the puppy or adolescent stages. Learn the Do's and Don'ts of raising a puppy with local Veterinarian Dr Peta-Gay Railton.

2D. PAVEMENT ART: Come and contribute to a piece of pavement art with chalk medium with established local artist Gilly Paterson. (Funded by CASP)

3D. SERVICING SMALL MOTORS: See description at 3B

4D. CANADIAN TOWEL MAKING: Cathy McTauish will show you how to make these simple, useful and elegant towels – a perfect housewarming gift or a great addition to your own kitchen. Take home the knowledge, pattern and product to create your own. Cost \$10.

5D. STITCHED CARD CREATION: Carol Downton will provide patterns and show you how to create beautiful handmade greeting cards that your loved ones and special friends will treasure. Bring a hand towel and thread-scissors. Cost \$15 (includes kit).

6D. HOW TO BE A WHACKY WISE WOMAN: Learn to make the most out of life and truly enjoy 'you' in this fun-filled yet deeply insightful presentation. Gather tools to reduce stress and gloom and bring more laughter, passion and delight to your life. Natalie Shepard and Sandra Martin will show you how to realise your unique gifts and take control of your thoughts and self talk. You will be inspired to be the strong, happy, whacky, wildly wonderful woman you were meant to be!

7D. CARE FOR YOUR HAIR: Local hair stylist Olivia Meier will discuss what products best match your hair colour, cut, length and type. Learn how best to treat 'your crowning glory'.

8D. SHARING STORIES THROUGH DRAMA: See description at 8B

9D. PRINTING YOUR MEMORIES: Learn to make the most of treasured family images, memorable events or even a photo of your favorite pet. Paul Boniface will step you through the printing process and show you how to present your favourite images for years to come. Bring photos on media storage device.

10D. COOKING INDIAN: Local Indian cuisine specialist Elizabeth Walter will show you how to create Indian cuisine at home – stepping you through the process for preparing and cooking curry puffs, somosas and korma.

11D. PHYSIOTHERAPY EXERCISES: Discussion and exercise by a specialist continence and pelvic floor physiotherapist Eileen Lavis.

12D. SELF DEFENSE: Local self-defense specialist Lesley Whitehead will show you basic moves in self-defense.

13D. YOGA: Yoga is a commonly known term for the physical, mental, and spiritual practices or disciplines which originated in ancient India with a view to attain a state of permanent peace. Come and learn or join in with local Dr Kaye Cussen.

14D. CHEESE TASTING: Hunter Belle Cheese owner Tania Chesworth will show you what cheeses to serve during a dinner party and what tastes will enhance the palate when deciding on a menu or beverage. Cheeses available to purchase on the day.

15D. DAILY HABITS TO DESIGN YOUR DESTINY: See description at 12B

16D. CHORAL WORKSHOP: Come and learn simple choral pieces and gain ideas for starting a choir in your own community. This workshop is more challenging than the other two workshops. An ability to read music is an advantage but not essential. Be prepared to work hard and have a good sing.

17D. COMMONWEALTH BANK FINANCIALS: See description 9C

18D. GENEALOGY: Check out your ancestry and trace your family history using computer technology.

19D. CAKE DECORATING: Learn how to mould a figure (animal or person) in modeling paste (icing) and time permitting create something for Christmas. Cost \$10

20D. BURN YOUR BRA!: Discover which bra compliments your body shape and your outer wear.

21D. GOING TO THE RACES: Learn how to make floral accessories to match your outfit on the day. Cost \$5

Come and Horse Around with Us ... in Scone ... in the beautiful Upper Hunter!

An invitation is extended to women from NSW to visit Scone and network and participate in exciting and unique workshops over the weekend of 25–27 October. Come and join the women of the Upper Hunter Shire as they host this year's Gathering. It will be a unique, exciting and very special experience for all participants. Accommodation listings can be found on the accommodation page of the website along with regular updates and detailed information on the program, workshops and tours.

www.upperhuntertourism.com.au





NSW Rural Women's Gathering

Registration Form & Tax Invoice

Scone, 25–27 October 2013

Participant details:

NAME:

ADDRESS:

TOWN: POSTCODE:

EMAIL:

PHONE: FAX: MOBILE:

SPECIAL NEEDS (DIET, ACCESS)

General enquiries

Lee Watts: 0413 036 628
Kerri Cone: p: 02 6540 1141
e: kccone@upperhunter.nsw.gov.au
w: upperhuntertourism.com.au

Registration enquiries

Belinda McKenzie
p: 02 6540 1301 e: bmckenzie@upperhunter.nsw.gov.au

NSW Rural Women's Gathering
Committee, c/- Upper Hunter Shire
Council, PO Box 208, Scone 2337

Transport enquiries

Helen Jenkinson
p: 6545 0211 m: 0400 285 933
e: helenjenko@hotmail.com

Men's Program

Heather Ranclaud
p: 6540 1356 e: hcranclaud@upperhunter.nsw.gov.au

Sponsors

The Gathering is made possible
through the generous financial and
in-kind support of sponsors.

Gold sponsors:



Silver Sponsors: Brokenwood,
Ascella Wines, Coal & Allied,
Mitavite, Landmark Townsend
Scone, Leigh Equine Services and
Scone Chamber of Commerce.

Full Registration \$195: Friday night to Sunday
afternoon including speakers, workshops*,
entertainment, lunches, morning and afternoon
teas, Saturday night Dinner and free Sunday
breakfast hosted by Rotary.

Friday Night Only \$45: Finger food and hot
box, markets, equestrian demonstration, fashions
on the field. Scone Race Course.

Saturday & Sunday \$130: Speakers,
workshops*, tours, morning and afternoon teas and
lunches, free Sunday breakfast hosted by Rotary.
(NB Saturday Night Dinner NOT included).

Saturday Only \$85: Speakers, workshops*,
tour, morning and afternoon teas and lunch.
(NB Saturday Night Dinner NOT included).

Saturday Dinner Only \$80: Dinner, speaker
Dr Kaye Cussen and entertainment by Susan Davis
and Scone Singers and Bush Poet Greg Scott.

Sunday Only \$65: Free Sunday breakfast hosted
by Rotary, ecumenical service, workshop, women of
influence session, morning tea and lunch.

Partners Tour \$50: Saturday 9 am – 4 pm.
Cressfield Stud, Wingen township, Paradise park,
Murrurundi Museum, Pioneer Cottage, 4 Bridges
Walk, 2013 Photographic Exhibition in the RSL Hall,
and a BBQ lunch at Murrurundi Golf Club.

TOTAL COST (GST inclusive) \$

Early Bird Registration up to 15 September

will be entered into the draw for a full registration
refund with the winner to be announced during the
weekend. **Normal registration closes 1 October
2013.** Bookings received after this may be placed
on a waiting list or not accepted.

Childcare If you require childcare please contact
Upper Hunter Family Day Care on 02 6545 1151

Workshop / Tour selections For Saturday
morning workshop please choose from Workshop
A (3hrs) OR a B & C workshop (1.5 hrs each). Write
3 choices in order of preference for each of the 4
categories using the workshop number as your code.
For online bookings you will be notified immediately
if a workshop/tour is booked out and another choice
is required. **NB:** Every effort will be made to meet
preferences but cannot be guaranteed. *Some
workshops attract extra charges as noted.

A or B Workshop

- 1st Preference
 2nd Preference
 3rd Preference

D Workshop

- 1st Preference
 2nd Preference
 3rd Preference

C Workshops

- 1st Preference
 2nd Preference
 3rd Preference

Tours

- 1st Preference
 2nd Preference
 3rd Preference

PAYMENT DETAILS

Upper Hunter Shire Council ABN 17 261 839 740

IN PERSON: Cash, money order, credit card or EFTPOS payment can be made at Upper Hunter Shire
Council Scone Administration Centre or Scone Visitors Information Centre

POST: Mail your cheque or money order, made payable to *Upper Hunter Shire Council*, to NSW Rural
Women's Gathering Committee, c/- Upper Hunter Shire Council, PO Box 208, Scone NSW 2337

ONLINE: Credit Card only accepted via Trybooking Registration: www.upperhuntertourism.com.au

This document becomes a Tax Invoice on completion of payment. ABN 17 261 839 740 GST INCLUSIVE

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

OUR DAD

Our Dad he was a grazier,
A sheep man through and through.
Once or twice, the local show,
He bred the "Champion ewe"

He dipped, he drenched, and jetted
Crutched, mused and then
Once he'd gotten through the lot,
He'd do it all again!

Footrot, flies and drought,
He took them in his stride.
He'd tinkle on the piano
And sing along beside.

He taught each one of us to drive
First in the column shift.
He taught us clutch and brake
And how to handle skids and such
to keep ourselves alive.

He taught me other things as well,
They've stood me in good stead.
At harvest time amidst all of the
cawfuffle,
To drive the truck and be of help,
I knew to 'double shuffle'

Lambing time was lots of fun
We'd check them all each day.
Few things brought him so much joy
As to see a lamb at play.

To clearing sales he loved to go,
I just went for the ride,
But once your purchase was made,
There's one thing that you find ...
A hundred bits of junky stuff
come along behind!

A man of zeal and energy,
He set out with the hoe,
To rid our ground of 'Bathurst Burr',
And other weedy foe.

And though other weeds have
taken hold,
There's one thing that you find,
Not a single 'Bathurst Burr',
At "Ellerslie" does reside.

© JENNY POTTIE, MANILDRA



A bright horizon for Eliza

A new-found confidence has been one of the major benefits for NSW student Eliza Star as one of the Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation's Horizon scholars.

Eliza grew up on a mixed-enterprise farm near the town of Carrathool, in NSW, and says the lack of female role models in the male-dominated field of agriculture initially put her off a career in the industry. But Year 10 work experience with a well-respected female agronomist helped to persuade her otherwise and in 2013 she is studying the second year of Bachelor of Agricultural Science at Charles Sturt University.

Being awarded a Horizon Scholarship, sponsored by the Ricegrowers' Association of Australia (RGA), has given Eliza a boost financially and in terms of her own personal development. She receives a bursary of \$5000 a year through the scholarship

and participates in development events with other young agricultural enthusiasts.

'I have been involved in many activities stemming directly from the scholarship, including participating in various workshops and conferences,' she said. At the annual Horizon workshop held in Canberra she joined other scholars to discuss industry issues and how the scholars might become leaders.

'We even went to the ABC's Country Hour to build our profile and public speaking ability. I attended various RGA meetings and events ranging from SunRice and RGA annual general meetings, to grower discussion groups and social events!'

When in need of advice Eliza has mentors organised through the Horizon program she can call upon, including two from RGA.

'I have received a lot of help from my mentors. They help organise tasks and help me to go

beyond my boundaries. Having contact with people heavily involved in the industry gives you inspiration and that extra drive.'

The program also helps to coordinate work placements, which provide valuable industry exposure and also count towards university requirements. For Eliza, this is expected to include some time working with rice researchers. Although leaning towards agronomy, Eliza says there are so many places her agricultural degree could take her—teaching, agronomy, spatial analysis, animal nutrition, agribusiness and the list goes on.

She says the support gained through the Horizon program has given her greater confidence in herself and challenged her to expand her boundaries. It has helped her to develop new skills and to consider the image of agriculture that, as young leaders in the industry, the Horizon scholars present to the public.

'It's the best thing I have ever been involved in and I encourage anyone about to start their studies to give it a shot!'

The Horizon Scholarship is open to students entering their first year of university and studying a degree related to agriculture, such as agricultural science, rural science, livestock/animal science, veterinary science or agribusiness.

For more information or to apply for a Horizon scholarship see: www.rirdc.gov.au or call 02 6271 4100. ■

What's next?

The next edition of *Country Web* will showcase rural, regional and remote younger women who are actively involved in their industry and communities and will become

tomorrow's leaders. These women will play a key role in helping to build a thriving, sustainable agriculture for our communities. We invite stories from younger women themselves (15–35) and from people and groups/

organisations who work directly with young women leaders. Contributions are required by 18 November for publication in March 2014. Send contributions to RWN.





Having difficulty securing sponsors? How to influence sponsors and get them to say 'yes'

Influencing sponsors isn't just about developing really good relationships—you must also deliver a commercial and social return. That return can be many things to a sponsor, not just branding to gain more sales through your advertising campaigns. It could be an opportunity for their staff to participate in the event or to garner community awareness that they are giving back locally through their Corporate Social Responsibility program.

Procuring sponsorship brings with it many highs and lows—the excitement when they say 'yes' (and you actually have it in writing!) to the weeks where you have made so many calls and visited potential sponsors only to feel rejected when they say 'no'.

There are many ways that we can be women of influence at the decision table—although much of our work needs to be done well in advance of the decision and while there are a lot of finer points such as the language you use, how you determine brand impression, how you present the package and the angle you sell it, ultimately it's really down to how you market and present your organisation and the offer. Keep these tips in mind when you are planning your next sponsorship drive.

■ Interestingly many undermine the true social value of their sponsorship. Be sure to research the sponsor and suggest ways that they can cross-market your activity as well to gain the most from the 'brand love' they receive

it around, or they may have a policy change. Be sure to ask them for a testimonial to use in your sponsorship pitch and a recommendation or introduction to another business.

■ Logo-itis is a disease! Ensure your sponsorship package isn't just filled with logo placements. What else can the sponsor and/or their staff be involved in? If they are in marketing, then perhaps they can help to develop and/or review your marketing plan?

■ Understand what drives their investment. Some need you to talk cold hard facts about what target market you are covering and how many brand impressions they will receive. Others are purely interested in the social return. If you can better understand their drivers and motivations towards sponsorship, you'll be in a better position to start influencing them.

■ Early bird catches the worm! You need to plan so that you are starting to procure sponsorship a minimum of eight months before the first promotional activity.

■ No is not a stop sign! Don't get disheartened, it's an acronym for what's the Next Offer you can make them or if it just doesn't align, what's your Next Option and Next Opportunity?

■ Calendars of opportunities are great things—be sure to give one to your sponsors. This is a calendar of all the marketing opportunities you have identified you will be

undertaking. It's not just the media launch they should be attending or photographed at. Stage a series of media opportunities in the lead up to, during and after the activity.

■ Enough of the fluffy, airy fairy language please! Don't use words such as 'we expect', 'we believe' or 'we plan to'. Be direct; straight to the point and tell them exactly what you will do for them. Treat it seriously and give them a contract/letter of agreement outlining exactly what you will do and what they will do. Be sure to regularly report on your progress—don't leave it until their final sponsorship report arrives!

If you would like to know more, be sure to log onto nataliebramble.com.au and download our free sponsorship checklist from our resources section.

'... sponsors like to be aligned with positive and energetic organisations!'

One truth we must all accept is that sponsors like to be aligned with positive and energetic organisations. I'm sure you have heard the adage 'people are attracted to success'—it's so true! I have seen this many a time where a committee will get tired and in some cases so tired the club decides not to run the event again, only to have another group take up the challenge and with their motivation and enthusiasm, they manage to obtain sponsorship income that far exceeds that of the previous year's event (yes, I'm talking cash - not just in-kind!).

being aligned with a community organisation.

■ Need is really difficult for people to articulate. You must be very clear about why you need to have the event or run the project/program. Focus on selling the benefits, not the features!

■ Friends are there for a reason or a season! Don't despair if a previous sponsor decides it's time to move on. Find out why they are moving on. Many do because they need to be seen engaging with other community groups and sharing



**Natalie is a Business/NFP Consultant, NFP Governance Specialist and Coach, Engaging Trainer and Facilitator. In her spare time Natalie volunteers, works on big ideas for her next social enterprise, adds finished ebooks to her 12,500+ library and studies like mad to finish her masters.*

ADVERTISEMENT

How prepared are you?

Farm business succession planning

Succession planning for farmers can be difficult and at times stressful, but it's important and must be addressed. Sometimes it can seem like a huge task, with too many difficult decisions to address and the risk of conflict or disagreement can often discourage families from starting the process. It's best to get it all planned early so that everyone knows what to expect should you retire or be forced off the farm due to injury or other circumstances. The sooner decisions are discussed, the more choices are likely to be available to the family—it's never too late to start. Seeking professional advice long before you reach retirement age will ensure a smooth transition.



There are different reasons a transition of ownership occurs in farm families. Unlike many other businesses, the farm is usually passed onto another member of the family. This can lead to problems if you have more than one child and don't have an appropriate succession plan in place. Farm succession can create tension among siblings. The child who inherits the farm may be the only one who has any economic advantage from the family inheritance. There are creative ways to share the farm among your children however, which may not involve carving up the property into non-viable plots of land.

Sometimes rapidly changing circumstances can mean loss of the farm and this can be traumatic as the farm may have sentimental as well as economic value. Having a well-thought-out and detailed succession plan is the best way to avoid the difficult and stressful time of succession when it comes.

A Director of proAGtIVE and the 2013 NSW-ACT RIRDC Rural Women's Award winner, Isobel Knight says, 'a good approach to establish a farm succession plan is to seek the assistance of a succession planning professional who can walk you through the complexities involved in the planning process. This will

ensure the needs of all family members are met and also ensures a viable and sustainable farm into the future.'

Whether you're a family member or non-family member working in a family owned business—succession and preparing for the transition of management to the next generation is an integral part of good business planning. Succession involves far more than just the transfer of assets when the business owners either retire or pass away. It is an evolving process ensuring the continuation of a business down through either generations or layers of management. It involves choosing and grooming the successor(s), planning for the future, coping with the transition, communicating around and managing the change to the family and the business and letting go gracefully.

The timeliness of succession is the most critical task any business owner, who wants their business to endure for future generations, will face. Effective succession planning depends on open communication, good will, respect and a desire to keep relationships strong between all family members whether they are on or off farm.

Isobel says there are many benefits for developing a farm succession plan including:

- The opportunity to discuss key areas of concern and future aspirations before the situation becomes out of hand.
- To understand how to implement strategies now to prevent issues in the future.
- Increased family harmony, less pressure on Mum and Dad to have to 'sort it all out' themselves.
- Opportunity for the business owners and family members to communicate their aspirations for the future in a non-threatening environment.
- Framework and plan to manage the complexities associated with being in business with the people who are also our family.
- Clarity and direction for each family member for the future.
- Future direction for the business.
- Security for each family member for the future.
- Opportunity to have meaningful relationships with family separate to the business.
- Empowerment to ask other professionals the right questions to ensure accurate information and the right structures and agreements are put in place.
- Less stress for family members.
- Motivation, drive and enthusiasm injected back into the business.
- Risk management strategies discussed and analysis on current and future business structure based on the needs and interests of each family member.
- Strategic planning to build greater profitability into your business.
- Accurate and appropriate structuring to save you money.

MORE INFORMATION

proAGtIVE works with people in family businesses to provide succession planning and other services. Visit their website at: www.proagtive.com.au, email: info@proagtive.com.au or call 0419 464 857.

Rural Financial Counsellors provide free, independent and confidential assistance to farmers and small rural businesses. To find your local Rural Financial Counsellor in NSW go to: www.daff.gov.au or call 02 6272 3933.

A guide to succession: Sustaining families and farms produced by GRDC is a free publication. Call Ground Cover Direct on 1800 110 044. (Postage and handling fee \$10).

Ageing is wonderful and wrinkles are beautiful – let's celebrate!

By Nel Hunter, *Bribbaree (near Young)*



A group of incredibly inspiring women and I meet regularly for a yoga and deep relaxation class I teach in town. In between classes they go off to chemotherapy, surgery or doctors appointments. When time allows they get on with day-to-day life with a whole new perspective. They don't take anything for granted and have a way of seeing things that needs to be bottled.

Some of the women are further along the path and their hair is

returning with a few extra lush curls. We are great friends and getting to know each other during this last 12 months has been precious for us all.

We were talking about birthdays yesterday and what important milestones they are. Hearing that people hide their age and complain about their birthday seems so ridiculous. Ageing is wonderful! Wrinkles are beautiful lifetime expressions, and for one particular lady in our group, turning 60 is a goal

almost achieved! Our dear buddy doesn't have to have chemo for two months and that means celebrating in style!

When we are together it feels like they are the teachers and I am the student. The beautiful women talk about playing with the grandchildren in the autumn leaves like it's a lotto win, and it is! (and so much more). They speak of family and friends like they are kings and queens, oncology staff like they are angels and the detail in their gardens like blessings. When the sick feeling subsides and life can return to some sort of normality, something seems to have shifted big time. Every small detail is worthy of a celebration!

There are women in the group with young children too and staying in a mindful state while juggling careers and home life is challenging some days. We have noticed that when we get together it recharges everyone and the friendship we offer each other fills the yoga studio to the brim with love. The one thing I know is that we all need good friends. A good friend listens well, encourages us, doesn't let us stay in a negative state for too long and would drop everything

if needed. They are also great at making us laugh! The other thing we have all discovered is that regular deep relaxation techniques can make a huge difference in being able to cope during cancer treatment. Being able to focus on the breath, settle thoughts and emotions, while releasing tension is incredibly important. As one of the ladies explained, 'It was empowering.' Having the skills to respond to the stressful situation in new ways felt like there was finally something the women could be doing, rather than just having to put up with fear, anxiety, tension and worry.

My wish is that one day all cancer patients can experience the power of deep relaxation during treatment but that is only part of the wish. I would love everyone to experience the power of true friendship combined with an intention to celebrate everything that is beautiful about life. Couldn't we have some fun together!

Next time you look in the mirror, smile and give thanks, you are beautiful just the way you are and your age is fabulous! ■

Read Nel's Blog at <http://nelhunter.blogspot.com.au>



The National Rural Women's Coalition's A Cuppa With™ series will use the latest technology to offer networking opportunities for women from all corners of Australia. The sessions will be conducted in a web conferencing room providing an engaging multi-media experience where the speaker and participants can interact in the virtual classroom as if they were face-to-face.

The sessions are free and open to all rural and regional women. They will take place every 2nd Thursday of the month (unless otherwise notified) at 7 pm AEST. The sessions are live and will

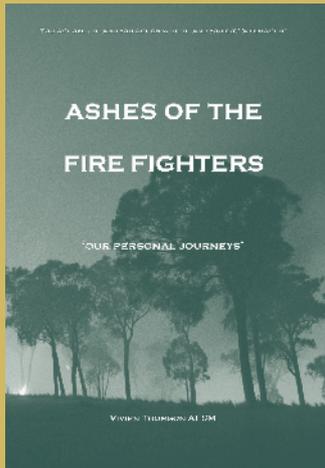
not be recorded—there will be an opportunity for discussion so you need to be there on the night. There is no commitment to attend every session, however the more sessions you attend—the more you will get out of the series.

The first three sessions will feature:

- 12 September: Modern Networking with Robyn Henderson
- 10 October: Mentoring and Personal Growth with Jeanette Long
- 14 November: Telling Your Story with Alice Greenup.

So pour yourself a cuppa and settle in for a great night!

To register, email: projects@nrwc.com.au, five days prior to the scheduled session. For more information and what you need to do to participate ie. system requirements, see: www.nrwc.com.au/Projects/ACuppaWith or contact the Coordinator, Kerryn Suttor by email: projects@nrwc.com.au or 0448 629 647



Ashes of the Fire Fighters

By Vivien Thomson AFSM

Ashes of the Fire Fighters is a book that documents the journey of nine people after experiencing a major bushfire event. It is a raw account and you will go through the journey of trauma and recovery with each person telling their own story.

Those that haven't been through it can see what others have been through, and if they have been through it, they will know they are not alone.

Vivien wrote this book in the hope that it would help future firefighters and their friends and families develop a better understanding of the recovery needed to survive and help them build resilience and understanding in the process.'

Ashes of the Fire Fighters is available for purchase online at: ashesofthefirefighters.com.au or you can download an order from the website to order by mail. Alternatively, email: ashesofthefirefighters@gmail.com or call 0408 282 899.

Published by Vivien Thomson
ISBN 978-0-646-59333-9
Cost \$35.00

ADVERTISEMENT



From January 2014, Local Land Services will bring together services currently provided by Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs), Livestock Health and Pest Authorities (LHPA) and some advisory services from the Department of Primary Industries (DPI).

The new grassroots model is a new approach to delivering services, information and advice to farmers, land managers and communities in NSW.

Local priorities

Local Land Services in each region will prioritise service delivery to reflect local priorities. It will be managed by local boards who will work closely with farmers, land managers and communities to deliver services relevant to their local needs.

Local Land Services will have:

- 11 Local Land Services regions
- 7-member Local Boards with a Local Chair
- 1 Board of Chairs headed by an Independent Chair
- Boundaries aligned with Local Government Areas
- Individual regions independently audited to ensure accountability and delivery against priorities.

Co-ordinated services

Whether it's cropping, livestock, horticulture, biosecurity or sustainable agriculture advice, Local Land Services will give farmers easy access to the latest information and services—all from one convenient local source.

- Local Land Services will deliver:
- Agricultural advice
- Plant and animal pest control and biosecurity
- Natural resource management
- Emergency management

Staffing

- Each region has a general manager responsible for operational performance
- Staff will be located at key sites and accessible to customers
- Local boards empowered to manage staff appointments

Funding

- Shared contributions from ratepayers, NSW Government and the Federal Government
- Funds allocated to specific purpose, eg. biosecurity, NRM projects and advisory services

- Local Boards will receive annual funding from Local Land Services Future Fund, a consolidation of cash assets of \$35 million, from LHPA and CMAs.

Benefits

- Local and relevant—local boards, local decisions and tailored services for your area and for your industry
- One stop shop—a range of support and advice from one convenient source
- Value-add advice—identifying opportunities, risks and better ways to improve your farm business, land management and catchment health
- Connected and innovative—close links with DPI research and industry development
- Independent and trusted—scientifically sound advice remains independent and transparent
- Keeping up with the times—new ways of accessing information and advice through smart technology, like mobile phone and tablet apps, and easy access to online resources.

women's health ■ things to tell your daughter, or ask your mother ...

As a woman, knowing some key things about your mother's life journey can give you an idea of what to expect and what to keep an eye on. Some important questions to ask her are:

When did your periods start?

Girls in Australia mostly start their menstrual periods at around 12–13 years old, but if your mother started hers earlier it's likely that you will too.

What have your periods been like?

Women can experience periods very differently. Your best 'crystal ball' is your mother. Ask if her periods are/were regular, if her bleeding was heavy or light when she was your age (it can change over time) and if she had much pain just before or during her periods.

When did you go through menopause?

Your final menstrual period (menopause) is likely to happen at a similar age to your mother's. If her periods stopped spontaneously (not

due to surgery, chemotherapy or radiotherapy) before age 45, ask a doctor about protecting yourself against long-term health risks such as osteoporosis and heart disease.

Do we have a family history of any disease?

Your chance of developing common gynaecological conditions like endometriosis or polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) is higher if a close female relative has it. Many older women may still not know they have particular conditions, so ask if your mother has/had a lot of pain with her periods, if she had any problems getting pregnant, or if she has trouble managing her weight or body hair.

Have you ever suffered from depression?

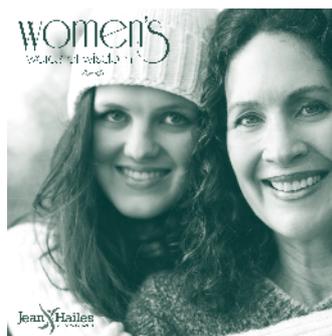
Depression can run in families, but this doesn't mean that if your mother has experienced depression you automatically will. If she has, ask when and for how long. You may experience something similar, particularly if her mood was affected by

her menstrual cycle, but your own life events and lifestyle (drug and alcohol use, physical activity, social support) are also important factors.

Have you ever had high or low blood pressure?

If your mother had high or low blood pressure later in life, it could well be lifestyle related, but if she was quite young it's something you should ask your doctor to keep an eye on.

Contributed by Jean Hailes for Women's Health. Call 1800 JEAN HAILES (532 642) or visit the website at: www.jeanhailes.org.au

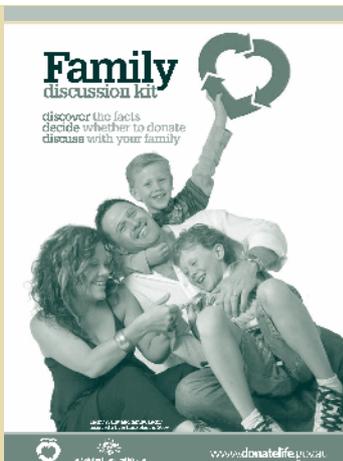


Download this free eBook full of tips from real Australian women to future generations at: www.jeanhailes.org.au/resources/what-australian-mums-wish

DONATELIFE ... THE GREATEST GIFT

is a government campaign aimed at increasing family discussion about organ and tissue donation. The campaign aims to encourage Australian families to discover the facts about organisation and tissue donation so they can make and register their informed donation decisions on the Australian Organ Donor Register (donatelife.gov.au/decide) and most important,

discuss and know each others organ donation wishes. In Australia, the family of every potential organ and tissue donor is asked to confirm the donation decision of their loved one, which is why family discussion on this issue is so important. The Family Discussion Kit is a practical guide that will assist you and your family to have an informed and memorable discussion about organ and tissue donation.



Download the free Family discussion kit from DonateLife: www.donatelife.gov.au

GRANTS & FUNDING

INVESTING IN WOMEN

Up to \$25 000 is available from Women NSW for partnership projects that lead to the economic empowerment of women through training and employment in non-traditional trades. The money will support key stakeholders to encourage women into the trades and to improve opportunities and outcomes for women in the priority area of economic participation. See the website for Funding Guidelines and How to Apply.

P: 02 9248 1840

E: iiw@facns.nsw.gov.au

www.women.nsw.gov.au



HORIZON SCHOLARSHIP

Supports young people studying agriculture at university who are passionate about the industry and have a keen interest in the future and who are ready to expand their networks and learn new skills. You receive \$5 000 per year for the duration of your degree, mentoring, professional development workshops, annual industry work placements and opportunities to network and gain knowledge at a range of industry events. Applications open 1 November 2013.

P: 02 6271 4132

E: margo.andrae@rirdc.gov.au

www.rirdc.gov.au/horizon

Are you 18–23 years old? We need you!

Contributed by Clare Thomson, Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health

Each generation faces unique health issues and those faced by young women today are largely unknown. To help address this issue The Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health (ALSWH) is recruiting a new group of women aged 18–23 to participate in their research.

The ALSWH is one of the most comprehensive health studies in Australia and has helped improve health services for Australian women located in rural and remote areas for 17 years.

ALSWH is keen for young women aged 18–23 to participate in the survey as their input is likely to have a positive affect on health policy for Australian women, both now and in the future.

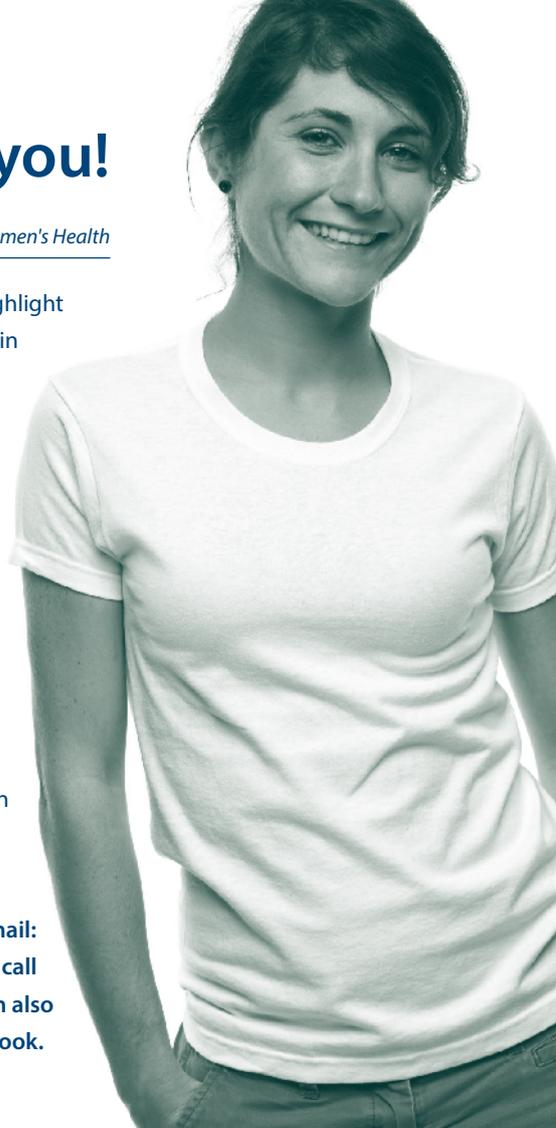
In 1996, three groups of women, then aged 18–23, 45–50 and 70–75, enrolled in the study. These women represented 2–3 per cent of their age groups living across Australia at the time. These women have provided valuable health information through the completion of surveys over the past 17 years.

The aim of this new group is to develop and evaluate health policy and practice relevant to women in this age group. In addition, information collected from the original 18–23 year old group in 1996 will be compared with the information provided by the new group.

This new study will highlight generational changes in health and the health service used by these women, in addition to areas in need of policy change.

To participate go to: www.alswh.org.au/survey and complete the first health survey. It takes about 20 minutes and you will have the chance to win some fantastic prizes.

For more information contact ALSWH by email: info@alswh.org.au or call 1800 068 081. You can also find ALSWH on Facebook.



Family Planning NSW Talkline information, advice and referral 8.30 am to 5 pm weekdays www.fpnsw.org.au/talkline Call 1300 658 886

The Family Planning NSW Talkline provides expert advice on contraception, including IUDs and implants, pregnancy options, fertility, menstruation, puberty, menopause, sexually transmissible infections (STIs), men's sexual health and healthy relationships.

Dr Mary Stewart, Acting Medical Director says that when someone contacts the Talkline they are likely to talk about matters that are very personal to them, sometimes for the first time. She says their Talkline staff draw on both their clinical knowledge and professional experience to assist a caller to examine their options and plan an appropriate course of action.

'We know some issues can be difficult to talk about, but there is nothing our staff has not heard. Whether it's contraception advice, problems with menstruation or menopause, anxiety around an STI, or an unplanned pregnancy, our staff can help.'

'We know that in smaller country towns there can be concerns around confidentiality with reproductive and sexual health issues, or the local GP might not have expertise in this area of clinical practice, there are many reasons why the service we provide is utilised.'

'As a not for profit organisation, funded by the NSW Ministry of Health, our role is to ensure that information is available to everyone in NSW so we also have an online bookshop: www.fpnsw.org.au/bookshop, factsheets and a lending library.'

Connecting rural NSW to expert reproductive and sexual health information, advice and referral

Family drug support

Today's family faces many challenges including alcohol or other drug use. Sometimes this can dominate a family for years and everyone can be affected—parents, siblings and friends. Children of drug or alcohol dependent parents are particularly at risk.

Family Drug Support (FDS)* is a caring, non-religious organisation which provides non judgemental, non-directive support and information to families and friends of alcohol/drug dependent people across Australia. FDS was founded in 1997 by Tony Trimmingham following the loss of his son to a heroin overdose. In searching for support for himself and his family, he realised that there was very little available. In speaking out about his concerns in the media, he was contacted by other families who told of similar experiences

and this, combined with an overwhelming response to a public meeting, led to the formation of FDS. FDS believe families are important and any connection with the alcohol/drug user is critical. Sadly though, many families are left to work through tough issues without support.

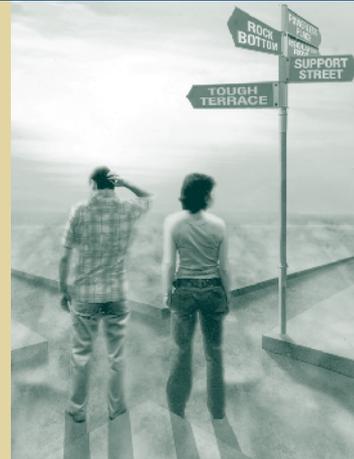
Family support is crucial when dealing with dependent alcohol and other drug use. The journey for families is chaotic, often abusive and lengthy. In order to cope better, become resilient and survive the journey, families need on-going support. Without this, families can become isolated and helpless.

TIPS

- Seek help—don't deal with things in isolation. Talk openly with the whole family.
- Listen to the drug user without 'reacting'. Look for clues that they want to talk.
- Try to avoid control and direction. These tactics usually lead to more underground activity and resistance to change.

- Acceptance is not the same as approval.
- Support is not the same as rescue.
- Love and acceptance is not the same as being a 'doormat'.
- Listening is the most useful communication skill.
- Defer communication if you are not calm.
- Be clear on boundaries set. Don't make them unrealistic.
- Be informed. Educate yourself about drugs and how they affect people.

While there are no quick fixes and we can't force people to admit drugs are causing them problems or push them into treatment, we can learn strategies to reduce confusion and hopelessness associated with drug taking behaviour as well as maintaining a relationship with the drug user. One mother said after completing the Stepping Forwards course, 'From being really anxious and confused, I learned to support my



daughter without giving up my own life. We now have a reasonable relationship and I feel I'm coping'.

MORE INFORMATION

The **Stepping Forwards** course provides information on helping families to cope better and learn more about their journey with their loved one. For information contact Julie Clark on 0400 113 422.

The following interactive websites provide information and resources: www.fds.org.au and www.yds.org.au

The National Telephone Support Line runs 24-hours 7 days a week. Call 1300 368 186

THE RURAL ADVERSITY MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM

(RAMHP) rolls out activities and strategies designed to improve mental health knowledge, reduce stigma, link people to services and develop community resilience. A major program of the University of Newcastle's Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health RAMHP is funded by the NSW Ministry of Health. In partnership with the rural NSW health districts, RAMHP works with communities in dealing with the after-effects of a decade of drought, and also addresses the fear and uncertainty

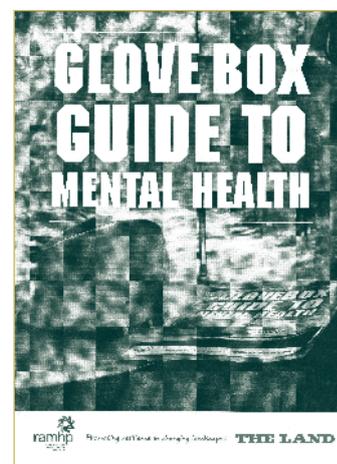
produced by economic downturn, climate variability, and other natural disasters.

In 2012 RAMHP and *The Land* formed a partnership to release the *Glove Box Guide to Mental Health*. The Guide provided vital information about simple and effective strategies to promote and maintain mental health, and features stories of those who experience symptoms of mental illness and their journey to recovery. The *Glove Box Guide* will again be produced by RAMHP and *The Land* in 2013. This year, as well

as providing even more individual stories from rural people, the Guide will showcase innovative ways rural communities support each other and how being engaged in your community can protect your mental health. Look out for the 2013 edition in *The Land* later this year.

Let's talk about mental health

As part of the drive to get more people in the bush talking about mental health, join *The Land* for the online Friday Forum on the first Friday of each month 2 pm–3 pm. Go to www.theland.com.au



www.theland.com.au and follow the 'Let's talk about Mental Health' link before the forum to participate.

Frayne fulfills a lifelong dream – bringing smiles to children's faces

By Tracy Gordon, Dhirraway Dhaarun Bawu (Strong Happy Family Centre), Brewarrina Aboriginal Integrated Child & Family Centre



PHOTO COURTESY OF BREWARRINA NEWS

Frayne Barker is the Director of Gainmara Birrilee Preschool at Brewarrina. She is a well known and respected person of the community with her tireless effort and dedication for the young children and families.

Frayne grew up in Brewarrina and went to the local Central School, finishing year 10 in 1982.

'In my last year at school I was able to do work experience at Gainmara Birrilee Preschool enabling me to decide on a career in childcare or looking after the elderly. After some words of wisdom from my father, I decided that I wanted to work with young kids. That was a very positive week for me, I was inspired and wanted to leave Brewarrina and do some further training in working with children.

'Off I went to Sydney at the age of 16. Three weeks later I applied for a job at an Aboriginal Preschool, in Eveleigh Street, Redfern and was fortunate enough to begin my first job.

'This was my start. The preschool staff, committee and community members who I had worked with supported me in my role

and encouraged me in further training. At this time I was very shy, I found it difficult to speak in public and have eye contact with people, in doing further training I became stronger within myself.

'In 1986 I finished my Childcare Course by working through the day at the centre and going to TAFE at night.

'This was the year that I lost my father—the biggest inspiration in my life. He was the person who told me I could do what I wanted and I would have loved to share my results with him, I hoped he would be proud of me as this is what spurred me on.'

Frayne enrolled in the The Bachelor of Teaching degree at Waverly College as a full-time student. After 12 months of study she was struggling financially and decided to work and study part-time.

'It took me seven years to complete my studies—it wasn't easy. It was hard at times being the only Aboriginal student. I was continuously rewriting my projects and assignments to perfect the finished product as I had difficulty in understanding

them at my first attempt.

'At this time I was longing to be home with my family as I was still coming to terms with the loss of my father.'

After completing the course Frayne had broken her leg and saw this as a chance to finally go home. On returning to Brewarrina, the preschool, Gainmara Birrilee had advertised a job that Frayne had been dreaming of. She applied and was successful—the new Director of the Brewarrina Preschool.

Frayne overcome many obstacles when she first took over the centre. The advantage of being a local from Brewarrina and understanding the cultural

significance in the community enabled her to know the families and most importantly their children. After 17 years she has seen many childcare policies change—this has required her and her staff to take on extra studies to obtain the qualifications to ensure that the preschool is fully accredited with the current requirements.

Frayne, the shy little 16-year-old who begun her career in Redfern has finally fulfilled her dreams. Gainmara Birrilee Preschool and staff are the recognised leading light in Preschools in the Far West of NSW, being utilised as a training ground for Preschool teachers of the future.

'I have a great network outside of my community, just a phone call away. My dream was to come back home and teach at preschool. I have achieved that and more.' ■

CLOUDY MEMORIES

'Go away; I have no time to play'.
Yesterday gone, but forgotten, Nay.
Busy mother with children and chores.
Outside too, not just indoors.
She struggles and juggles, still learning herself, about life.
Raises her kids through trouble and strife.
Explains that most folks are good, but some bad,
and occasions include both happy and sad.
Decisions and effort are encouraged always ...
even misshapen gifts are received with praise!
Look up to the sky, watch the clouds passing by.
Wispy, fluffy, tumbling, broiling—merging images in the blue ...
disperse, reform to something new.
Visualise, realise,
minds full of memories—creating our histories.
My legacy of love, now from heaven above,
is to listen and learn, to care and to share.
Always have time to pause and see ...
(some magical thing) like she did with me!
Those dreaded words I doubt to me were ever said.
This phrase I heard instead ...
'Wherever you are in this fair land,
just reach out—I will take your hand'.

© BY KATH WHALAN, WANTABADGERY

PHOTO BY NEL HUNTER



Lisa Shipley is a Kamilaroi woman from Northern NSW. She holds a Bachelor of Education and is completing a Masters of Education (Honours). She is a committee member of NSW Ageing, Disability & Homecare Aboriginal Advisory Committee (AAAC), Director on the National Rural Women's Coalition (NRWC) and Reference Group Member for Lowitja Institute Round Table on Maternal & Infant Health. She is a Research Academic with the University of Newcastle's Department of Rural Health and has presented at national and international conferences. Through membership with the National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance she attended the 57th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women held in New York in March 2013—forming the first Indigenous Caucus for CSW.

WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO BECOME INVOLVED?

I believe Aboriginal women are a large and vital part of the fabric of rural communities however I don't think this is highlighted enough and Aboriginal women appear not to have a voice. My motivation for becoming involved with NRWC is to join non-Aboriginal women to highlight and build on the distinct aspects of rural life for all women. My role with AAAC was motivated by the Gabba Binaal Elders who

wanted to be heard at a state level to ensure their distinct needs are understood. As a member of NATSIWA I hope to contribute to discussions ensuring rural Aboriginal women are not left out of the conversation in regard to national agendas and policy implementation. As an Indigenous Research Academic I am identifying the barriers and enablers for Aboriginal women accessing and engaging in education and training within the health sector.

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

I am closely linked with local women through Yinarr, a group of volunteer women who proactively address health and wellbeing issues within the local community. We have come to realise that as Aboriginal women we need to look at the broader picture to improve our circumstance. This led to my involvement with NRWC and it has provided a platform for Aboriginal women in our region to share our collective concerns. Being involved in these roles has broadened my understanding of a range of issues and I now have knowledge, understanding and confidence to advocate on behalf of rural Aboriginal women.

HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY OBSTACLES?

Completing higher education was difficult due to distance, work and family and community commitments. Feeling isolated from major learning centres, limited access to computers and the internet and the high cost of travel were also obstacles. The support I received from family

and friends and the cultural support and guidance from the women of Yinarr was all invaluable as was the support I received from Yalbalinga, the Aboriginal unit at the Australian Catholic University where I completed my degree.

WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR SUPPORT?

My major source of strength and support comes from my children and immediate family. I also have a wider level of support from my extended family and close friends. I also have the support and friendship of strong non-Aboriginal women which I value greatly as I believe we need to work together for better outcomes for our families and communities. I think it is important to have a positive outlook on life, to stay connected to my family, and to remain grounded in my Aboriginal identity and retain my connection to country.

WHO IS THE MOST INFLUENTIAL WOMAN IN YOUR LIFE & WHY?

My Mum has worked tirelessly within the Aboriginal community for over 30 years. Her knowledge, resilience, strength and determination is endless and I have witnessed her overcome many barriers. She is a strong, independent woman who grasps every opportunity. Her knowledge of Aboriginal affairs is invaluable with many turning to her for advice and support.

HOW HAS SHE INFLUENCED YOU IN LATER LIFE?

Mum's influence has always been with me and still guides me to this day. She doesn't dictate what to do, she leads

by example and is always there for support and advice. Mum definitely contributed to the career I am pursuing now and the committees I am involved in. It was her modelled behaviour that set me on my path in life. In relation to my current role, I recall Mum saying to me once when I was pestering her about something, "I've run out of answers Lisa, go to the library", and a researcher was born.

WHAT IS THE BEST PIECE OF ADVICE YOU HAVE RECEIVED FROM HER?

Be selfless. Mum always gives of herself to others and taught me to never judge anyone or their circumstance because we may never know or understand the things that have shaped or influenced their life situation. She also taught me to be connected, be informed, to seek answers, and to always look at the big picture.

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

As an Aboriginal woman I felt it was never my place to be involved in decisions that impacted me, my family or community. However being involved in these groups I have gained a level of confidence that allows me to be actively involved. This is important to me as an Aboriginal woman because if Aboriginal women aren't given a voice and opportunities to be involved in decision making processes, decisions will be made about us and not with us. This is the reason I have pushed myself to become involved and while at times it can be hard, I encourage other Aboriginal women to get involved. ■



How to be heard

By Mariette Rups-Donnelly, International speaker and presenter

The second in a two-part series by Mariette Rups-Donnelly. In this final instalment Mariette's provides tips and ideas to ensure your opinions are heard at your next board or committee meeting.

When you walk into a room, or turn up at a meeting, the first thing people will notice about you is your physical presence and then ... you speak.

In the previous issue of *The Country Web* I shared techniques for dealing with fear, standing out and taking advantage of opportunities. Now let's make sure that you are heard!

The sound of your voice is a combination of genetics and life influence and many of us use only a small amount of the vocal quality available to us.

Do people often ask you to repeat what you say? Do you have a soft voice? Are you aware if you are not always clear? It really is up to you to make it easy for people to hear you. It takes some awareness, some thought, and a bit of work.

Today I will focus on being heard in meetings but these techniques work just as well for networking and delivering presentations.

CHOOSE YOUR SEAT CAREFULLY

When you arrive at a meeting do you choose your seat immediately or end up with one of the last remaining seats? If you want to be heard you need to be seated where you can be involved in the discussion. The conversation will always swirl around the most influential and powerful people in the room (and the pushy ones). When you get caught at the opposite

end of the table to where the discussion is happening, it can be a real challenge to interject.

Always aim to sit on the side and towards the middle of the table so you are close to the main discussion. Get in the room and put your bag on your chosen seat as quickly as you can.

'You have things to say and you want to be heard. Step up, stand out and be heard!'

USE YOUR VOICE WELL.

Your voice works on air. Take a good deep breath in, before you speak, and then as you speak, allow the air to flow out with your voice. This will immediately give your voice more volume and a warmer, more resonant tonal quality. To get the feeling of airflow try singing and then try speaking with similar airflow.

Use your words clearly and fully. Clear articulation makes it much easier for all of us to understand each other.

No need to rush. Emphasise the important words of the sentence to make your message clear. Breathe at the end of sentences and at the end of phrases to give you a natural pause and allow your listeners time to take in what you are saying.

MAKE YOUR PRESENCE FELT

To help make your presence felt in the room, arrive early at the

meeting and greet people as they arrive (after you claim your seat).

Speak early in the meeting, even if you just agree or support someone else's ideas. This ensures your presence is noticed at the table.

Interjecting into a free-flowing discussion is not always easy. When a woman wants to break into a conversation, particularly with a group of men with deep resonant voices she usually raises her voice in volume and in pitch. This is fine, initially, however if the voice stays like this it can sound pushed and harsh. (This is a problem for women because their voices naturally resonate higher than men's voices). So what to do? Raise your voice momentarily to get attention and then let it settle again at a lower pitch. This works best if you move or gesture at the same time as

you speak. That way the others at the table will see and hear you at the same time.

PREPARE WELL

If you want people to take on board what you have to say your ideas must be structured logically and delivered concisely. This takes preparation. Think through the agenda and make precise notes on the points you will address. In fact, be prepared to speak on any item on the agenda ... you never know when you will be asked, and then practise what you might say, on your feet and out loud.

Warm up. Your voice is a muscle; it works best when warm. Do some humming. Play around with tongue twisters, sing.

You have things to say and you want to be heard. Step up, stand out and be heard. ■

BECOMING A MEMBER OF A BOARD

By becoming a board member, you can gain valuable skills and experience, and make essential contributions to the community and the way NSW is governed. To help you become board-ready Women NSW has developed a series of fact sheets outlining what is required: www.women.nsw.gov.au/publications/fact_sheets#board_fact_sheets

To learn about NSW Government boards and committees see the Boards & Committees website: www.boards.dpc.nsw.gov.au Here you will also find information about joining the NSW Government register of people available for appointment to NSW Government boards and committees and see a list of vacancies for NSW Government boards and committees.

I WANT TO APPOINT WOMEN BOARD MEMBERS

There is growing evidence that women's leadership increases company success. To find out more about how to appoint women to your board read through some of the fact sheets available at: www.women.nsw.gov.au/women_in_leadership/women_on_boards



Into the future with Rural Women Connect

By Nerida Cullen, Chair – RWConnect

There are times when even a good writer uses a cliché—because it sums up events, ideas and impressions succinctly. And this is one of those times.

How many times have you heard people say that ‘Nothing lasts’? The Rural Women’s Council has been replaced by Rural Women Connect (RWConnect) which is based on a more modern model of communication and has the potential to be more flexible. There are now some 20 women (all committed, talented and competent) involved in RWConnect from around the state. All these women volunteered as they believe the voice of rural woman needs to be heard.

This newly minted RWConnect augurs well for rural women and their issues.

We do not rely on face-to-face meetings but use technology.

We have our meetings via webinars and extensively use the internet between times. So far we have had two webinars with a further two scheduled in September and November 2013.

This embrace of technology gives us flexibility to facilitate discussion and collect women’s views and opinions on issues relevant to rural, regional and remote women and their communities. We have access to government through key groups such as the Primary Industry Ministerial Advisory Committee (PIMAC) and the Rural Assistance Authorities Regional Assistance Advisory Committee (RAAC). We aim not only to complement their work for rural NSW but to become an important source of good advice and a valuable social research tool to enrich government policy making.

Our first research project has a focus on domestic

violence—an issue that does not go away and one that affects every level of society. There is a strong feeling that there is a need for a grassroots, sensitive and responsive model to be developed. I know there is more awareness of the nature and the effects of domestic violence, through the work done with mental health issues during the drought. It is no longer the province of women—men are more aware and at times have been victims as well.

This is where the second cliché comes in—‘The more things change, the more they stay the same.’ Our awareness of domestic violence may have increased but we still do not know how to tackle it successfully. Hopefully our project will provide some ideas to address this.

It did appear that with the demise of the Rural Women’s Council that an era would end, never to be repeated. But as the third cliché says—‘As one door closes, another opens.’ And so it is. RWConnect will prove to be a powerful instrument to ensure the voice of rural, regional and remote women is represented and acknowledged in the adoption of policies for the improvement of their communities.

We ask you to be involved in our journey—this will give us strength and relevance. The staff at the RWN is committed to our success and welcomes your involvement. For information and to stay up-to-date visit: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn

STAY TUNED!

The next edition of *The Country Web* will feature a 4-page pullout on domestic violence with useful information and resources.

WOMEN FORGING AHEAD IN GLOBAL MARKETS

One of the surprising results from the report *Australia’s underestimated resource: Women doing business globally*, is that the largest demographic of women-owned businesses that have engaged internationally are women over the age of 50. They are highly educated, fluent in languages, with the majority seeking to expand further into new markets. Their appetite to expand business internationally is robust, strong and likely to continue for the foreseeable future. So why are these women invisible? Why are they not celebrated more widely in our community? Their contribution to Australia’s economic growth is substantial but under recognised and underestimated.

Women In Global Business (WIGB) aims to give women a voice and a platform for recognition to help them achieve a greater public profile by helping to increase female participation in international trade and delivering greater economic benefit and job creation. WIGB also provides women with information and resources, support and connection. It is free to join.

E: info@wiggb.gov.au

P: 03 9648 3285

W: wiggb.gov.au

(Source: Cynthia’s Blog @ <http://wiggb.gov.au>)

Assist A Sista

Helping survivors of domestic violence rebuild and repair by bringing hope and restoring faith

Contributed by Assist A Sista

Standing terrified in the doorway to the Refuge Fiona* could barely remember those first few happy days ...

Fiona had just finished university, gaining qualifications to become a Speech Pathologist, when she met Danny—the man of her dreams. Attentive, charismatic, extremely handsome and sharing the same ideals for a bright future together. After a beautiful wedding the happy couple moved 700 km away to a rural area where Danny had once lived. After a few months he began becoming aggressive. Fiona had never experienced this kind of behavior before and

just put it down to the stress of moving towns so she kept apologising and promised not to upset him again. It wasn't long before Danny started to threaten her life stating he would shoot her if she ever left him. A few weeks later she discovered she was pregnant. Danny was extremely happy but it didn't last.

Three months after their son was born, the beatings continued where they had left off and four months later Fiona again discovered she was pregnant having been sexually abused by Danny. He controlled all of the money now and had even confiscated Fiona's purse and handbag telling her she had no use for it.

During the seven years they'd been married, Fiona attempted to leave Danny five times. Each time she left it always seemed easier to just go back—the journey ahead was too frightening and overwhelming.

Who would help her? Fiona had no friends anymore and she'd lost touch with her family who had disapproved of Danny. Fiona was so mentally and physically drained, that she just didn't have the energy to fight the unknown battle.

Becoming more and more tyrannical and incensed, Danny locked Fiona in the house and forbid her to have any access to the outside world. When he went to work each day, Fiona tied small notes around batteries and threw them into the neighbor's yard until eventually the notes were found and the police were called. The police arrived and took Fiona and the children to the station where she made a statement and the police themselves put an order out on Danny. Fiona was taken to a motel for the night and the next day was moved to the Gold Coast.

Fiona was feeling so vulnerable, scared and worried for her children having arrived at the refuge with only the clothes on their back. The Support workers at the Refuge made them feel very welcome and asked what her immediate needs were? Fiona explained she had no money but the team reassured her by talking about Assist A Sista Australia.

Assist A Sista is a group of community-based volunteers who work together to help survivors of domestic violence rebuild and repair by bringing hope and restoring faith. Assist A Sista would help her.

Within hours, Fiona and her three children had an abundance of beautiful clothing all in the right sizes, personal items, and loads of toys for the kids, even a special pamper pack just for mum. Fiona couldn't believe that these items had been given to her free—and by

strangers who were willing to help her and her children.

As soon as Fiona and her children found suitable accommodation, Assist A Sista again waved their magic and turned that bare house into a home. Beds, linen, lounge, dining table—everything, even a pantry full of food to get them through the first week. Fiona said she is certain that if Assist a Sista had been there when she had tried to leave Danny all those years before, she would never have gone back.

After years of domestic violence, to actually have something to call her own is so empowering. Fiona now feels like herself again, has her children settled in daycare and has just returned to a part-time position as a speech pathologist. She now has her home with the most beautiful furnishings imaginable all thanks to the help of Assist A Sista and smiles every day. Fiona now has a life—her own life. The cycle for Fiona has been broken!

To join the Assistahood and help others like Fiona to break the cycle, send an email to: Info@assistasista.com.au or visit our website: www.assistasista.com.au Like us on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/assistasista

**Fiona' is a character who has been built around the joint stories of women who have been affected by domestic violence and supported in refuge. ■*

Just when the caterpillar thought the world was over, it became a butterfly. PROVERB

Domestic violence can happen to anyone

Domestic and family violence takes many forms. It involves violent, abusive or intimidating behaviour carried out by a partner, carer or family member to control, dominate or instil fear. It doesn't have to be physical abuse. It can be emotional, psychological, financial, sexual or other types of abuse.

It can affect anyone in the community, regardless of gender, sexual identity, race, age, culture, ethnicity, religion, disability, economic status or location.

Anyone in immediate danger should call the police on Triple Zero (000).

For information, support and referrals, call the 24 hour **Domestic Violence Line on 1800 65 64 63.**

You have the right to live safely in your home. Read the Staying Home Leaving Violence section for more information.

www.domesticviolence.nsw.gov.au



social media ■ staying in touch with RWN

By Kate Needham, NSW Trade & Investment

For the last few years the Rural Women's Network (RWN) has been using a range of social media tools to communicate and engage with the public about the RIRDC Rural Women's Award, the annual NSW Rural Women's Gathering, Hidden Treasures and other projects, as well as sharing information from the broader community, such as funding and other opportunities, government initiatives, resources, and rural and women's issues. So let's look at how you can stay in touch with RWN through their social media channels.

BLOG

A blog (short for web log) is a website featuring articles or 'posts', usually displayed in reverse chronological order. Many blogs provide commentary on a particular subject, while others are more personal online diaries.

RWN has a blog at: www.nswruralwomensnetwork.wordpress.com

You can subscribe to most blogs using RSS (Really Simple Syndication), to get updated as soon as a new article is published, without having to check the site every day. The feed allows you

to read summaries of the new content and follow links back to the site if something is of interest to you. You can manage all your RSS feeds in one place using an RSS reader or 'aggregator', such as Netvibes: www.netvibes.com or Newsblur: www.newsblur.com

Most blogs, including the RWN blog, also allow you to comment on articles; you will usually need to provide an email address.

You can start your own blog using a range of free or low cost options, such as WordPress: www.wordpress.com or Blogger www.blogger.com

YOUTUBE

YouTube is a video-sharing website that you can use to upload, view, share and comment on videos. YouTube content includes everything from homemade videos and animations to music clips, video blogs and instructional videos, to full TV episodes, film trailers and advertising campaigns.

RWN has a YouTube channel at: www.youtube.com/user/nswrwn

You don't have to sign up to YouTube to watch videos. You can find videos by searching for

key words. YouTube will suggest similar videos to watch, or you can link to the video publisher to see other videos they've uploaded.

If you create your own YouTube account, you can upload your own videos via your own channel. You can also like, rate and comment on other people's videos, save videos to your 'Favourites', subscribe to channel updates, and create your own playlists.

To sign up for free go to: www.youtube.com and click on 'Sign in', then 'Create an account' in the top right corner of the page.

Twitter

Twitter is a free, web-based micro-blogging service that lets you send and read messages, called 'tweets', in real time. It's called micro-blogging because messages can't be more than 140 characters.

RWN has a Twitter page at: https://twitter.com/nsw_rwn

You don't need to sign up to Twitter to read tweets. You can find tweets or tweeters by searching. Search for 'rural women' for all related tweets from anywhere in the world, for example.

If you create your own Twitter account, you can publish your own tweets, follow your favourite tweeters, add tweeters to subject-based lists, and customise your Twitter page with a background image and short biography. You can also share photos and videos.

Once you have an account you can also interact with other tweeters by retweeting (sharing another tweeter's tweet), mentioning a tweeter (using their Twitter name starting with '@'), replying to a tweet, or sending a direct message to your followers. Twitter will also suggest people to follow, based on the people you are already following.

Using hashtags—putting a '#' in from of a word—allows that word to be used in searches across all tweets. The ABC uses #qanda each week when Q&A is televised, so the audience can follow the Twitter conversation. AgChatOz: www.agchatoz.org.au uses the hashtag #agchatoz every Tuesday at 8 pm AEST to bring people together to discuss issues affecting the agricultural industry.

To sign up for free go to: www.twitter.com ■

WEB WATCH

www.boards.dpc.nsw.gov.au/online-regisration

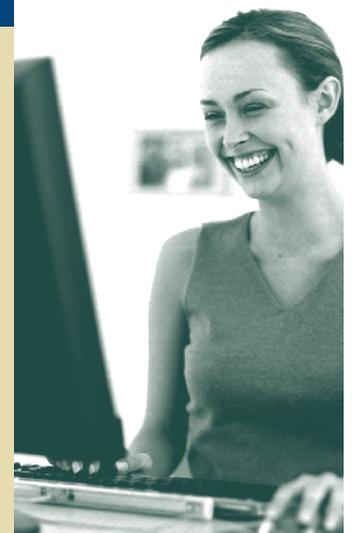
If you want to make a contribution to your community and the way you live and have a say on decisions that affect tomorrow, join the NSW Government Register of people available for appointment to NSW Government boards and committees.

www.governance.reconciliation.org.au

The Indigenous Governance Toolkit is an online resource for Indigenous nations, communities, individuals and organisations. It covers rules, values, culture, membership, leadership, and decision making and has many examples of ideas that work from other groups and tools to help you get started.

www.womensagenda.com.au

Women's Agenda is free online resource for career-minded women. It provides daily news and updates as well as a daily news alert to registered readers. It supports women in business, women on boards, women in media, women in leadership and all aspirational women in the workplace. You'll find great articles and resources and lots of inspiration.



what's on, what's new?



New domestic and family violence app

The Aurora domestic and family violence app is available now for free download for people experiencing domestic and family violence or for those worried about their relationship. It is also a valuable resource for those worried that a friend or family member is experiencing domestic and family violence.

The app was developed by Women NSW and contains useful and potentially life-saving information including emergency contacts, information on the sorts of behaviour considered to be domestic and family violence, as well as vital information and links to support services available in NSW.

Importantly, the app also allows the user to message their trusted friends and family members or call emergency services immediately—with the touch of a button.

The Aurora app has been built with safety features that allow women to use it discreetly and seek assistance without risk of tipping off a perpetrator and endangering themselves. It was developed in consultation with NSW Police and the domestic violence sector, including the Women's Refuge Movement.

Aurora is available now and free to download from the iPhone App Store and the Android Google Play Store.

Daring to Dream 2 available from the iBookstore

If you're looking for inspiration, you can now download the second book in Rural Women's Network's Daring to Dream book series from the iBookstore. *Daring to Dream 2* features 25 diverse women from NSW and includes high profile leaders alongside remarkable 'unsung' heroines. Their stories display creativity, perseverance and resilience. Each of the women showcased in the book shares her knowledge and experiences to provide inspiration for others. Available on iPhone, iPad or iPod touch for \$5.99. To download visit: <http://bit.ly/14lpGVy>

HELP FIND MORE ANSWERS! Help find more answers to breast cancer and other diseases by joining Register4. It's the National Breast Cancer Foundation's online community where you can sign up to participate in breast cancer research. Every person counts. www.register4.org.au

Buy A Bale



Buy a Bale is a joint venture between Aussie Helpers and The Give Back Campaign. As part of the campaign Australians are asked to give by

purchasing bales of hay, litres of diesel or gift cards that are in turn donated to farmers in need. The organisers say the key to the campaigns success has been its simplicity: 'We know farmers are a proud bunch and don't like asking for help. Over the last 11 years Aussie Helpers has assisted hundreds of farming families and thousands indirectly in their communities. It's important for our farmers to know that their city brothers and sisters really do care and over \$300 000 in donations in just five weeks is testament to that'. If you would like to donate see: www.buyabale.com.au

If you're a farmer or know a farmer who needs help register here: www.buyabale.com.au/can-we-help-you



Department of Primary Industries



NSW-ACT
RIRDC
RURAL
WOMEN'S
AWARD
2014

A LIFE
CHANGING
EXPERIENCE!

The Rural Women's Award recognises and encourages women's contribution to primary industries and rural Australia by providing skills and resources to build leadership and decision making capacity.

What's in it for you? \$10,000 to implement your idea or project; skills and resources to develop your leadership skills; enrolment in the Australian Institute of Company Directors Course; implementation

of a 12 month leadership plan; networking, media and PR opportunities; and membership to the RWA Alumni.

Applications opened 1 August and close 31 October 2013.



Contact the NSW Rural Women's Network for an application package on 02 6391 3620, email rural.women@dpi.nsw.gov.au or see www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn or www.ruralwomensaward.gov.au

Develop your skills. Make a difference. Inspire others.

MATE HELPING MATE FREE CD

Mate Helping Mate is designed for rural men to learn about overcoming depression and other mental health issues. Developed by John Harper, a farmer from Stockinbingal in southern NSW, the CD is an honest and inspiring account of overcoming depression and makes it easy and convenient for anyone who hasn't been able to catch one of the "Mate Helping Mate" presentation. It traces John's journey as he talks candidly about his experience with depression and how it damaged his physical health, as well as his business and personal relationships, and how he managed to overcome it and help others along the way. Play it at home, in the car or on the tractor! **To request a free copy contact the Rural Women's Network on 02 6391 3620 or email: rural.women@dpi.nsw.gov.au**

ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL

The National Rural Women's Summit, hosted by the National Rural Women's Coalition in February 2013 attracted 52 women from rural, remote and regional areas, including Aboriginal women, women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, young women and women with disabilities who came together to discuss current issues relevant which they believe require attention at a national level. The women collectively were involved with over 83 community groups which work in the rural sector. The conclusions from the discussions are summarised and documented in a special report at: www.nrwc.com.au/Projects/NationalRuralWomensSummit

MORTGAGE STRESS HANDBOOK

Getting behind on your repayments for a home loan is stressful. This practical guide will help you get a repayment arrangement in place with your lender. Search for 'Mortgage Stress Handbook' at www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au

TRACKMYSPEND APP

Keep track of your expenses on the go with the TrackMySpend App. You'll be able to track your spending, set goals and save, and gain a clearer picture of what you are spending your money on and gain control of your money. You can also nominate a spending limit (per week, fortnight or year) and track your progress. Available from the App Store for iPad, or on the Google Play™ Store for Android™.

WOMEN IN NSW ANNUAL REPORT



The second annual report on NSW women's status and experiences is out. It's a treasure trove of data about women's social and economic wellbeing with over 90 gender indicators reported. Read more and download the report at www.women.nsw.gov.au/women_in_nsw

YOUNG ADULTS: THEN AND NOW REPORT

The Australian Bureau of Statistics has released new data about young people and the way their lives have changed compared to the way young people lived 35 years ago. The data cover the years 1976 to 2011. Key changes can be found in the fact that there are far fewer young people (aged 18–34) as a proportion of the population now than there were 35 years ago. Young people today are less likely to be married than their mid-1970s counterparts, and more likely to stay on in their parents' homes. They are also less likely to be religious, but are likely to be better educated. **To access ABS information on 'Young adults: Then and now', go to: www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4102.0Main+Features40April+2013**

SOMETHING FOR THE KIDS

Forest NSW's **Wildlife Detective App** is a free game that takes pre and primary school children on a search for threatened species. The app helps explain the important work undertaken by Forests NSW prior to harvest operations and allows the player to be a forest ecologist or a wildlife detective. Find out more at: www.forestlearning.edu.au/Resources/Wildlife-detective

DARING TO DREAM E-BOOK

Rural Women's Network's, '*Daring to Dream 2: Stories from inspirational rural women*', is now available to download as an iBook. To download you will need to have the iBooks App installed on your device. *Daring to Dream 2* costs \$5.99 from iTunes and can be downloaded at this link: <https://itunes.apple.com/au/book/daring-to-dream-2>

IN THE LOOP

A new resource to help young people who are dealing with the disappearance of a loved one, *In the Loop* gives an insight into what young people are going through and how their friends and carers can support them. It reflects the thoughts and experiences of young people, how they cope with their loss and how they want to be treated during this difficult time. To download the free booklet go to: <http://bit.ly/16Fb2jG>

LETS TALK ABOUT ALOCHOL & DRUGS

The Australian Drug Foundation (ADF) has a new website for parents and those with young people in their care called **The Other Talk**. It refers to the talk that parents need to have with their young people about alcohol and other drugs, and the safety issues surrounding these drugs (the initial talk being about sex). They also have a GrogWatch Blog. **For more information visit: theothertalk.org.au or www.druginfo.adf.org.au, call 1300 85 85 84, or email druginfo@adf.org.au**

FIND A FARMER—IN THE CENTRAL WEST

If you are a farmer that has great products to sell to the public or if you are someone that wants to buy locally grown, sustainable farm produce look no further. Jump on this website, register your farm or have a look at what's available. They site is getting more registrations constantly, so keep having a look and encourage those people you know to register their products. Compatible with home computers, tablets and smart phones.

www.findafarmer.com.au

ASK LOIS

Ask LOIS (Legal Online Information Service) is free and secure member-only website for community workers in rural and regional NSW who are responding to women with legal needs. Ask LOIS provides community workers with online training, information and support on legal issues such as domestic violence, apprehended violence orders, family law, child protection, victims compensation and much more. The website features live and interactive training webinars, case studies, a resource library, discussion forums and links to domestic violence services in NSW: www.asklois.org.au

BUSINESS HELP FOR ENTREPRENEURS

business.gov.au has created a suite of apps to help people in small business to plan for their success. They include:

MyBizPlan: A free, interactive app that will step you through the process of creating a solid, well-structured plan, tailored to your business.

MarketMyBiz: A free interactive app that steps you through the process of creating a solid, well-structured marketing plan, tailored to your business.

MyBizShield: A free, interactive app that steps you through the process of creating a solid, well-structured emergency management plan, tailored to your business.

The apps are available for tablet devices and can be downloaded from the App Store for iPad, or MyBizPlan on the Google Play™ Store for Android™.

MONEY SMART YOUNG PEOPLE

Being MoneySmart is a core life skill. In a rapidly changing world of personal finances, children and young people benefit from the knowledge, understanding, skills and behaviours to establish good consumer and financial habits. Developed by the Australian Securities & Investments Commission (ASIC) MoneySmart Teaching provides professional and personal learning programs and resources for teaching and learning. While resources are targeted at teachers there is also some great information for parents. Find out more at: <http://teaching.moneysmart.gov.au>

MEDICINES LIST IPHONE APP

Now you can keep track of all your medicines with this great little app that allows you to store the names, details and instructions of all your medicines. It also allows you to update them quickly if there are any changes, ensuring you have an up-to-date medical list on hand all the time. Visit the National Prescribing Service website at: www.nps.org.au/iphonemedicineslist

FREE MEDITATION APP FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

A modern meditation for young people, Smiling Mind is a simple tool that gives a sense of calm, clarity and contentment. A unique web and App-based program it is designed to help bring balance to young lives—with exam time looming for many senior high school students this simple tool may help ease some of the stress! Find out more at: <http://smilingmind.com.au>



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.

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What's in it for you?
 10,000 to implement your idea or project; skills and resources to build your leadership skills; Enrolment in the Australian Institute of Company Directors Course; implementation of a 12 month leadership

plan; networking, media and PR opportunities; and membership to the Rural Women's Award Alumni.

Applications close 31 October 2013. Contact RWN for an application package and access to mentors!

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



Department of 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.