



TakeOff

IN THE AIR, ON THE GROUND

ISSUE 07 AUTUMN 2018



90 YEARS



Royal Flying Doctor Service
TASMANIA

Early days: A patient is transported by camel-drawn wagon to the waiting Flying Doctor plane



90 years of service and still needed

The Flying Doctor was created out of need, continues today to fill a need, and will in the future be needed. We want to thank our donors, fundraisers, volunteers, staff and industry colleagues for their ongoing support as we still need them to help us. In a year of national celebration of 90 years, the RFDS remains an organisation about individuals, families and the communities that we work and care for.

We still need your help to overcome the barriers to health access across the nation.

Inside this issue

- > Get social with RFDS
- > Celebrating 90 years!
- > Holiday rescue
- > Meet our scholarship winners

Malcolm White *Chairman*

The remarkable thing about the Royal Flying Doctor Service is that after 90 years the organisation remains as valued, vital and relevant as it did when services were commenced in outback Queensland.

The innovation of combining aviation, medicine and telecommunications would go on to change the lives of Australians living, working and travelling in the bush by providing a mantle of safety, and the story of the Flying Doctor would become a loved part of Australia's history.

Much has changed and developed with the passing decades; aircraft have become sophisticated aerial medical platforms, developments in medicine have significantly increased life expectancy and telecommunications in the bush have gone from morse code and telephone lines strung along fences to internet services.

And some things haven't changed; the ethos and values that underpinned the work and the dreams of John Flynn, the generous support received from Australians in the city and in the bush



and the continuing work of responding to the health care needs of people in regional and rural Australia.

In Tasmania, the Flying Doctor was created out of need and continues to meet needs; for dental services in the Circular Head region, supporting aeromedical evacuations from Bass Strait Islands and providing primary health care services to country Tasmanians, to name but some.

After 90 years it is appropriate to reflect on all that has been achieved, to look forward to all that will be achieved and to thank our supporters, volunteers, staff and the many partners we work with.

And from Martin Laverty *Federation CEO*



In a country as large as Australia, the health care service barriers are many. If the vast distances between townships and stations are not bad enough, then you can add in harsh climates, lack of infrastructure, socio-economic challenges and cultural differences to resolve.

Our 90th year is a chance to reflect on how far we have come in providing healthcare to those that live in country Australia, but even more importantly it is an opportunity to thank the individuals, families, communities and townships that the Flying Doctor service. It is more about them than it is about us. Their resilience, determination, cooperative efforts and support has enabled us

to provide the service we do – and they are indeed part of the RFDS family.

2018 is also an opportunity to acknowledge our 1400+ dedicated staff who make the Service possible. An organisation is only as strong as the individuals that make it up, and in this regard, we are blessed.

And of course, our 90th year is cause for celebration for the lives saved, work accomplished and dreams made possible in country Australia as a result of the Flying Doctor. It is these stories that sum up the mission of the Flying Doctor and will see this organisation still running strong for the next 90 plus years.

Holiday Horror

Faye and Jim Johnston were on a dream holiday in The Kimberley region of Western Australia when Faye began to feel unwell one night.



"We'd flown from Brisbane to Darwin and then travelled by coach from Darwin to Broome," explains Faye. "We'd got as far as Kununurra to stay for a couple of nights. We'd visited the Hidden Valley and climbed to all the lookouts.

That night I woke up around 11.30pm feeling nauseous. At first I thought it was just a stuffy room, and then I got the shakes. Something was just not quite right.

Because we were due to get up to fly over the Bungle Bungle in four hours' time I thought I'd just get things checked."

Faye called the ambulance and was soon given an ECG by the paramedic at the motel.

"Everything was normal and apparently it was when he was packing up to go I just had a heart attack in front of him!" says Faye.

"The next thing I woke up crying in Kununurra Hospital, not knowing what was wrong. The paramedic had to use his defibrillator and some CPR on me before getting me to the hospital."

The next morning the Flying Doctor was called in to transfer Faye, first to Port Headland. There she changed RFDS aircraft to fly on to the Fiona Stanley Hospital in Perth for specialist treatment.

"I had a stent put in the day after I arrived," explains Faye.

Meanwhile Faye's husband organised to travel to Perth, where their daughter joined him for a few days.

"He says he was never so glad to see anyone in his life," says Faye. "We had to stay over for a week until I had clearance to fly home." Faye shares a warning to others to be open with their doctor when asked about their health.

"The Flying Doctor was absolutely amazing. They couldn't have been any better. They were so professional, wonderful, friendly and caring. Without the RFDS I might not be here."

"I'd gone to the doctor's a week before we went away for a check-up," says Faye. "He'd asked me if I was short of breath when I climbed hills or went up stairs. I said no but I didn't tell him that I was. I put it down to getting older.

My friends all said they thought I'd be the last person to have a heart attack as I'm slim and reasonably fit. But my father died fairly young of a heart attack. I gave all my family a scare."



RFDS getting social in our 90th year!

The advantage of social media is in the immediacy we can deliver up-to-the-minute news and stories to our supporters.

Stories recently on the RFDS Facebook page have been about our 90th year celebrations, edge-of-your-seat rescues and transfers, plus our primary healthcare programs across Tasmania.

We streamed live video of our UTAS scholarship recipients talking about their experiences working with RFDS in the outback (still available on our Facebook page). It was so exciting to hear their stories!

Thinking about people who want to engage with RFDS, but can't make it to see these events, they are now being able to watch live from anywhere still blows my mind!

Social media allows us to engage with our supporters and find out more about them.

That's why we would love it if you followed RFDS on Facebook facebook.com/royalflyingdoctorservice

If you don't have Facebook but want to keep-up-to-date with the RFDS, check out our website for news and events www.flyingdoctor.org.au

Lisa Wright
Acting Fundraising Manager



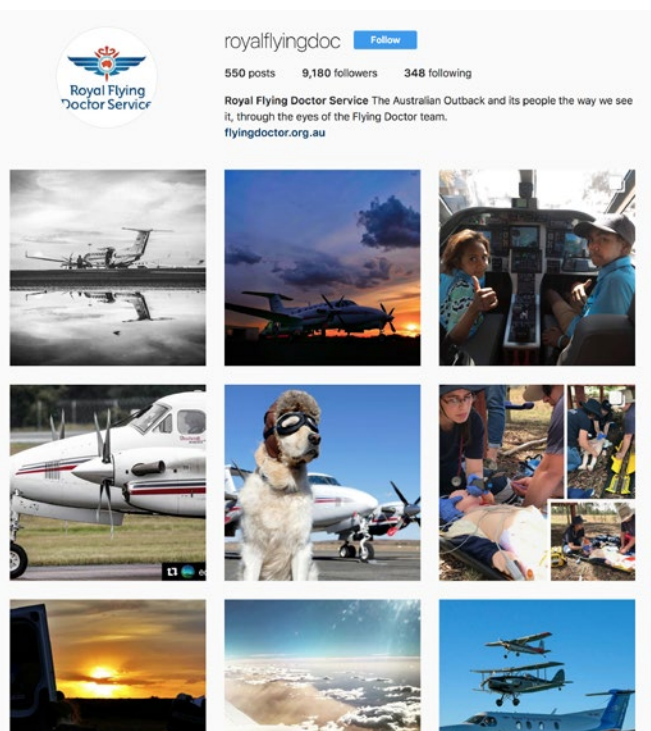
Share with us!

When posting photos of our vehicles, planes, dentists or anything else RFDS Tasmania related on social media in our 90th year, don't forget to use these hashtags. See your photo travel around the world!

**#RFDS90 #RFDS #FlyingDoctor #neededand90
#caringforruralcommunities #stillneeded**

Follow RFDS on Instagram

We love seeing your photos of the RFDS planes from around Australia. Instagram provides RFDS with some stunning shots including this one from Line Pilot, Heather Ford in Alice Springs.



"I had been on a day wait in Ayers Rock and was watching two thunderstorms on the radar build west of Alice. By the time my doctors were ready to leave, the two storms had merged into one. We waited an extra 30 minutes before leaving and had to hold enroute to wait for the storm to pass Alice. This photo was taken once we had landed and the rain had cleared".



A Day in the life of an RFDS Patient Transport Officer

Lisa Lord, Team Co-ordinator, Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service with the RFDS, recently accompanied an elderly patient for a specialist appointment at the Royal Melbourne Hospital from her home in Devonport. The trip, which brought together three RFDS services: a road crew from both Tasmania and Victoria, and an aeromedical flight. Lisa shares her day below.

"The Tasmanian road crew, including myself, collected Glenice, and drove her to the Devonport Airport where the RFDS plane was waiting. With Peter as pilot and Janine as flight nurse, we made the trip across Bass Strait. The approach into Essendon was slightly un-nerving for someone not used to the King Air! Janine explained to Glenice and I that the combination of heat from the ground and the wind, was causing the plane to sway as it landed. My opinion of our RFDS pilots swelled!

The door opened, and we were greeted by the Victorian road crew, Glenn and Wez. The 37-degree day was quite a shock after the 22 degrees we left behind in Devonport. Glenice was gently transferred

to a stretcher and off we went to the hospital, amidst a good deal of teasing from Glenice.

After the appointment, it was once again time to head back to the airport and a fond farewell to the wonderful Victorian crew. With Peter again our pilot and a new flight nurse on board, the flight home to Devonport was smooth.

Glenice and I enjoyed the breath of sea breeze and the cooler temperature after the Melbourne heat. A quick transfer in our road vehicle and Glenice was once again in her own home. For me, it was a trip back to the Launceston Base, a long but rewarding day".

If you would like more information on using the Non-emergency Patient Transport Service the RFDS offers, contact enquiries@rfdstas.org.au or call 63910509

Young readers switched onto the RFDS

Encouraging children to read can sometimes be difficult. We were therefore overjoyed to receive an email from Jessica Marston, Teacher Librarian at the Hagley Farm School, informing us how the Flying Doctor had managed to 'switch' on young readers.

"Thanks to our fabulous library technician, Martha McQueen, we have recently featured a RFDS display of books – some of which we received from you, some we have purchased ourselves and some we were lucky enough to win as part of a Kellogg's IGA Book promotion earlier in the year."

The display caused much interest especially for two grade 3/4 boys, Cooper and Beau. They made connections between the Meet the Flying Doctors book and the information provided, and over the next few weeks continued to read each of the George Ivanoff Books, as well as recommending them to their classmates.

These books are available at the RFDS Base in Launceston. Please contact Jocelyn McLean, Education Officer. Phone: 03 6391 0504





Scholarship receivers L-R
(photo one photo courtesy Phillip Biggs
The Examiner): Dariel Roper Hannah
Nichol Ashleigh Gibson, (photo two)
Kirsty Bennett, Renee Shepherd,
Sharon Fitzpatrick

Scholarship winners fly high

Six students from the University of Tasmania recently received scholarships with the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

These scholarships enabled them to work in Outback Australia. It is thanks to our Tasmanian donors and fundraisers that we can continue to give young Tasmanians the opportunity to work in remote and regional Australia, and therefore gaining a greater understanding of the valuable contribution the RFDS makes to those living there.

Dr. Sharon Fitzpatrick was the recipient of the Fred McKay Medical Student Scholarship. Sharon spent two weeks attending clinics in outlying areas from Broken Hill. Kirsty Bennett won the Robin Miller RFDS Nursing Scholarship which gave her the opportunity to fly out of the RFDS Port Augusta Base in South Australia. Renee Shepherd received the

John Flynn Dental Assistant Scholarship, working out of the Dubbo Base.

For the second year, we have been able to offer three, fourth year medical students placements, thanks to the Commercial Travellers Association of Tasmania (CTA). Their significant donation to the RFDS is in recognition of the support they had received from rural and remote GP's and the RFDS in the past.

Dr. Hannah Nichol from Launceston spent two weeks flying out of Jandakot and Broome in WA. Hobart Doctors, Dariel Roper and Ashleigh Gibson both spent time at the RFDS Port Augusta Base. We wish all recipients well in their future careers.

"To be awarded the 2017 RFDS John Flynn Scholarship for Dental Assisting, in memory and name of the man who established the service, is an absolute honour and a privilege. This award commends hard work, stoicism and drive, the traits that Flynn himself embodied. The fact that I have been fortunate enough to receive it has been the perfect culmination of twelve-months of study and has only spurred me to – excuse the pun – aim higher".

Flying with the RFDS Dental Team

2017 John Flynn Scholarship recipient Renee Shepherd spent two weeks with the RFDS Dental Team in Dubbo last year. Flying to destinations such as Bourke, Lightning Ridge, Goodooga and Collarenebri, the dental team, which comprises two dentists and three dental assistants, provides clinics for outback residents.

"The RFDS dental team in Dubbo do a great job at trying to bridge the gap in dental care, tells Renee. "This journey proved to me the importance of access to primary healthcare for all Australians. The mouth is the gateway to the body, so an emphasis on oral health and preventative treatment should be a priority. My experience with the RFDS team was invaluable and I would love to work with the service in years to come".



Thank you

to our communities, volunteers, fundraisers and staff for their ongoing dedication, work and support.

You are the reason the Flying Doctor has been able to provide service over the last nine decades, and you are **still needed** today.

Make a donation today

- > Call 6391 0509
- > Online at www.flyingdoctor.org.au/donate-tasmania

**90
YEARS**



**Royal Flying
Doctor Service**





Steve Stone takes out Industry Award

Exercise & Sports Science Australia (ESSA) annually recognises its outstanding accredited members.

Members who demonstrate through their practice, a thorough understanding of the discipline, and a strong commitment to the profession and the industry through their advocacy within the community.

Steve Stone, the 2017 Accredited Exercise Physiologist of the Year winner, is the Rural Health and Physical Health Worker with the Royal Flying Doctor Service Tasmania. Steve, along with a strong committed team deliver free health services for people living with chronic health conditions in five Tasmanian Local Government (LGAs) areas. Within the program, Steve oversees four other physical health professionals and physiotherapists.

"I recently designed a cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation program called 'Prime Mover' that has been delivered into the LGAs since November 2017", said Steve. "It's a much-needed service for people in regional areas and will help to optimise their health and wellness, and reduce preventable health care interactions".

Anita Hobson-Powell, ESSA Chief Executive Officer said, "Stephen has provided outstanding support across a broad range of sectors including education, occupational health and rural health".

And Steve's response to winning this award—"I am tremendously humbled to receive this accolade. Being able to work in a field where I constantly feel the joy and satisfaction when I know I have made a positive difference to someone's quality of life and seeing how this empowers my clients is reward enough. But to be acknowledged in this way and being able to represent this ever expanding profession of ours in Tasmania is a real honour".

RFDS partners with the Devil

The Save the Tasmanian Devil Appeal, the central charity for our iconic animal is proud to partner with the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

The Devil Appeal is administered by the University of Tasmania and in the past six years has delivered over 3 million dollars' worth of funding to key research and projects for the endangered animal.

All the funds raised come from supporters—passionate individuals, businesses, foundations and schools.

"School kids have a real affection for and interest in our Tassie devil", said the University of Tasmania's Rebecca Cuthill. "Over the past few years I have spoken at many schools, about how children can help raise funds and awareness for our endangered icon and there is always such an incredibly willingness to help out. When we heard about the RFDS dental program we thought there was a wonderful opportunity to show how the Tassie devil also cares about kids".

The large soft toys known as "Taz" and popularised by the Warner Bros. cartoon, are used to demonstrate good dental care.

"We hope that by engaging kids in looking after their teeth, they will also understand the importance of securing a future in the wild for our Tassie devil," she added.



EVERY DAY THE FLYING DOCTOR:



> helps someone every **2 minutes**



> aeromedically retrieves **101 patients**



> delivers **48 GP & Nurse clinics** in the bush



> serves **243 patients** over telehealth lines



> transports **193 patients** for specialist care by road



> flies the equivalent of **1.5 times** around the Earth



> provides service from **24 aerobases** and fleet of **69 planes** and **115 road vehicles**



> pharmaceutical and medicinal provision supplied from **2,348 medical chests**



Touch and go

An aviation manoeuvre requiring a pilot landing on the runway and taking off again without a full stop. Here we provide you with 'quick bites'—a touch and go!

The RFDS Tasmania competed in the Soggy Bottom Boat Race at Waverley Lake on Sunday 4th March. The comment "fortunately we fly planes better than boats" was most applicable. Youngtown Rotary are kindly donating some of their funds to the RFDS. A huge thank you to Zoe and Indiana Carman, Eve Holloway, and Steph Grose for coming second in their home-made cardboard boat that was finally swum, entertainingly across the line.



The soggy plane/boat crosses the line!

A huge thank you to Evandale Primary School and their Grade 1-2 teacher Kathy Castle. Her class raised \$200 by selling popcorn. What a great effort! Cody Rigby presented John Kirwan, CEO with their donation. Evandale School enjoyed a day of activities at the Launceston RFDS Base last year.

A fond farewell at the December Board Meeting for Sarah Merridew, elected in 2006, Tim Maddock elected in 2012, and Elizabeth Daly OAM, elected 2015. Their service to the organisation has been exemplary and we wish them all well. The Board now welcomes Mr Rod Roberts from Hobart.

We hope many of you will visit us in the Hobart Mall or the Launceston Mall, May 15th and 17th respectively. There will be camels!

Our Open Day at the Launceston Base will be Sunday 29th April. All welcome. Hobart and Launceston city will be lit up in RFDS colours during the week 14th-20th May to celebrate First Flight Week 90 years ago.

YES! Here is my gift of support

Please accept my donation of:

☐ \$1,000 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$100
☐ \$50 ☐ \$20 ☐ other \$ _____

Please charge my credit card:

☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express

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OR ☐ my cheque or money order is attached

OR give online at donatese.flyingdoctor.org.au/donate-tasmania

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Surname _____

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☐ I wish my donation to remain anonymous

☐ Please contact me with information about leaving a bequest to the RFDS



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TASMANIA

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