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Chief Executive’s message

It’s always a privilege to write to you and share our news, events, achievements and the fantastic stories from the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS).

As we welcome the start to 2016, I can’t help but reflect on what a great year 2015 was for the Royal Flying Doctors in Victoria. We welcomed a new Chairman to RFDS Victoria with the appointment of Denis Henry. Denis was elected as Chair at the Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 25 November 2015.

We commenced our non-emergency patient transport contract for Ambulance Victoria on Sunday 1 November 2015. A lot of work and preparation went into ensuring everything went as smoothly as possible and I’m pleased to say it has been a great success.

We also held a number of successful fundraising events throughout the year with all of our loyal donors and introduced the Flying Doctors to new friends. On top of this, our primary health care team have continued to provide necessary dental, optometry, diabetes and women’s GP services across Victoria.

As we’ve moved through the Christmas period, we were inundated with Christmas merchandise requests. We received an overwhelming response to our merchandise campaign, which meant that we quickly sold out of some products. I know some of our donors didn’t receive their orders within a satisfactory time frame and I would like to apologise for this. Staff alongside a small army of volunteers were busy packing each order in time for Christmas. We are truly sorry if your order took longer than expected to arrive and appreciate your understanding.

In this issue of Going the Distance we bring you a story of a Flying Doctor rescue for a South Australian family, Paul and Colleen Manning. Paul was mustering cattle on his station near Lake Gardiner in far north South Australia, when he came off his motorbike and suffered severe facial injuries. Thanks to the quick thinking actions of his son-in-law and a long ride to get help, the Flying Doctors were there to save Paul from any permanent damage.

We have a number of exciting events planned for 2016 with our popular Morning Melodies returning at the Arts Centre, our successful Going the Distance Dinner at the Plaza Ballroom and our John Flynn Luncheon.

I hope you enjoy this edition of the Going the Distance newsletter and I look forward to seeing you at our events in the near future.

Scott Chapman
Chief Executive
RFDS Victoria
Outback mercy dash for the Flying Doctors

A 400-kilometre round-trip to the nearest hospital is difficult to contemplate – especially when much of that journey is along a track cutting through the paddocks, scrub and salt lakes of South Australia’s far North.

But for Paul Manning and his family on Mahanewo Station, near Lake Gardiner, it is a reality of living in the outback, and one they never complain about.

It takes a situation out of the ordinary to call upon the RFDS, an organisation the Manning’s selflessly try to leave to serve those “further away and more vulnerable than we are”.

Just before Christmas a few years ago there was no choice but to make the call to the Flying Doctors after Paul suffered shocking injuries in a motorbike accident while mustering cattle.

On this particular day I rode into a rock in the grass that I just didn’t see and I went straight over the handlebars,” recalls Paul.

He careered head-first into another rock, with the impact causing extensive facial wounds.

“The rock peeled back a fair chunk of my face,” Paul says. “I knew there was a bit of damage because I could actually hear my face breaking up as I hit the rock.”

Paul’s son-in-law Allan McArdle reacted calmly, despite witnessing the crash and its awful consequences.

“Allan took off his shirt to wrap around my face to stop the bleeding and protect the open flesh,” Paul remembers.

Using a UHF radio, Allan contacted Paul’s wife Colleen at the homestead and told her to contact the RFDS Port Augusta Base.

“Allan got me on the back of his motorbike and ‘donkeyed’ me for 20 kilometres around the side of the salt lake, to where it joins the road and where Colleen and our daughter Bridie were waiting.

“It was pretty hard going, but Allan got me there so they could then drive me to the airstrip where the Flying Doctor plane landed only 15 minutes later.”

An RFDS Medical Practitioner was aboard the aircraft with Senior Flight Nurse Barb White, Flight Nurse Angelique Galea and Pilot Neil Tucker.

After stemming the blood flowing from Paul’s badly cut up face, dressing his wounds and administering pain relief, the crew flew their patient to Royal Adelaide Hospital.

“It was obvious that the best thing to do was to get him as quickly as possible to a major hospital,” Senior Flight Nurse Barb White said, who credited the quick-thinking of Paul’s son-in-law, Allan for ensuring a speedy response to the crash and facial wounds.

Landing in Adelaide just three hours after the crash, Paul underwent testing to clear him of organ damage before undergoing extensive facial surgery.

“I was happy to see Flying Doctor, Nurses and the Pilot, I can tell you,” Paul says.

“If you get hurt, you need help. Everything was done really well and the RFDS response worked perfectly.”

Colleen says Paul’s evacuation highlights the value of the RFDS, which has undertaken five emergency visits to Mahanewo Station during the almost 80 years her family has lived there.

“It is extremely difficult to explain to someone else how I felt when I first heard the drone of the plane’s engine and then saw the glint of silver in the sky,” she said.

That feeling of utter relief and enormous gratitude is indescribable. The last sentence on the RFDS logo is so very true. It absolutely provides ‘The finest care’. 
The Flying Doctor’s Dental Clinic now has a purpose built dental van that will be travelling around Victoria.

The dental van will provide dental treatment for people living in regional Victoria who are either on a dental waiting list or have been determined by our dental screening team as needing dental treatment.

In partnership with the Australian Dental Association Victorian Branch and Dental Health Services Victoria, the Royal Flying Doctors will be travelling in the van, which is essentially a dental clinic on the move. It will travel around towns for 48 weeks throughout the year through regional Victoria, providing treatment to children, families and individuals on Health Care or Pensioner Concession Cards.

Our dedicated team of 12 office volunteers worked a huge 1,378 hours last year. As well as the normal wide range of tasks they perform from booking schools for our education program to delivering equipment to our regional bases, they have also packed and sent out 44,029 receipts from donations over the course of the year.

RFDS Victoria Bayside Auxiliary have raised over $250,000 in the last 17 years. The Auxiliary works tirelessly to fundraise for the RFDS and holds a number of fundraising events including craft market stalls, fashion parades, lunches and continues to show their support for the RFDS.

We recently had a morning tea at our new Richmond office to thank these volunteers and members from the Bayside Auxiliary.

RFDS Victoria would like to sincerely thank this dedicated group of volunteers. The work of our volunteers is invaluable. Their volunteered time makes a huge difference to RFDS Victoria.

We are pleased to announce our new Chairman, Mr Denis Henry. Denis was elected as Chair at the Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 25 November 2015 at the RACV City Club.

Denis has been previously serving on the RFDS Victoria Board for the past 15 months and is also a Board Director for Doutta Galla aged care provider. Denis replaces Murray Rogers, who stepped down as Chair after five years. Murray remains on the RFDS Vic Board as a Director. We are extremely appreciative of the devotion and guidance of Murray over the past five years and extend a big welcome to Denis Henry.
RFDS Victoria has moved offices. We’ve moved a bit further down Bridge Road from the old office and are now located at Level 1, 345 Bridge Road, Richmond – entry via Gleadell Street.

Our phone number and PO Box address remains the same, 03 8412 0400 and PO Box 7027 Richmond Victoria 3121.
RFDS Victoria’s Mobile Eye Care program has partnered with Onesight and is supported by OPSM to provide optometry services for people living in East Gippsland and West Wimmera.

The service reduces the need for people to travel vast distances to access eye care services, with an optometrist coming to them.

Optometrists from Melbourne will travel to bush nursing centres and local community health centres to provide a range of optometry services.

The Mobile Eye Care program is free for people with a health care card and those who are diagnosed as needing glasses will receive a free pair of glasses. Those who do not have a health care card can purchase glasses for $30.
RFDS is planning another Outback Tour and we invite you to join us.

In June 2016 we will travel to western Queensland visiting Longreach and the famous Stockman’s Hall of Fame, Winton the dinosaur capital of Australia and Mt Isa where we have one of our largest and most interesting RFDS bases.

From there we take a brief tour in Townsville before heading to Cairns and the tropical north. At the end of our journey we will spend three days in beautiful Port Douglas exploring the lush tropical area and the dream time culture. We will meet the wonderful men and women of the RFDS in three Queensland bases and enjoy the company of friends both old and new.

RFDS Vic General Manager Marketing and Fundraising Jacqui deKievit, will again be joining Public Affairs Manager Annette Allison in hosting this special event.

For further details and to request a brochure please contact RFDS Victoria 03 8412 0400.

Rowathon a great success

On Saturday 10 October 2015 over 104 rowers on 17 boats showed skill, commitment and courage on the Darling River for the Flying Doctor Rowathon.

One first time competitor was Lee-Lin Low who decided to enter the Rowathon in memory of her late husband Richard Low who lost his battle with cancer in May last year. Richard supported Lee-Lin in all of her rowing regattas since she first started rowing in 2010.

Initially, Lee-Lin was a bit apprehensive about joining the Rowathon as she had taken a break from rowing during Richard’s illness. “The thought of rowing a couple of 20 kilometres legs was overwhelming,” Lee-Lin said.

“But together with my good friends from Caulfield Grammarian Rowing Club (CGRC) and the Mercantile Rowing Club, we formed two Fours and completed the daunting 82km challenge!”

It was a very personal journey for me, and one that I am very pleased I undertook. Richard, my family and friends were rowing with me that day, and I will be forever thankful for their support.

The Rowathon has played a vital role in recent years in helping RFDS Victoria establish dental and diabetes services in the Mallee region.

Last year just over $38,000 was raised to help keep the Flying Doctor flying, and will go towards the new Flying Doctor Dental Clinic.
Coo-ee!
Come and join all the fun for kids.

FREE to join!

- Birthday and Christmas cards in the mail
- Activities and competitions
- Newsletters
- Fun facts
- Annual Kids Club gatherings
- Discover how the Royal Flying Doctor Service helps other kids in remote communities

If you’re aged between 5 and 12 years old, join the Flying Doctor Kids Club today for your chance to win an iPad and a Pilots Pack.

A fun FREE fair dinkum Aussie Kids Club!

The Flying Doctor Kids Club

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Parent/Guardian name:

Parent/Guardian email:

Parent/Guardian signature of permission:

Post this form back to us at:
PO Box 7027 Richmond VIC 3121 to register today.

Privacy notice: The Royal Flying Doctor Service respects your privacy. We do not trade, rent or sell the details of our Kids Club members. You may opt out of our Kids Club mailing list at any time by contacting our office at flynntheflyer@rfdsvic.com.au.
Following a busy and successful 2015, our Education Program will continue to offer Victorian schools interactive and engaging incursions featuring a life sized model of a Flying Doctor aeroplane – our Aeromedical Simulator.

New to 2016, the Simulator has been fitted with a cockpit complete with flight simulator to enhance the student’s experience, giving them a sense of what it feels like to be on a real Flying Doctors plane.

Students will hear stories, land a plane in the outback, rescue a patient and most importantly, climb on board, strap themselves in and enjoy this unique experience.

Our FREE interactive online teaching resource has been redesigned with the Australian Curriculum in mind. Direct links to History, Geography as well as thematic links to topics such as Community, Australia, Communication, Heroes and Australian Icons feature predominately in the program.

The updated resource features a panoramic 360-degree view of key RFDS locations, and an animation of John Flynn’s face on the $20 note speaking about the founding of the RFDS, and interviews focusing on regional and remote areas.

Find out more at www.flyingdoctor4education.org.au

In 2016, schools will be offered an opportunity to pay for each session or fundraise at their school.

To be involved, call RFDS Education Manager Tom Ryan directly on 03 8412 0433 or email tom.ryan@rfdsvic.com.au
RFDS Victoria at Morning Melodies with

The Australian Ballet School

You are invited to support the Flying Doctors at an exciting RFDS event featuring the wonderful Australian Ballet School, following a special light lunch for Flying Doctors supporters.

In association with the Arts Centre Melbourne, we warmly invite donors, supporters and friends of RFDS Victoria to join us for a performance featuring the Australian Ballet School.

The Australian Ballet School’s annual performance has become a much-loved feature of the Arts Centre Melbourne’s Morning Melodies program and we will be attending their matinee performance.

In a showcase of works by talented students, this performance celebrates the art of ballet: the sublime meeting of dance and music.

Recognised as one of the world’s most renowned vocational ballet schools, this is your opportunity to see up and coming ballet stars of the future.

Prior to the Show, donors, supporters and friends will enjoy a special RFDS light lunch in a private dining room.

This is your chance to see first class entertainment and support the work of the RFDS, while spending a lovely afternoon with friends of the Flying Doctors!

The Arts Centre Melbourne is easily accessed by public transport, and parking will be offered at an early bird flat rate of $16. Detailed event information will be provided with a letter confirming your ticket purchase.

Places are limited, so book now!


date: Tuesday 10 May 2016

time: 12 noon – 2.30pm

Light lunch, followed by matinee performance

venue: Arts Centre Melbourne
100 St Kilda Road
Melbourne

cost: $75

Special event tickets are only available through RFDS Victoria

RSVP: Bookings strictly close Monday 11 April 2016 unless sold out prior

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RFDS Victoria held its Annual General Meeting Forum and John Flynn Luncheon at the RACV City Club on Wednesday 25 November. Both events were extremely popular and guests loved seeing the RFDS simulator and MPC vehicle out the front on Bourke Street.

In total there were 120 supporters, stakeholders and staff at the AGM Forum who heard about RFDS Vic’s results over the past financial year, speeches by community fundraisers, corporate partners, and our supporters.

The John Flynn Luncheon hosted over 270 loyal RFDS supporters and featured guest speaker Pip Courtney, host of ABC TV’s Landline program, who was extremely popular with all our guests as she talked about filming in outback Australia, the story behind the different types of Akubra hats and her connection with the Flying Doctors.

Over 2,000 people visited the RFDS stand at the Ballarat Show on the 13–15 November 2015.

Families and children at the Show stopped by our stand and were able to see the RFDS aeromedical simulator, explore inside the plane and hear Flying Doctor stories from ‘Captain Tom’. Our site was a popular attraction in the Youth Pavilion at the Show, and won Best Large Indoor Exhibit Award. A big thank you to RFDS volunteers who helped out over the three days at the Show.

The Royal Flying Doctors exhibited at the Royal Melbourne Show for two days again during the September 2015 school holidays and it proved to be a great success. We welcomed over 3,250 visitors into the aero-medical simulator and spoke to thousands of people over the two days – which was almost double the amount of visitors compared to last year!

A big thank you to all the RFDS staff who volunteered their time at the show over the two days. It was a great effort from everyone who helped out at the stand, greeting visitors, fundraising and sharing the stories of the Flying Doctors with everyone who stopped by.

The simulator proved again to be extremely popular with children and their parents having a turn at being an RFDS pilot.
Calendar of events 2016

We continue to look for opportunities to meet with donors and local communities and we would love to see you at one of our events. Not only will you enjoy yourself, but you’ll also be supporting the Flying Doctor at the same time!

RFDS Victoria’s Morning Melodies
10 May, Arts Centre Melbourne

Flying Doctors
Thanksgiving Church Service
May, Scots’ Church

Flying Doctor Outback Tour
June – July

Going the Distance Dinner
18 August, Plaza Ballroom

Flying Doctor Rowathon
8th October

Annual General Meeting Forum
23 November, RACV City Club

John Flynn Luncheon
23 November, RACV City Club

Join us on the adventure of a lifetime.

Not for the faint-hearted, this truly is an incredible adventure. Imagine taking your first steps on the iconic Kokoda track knowing with every step you take, you have raised vital funds for another Australian icon, the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

Fast Facts

Dates: 5–15 November 2016
Registration fee: $770 (non refundable)
Fundraising target: $4,000 (excludes travel)
Travel quote: $4,745*, including taxes (depart Brisbane)
Trip duration: 11 days
Challenge duration: 9 days


Yes, here’s my gift to support the essential work of the Flying Doctor in 2016.

☐ I authorise the Royal Flying Doctor Service to debit $……………………….. per month from my credit card below.

☐ Or, please find enclosed my one-off donation of $………………………….

I would like to pay by: ☐ Cheque ☐ Money order ☐ Credit Card

Credit Card payment details:

☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ AMEX

Cardholder’s name: .................................................................

Card number: .................................................................

Expiry: [ ] / [ ] Signature: .................................................................

☐ I wish to include the RFDS in my will.

My details:

Title: ................................................................. Name: .................................................................

Address: .................................................................................................................................

Postcode: .................................................................................................................................

Phone no. .................................................................................................................................

Email: .................................................................................................................................

Donations $2 and over are tax deductible and a receipt will be issued.

Please return with your payment to:
Royal Flying Doctor Service Victoria
PO Box 7027, Richmond VIC 3121
T 03 8412 0400  F 03 9429 8311
E info@rfdsvic.com.au
> www.flyingdoctor.org.au
ABN 71 004 196 230