

NOVEMBER 2019

# FrontierNews

Showing up  
and showing  
we care



**Frontier  
Services**

Standing with  
people in the bush



## A message from Jannine

As we approach Christmas, a time when we're getting together with our families, those in the bush are reminded of how tough living in isolation can be.

Many are still recovering from the aftermath of bushfires or floods earlier this year. And they're doing this on top of years of severe financial and emotional hardship from prolonged drought. A drought that's still not letting up in large parts of Australia.

Indeed, it's become so dry in some places that people are running out of drinking water and entire communities are facing costs upwards of \$2 million per month just to supply their town.

These people need to know that they're not alone, that there are people who care and people who are willing to give them a hand up.

On page 4, we introduce you to Pastor Cain Hartigan who's been working to connect people and communities in our Cunnamulla-Burke & Wills Remote Area.

Our incredible Bush Chaplains are working hard to build and maintain support networks in our remote communities. They are our eyes and ears

on the ground so we can understand the needs in their respective Remote Areas and deploy volunteers as required.

To this end, we teamed up with the NRMA to bring skilled mechanics to the town of Tottenham. Our wonderful volunteers repaired and maintained vehicles essential to harvesting and mustering - ensuring farmers can continue to stay on their properties. As you will read in this edition of Frontier News, it gave the townspeople renewed hope that they weren't alone and they haven't been forgotten.

### **Thank you for your support.**

The support you've shown people in the bush this year warms my heart. You've brought helping hands and hope to those doing it tough by volunteering with us, hosting a Great Outback BBQ and sharing their stories. Your support has given them strength. And equally important, you've given them a voice. **Thank you.**

**Jannine Jackson**  
National Director





Volunteer Gowan Cook (right) lends his experience driving tractors to help with earthworks at farmer Ben Mason's property in Mitchell, Queensland

## Show people in the Outback that there are people who care

- For as little as \$25 you can give the gift of a cuppa and a chat with one of our Bush Chaplains to someone living in isolation. Go to page 18 for our selection of gift cards.
- **Volunteer** with us! Sign up and lend a hand at [frontierservices.org/volunteer](http://frontierservices.org/volunteer)



**Frontier Services**  
Standing with people in the bush

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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.

# When our Bush Chaplains arrive at the gate

Pastor Cain Hartigan and his wife Jacki have taken on the reins of our Cunnamulla-Burke & Wills Remote Area. We hope you'll welcome them into your homes for a cuppa and a chat the next time they arrive at your gate.

We recently caught up with Cain to understand the current needs of people in his Remote Area. Rural communities are losing key services such as banks, schools and medical practices because of the ongoing drought<sup>1</sup>. A drought that's put tremendous strain on farming families.

Many of our farmers have endured several years without an income, all while dealing with a seemingly never-ending cycle of hand-feeding their animals, paying ever-increasing prices for feed and culling their livestock. It's heartbreaking and exhausting.

## ...she fell into Jacki's arms sobbing...

As we sat by the campfire, Cain reflected on one of the earliest visits he and Jacki made when they hit the road. They had been referred to a different station, and were on their way there, when they passed a property gate with no name or identification.

"We saw about 20 goats standing on top of some old cars, which gave us a laugh, but we kept driving," Cain recalled. "Then this feeling crept in that told me we needed to turn around, so we did."





Arriving at the property, they unlocked the gate and drove down the dusty driveway. A lady approached when they got out of the car. As they introduced themselves, she fell onto Jacki's arms sobbing with tears, saying, "I thought we had been forgotten. Nobody has ever visited us before."

## It gave them hope that people do care

We learned that she and her husband had been in drought for ten years. They were struggling to feed their animals and were dealing with the trauma of destocking. But that wasn't all. The lady recently had surgery for throat cancer and was also the primary carer for her husband.

It is hard to imagine how anyone can cope with this much hardship whilst living in isolation. We are so grateful our Bush Chaplain was there for them to provide a listening ear.

Cain and Jacki spent a few hours to allow her to talk about her concerns. They promised she would not be forgotten and said they would visit again soon.

A fortnight later, Cain and Jacki returned. Their visit could not have come at a better time. Sharing stories over cake and morning tea, the husband revealed to Cain how close he was to taking his own life. But their visit gave him hope that people do care.

Before leaving, they handed the couple a food voucher for the local grocery shop. There were tears of appreciation. Cain and Jacki continue to stay in regular contact with the couple.

*Inset (left to right): Rev David Ellis (McKay Remote Area) and Pastors Cain Hartigan and Chris Guise (Kennedy Remote Area).*



### References:

1. Edwards, B., Gray, M. and Hunter, B. (2018), 'Social and economic impacts of drought on farm families and rural communities', Australian Institute of Family Studies

## You can bring hope to people in isolation

When times get tough in the bush, people can feel extremely lonely and isolated. But you can make a real difference by purchasing one of our Gift of Hope cards. For as little as \$25, you can gift a cuppa and a chat with a Bush Chaplain to someone living in remote Australia. Go to page 18 and 19 for our order form.

# Continuing our Birdsville legacy

Located 1,600km west of Brisbane and 11km north of the Queensland-South Australian border, Birdsville is a town we have strong historical links with.

In 1923, the Australian Inland Mission (as we were previously known) established the state's first mission hostel in Birdsville, later replacing it with a purpose-built hospital in 1937. When fire destroyed the building in 1951, construction of a new hospital commenced at the start of 1952, with the new hospital opening on 5 August 1953.

Today, the hospital is a museum offering visitors a glimpse into what it was like for medical personnel to treat patients in the most arid of desert climates. We were so lucky to be able to pay a visit and share these photos with you.

## The Birdsville Races

From its humble beginnings in the early 1880s, the Birdsville Races has grown to become an iconic Australian event that attracts more than 6,000 visitors by air and land every September.

We took this opportunity to make local connections, introduce our new Bush Chaplain to the community and remind people that we're here for them and that we care.

"We think it's vital for people in remote Australia to be able to gather over an event like this," said our Bush Chaplain, Pastor Cain Hartigan. "It's good for their mental health because people can see fresh faces, hear different stories and get some reprieve from the hardships of their day to day."





*You can make a difference by visiting rural and regional towns across Australia. Spend some money at the local store, fill up your tank or stop by for lunch and a cuppa at the town café. And don't forget to say hello to the locals! Spending a little time and a little cash out bush can make a big difference.*

**“We think it’s vital for people in remote Australia to be able to gather over an event like this.”**





# Teaming up for Tottenham

In September we teamed up with the NRMA to bring skilled volunteers to farmers in north-western New South Wales. By the end of the week, locals had renewed hope that they weren't alone; that there are people who care.





Farmers in and around the township of Tottenham in north-western New South Wales are facing their fifth year of drought. There are families that have four generations of farming behind them. Many hold hope that their children will be the next generation to carry on the tradition. The Mills family were grateful for the practical care our volunteers provided.

*Pictured below:*

*Phil and Melinda Mills with their two children and NRMA volunteers Jonathan Santos (left) and Robyn Gilmore (far right).*

**"A huge thank  
you to Jono and Robyn  
for their wonderful support.  
It's very much appreciated  
and helps immensely,  
mentally, to feel loved,  
cared for and not forgotten  
in the drought."**

Melinda



With the day to day demands on the farm, we understand many jobs go on the back burner. But with a couple of our skilled volunteers on hand, some of these tasks were finally ticked off the to-do-list!

*Inset:  
NRMA volunteers George  
El Amal and Colin Stanzione  
replacing the front shock  
absorbers on a ute.*

**"...it was  
great to see some of  
the parts that have been  
sitting in the shed for the past  
three years finally get put into  
the vehicles that needed them.  
When you lose over half the week  
to animal feeding it gets put on  
the back of the list of priorities.  
Thanks again for your help."**

Jeff



The effect of drought extends beyond the farm. It can have tremendous impact on people's emotional and mental health, too. And many farmers are doing it tough in isolation. But having our incredible NRMA volunteers and our wonderful Bush Chaplain, Rev Phill Matthews on site gave them some much-needed respite and company.

**"Thank you  
to Frontier Services  
Outback Links and NRMA for  
supporting farmers in drought.  
We hosted an awesome crew who  
helped get some of our farm  
vehicles up to scratch with great  
mechanics and the Bush Chaplain  
who had us rolling with laughter.  
A well-needed morale boost."**

Kath

### **Our farmers need your help – Can you volunteer?**

We can't make it rain, but you can bring helping hands and hope to our farmers and their families. For information about volunteering, including how to get started, please visit [\*\*frontierservices.org/volunteer\*\*](https://frontierservices.org/volunteer)

Please help us spread the word and let others know about our Outback Links volunteering program. Thank you!







# We're always ready to help

[mynrma.com.au](http://mynrma.com.au)





# Fighter pilot survives three wars to become Bush Chaplain

Rev Robert MacIntosh served as a fighter pilot in the Royal Australian Air Force in Korea, Malaysia and Vietnam. He left a self-described agnostic and came back a Christian.



After retiring from the RAAF and with the support of his wife Jenny, Rob sought out his religious vocation, later joining Frontier Services as Bush Chaplain in Meekatharra, Western Australia. The pair commenced in 1985 and for the next nine years, they were the face of our Murchison Remote Area.

Reflecting on her conversations with Rob, National Director Jannine Jackson said, "I couldn't believe his incredible life journey and how much Rob had experienced. He was a man of great compassion."

With an area of 460,000 square kilometres, Rob and Jenny used a Cessna plane to cover the distances between 150 stations, 12 mines and conduct services at six churches. Jenny learned to fly, too, and accompanied Rob everywhere across the Murchison.

Typical, Rob recalled, was landing the Cessna in the red dust at an isolated station. The lady of the house wouldn't have seen another woman for over six months! As soon as she saw Jenny her face would light up and she'd say, *"Come in! Come in! Welcome! I'll just pop the kettle on for a cuppa!"*

**Vale Rev Robert (Rob) MacIntosh AFC OAM MID**

**12 March 1929 – 3 September 2019**

# In your words

Our readers wanted to show some love to families doing it tough out bush. Here, we share some words of encouragement. To those living in remote Australia, please know that you are not alone. We're standing with you!

*"As a retired farmer I understand the pressures you are living with. I pray that you will soon get some rain. In the interim, I hope the help of Outback Links and Bush Chaplains will keep your spirits up."*

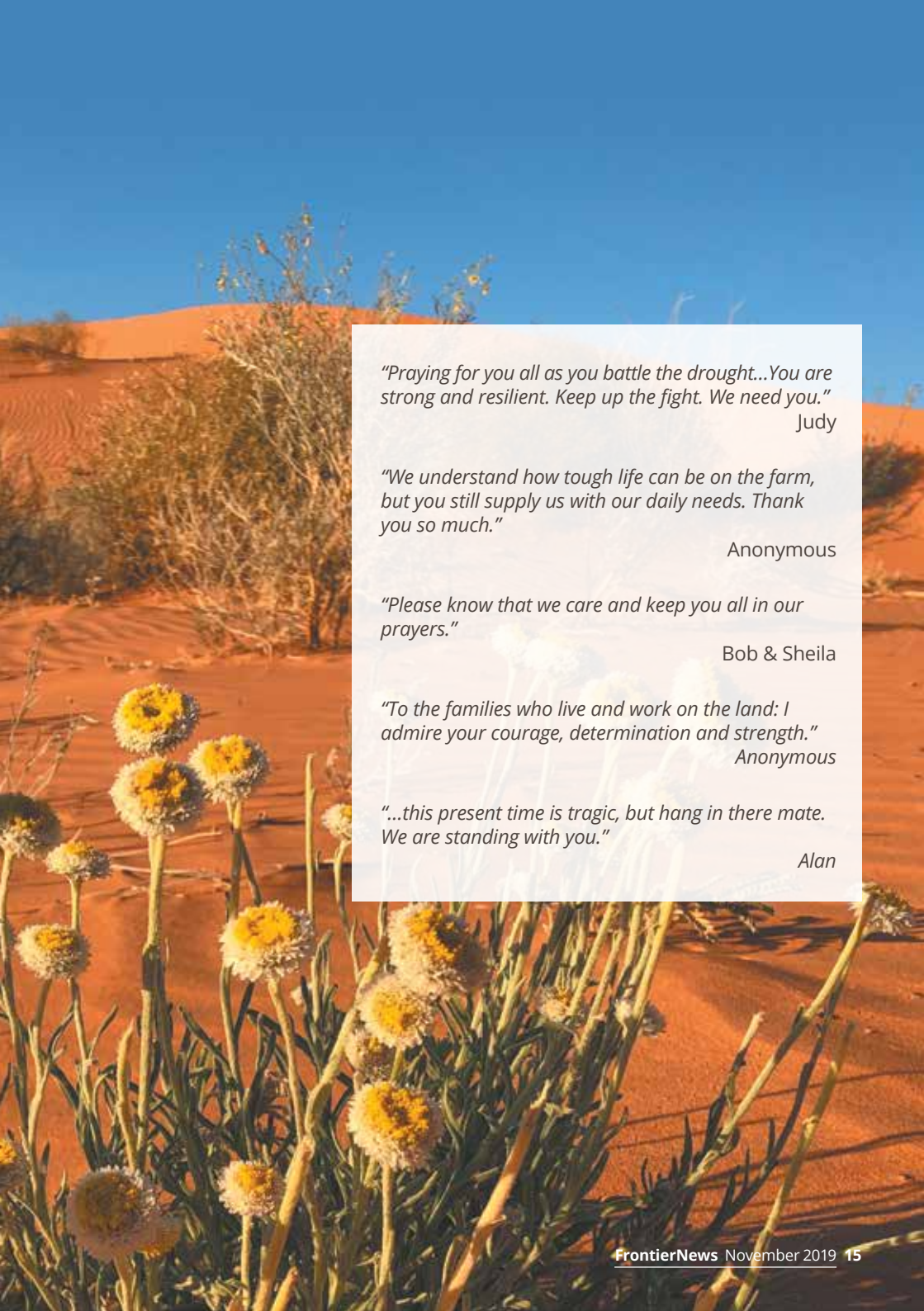
Rosalie

*"My thoughts and prayers are with you ...I have an abiding love of the bush and a great regard for you people who continue to do such wonderful work on our beautiful land."*

Anne

*"I admire all families who live in remote areas of Australia. You are the backbone of this wonderful country. You endure so much...we can't imagine the heartache you experience. Be assured there are people who care."*

Anonymous



*"Praying for you all as you battle the drought...You are strong and resilient. Keep up the fight. We need you."*  
Judy

*"We understand how tough life can be on the farm, but you still supply us with our daily needs. Thank you so much."*  
Anonymous

*"Please know that we care and keep you all in our prayers."*  
Bob & Sheila

*"To the families who live and work on the land: I admire your courage, determination and strength."*  
Anonymous

*"...this present time is tragic, but hang in there mate. We are standing with you."*  
Alan



# 2019 Christmas Cards

**Limited stock available! Last orders taken on Friday, 29 November 2019**

Our Christmas cards often sell out. This is a strictly limited print run, so we encourage you to order early.

This year's designs celebrate our Aussie Farmers. We hope you love this year's cards as much as we do. Each pack contains 10 cards, with two of each design.





# YES, I/we would like to purchase 2019 Christmas Cards\* and/or make a donation to Frontier Services

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

	NUMBER OF PACKS	PRICE PER PACK	TOTAL
<b>MY ORDER</b> <b>(1-9 PACKS)</b>		<b>\$12</b> (including P&H)	\$
<b>BULK ORDER</b> <b>(10+ PACKS)</b>	<b>Contact us for bulk orders</b> <b>E fsfundraising@frontierservices.org or T 1300 787 247</b>		
I would like to include a donation to help the people of remote Australia. (Note: donations of \$2 and over are tax deductible.)			\$
*Note: Last orders taken on Friday, 29 November 2019		<b>TOTAL</b>	\$

## PLEASE ENSURE YOU COMPLETE YOUR ADDRESS DETAILS

☐ Mr ☐ Mrs ☐ Miss ☐ Ms ☐ Dr ☐ Rev PLEASE TICK

Name

Address (please print)

State

Postcode

Daytime Telephone

Mobile

Date

/   /

### I/WE WISH TO PAY BY

☐ Cheque / Money Order (payable to **Frontier Services**)

☐ Credit Card: Please debit my ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Amex

Name on Card

Signature

Card number

Expiry Date

/

NOV19

**Please complete this order form and send via:**

**Post Frontier Services, PO Box 3424, Parramatta NSW 2124**

**Email fsfundraising@frontierservices.org**

Alternatively, please call us on 1300 787 247 to place an order over the phone.



# The Gift of Hope this Christmas

## The Gift that Gives Twice!

Each year, our incredible Bush Chaplains and Outback Links volunteers travel vast distances to visit hundreds of families living in the most remote places of Australia to provide practical and pastoral care when it's needed most.

This Christmas, you can help make someone's life in the bush a little easier. Simply choose the way you would like to help, purchase one or more of our tax-deductible Gift of Hope cards and gift it to a loved one, knowing you're making a real difference to the lives of people living in Outback Australia.

**\$25**



A cuppa and a chat



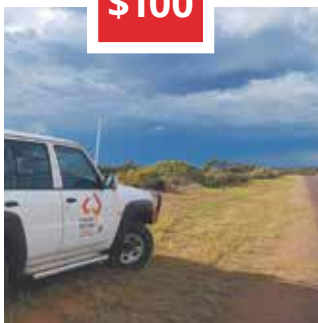
**\$50**



Mend a fence

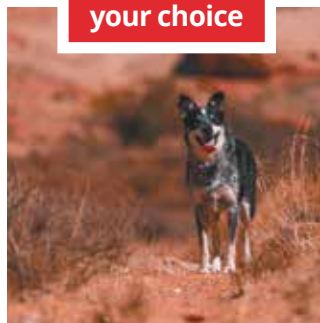


**\$100**



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
<b>A cuppa and a chat (\$25):</b> Isolation is one of the hardest things to endure and your gift supports our Bush Chaplains to lend a listening ear when needed.		\$25	\$
<b>Mend a fence (\$50):</b> Practical support is often what's needed most and your gift allows our skilled volunteers to complete repairs and maintenance on farming stations.		\$50	\$
<b>Fill a tank (\$100):</b> Our Bush Chaplains spend much of their time travelling to visit people in isolation. Your gift helps to keep them on the road so they can be where they are needed most.		\$100	\$
<b>The gift of mateship (Gift of your choosing):</b> Show people doing it tough in the bush this Christmas that they're not alone by giving the gift of mateship. Every amount helps, but gifts over \$10 means we can cover our costs.		\$ 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.)			\$
<b>TOTAL \$</b>			\$

**NOTE:** All orders must be placed by Friday, 6 December 2019.

Cards are blank on the inside so you can personalise them before giving to family and friends.

**Please complete this order form and send via:**

## Post

Frontier Services  
PO Box 3424,  
Parramatta NSW 2124

## Email

fsfundraising@frontierservices.org

Alternatively, please call us on  
1300 787 247 to place an order  
over the phone.



**Frontier  
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Standing with  
people in the bush

## PLEASE ENSURE YOU COMPLETE YOUR ADDRESS DETAILS

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/  
Dr/Rev PLEASE PRINT

Address

Postcode

Phone / Mobile

## I/WE WISH TO PAY BY

☐

Cheque/Money Order (payable to Frontier Services)

☐

Credit card – please fill in details below

Credit card – please debit ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Amex

Name on Card

Signature

Card number

Expiry Date

NOV19

*The Great*  
**OUTBACK  
BBQ**



Frontier Services



**Even if you missed  
September you can still join  
the fun this summer and  
host a Great Outback BBQ in  
support of Aussie Farmers**

**Register online: Visit [greatoutbackbbq.com.au](http://greatoutbackbbq.com.au)**