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FrontierNews

Many hands make light work

In this issue

Iron Ore and Red Dust

The Pilbara in the 70s

Caring for Cobar

30 volunteers lend a hand

West Arnhem Ministry

Stories from the top end

2017 Christmas and Gift Cards



Frontier Services
serving remote Australia

Many hands make light work

What a privilege it is to be the National Director of Frontier Services. I am sitting at my desk reflecting on my trip to Cobar feeling tired but honoured. We just got back from helping three farming families, with a team of 30 volunteers and finishing up the week painting one large youth centre. I felt blessed to be a part of something very special.

Our team of volunteers came from all over Australia, from all different walks of life, with just one aim: to help those in the bush who were doing it a bit tough. That's just what we did. I am glad to have played a small part. The saying "many hands make light work" couldn't have been truer over this week.

The enthusiasm started on day one as soon as we arrived at the first property and everyone pitched in. I saw first-hand how hard work can be fun when it is shared. Laughter, conversations and lifelong friendships have been made over a paint brush and a meal.

Our volunteers quickly bonded in their teams, and everyone managed to find a job that suited their skills. There were plenty of jobs to be done. We cooked, cleaned, repaired, painted and even pulled down a shed. There were plenty of funny stories and surprises along the way. One I will never forget was a lone bagpiper on the hill surrounded by fog, and it wasn't a movie,



**Laughter, conversations
and lifelong friendships
have been made over a
paint brush and a meal.**

Left to right: Howard Jones, Marsha Colbran and Jannine Jackson

it was one of our incredible volunteers entertaining the troops.

To all of our volunteers, you are amazing.

The farmers we supported across the week were remarkable. I enjoyed getting to know each of them and to understand their stories. They really enjoyed the companionship, as it isn't very often they have so many people over to stay. We came in great numbers with approximately 10 on each property. We left each property in a better condition that we found it, doing a number of projects that the farmers just hadn't been able to do. Some projects had been left for years as they were too hard or need too much manpower.

One of the farmers was on a property on her own and she is not as young or as sprightly as she was in her prime. I was humbled to know she felt her pride restored as she saw her home brought back to life with some elbow grease. I was touched when on the last day she said, "Jannine, you have given me more than my pride back, you have given me hope." We said our goodbyes with tears in our eyes.

All of our farmers were surprised by how much was done in a short period of time, how well it was done and want us to come back real soon. To everyone involved in this trip thank you, you have changed lives for the better.

And last but by no means least, my thanks to our wonderful Patrol Minister Jo Smalbil and her husband Lou welcomed us warmly to Cobar. It was great to talk to them both and understand their challenges and joys in serving their community. They played a key role in selecting farms and worked tirelessly all week supporting the volunteers.

If you would like to support our volunteers, patrol ministers and farmers or want to be involved please let us know as we would love to hear from you. Call us on 1300 787 247

Jannine Jackson
National Director

FrontierNews



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Level 10, 222 Pitt St Sydney
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Tel 1300 787 247
Fax 02 8270 1313
Email enquiries@frontierservices.org
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CIRCULATION **36,000**
FRONT COVER **Rev Jo Smalbil with Jannine Jackson in Cobar.**
Photo by **Lou Smalbil**

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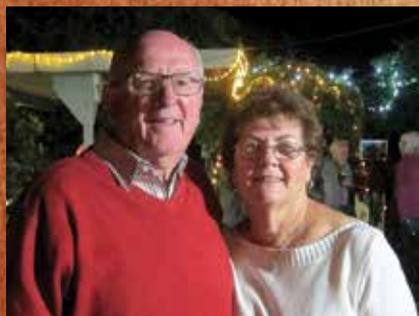


ABOUT FRONTIER SERVICES

Frontier Services is a national agency of the Uniting Church in Australia, established to continue the unified work of the Australian Inland Mission, the Methodist Inland Mission, and the inland mission of the Congregational Union, and works with people across 85% of the continent, including Aboriginal communities and isolated properties.

Iron Ore and Red Dust Three Years in the Pilbara

Before there was a Uniting Church, Presbyterian and Methodist patrol ministers worked cooperatively bringing services to Australia's vast Inland. Patrol ministers are exceptional people. We interviewed Rev Tony Winter about some of his most memorable moments in the Pilbara region of WA in the 1970s.



Top: Tony and Annette Winters, Above: Rev Tony Winter, second from right, with Rev Keith Kestell and Rev Ray Richmond at their 50th Anniversary of Ordination. Officiating, Rev Will Pearson.

The day he arrived in Port Hedland to take on the role of patrol minister in the Pilbara, Rev Tony Winter found himself stepping into the calm before the storm.

An hour after dropping the suitcases at the manse, Tony was in the local grocery shop trying to fill a basic shopping list for his family. But he was having a hard time of it. All he could see were rows of empty shelves. "Where's the bread, milk, eggs?" he asked the man at the counter.

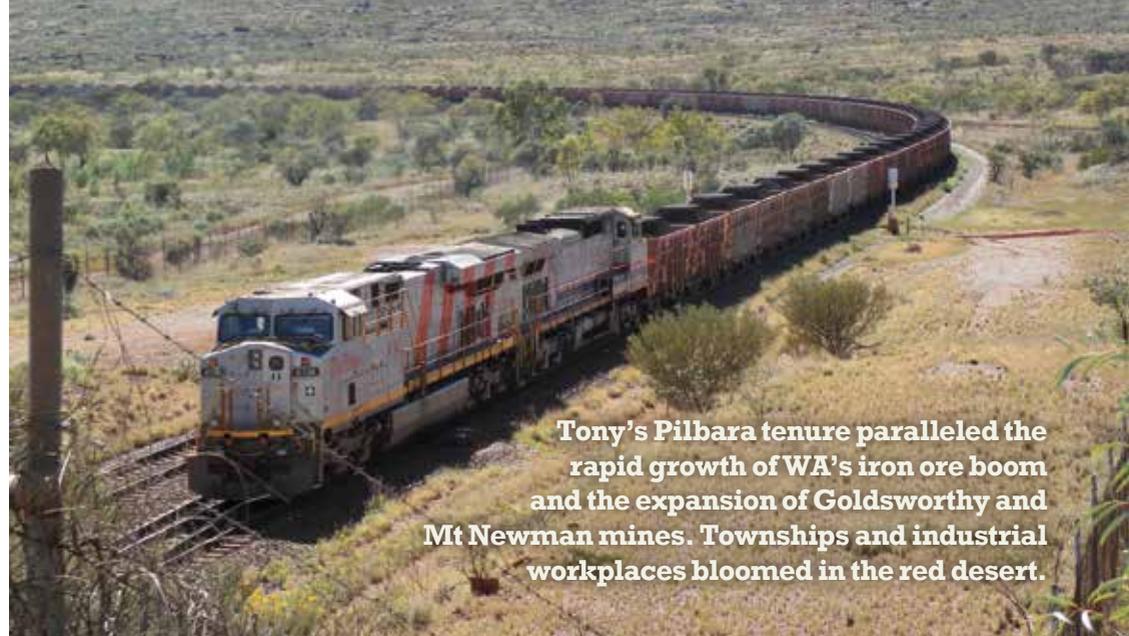
"Red flag's up. All sold out," the man replied languidly, adding: "People tend to stock up before the cyclone hits." It was the first Tony had heard that there was a cyclone approaching from the Indian Ocean. Sure enough, when he checked the flagpole at the Police Station, the red flag was flapping gaily in the stiffening breeze.

That night as cyclonic winds of 125km howled, Tony and his family sheltered in the safety of a motel. The manse they had intended to occupy meanwhile was battered and doused in the ferocious storm. In the storm's aftermath, as Tony was wondering how to fix it, a builder arrived to say that he'd been sent to give a quote on building a new manse. Thanking providence for this timely intervention, Tony accepted the builder's quote on the spot. Eighteen months later a new family-friendly manse was built at Point Cook.

The years 1970-73, when Tony Winter was the Federal Methodist Inland Mission's (FMIM) patrol minister in the Pilbara ranks among his most memorable ministries. When he celebrated his golden anniversary of ordination as Minister of the Word, Tony reflected that his enthusiasm was inspired by Rev Alan Walker, the Methodist Church's great evangelist.



Rev Tony in the Pilbara, 1972.



Tony's Pilbara tenure paralleled the rapid growth of WA's iron ore boom and the expansion of Goldsworthy and Mt Newman mines. Townships and industrial workplaces bloomed in the red desert.

"At Sydney Central Methodist Mission, I learned from Alan to find opportunities in my ministry to engage with those outside of the Church.

Tony's Pilbara tenure paralleled the rapid growth of WA's iron ore boom and the expansion of Goldsworthy and Mt Newman mines. Townships and industrial workplaces bloomed in the red desert. Tony was flown down to Mt Newman each week in the company plane. To be an effective chaplain to miners was to live the life of the miner. "I would stay overnight in the single men's quarters. Those blokes were isolated and lonely, looking for some kind of friendship."

The dark side of the miner's lives were the pitfalls of drunkenness and domestic violence. For the temperate Methodist, Tony's pleas for abstinence were a mediating influence.

Tony's patrol also took him on monthly visits to Marble Bar to do scripture classes with the children. He got to know station manager at Mt Edgar Station, en route to the Bar, Jimmie 'Ringer' Edwards well. Jimmie's legendary status came from his surviving an extraordinarily cruel

wartime experience on the Burma Railway. For the crime of escaping his captors, Jimmie was punished with crucifixion on a tree. "He endured 63 hours and survived" said Tony.

Jimmie Edwards was the basis for the character Joe Harman in Nevil Shute's novel 'A Town like Alice'. Yet it was Tony Winter as patrol 'Padre' who witnessed what tragedy can inflict on such a strong man. Early one morning Tony was awakened by loud banging at the front door of the manse. Out front he found Jimmie Edwards roaring drunk.

A shooting tragedy had occurred at Mt Edgar station where no-one was allowed to carry a loaded gun. While spotlight shooting kangaroos, Edward's son 'Young Jim' had leaned his rifle against a vehicle; it had slipped and discharged, killing him instantly. It was the father who found the boy.

"Please bury my son," was Jimmie Edwards soulful request of his minister. "Yes, Jimmie. Of course, I will. Come in, Mate" answered Tony Winter.

His ministry was filled with vivid and moving experiences. Tony Winter still talks fondly of those years in the Pilbara.



The youth centre getting a fresh new look. Far left; happy volunteers are shown around the property. Below centre: there to help our farmers, NRMA volunteer David Scott

The list of chores included painting a shearer's quarters, a house and outbuildings and a dilapidated shed was demolished. ... At the end of the week, the gigantic youth centre was also painted

Caring for Cobar

On a wintery June week, 30 volunteers travelled from four states, towing caravans and converging on the town of Cobar, NSW. Their mission – to help the farmers.

This was the first group trip with volunteers from congregations for some time and included some of our most experienced volunteers - retirees who have been volunteering with Outback Links for years.

Usually travelling on their own or as couples, completing up to four placements on remote properties each year, they loved the idea of working as a larger team.

They were joined by three younger volunteers from the Royal Agricultural Society and three NRMA mechanics. This diverse group, aged between 19-80, worked well together to prove that age is just a mindset.

They all bonded around the campfire, exchanging



stories and telling many 'dad jokes.' The light-hearted banter was infectious and the farmers grinned, enjoying the festive atmosphere.

This trip would have been impossible without the support of our Cobar/Nyngan patrol minister, Rev Jo Smalbil and her husband Lou. As far as ministry goes, Jo and Lou are a package deal who have become much-loved members of the community, living, working and volunteering there for two years now.

Jo had identified three properties that would benefit greatly from a team of volunteers and we were there to back her up with willing helpers.

The list of chores included painting a shearer's quarters, a house and outbuildings and a dilapidated shed was demolished. An elderly woman's home was cleaned out and painted, the job being impossible for her to achieve on her own, given her physical health.

At the end of the week, the gigantic youth centre was also painted, much to one local's delight, the woman stopping to thank the volunteers with tears of gratitude in her eyes.





NRMA volunteers the quiet achievers

Meanwhile, in the partnership between Frontier Services and the NRMA, volunteer mechanics have been working away quietly in the background all year. Each month, mechanics head out to properties in NSW, repairing farm vehicles and machinery for farmers struggling with drought or other disadvantage. They've made trips to Walgett Shire, Cobar Shire and will next visit Dunedoo.

It was good to team up again this trip with George Whisker, David Scott and Michael Parnis. The three mechanics worked on the same properties as the other volunteers, under the bonnet of the vehicles needing help.

NRMA has a strong community service component that is reflected in their individual employee's willingness to volunteer with us. It's something they feel strongly about,

but find it hard to put into words. George Whisker offers as an explanation, "I just like helping out," he says, "it's easy for me to use my skills out here but it means so much to the farmers."

Over the week in Cobar, they got a 1980s truck running again after four years sitting idle in the shed. They also made repairs to two tractors, another truck and a ute, all now useful and working again.

But one of the best

moments was George showing one of the farmer's teenage grandson, Sam, around an old engine. Sam is interested in becoming a mechanic and George was more than happy to talk him through the basics. Who knows - this may be the thing that sets Sam off on his new career.

Four more NRMA trips are scheduled for the latter half of 2017.

Far left: NRMA mechanic George Whisker and Rev Jo Smalbil share a joke.

Volunteer spotlight

Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Volunteering

With a farm of her own, Liberty Nelson understands the challenges of working the land. Her eyes were opened to a different struggle on our Outback Links volunteer trip to Cobar.

Liberty is very engaged in her local community, always looking for opportunities to get involved and give back. She's a member of her local Country Women's Association and Royal Agricultural Society, which is how the opportunity to join the Outback Links trip came about.

"It's not an experience I've had before," Liberty said. "Outback Links sparked an interest in me, I wanted to understand more of the challenges farmers face across Australia."

Leaving her farm on the NSW South Coast behind for a week, Liberty helped paint an original shearer's quarters and also picked up the brushes again on the Cobar Youth Club in town.

Before Liberty arrived in Cobar, she wondered if the property owners would be overwhelmed by a group of volunteers showing up at their doorstep ready to work.

"I think the diversity of the age group has been beneficial because there are people in the group that have experience that the younger people don't have," Liberty said.

"It gives us the ability to engage with the property owner on all different levels because we've got three generations living and working together."

The cups of tea and cake seemed

endless as Liberty got to know all of the different volunteers and property owners, swapping stories and sharing experiences together.

"The biggest thing I've taken away from this experience is an understanding of different people from different walks of life," Liberty said. "It's not even just about the work that's done, it's about those friendships formed that are something to be treasured."

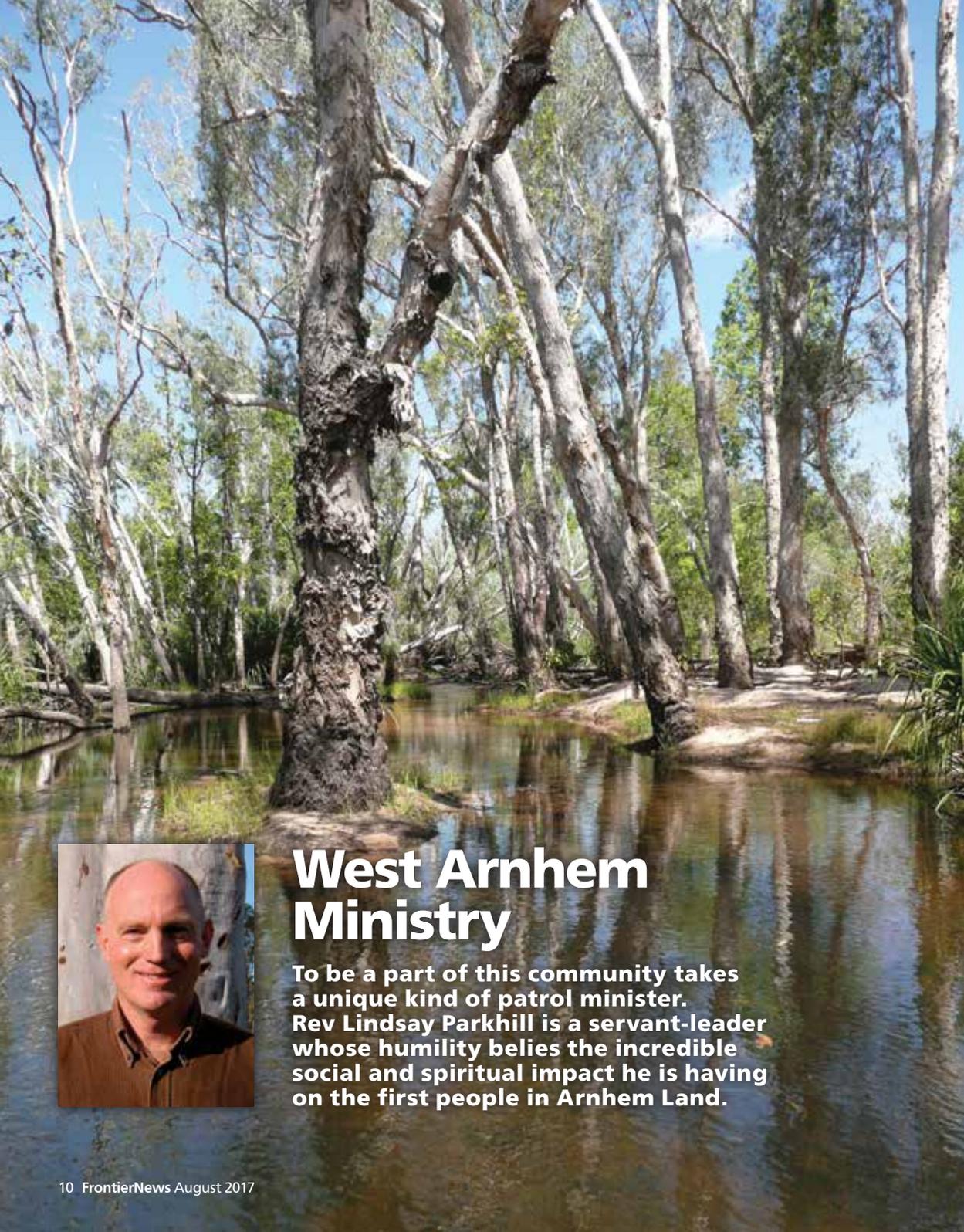
Liberty is passionate about getting younger people to join Outback Links because she wants others to have the same opportunity to give back. She and her fiancé, Rodney, are even considering going on a placement as part of their honeymoon!

"Now that I've found Outback Links, it's something I'd like to stay involved in," Liberty said. "There are so many more adventures I can have and many more people I can help."

Join our passionate group of volunteers, or donate to support our work: <https://frontierservices.org/>



Liberty Nelson loves giving back to the community



West Arnhem Ministry

To be a part of this community takes a unique kind of patrol minister. Rev Lindsay Parkhill is a servant-leader whose humility belies the incredible social and spiritual impact he is having on the first people in Arnhem Land.

Being in the middle of Kakadu National Park isn't a bad location to base your ministry, even if it's next to a uranium mine. The mine is closing in 2021 so it's good to be part of the conversation as Jabiru re-invents itself as the Western hub town for Arnhem Land.

I've been living here since 2008 with my wife Louise, who looks after 'Coordinate', the Northern Synod's Scripture translation initiative, overseeing the translation of the Word of God in twelve of the many Arnhemland languages.

The ministry area encompasses what is termed Western Arnhem Land, from the Blythe River in the East and Coburg Peninsular in the West. The three major settlements I visit are Maningrida, which is the second-biggest indigenous town in Australia, Warruwi Goulburn Island which celebrated its centenary last year, and Minjilang Croker Island which is at the tip of Coburg Peninsular.

The other focus of my ministry is the many homelands where the indigenous inhabitants are still living on their ancestral estates. We have three cross dedication ceremonies planned for this year during the Dry Season at Barrijokeng, Jimalowa and Mandedjkadja.

These ceremonies involve preparing candidates for baptism in the living waters of a local billabong or river, planting a cross to dedicate the area to Jesus and celebrating Communion with much jubilation. Christians far outnumber non-believers in Arnhemland and at the last cross dedication ceremony, 123 people were baptised at Yikarrakel. Check it out on Youtube! [search Yikarrakel and you'll find it]

Developing local church leadership



Three new pastors at Maningrida, Rosemary Jimalaya, George Gaymarania Pascoe and Sheila Kalakala with Rev Gary Lewis, Vice Chair UAICC
Left: Rev Lindsay Parkhill, Creek crossing on the road to Maningrida,

is the focus of my work as a support worker for the Northern Regional Council of the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress and a number of pastors have been commissioned and now minister to their congregations.

The prerequisites for a pastor, who is raised up by the congregation to minister to that congregation, are knowledge of the Basis of Union, Ethics and Sacraments. They go through a lengthy period of discernment. Last week three pastors were commissioned at Maningrida by Rev. Gary Lewis, the deputy chair of UAICC.

The ministry is full of surprises, what with hospital and prison visits, involvement as an Army Reserve Chaplain and fortnightly worship at Jabiru, there's never a dull moment. It keeps me on the street and close to people who love Jesus and those who are seeking to understand the mysteries of faith, life and death.

Rev Lindsay Parkhill

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Mixed pack of 10 Christmas cards (2 of each design)*
= \$12 including postage & handling

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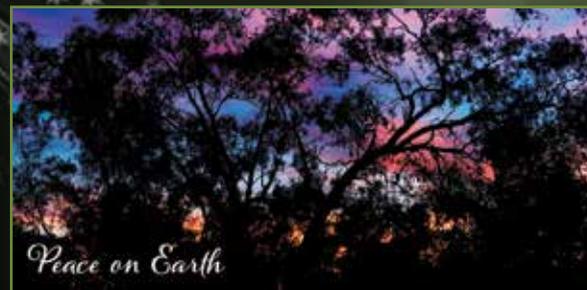
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Thank you for your feedback. Our Christmas cards are incredibly popular with our supporters. We have included a hand-picked variety of designs to send to your friends and loved ones.

Christmas cards mixed packs of 10. Five stunning designs of the Australian bush (2 of each design).

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the gift of hope this Christmas

Gift Cards

Each year Frontier Services patrol ministers and volunteers travel vast distances visiting hundreds of families living in the most remote places in Australia, providing both pastoral care and practical assistance which is so valued when times get tough.

This Christmas, we ask you to think about giving your loved ones a Frontier Services tax deductible donation gift card so that we can continue to send our Patrol Ministers and volunteers to be with those living in isolation.



\$25

A cuppa and a chat



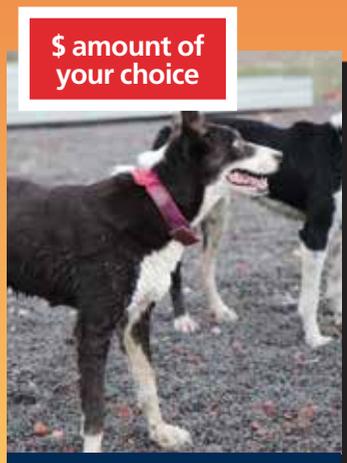

\$50

Mend a fence




\$100

Fill a tank

\$ amount of your choice

The gift of mateship


YES, I/we would like to purchase Gift Cards and/or make a donation to Frontier Services			
YOUR GIFT	QUANTITY	PRICE	TOTAL
A cuppa and a chat (\$25): Your gift will help a Patrol Minister call on a person living in isolation.		\$25	\$
Mend a Fence (\$50): Your gift can go towards the purchase of materials utilized by our volunteers to complete repairs to farm infrastructure.		\$50	\$
Fill a tank (\$100): Getting there is one of our biggest expenses. Your gift can help fill the tank of a Patrol Minister on the road allowing them to travel hundreds of kilometres at a time.		\$100	\$
The gift of mateship (minimum \$10): A gift of the amount of your choosing will ensure that the people of remote Australia know that they are not alone this Christmas.		\$ Minimum \$10	\$
<input type="checkbox"/> I would like to include a donation to help the people of remote Australia. (Note: donations of \$2 and over are tax deductible.)			\$
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Credit card – please fill in details below

Credit card – please debit Visa Mastercard Amex

Name on Card _____

Signature _____

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A close-up photograph of a person's hand using wooden tongs to turn sausages on a metal grill. The grill is positioned over a fire of burning logs. The sausages are golden brown and sizzling. The background is slightly blurred, showing more sausages on the grill and the person's arm.

Can you smell those sausages sizzling?

Register your BBQ today at www.greatoutbackbbq.com.au and receive a host pack with everything you need for your BBQ

The Great
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