

MAY 2022

FrontierNews

*"My heart
belongs in
the country"*



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



Frontier Services is an agency
of Uniting Church in Australia

A message from Jannine



It almost takes my breath away to realise how far into 2022 we have already come. As you all know, the journey so far has not been easy for any of us, especially for our friends in rural and remote Australia, who have struggled with darkness and despair of natural disasters, and compounded by loneliness and isolation.

But we are here now. And none of this would have been possible without the constant help and support of our loved ones. For those on far-flung cattle stations, properties and in Australia's most isolated towns, our Bush Chaplains and Outback Links volunteers have been standing by their side, taking their hand and helping them place one foot in front of the other, on the road to rebuilding and recovery.

As I sit and ponder on what lays ahead of us over the next few years, it suddenly dawned on me that not a lot has changed since we first began more than 100 years ago.

Our Bush Chaplains, with hearts of gold, are still the very thread that binds the fabric of our communities together. They join in during moments of joy and sorrow, and provide compassion and support to some of our most vulnerable communities during episodes of personal upheaval as well as disasters on a national scale. That familiar face by their side has not changed one bit.

We have a dream to place one Bush Chaplain in every remote town, so that people can have access to the incredible and life-changing support that they bring. I feel personally privileged to work with them and they inspire me every day.

Wouldn't it be remarkable to share this same level of love and support with everyone that needs a beautiful ray of hope?

Looking back, the history of Frontier Services has witnessed some outstanding and courageous women setting out to do things that few dreamt of. Our Bush Nurses travelled far and wide – from sweltering Oodnadatta to the wilderness of Cloncurry and the dusty plains of Birdsville. These incredibly strong women became part of building Frontier Services, and it is great to reflect on the amazing difference that our female Bush Chaplains are making across communities in rural and remote parts of the country as we recognise International Women's Day. Our Bush Chaplains like Pastor Julia Lennon continue to work with Traditional Owners, and lead by example on how communities and relationships between First and Second Peoples are built.

We have a dream to show up every time we are needed. So no call goes unanswered. There is an increasing demand for us to fill the gaps in the disaster recovery framework around communities that have been ravaged by natural disasters. We are in it for the long haul, staying behind when everyone else has left. Rebuilding lives and communities doesn't take days or months. It takes years of dedication and unfailing support.

We look back and reflect on all the lives that we have been able to touch over decades. Deep down, we are still the same. And it is now more than ever that we continue to do what is essential.

We stand with people in the bush.

Jannine Jackson
National Director

Introducing Pastor Michael Chapman:

What started as casual banter became a job offer too unique to turn down. Pastor Michael Chapman had been chatting with his friend Rev. Garry Hardingham when Garry asked him if he wanted to be the next Flying Bush Chaplain in the Carpentaria-McKay Remote Area of Queensland, a role with a 100-year-old legacy.

Continued...



How you can help bush communities right now:

- ✓ Make a tax-deductible gift by completing the self-sealing envelope in this magazine, or donate online at frontierservices.org/donate
- ✓ Register to volunteer at frontierservices.org/outback-links and to check out our current volunteering opportunities in areas of most need.



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.

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The job came with its own set of privileges. The greatest one to Pastor Michael was connecting with people living in one of Australia's most rural and remote corners, and being able to listen to their most intimate stories of despair, dejection and heartbreak and share their happiness too. What's more, the job even came with its own set of wings!

Based in Cloncurry, the birthplace of the Royal Flying Doctor Service, this Bush Chaplaincy has been the only continuous service in the region since 1922, as other essential services have withdrawn from the Outback.

Garry, who held the role two decades ago and is currently the Presbytery Minister for Rural and Indigenous Engagement in the Carpentaria Presbytery, says he hand-picked Michael for the job because "he is a man with a heart." And that says a lot about our Bush Chaplains, who provide a non-judgmental ear to listen to the needs and concerns of people in isolated communities. They are often first responders in times of personal

or community disasters. As trusted confidants, they bring fellowship and a sense of connection.

Michael and his wife Di are grateful for being given a chance to make a real difference in the lives of people who live across rural and remote Australia.

"We believe we have been called here, so our hearts are in it," says Michael, while Di adds, "We have taken up a challenge that takes a fair bit of faith from us. This role is about delivering hope to people. We turn up on their darkest day, and try to create a sliver of sunshine."

Most farmers in the Carpentaria-McKay Remote Area have battled through seven or eight years of drought, only to have devastating floods and cyclones tear down whatever stood in their path. Many have lost everything – homes, buildings, fences, property, crops, stock and their hope. Helped by Frontier Services' supporters, Bush Chaplains bring farmers hope, connect with them in their isolation and provide much-needed encouragement and human connection.

"Because of the support we receive, we can visit people on remote stations and provide that listening ear. It will give us the means to help with overdue power bills, give kids the chance to attend school camps or assist with access to medical services," Michael points out.

To keep just one Bush Chaplain on the road for 12 months, we need to raise an average of \$130,000 per year. Our Bush Chaplains need your gift today to keep them on the road and in the air.



Rev. Garry Hardingham alongside the Cessna on the runway

A heartfelt letter from Pastor Michael to our supporters

11.03.2022

I'm just coming to the end of my third week here as the new Carpentaria-McKay Remote Bush Chaplain and let me say, Cloncurry gets very hot!

Obviously I've only begun my journey into learning how to fly a Cessna 182 but I'm embracing and enjoying the challenge. My lovely wife, as usual, has thrown herself into the community, getting to know people and volunteering to help out where she can.

This week I attended two funerals here in Cloncurry. The first funeral was led by Garry (Rev. Hardingham), who returned at the family's request because of their connection made with him over many years. The second funeral was for a loved one of a beautiful Indigenous family from Cloncurry. It was my privilege and honour to lead this funeral.

Who would conduct these funerals if the Bush Chaplains weren't here? These two funerals were in Cloncurry, but I better get on with learning how to fly because the next funeral or baptism or wedding might be in Karumba or Normanton or Boulia or Birdsville or any other remote Western Queensland town, or on some remote cattle station that will require me to fly in onto their bush airstrip.

Conducting services and ceremonies is only one, small part of the role but it's an important part. We are so thankful for all the generous support given to make this work possible. I feel like we are on the edge of an incredible whirlpool of adventure and wonderful works of God that are only beginning to unfold.

Gratefully yours,
Michael Chapman
Frontier Services' Bush Chaplain,
Carpentaria-McKay Remote Area QLD



Michael and his wife Di

As the wave of back-to-back disasters sweep across the country, our Bush Chaplains are on the ground, involved in many ways and capacities to help people deal with the shock and the losses. Our Outback Links volunteers are out there standing with people undergoing hardships.

Disasters have hit us hard too. If you can, please donate to support our disaster response or volunteer with us. Please give us a call on 1300 787 247 to know how you can help.



Farewells

Rev. David Ellis, Carpentaria-McKay Remote Area, QLD

After carrying John Flynn's Mantle of Safety around the Carpentaria-McKay Remote Area for a number of years, it was time for Rev. David Ellis to move on. David, who took to the roads as well as the sky with equal ease, leaves very large shoes to fill. As Flying Bush Chaplain, David and his wife Janette covered vast distances in the remote Carpentaria-McKay region, travelling from one far-flung cattle station to another, armed with words of wisdom, care, encouragement and an aeroplane! During his time with Frontier Services, David visited hundreds of individuals, couples and families living on isolated properties, extending practical, pastoral and spiritual support. A popular community figure, he will be missed by one and all.

Pastor Cain Hartigan, Cunnamulla-Burke & Wills Remote Area, QLD

Known for his friendly and exuberant nature, Cain was widely admired. The epitome of country town humour and wit, Cain doubled up as the Police Chaplain for the Cunnamulla region, which increased his ministry's outreach in the community. Working closely with our Outback Links team, Cain's impact was far-reaching in the community and helped Frontier Services touch the lives of the vulnerable and elderly who needed our care and support.

Pastor Chris Guise, Kennedy Remote Area, QLD

Always up for a good yarn, Chris was committed to the welfare of people in his patch. Going beyond practical help and support, Chris provided hours of meaningful and ongoing pastoral care to couples and individuals in the Kennedy Remote Area. He was the anchor of support for many, and even helped people ease back into community life after serving time. Having developed a close connection with local primary health networks, Chris helped ensure people in his communities always had access to the support they needed. Stopping by for a cuppa and a chat, Chris was always welcoming people in for face-to-face counselling as well as phone support to people seeking assistance.

David, Cain and Chris will all be very much missed. The Frontier Services family sincerely thanks them for their service and wishes them well in their next endeavours. Go well gentleman!

David, Cain and Chris with National Director, Jannine Jackson



Veronica's heart for connection



In the last edition of Frontier News, we bid fond farewell to our former Bush Chaplain Rev. Rowena Harris who retired from her placement in the High Country Remote Area in Victoria. Rowena was loved across her community for being a pillar of strength and kindness for those who had experienced some of Australia's worst natural disasters in history.

Rev. Veronica Bradley, our new Bush Chaplain in Prom Country Remote Area, tells us that it was Rowena's trailblazing in remote area ministry as a single woman that inspired her to take up a similar role. As we speak with Veronica, she tells us more about her deep-rooted connection with communities that live on the fringe and the people who do it tough.

What is your greatest inspiration for taking up this new role?

My association with Frontier Services began as a heart longing in my time at college. I was inspired by Rowena's role in Swifts Creek. In my heart, I feel drawn to communities that are living through challenges. People who live elsewhere take so many things in life for granted. I have a heart for communities that can no longer afford to gather in a sacred place where all the big moments in life can be celebrated.

I am also a volunteer Police Chaplain and so I am able to connect with local people and find ways to support them, as they deal with their joys and struggles. Sometimes that involves the trauma of responding during the worst experiences of people's lives – families going through the trauma of drownings, shark attacks, bush fires, search and rescue events and more.

What sets you up for success as a Bush Chaplain?

My ability to connect with people outside of the church. I have noticed a great hunger for someone to connect pastorally to people in communities I serve. Local Community Centres have been delighted with the chaplaincy support and are already lining up people for me to visit, who are falling through gaps in services or waiting for mental health services to be set up.

Tell us about some of your work in the recent months.

My day consists of travelling around the most beautiful parts of the country you could imagine. In each community I am trying to build relationships with community organisations and individual people. One connection leads to another and I never know how the day might unfold. I also try to incorporate police chaplaincy and pastoral care with visits to different areas. This helps me to get to know people.

We placed three new Bush Chaplains this year, because of supporters like you. Your kind donation now can help us keep increasing our team to comfort, connect and encourage more people in Australia's most isolated rural and remote areas.

National Reconciliation Week 2022

Be Brave. Make Change.

Rev. Lindsay Parkhill
West Arnhem Remote
Area, NT. His ministry
lies in the heart of
beautiful Kakadu
National Park and his
work is almost wholly
with the First Peoples of Arnhem Land.



Australians are on a journey of reconciliation between the indigenous inhabitants of this country – with its wealth of tradition and culture. There was a Spirit in the land long before and each time we Acknowledge Country we acknowledge the Spirit of a people that has lived here in this continent and islands for maybe 60,000 years. The preamble of the Uniting Church constitution reflects this too.

The same principles apply in Reconciliation Week. Twenty-five years ago, the Report of the National Enquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families was published. Why have all its recommendations not been implemented? The prison population is overwhelmingly indigenous in the Northern Territory. Why is this so? The macro level of inequality is obvious, but it is in the micro level that reconciliation really counts. That's where change starts, building relationships and maintaining them at a community level. Making generational change. What is your reconciliation action plan? How do you respect the Spirit in the land and its original peoples?

"Be brave, make change" is the slogan for Reconciliation Week 2022. How are you bravely making change between First and Second Peoples in your community?

Rev. Dr. Chris Budden
Retired Uniting Church
Minister. Former
Board Advisor, Frontier
Services. Resource
worker for Uniting
Aboriginal and Islander
Christian Congress.



How does a nation build a healthy community when it began its life in the invasion of another people's land, dispossessing them from the foundation of their economy, culture and language, family, and spirituality, and creating ongoing marginalisation?

I think the Week of Reconciliation brings to our attention the fact that there is much more work to be done, much inequality to be tackled, and real reparation to be sorted out. It challenges us to understand that there can be no reconciliation while we refuse to honour ongoing sovereignty, the need for people to carry out their obligations to land, and the need to close the gap in education, employment, housing and imprisonment rates.

This year we are challenged to have the courage to be brave (and honest), and to make real change; change that is not simply about Second People's feeling better about themselves, but change – voice to parliament, truth-telling, treaty – that makes a real difference. There is hope in this dialogue as we move forward in a way that hears all sides of the story and acknowledges our history. Together if we are brave we can make a change.

*Background artwork: Family community connection.
By Pastor Julia Lennon*



Bobbie's on a mission

At the age of 34, when Bobbie Perkins travelled halfway around the world from America to Australia to make it her new home, she knew deep inside this was going to be an exciting ride! Since then, while the earth has made 52 trips around the sun, Bobbie has travelled thousands of kilometres around the great Outback to keep her connection with the land alive and kicking.

Now 85, Bobbie has had a long association with Frontier Services, being one of our oldest and most active volunteers on the ground. A proud Bobbie tells us that after her second husband passed away, she decided to take up driving lessons in a 4WD, one day after her 69th birthday. And she has never looked back. Since her first placement as an Outback Links volunteer in 2006, Bobbie completed 32 placements, before taking a hiatus when she developed some pressing health concerns. Now, Bobbie is back and raring to go once again. She will soon be joining

a group of volunteers making their way to Oodnadatta in South Australia for a series of jobs that need to be completed before the town gets its first-ever taste of clean drinking water.

Bobbie tells us, "After my second husband passed away, I asked "Lord, what do you want me to do now?" Having travelled extensively around rural and remote Australia during both her previous marriages, Bobbie decided it was now time for her to make the best use of her familiarity with the land and make a difference in the lives of people living in far-flung cattle stations.

"I had done a volunteering trip with Frontier Services back in 1999 to Kununurra in WA – when I was ready to go back again, I contacted the Outback Links team and received my first solo placement in February 2006," says Bobbie. "Though I had been a city girl all my life, my heart belonged in the country. I wanted to help the women on the

stations with house work and everyday chores. I learnt so much and I did things that I never knew I could do. I saw first-hand the difference it made to their lives.”

Every bit of help goes a long way on these remote properties, where the women are working day and night to support their husbands, take care of the kids, manage the house and look after the animals. And all this while battling nature's fury in the form of never-ending drought, bushfires and floods!

To all our aspiring volunteers, Bobbie has an inspiring message. She says, “Helping with daily chores can free up the lady of the station to pursue other important things. It takes a lot of pressure off them, so that they can turn their attention to the books,

learn new skills, or just be able to help their husbands out on the land. I even helped to look after the animals – the working dogs, goats and the chooks and even watered the grass. These small gestures help the family take much-needed respite or just attend to a family emergency.”



All roads lead to Oodnadatta

Bush Chaplain Rev. Sunil Kadaparambil in Oodnadatta.



Having passed by this little remote town about 1,000 kms north of Adelaide several times during her travels across the Outback, Bobbie is excited to make her way back there. This time she'll stay on for a week as a member of our Outback Links team, assisting with a

major project. Oodnadatta has for years been supplied with undrinkable bore water, and residents are crying out for a fresh water supply as a priority. Soon, SA Water will begin the construction of a new water treatment facility which should be delivering clean, safe drinking water to the town before the end of 2022. Our Outback Links volunteers are helping clean up the town and doing the repair work necessary for SA Water to get started.

Bobbie will fuel the team with her culinary skills. She also plans to come laden with scrumptious home-made fudges for everyone to enjoy. She knows that after a long day at work, all the volunteers like her would enjoy a good meal and great company before turning in for the night under the starry skies of Oodnadatta.

Frontier Services Bush Chaplain Pastor Julia Lennon is placed in the Oodnadatta Remote Area, and covers the vast distance of the APY Lands (Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara) that are home to over 2,300 First Nations People, the Traditional Owners of this land. Get in touch with our friendly Outback Links team online at frontierservices.org/volunteering-to-change-lives or give us a call on 1300 787 247 if you'd like to change lives in the bush.

International Women's Day

A word from our female Bush Chaplains

They are strong. They are brave. They are compassionate. They are innovative. And they are rooted to the land. That's just a few of the qualities that our female Bush Chaplains have, as they head out on the open roads to connect with people in their patch. Our female Bush Chaplains are warmly welcomed, accepted, embraced, and lauded for their spirit and resilience. We celebrated International Women's Day this year (March 8) by chatting with our three female Bush Chaplains on what motivates them in their roles.

Rev. Marian Bisset from the High Country Remote Area in Victoria

On the occasion of International Women's Day, I think of the strong women's voices from around the world today, who fight and advocate for all voices to be heard and respected, who call for equal access to education and health, food and housing. Jesus calls upon us to stand up and walk alongside those who are vulnerable. As I commence my role as a Bush Chaplain in the High Country Remote Area, I am motivated to stand alongside those that are isolated because of geographical locations, health, or financial constraints.

Having three female Bush Chaplains at Frontier Services across different locations is fantastic. We are all able to touch the lives of those we encounter as ministers. I am looking forward to being in an area which is challenging in the ruggedness, the demands of the climate and the trauma which can come from the climate extremes. The farming community here is resilient and strong. I am looking forward to learning about their ways of life, being immersed in a new culture and being part of the wider community.



Rev. Veronica Bradley from the Prom Country Remote Area in Victoria

For me International Women's Day is about celebrating the achievements of women who've come from places where they have had to struggle to get education, opportunities and even just to survive. It is a day for women to celebrate other women who are trying to overcome adversities and are struggling to make their communities and the world a better place.

As a female Bush Chaplain, I have been able to successfully stand beside both men and women. When I think of the people I encounter as a Bush Chaplain, they embody the kind of resilience Nelson Mandela described when he said, "The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall." Resilience comes from getting back up on your feet every time you fall. And that is an incredible quality I see in everyday women (and men) in rural and remote Australia.



Pastor Julia Lennon from Oodnadatta Remote Area in South Australia

I am now doing the things I am so passionate about: the travels, the challenges, the countless blessings through the heat, through the floods, standing alongside people, strengthening and teaching young people about their gifts and leadership. What I love waking up to everyday is the moment of seeing their smiles, seeing community growth for the better, that moment you find the one solution, that moment you have seen the results, the recovery and the never-ending thank-you's. And I'm Aboriginal. My life wasn't as easy as it seems. The years of challenges, to understand, to listen to my heart, before understanding the gift I had: to know who I was and how I am connected, to be able to do what I live to do.



Easter Reflections

**Rev. Lindsay
Parkhill
Bush Chaplain
from West Arnhem
Remote Area, NT**



Easter marks renewal. The bush food is prolific. The rain has flushed out all the big fish and hunting is easy. The monsoon season has passed and hopefully the Border Store (Cahills) crossing has gone down enough enabling travel into Arnhem Land where families can visit their ancestral homelands. Maybe the road will be open as far as Maningrida, which has been part of the biosecurity zone, locking out all but essential visitors up until lately. But the bush telegraph and social media have been running hot and families have been meeting to fellowship and they are ready to celebrate with gatherings. Cross dedication ceremonies are planned at Mumeka, Mudginberri, Capalyarra, Ngakalawarra, Kewelyi, Karratha and other homelands. The Spirit is alive and moving in Arnhem Land!

Just as the women found the tomb empty on that Easter two thousand years ago, today people who have been living in their country for 60,000 years are celebrating the renewal of life and the start of another season of faith that involves passing from death to new life. Many are the funerals that are already being planned following delays due to the monsoons. With the sadness of the passing of loved ones comes the celebration of a life lived and now gone

to God. There will be more funerals, but Easter reminds us that with death comes a new life and Spirit returns to country.

As a Bush Chaplain I have the rare privilege to participate in these ceremonies of renewal after months of confinement. Easter marks a transition to a new season. The church calls that new season Pentecost. It is called Yekke here in Jabiru. What do you call your season of renewal?

**Pastor Gary
Ferguson
Bush Chaplain from
Ceduna Remote
Area, SA**



Easter to me stands for hope and new beginnings. It is the season of hope for farmers around Australia. If they get a good opening rain, it will be the time to sow new seeds, and shower them with love and see them through the growing season. It is also the time to sow new hope for the future, and the time to get on with a normal life. This Easter, I will be grateful for all the doctors and the nurses around rural and remote Australia. I hope they will be able to see the light at the end of the tunnel. They have often been overlooked, as the world got busy coping with the COVID-19 pandemic. In our small country town, it is important that we look after and care for each other. Easter Sunday will fill us with hope. Let us bring hope to those who have none left. Let us turn up at the door of those who need us the most. The need is great in the Ceduna Remote Area.

**Rev. John Dihm
Bush Chaplain
from Pilbara
Remote Area, WA**

Easter celebrates the hope of salvation and assurance of triumph over adversities. Ours is a Ministry of People. We as Ministers of the church extend a helping hand for all people, and we welcome diversity with open arms. Every human being reaches a fork in the road at some time in his or her life. When they have no one to turn to, they turn to us. Sometimes in the line of duty, we witness “miracles”. These miracles take place when broken men sitting in their cattle yards lost in despair take our hands and embrace our help. Easter will be the time for people to slow down, travel safely and catch their breath after battling back-to-back disasters across the country.



**Pastor Julia
Lennon
Bush Chaplain
from Oodnadatta
Remote Area, SA**

“They asked each other, Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the scriptures to us?” Luke 24: 32

I am a Yankuntjatjara Aboriginal woman born and raised in Oodnadatta. I grew up holding the Bible in my heart and enjoyed every picture before knowing any of the words. I believe Easter is a time of hope, giving, sharing and caring for others no matter who we are. We are all accountable for our



actions and what we do. As Christians we need to be open to God's grace, being ready to carry out God's plans and experiencing more of God's love and His purpose.

It was the cross that made a difference. It was the cross that changed me and made me into who I am today.

**Rev. Sunil (Sunny)
Kadaparambil
Bush Chaplain
from Parkin-Sturt
Remote Area, SA**

Easter truly signifies a new start for all, irrespective of their faith. Over the many years I have spent in my patch, the community has undergone far-reaching impacts of one natural disaster after another. It almost feels like the tough times will last forever. Hidden behind the smile on people's faces is a lot of pain and suffering deep within. The farmers and small business owners have borne the brunt of the drought followed by the floods, and the pandemic to top it all. But out in the bush, there is still hope – the hope to rise up every time you get pushed to the ground. That is the resilience our communities across rural and remote Australia are known for. This is not the end. The hurt and the suffering may seem like Good Friday, but there is an Easter Sunday in the waiting. That is the message of Christ to all.



Helping a family find their feet



Brian and Corrie-Lyn count themselves blessed to have found their home, almost an hour's drive from their nearest town in western NSW. This gratitude comes despite the immense challenges the family continues to face after arriving from Victoria four years ago, as the region dealt with severe drought, a damaging cyclone and a devastating mouse plague.

They still have a tough road ahead of them and any support means a lot.

Setting up the farm while caring for their five children has been an overwhelming task for the couple and money remains a constant concern. Even a drive to Parkes to service their Toyota Prado is something that needs to be weighed up carefully.

Lacking time or the skills needed, Brian and Corrie-Lyn have no choice but to put many jobs onto the backburner.

So it was action stations when two volunteers from our National Mobility Partner NRMA arrived, who are both mechanics, along with an additional volunteer supporting our Outback Links project.

They found an endless list of jobs waiting for them, from a paddock bashing Magna that hasn't started for 10 years to a broken cow milking machine and an old sawmill that cuts planks of timber unevenly. Undaunted, Chris and Pete got to work and what they accomplished over three days is astonishing.

As they serviced the family's Prado and repaired the Magna, the two oldest boys Christian and Isaac watched on keenly. Offering their thoughts, asking questions and tightening screws, they were both totally absorbed in how the mechanics were weaving their magic.

For Isaac in particular, whose passion is anything with gears, the experience is one he'll never forget.

Not expecting this kind of connection, dad Brian was noticeably touched, "By the end of the first day they had built great friendships with our four kids here at home. They were all so excited when they arrived on the second day."

Having their work well and truly cut out for them at home hasn't stopped Brian and Corrie-Lyn from turning their thoughts and efforts to others. Ahead of the trip, Corrie-Lyn checked to make sure the volunteers weren't personally affected by the flood along the country's east coast.

The same compassionate, selfless spirit underlies the couple's commitment to foster care. Two of their five children are adopted, one remaining with the family full time while the other visits on weekends. At four years old, the youngest of these two has been shuffled between numerous homes, and Brian and Corrie-Lyn are determined to make theirs his final stop.

A bundle of energy, he wandered around from person to person, as the volunteers worked on, seeking attention and affection, entertained by all the new, friendly faces. As the volunteers continued to attend to the many jobs on the property, Nicole, a third volunteer, regularly spent time with him to read him stories from the books they brought along as gifts and created rare moments of calm while connecting with Brian and Corrie-Lyn's teenage daughter, Faith.

As the visit drew to an end, Brian pointed to a broken trampoline.

"Chris jumped at the challenge, and before I even knew he was working on it, he had welded it up and fixed it. My kids were so full of joy it was unbelievable."



The farm was visibly transformed and the whole group was happy with the progress made.

As the volunteers packed their things up to leave, there was a sense that no one wanted to say goodbye. Corrie-Lyn's eyes welled up as she embraced Nicole, and Brian expressed his gratitude and deep appreciation at everything that had been achieved.

"They were like troopers, charging in and conquering problems left, right and centre," he says.

"They involved us and the kids, we connected with the team, and very quickly made new friends."

"Chris, Peter, and Nicole, you guys were so generous to us, giving your time, your holidays, to volunteer at our place. We will never forget you all. You will be blessed abundantly for the kindness you have shown us, for this is how our world works."

We're just so happy we could stand alongside such an incredible family like yours Brian and Corrie-Lyn, with the help and support of our incredible NRMA volunteers!



Memories

How a handwritten letter brought the past to life

All of us at Frontier Services are grateful and delighted when you send us notes describing how our Outback Links volunteers and Bush Chaplains made a difference in your lives. So when 96-year-old Elizabeth from New South Wales sent us a handwritten letter telling us all about her family's association with Frontier Services going back more than 30 years, we had to share it.

A trained mothercraft nurse, Elizabeth and her husband lived in Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory for several years, and quickly developed an interest in helping the Indigenous communities of this land.

Elizabeth's nephew, Rev. Michael Ellemor, was appointed Patrol Padre (what is now known as a Bush Chaplain) in the '90s and spent time with his wife Evelyn in the Tennant Barkly Remote Area in the Northern Territory. When eight-year-old Clinton Liebelt went missing from Dunmurra Roadhouse, NT in 1993, and news quickly spread about his disappearance, Michael joined the search party of volunteers and officials to look for the little boy who was lost in the bush.

The incident ended in a tragedy, after Clinton's body was discovered nine days later, dashing the country's hope of finding him alive. With a devastated community by his side, Michael performed the boy's funeral, and

today still counts it as one of the most significant things he ever had to do during his time as a Frontier Services' Patrol Padre. Michael was at the frontline, providing support as people struggled with their sadness and shock.

In our February edition of Frontier News, we brought to you Bush Chaplain Pastor John Tomkins' account of the sadness that unfolded in the community when little Cleo Smith went missing in Carnarvon, WA. And the joy that erupted thereafter when the four-year-old was found. The contributions of our Bush Chaplains to rural and remote communities is unparalleled. They are often the only familiar faces that isolated Outback communities see apart from their immediate loved ones for long stretches of time.

Inspired by Elizabeth's letter, we asked Michael to share some memories with us from his unforgettable time spent working for Frontier Services.



A young Elizabeth on the cover of the book she later wrote about her many years spent in Outback Australia.



Rev. Michael Ellemor
Retired Frontier Services' Bush
Chaplain, Tennant Barkly Remote Area

It's been more than 30 years since I worked up there at Tennant Barkly. A lot has changed. But there will never be a time when people don't benefit from a listening ear. Churches have started to get involved in Disaster Recovery on a big scale. Back then, we mostly worked alone with meagre support. I am glad to see Frontier Services Bush Chaplains still going strong. Their work demonstrates why Bush Chaplains are an integral part of the community, and why it matters to stand beside people when they need helping hands and listening ears.

Michael and Evelyn stand in front of Frontier Services' Tennant Barkly motorhome that doubled up as the Padre's means of transport. It bore the nickname "The Padre's Palace". Circa 1993.

*Thank you for caring
about our friends in
the bush*



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

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1300 787 247

*Frontier Services National Programs Manager
Josh Peters helping move soil and sow seeds
with Brian on our recent Outback Links project.*