



Royal Flying
Doctor Service

Your update on how your kindness
continues to deliver critical
healthcare to families in the bush.

The South Eastern Flyer

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"It's a journey that
no family should
go through alone.
But thanks to
you, there is help."

Lily with parents Jane and James
in Louth, got the life-changing care
she needed because of you.

- Jane, Lily's mum



You help create imaginative play moments like these for four-year-old Lily (centre) and her sister Harriet.

Thanks to you, Play Therapy is helping Lily find her voice and thrive

When Lily's communication changed and she became less connected with the world around her at just two years old, her mum Jane had no idea where to turn for answers. Thanks to your compassion, Lily is now playing, connecting and communicating in ways her family once struggled to imagine.

It wasn't until Jane connected with our monthly community clinic in Louth, 50 kilometres from the family's remote station, that the family began the journey towards a diagnosis of autism, and the support that would follow.

When Jane first attended the clinic, she connected with our doctors and Lesley Harvey, a Child, Adolescent and Family Mental Health Clinician and since then, Lily has attended monthly Play Therapy sessions with Lesley, and the change has been significant.

Where Lily's play was once routine and repetitive, it is now imaginative and creative. Working alongside the family's speech therapist, Lesley has also helped Lily find new ways to communicate and Lily can now express what she needs.

"The progress that Lily has made is so, so good," Jane shared.

"It's now very imaginative where it wasn't before."

Lesley has been more than just a therapist for Lily, she's been a steady support for Jane too, in a place where help is often hard to find. *"I didn't know Play Therapy was even a thing, but now I know it's so valuable,"* Jane said.

Lily is still building her sentences, and there's more work ahead. But thanks to your caring heart, Lily and many other children in the bush can continue to receive consistent face-to-face Play Therapy, and there are more families who no longer feel alone.

Grahame is back mustering because of the emergency care you made possible

You helped Grahame receive the emergency care he needed after breaking his leg, and he simply says, “thank you very much.”

Grahame was visiting his son in Bourke and spent the day helping a friend on their remote property, 80 kilometres from Cobar. While mustering, he had a motorbike accident that left Grahame stranded and in pain, with a badly broken leg, a long way from any medical care.

“I went after a breakaway mob, turning hard left and put my leg behind me, instead of in front, and the bike collapsed. My leg was pointing in the other direction. I knew it was broken.”

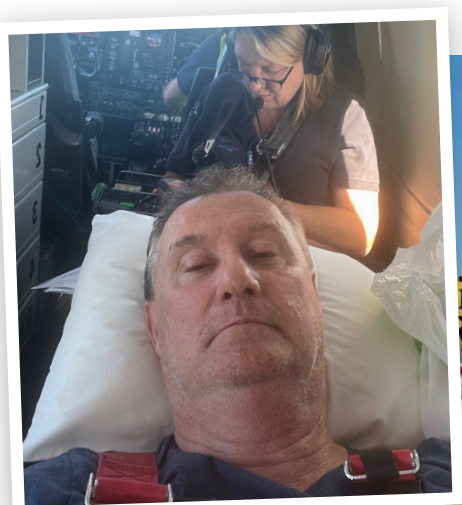
Friends quickly made a makeshift splint for Grahame’s ankle from tree branches and belts and got him to Cobar Hospital as quickly as they could. X-rays confirmed a broken fibula, but with limited resources, the surgery Grahame needed was not possible there.

Thanks to you, Grahame was taken to Dubbo Hospital by our emergency Aeromedical Retrieval team, where he got the specialist orthopaedic care he needed. He was facing a four-hour trip by road, but because of you, he got the critical care he needed in just 46 minutes.

“To know there’s someone to fly a plane, to have a doctor or nurse land and assist you in your moment of need... it’s quite remarkable in such a vast country. Without that assistance, life would be tougher out in the bush.”

Grahame’s complex surgery included six screws and a plate. His recovery has been slow, but he’s back on his feet, and already planning his next trip out to Cobar, but this time he will be mustering in a ute, not on a motorbike.

Your compassion means people like Grahame can get the critical care they need in an emergency, even while they are far from home. Thank you!



Grahame and his family are so thankful for your support. Now recovered, he’s eager to get back to mustering and doing the work he loves.

Belinda's gift in her Will helps care for the next generation, and you can too

Belinda's family has called Broken Hill home since 1895, and the Flying Doctor has always been part of that story. Now, through a gift in her Will, Belinda is making sure the next generation is cared for too.

Belinda was born in Broken Hill but left with her family when she was still a child. When Belinda felt Broken Hill calling her home from living in Sydney most of her life, she finally settled back in 2017.

While the Flying Doctor was always part of her community life when she was young, she was excited to discover she could see a local doctor at the Clive Bishop Medical Centre, only five minutes from her home. But her connection to the service runs deeper. Her partner, Larry, was taken to Adelaide by the Flying Doctor as a newborn baby in 1955, when his mother needed urgent care after complications during his birth in Tibooburra.

Belinda has since seen that very same plane, now on display at the museum where Larry worked as a tour guide. *"If it wasn't for RFDS, I would not be with Larry right now,"* Belinda said.

It's stories like this, of family, friends and community members who have relied on us in moments of real need, that led Belinda to become an Outback Guardian and leave a gift in her Will.

"Friends and family have constantly been able to utilise the service, and it's my way of saying 'thanks for doing that for them.'" Belinda said.



By becoming an Outback Guardian and making the commitment to leave a gift in your Will, you are helping ensure more lives are saved, and that families in the Outback can always rely on us to be there, just as Belinda's family, friends and community have.



Broken Hill and the Flying Doctor both hold a special place in Belinda's heart.



If Belinda's story has moved you, you can find out more about becoming an Outback Guardian or share why you have chosen to leave a gift in your Will, by getting in touch with our Planned Giving Senior Manager, Cristina Caamano, for a personal and confidential conversation.

Email cristina.caamano@rfdse.org.au,
call **0448 280 193** or call enquiries on **02 9941 8888**.



FLYERNEWSLETTER



Student doctor, Jessica (right), is one of many future doctors eager to care for families in the bush at our regular clinics.

You're helping grow a new generation of GPs that keep outback communities healthy

Thank you for your loyalty in helping ensure that people in Australia's most remote communities can access medical care from future doctors like Jessica.

Jessica recently completed an RFDS Clinical School placement in Dubbo in partnership with Charles Sturt University, where she learned the essential skills of rural medicine required to provide medical care in the outback.

"The trust that communities place in the medical teams cannot be overstated. The geographical challenges of providing care in remote communities has shown me why the frontline teams are such exceedingly competent and passionate people."

Seeing first-hand what remote primary healthcare looks like through attending regular clinics in Grawin, Hebel and Weilmoringle has given her another level of understanding. Jessica wants to work towards making healthcare more accessible in regional, rural and remote communities.

Our unique Clinical School program builds essential skills for the next generation of upcoming rural doctors. And your commitment to the future health and wellbeing of families who live in remote communities means they will always have the Flying Doctor there.

Student doctors like Jessica understand the many challenges of rural medicine, like vast distances, harsh

conditions and clinical isolation, and are trained to provide exceptional treatment.

Jessica has already asked about working for RFDS and says she wasn't the only one.

"These families... their whole lives are there. The work RFDS does is what enables communities to be sustained where they are, generations of families, where they're happiest."

Because of your caring and generous support, students like Jessica are gaining the skills to become tomorrow's Flying Doctors, prepared and ready to meet the growing demand and provide world-class medical care to families in the bush.



Broken Hill local, Rhonda, was overjoyed to visit the frontline team who saved her life.

Rhonda says "Thank you for saving my life"

When Rhonda returned to visit our Broken Hill base, gratitude and joy filled her heart. She is alive today because you proudly support and care for people just like her.

Back in April 2022, Rhonda arrived at Broken Hill Hospital fighting for her life, suffering multi-organ failure and in cardiac arrest. Nursing staff were trying to resuscitate Rhonda when they called the Flying Doctor.

Because of the critical care Rhonda received then, which saved her life, she was recently able to do something quite unique. She visited our base and went into an

aircraft, just like the one in which she was taken to Adelaide, and met the pilot who flew her safely back home to her family.

It was a full-circle moment for Rhonda, an opportunity to say thank you, in person, to the people who gave her a second chance at life.

"I was overwhelmed to be in the plane, to be told what equipment saves lives and saved me. I mean, without you guys and all that equipment, I wouldn't be here," Rhonda said.

For our team, these moments matter just as much. Our staff care deeply about the

patients they help and always welcome the chance to meet them again, to see how their story continues, and share in the sense of closure and healing that comes with it.

"To look at the plane and meet Pilot Paul was just my best day. It's so important to donate, to keep beautiful people like these flying."

It's hard to put into words the difference you've made. The care you helped provide changed the course of Rhonda's story. Thank you for your incredible kindness.

Meet Brendan, the Desert Swimmer - His extraordinary journey started with your support

When Brendan reached out for help, you were there, providing the mental health support he needed to get his life back on track. Now he is at peace with himself and finds great joy in helping others in the bush.

For years, Brendan struggled with the emotional rollercoaster of family farm succession planning, drought and isolation. He experienced extreme fatigue, lack of interest in socialising, and too often, didn't have the tools to cope with overwhelming feelings.

Realising these 'red flags' meant something deeper, Brendan made the brave decision to get professional

support in 2015 and was diagnosed with depression. *"A diagnosis was a relief and empowered me to change my life,"* he said.

Brendan accessed regular ongoing support from our Mental Health team and used endurance swimming in extremely remote locations, like Menindee Lakes in South West NSW as part of his recovery 'toolkit'.

Back on his feet, he wanted to do more. He became a We've Got Your Back Program Champion, our peer counselling program delivered through our Mental Health team and Lifeline. He then went on to swim the English

Channel, not once but twice, and wrote an inspirational book about his experience through it all!

"I didn't realise so many other people out there had similar issues. When I had the opportunity to become a Champion within the RFDS We've Got Your Back Program, I thought, 'Wow, I'm able to help people in the community.' I'll give the RFDS every part of me to make it work for those people out in the desert."



Brendan took up endurance swimming in Menindee Lakes as part of his recovery journey.

If you're interested to hear more about how



Brendan turned his life around, you can listen to our Flying Doctor podcast episode where he tells his heart-warming story.

Or read about Brendan's journey in his book, 'The Desert Swimmer' which you can find in our RFDS DocShop. As a valued supporter, we are delighted to offer you 15% off the price of Brendan's book. Simply enter the code **desertswimmer15 at checkout*.**

Escape to the outback and experience the Flying Doctor

There are few places on earth as vast, as beautiful, and as rugged as the Australian Outback.

Its endless horizons, blood-red earth and unique landscapes have drawn travellers from every corner of the globe, and at the heart of it all is the Flying Doctor.

Step inside our Broken Hill and Dubbo Visitor Experiences and immerse yourself in stories of survival, celebrate the resilience of communities living in the bush, the history of the RFDS and the people who have brought care to the furthest corners of the Outback for nearly a century.

Share the experiences of lives saved and see the incredible story of the Flying Doctor come to life before your eyes.

Scan the QR codes to start planning your visitor experience.



At the Outback Heritage Experience in Broken Hill, you'll discover where it all started. Learn about 100 years of aviation, the vision of our Founder, Reverend John Flynn, and how one man's ingenuity has gone on to save countless lives.



At our Dubbo Visitor Experience, a fun learning space for the whole family, discover interactive displays offering a unique 'behind-the-scenes' look at our life-saving work, then complete your experience with a visit to the in-house Outback Trek Café.



With your help, we are taking healthcare to more people more often.
Thank you! To contact the Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section), phone **1300 669 569**, email **supporter@rfdse.org.au** or visit us at **flyingdoctor.org.au** ABN 86 000 032 422