

Going the

February 2021

# DISTANCE

*Stories of strength and survival, made possible by you, <First Name>*



*Thanks to you*

Special memories  
can live on



Royal Flying Doctor Service  
VICTORIA



To you,  
from Scott

2020 was an incredibly difficult year for us all. Yet, with several COVID-19 vaccines being rolled out around the world, I feel we can now look forward together with great hope and optimism.

As individuals and as a nation, we have risen to the challenges of recent times. As an organisation we've explored and implemented new ways of reaching those in need.

We have continued to save lives and deliver quality health care where it's needed most. And, for that, we owe a special thank you to supporters like you <Personalised>.

The health and wellbeing of every Australian matters deeply to all of us – and the stories featured in this edition of *Going the Distance* demonstrate the difference your support makes to people living and working in regional and rural communities.

One story very close to my heart is Jack's last journey. I hope that together, with your generous support on 25<sup>th</sup> February, we will make Memory Lane come true. Your care and compassion could bring joy and comfort to people in their final days of life.

Whatever challenges we face this year, one thing is certain; the services you help us provide remain vital to remote and rural Victorians.

Thank you for your continued support.

Scott Chapman  
Chief Executive  
Royal Flying Doctor Service Victoria



This was the first time the Flying Doctor made a dying wish come true. We hope you will help us grant many more by supporting the launch of this new service.



In November 2020, Jack visited his farm one last time. He could experience the simple joy of being where his heart was, with his loved ones.

## <FIRST NAME>, YOU CAN MAKE FINAL WISHES COME TRUE

**For people with terminal illness or in palliative care, a simple chance to reconnect with their lives in their final stages can mean the world. That's why we're launching Memory Lane.**

**W**hat would be your last wish before you close your eyes for one last time? For patients in end-of-life care, visiting a place that holds special memories one last time can bring joy and release – and your support can make that wish possible.

The Flying Doctor is launching Memory Lane, a new service that enables people with a terminal illness or in palliative care to reconnect with their lives in their final days.

Thanks to supporters like you, we have the expertise and purpose built vehicles to transport people safely and comfortably to a place that holds meaning for them: to enjoy their own garden, to sit in a favourite chair on their veranda, to feel a coastal breeze, or to be surrounded by their loved ones and pets, one last time.

In November 2020, we received a request from the Rochester and Elmore District Health Service to see if we could grant Jack's final wish to visit his beloved family farm in Romsey.

For our crews, being able to grant someone's dying wish is an enormous privilege. When the

call went out for volunteers to transport Jack back home, six crew members put themselves forward immediately.

The following day, Victoria Gibson and Samantha Keating from our Bendigo branch transported Jack safely from his care home to his farm, where he spent time enjoying his garden and having lunch with his family. He even remarked on how lovely it was to sit on his favourite couch again.

It meant a huge amount to Jack and his family to share this special moment together and they all expressed their gratitude to the Flying Doctor for making

it happen. Six days later, Jack passed away peacefully.

Our crews regularly transport palliative patients to and from medical facilities. The care and compassion they provide for patients in this incredibly vulnerable state is exceptional.

But they need you to make Memory Lane happen. Only your support can bring moments of great comfort, peace and joy to people like Jack and their families.

**<Personalised>, become part of the Memory Lane story and donate online on 25<sup>th</sup> February.**

**You can help launch Memory Lane**

On **Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> February**, we will launch a 24-hour online campaign to raise critical funds for Memory Lane.

Any dollar you will give online toward this campaign will be doubled to increase your impact.

**Remember, it's one day only!** Head to [charidy.com/rfdsvic](http://charidy.com/rfdsvic) on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> February.



# CHILDREN ARE FINDING THEIR VOICE THANKS TO YOU

Sea Lake kindergarten teacher Bron knows the difference your support makes in her community and for children who need speech therapy.

**Every child in Australia should be able to access the health services they need to grow, develop and realise their potential... no matter where they live.**

Childhood is full of memorable milestones – the first smile, laugh, or tentative walk. Perhaps the most significant development is speech. As a child learns to talk, their personality begins to shine through. They can express who they are, what they need and how they feel.

Some children naturally need a little more time when it comes to speech, but in some cases a child might require some extra support in the form of speech therapy. For families living in rural communities, however, seeing a speech therapist can require a very lengthy journey.

Bron Alday is a kindergarten teacher in the north-western Victorian town of Sea Lake. She is only too aware of the difficulties families face when it comes to accessing specialist health services.

"It's a big financial commitment to travel," Bron says. "Especially for the more vulnerable families – it is more challenging for them to access specialist health resources."

Bron has the experience to spot any signs of difficulty or delay in a child's speech. She also knows how vital early intervention is to a child's progress. Support with speech can help to improve their social skills, confidence and emotional development. And now, thanks to donors like you, she can refer children for speech therapy in her local community.

Working with local partners, schools and kindergartens, a

Flying Doctor team is providing speech therapy to local families. As Bron explains, the service is making a huge difference to the children who need it.

"Overwhelmingly our families have engaged and kept engaging; so that says a lot about the therapist they're working with. The services offered by the Flying Doctor are targeted exactly for the needs of small rural communities. Eye examinations, dental health, speech – they are the areas that we really struggle to have access to. Families often can't afford to access these services. Being able to partner with the Royal Flying Doctor Service is amazing for our communities."

**<First Name>, your support means children in rural and remote areas receive the care they need to keep up with learning at school.**

# BASE TO BUSH: YOU ARE INCREDIBLE!

A special 'thank you' to everyone who took part in our first ever Base to Bush event.

Over 180 amazing people have taken part in the virtual event; walking, running or cycling from our Airbase at Essendon Fields to one of three Flying Doctor Wellbeing locations in the bush.

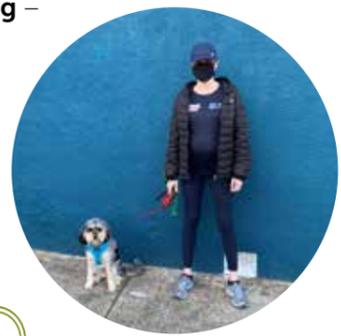
As well as challenging themselves and supporting their own wellbeing, participants also raised vital funds to support **Flying Doctor Wellbeing** – our free mental health service.

Here are just a few of the people who helped us reach an incredible total of **\$27,832**.



Another 8kms walk in the sunshine logged as part of my Base to Bush Challenge. It's so important that we look after each other - and ourselves. Here, I am feeling motivated to get up and exercise for my own wellbeing, but in the process showing support to our mates in the bush.

– 'GourmetCyclist', one of our 180 dedicated participants



What a tough year 2020 was! Bushfires in January and then the relentless COVID pandemic. Even the strongest of us have felt the mental and emotional toll. That's why we decided to do something to help support services for mental health.

– Kellie, Claire, April and Ali [AKA The Runaway Mums]



Having grown up in rural Victoria, I know firsthand the difficulty people can face in accessing services – particularly when it comes to mental health. It's with great pride that I'm taking part in the Base to Bush challenge and supporting vital services that make a real difference to country communities.

– Jake



I have done a lot of reporting on bushfires and people losing jobs and businesses during COVID... and I know there are a lot of people who have been left struggling. I want all Australians to have access to good mental health support, no matter where they live.

– Elise, ABC journalist





*In many ways, we as a community need to give ourselves more credit in regard to the old 'silent and self-reliant' stereotype of rural communities, because a lot of the old stigma about seeking help is changing. I think that's really hopeful.*

## YOU'RE SUPPORTING PEOPLE THROUGH TOUGH TIMES

Thank you for bringing mental health support to rural and remote areas. This service was critical throughout 2020, both face-to-face, online and over the phone.

**Your compassion for people struggling in country Victoria means Alice Irving can provide vital mental health support for communities in the Gippsland region.**

After growing up on a farm in South East Gippsland, Alice Irving travelled Australia pursuing a career in mental health – but the call of home proved too strong.

“Our place has been in my dad’s family for ages – my sister and I are the fourth generation to grow up here,” she says. “So I’ve got a strong connection with where I live. It’s a really strong part of my identity.”

It has been a really challenging few years for agricultural communities across Gippsland. Last year’s devastating bushfires and COVID-19 crisis came on the back of several years of severe

drought. The impact of these emergencies has hit people’s livelihoods and left others feeling overwhelmed and unable to cope.

However, community spirit has shone through and farming communities have rallied in support of one another. Thanks to friends like you, they have also been helped by mental health professionals like Alice. As part of the Flying Doctor team, Alice travels across large parts of Central and South Gippsland, supporting people who are struggling with a range of issues such as anxiety, isolation, depression, financial stress and grief.

Mental health is just as important as physical health, yet traditionally in rural areas like Gippsland, there has been a stigma attached to seeking help for mental health problems. Thankfully, times are changing.

2020 was a year of unprecedented emergencies, yet one of the positives that has come out of this challenging time is that people are feeling more comfortable about letting others know when they are struggling.

It’s a message that Alice is keen to reinforce – and technology is playing an important role too. Alice believes the ability to access mental health services by video call or phone from home, or while out in the paddocks or stockyards, has been a game changer.

“For a lot of people it has made mental health support much more accessible, and perhaps a little bit less daunting.”

**<Name>, together we can reach out to people living in rural and remote communities and support them when times are tough. Thank you.**

## YOU CAN BRING 'SAFE-TEA' TO THE OUTBACK

Hosting an Outback Morning Tea is a wonderful way to support the lifesaving work of the Flying Doctor. So why not request your free host pack today?

The Outback Morning Tea is coming back in March 2021 – and being a host is deliciously simple!

All you have to do is get together to enjoy a cuppa and a slice of cake with family, friends or colleagues... and raise vital funds to support fellow Australians in times of need.

You can register today at [outbackmorningtea.com.au](http://outbackmorningtea.com.au) and we'll send you a free host pack with everything you need to make your event a success, including delicious recipes. You can even download free invitations to get your friends, family and colleagues involved.

For more information, call our team on **1300 669 569** or email [events@rfdsvic.com.au](mailto:events@rfdsvic.com.au).

**<Name>, here's a simply delicious recipe to inspire you.**

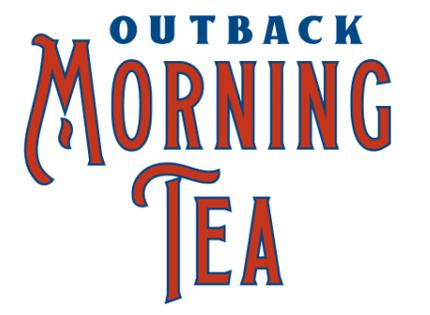
### Drop scones

#### Ingredients:

- 3 heaped tbs self-raising flour
- 2 tbs sugar
- 1 egg
- a pinch of salt
- about 1/2 a cup of milk

#### Method:

1. Mix the flour, sugar and salt together in a bowl
2. Add the egg and mix till smooth
3. Add a little milk and mix till smooth
4. Then add enough milk and stir until the mixture is the right consistency – not very thin but not heavy
5. Drop spoonfuls of the mixture onto a greased and heated griddle or pan
6. When bubbles appear (after 2-3 mins), turn over the drop scones and cook on the other side until browned (1-2mins)
7. Cook quickly, on medium heat (170-180°C)



From *Cookery Book Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc.* (Reprinted 2016) (page 225).

## MEET DANI VENN

Like you, Masterchef finalist and Flying Doctor Ambassador Dani Venn is passionate about supporting fellow Australians in times of need.

**What is your connection with the Flying Doctor?** I first heard about it in primary school, and then there was the TV show! More recently, I also found out that Dr Whitechurch, who was following me during my pregnancy, is a GP with the Flying Doctor too!

**Why do you support the Flying Doctor?** The work you do is incredible. You go to the hard to reach communities, which are often under-resourced, to ensure people get access to health care.

Where would we be without all of the incredible work of the people in regional and remote Australia? People like farmers are the backbone of our country and we must support them.

**What message do you want to share?** I want to get the message across that the Flying



Doctor is an integral part of the health of rural Australia – but it’s far more than planes.

It’s letting people know that you’re a modern organisation that uses the latest technology to provide everyday assistance for rural people.

# ALWAYS CARING, WITH A GIFT IN YOUR WILL

The support you give today keeps our vehicles on the road and our aircraft in the sky. And there's a very special way that you can continue caring for those who will need us tomorrow.

By leaving a gift in your Will to the Royal Flying Doctor Service, you can be there for Australians in times of need. It is easy to include RFDS Victoria in your Will – and every gift, large or small, makes a tremendous difference.

So once you've made provisions for your loved ones, we hope you'll consider making a special gift to a cause close to your heart.

If you would like more information about this meaningful way of giving, please contact Teresa Cianciosi at [teresa.cianciosi@rfdsvic.com.au](mailto:teresa.cianciosi@rfdsvic.com.au) or **03 8412 0400**.



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[www.flyingdoctor.org.au](http://www.flyingdoctor.org.au)



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