

Going the ***DISTANCE***

February 2020

Stories of strength and survival, made possible by you



Thanks to you

Allan can receive
crucial cancer care



Royal Flying Doctor Service
VICTORIA

To you, from Scott

It has been a devastating start to the year for so many communities across Victoria, and our teams have been going the distance to help those affected by the terrible bushfires.

We are all aware that the effects of the bushfires will remain long after the crisis is over. With your support, we will be there to provide health care for rural and regional Victorians as they rebuild their homes, livelihoods and communities.

As well as enabling us to offer support in times of crisis, you are giving families access to the health care they need.

Opposite you can read about our Community Transport service, and how our volunteer drivers travel thousands of kilometres each year to support Heathcote residents like Pat and Allan.

On page 5 you can read about our Mobile Eye Care service, and how it travels to the regions of the Mallee, West Wimmera and East Gippsland, giving families living in these remote areas access to expert eye care.

As you know, some of these regions have been in the path of the recent bushfires – so your support for families living in these communities has never been more important.

I want to thank you for standing alongside your fellow Victorians throughout this crisis.



Scott Chapman
Chief Executive
Royal Flying Doctor Service
Victoria

YOU'RE KEEPING US IN THE AIR... AND ON THE ROAD!

By supporting the Flying Doctor Community Transport service, delivered in partnership with Heathcote Health, you're helping local residents like Pat and Allan access vital medical treatment and stay connected to the community they've been part of for more than 50 years. They've both used the service a number of times – and it's made a life-changing difference.

When Allan's failing eyesight made it impossible for him to drive, he and Pat had no way of getting to their medical

appointments in Bendigo, 50km away. With Allan needing treatment for cancer, this wasn't just a transport issue, it was life threatening.

However, thanks to generous supporters like you, our Community Transport service was there to help them.

With your support, we can offer this essential community service free of charge to eligible residents like Pat and Allan, living within a 30km radius of Heathcote.



**"I don't know what we would have
done without it. We wouldn't be
able to get to the doctors.
They've been absolutely marvelous."**

– PAT



Your support means we can pick-up Pat and Allan from their doorstep and take them to their health appointments.

The service is delivered in partnership with Heathcote Health and we currently have three vehicles in operation, including one which is wheelchair-friendly.

Our wonderful local volunteer drivers pick people up from their homes and take them to health appointments, such as hydrotherapy, cancer treatment, physiotherapy, and GP appointments, with Bendigo being the most common destination.

As Pat says, *"The drivers all do such a good job. They're very talkative and make me feel at ease. If I'm feeling down when I come out of the doctors, they make me laugh and talk about different things. They are wonderful."*

The service is a lifeline

Heathcote is a small town with a population of around 4,000 –

and the Community Transport service you help fund makes such a difference.

Public transport in the area is limited, especially for the elderly, disabled or ill. A return taxi to Bendigo costs close to \$100, meaning without the service, many residents would find it difficult or impossible to receive the health care they need. What's more, for older people living alone, the service has helped them to maintain a vital social link with their community.

For Pat and Allan – and hundreds of other Heathcote residents – the Community Transport service is nothing short of a lifeline. But we can only continue to keep this essential service running with the support of people like you. Thank you!

Thank you for supporting this life-changing service



Pat with Erin Foster who coordinates the program in Heathcote.



They are such a lovely couple, and both so appreciative of the service and how it's helped them manage their health. I'm really fond of them both.

– Erin Foster, RFDS Program Coordinator-Community Transport

VOLUNTEERS WITH THE DRIVE TO HELP OTHERS



I feel good being able to help them, knowing that they won't be charged a couple of hundred bucks just to travel to Bendigo and back by a cab.

– Colin, volunteer driver

Our fantastic team of volunteers make the Flying Doctor Community Transport service possible for residents of Heathcote in central Victoria.

Since the Community Transport service began in August 2018, volunteer drivers have made more than 4,000 trips – an average of 17 journeys a day!

Thanks to you, our amazing volunteers drive eligible residents to all kinds of medical appointments.

Colin, one of our driver volunteers, enjoys assisting Heathcote residents to access

healthcare services.

"I love being able to see the older residents – who have worked all their lives – and putting a little smile on their face."

Drivers like Colin also take people to a range of planned activity group sessions in the area. This human contact is so important for elderly people who could otherwise be very isolated.

Along with our team of dedicated volunteers, your continued generosity helps to support the program through the delivery of ongoing training to drivers. Thank you.

GIVE THEM WINGS FOR THE FUTURE

Proudly funded by long-time RFDS supporters the Bayside Auxiliary, the *Give them Wings* scholarships are awarded annually to four students from rural and remote communities who are in their first year of university, studying nursing or allied health.

The prestigious scholarships not only help students with the costs of living associated with university, they also promote the importance of skilled medical professionals working in the bush.

Yet again, the *Give them Wings* scholarships have been awarded to four very deserving winners. At the RFDS Victoria Richmond office, Chief Executive, Scott Chapman, presented Madeline Beckwith, Emily Mills, Michaela Humphries and Samantha Desailly (pictured left to right) with their scholarships.



Since being a little girl I have always loved helping and caring for people. But my decision to become a nurse was set in 2013 when my dad suffered a car accident leaving him with brain damage. When dad was getting flown to Royal Melbourne hospital I couldn't believe the compassion and high care they were giving my dad and that was when I decided I wanted to become a nurse and help people in times of crisis.

– Samantha Desailly, Give them Wings scholarship recipient



YOU'RE BRINGING SIGHT FOR SORE EYES IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

For people living in remote communities, a visit to an eye specialist can be a very lengthy journey. Thanks to supporters like you, we're bringing eye care directly to rural families like Lynton's.

Lynton and his family live amongst the rolling hills of Gelatipy, in East Gippsland. The nearest major centre of Bairnsdale is a three-hour drive, making it very difficult for them to access health care services. Now, thanks to your support, Lynton's family can receive expert eye care locally.

Our Mobile Eye Care service, delivered in partnership with the Australian College of Optometry, provides a visiting optometrist in selected towns within the regions of the Mallee, West Wimmera and East Gippsland.

For Lynton, who has had issues with his eyes in the past, our mobile eye clinic means that he can stay on top of his eye health close to home.

Lynton's parents-in-law, Judi and Paul (pictured above), also value having such an important health service nearby. In fact, Judi discovered she had the early signs of cataracts at our mobile eye clinic, enabling her to manage the condition before it became more serious.

It's no wonder she is full of praise for the service. "I think it's amazing for people in isolated areas," she says. "It's a much-needed service. A lot of people are very thankful for the Flying Doctor coming to Gelatipy."

We can only continue to provide vital health care services like this with your support. Thank you!

UPDATE: East Gippsland has been devastated by the recent bushfires, with many thousands of residents forced to flee. Our thoughts are with Lynton's family and the thousands of other residents of East Gippsland at this difficult time.



"By having these great services come to town, we can check in and maintain good health. And that's really important when you have little kids."

— LYNTON

Thanks to you, Lynton, his wife Lauren, their two children Campbell and Lexi, and Lauren's parents, Paul and Judi, can look after their sight at the Flying Doctor Mobile Eye Clinic.



Lance with Annette Allison OAM, at a recent RFDS function.

A LEGACY OF COMPASSION

Lance Jennison's commitment to the Flying Doctor is something he inherited from his late parents, Thelma and Bill, who were passionate supporters – even when times were tough.

Lance recalls that his parents were always committed to helping others, even during the 1930s, when the country was coming out of The Great Depression. As he says, "Even in tough financial times they'd still put a bit of money away and always help other people, because those people needed help a bit more than they did." For Lance, compassion for others is a proud family legacy, which is why he and his wife plan to remember the Flying Doctor in their Will.

By leaving a gift in your Will to the Flying Doctor, you can leave your own legacy of compassion. Your special pledge could help us bring life-saving help to future generations of Australians across this vast country of ours.

If you would like to find out more about leaving a gift in your Will to the Flying Doctor, please contact Teresa Cianciosi directly on 03 8412 0448 or teresa.cianciosi@rfdsvic.com.au

A MAGICAL CHRISTMAS FOR MADDISON



Our recent Christmas appeal featured little Maddison, who's flown with us five times to get the cancer treatment she needed.

By continuing to support the Flying Doctor, you can ensure that we're ready to go at a moments notice when someone like Maddison urgently needs us.

As you may recall, Maddison has needed the Flying Doctor Service five times. She's had a rare and aggressive form of cancer, and her condition can deteriorate rapidly. That's why her mum, Vanessa, had a hospital bag packed 24/7, so if Maddison's condition worsened they would be ready to go.

Your support keeps our aircraft stocked with vital medical supplies, so we can be in the air at moments notice to reach patients like Maddison.

It's been a very special Christmas for Maddison

The great news is that Maddison is currently in remission and was able to spend Christmas with her family. Last year she spent over 100 days in hospital, so if there's one little girl who deserved a special Christmas, it was Maddison.

After everything they have been through, Maddison and her family have so much to look forward to in 2020. And Vanessa would like to thank supporters like you for the life-saving difference you make to families like hers:

I've told Maddison that 2020 is going to be our year. She's going to be able to go to school, go to parties – and just be a 'normal' kid again. I really can't thank you enough for the difference your donations make to families like mine.

– Vanessa, Maddison's mum



Special FLYING DOCTOR EVENTS BROUGHT TO YOU

As one of our incredible supporters, we'd be delighted to see you at one of our upcoming events.



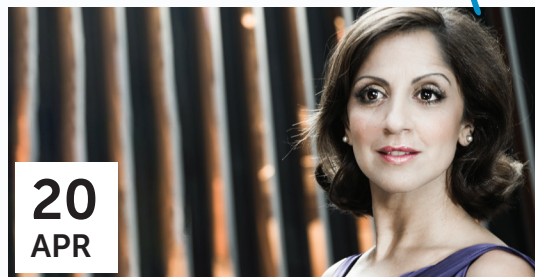
An afternoon with the Flying Doctor Bendigo

Join us for a special Flying Doctor event as we recognise our wonderful community of supporters and update you on our work. Please ensure that you RSVP as spaces are limited.



Run Melbourne

This year the Flying Doctor Ground Crew are taking part in Run Melbourne to raise vital funds for Flying Doctor Wellbeing. Join them in making strides for mental health in the bush!



Morning Melodies

Join fellow Flying Doctor supporters for a delightful two-part event that includes a light lunch, followed by a unique matinée performance by one of Australia's most versatile and talented entertainers, Silvie Paladino.

Silvie has been credited as being one of the greatest female voices in Australia. Accompanied by the David Cameron trio, she will perform songs from her vast repertoire, which includes jazz, contemporary, musical theatre and light opera.

Secure your tickets

Tickets for this special event are only available through RFDS Victoria.

Secure your tickets today using the coupon provided, and the enclosed reply paid envelope.

Alternatively, you can book online at www.flyingdoctor.org.au/vic/events or by calling 1300 669 569.

Please RSVP by Monday 6 April

Event Information

Date: Monday 20 April 2020

Time: 12 noon – 2:30pm
Light lunch, followed by a matinée performance.

Venue: Arts Centre Melbourne
100 St Kilda Road Melbourne

The Arts Centre Melbourne is easily accessed by public transport, and parking is offered at an early bird flat rate of \$17.

Cost: \$75 per person

Detailed event information will be provided with a letter confirming your ticket purchase.



**Yes, I'd like to attend RFDS
Victoria Morning Melodies**

Your details

First Name:

Last Name:

Address:

Suburb:

Postcode: State:

Phone:

Email:

Ticket \$75

Quantity Total price \$.....

Payment details

Name on card

Card number

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

Expiry

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Signature

Guest details and dietary requirements

1.

☐ None ☐ Gluten free ☐ Nuts ☐ Vegetarian
☐ Other

2.

☐ None ☐ Gluten free ☐ Nuts ☐ Vegetarian
☐ Other

3.

☐ None ☐ Gluten free ☐ Nuts ☐ Vegetarian
☐ Other

4.

☐ None ☐ Gluten free ☐ Nuts ☐ Vegetarian
☐ Other

Do you or your guests have any accessibility requirements?

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JOHN FLYNN LUNCHEON CELEBRATES GREAT WOMEN

Thank you to all those who attended RFDS Victoria's annual John Flynn Luncheon, held on Wednesday, 20 November 2019.

This year's event celebrated the great women of the RFDS. Guest speaker, Louise Burton, a flight nurse with RFDS Queensland for more than 20 years, and Anne Lewis, the first female pilot to obtain her commercial licence in Western

Australia and the first woman to fly for the Australian Aerial Medical Service (AAMS), later to become the RFDS.

They both kept the crowd captivated with tales of life in the sky.

The event was preceded by the RFDS Victoria AGM Forum, during which RFDS Victoria representatives highlighted some of the key achievements of the past year.

**To know more about our events, please call 1300 669 569 or visit www.flyingdoctor.org.au/vic/events
We would love to see you at a Flying Doctor event in 2020.**

**Please RSVP sending the above coupon
to Royal Flying Doctor Service Victoria
PO Box 7027, Richmond VIC 3121**

THE FLYING DOCTORS RETURNS TO OUR TV SCREENS

The gripping TV drama based around the life-saving work of the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) in Australia's red heart, returns to our TV screens. Filming is due to begin in 2020.

Justine Clarke and Rob Collins will star in a new action-packed drama, filmed on location in

and around Broken Hill, NSW. The modern-day heroes of the RFDS will navigate private lives as turbulent and profound as the heart stopping emergencies they attend.

Based on remarkable real-life stories, the series will capture the beauty and brutality of Australia's vast centre where

the doctors, nurses, pilots and support staff of the RFDS negotiate unique challenges and save lives across some of the most inhospitable places in the country. This will also be a story about community and people coming together to laugh, to cry and to triumph, in spite of the huge obstacles they face.



Going the
distance
with you



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VICTORIA



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www.flyingdoctor.org.au