

AUGUST 2023

FrontierNews

*Your kindness extends far and wide.
Thank you!*



Frontier Services
Standing with people in the bush



Acknowledgement

Frontier Services acknowledges the sovereign First Peoples on whose lands and waters we live, meet, and work. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and to all descendants of these Nations who have cared for this place since Creation.

About Frontier Services

We are Australia's oldest bush charity, and we are here to help people living on the land. Through the generosity of our supporters, we provide practical, pastoral, and spiritual help to people in remote areas of Australia.

You can help bush communities today and into the future.

- ✓ Make a tax-deductible gift by completing the donation form 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
- ✓ Leave a lasting legacy by including a Gift in your Will to Frontier Services, visit frontierservices.org/bequest



Published by

Frontier Services
Suite 53 / 2 O'Connell St
Land of the Burramattagal Clan of the Dharug People
Parramatta NSW 2150

PO Box 3424
Parramatta NSW 2124
T 1300 787 247
E enquiries@frontierservices.org
W www.frontierservices.org

Aug 2023 Edition 125, Volume 3
Print Post 100020006

Editor Karen Salipuran
Front Cover Lily and Carol, Curtin Springs NT

Circulation 14,000

Copyright notice Frontier News is the quarterly newsletter of the United Church in Australia Frontier Services. Copyright in this publication is owned by Frontier Services. Congregations or fellowships wishing to reproduce material contained in Frontier News may do so without permission providing that material is attributed to Frontier Services.

Share your story If you have a story relating to our work that you would like to share, email Karen at karens@frontierservices.org

Message from the National Director



Have you ever noticed how it's often the small, unexpected acts of kindness that make the tears fall?

You might have experienced this yourself. Perhaps you were holding it together through a particularly tough time, staying strong, but then someone reaches out to you with a kind hug or an offer of help with the shopping, and that's when the weight finally lifts and the tears fall.

The people you'll meet in this edition of Frontier News know exactly what that's like. They are strong and resilient and accustomed to just 'keeping on keeping on'. So when someone like you sends them practical help and heart-felt kindness, their tears of gratitude often speak louder than words.

These acts of kindness may be as small as someone bringing them their favourite food that they haven't tasted since they left home months ago. Or it could be a profoundly moving offer

of prayer and fellowship for people without a church. Or it could be a group of Outback Links volunteers helping a survivor of the Black Summer bushfires find home again.

The impact is deeply moving and, often, life-changing. Your compassion and generosity have the power to pull people from despair into a renewed enthusiasm for the future. You bring courage. You bring hope. You bring light, and I am so very grateful for your gifts.

If you would like to give today to help even more people in the bush, you can simply complete and send the enclosed form. We'll put your gift straight to work to reach people most in need.

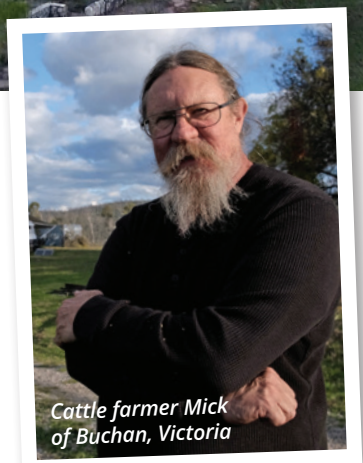
Rob Floyd
National Director

Homecoming sparks hope in Buchan

The feeling of family is often tied to the place we grew up, where we forged our earliest memories. For many people in remote communities like Buchan, Victoria, that feeling of family is enough reason to never leave. Even when everything's gone.

When Mick looks over his family's cattle farm today, he feels the same quiet beauty but sees a very different landscape from the one he grew up in.

The town of Buchan in the East Gippsland region of Victoria was scorched by the 2019/20 Black Summer bushfires. In the midst of regrowth the charred skeletons of trees still scar the hillscape. The



Cattle farmer Mick of Buchan, Victoria

trauma and grief of losing everything in a violent, burning wave still lingers.

The entire region has been burnt to its roots.

In the more than three years since his home and its surrounds were consumed by fire, Mick has remained



The Snowy River meandering through the hills where vegetation is still recovering

without a permanent place to stay. He describes the aftermath as 'horrific'.

And yet he speaks of an even more profound pain.

"The worst thing that's happened recently was my father passing away. He didn't have the opportunity to come out here and stay, which I regret deeply."

In the fallout of the fires, Bushfire Recovery Bush Chaplain Peter Harvey has been devoted to supporting the region. As part of his outreach, he has witnessed extraordinary resilience and determination. He has seen that many people have not yet healed; that so much support is still needed even if concern from outside the community has slowly ebbed away.



Bushfire Recovery Bush Chaplain Peter Harvey with Frontier Services staff removing fire damaged star picket posts

Disaster does not disappear overnight.

Peter shares, "There are a lot of people still struggling to find their place in the region.

"Some are still struggling with the sounds and smells of fire."



Outback Links volunteers working on the fencing



When Peter recently spoke at a community gathering detailing the support Frontier Services could provide, Mick embraced the opportunity and humbly asked for assistance. Within weeks, a group of Outback Links volunteers rallied to his property, ready to set the stage for a long overdue homecoming.

“It’s three and a half years since the fires came through, and Mick is only just getting back into his house,” explains Peter. Mick himself adds, “It’s been a long, slow road [to recovery].”

The Outback Links volunteers cleared the fencing that was completely wiped out by fire. They cut back overgrown grass which had taken hold of garden beds in Mick’s absence.

“It gives you incentive to keep going, do more,” says Mick. “So this is a real bonus - this is just fantastic. Every little tiny bit we do while [the volunteers] are here is just icing on the cake really.”

It’s an enriching experience for the Outback Links volunteers themselves. James, an experienced volunteer based in the Blue Mountains west of Sydney says, “Fifty years in IT did not prepare me to go and be a farmer. However, if I can go out and help somebody, I can

mow, I can paint, I can use a whipper snipper. I just enjoy being able to help people.”

More than this, the Outback Links volunteers were there for some campfire companionship shared with a warm-hearted, appreciative host who’s been through a lot.

“You have no idea how much this means to me and how grateful I am,” Mick says.

For survivors of the Black Summer fires, recovery does not mean getting back the life they used to have. Life will never be the same. But the presence of Bush Chaplain Peter Harvey and the Outback Links volunteers can make pushing forward that little bit easier. Sometimes it’s as simple as knowing help is available, that people care, and that there is strength within, ready to be awoken.



Outback Links volunteers Ian and James enjoying a hard-earned cuppa

Mick has shown what strength he holds. People like Peter and the Outback Links volunteers will always be there to remind him.



Mick sharing his stories with Outback Links volunteers



Draped by hills and a setting sun, Outback Links volunteer James plays his bagpipes filling the air with a sense of hope. As if to sing, “today’s work is done and tomorrow’s will be easier.”

Thank you for helping those far from home

Hospitality warms the hearts of migrant workers



Lily and Carol spend their days and nights making sure guests feel welcome, and now you helped them feel welcome, too.

The two Ni-Vanuatu women are living in Curtin Springs, near Uluru, as part of the Pacific Labour Scheme. They've had to leave their family and culture behind in Vanuatu, so they could work hard to send money back home to provide their families a better future.

They've found themselves in the centre of Australia. No ocean, no sway of palm trees, no access to the food they've grown up with, and no place of worship in Curtin Springs.

Back home, their lives revolved around family and church.

Thanks to your support, Bush Chaplain Benji Quilliam was recently able to brighten the lives of Lily and Carol and other Ni-Vanuatu and iTaukei (Fijian) workers in Curtin Springs.

Benji explains: "I heard about a group looking for spiritual support. Some had just arrived, so they were looking for some practical support as well.

"They're quite isolated there. They don't have transport or a car to get to Alice Springs or go to church. There's not even a supermarket in the town.

"They are well looked-after in terms of food and accommodation through their employer, but they are desperately missing that vital spiritual and emotional support.

"They miss home. They miss their family. A lot of them had to leave their families behind, even young children, for the opportunity to make better money. It's hard for them."

Benji has visited twice, each time bringing shopping including work shoes, spare clothes, and special snacks.

On the second visit, he arrived with very special cargo in his car: 10 kilo boxes of frozen cassava.

Cassava is similar to sweet potato and is a daily staple for the iTaukei. No meal is complete without it back home.

Benji says, "We're working on getting the local IGA to stock it, but until then, I'll need to stash it in my car fridge!"

Good for the spirit

On his most recent visit, Benji was able to offer something they wanted even more than cassava. He could take them to a church service – plus a visit to Uluru.

"One said to me, 'I've always seen photos of Uluru, and I never thought I'd ever be able to see it in real life, but here I am.'"

After a beautifully moving visit to Uluru, the group were able to attend their first church service in a very long time. The Pacific Islanders' singing was spine-tingling!



You're an angel, thank you!

Outback Angels are kind and caring people just like you who generously donate every month to make an enormous difference.

As an Outback Angel, your regular gift gives strength and certainty, ensuring that together, we can always be there for people in need in rural and remote areas of Australia.

Join the Outback Angels today and become a guardian of our friends in the Outback.

Simply complete the form on the opposite page, or online at frontierservices.org/join-angels and select "monthly".

Yes, I would like to be an Outback Angel

I would like to become a supporter and give a monthly donation of:

- \$30/month, which is equivalent to \$1/day
 \$50/month, which is equivalent to less than \$2/day
 \$100/month, which is equivalent to just a little over \$3/day
 Other \$ _____ /month

I cannot be an Outback Angel right now but please accept my one-time donation of:

- \$30 \$75 \$100 Other \$ _____

Please debit my:

- VISA Mastercard Amex

Card Number

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Expiry Date

M	M	/	Y	Y
---	---	---	---	---

Name on card

Signature

My contact details:

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Street address _____

Suburb _____ State _____ Postcode _____

Phone / Mobile _____

Email _____

Please send my receipt via:

- Post Email

Please return this completed form to:

**PO Box 3424
Parramatta NSW 2124**

Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible.

Privacy notice: Your personal information is collected to enable us to provide you with a receipt for donations and news. You can request to have your details or contact preferences changed at any time by phoning 1300 787 247. To read more about how Frontier Services uses your information and our full privacy policy please visit frontierservices.org

Thank you for being a guardian of our friends in the Outback.

You can also donate by calling **1300 787 247**, visiting **frontierservices.org/join-angels** or scanning the QR code:



Christmas Cards Order Form



Order quantity	Pack name	REDUCED price/pack includes postage	Total
<input type="text"/>	Red Dirt	\$12 \$8	\$ <input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	Three Wise Men	\$12 \$8	\$ <input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	Julia's Paintings	\$12 \$8	\$ <input type="text"/>
Grand total			\$ <input type="text"/>

Please consider adding a donation to your Christmas Card purchase today. Use the form overleaf to send your kind gift.

If adding a donation to your purchase and the payment and address details provided overleaf are the same, there's no need to complete the form below.

Mailing details

First name _____ Last name _____

Street address _____

Suburb _____ State _____ Postcode _____

Phone/Mobile _____ Email _____

I wish to pay by

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

Credit card Please debit my:

VISA Mastercard Amex

Card number

Expiry date

/

Name on card

Signature

Please return this completed form to:
PO Box 3424
Parramatta NSW 2124

Privacy notice: See overleaf

You can also purchase these cards through our online shop at **frontierservices.org/shop** or scan the QR code.



Frontier Services

Christmas Cards



LIMITED
OFFER

Say Happy Christmas 15 different ways with these 15 uniquely Outback-themed Christmas Cards. Choose from three packs and place your **order before 1 Dec.**

Each pack comes with 10 cards (two of each design) and 10 envelopes. Offer good while supplies last. Order yours today. All proceeds go to our Bush Chaplain and Outback Links programs.

Red Dirt

Inside reads:

May the Christmas season fill your home with joy, your heart with love, and your life with laughter.



Three Wise Men

Inside reads:

May the peace and happiness of Christmas be with you today, tomorrow, and throughout the New Year! Wishing you a Merry Christmas.

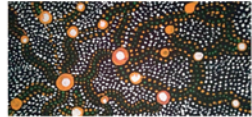


Julia's Paintings

Original artwork by our very own Bush Chaplain Julia Lennon (Oodnadatta SA)

Inside reads:

May you be filled with love, joy and peace this Christmas season and throughout the New Year.



Visit our online shop at frontierservices.org/shop or scan the QR code to learn more about the featured photos and artwork and to view more photos.

Place your order before 1 December.

School kids say thank you!

Helping disadvantaged children who were falling through the cracks.

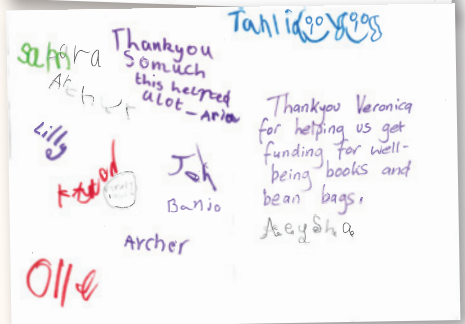
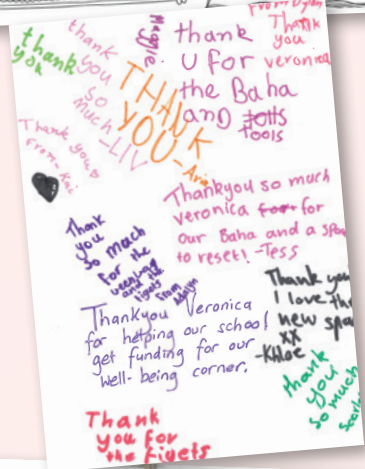
In a primary school in South Gippsland, kids can now start their day of learning on a full tummy. Others now have a safe, comfy space to retreat to when things are overwhelming. Older kids going to high school finally have a computer to access classwork.

And it's all thanks to an extraordinary partnership between you, our Bush Chaplain, local schools and community groups, and The Flora & Frank Leith Charitable Trust.

Helping those who can't get help.

Bush Chaplain Veronica Bradley could see the need. She spends her days helping those who fall through the cracks of government or agency support. "I help people who can't get help anywhere else," she explains.

She helps the mum who's overwhelmed with caring for kids with special needs. She helps the people in the community experiencing addiction or homelessness. They trust her.



Bush Chaplain Veronica doesn't come with an agenda or with complicated forms – she comes with pure compassion and practical help.

So when local schools told her about kids who were missing out at school because of financial disadvantage, Frontier Services sprang into action.

Practical support with a huge impact

Bush Chaplain Veronica worked with each school to find out who was most in need and what they needed.

And thanks to generous grant funding received from The Flora & Frank Leith Charitable Trust, Bush Chaplain Veronica was able to source and provide these much needed supplies to the local schools.

One school needed a breakfast program for kids who were coming to school early or with nothing to eat. The school ran a food program during COVID lockdowns and the demand is still there.

Another school needed funds for a “wellbeing corner” in the classroom. They received beanbags, weighted lap pads, and squishy toys to give kids a place to calm down and reset.

Other students didn't have computers at home. Going into

high school, they needed the internet every day to access Google Classroom for homework tasks, online textbooks and apps. Through Veronica's community connections and The Flora & Frank Leith Charitable Trust funding, she was able to secure home computers and laptops at a fraction of the commercial price.



Frontier Services Bush Chaplains like Veronica go wherever help is needed. Thank you for making this vital work possible!



Frontier Services
Standing with people in the bush

#NarrabriShow



Frontier Services
Standing with people in the bush

Showtime!

The joy of connecting with communities

There's something about a rural show. It's the sound of greetings called out to friends who haven't met up in a year. It's the smell of scones from the baking tent. It's the celebration of everything that makes that region wonderful.

And for the Frontier Services community, it's the chance to connect.

Our Bush Chaplains are often travelling hours each day to try to cover the enormous distances in their area. But at a show, everyone is together in one place.

So far this year, Frontier Services has been a visible presence at community shows and events across the country including the Roma Show, the Finke Desert Race, the Narrabri Show, and the Mullewa Muster & Rodeo.

People we meet at these events are often astonished and delighted to discover the ways we can help them face life's challenges. Many can barely believe that we have volunteers willing to travel to help on their property, or that our Bush

Chaplains are there for anyone, in any situation. It means an enormous amount to them to know that people like you care.

Our team loves connecting with the communities through these events and are looking forward to more great conversations at upcoming shows.



Frontier Services will be at the following events later this year. If you or someone you know will be in the area, pop in to say g'day:

- NSW: AgQuip Field Days
August 22-24
- SA: Innamincka Gymkhana
August 25-28
- QLD: Birdsville Races
September 1-2
- WA: Chapman Valley Rodeo
September 30

Because of you, they know God is with them



Bush Chaplain Joe with a family who had felt abandoned

After a series of tragedies, and without even a church nearby, a community in the Shire of Cook in Far North Queensland had been feeling isolated and abandoned. They told Bush Chaplain Joe Eka, “Even God has left us”.

But thanks to your support, Bush Chaplain Joe could visit the community, bringing prayer, fellowship and encouragement.

Joe reports he and the community have been talking with the local council about plans for a new church, and a plot of land has been reserved.

“Communities in the region are crying out for spiritual support,” says Joe.

He recently visited Hope Vale, an area north of Cooktown, and baptised 22 people in one night.

“I taught them how to pray, gave each person a bible, and left words of encouragement so they could grow in their faith.”

Bush Chaplain Joe says he feels incredibly grateful for the people who donate to Frontier Services.

He says, “I drive a long, long way, but when I get there, I see people who need our support, prayer and encouragement. I feel my trip is worthwhile. I want to thank everyone who makes this possible by giving to Frontier Services.”

Fire up the barbie

Ready to share a feed, a yarn, and a cold drink or a cuppa? The Great Outback BBQ is a fun, easy, and delicious way to help people in the bush doing it tough.

It's been a tough few years for our farmers. They've endured floods, cyclones, droughts, fires, mouse plagues, and COVID restrictions. Now, the cost-of-living crisis is causing stress levels to rise even higher.

People in the cities rely on farmers for their food, and yet often farmers feel they have to struggle on alone.

By hosting a Great Outback BBQ this summer, you can show our sisters and brothers in the bush they are not forgotten. Every dollar raised goes towards helping them make it through these challenges and stay on the land. Please join us – and let people in the bush know you care!

Register now at
greatoutbackbbq.com.au



Mount Waverley, VIC



St Martin's Foothills Uniting Church, WA



Tweed and Brunswick Valleys, NSW



William Creek, SA



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

frontierservices.org

1300 787 247

*"I can mow, I can paint, I can use
a whipper snipper. I just enjoy
being able to help people."*

- James, Outback Links volunteer

