



This document is part of a larger publication and is subject to the disclaimers and copyright of the full version from which it was extracted.

The remaining parts and full version of the publication, as well as updates and copyright and other legal information can be found at:

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn/country-web>

NSW DPI

• FOR RURAL WOMEN & THEIR FAMILIES •

The Country Web

YOUTH

NUMBER 47 WINTER 2008 **FREE NEWSLETTER**



Photo: © iStockphoto/pelvidge



Let's make it happen – together

Rural Women's Network

TODAY'S YOUTH ■ LOOKING BACK ■ DAUGHTERS-IN-LAW

THE COUNTRY WEB

The Country Web is produced by NSW Department of Primary Industries Rural Women's Network (RWN) and is distributed free, three times a year. For more about RWN see page 5.

EDITING/DESKTOP PUBLISHING

Wendy Bortolazzo

CONTRIBUTIONS

Letters, stories, poems and photographs from rural women and their families are always welcome.

FREE MAILING LIST

If you live in New South Wales and would like to be on our free mailing list, contact the RWN.

ADVERTISING

14 500 Country Webs are produced each edition. We welcome advertisements and offer very competitive rates. Contact RWN for more information. Sponsorship and insert options are also available.

CONTACT DETAILS

Rural Women's Network
Locked Bag 21
Orange NSW 2800
Ph: 02 6391 3620
Fax: 02 6391 3650
TTY: 02 6391 3300
Email: rural.women@dpi.nsw.gov.au
Website: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn

COMPETITION TERMS & CONDITIONS

See pages 7 & 23 for competitions.

1. Information on how to enter and prize details form part of the Terms & Conditions. By entering the competition, entrants accept these Terms & Conditions. 2. To enter, you must provide your full name and postal details, and in 25 words or less answer the competition question. 3. Entries must be posted to the stated address by the stated date. 4. This competition is a game of skill. The best answer as judged by the RWN will win. The judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Prizes cannot be transferred or redeemed for cash. The winner will be notified by mail within 14 days from the judging date.

DISCLAIMER

Recognising that some of the information in this document is provided by third parties, the NSW Department of Primary Industries, the State of New South Wales, the author and the publisher take no responsibility for the accuracy, currency, reliability and correctness of any information included in the document provided by such third parties. The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing. However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up-to-date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of NSW Department of Primary Industries, or the user's independent adviser.

contents

FEATURES

- 8 Looking back**
Two women reflect on their youth in the 1930s and 1940s
- 9 A five minute drive**
The experiences of students from rural universities
- 14 Hearing – a resource for life**
Decisions you make in your youth can affect your hearing for life
- 17 Working her out**
Examines the relationship between women and their mothers-in-law in farm families
- 24 Carbon farming**
2008 RIRDC Rural Women's Award finalist Louisa Kiely explains carbon farming
- 26 Applying for grants for youth projects**
Tips for writing successful applications and how to involve youth in the process
- 26 Helping young people through a community business partnership**
Different ways to engage youth through partnerships
- 32 Rites of passage**
The role of rites of passage in today's society



10

In their own words - we hear from some of today's youth



19

2008 Women's Gathering program and registration

REGULAR FEATURES

3	Editorial	23	Book reviews	34	SAC Update
3	Calendar	27	Grants/Funding	36	Web Watch
4	Letters	28	Health	37	What's on, What's new?
5	From Sonia's desk	33	Women in Decision Making	38	Resources
18	Parenting				



*By Nerida
Cullen, State
Council of RLPB
representative,
RWN State
Advisory
Committee*

How true is the old saying 'youth is wasted on the young'?

We who are no longer 'young' grumble about the young. It is as though we want them to enjoy their youth and yet we want them to have the wisdom we believe we have.

We forget our own youth with its moments of sheer joy and frustration and questioning.

We know we do not want our young to make the errors we made. We want to protect them from the blows that life will deal them. Yet we know we cannot. We know they have to discover and judge for themselves.

We get annoyed by their arrogance, their knowing. Their ease with technology alienates and puzzles us. Their friends aren't the sort we'd like for them. The clothes they wear – or the lack of them – reflect a different range of values as they push the boundaries of fashion and acceptability.

The legacy of distance from our youth allows us to forget our earlier intolerance of parents and adults. We were invincible. We were the experts on everything. Our parents knew nothing. We would argue simply to make a point. But there were times when we would listen, when we were chastened by adult wisdom. And so it is today.

The media chooses examples of outrageous behaviour and we come to accept this as the way young people behave. We forget our generation who engaged in similar stunts.

There are few reports on the acts of charity or selflessness that are carried out by the younger generations. Often young people do not want the recognition we want for them. They really are not that different from us, or our younger selves.

We have to remember that the world they inhabit, and will inhabit, is not our world. The technology they know and use today will not be the technology they will use tomorrow. The world is a faster and smaller global village than the one we knew. Manners and etiquette have changed. Their belief in themselves gives them a freedom we may never have experienced. They may not see the need to fight for the rights and equality which they believe they already have.

In a sense this is our legacy to them. We paved the way and now we have to watch them benefit from what went before.

We also have to remember that one day they will become adults, that bane of a young person's life. The wheel turns.

As we shift our focus from our children to our ageing parents, our youth enter the different reality of adulthood. We have to trust them in the same way they trusted us when they were very young; when Dad was a hero and Mum was a healing angel.

They are but us in a different time zone. They have the same needs as we had and have but they try to secure them in ways we never did and in ways we never could.

They have much to teach us in the same way that we have much, much more to teach them. Under the brashness, they know this.

We must celebrate their bravado, their inquisitiveness and their reluctance. They annoy us and perplex us. Yet we admire and love them for who they are.

Youth is the world of the past, the present and the future. We have been there and so have they.

It is the passage through youth that is the foundation for our maturity.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 2008

9–10, SWAN HILL

Shaping Our Futures Together (SOFT) A 2 day interactive self development workshop run by RWN. **More information:** RWN website: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn

OCTOBER 2008

17–19, COONAMBLE

Women's Gathering See the middle pages of this issue for the program and registration form.

21–23, ORANGE

Australian National Field Days Australia's oldest annual agricultural exhibition featuring a range of agricultural machinery, implements, services and ideas from over 600 exhibitors from throughout Australia and overseas.

More information: Ph: 02 6362 1588, info@anfd.com.au, www.anfd.com.au

WHAT'S NEXT?

The next edition of The Country Web will challenge us to rethink how we do things. We would like to know how you are 'doing things differently' to adapt to our changing world, such as innovative ways of living and working.

There will also be a pull-out feature on 'Women's wealth' so let us know your tips for making and saving money.

We welcome your ideas, as well as other information of interest, stories, poems or pictures.

Contributions are required by 19 September 2008 for publication in December 2008.

Send your contributions to:

The Editor, RWN, Locked Bag 21, Orange NSW 2800

Fax: 02 6391 3650

Email: rural.women@dpi.nsw.gov.au

FOOD MILES

This information was brought to our attention by Nick Milham, Director, Socio-economic Evaluation, NSW Department of Primary Industries, in response to the article on Food Miles in the last issue.

While it seems intuitive that the further the distance a product travels the more CO₂ emissions there will be, this does not necessarily mean that local produce is better from a CO₂ emissions perspective.

One argument for reducing food miles (the distance food travels from where it is produced to where it is consumed) is to decrease the CO₂ that is generated during transportation. However, this argument only takes into account the CO₂ created by distributing produce.

Fuel efficiency for volume and the method of transport also need to be factored in. Further, an analysis of the total CO₂ footprint would consider the whole life-cycle of production from the seeding of crops and the birth of livestock, to their delivery to the consumer. In addition to transportation, other inputs such as fertiliser, electricity, feed, tools and housing would be factored in.

When analysed this way, there are examples of export commodities that have a smaller CO₂ footprint than locally produced food. Some examples are:

■ A sustainable transport organisation, Transport 2000, investigated the potential CO₂ footprint of products depending on the distance they travelled and concluded

that, in the case of New Zealand apples, the impact of transport by sea was equivalent to apples travelling by road from southern Europe, despite the difference in distance.

■ A report by the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs found that 'a single indicator based on total food kilometres is an inadequate indicator of sustainability'. The report also found in favour of transporting produce in certain circumstances – for example, importing tomatoes from Spain which produced less CO₂ than growing tomatoes in greenhouses during the UK winter.

■ A Lincoln University report, *Food Miles – Comparative Energy / Emissions Performance of New Zealand's Agriculture Industry*, completed in July 2006, found that key agricultural exports from NZ resulted in fewer emissions than the same primary products produced in Europe even after taking into account the distance travelled to reach key markets. The study considered the life-cycle CO₂ footprint of three exports (apples, onions and lamb) from NZ to the EU and assessed them against the comparable products in the UK. The study found the CO₂ footprint of apples is less, and lamb is spectacularly less, in NZ than in the UK. Only onions had a comparable CO₂ footprint, but that was still after transportation was factored in. The smaller CO₂ footprint of NZ products was attributed to variables such

as a lower dependency on energy-intensive fertilisers in crop production, the capacity for animals to graze all year round and animals consuming less concentrated feed.

RIGHT DIRECTION

Congratulations on an excellent and informative autumn edition of *The Country Web*! I read the mag cover to cover and was impressed by the depth and magnitude of the articles etc. Country women are working hard to raise the bar with their 'resilience' and are certainly at 'the crossroads' of personal awareness and a need to move forward. Perhaps men need a little push in the right direction to keep up with the women!

Bill Whitting, Wagga Wagga

WORDS OF WISDOM

In the last issue we asked our readers about advice they had been given as youth or advice they have given to youth. Here are some of the responses:

Offered in her high school farewell speech:
'Make sure you fall for a handsome heart and not a handsome face'.

Jill Baggett, Mudgee

From her parents:
'Don't spend money you do not have' and 'if you do not have the money, you can't afford it'.

Hellen Crittenden, Gloucester

Never give up, for that is just the place and time that the tide will turn.

– Harriet Beecher Stowe

THE ELYNE MITCHELL RURAL WOMEN'S WRITING AWARD

A award established to encourage rural women to write their stories.

\$1000 prize for each category

- Emerging – women aged 15–25 years
- Open – women over 25 years

More information

www.elynemitchell.com

Ph: 0407 627 482

info@elynemitchell.com

COMPETITION WINNERS: THE COUNTRY WEB NO.46

Diamonds and dust

A. Bowden, Crabbes Creek
M. Atley, Deniliquin

Living the journey

J. Painter, Crooked Corner
L. McEvoy, Coonabarabran
J. Baggett, Mudgee

Reinventing the bush

V. McTyer, Comboyne
J. Atkinson, Warren

Snowflake on my sleeve: a journey of grief and joy

T. Jessop, Bellawongarah
D. Harley, Merimbula
G. Teale-McEvoy, Coonabarabran

Take my hand and I will help you up: feisty farmers philosophies

A. Nixon, Oaklands
P. Bartlett, Manyana



The RWN team: Sonia Muir (Coordinator), Danielle Goolagong (Project officer), and Wendy Bortolazzo (Assistant coordinator)

The Rural Women's Network (RWN) is a statewide government program within NSW Department of Primary Industries and is based at Orange. RWN works in partnership with individuals and agencies to share information and promote action on rural women's issues. The RWN:

- provides information and referrals;
- supports the development of local initiatives;
- works with rural women and families to identify and bring attention to priority issues;
- develops projects with other agencies to address needs;
- provides a medium for networking and information sharing;
- promotes the profile of rural women;
- provides a two-way link between government and rural women; and
- provides policy advice.

Contact the RWN on
Ph: 02 6391 3620
Fax: 02 6391 3650
rural.women@dpi.nsw.gov.au

from Sonia's desk

Sophia Loren said 'there is a fountain of youth: it is your mind, your talents, the creativity you bring to your life and to the lives of others.' She reminds us that we can be innovative at any age; it simply relies on our attitudes and actions.

Last year I heard the dynamic Tania Major (2007 Young Australian of the Year) speak about her passion to improve the lives of Aboriginal children by encouraging them to follow their dreams. She recalled how meeting the 'deadly' [her word!] high profile lawyer and activist Noel Pearson made her think 'if you can come from a mission and get out there and speak your mind, I can do that as well.'

As we get older (and hopefully wiser) we have a responsibility to mentor and support younger people. I hope the perspectives and information in this *Country Web* act as a catalyst to keep you engaged with our leaders of tomorrow.

Listening to young people's points of view is very important in this process. Just as *everyday speaking* is not the same as *public speaking*, *silent listening* is not the same as *active listening*. Active listening shows the speaker that what they are saying is important. This kind of listening is not something that you do every day, so after engaging in active listening take some timeout as it can be tiring.

The Rural Women's Network (RWN) Shaping Our Futures Together (SOFT) course includes sessions on listening, goal setting and exploring ways to boost self esteem. These skills are useful for all ages and stages.

We need a minimum of 12 participants and the courses can be held anywhere in NSW. Special funding means we can run SOFT courses in drought-affected areas for a minimal fee for the next few months.

Contact the RWN if you would like to know more.

SUPPORT FOR COONAMBLE GATHERING

The Coonamble Women's Gathering is on the near horizon (17-19 October).

Gatherings are a wonderful opportunity to learn skills through workshops, listen to inspiring speakers, access information on services, network with other women and have a break from thinking about the effects of drought.

The program is in the middle pages of this issue.

The RWN is keen to support drought-affected women to enable as many as possible to attend.

■ **Support for buses.** We have sourced some special funding to pay for buses but will need local women to manage the coordination. If you would like to organise a bus from your area simply contact me and we can work together to make it happen.

■ **Free registrations.** NSW DPI has five complimentary registrations to give away.

To apply, just email, fax or post an Expression of Interest to the RWN by Friday 19 September. Make sure you include:

- your name
- contact details
- a short paragraph on why you would like to attend.

Preference will go to drought-affected women who have never been to a Gathering.

RWN COORDINATOR



How wonderful to see mothers like Judith Jones sharing learning experiences with her daughters Lauren and Jessica at the 'Look Great, Feel Fantastic' day held in Canowindra in June

Visit the Rural Women's Network internet site at
www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn



XYZ of today's youth

The condition of being young; the period from puberty to the attainment of full growth.

This is the definition of youth in the Macquarie Dictionary. In this issue of *The Country Web* we have loosely defined youth as people aged 14–24 years.

The terms ‘baby boomers’ and generations ‘X’, ‘Y’ and ‘Z’ are used in popular culture to describe groups of people influenced by different socio-economic conditions at the time they are growing up. The box on the right summarises some broad characteristics of each generation

DECREASE IN YOUTH

Reports from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) show that Australia’s population is changing.

In 1901, Australia’s population was less than 20% of its current size and males outnumbered females.

From 1901 to 1999, the percentage of people aged under 15 years decreased from 35.1% to 20.7%.

On the other hand, the proportion of people aged over 65 years increased threefold from 4% in 1901 to 12.2% in 1999.

Table 1 shows that the aging population trend continued 2000–2004 and it is projected to continue from 2011–2101.

WHAT YOUTH ARE DOING

In 2004, 86% of people aged 15–19 years (1 179 400 people) were engaged in either full-time education, full-time employment or a combination of part-time education and part-time employment (Figure 1).

The level of engagement was found to be affected by the following factors:

- **Sex differences.** Young women tend to be less engaged than young men.
- **Area of residence.** People outside capital cities were less engaged than their metropolitan counterparts.
- **Educational background.** Year 12 completers were more likely to be fully engaged than those who left school earlier.

BROAD CHARACTERISTICS OF BABY BOOMERS, GENERATIONS X, Y AND Z

Baby boomers Born: 1946–1964
Education: Free university education available.
Career: Experienced in the work place, approaching retirement. Work long hours. The first generation to have women in senior positions. Job status is important.
Attitudes: Risk takers, adventurous, independent, value creativity and individual freedom.
Family: Challenged their traditional parents with their music and political attitudes.

Generation X Born: 1965–1979
Education: Highly educated generation.
Career: Experienced in the work place. Committed to having work/life balance. Possess transferable work skills. Will have many jobs and many are self-employed.
Attitudes: Cynical towards politics, independent, informal, entrepreneurial, value teamwork, not intimidated by authority.
Family: Often had both parents working. Value the time they spend with their children.

Generation Y Born: 1980–1994
Education: Very technically literate. Experiencing increased costs for education.
Career: About to enter or recently entered the work place. Expect to change jobs frequently.
Attitudes: Team players, strong sense of fairness, respond to direct communication, easily bored. Their respect is earned not positional.
Family: Many have separated parents. Many have both parents working. Peer-oriented rather than family-oriented.

Generation Z Born: 1994 to now
Education: Start education younger and projected to study longer.
Career: Workforce of tomorrow. Expect to change jobs frequently.
Attitudes: Technologically and socially empowered. Most materially supplied generation.
Family: Children of older, wealthier parents. Have fewer siblings.

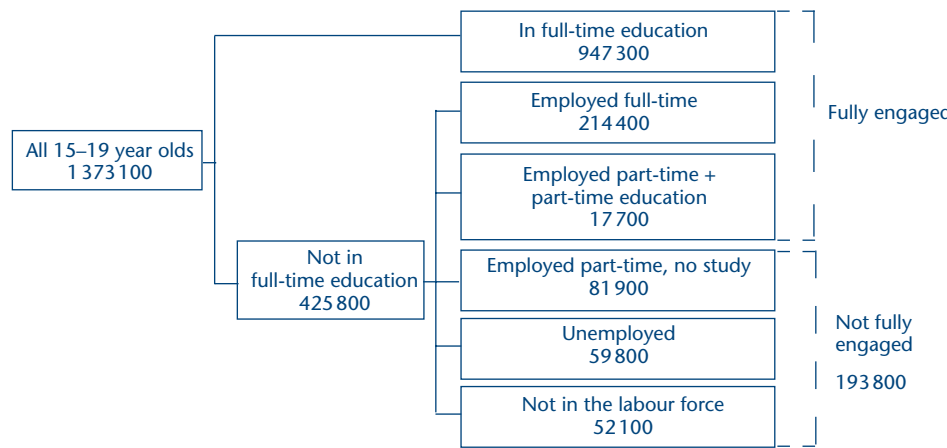
Compiled from a number of internet sources, including Wikipedia (www.wikipedia.com)

Table 1. Australia’s population by age

Population:	Units	Measured					Projected		
		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2011	2051	2101
Total	'000	19 153	19 413	19 641	19 873	20 111	21 524	26 422	26 356
Aged 0-14	%	20.7	20.5	20.3	20.0	19.8	17.8	14.0	13.8
Aged 15-64	%	66.9	66.9	67.0	67.2	67.3	67.5	58.9	57.2
Aged 65+	%	12.4	12.5	12.7	12.8	13.0	14.7	27.1	28.9
Aged 80+	%	2.9	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	4.1	10.4	11.6

From: www.abs.gov.au/ausstats

Figure 1. Engagement of people aged 15–19 years in education and the labour force (2004)



From: www.abs.gov.au/ausstats

More information

Australian Bureau of Statistics, Ph: 1300 135 070, www.abs.gov.au

Tween culture

Adapted from an article from Hornsby Shire Council. Reproduced with permission.

Tweens are girls aged 6–11 years who are between childhood and adolescence.

First named by Lynn Mikel Brown and Carol Gilligan in 1992, girls in this age group are on the edge of adolescence and are seemingly wise beyond their years – ‘nine going on forty’ as some adults describe them. Toys and accessories that were once seen to be popular items of the later teenage years now seem to be the interest of young pre-teens. For example, Barbie dolls were once played with by 11 and 12 year olds. Now they are mostly played with by very young girls. Indeed Mattel, noting this trend, has begun marketing a new ‘My Scene’ Barbie targeted at eleven year old girls.

Tweens are a generation of children that are fashion-conscious, fad-loving and filled with attitude. Parents face a constant struggle with this group with their desire for independence versus the need for boundaries. Tweens are too big for child’s play and too small for teenage entertainment.

The following examples from parents of tweens shows differences between girls and boys in this age group:

Jenny already has tangible angst. She worries about her weight and has nightmares about a gunman coming to her school. Most days Adam’s biggest concern is a lost action figure.

A father tells me his six-year-old didn’t smile for her school picture this year. He says, ‘She told me that models don’t smile’. This is the same girl who fussed about wearing a winter coat last year because it made her look fat. His sons still wear his hand-me-down sweatshirts.

From: *What’s a tween?* Mary Manz-Simon, 2001

Girls are more susceptible than ever to buying into the ‘perfect body image’ and the idea that consuming and adorning themselves brings pleasure.

Today’s tweens are confident, high-tech, optimistic, street-smart and marketing savvy. They are on a fast track to growing

up. They are influenced by new media, virtual friends and the power that comes with technology. Today’s tweens represent the first generation to practice adolescent independence on the Internet: Tweens do not need parents or teachers to help them gather information.

This high level of competence with technology has partially fuelled the designation of tweens as the new target group in marketing. In America, direct spending by tweens totals an incredible \$14 billion annually.

Better nutrition is one of the major reasons puberty begins earlier than ever. As a result, 8–9 year olds may experience the mood swings previously associated with teens. Emotionally, tweens cope with new fears. As young children they had fantasy-based fears: they were afraid of thunderstorms or the dark. The fears of tweens are shaped by their experiences: a nine year old who watched the news about a local rapist might worry all day about going home to an empty house.

During these years, peers assume more importance. This influence is common in areas of style, including haircuts and clothes. Self-concept is partially determined by the group to which the tween belongs. Cognitively, tweens begin to practice new ways of thinking. Although parents may complain about their self-centred tunnel vision, 8–12 year olds begin to develop almost adult levels of thinking. They can visualise changing places with someone else and project possible behaviours.

More information and resources

Full article: www.hornsby.nsw.gov.au/ourcommunity/index.cfm?NavigationID=1777

The tween years by Donna G. Corwin, published by McGraw-Hill, Ph: 9900 1800, www.mcgraw-hill.com.au

What’s happening to our girls? by Maggie Hamilton, published by Penguin, Ph: 03 9811 2400, www.penguin.com.au, www.maggiehamilton.org

A different dream

Amanda Ducker, profiled in our *Daring to Dream* book (see back cover), wrote to tell us that she had moved.

Originally from Sydney, Amanda lived in Nundle (near Tamworth) for seven years and has recently moved to Tasmania.

Her reflections on life in Nundle and her move to Hobart appeared in an article in *The Sydney Morning Herald* earlier this year.

[According to] Bernard Salt ... author of The Big Shift, a book charting geographical lifestyle trends in Australia ... ‘While you might continue to enjoy the isolation and peace of a farmhouse-type existence, to today’s teenager, who is very tribal, that just doesn’t cut it.’

... I love Sydney, but it is part of my old life, the one where I could head for the door without three pairs of eyes pleading with me, please don’t go, we love you so. To live well there – in the style we’ve enjoyed in Nundle, without much money – we’d both need to be working too much. I cannot bear the thought of any of us feeling torn by that demand. In Hobart, I think we can still have the good life together – as close as can be – whilst enjoying manageable workloads and the novelty of all the amenities and our easy access to them.

The full article can be read at: tasmaniantimes.com/index.php?weblog/article/out-of-the-trees-and-into-the-light

Artist Hanna Kay moved from Sydney to rural NSW in 2000 which inspired her to keep a journal. Her words and artworks have been brought together in a book *Notes from the Shed*.

To be in the running to win a copy write and tell us in 25 words or less what a ‘journal’ means to you.

Entries close: 19 September.

See page 2 for competition terms and conditions.

Macmillan Art Publishing
ISBN 1-978-1-8768-3258-2
RRP: \$60.00

READER
GIVE-AWAY

Looking back

Kim Deans, NSW Department of Primary Industries Rural Women's Network State Advisory Committee

I recently asked my two grandmothers to take a walk down memory lane and write down some recollections of their youth. Let me introduce you.

Enid Shaw was born in 1920 in Newcastle and grew up in Wickham, an industrial centre near the harbour. She recently moved to Inverell having spent over 50 years on the farm 'Manitoba' in Delungra.

Lila Uebergang was born in 1918. Lila grew up on a 640 acre farm at Horsham in Victoria. She now lives in Inverell, but spent most of her life at 'Pearsby Hall', a farm near Delungra.

Growing up in the city, Enid remembers the ice man calling twice a week with blocks of ice for the ice chest and a rabbit man coming once a week. The rabbit they bought was baked, stewed, curried or casseroled for a cheap meal.

Lila remembers they were mostly self sufficient on the farm she grew up on. They produced their own butter, cream, milk, eggs, chicken, lamb, fruit and vegetables.

With no television or computers there was very little entertainment besides each other. For both women, their pastimes were simple.

Enid remembers their main source of entertainment was a sing-along around a piano. They also enjoyed going to the cinema on Saturday afternoons, dancing, hiking, picnicking, swimming at the

beach and catching prawns at night off the jetty. She belonged to the St James Anglican Church choir and the Girls Friendly Society who held a social evening once a month.

Lila remembers going to country dances in halls and barns, listening to the wireless (radio), going to Sunday school and the yearly Sunday school picnic, attending the local show and socialising with family and friends. She also recalls holidaying at Portland on the coast of Victoria and celebrating wonderful family Christmases with roast turkey and puddings with money hidden inside. Lila was also a member of the Girl Guides and fondly remembers a jamboree in Melbourne that was attended by Lord Baden-Powell and scouts and guides from all over the world.

A memorable occasion for Enid was seeing an oil tanker catch fire in the harbour in 1930 that resulted in the school and residents being evacuated to Hamilton.

Lila remembers Charles Kingsford Smith landing his light plane in a neighbour's paddock when she was 12 and the whole town coming to see it.

For Lila's family, Saturday morning meant lining up for a dose of Epsom salts, castor oil and cod liver oil for their health.

Saturday night was bath night. Lila's family had a chip heater for the water. Starting with the youngest, the whole family bathed, adding more hot water as the bath cooled down.

Both women remember economising during the depression – using salt for toothpaste, homemade soap to hand wash clothes in the wood heated coppers – but they never went hungry.

Career options for girls growing up in this time were limited.

In the city, Enid graduated from high school and then went to Newcastle Domestic Science school. Music was Enid's passion. She learned to play the piano from age five and had always wanted to be a concert pianist. After qualifying to teach music she tried nursing for six months then taught piano. In 1942, Enid and her best friend decided to join the army in a burst of patriotism during a recruitment drive in Newcastle. Whilst waiting for her call up she met my grandfather Tom at a social evening. He was an airman at the base in Williamstown. Enid served as a wireless telegraphist in the army at various signal offices and remembers living for the day during the war.

Lila doesn't remember being ambitious career-wise, but thought she might get married some day. On finishing school Lila stayed at home on the farm until marrying my grandfather Ray, a local farmer, in 1943.

Enid's parents encouraged her to always walk tall and proud and do her best in whatever she did. 'We had so little back in the twenties and thirties and yet we had so much. I think

that honesty, love and loyalty to those who love you are the main ingredients for a good life and I still remember the golden rule at Wickham school – do unto others as you would have them do unto you'.

Our lifestyle was so different to today, no rush and bustle.

– Lila Uebergang

For today's youth, Lila offers the following advice: always be honest, take a pride in what you do, respect your parents and appreciate what they have done for you. Do not expect to start out in life with the things your parents have worked a lifetime to achieve. Work hard to be successful even if you start off with very little – the effort you make is character building. Kindness and compassion to others less fortunate is always important as you go through life. Fame and fortune are no recipe for happiness or to be envied – it's often the simple things that give the most pleasure. Be proud to be Australian, it is still a lucky country.

I would encourage other Country Web readers to record their memories. They are such a treasure to pass on to your family. Other members of my family are writing their memoirs since I've written about my grandmothers. Lila is finding out about all sorts of mischief from her children as they record their own stories! – Kim Deans

A five minute drive

Helen Machalias, student at the University of New England, Armidale

Train travel for four hours a day. Overcrowded lecture theatres. A sea of strange faces. Thankfully this has not been my university experience.

I am in my last year at the University of New England (UNE) in Armidale, and more than ever I am grateful to have attended a regional university.

I have lived in Armidale all my life and both my parents and grandparents worked at UNE. People often assume that I chose to study here out of fear of the unknown but this couldn't be further from the truth. Wanting to study Arts meant I could have attended a number of universities. I chose to study at UNE because of its strong reputation in humanities and staying in Armidale meant I could maintain my network of friends and continue to contribute to the community. It is a bonus to have lectures in rooms where my brother and I used to play hide and seek!

Other people attending regional universities have similar reasons for their choices. Chi Tranter (20) is studying a Bachelor of Communications at Charles Sturt University in Bathurst. She considered attending a metropolitan university but the strong reputation of her degree influenced her decision. She adds, 'I have been able to get a lot of support, help and advice from lecturers and tutors as they are

actually on-site instead of on a screen lecturing to several universities [as they are in some of the city universities]'. There are many benefits of regional universities. The financial outlay for students and their parents is often less and there is a stronger sense of community, compared to city universities, due to the high availability of on-campus accommodation. Smaller class sizes mean students receive more individual attention and feedback, which is appreciated by Tjirra Francis, (19), who is training at Southern Cross University in Coffs Harbour to be a nurse. 'To study nursing, many people suggested a larger university since they are capable of providing better avenues for specific nursing pathways, yet I have found classes are more personal [because they are] smaller and lecturers are very accessible'.

When I told people of my decision to study in Armidale, I received a significant amount of criticism. Some people said that with my high UAI [university admissions index], I was mad not to study at a university in Sydney. It obviously had no effect on my decision, but it is a shame



Booloominbah Homestead, UNE

many regional people place a higher value on a degree from a metropolitan university.

Rural communities need to celebrate and support their universities by providing more than a ready-made workforce from the town's population. Women who have studied in regional universities have a responsibility to promote the many great things they offer. Just because a university is smaller and surrounded by parkland doesn't mean it is an inferior academic institution.

Summing up my regional university experience in a few words: unparalleled opportunities, amazing support, a great sense of community... and being able to sleep in on Monday because campus is only a five minute drive away!

THE OUTBACK

The outback is a beautiful sight,
When sunset comes it fills with light,
By morning time we're up and about,
By evening time we're all worn out,
The cows are in their paddocks eating all the grass,
And we are hearing crickets chirping very fast,
The colour of the sunset is pink, purple, blue and white,
I think it's gonna be a very starry sky tonight.

— Brianna Deans, Tenterfield, age 11

Australian musical

With an engaging story, great songs and relevance to issues facing every rural and regional community, the new Australian musical *Swag* seems certain to attract plenty of attention when it opens in Cowra on Friday 19 September.

Written by Maggie May Gordon of Trangie and with music by well-known composer Michael Maurice Harvey, *Swag* is the latest production for the Cowra Musical and Dramatic Society.

Swag tells the story of a battling farming family doing it tough in the harsh years of the great depression.

'It's a wonderful story and we are very proud to have the opportunity to bring it to the stage for the first time', said director Jenny Friend.

ADVERTISEMENT

The first Australian production of a home grown musical set to capture your heart!

Swag

A love story set on the land during the Great Depression

Presented by the Cowra Musical and Dramatic Society Inc.

Cowra Showground Pavilion

19-26 September

Enquiries/bookings

026341 3337

In their own words

For this issue of The Country Web we asked some fabulous youth questions about themselves and rural life and for a slogan to promote rural living. Here is what they said.



Ryan Jennings, from Coolamon, is in Year 9 at school in Wagga Wagga.

What are the best things about living in a rural area?

More room for activities, the great outdoors experience in fresh, clean, green air. More freedom.

What is a common misconception about living in a rural area?

[City people] do not understand big issues such as water, drought, distance, the balance between environmental issues and production, how important farmers are to the production of food to feed people in the city.

What could be done to make life better for rural youth?

Provision of suitable activities such as skate parks, rock concerts, music jam sessions, etc. – more things to do.

Thriving – not just surviving.

– Ryan Jennings

What do you do for fun?

Sports such as Aussie Rules football and touch football, swimming in the dam, play guitar, movies, camping with my mates, shooting/spotlighting.

What is your most prized possession?

My steel stringed, acoustic electric guitar.

What is the best piece of advice you have been given?

'If you get knocked down, get up again and go harder'.

What would you like to have achieved by the age of 30?

A successful career and a relationship. Good health.



Bridget O'Kane turns 20 this year. She grew up in Crookwell and is studying Arts in Canberra and hopes to major in English and history.

What are the best things about living in a rural area?

I love the sense of community [in Crookwell], of going to do the shopping and it taking twice as long because you've been stopped talking. I love how much people care because of the common bonds we share. I love the history, the ties between families and to

the land. I love all the smiles, the waves and the cuddles when I get back – it makes me warm inside. It's one of the feelings a city can't generate.

I wouldn't be trading places with anyone.

– Bridget O'Kane

What is a common misconception about living in a rural area?

That because you have lived in small community and have gone to a small country school you have inevitably achieved at a lower level and have been deprived of opportunities. Not true. Small communities and small schools produce equally high achievers who take every opportunity afforded to them and even make opportunities where there didn't seem to be any. So often it's about the individual. There are absolutely no barriers to success if you desire it enough.

What could be done to make life better for rural youth?

Rural youth need support. Often the decision to leave their community to undertake further studies, to travel or to take up an employment opportunity is a difficult one and their community needs to be behind them. Rural youth have the same right to take the opportunities the wider world has presented to them. Following the heart often makes for a happier individual who in later years will perhaps make a return to the community bringing with them the skills and energy so critical to the survival of rural areas.

What do you do for fun?

When I come home now I just have fun catching up with all my family and friends. It would seem that absence does make the heart grow fonder. I miss my hometown so to come back is always good.

I enjoy socialising immensely. I also love to read and write and music usually generates good times for me.

What is your most prized possession?

My Hyundai Excel 'Audrey' and my laptop. My car is my independence... It means I can go between both my homes (Canberra and Crookwell) which is immensely important to me. My laptop means my university work can go between both my homes as well giving me plenty of flexibility.

What is the best piece of advice you have been given?

The advice I got before I came to university from various people at home – to make [the most of] the opportunities that were ahead of me and never look back. I constantly remember the words of those people and how much they meant whenever I doubt myself.

What would you like to have achieved by the age of 30?

My Arts degree firstly. By 30 I would also like to be settled into a career and a lifestyle that is making me happy. I have dreams about writing novels and songs so hopefully I'll be well on the road to doing that as well.