

Going the

October 2019

DISTANCE

Stories of strength and survival, made possible by you



Thanks to you

Stella can now
access life-changing
healthcare



Royal Flying Doctor Service
VICTORIA



To you, from Scott

Dear Friend,

Welcome to your latest edition of 'Going the Distance'. Inside this edition, you'll find many examples of how your support is making a profound difference to Australians in rural and remote areas.

Australians like Stella. Because she couldn't hear well, this energetic five-year-old girl started to struggle speaking and expressing herself.

Thanks to you, she's been able to access speech pathology services despite living in a very small town. Now Stella has started school and has a bright future ahead of her!

This is just one example of how you are changing – and saving – lives in remote parts of the country.

If you're looking for more ways to support the Flying Doctor this month, I encourage you to turn to page 3 to see how your Christmas gifts can make a difference, or to page 6 to find out how you can host a special fundraising morning tea.

On behalf of all of us, thank you so much for all that you do.

Scott Chapman
Chief Executive
Royal Flying Doctor Service Victoria

A MUM SAYS "THANK YOU" FOR HELPING HER DAUGHTER "SPEAK UP"

It's always a shock to sit in front of a doctor and be told your child has a medical problem that needs urgent action. But when you live in a very remote area located hours travel from the facilities your little-one needs, what do you do?

It happened to Jaimi Willersdorf when her five-year-old daughter Stella began having trouble with her hearing. An audiologist's exam revealed that Stella had glue ear, and her hearing had deteriorated to the point where it was now affecting her speech.

However, thanks to Flying Doctor supporters like you, we had just rolled out a new speech pathology service for children aged 0-12 years old across the Mallee region. When Jaimi heard the news, she was delighted.

Stella quickly began sessions with speech pathologist, Vanessa Patey. Vanessa has worked with Stella to improve her articulation issues that had developed as a consequence of glue ear. And the results showed really quickly.

"Thank you for helping Stella to improve her speech!"

JAIMI WILLERSDORF - STELLA'S MUM

Jaimi was told Stella needed the intervention of a speech pathologist right away. But in the small town of Murrayville where they live – population 280 – getting access to a speech pathologist was a near-impossible task. In fact, the only option was miles away.

"It was a whole day of traveling!" says Jaimi. "Having your child out of school for a day can hugely impact their learning, and it can also be difficult for the parent if you're working."

What would be easily dealt with in an urban area becomes a much bigger issue when you live far from healthcare specialists.

"Her speech has definitely improved," says Jaimi. "We've gotten through the S sound and now moved on to the R sound. Stella's been doing so well."

Part of the key to Vanessa's success is keeping sessions fun as well as focused. She kicks each one off with a warm-up activity or game followed by clinical assessments, interspersed with other fun, educational activities.

As Vanessa says, *"Kids learn best when they're playing, and we want them to enjoy our sessions too."*



Support like yours helped 5 year-old Stella get the speech therapy she needed.

Jaimi is delighted with the breakthroughs the sessions have helped Stella to make. *"I'm very proud of how determined Stella has been to work through the activities and break the speech habits,"* she says.

And Jaimi has a special message of thanks she wants us to pass on to you, our wonderful supporters, for making it all possible.

"Thank you so much for supporting the Flying Doctor and for giving us this fantastic opportunity," she says. *"It's been so wonderful for us in an area like this, where we don't have many services, and where it can be very difficult to go away to see specialists. The appreciation we have is hard to put into words."*

You'll be pleased to know that Stella's glue ear has now completely cleared up and her speech is fully back on track too. Thank you so much for making turnarounds like this possible for little ones like Stella.



Stella playing with her mum Jaimi and her little brother Ty

YOU ARE HELPING KIDS LIKE STELLA ACCESS LIFE-CHANGING HEALTHCARE



Vanessa Patey, RFDS
speech pathologist

Thanks to your support, we have launched a much-needed speech pathology program for children like Stella (featured on previous pages), aged 0-12 in the remote Mallee region.

This care has been developed locally with Mallee Track Health & Community Services and Robinvale District Health Service.

It involves the assessment and treatment of difficulties relating to speech and language, stutters and voice, swallowing, literacy, phonological awareness or assisting with multi-modal communication – when a child need an iPad or pictures to communicate.

The speech pathologist then creates a therapy plan to suit the individual child's needs, which may include

support from an allied health assistant to allow for more frequent appointments.

Vanessa Patey, who works as part of the Flying Doctor Speech Therapy team in Robinvale, can see how grateful families are to be able to access speech pathology locally.

"Seeing the increase in the speech services we've been able to provide, and the therapy goals clients have been able to achieve due to the increase in service, is really special. It means a lot to the communities."

Thank you for ensuring that children in rural Victoria can access the speech pathology support they need to be on a positive path for the rest of their lives.

Thank you for making this life-changing service possible!

: YOUR CHRISTMAS GIFTS CAN SAVE LIVES!

You can feel the joy of giving this Christmas by purchasing from the Flying Doctor Christmas Catalogue!

There is a fantastic selection of gifts to choose from, including tea towels, tote bags, beach towels and water bottles, that are sure to bring joy to your friends and family this Christmas.

View the full range of Christmas gifts available by visiting www.shoprdfs.com.au.



HOW YOU'RE RAISING THE NEXT GENERATION OF FLYING DOCTORS

On Wednesday 28 August, the RFDS Victoria Education Program hit a momentous milestone – reaching its 2,000th school presentation while visiting Saint Peter Apostle Primary School in Hopper's Crossing.

The program, which is only possible thanks to your commitment to the RFDS, sees Tom Ryan, the Education Program Manager, hitting the road regularly, taking his dynamic school incursion program, titled Look! Up in the Sky, to thousands of kids in all corners of Victoria and Tasmania.

Tom brings the curriculum to life, telling stories of the Flying Doctor to enthralled students in grades 2 – 6. Children learn about the contribution of the RFDS over the years, why it's still important today, and why so many Australians like you are so committed to the work being done.

The highlight of every session is the aircraft simulator. Always a crowd favourite, the simulator is a life-size replica RFDS plane that's kitted out like the aircraft we use to transport patients.



Our flying doctors of tomorrow! Children from Cowwarr Primary School playing dress ups during a visit from the RFDS Education Manager Tom Ryan. Photo: Liz Lyons

"I've met thousands of fantastic young people, parents and teachers over the years who had limited knowledge of country Australia before we came by. We make an impact with this program every day."

TOM RYAN, EDUCATION PROGRAM MANAGER

It contains two flight simulator games in the cockpit, as well as most of the medical equipment you'd find in an active RFDS aircraft – breathing masks, stretchers, IV pumps, head phones and oxygen.

The program is a dynamic and invaluable tool to share John Flynn's legacy with the

next generation. Your support of this program is inspiring the doctors, dentists, speech pathologists, mental health clinicians and donors of tomorrow – all while having a lot of fun!

For more information on Tom's program, please go to www.flyingdoctor4education.org.au

LOOK OUT FOR THE NEW \$20 NOTE



Australia's new \$20 note is set to go into circulation in October.

The new note, with a freshly drawn portrait of an RFDS Founder, Rev. John Flynn, pays homage to the history of the service that you continue to make possible through your support, including a drawing of a RFDS De Havilland Dragon aircraft leaving a Broken Hill homestead in 1948, and the Traegar pedal wireless radio which was used to communicate across vast distance.



When I was a teenager, I lived in Perth and went to a little wooden Presbyterian church in Nedlands. Rev. John Flynn came and preached, and I always remember the beautiful white lace on his garments. He was a wonderful person.



- Erla, RFDS supporter



Frank, 18 years behind the controls and counting – all thanks to you!

YOU'RE KEEPING FRANK IN THE AIR!

Every member of the Flying Doctor crew is extremely passionate about helping provide health care in remote areas. And they're so grateful to you and for your commitment to enabling our crew in the air and on the road to make a difference.

Your ongoing support empowers people like Frank to do their crucial jobs. He is a pilot with the RFDS Victoria and, after 18 years behind the controls, has travelled far and wide across Victoria and Australia.

Frank says that, after all his years in the job, the one thing that continually stands out to him is the community spirit and affinity with the RFDS that exists in the places he visits.

"I remember being in Darwin and a tourist was complaining about RFDS donation boxes being in every shop he went to. The shop owner said that they support the RFDS because if something happens out in the bush the RFDS are the only people who will come and pick you up."

"People really appreciate our help. There are people who still make donations because we saved their son 20 years ago. It's very touching."

It's because of your support that we're able to provide this vital support to regional communities. Frank says it best when he says, "Thanks to the donations of all of you, our facilities get to the people who need them most."

THANK YOU FOR RUNNING, MELBOURNE

More than \$11,000 was raised at Run Melbourne, with 27 people pulling on their running shoes to represent the Flying Doctor on the day.

Personal bests were reached, a lot of fun was had and the RFDS stall served as a hub for interested members of the public to learn about the important work we do.

A huge thanks to all of our fantastic fundraisers who took part, and the equally fantastic donors who supported them.

One passionate participant in this year's Run Melbourne was Dr Anita Moss, a rural women's GP in the small community of Robinvale, in north-western Victoria.

With a population of only 3,000 people, access to specialist care in the town can be limited.

But your support means that Anita can visit the community for two days every six weeks and support the work of the town's two part-time doctors and one midwife.

"My patients are very grateful for the RFDS. The clinics I do are only possible thanks to people like you and provide a much-needed lifeline to people in rural Victoria", says Anita.



Dr Anita Moss: a runner and a Flying Doctor.

Thank you for enabling doctors like Anita to impact remote communities like Robinvale!



Dr Anita Moss (bottom right) and team, all running for RFDS in this year's Run Melbourne.

WINIFRED'S WONDERFUL LEGACY

When asked why she has donated to the Flying Doctor for 26 years, Winifred responds quickly.

"Imagine you're living 100 kms from the nearest town and your child suddenly needs a doctor," Winifred says. "It's as simple as that."

"I've always had a pure and absolute admiration for the work of the Flying Doctor. It's marvellous we can take this help to remote parts of the country that don't have quick access to medical help."

Winifred understanding of just how hard it is for people living

in remote areas to access healthcare, is the reason for her longstanding support. And her belief in the need for us to always be there for people has inspired her to leave a gift to the RFDS in her Will.

"It's remarkable the way the Flying Doctor reaches people - it's a service we all need to support," she says.

If you would like to find out more about leaving a gift of a lifetime, by including the Flying Doctor in your Will, please contact Teresa Cianciosi directly on 03 8412 0448 or teresa.cianciosi@rfdsvic.com.au

Long-time RFDS supporter Winifred playing the cello, one of her passions.

© Photo courtesy of Merrill Boyd of The Telegraph



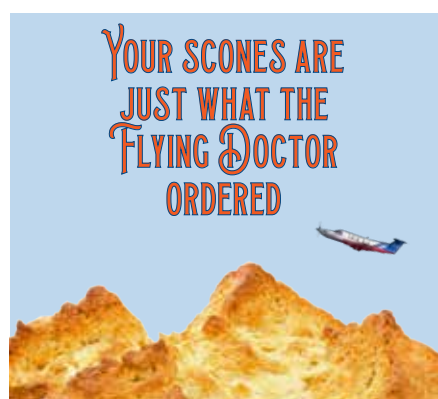
SAMUEL'S MUM SAYS **THANK YOU!**

"We will be forever be grateful for everyone involved – from the donors who support the RFDS to the paramedics and hospital staff on both ends who gave Samuel the help he needed."

In your last newsletter, you read how Samuel's leg was saved after a horrendous motorbike accident. With your support, we can rescue more people like Samuel – thank you.

HOST YOUR OWN **OUTBACK MORNING TEA**

Your scones can save lives!



From Bairnsdale to Bendigo, Hamilton to Hopetoun, and Wangaratta to Wonthaggi, we invite you to host a fundraising morning tea for RFDS Victoria on Monday 25 November in honour of Flying Doctor founder Rev. John Flynn's birthday.

This is such a simple way for you to support the RFDS and the many life-saving services we deliver across the country.

Morning tea has a special place in the RFDS' history. Legend has it that, after the first Flying Doctor flight returned to base, a "debrief"

was had over a cup of tea and a biscuit.

To sign up to host your morning tea, please head to outbackmorningtea.com.au. Here you'll find more information and resources to aid your planning, taste-bud-tempting recipes from the Country Women's Association, and RFDS morning-tea-related merchandise.

For any questions about this event, please call 1300 669 569 or email our Community & Corporate Fundraiser, Rohan Morris at rohan.morris@rfdsvic.com.au

DINNER DELIVERS FOR REGIONAL VICTORIA

Thank you to all our guests who made our annual Going the Distance Dinner a beautiful night! The event, held on Thursday 22 August at the Plaza Ballroom in Melbourne's CBD, was a fantastic evening of speeches, impeccable food and drink, and brilliant entertainment.

"Thank you to everyone involved in our Going the Distance Dinner. While important in a fundraising capacity, the event is also a chance for us to say a big thank you for the very real impact your donations are having in regional Victoria," – Scott Chapman, Chief Executive – RFDS Victoria.

Guests were kept well entertained by Master of Ceremonies Tiffany Cherry, and heard the moving story of Warren Davies, best known as *The Unbreakable Farmer*.

More than \$60,000 was raised to continue providing healthcare in regional communities. Thank you to all who came along and made the night a wonderful success!



A special INVITATION FOR YOU

As one of our incredible supporters, we'd be delighted to see you at one of our upcoming events.



Flying Doctor Aircraft Simulator

Visit our aircraft simulator at the Nhill Airshow and the Lilydale show this November.



Drive 4x4 the Doc

Be part of a long-weekend drive in the country in support of RFDS. For more info, go to www.drive4x4thedoc.com.au



John Flynn Luncheon

Join us in Melbourne for our annual John Flynn Luncheon, and the opportunity to meet people as passionate as you.



AGM - A Year in Review

Come together with fellow supporters and RFDS team members to hear how your support helped impact lives this year.