

The official magazine of the Royal Flying Doctor Service
CENTRAL OPERATIONS | ISSUE 267 | NOVEMBER 18



Royal Flying Doctor Service
The furthest corner. The finest care.

AirDoctor



90
YEARS

From the Chairman & CEO >



LORETTA REYNOLDS
Chairman

JOHN LYNCH
Chief Executive Officer

WELCOME to the November edition of *AirDoctor*. As our milestone *90 YEARS* of saving lives draws to an end, it will also mark the end of an era at Central Operations with the retirement of John Lynch after serving 18 years as our CEO. As Chairman, on behalf of you all, I thank John and his wife Anita for a life of service and commitment to our organisation, in particular those we serve, and wish them well for their future retirement.

Tony Vaughan comes into the CEO role and we wish him every congratulations and success for his time ahead in what is both an exciting – and equally challenging – period of growth and change for our organisation and stakeholders.

The end of a year always provides us an opportunity to reflect upon another busy period of patient activity in South and Central Australia, highlighted by more than 52,000 episodes of health care over this past financial year, including:

- 9,777 aeromedical evacuations
- 5,587 telehealth consultations
- 7,928 mental health consultations
- 11,554 primary health consultations
- 143 road ambulance transportations
- 716 remote immunisations

Our milestone year has seen us celebrate our 'birthday' with staff, volunteers, donors, bequestors, stakeholders and corporate partners across South Australia and the Northern Territory, in addition to honouring the anniversaries of those individuals whose lives have shaped our organisation.

In August a group of RFDS staff, alongside employees from our community partner, Cheap as Chips, honoured the legacy of Jimmy Darcy, the young stockman whose death in 1917 inspired Reverend John Flynn's vision for a mantle of safety for the outback.

The group retraced Jimmy's final footsteps in a 46-kilometre trek culminating in Halls Creek, where new signage and story boards at Jimmy's grave site in the Kimberley town were unveiled in a moving ceremony.

In September we acknowledged the centenary of the death of Lieutenant Clifford Peel, the young airman who was shot down in France at just 24 years of age, never to know that his letter to Reverend Flynn became the blueprint for the creation of the 'Flying Doctor' (refer story page 8).

Members of Clifford Peel's family and RFDS representatives attended the Last Post Ceremony at the National War Memorial and laid wreaths to pay tribute to Lt Peel.

Our Board officially opened our purpose-built aeromedical base at Darwin Airport in September, fulfilling our strategic goal of providing the finest care to the entire corridor of SA/NT.

We recently published our 2017/18 Annual Report (available on our website flyingdoctor.org.au/sant/AR2018) which we commend to you, in particular the case study 'Another Big Day Out' which immerses you into a day with the Flying Doctor and how we assist someone every 10 minutes.

Recently we shared a letter with our donors about an Adelaide man named Geoff Pinch who suffered horrific burns when he slipped and fell into a pool of boiling artesian water whilst touring the Simpson Desert. We are so pleased that Geoff's great mate Nigel – whose quick thinking played an integral role in Geoff's survival – has been nominated for a bravery award.

In this edition of our *AirDoctor* we hope you enjoy reading about courageous nurse Claire, who defied all odds to 'walk' in the annual *City-Bay Fun Run* after an outback accident that

left her unable to walk unaided. We also share the heart-warming story of baby Lewi, who recently celebrated his first birthday after arriving prematurely at just 25 weeks' gestation.

We acknowledge our Board members for another year of dedicated service, all of whom are volunteers. We sincerely thank our three retiring Directors, Janet Chisholm, Glenise Coulthard and David Hills for their significant contribution over decades of service, and welcome new Directors Peter de Cure, Dr Christine Lesnikowski and Michael O'Neill.

We thank our staff, both our crews in the skies and those on the ground, for their ongoing dedication and commitment to ensure the best possible outcomes for the people we serve.

We hope you enjoy this edition and sincerely thank you for your unwavering support. Wishing you a safe and happy Christmas with family and friends and a prosperous New Year.

LORETTA REYNOLDS
Chairman


JOHN LYNCH
Chief Executive Officer


AirDoctor is the official magazine of the **Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia Central Operations**.

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OUR COVER: RFDS Port Augusta Community Health Nurses Therese McCourt and Caitlyn Keller with Dr Dustin Mattie on the tarmac at Marree, Birdsville Track, SA.

Outback nurse defies odds to walk again >

“We came to Australia for an adventure,” says British-born Claire Hewitt, who emigrated with her husband Terry in 2009. “We’d previously spent a year travelling around the country and fell in love with the outback.”

Claire was thrilled when she was offered a position as a Public Health Nurse with the Centre for Disease Control. Based in Alice Springs, her role involved frequent travel to remote Aboriginal communities.

In May 2010, when travelling to a community near Mt Liebig, some 300 kilometres north west of Alice Springs, Claire lost control of her vehicle on a remote road.

Claire – who has no recollection of the four weeks that followed – says she is “very, very lucky to be alive.”

“My vehicle had rolled six times down an embankment, about 50 metres from the road. A couple passing by in their caravan spotted me, but they had no radio or satellite telephone to call for help,” Claire says.

“I was totally trapped in the wreckage.”

By sheer coincidence, a NT Health colleague happened to be travelling through the same isolated area.

“I can’t imagine how he must have felt when he came across my car – knowing it was someone he knew inside and not sure if I’d still be alive,” she says.



Claire’s vehicle rolled six times, trapping her inside.

An ambulance was called from Alice Springs and paramedics spent more than 90 minutes painstakingly removing Claire from the mangled vehicle before transporting her to Alice Springs Hospital. Scans revealed the extent of her traumatic brain injury.

The RFDS was tasked to transfer Claire to Flinders Medical Centre for urgent specialist care. The 1,500 kilometre journey to Adelaide takes more than 16 hours by car – the RFDS covers this ground in just over three.

Claire spent two weeks at Flinders, then more than three months in the Repatriation General Hospital before starting her long-term rehabilitation journey as an out-patient.

Eight years later, much of Claire’s life still revolves around time in physical therapy. “I haven’t been able to work at all since my accident, and I’ll never work as a nurse again,” she says.

“I told my physiotherapist I was determined to complete the three-kilometre walk in the *City-Bay Fun Run*.

“That was a major goal – I can’t walk unaided. I can generally only manage a couple of hundred metres at a time.”

But on 16 September this year, whilst her husband Terry completed a half-marathon, Claire realised her dream – raising more than \$2,300 for the RFDS in the process.

“The RFDS played an important part in my recovery – and that recovery still continues today. I wanted to do something to thank them for being there when I needed them.”

“A three kilometre walk isn’t far for many people, but for me it’s over two kilometres further than I’ve been able to walk for the last eight years.”

Claire Hewitt



Claire and Terry Hewitt.

Tribute to 'inspirational' stockman >

A committed group of fundraisers followed in the footsteps of Jimmy Darcy – the young stockman whose death in 1917 proved the impetus for Reverend John Flynn's 'Flying Doctor' scheme.

IN AUGUST the group of 20 *Cheap as Chips* employees and off-duty RFDS staff retraced Jimmy's final days as part of a 46-kilometre walk culminating in Halls Creek, WA, for a ceremony to unveil new signage at his grave site in the Kimberley town.

"It was a very humbling feeling to be walking the same route that Jimmy Darcy took 101 years ago in pursuit of urgent medical care," says RFDS Adelaide Flight Nurse, Trudi Kluge, who took part in the three-day trek.

"Jimmy could never have imagined that his final days would inspire the creation of an organisation that today provides life-saving and essential primary health care services to someone in Australia every two minutes. We all feel very proud to honour his legacy," says Trudi.

Shane Radbone, Cheap as Chips CEO says

"as a RFDS Community Partner, we were so proud to walk together – quite literally – to honour the legacy of Jimmy Darcy whose plight inspired the establishment of the RFDS which has been saving lives for 90 years."

The group raised \$55,893 – a wonderful result.

Jimmy Darcy was just 29 years old when he suffered serious injury from a fall from his horse while working on Lamboo Station, and was dragged by his brothers on a dray into the nearby town of Halls Creek.

The Halls Creek Postmaster, Fred Tuckett – the only person with basic First Aid knowledge – performed emergency surgery on Jimmy with only a sharpened pen-knife and some morphine under instruction via Morse code from Dr Holland almost 3,000km away in Perth.



RFDS and Cheap as Chips staff honour the legacy of Jimmy Darcy at Halls Creek, WA.

The seven-hour operation on his ruptured bladder was a success, but Jimmy's condition did not improve. Dr Holland made the two-week journey from Perth by a combination of cattle boat, car and horse buggy, but he was 24 hours too late to save Jimmy. He had died of malaria.

Jimmy's death – which attracted national headlines – was thankfully not in vain. It provided the impetus for Reverend John Flynn's vision for an outback aeromedical service which he founded in 1928 with a bequest from industrialist Hugh Victor McKay.

Learn more about our history online at
flyingdoctor.org.au/about-the-rfds/history



Accolade for a 'great mate' >

Nigel Hardy (left) and his 'great mate' Geoff Pinch one year on after Geoff's accident on the Birdsville Track.

NIGEL HARDY, a self-confessed 'typical Aussie bloke,' has been nominated for a *Pride of Australia Award* for bravery.

Channel 7 Adelaide newsreaders Jane Doyle and John Riddell nominated Nigel for his role in saving the life of his great mate, Geoff Pinch following a horrific outback accident.

Nigel and Geoff were travelling the Birdsville Track by four-wheel-drive with a group of friends last September. When they pulled in for a rest break at a roadside artesian bore, Geoff lost his footing and fell into a pool of 90-degree artesian water.

"I heard a man scream ... a scream like I'd never heard before," Nigel recalls.

It was Nigel who pulled Geoff from the water with his bare hands, stripped off his heat-trapping clothes and administered vital First Aid before driving Geoff to the nearest settlement, the tiny outpost of Mungerannie.

"That bone-jarring drive took an hour, the longest hour of my life," Nigel says.

"Geoff was still shaking violently and he kept losing consciousness, so I had to keep rousing him awake again," he says.

“All the time I had to push away the fear that he was going to die in the car while I was trying to get him to help he so desperately needed.”

Nigel Hardy

Suffering horrific burns, Geoff's only hope of survival was to be airlifted for urgent care at the Royal Adelaide Hospital – some 800 kilometres away. Fortunately a RFDS aircraft was already

close by undertaking a 'fly-in' GP health clinic and was diverted to Mungerannie.

Whilst the RFDS crew worked hard to stabilise Geoff, a second RFDS aircraft – with a MedSTAR retrieval team on board – was tasked to transfer Geoff to Adelaide for the specialist care he so desperately needed.

Memories of that day still haunt Nigel, who says: "I didn't see how someone so badly burnt could possibly survive."

But thanks to Nigel, Geoff did survive.

"I suffered second degree burns to 80 per cent of my body in the middle of the outback – the pain was indescribable," Geoff says.

"I have so many people to thank. Nigel, whose quick thinking and First Aid undoubtedly saved my life, and the amazing people at the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

"But the hospital can't help you until you get there – and for that I'm indebted to the Royal Flying Doctor Service."



'Game changer' in diabetes care >

Mandy Smallacombe, Community Health Nurse, tests a patient's blood glucose level.

DESPITE WHAT IS arguably the largest waiting room in the world – with patients scattered across more than 600,000 square kilometres of the outback – the RFDS Port Augusta Primary Health Care Service prides itself on delivering the finest care in the middle of nowhere.

In addition to the fully-integrated team of Doctors and Community Health Nurse specialists in their respective fields of midwifery, mental health, chronic disease management and breast cancer care, the clinicians consult and record patient information in real-time on the electronic medical record software system Best Practice.

Mandy Smallacombe, RFDS Community Health Nurse and specialist diabetes educator, describes how one small piece of equipment is making big changes to the way she and her patients are managing diabetes – with tangible results.

“Tight management of blood glucose levels is absolutely vital in preventing the onset of serious

complications such as eye disease, kidney problems, nerve damage, and high cholesterol, which in turn is a major risk factor for heart disease,” Mandy says.

“We have started using the Libre Flash Glucose Monitoring (FGM) device, and it's truly a game changer in diabetes care,” she says.

People with diabetes typically test their blood glucose level (BGL) a minimum of four times a day by pricking their finger and testing a small drop of blood on a test strip; the test result is displayed on a small screen.

The Libre FGM is an interactive blood glucose sensor, around the size of a 20 cent piece, which the patient applies to their upper arm. The sensor lasts up to two weeks, allowing the patient to check their BGL up to 200 times a day simply by scanning their smartphone over the area – even through clothing.

“Knowledge is a very powerful thing,” says Mandy. “Patients can see almost immediately

It's an incredible tool for promoting engagement in a patient's own glycaemic control. It makes it easy to understand the relationship between what we eat and our blood sugar.

Mandy Smallacombe

how the food they eat affects their blood glucose.”

The most valuable feature of the FGM are the ‘trend arrows’ that illustrates patterns in a patient's blood glucose over time – potentially identifying dangerous rises or falls.

“It's especially useful for people at risk of dangerous hypoglycaemic episodes overnight. By keeping a close eye on the trend information, you can make smart choices, such as having a snack just before you go to bed.”

Data from the smartphone App is uploaded into the ‘cloud’, allowing clinicians such as Mandy to review patient's levels anytime, anywhere.

“If I notice a pattern that concerns me, I can get in touch with the patient very quickly and make suggestions over the telephone to help them better manage their blood glucose, or adjust their insulin doses,” says Mandy.

“It's incredible really how something so small can make such a profound difference.”



New 'Top End' RFDS Base >

Pilot Fred Grace on the tarmac of the new purpose-built RFDS Darwin Base.

THE NEW RFDS Darwin Base was officially opened on 20 September by RFDS Central Operations Chairman, Ms Loretta Reynolds, recognising the contribution of staff, Board members, Auxiliaries & Support Groups, volunteers, donors, bequestors and corporate partners.

The RFDS has been evacuating patients from Central Australia and the Kimberley region to Royal Darwin Hospital for almost 80 years, but until recently it utilised a combination of hangar sub-lease and shared access arrangements with general aviation providers at Darwin Airport.

"The Board's decision to invest in our own, purpose-built Darwin Base is evidence of a long-term commitment to the care and well-being of all Territorians," Ms Reynolds said.

 **We continue our services from our very own facility that has enabled us to deliver enhanced care and comfort for our patients heading into Darwin.**

Loretta Reynolds, Chairman

"The modern facility will create a streamlined patient transfer process, as well as provide a modern and safe workplace for our Darwin-based staff, as well as guests and our health service-delivery partners in NT Health and St John Ambulance.

"It also offers the NT Government a trusted and cost-effective option for the repatriation of low-acuity patients from Royal Darwin Hospital," she added.

The aviation section of the new facility includes a modern engineering workshop and store with the capacity to hangar up to four RFDS aircraft – including one long-haul aeromedical jet – as well as parking for up to six aircraft on the tarmac apron.

Features of the medical and patient transfer facility include time-critical design factors and private patient management bays, with a separate waiting area/lounge for charter guests such as NT Health clinicians delivering remote clinics.

In 2017/18 the RFDS airlifted more than 3,000 Territorians – equivalent to nine patients per day in the Northern Territory.

RFDS honours Lt Clifford Peel >

The RFDS has honoured the legacy of a far-sighted young airman and war hero named Lieutenant John Clifford Peel, whose vision played a great part in the inspiration and design of the Flying Doctor.

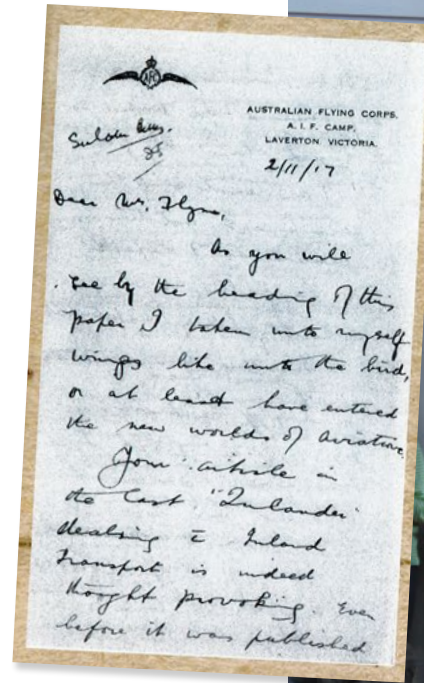
IN 1917, inspired by the national headlines following the death of outback stockman Jimmy Darcy, Lt Peel wrote an inspirational letter to Reverend John Flynn, founder of the RFDS, to suggest the use of aviation to bring medical help to the vast interior.

September 19 marked 100 years since Lt Peel was shot down in France and died at just 24 years of age, never to know that his detailed letter to Flynn became a blueprint for the creation of Flynn's 'Flying Doctor' scheme.

His suggestion shaped the formation of an Australian institution that has been providing emergency aeromedical and primary health care services to outback communities for the past 90 years.

To commemorate the centenary of Lt Peel's passing, members of his family and RFDS representatives travelled to Canberra to attend the Last Post Ceremony and lay wreaths at the National War Memorial.

Shortly after the Last Post Ceremony, a RFDS aircraft performed a fly-over of the Memorial in recognition of the wonderful contribution Lt Peel made to the service.



Clifford Peel wrote to Reverend John Flynn to suggest the use of aviation to bring medical help to the outback.



LETTER TO FLYNN

Aviation is still new, but it has set some of us thinking hard. Perhaps others want to be thinking too. Hence these few notes...

From Oodnadatta, Alice Springs is about three and a half hours trip. Overland it takes nine DAYS – long ones too.

In the not-very-distant future, if our church folk only realise the need, I can see a missionary doctor administering to the needs of men and women scattered between Wyndham and Cloncurry, Darwin and Hergott.

If the nation can do so much in the days of war, surely it will do its 'bit' in the coming days of peace – and here is its chance.

Lt Clifford Peel



Martin Laverty, RFDS Federation CEO, and Doug Peel lay wreaths at the National War Memorial in honour of Lt Clifford Peel.



Who was Clifford Peel >



VICTORIAN MEDICAL

STUDENT, Lieutenant John Clifford Peel (known as Clifford) was a keen reader of Reverend John Flynn's "Northern Territory and Central Australia – a Call to the Church".

According to his family, it inspired his interest in Flynn's extraordinary work and set him thinking about the logistics of how Flynn would be able to provide help to people in need who were widely dispersed throughout Australia.

When the Australian Imperial Forces was searching for candidates for their newly-formed Australian Flying Corps in 1917, young Clifford Peel volunteered and was selected for flying training at the central Flying School in Laverton, Victoria. Whilst at Laverton, the union of aviation and healthcare occurred in Peel's mind.

Lt Peel sent a letter to Flynn, suggesting aeroplanes – which at the time were very novel machines – could carry healthcare to the wide-spread areas of the Australian outback. Flynn wrote back with great interest, sparking a famous and detailed letter from Lt Peel, sent on the 20 November 1917, whilst on board HMAT Nestor, bound for the United Kingdom.

With great insight, Lt Peel outlined the costs and advantages of running aeroplanes compared with the costs and disadvantages of travel on the ground.

Tragically, on 19 September 1918, only 13 months after he sent the letter and seven weeks before the end of the First World War, Lt Peel's RE8 aircraft disappeared during a patrol in France.

Lt Peel died at just 24 years of age and never knew that his letter became a blueprint for the creation of the Australian Inland Mission's (AIM) Flying Doctor Service.

Had he lived, there is no doubt he would have returned from the war to help Flynn build the Flying Doctor Service he had clearly foreseen. However Lt Peel had succeeded in conveying his brilliant idea to Flynn, the man who was able to bring it to life.

For the next 10 years, Flynn campaigned for an aerial medical service. Whilst Lt Peel never had a chance to work for the RFDS directly, his legend, inspiration and forward thinking has inspired continued progress and innovation.

Early arrival for baby Lewi >

ROBE COUPLE Tara and her partner Dale were eagerly awaiting the arrival of their first baby. Despite some bleeding early in her pregnancy, it was smooth sailing for Tara until her waters suddenly broke at just 25 weeks' gestation.

"I knew something wasn't right, but I hoped it was a false alarm," says Tara, who immediately called Naracoorte Hospital, where she was scheduled to deliver some four months later.

"The midwife said we needed to drive straight to Mount Gambier Hospital," Tara says.

For babies born at 25 or 26 weeks, the chance of survival is about 80 per cent – but only if they receive intensive treatment in a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).

Now in an irreversible labour, Tara underwent an emergency caesarean section to deliver her tiny baby boy;

meanwhile the RFDS and MedSTAR Kids retrieval team were tasked to immediately airlift the newborn to the NICU at Adelaide's Women's and Children's Hospital.

The journey from Mt Gambier to Adelaide takes nearly five hours by road – a RFDS 'flying intensive care unit' covers this ground in less than 60 minutes.

Baby Lewi was airlifted to Adelaide to receive his specialist care, whilst Tara remained in Mt Gambier to be treated for post-birth complications. The next day, the RFDS was called once again to airlift Tara to her baby's side in the Women's and Children's Hospital.

"Lewi is doing really well," says Tara, who recently celebrated their son's first birthday.

"He's hitting all his milestones and most importantly he's a happy, healthy baby. We couldn't be luckier."



Above > Dale and Tara celebrate their son's first birthday.
Below > Baby Lewi was born at just 25 weeks' gestation.



Chairman Loretta Reynolds and Honorary Life Member David Hills.

David Hills awarded Life Membership >

IMMEDIATE-PAST CHAIRMAN David Hills has been named as the 15th Honorary Life Member of RFDS Central Operations.

Ms Loretta Reynolds, Chairman, RFDS Central Operations, presented David with the prestigious accolade at the organisation's 82nd AGM in October.

"We thank David for his leadership and are so pleased to award him Life Membership of RFDS Central Operations," Reynolds said.

"David's personal contribution to the RFDS has been one of selfless commitment of time, of spirit and philanthropy."

Ms Reynolds added that David's strategic direction included many achievements, with numerous highlights ranging from the introduction of the 10-year *RFDS Healthy Living Program* in South Australia, delivery of the *RFDS Mental Health Outreach Program* in Central

Australia, and the financial security of a 10-year Inter-Hospital Transfer (IHT) contract with the SA Government.

During David's Chairmanship, RFDS Central Operations oversaw over \$110 million of capital investment, including:

- replacement of seven Pilatus PC12 'flying intensive care units';
- redevelopment of RFDS Port Augusta Base;
- redevelopment of RFDS Alice Springs Base;
- construction of the *Bill & Dawn Prior Village* for staff accommodation in Alice Springs;
- upgrade to the award-winning Alice Springs Tourist Facility;
- construction of the world-class aeromedical base at Adelaide Airport; and
- the order of the Pilatus PC-24 aeromedical jet, which will be South Australia's first permanently-configured aeromedical jet.



Miner extends 'major' support >

Members of the BHP Olympic Dam team with 'Bravo' at the sponsorship announcement at RFDS Adelaide Base.

BHP OLYMPIC DAM has renewed its major sponsorship of the RFDS Central Operations (RFDS) to support its life-saving services to the remote communities of South and Central Australia.

Making the announcement at the RFDS's Adelaide Base, Olympic Dam Asset President, Laura Tyler, said the new agreement was part of BHP's support of health and wellbeing in its host communities.

"We've been operating in remote South Australia for 30 years, and we understand the vital role the RFDS has played over many years in helping people across the State during times of great need," she said.

"Olympic Dam is proud to support the RFDS, and we hope our contribution will make a lasting difference to South Australia's regional, rural and remote communities."

RFDS Central Operations Deputy Chairman, Paul Prestwich OAM, said the RFDS had been saving lives for 90 years.

"The RFDS conducts over 15 aeromedical flights across South Australia every day – but it relies on the financial support of the community to help keep its crews in the sky," Mr Prestwich said.

"BHP's sponsorship will directly support our capital-raising program for on-going upgrade of our fleet of 'flying intensive care units' that deliver 24/7 emergency aeromedical services throughout South and Central Australia," he said.

Our association with BHP Olympic Dam stretches back more than a decade, and we're extremely proud to renew BHP as a Major Sponsor.

Paul Prestwich OAM

In recognition of BHP's support, Mr Prestwich and Ms Tyler unveiled BHP branding on RFDS aircraft VH-FVB – also known as 'Bravo' – which has a long history with the mining company.

"BHP funded the medical fit out of Bravo back in 2010, and since then the plane has airlifted more than 7,100 patients – including 76 from Roxby Downs – so we feel a special connection to this aircraft," Ms Tyler said.



BHP Olympic Dam Asset President, Laura Tyler, with RFDS Deputy Chairman, Paul Prestwich OAM.

 Crafted in Switzerland

PC-12 NG



 **PILATUS** 

THANK YOU FOR FLYING PILATUS

From outback strips to city airports, the Pilatus PC-12 has operated day and night for over twenty years to keep the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) in the air. As a future operator of the new PC-24, the RFDS is set to continue its tradition as a loyal and valuable member of the Pilatus family. We are all extremely proud to be associated with the RFDS and their provision of the finest care to the furthest corners with our aircraft – yesterday, today and in the future.

Pilatus Australia Pty Ltd · Phone +61 8 8238 1600 · www.pilatus-aircraft.com

Meet the team: care in the air with Michael >

In this issue we catch up with Adelaide Flight Nurse Mike Phelan as he celebrates his first year with the Flying Doctor.

Tell us about yourself

My background is in intensive care nursing, however I have worked in a variety of other settings. I spent 14 years in the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF), working all over the world, including a stint in Afghanistan. I'm still part of the RAAF working as a Specialist Reserve.

Before I joined the Flying Doctor I worked as a Midwife and Intensive Care Nurse in Newcastle, NSW. In 2017 I was offered a job as a Flight Nurse with the RFDS and so my wife and I made the decision to move to Adelaide with our two children – a great opportunity for all of our family.

Outside of work I enjoy music. I play the guitar and trumpet, and have played in many bands over the years. Living close to the beach I enjoy a swim with the kids during the summer months.

What does a typical day for a RFDS Flight Nurse look like?

Whilst no two days are the same, each shift sees us flying to diverse locations across South Australia and the Northern Territory to retrieve critically-ill or injured people from remote locations, or to transfer patients between regional and metropolitan hospitals for urgent care.

We also regularly transfer patients to interstate hospitals for life-saving surgery, such as organ transplants or heart surgery on newborn babies.

What appealed to you about the role?

The enormous variety of work provides a fantastic opportunity to use all of my nursing and midwifery skills. The organisation has a well-deserved reputation for providing best practice health care – I feel very proud to be part of it. Every day I am reminded how precious and fragile life can be.

What do you enjoy the most?

I work closely with a wonderful team of nurses, pilots, doctors and administration staff. Whilst people living in remote areas can experience disadvantage due to tyranny of distance, our entire team is dedicated to providing the finest health care.

I also relish the opportunity to work independently. I really enjoy the total responsibility of caring for a patient as a sole practitioner, managing a whole range of clinical situations in an isolated environment. Should I ever need support whilst providing care in the air I can contact specialists for advice via telephone or aircraft radio network.



I'm also lucky to see some beautiful areas of outback Australia – sometimes even encountering some unique wildlife in its local habitat!

Do you have any advice for aspiring Flight Nurses?

RFDS Flight Nurses need qualifications and experience in both critical care and obstetrics – it's not something you'll do as a new graduate. You also need to be a flexible thinker and confident in making decisions. Flight Nursing is a wonderful career – I highly recommend it.

Find out more about careers with RFDS at flyingdoctor.org.au/careers

Thank you >

There are countless volunteers, individuals, event participants and corporate partners who we wish to thank for their wonderful efforts as we celebrate our 90 YEARS of saving lives. Here are just some of the highlights...



'Wings for Life' Ball >

THE RFDS WINGS FOR LIFE 'Birthday' Ball was our biggest yet, with 950 guests joining us for a night of celebration at the Adelaide Entertainment Centre, where guests enjoyed fine food, wine and entertainment from classic rock band, DRAGON. The sell-out event generated \$280,000 net proceeds through sponsorship, donations and fundraising activities. We thank Major Sponsors Adelaide Airport Limited, Ahrens, Beach Energy, Channel 7, Heathgate, Iluka, MGA Whittles Group of Companies, Raw Pearls and S. Kidman & Co.

Sign up for our events updates at flyingdoctor.org.au/sant/events

OZ Outback Odyssey >

THIS FANTASTIC OUTBACK CAR RALLY of pre-1985 vehicles held in July raised an incredible \$153,000 – a record result. We thank all entrants, organisers and officials (all volunteers) who helped make the 3,000-kilometre journey from Adelaide to the Sunshine Coast the best one yet.

Find out more about next year's event (Adelaide to Fraser Island) at ozoutbackodyssey.com.au

KTM Outback Rallye >

WE THANK the 244 participants of the third annual KTM Australia 'Outback Rallye' who spent seven days in June motorcycling through 2,700km of outback NT and raising more than \$100,000 for the RFDS. The Rallye began at Maryfield Station, 500km south of Darwin, visiting stations at Maryfield, Humbert River and Limbunya and the breathtaking Gregory National Park before concluding at Alice Springs. The event was supported by RFDS staff **Kathy Arthurs** (Senior Flight Nurse), **Stewart Arthurs** (Maintenance Support Officer), and **Michael Penno** (Senior Flight Nurse), who assisted the Race Safe (Motorsport Safety Services Australia) Medical Team.



Piper aims for the sky >

WE DON'T KNOW of many six-year-olds running their own fundraising campaigns! Piper Southern, Naracoorte SA, has spent the past few months busily organising trading tables, a raffle, a 'guess the lollies in the jar' competition and a school dress up day, all to raise money for the Flying Doctor in memory of her Nonno, a previous RFDS patient who passed away in 2017. Piper has raised more than \$7,000 (and counting!) – an incredible result.



Gentle Bears >

GALLAGHER BASSET 'Gentle Bears' are distributed worldwide to provide comfort to children dealing with traumatic experiences. The Gentle Bear initiative began in SA, with bears given to police officers to hand out to children involved in serious accidents or scary situations. In 2017 we were proud to begin flying the fluffy bears on our flights, bringing much-needed reassurance to our youngest patients.



City-Bay Fun Run >

MORE THAN 80 MEMBERS of 'Team RFDS' – including 40 Beach Energy employees – walked and ran up to 12km in Adelaide's *City-Bay Fun Run* in September, collectively raising over \$10,000. The highest fundraiser was local Year 9 student Emma Reid, who ran the 12km distance with her father, Gavin, raising over \$2,300. We were delighted to host Emma and Gavin for a tour of our Adelaide Base and say thank you with a gift from our Supporting Partner Edible Blooms.



Mitchell Street Mile >

A 30-STRONG 'Team RFDS' took part in Darwin's *Mitchell Street Mile* fun run in September with local Pilot Fred Grace the first home in the RFDS Open Mile category with a very respectable 6.09 minutes. Event sponsor Lottoland presented Team RFDS with a \$50,000 donation and members of the public enjoyed stepping inside our aircraft simulator to learn more about our work in the NT.



Westbound Wanderers >

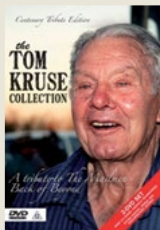
WE WERE DELIGHTED with the incredible \$70,000 raised by this muscle car event from Adelaide to WA and back! The amazing donation will support the RFDS' life-saving services in South and Western Australia. Plans are well underway for the next event in December 2018 as the convoy travels through outback SA, New South Wales and country Victoria.



Istrian Social Club >

MEMBERS of the Istrian Social Club of SA recently visited RFDS Adelaide Base to present a cheque for their donation of \$53,000. President Jordan Hrvatin said "The work of the RFDS is so important and we are very proud to be able to provide this support." The Istrian Social Club's donation will be used to purchase much-needed medical equipment for use in our flying intensive care units and at remote area fly-in GP clinics.

Give a life saving gift this Christmas >



The Tom Kruse Collection DVD

Featuring the documentary, *The Mailmen Back of Beyond*, Ian Doyle's complete history of Tom Kruse MBE and stories behind a century of mailmen of the Birdsville Track. lastmailfrombirdsville.com.au

\$39.95 (includes postage)

Visit our Doc Shop to see our full range of fantastic official RFDS merchandise and order online.

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Items and receipts will be delivered to the nominated address below.

Title	First Name
Surname	
Supporter number <small>(Seven digit number located above your name in the accompanying letter.)</small>	
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Suburb/Town	
State	Postcode
Daytime telephone ()	
Email	

Your order form >

PRICE QTY TOTAL

RFDS Christmas Gift Cards (includes postage)			
Mercy Flight	\$50.00		
Mercy Dash	\$50.00		
Outback Clinic	\$25.00		
Outback Arrival	\$25.00		

RFDS MERCHANDISE

The Tom Kruse Collection DVD <small>(includes postage)</small>	\$39.95		
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YOUR DONATION – THANK YOU <small>(tax deductible over \$2)</small>			
Order Total			

Method of payment

- Cheque/Money Order enclosed and made payable to:
RFDS Central Operations.
- Visa Mastercard AMEX

Card number
Expiry /
Cardholder's name

Signature

Please send me information about arranging a regular donation to the RFDS.

Please send me information about including a gift to the RFDS in my will.

I have included the RFDS in my will.

Please check carefully that: the order form is fully completed. Use the reply paid envelope enclosed or post to: Royal Flying Doctor Service – Merchandise PO Box 381 MARLESTON SA 5033.

If you have any questions, please call us on 08 8238 3333 during business hours. Thank you for supporting the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

'Donate' a Christmas gift that saves lives >

Buy an RFDS Gift Card

Are you looking for a great Christmas solution for that hard-to-buy-for person? This Christmas, make a donation to the RFDS and we will send you an RFDS card for you to give to the recipient.

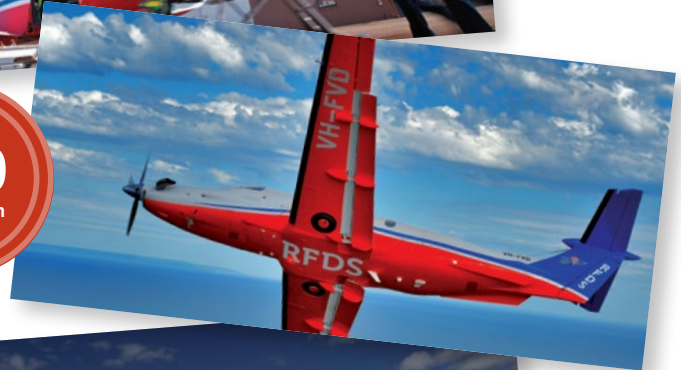
Each Gift Card showcases a signature image of our RFDS aircraft at work, making it the perfect addition to the mantelpiece.

Give a Gift Card that makes a real difference!

It's simple!

1. Four Gift Cards are available, with values of \$25 and \$50. Each Gift Card includes a printed Christmas greeting and mentions that a donation has been made to the RFDS as your Christmas gift to them.
2. Choose one or several, and complete the order form inside the AirDoctor magazine, or call us to order on (08) 8238 3333.
3. The amount you pay for Gift Cards is a tax deductible donation to the RFDS – we will send you a receipt.
4. We will send you the Gift Cards, with envelopes. Just add your name (and personal greeting if you wish) before giving your Gift Cards to family and friends on Christmas Day.

RFDS Christmas Gift Cards indicate you have given a Christmas donation to the RFDS with your recipient in mind. They have no cash value and are not redeemable for purchase of RFDS merchandise. Card size: 99mm x 210mm wide (DL).



Save lives from the ground >



As a RFDS Regular Giver, we make it easy for you to help us deliver urgent care in regional, rural and remote areas throughout South and Central Australia.

You can arrange automatic donations with your credit card, or by direct debit from your bank account – you choose the frequency and the amount – and we look after the rest! With one receipt summary issued annually we also make it easy for you at tax time.

To begin your regular giving today, please call 1800 813 318 or visit flyingdoctor.org.au/sant/regular

