



Royal Flying Doctor Service

The furthest corner. The finest care.

The Flying Doctor

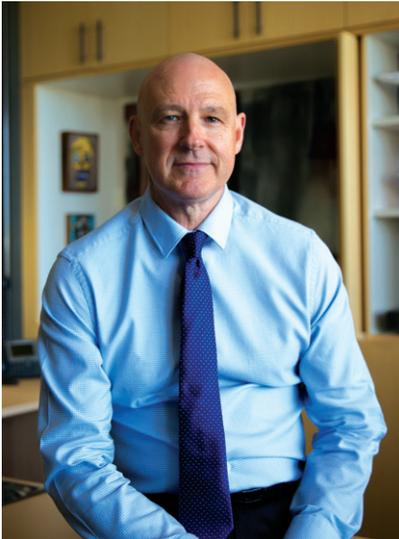
The official newsletter of the Royal Flying Doctor Service
WESTERN AUSTRALIA • MARCH 2016



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DEAR SUPPORTERS

2016 marks an exciting time for the RFDS in WA, as we approach the launch of our first new base in over 50 years, which will assist us in continuing to provide aero medical and primary health care right across our vast state.

Our sixth base, which is nearing completion in Broome, will ensure we are able to better serve the growing and changing footprint of the population in the north of our state. With operations due to commence from the facilities at the start of March, our Broome based staff members and aircraft have begun moving into the north-west community and we're looking forward to expanding our services to ensure better outcomes for those who require our care.

In addition to the construction of Broome, we've been collaborating with the WA Police Air Wing and CBH Group on sharing remote airstrip information.

Through the CBH Airstrip Survey Program, the RFDS is able to now share regular reports on the condition of remote airstrips with the WA Police Air Wing.

As we wrapped up our 80th anniversary celebrations last year, the iconic Sugar Bird Lady monument was restored and placed back on its plinth on Eagle Drive, Jandakot, following storm damage. This rich part of our history is now back on display opposite our Jandakot base, and we welcome you to read more about it in the article on page 3.

We are very excited about the future of RFDS in WA as we continue to evolve to meet the needs and demands of our patients, and it's due to your ongoing support and continued commitment to our service that we are able to be there whenever and wherever required.

Thank you!

Grahame Marshall
Chief Executive Officer
Royal Flying Doctor Service,
Western Australia

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Medical Emergencies only

1800 625 800

Our Doc Shop carries a range of official RFDS merchandise.

<http://rfdswa.myshopify.com/>

Kalgoorlie Visitor Centre

(08) 9093 7595

Follow us on   

SUGAR BIRD LADY MONUMENT RESTORED >



Nurse and aviator Robin Miller



The historic Sugar Bird Lady monument, a replica of a Mooney Mark 21 aircraft from the 1960's, flown for the RFDS by former nurse and aviator Robin Miller, has been restored and returned to its place on Eagle Drive in Jandakot.

Robin Miller was an innovator, requesting permission to fly to northern WA in order to carry out a vaccination programme. Permission granted, she borrowed money for a Cessna 182 and set out on her first flight on 22 May 1967. The name "Sugar Bird Lady" was given to her by outback Aboriginal children during her work combating polio, travelling to remote communities, she treated children with the Sabin vaccine in sugar lumps.

She completed the immunisation programme in October 1969, after administering over 37,000 doses

of vaccine and flying 43,000 miles (69,200km). She replaced her Cessna with a Mooney Mark 21 and flew regularly for the RFDS, always on call, flying in all types of weather, responding to a range of emergencies and coping with difficult or frightened patients. She was one of the outstanding female pilots of the 20th century, once quoted as saying about her job; "It's difficult to define it. It's always a challenge. You never know what you're going to encounter. In my particular job, you never know where you're going or when or for what."

Sadly, at the age of only 35, Robin died of cancer, in 1975.

The Sugar Bird Lady monument was established in her memory and is a well known landmark at Jandakot. Although not the actual aircraft flown by Robin Miller, the engineering prototype donated by Mooney Aircraft to the RFDS in 1978 serves as a memorial to the late Robin Miller.

The aircraft was damaged and blown to the ground in a storm in 2013, but with the assistance of the restoration team at the Aviation Heritage Museum Bull Creek it has been restored, repainted and reinstated to its plinth at Jandakot Airport.

THE SUGAR BIRD LADY MONUMENT IS AVAILABLE FOR THE PUBLIC TO VIEW, OPPOSITE THE ROYAL FLYING DOCTOR SERVICE OFFICES AT 3 EAGLE DRIVE, JANDAKOT.



BROOME BASE UPDATE



Panoramic shot of the new RFDS Broome base under construction

For the past 12 months, we have been busy planning and building our first new base in WA in over 50 years. Located at the Broome International Airport, the facility is set to bolster our capabilities in the north of the state, with Broome having seen a 236% increase in aero medical patient flights over the past five years.

The new facility will officially open in March and will become the sixth operational RFDS base in Western Australia.

The facility comprises two aircraft hangars, and a patient treatment centre; having transported over 1,100 patients to and from Broome last year alone, these facilities

will mean the RFDS is better placed to more quickly respond to emergencies throughout the Kimberley, enabling reduced flight times, and ultimately providing better outcomes for our patients.

BUSSELTON RFDS VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE PROFILE >

The RFDS Busselton Volunteer Committee are a dedicated group of 19 members and 40 helpers, led by committee President Alison Cunningham.

The RFDS Busselton Volunteer Committee are long time supporters of the RFDS and work tirelessly to support us throughout the South West. Their fundraising is undertaken through a variety of activities including raffles, open gardens, donation tins and various events they hold throughout the year including film premiers and fundraising concerts. With the support of the local community, the Busselton volunteers raised over \$52,000 for the Flying Doctor in 2015 – taking their support to over \$720,000 for the RFDS since the committee's inception!

THANK YOU

We would like to take this opportunity to offer our sincere thanks and gratitude to the RFDS Busselton Volunteers for the outstanding support they provide to us. We are fortunate to have a number of volunteer committees and auxiliaries throughout the State and we are extremely grateful to each and every one for their commitment to the RFDS.

JOIN OUR SUPPORT CREW >



We are excited to introduce 'The Support Crew' this month – the official new Regular Giving Program for the RFDS in WA.

By regularly donating to the RFDS you can help ensure our life saving work continues on well into the future. Members of the RFDS Support Crew will receive a Support Crew pack upon joining and a single

statement summarising monthly donations at the end of the financial year for tax purposes.

To find out more about how you can become a member of our Support Crew, please visit www.flyingdoctor.org.au/wa/support-crew/ or contact our Regular Giving Manager, Fiona Jones, on (08) 9417 6400.



JAKE'S STORY

RFDS PILOT >

Jake Walsh loves his job as a Pilot for the Royal Flying Doctor Service. He has come 'full circle' since being an RFDS patient at the age of two when he inhaled a two cent piece.

"Mum probably wasn't too impressed and Dad was in trouble for allowing me to play with two cent coins, but I was ok after being airlifted from Port Macquarie to Newcastle by the RFDS," he said.

Fast forward 23 years and Jake now has more than nine years' experience flying; the last six months of that with the RFDS. He moved from Port Macquarie to WA and has already seen a fair bit of our vast state while working for various mining companies and now the RFDS.

"It's an exciting job; I get to fly for the RFDS and contribute to saving lives, and no day is ever the same as the next," he said.

Now based in Port Hedland, Jake said he loves not knowing where he will be flying to on any day he's working.

"On my first day flying a Pilatus PC-12, we were diverted to Albany to assist with the search for two people who were in the water after their boat had capsized. We managed to locate them in time and they have both recovered, which is great," Jake said.

"The job we do is quite rewarding and I love being part of a team, assisting the doctors and flight nurses."

"Some of the places we travel to for patient retrievals are so remote, you wouldn't even know they existed, like Jamieson Range close to the South Australian and Northern Territory borders. The people there are so far from any medical assistance and they are very relieved to see the RFDS!"

Jake says you need to be able to accustom yourself to a changing environment quite quickly as part of the RFDS team.

"You need to be able to adapt to constantly changing tasks. You might be diverted while in the air and while you can try to plan ahead, things change most of the time."

"Some shifts involve flying at night or in bad weather and retrieving patients from serious car accidents. We had one last year in the state's north-west involving 16 people in one vehicle, two didn't make it which is sad but I'm pleased that most did, including an eight year-old girl from Broome who has made a full recovery."

Jake enjoys the RFDS environment and says it's a much bigger team than he'd realised. He enjoys bike riding, swimming and camping and has no plans to move on from the RFDS, hoping at some stage to be based in Kalgoorlie.

IN DECEMBER 2015, JAKE:

- > WAS BASED IN PORT HEDLAND
- > FLEW 22,000 KILOMETRES
- > LANDED AT 12 DIFFERENT AIRSTRIPS
- > FLEW A TOTAL OF 63 HOURS
- > COMPLETED 13 DAY SHIFTS AND 5 NIGHT SHIFTS
- > FLEW 22 PATIENTS INCLUDING ONE CHILD UNDER 15 YEARS OLD AND THE OLDEST PATIENT HE FLEW WAS 82 YEARS OLD

WENDY'S STORY >

Karratha Real Estate Agent Wendy Hipworth, 23, had been suffering from bad stomach cramps and pains. When a routine tap dancing class in June last year, resulted in worsening pains, Wendy knew she needed to go to hospital. This trip to the Karratha Hospital proved to be vital, as blood tests revealed Wendy had severe pancreatitis and suspected gall stones.

“During my tap dancing class I noticed the pain getting worse, and when I got home I began trying to vomit,” she said. “It was then I called my mum and went to hospital.”

After spending the night in emergency, and with plenty of medication to get her through to pain, Wendy's doctor confirmed she had gall stones, and would need surgery, which was too high risk to be performed in Karratha. The Royal Flying Doctor Service was called

and Wendy was on her way to the airstrip within 20 minutes to meet the aircraft and medical team.

Whilst in flight, the aircraft was diverted to collect two more patients who also both required a flight to Perth for further medical assistance. The RFDS Flight Nurse on board looked after the medical needs of all three patients throughout the five and a half hour flight. The three patients were flown to Perth and taken to hospital by ambulance; Wendy was taken to Royal Perth Hospital where she would spend the next 10 days.

“Due to the swelling, they couldn't perform surgery until it subsided, so I spent 10 days in hospital,” she recalls. “It's like having a swollen ankle - you can't do much other than rest it, and you have to wait out the pain until it can be operated on.”



Wendy Hipworth

Wendy fortunately made a full recovery, and the RFDS are well known in Karratha due to the number of retrievals made in and around this remote Pilbara town.

STAY SAFE THIS EASTER >

The Royal Flying Doctor Service is urging all West Australians to take care as they prepare to enjoy the Easter holiday season this month.

While the RFDS team is ready to respond 365 days a year, 24 hours a day, it would be preferable that we were not needed at all over the Easter period, which is traditionally a very busy time, particularly on our roads with many holiday goers travelling from the greater Perth metro area to popular holiday locations around the state.

Unfortunately the holiday periods see more West Australians killed on our roads than almost any other time of the year, and we ask that people be mindful of the road conditions, and the additional care needed when driving long distances.



WA POLICE AIR WING COLLABORATION >

Every day the RFDS accesses airstrips around the state. Through the state-wide Airstrip Survey and Evaluation Program, sponsored by the CBH Group, the condition of almost 750 airstrips are reviewed regularly to ensure they are maintained and safe for aircraft landings.

As many of these remote airstrips are not used regularly, it is important to ensure that they are accessible and safe for us to be able to land on when delivering essential medical care, or evacuating patients from remote locations.

The RFDS are now sharing this regularly updated airstrip information with the WA Police Air Wing who also utilise many of these airstrips around the state. Initiating this collaboration means better outcomes for all people living, working and travelling throughout Western Australia.



Steve McLeod, WAPOL Deputy Chief Pilot, with Albin Unger, RFDS Deputy Chief Pilot

MORE THAN JUST AN EMERGENCY SERVICE >

THE RFDS RESPONDS TO A WIDE VARIETY OF MEDICAL CONDITIONS AND INJURIES. SOME ARE LIFE THREATENING EMERGENCIES, WHILST OTHERS ARE PATIENTS WHO NEED TO BE FLOWN TO A METROPOLITAN HOSPITAL FOR SPECIALISED TREATMENT.

RFDS RESPONDS TO:

INJURIES & POISONING - SUCH AS TRAUMA, BROKEN BONES, SNAKE BITES

CARDIAC - SUCH AS HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE, HEART FAILURE, HEART ATTACKS

DIGESTIVE SYSTEM COMPLICATIONS - SUCH AS BOWEL OBSTRUCTIONS, GASTROINTESTINAL BLEEDING

RESPIRATORY CONDITIONS - SUCH AS ASTHMA, BRONCHITIS, PNEUMONIA

OBSTETRICS - SUCH AS PREGNANCY COMPLICATIONS





ALTITUDE BALL 2016 >

TICKETS NOW AVAILABLE

ALTITUDE is the prestigious, annual, black tie ball established to raise essential funds for the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

Taking place on Saturday 20th August 2016, this year's exclusive and glamorous red carpet event will once again be the highlight of the Perth social calendar. ALTITUDE 2016 will feature a spectacular blend of

national and local entertainment, premium fine dining and wine, world class service and a live charity auction, all within the luxurious five-star surrounds of the Crown Metropol Perth.

ALTITUDE 2016 promises the ultimate high-end ball experience. The event was a sell out in the last two years, don't be disappointed, book your tickets early and glam

up for a night of unforgettable entertainment with all proceeds raised going to support the RFDS.

For more information and to book your tickets, please visit the ALTITUDE website.

www.altitudeball.com.au



Reigan Derry, Bianca Wheeler, CEO Grahame Marshall, Dami Im, Jessica Mauboy



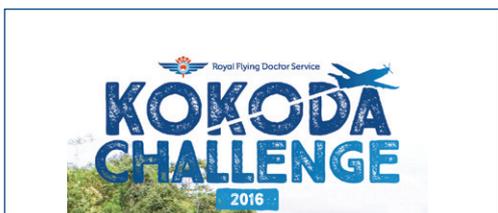
WHAT'S ON IN SUPPORT OF RFDS >



> HBF RUN FOR A REASON

SUNDAY 22ND MAY 2016

Make your reason the 'RFDS' and get a team together today! For more information on the event please visit www.hbfrun.com.au



> KOKODA TRAIL

5TH – 15TH NOVEMBER 2016

The first ever RFDS 2016 Kokoda Challenge is here! Join us this November for a once in a lifetime opportunity by trekking the iconic Kokoda track; knowing every step you take, you're raising funds for the 'Flying Doctor'.



> RED DOG RELAY AND FESTIVAL

3RD – 5TH JUNE 2016

Known as the Pilbara's unique annual adventure race, The Red Dog Relay and Festival is a fun, adventure-packed two day team event that charts a picturesque course from Dampier to Karratha. This year's event is from the 3rd-5th June with registrations opening in early March. Along with SAFE we are thrilled to have been named as charity partners and will receive part proceeds from funds raised. To sign up and for further details please visit www.reddogfestival.com.au



> RIDE TO THE OTHER SIDE

19TH JUNE – 15TH JULY 2016

In 2015 we were fortunate to be selected as the primary beneficiary for the Rotary Club of Armadale's 'Ride to the Other Side' which raised more than \$7,300 for the RFDS. We are grateful to once again have been selected as the beneficiary for the 4,000km journey from Katherine, in the Northern Territory, to Perth. If you would like to support this event or find out further information please visit www.ridetotheotherside.org.au



> CITY TO SURF

28TH AUGUST 2016

The City to Surf is back in 2016! Get your team together for a huge community fun run from Perth City to City Beach, and support the RFDS. Visit www.perthcitytosurf.com for more information.

CREATE YOUR OWN EVENT FOR THE RFDS >

If you'd like to support the RFDS by creating your own unique fundraising event we'd love to hear your idea. Please contact us to see how we can assist you in raising much needed funds for the RFDS.

To register your interest in any of the above events or find out more, please contact Jayne Northover, Events and Sponsorship Coordinator on (08) 9417 6408 or email fundraise@rfdswa.com.au



SPOTLIGHT ON OUR SUPPORTERS >

The Royal Flying Doctor Service in Western Australia is grateful to have a selection of events of which we are the major or partial beneficiary. There are a variety of activities that take place throughout the year where people showcase their creativity, community spirit and teamwork to put on events, all in the name of supporting us to provide life saving services around our state.

Our thanks go to all of our event organisers, including the following who have generously donated to RFDS over the past 12 months:



> WOOD CUTTERS - \$61,000

The Esperance Wood Cutters are valued supporters of the RFDS. A group of 23 committed individuals cut, collect and deliver firewood throughout the Esperance community each winter. Last year, the Wood Cutters raised an amazing \$61,950, which they generously donated to us through the RFDS Esperance Auxiliary. A special thank you to Neil Livingston for his committed organisational skills and work ethic as well as Doug Slater of Ratten and Slater for providing the wood yard. Thank you for your support!



> MINARA MASTERS GOLF DAY - \$15,500

Minara Resources Annual Golf Day was held on Saturday, 21st November at the Vines Resort. This annual event raised a total of \$15,500 for the RFDS in WA, which takes Minara's total support to over \$100,000 since 2004! Thank you to the team at Minara Resources for their ongoing support.

> IRWIN DISTRICTS CHARITY BALL, DONGARA - \$10,000

The Irwin Districts Charity Ball was held on Saturday, 24th October at the Irwin Recreation Centre. This community event raised \$20,000 which was generously split between the RFDS and the National Breast Cancer Foundation. We are grateful to have support from towns throughout WA. Thank you to the organisers of this event and everyone who helped make the night such a great success.

> OUTBACK AIR RACE - \$585,000

The 2015 Steadfast Outback Air Race set off from Esperance on Monday, 24th August and finished in Hamilton Island, QLD on Friday, 4th September. The event consisted of 26 light aircraft piloted by over 70 crew and passengers from all over Australia. The 5,000km GPS-based navigation time trial took participants on a two week fundraising adventure throughout remote outback Australia. The route took in many of Australia's iconic landmarks including Uluru, Alice Springs, then over the Simpson Desert to Birdsville and Winton. It then saw participants fly over the spectacular Gulf Country to Karumba and across to tropical Cooktown, with the final leg being a breathtaking flight down the East coast to the finish line.

The 2015 Steadfast Outback Air Race raised a record \$585,000 for the RFDS nationally, which continues to solidify the event as RFDS WA's largest community fundraising event, having raised over \$2 million since its inception in 1996. We would like to take the opportunity to offer our sincere thanks and gratitude to the Outback Air Race committee, participants, event sponsors and everyone involved in this unique event. Your support is greatly appreciated.



Steadfast Outback Air Race participants with RFDS Staff

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK OUR COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING SUPPORTERS THROUGHOUT WESTERN AUSTRALIA FOR THEIR ONGOING COMMITMENT AND GENEROSITY.



HOW YOU CAN HELP >

The RFDS relies on funding from government, private donations, philanthropic grants, private trusts, events and community fundraising to ensure our life saving services are maintained.

RFDS Support Crew

To maintain a sustainable service we invite you to join our Support Crew and make a monthly donation.

Community fundraising & events

Create your own unique fundraising event and let us provide support to you along the way from authorising your event to advising on how to run a raffle.

Leave a gift in your Will

Give a gift to the RFDS in your Will. This has the power to impact countless lives.

Give in memory or celebration

Make a donation to the RFDS in lieu of a gift or flowers. This is a touching way to honour an occasion, a loved one or an event.

Corporate Partnerships

Each business, whether big or small, has a lot to offer and we will make your philanthropic experience something you will be proud to be involved in.

PLEASE CONTACT OUR MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS TEAM ON (08) 9417 6400 OR EMAIL FUNDRAISE@RFDSWA.COM.AU FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON ANY OF OUR PROGRAMS.

OUR SUPPORTERS >

Altitude Partners

Rio Tinto

Founding partner – Aero Medical Fund
Partner of the Rio Tinto Life Flight jet fleet



Partner of
Pilatus PC-12 Aircraft

Major Partners



KARARA
MINING LTD



Community Partners



Altitude Ball Sponsors



Corporate Supporters



Government Supporters



Australian Government
Department of Health



RFDS IN THE COMMUNITY >

THE RFDS WOULD LIKE TO THANK OUR AMAZING VOLUNTEERS, COMMITTEES AND COMMUNITY FUNDRAISERS WHO GENEROUSLY DONATE THEIR TIME AND EFFORT TO FUNDRAISING FOR THE RFDS.

WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Broome Ambassador – Melva Stone, OAM
Busselton RFDS Volunteer Committee
Dongara RFDS Volunteer Committee
Flying 1000
Friends of the Flying Doctor

Geraldton RFDS Volunteer Committee
Jurien RFDS Volunteer Committee
Katanning RFDS Volunteer Committee
Mount Barker RFDS Volunteer Committee
Narrogin RFDS Volunteer Committee

Pannawonica RFDS Volunteer Committee
Paraburdoo RFDS Volunteer Committee
RFDS Eastern Goldfields Auxiliary
RFDS Esperance Auxiliary

Individual Supporters

Thank you to all of our individual supporters who generously contribute to the Royal Flying Doctor Service through donations, bequests, regular giving and our campaigns and appeals.



Royal Flying Doctor Service
WESTERN AUSTRALIA