

FEBRUARY 2025

FrontierNews

*Thank you for being
there for young and old!*



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 rural and remote areas of Australia.



You can help bush communities today and into the future.

- ✓ Make a tax-deductible gift by completing the donation form on page 11 of this magazine, or donate online at frontierservices.org/donate
- ✓ Register to volunteer and check out our current volunteering opportunities in areas of most need at frontierservices.org/outback-links
- ✓ Leave a lasting legacy by including a Gift in your Will to Frontier Services. To learn more, visit frontierservices.org/bequest



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Share your story

If you have a story relating to our work that you would like to share, email us at team@frontierservices.org

Message from the National Director



Happy New Year!

This is such a wonderful time of year, filled with new beginnings and opportunities. As I look over the activities we have planned and the successful achievements that you have already made possible, I'm filled with gratitude, determination, and a tangible sense of hope.

In this edition of *Frontier News*, you can see how your support has already created new beginnings for families all across Australia.

You've helped children in the outback access more opportunities. Many kids in rural and remote areas face social exclusion due to isolation and disadvantage, but you are helping to overcome that.

You've helped widows like Barbara*, who felt vulnerable and alone on her property with only her dog for company.

And even now, you're helping Bush Chaplains like Peter Harvey bring

new opportunities and support to isolated communities such as West Coast Tasmania.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of Outback Links, and I'm so grateful to all our supporters like you for making this unique and highly valued program such a roaring success. Your support helps Outback Links volunteers cover hundreds of thousands of kilometres every year as they bring their useful hands, strong shoulders, and listening ears to people in need.

Thank you again for being such a vital part of this work. I'm excited about what we can achieve together in 2025 as we work to help people young and old across the country.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rob Floyd". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rob Floyd
National Director

* Names changed to protect privacy

More than 2,000 volunteer hours and counting



Colin and Susan had just retired and finished their new home when they came across a leaflet about volunteering with Frontier Services' Outback Links program.

They knew straight away it was their calling.

Since that moment, they've travelled across inland Australia bringing support, practical help, and friendship to Aussies in need, giving more than 2,000 hours of their time.

Colin says they feel blessed to have experienced so many different



environments, different placements, and different people.

"It's a great experience and a great opportunity to travel and help people. And I think the good thing about Outback Links is that there are just so many placements on the Frontier Services website."

One of their most memorable trips was to Quilpie, right in the heart of Queensland.

“Well, it's referred to as Quilpie, but it was another day's travel [from Quilpie] just to get to the property because it was so far away. The property itself was 107,000 hectares,” says Colin.

They were helping an elderly property owner who could only communicate with her family on the other side of the property by CB radio.

Colin and Susan have left their mark on the lives - and on properties - of people across rural and remote Australia. They've fixed fences, painted walls, tidied gardens, scrubbed bathrooms, changed countless light bulbs, cared for stock, and looked after children - and that's just to name a few jobs.



There's a tiny olive tree here - wonder how much it's grown since?

They said if they had a chance to talk to someone who was thinking of volunteering, they would say:

“Go for it!

“Give it a go. If there's something you're not confident doing, just say so. People are very accepting. And there's always something else you can do.”

This is the 20th anniversary of Outback Links. Thank you for making such an enduring program in support of people living in the bush.



Landscaping after the bushfires at Buchan



Enjoying a hot bath after hard yakka - outback style!

To register as a volunteer, or to receive some Outback Links support, scan the QR code or visit frontierservices.org/outback-links



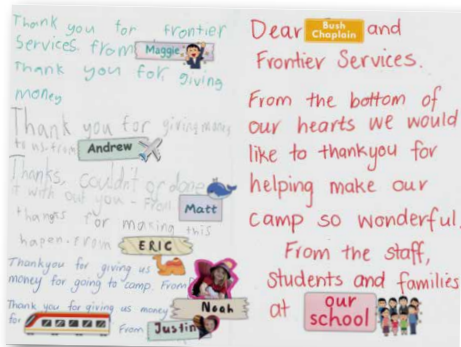
You brought joy to children across the outback!

Thank you for your outpouring of support for children at Christmas. Your response to our recent request for help was heart-warming and life-changing.

We told you about children who were facing social exclusion in the outback, and you responded with understanding, kindness, and generosity.

You helped our Bush Chaplains bring joy to children in the bush this Christmas. But more than that, you have helped fund long-term support to ease the impact of child social exclusion.

Your support helps provide targeted financial support to families in rural Australia who are struggling to meet the costs associated with their children's education which include school uniforms, textbooks and stationery, excursions and school camps, after-school activities such as swimming lessons and sporting events.




A gorgeous heart-felt thank you card from the children who went on their first school camp - thanks to you!



The best gift of all

A birthday celebration to help Aussies in the bush



Antoinette and her husband Peter celebrating her 80th birthday

When Antoinette turned 80, she was asked the inevitable question: *what do you want for your birthday?*

She felt she didn't need anything, but she did know people who were in need - people doing it tough in the outback.

So in lieu of presents, she asked her family, friends, and her congregation in South Australia to give a gift to Frontier Services in honour of her birthday.

“At my age you don't need to acquire anything more. I just asked if they would like to make a donation to Frontier Services, and I was blown away by the amount people gave. We raised close to \$2,000.

“Being a country person myself, I'm very much aware of the need of people

to get a friendly visit and a listening ear. I wanted to put some fuel in the tank for the Bush Chaplains.”

Antoinette herself has led a life of mission and service. She lived much of her married life serving the church in Fiji and Tonga, and once she moved back to Australia with her husband Peter, they still had a yearning for adventure and joined Outback Links as volunteers.

“We've had a very fortunate life, and we're very happy to give back. God has been very gracious to us.”

To arrange donations in lieu of gifts for your birthday or special event, please contact Anne Jones, Donor Relations Officer at annej@frontierservices.org or call 1300 787 247.



Flood recovery fuelled by community spirit in Eugowra

When disaster strikes, the power of community is revealed not just in resilience but in the support given by others. For the people of Eugowra in New South Wales, the devastating flash flood of November 2022 turned life upside down.

Torrents of water swept through the town, forcing over 700 residents to evacuate and leaving 200 homes severely damaged. Almost two years later, the journey to recovery continues. The Outback Links team, along with volunteers from the NRMA, visited the community recently to provide some practical support and connection.

Weaving into the community

This isn't just a story of tasks completed—it's about becoming part of a community's fabric. On this recent trip, Outback Links volunteers worked with five families deeply impacted by the floods. Practical help came in many forms: fixing farm vehicles, repairing garden tools, and tending to damaged gardens.

What truly set this effort apart was the local insight provided by the Country Women's Association (CWA). With members on the ground, they helped identify the families who needed help most.

Their long-standing presence in the region ensured that the assistance provided addressed the specific and often unspoken needs of those still reeling from the flood. This was a true team effort.



Practical support meets personal connections

As volunteers pruned hedges, cleaned windows, and re-established gardens, they also forged personal connections. Sharing stories over a cuppa or laughter while tackling stubborn weeds brought a sense of mateship to these families.

“They didn’t just lend a hand. They sat with us, listened, and reminded us we’re not facing this alone. It was as though they became part of our family,” says one of the people who received support.

This connection extended to the volunteers who left with a sense of fulfillment. One of them says, *“Every conversation, every shared meal—it wasn’t just about what we did, but about the team we did it with.”*

Strengthening partnerships

It’s clear how powerful partnerships can change lives in remote Australia. The support of NRMA, our Official Mobility Partner in NSW, provided critical resources and skilled professionals; CWA’s trusted local network ensured that support reached the families who needed it most; and our supporters’ immense generosity and kindness meant we could be there for the people of Eugowra.

A member of the community shares, *“This experience brought our community closer together, both within Eugowra and with the people who came to help. The difference isn’t just in what was fixed—it’s in the friendships and hope restored.”*



Partner with us

You can become a partner and be a part of this vital work. Join us in creating lasting impact in communities like Eugowra. Scan the QR code or visit frontierservices.org/partner to learn more.





Finding strength in the company of our Bush Chaplains

How our Bush Chaplains help men in the bush who are experiencing grief.

Grief and loss are part of everyone's life, yet men tend to suffer in stoic silence. Acknowledgement of grief and sadness goes against this social expectation men experience throughout their lives, and this social expectation is magnified in the bush.

"Grief is not just about losing a loved one. Losing financial security, health and independence, youth - all these can cause grief and can affect thoughts, beliefs, physical health, and relationships.

"Men often grit their teeth through the pain of grief and loss. Some find ways to keep busy, others withdraw so no one can see them in pain," says Bush Chaplain Noel.

One place where men feel safe expressing their grief is in the company of other men who are going or have gone through the same thing. Noel's personal experience with grief at an early age allows him to offer this safe environment.

"I can understand why men's approach is to 'solve the problem' of grief, and I use that mindset to help them navigate their way through it," says Noel.

Various support services are available in Australia: grief counselling, men's support groups, and online resources. But these are not easily accessible to those who live in the bush. This is why the presence of a Bush Chaplain in rural and remote communities is so vital. Through the generosity of our supporters, Bush Chaplains can be there as a lifeline, a safe space to help ease the pain of grief and loss.

With the help of their Bush Chaplains, men can understand that it is normal to feel strong emotions and that seeking help and support is a sign of strength.

If you or someone you know is experiencing grief, Griefline offers resources and support, so you don't feel alone. Call Griefline on 1300 845 745, 8AM to 8PM (AEST), seven days a week.

Thank you for sending Peter!

Bush Chaplain Peter Harvey moves from Victoria to West Coast Tasmania



A land of clouds and craggy peaks. Peter didn't see blue sky for his first 11 days!

"It's a Ministry of Presence.

"I'm here to provide support to the community, whatever that may be."

That's how Bush Chaplain Peter sums up his new job in West Coast Tasmania. It's early days, but already he's making connections and having in-depth conversations about what people need to support, strengthen, and build up their community.

"It's about being accepted as someone people can turn to when they need to talk about life.

*"It's about creating trust and showing people we're not here to get something out of them. **We're here to love and provide what we can to their journey.***

"That's one of the powerful things about the ministry of a Bush Chaplain: we have no expectation of the people we serve. We don't come with an agenda.

"We are there to listen to what is needed and help the community and individuals find what they need."

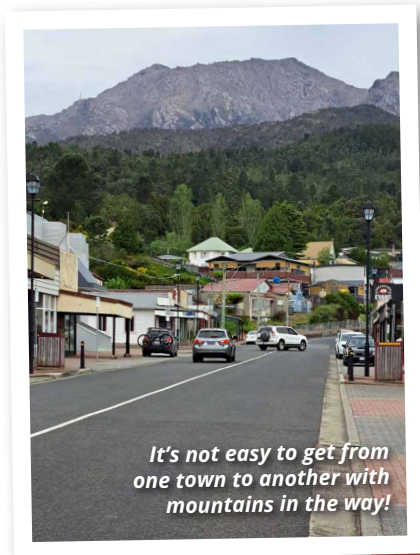
The Tasmanian west coast is a very different landscape from the one envisaged by many who are familiar with the work of Frontier Services. Like his previous position as Bushfire Recovery Chaplain in East Gippsland Victoria, Peter is surrounded by rugged mountains and deep valleys, where snow and rain and persistent winds abound.

"In the wide open spaces of the outback, you can drive for an hour and half and you've travelled 150 kilometres. You drive down here for an hour and a half and you've probably only covered 60 kilometres. It's a different kind of remoteness, but with the same sense of isolation.

"Geographically, it's a really remote area because of the nature of the environment. It's quite difficult to get around; you need to take a circuitous route around the mountains.

"It's hard for people to access health services and even retail services for daily necessities."

Peter can be there for the communities of this new region because of the kindness of our supporters. Your generosity allows us to fund Bush Chaplains like Peter to provide pastoral and practical care to people living in remote Australian communities.



Follow us on Facebook
[facebook.com/FrontierServices](https://www.facebook.com/FrontierServices) to get updates on Peter's ministry of presence in Tassie.



Members of the Frontier Services Board celebrating the organisation's 112th birthday in 2024

Let your legacy live on

Tim was born into the Frontier Services family, and he will make sure his legacy continues after he has gone by leaving a Gift in his Will.

Tim Ford grew up in the world of Bush Chaplaincy. His parents Colin and Margaret Ford were personally appointed by John Flynn as "Patrol Padres" – the early versions of Bush Chaplains.

Fresh out of university, his mum and dad took their faith and courage in both hands and made the commitment to live "off the back of a Chevy truck" for 10 years in the Top End.

"In those days, there was no air conditioning in the Chevy truck and no internet. So not only would [Mum and Dad] help people deal with all the loneliness associated with remote living in Australia, but they themselves were isolated.

"It's important that we provide a support network around our Bush Chaplains."

By the time Tim was born, Colin and Margaret had moved to Alice Springs (population 5,000 at that time) for Colin to become the first-ever minister at the John Flynn Memorial Church.

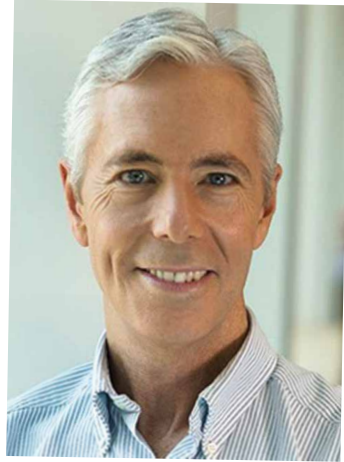
"I grew up with the whole ethos of Bush Chaplaincy pretty much embedded in my psyche."

Tim's family eventually moved to country New South Wales and then on to Sydney, where Tim now lives and works, while devoting his time and expertise as a Board member of Frontier Services.

"If someone was thinking of leaving a Gift in their Will, I would advise them to make sure the organisation they're picking has a track record of durability. Do they have confidence that they're going to be there in the future? With Frontier Services, I have confidence that that same quality of work and outcomes will be continued on down the track."



Chip off the old block. Tim today, and his dad Colin (top) in the early days of Bush Chaplaincy



Many generous people choose to support Frontier Services or the John Flynn Foundation through a Gift in their Will.

For information about how you can leave a lasting legacy, please contact James Nevein, Relationships Officer at jamesn@frontierservices.org or call 02 7228 4659, or visit frontierservices.org/bequest



You were there for Barbara* when she needed you most

Barbara was in need of help. She lives on her own and had already lost the last of her sheep to both the drought and the floods.

Then, her floor developed gaping holes. She just knew the snakes would get in.

She used her savings to get a tradesperson out to fix the flooring. Finding a tradie who could come to her remote property was difficult and expensive - and for Barbara, quite disastrous. The tradie tore up the flooring, had strong words with

Barbara, and then left...the floor in a mess, the job undone.

But then, thanks to your support, our Outback Links team connected Barbara with a volunteer to come and help.

"[Frontier Services] organised for a man called George to come up," says Barbara. "George was absolutely amazing.

"He knew exactly what to do. He took one look at it and said it would be best to use particle board.

"So off we went to the hardware store to get the board. We realised it was so big, we'd need two men to do it. So [Frontier Services] organised another volunteer, Bill, to come up.

"Bill arrived around a day or two later. Bill and George had never met, but they worked so well together and did an amazing job."

The Outback Links volunteers were just one of the many miracles Barbara has experienced in the bush.

"I believe God looks after me and protects me.

There are things I've tried to do on my own, but I'm not very strong. I try to lift things or unscrew things and, miraculously, I somehow have the strength."

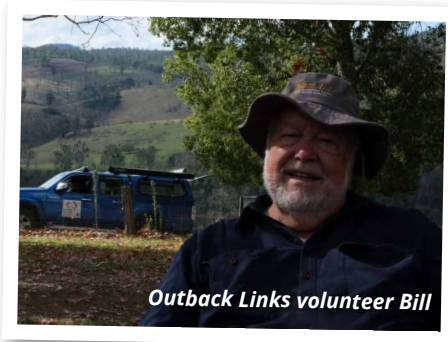
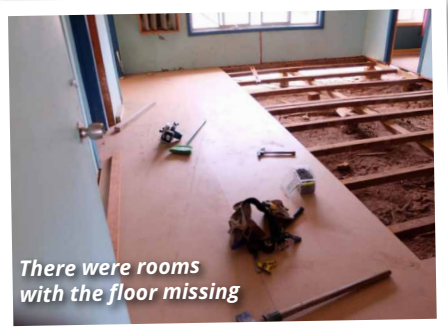
The other day, a brown snake appeared behind the door of her kitchen. And recently, a tiger snake slithered from her bathroom window to the water pump.

"God protected me from that and protected my dog from being bitten."

Thanks to you, we can be there for people like Barbara through our Bush Chaplains, Outback Links volunteers, and your immense kindness.

Thank you for standing with women in the bush like Barbara!

**Name changed to protect privacy*





Meet Glenn, former Bush Chaplain and new community advocate

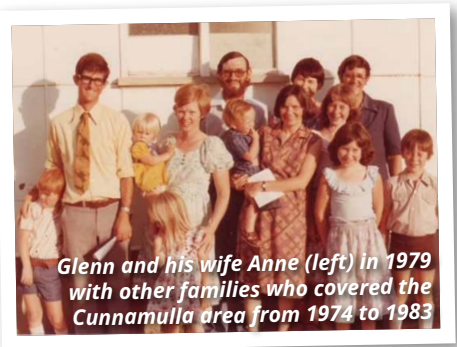
It was 48 degrees in the shade when Glenn Ingram arrived at his first placement as a Bush Chaplain in Cunnamulla in rural Queensland.

Not long out of Bible college, he took the leap with his wife and their three young kids. It was 1979.

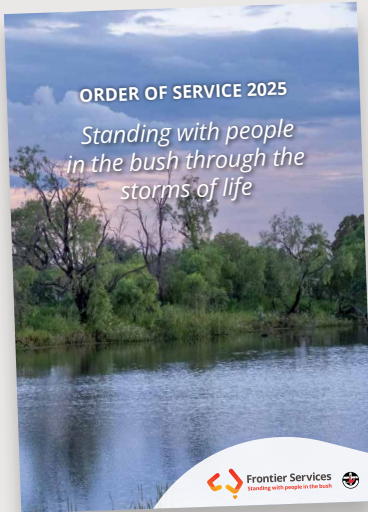
"I got onto the bush tracks and found my way around to different people. I would stay in a room at the back of the local church," Glenn recalls.

It was the start of a long career supporting people across the top of Australia with placements in Arnhem Land (Galiwinku and Gapuwiyak) and across Queensland in Cunnamulla, Boonah, Wellington Point, and Rockhampton.

Now, Glenn has reconnected with Frontier Services as a speaker at local church events, sharing his passion for the story of John Flynn and the immense difference that people like you can make to families in the outback.



2025 Order of Service is now available!



Bring the outback to your community with a Frontier Services church service. Let your congregation be inspired by the 100+ years of dedication and courage shown by all who bring God's love to the frontier of Australia.

We also have a number of wonderful volunteers and representatives available to share their unique stories and experiences of our work in the outback. Contact us to register your service date and check speaker availability.



**Order your copies at
frontierservices.org/order-of-service
or complete the form on Page 11.**

From the Top End to Tassie, thank you for showing up!



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