



Department of
Primary Industries

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HIDDEN
TREASURES
HONOUR ROLL


2019

celebrating women volunteers
who give so much to their
rural communities.



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Hidden Treasures is an initiative of Department of Primary Industries' Rural Women's Network.

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Ministers' message

"The purpose of life is to be useful, to be honourable, to be compassionate, to have it make some difference that you have lived and lived well."

- RALPH WALDO EMERSON

The women on the 2019 Hidden Treasures Honour Roll have lived this quote. We are proud to present these nominees and honour the contributions they have made through volunteering.

The impact that volunteers have on our way of life is extraordinary. The celebration of these nominees is an important part of ensuring their work is respected as a deeply valuable element in our community network.

The theme for National Volunteer Week 2019 was Making a world of difference, which highlights the role of volunteers in our community and acknowledges their generous contributions. There are more than two million volunteers in NSW, who give about 240 million hours of voluntary work per year.

But we can't quantify their impact with numbers alone – because the work they do is priceless. Our small gesture of appreciation through their inclusion in this honour roll is a tribute to these rural and regional women, as we continue to focus on building resilience and a rewarding future for the next generation beyond the current drought.

Despite the tough times we find ourselves in, this year is a year for celebration with the Hidden Treasures Roll reaching its tenth year and Volunteering Australia celebrating 30 years of National Volunteer Week. We encourage you to join these celebrations by reading these stories, and perhaps taking inspiration to start or continue your own volunteering journey.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Adam Marshall".

Hon. Adam Marshall MP

Minister for Agriculture
and Western NSW



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gareth Ward".

Hon. Gareth Ward MP

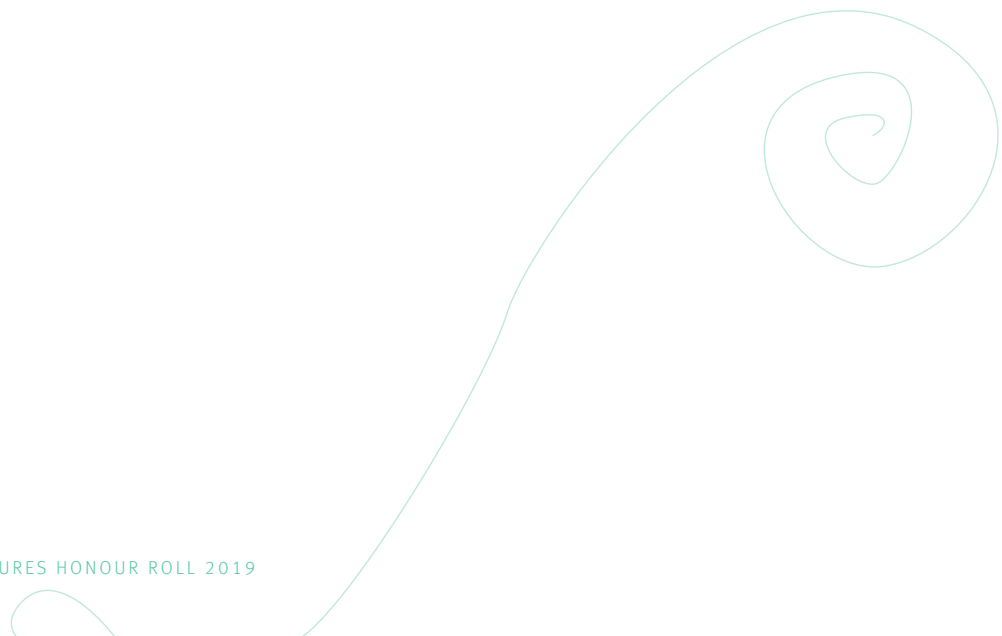
Minister for Families and
Communities, and Disability Services



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bronnie Taylor".

Hon. Bronnie Taylor MLC

Minister for Mental Health,
Regional Youth and Women



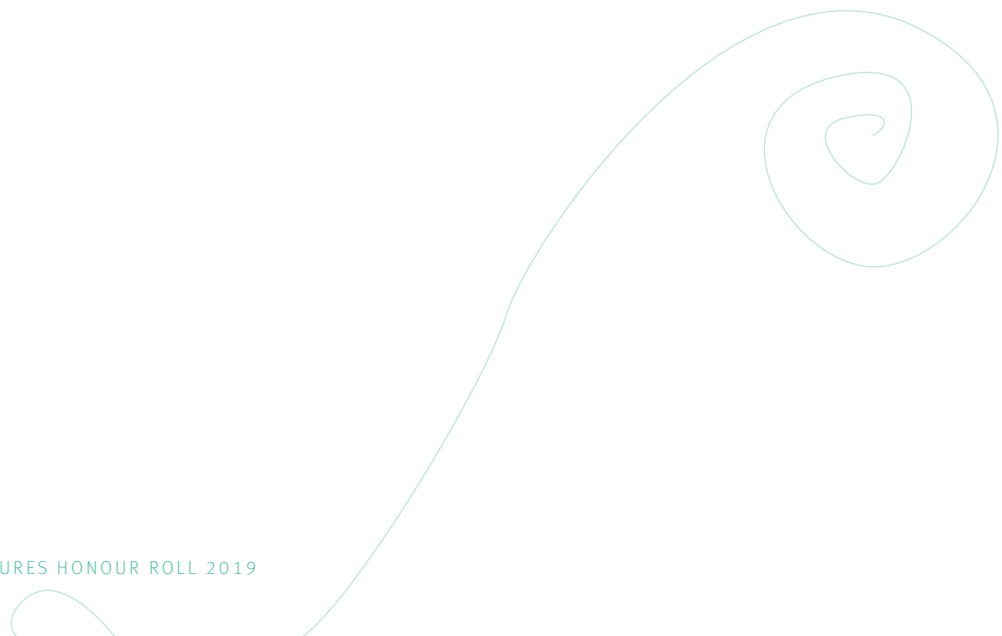
2019 hidden Treasures nominees

- | | | |
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| 7 Louise Amey [CASINO] | 14 Wilma Cunningham [GRIFFITH] | 19 Jillian Hamling [SCONE] |
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| 9 Judith Bond [DENILQUIN] | 16 Tamara Ferguson [TAMWORTH] | 22 Dione Howard [MILBRULONG] |
| 10 Sarah Boorer [BATHURST] | 16 Bev Fletcher [CABARITA BEACH] | 22 Rachael Hyde [NARRANDERA] |
| 10 Maria Cameron [MERRIWA] | 17 Val Fletcher [QUIRINDI] | 23 Margaret Jefferies [DENILQUIN] |
| 10 Kerry Cassells-Noble [MOREE] | 17 Moira Franklin [GLENIFFER] | 23 Helen Karrasch [ORANGE] |
| 11 Heather Christie [NARRANDERA] | 18 Gillian Fraser [DENILQUIN] | 23 Lynette Keanelly [OAKDALE] |
| 12 Lucy Collingridge [NARRABRI] | 18 Sheena Geppert [COBAR] | 24 Karryn Keed [PEAK HILL] |
| 12 Elizabeth Cotching [BURONGA] | 19 Sue Gordon [YOUNG] | 25 Lorraine Kefford [WHITTON] |
| 13 Anne Crowther [FALLS CREEK] | 19 Terese Gunn [FORBES] | 25 Jillian Kelly [COONAMBLE] |



2019 hidden Treasures nominees

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|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
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| 26 Julie Lee [BALLINA] | 32 Wendy Robb [NYNGAN] | 38 Bessie Thomas [COBAR] |
| 27 Debbie Matheson [NYNGAN] | 32 Kerry Roberts [NARROMINE] | 39 Denise Thomas [DENILIQVIN] |
| 27 Joy Maunder [QUIRINDI] | 33 Sarah Rushton [NARRABRI] | 39 Lyn Tout [SCONE] |
| 27 Lyn McCormick [BYRON BAY] | 33 Janice Saunders [DARETON] | 39 Cassandra Tyack [WIRRINYA] |
| 28 Janice McGilvray [NARRANDERA] | 34 Kay Scott [MCLEANS RIDGES] | 40 Tia Veech [WILTON] |
| 28 Cassandra McLaren [MERRIWA] | 35 Alison Shurmer [BATHURST] | 40 Rhonda Watt [CUMNOCK] |
| 28 Sylvia Micallef [CASINO] | 35 Kay Smith [DENILIQVIN] | 41 Lee Watts [SCONE] |
| 29 Elizabeth Nalder [GILGANDRA] | 35 Helen Spilsted [BROKEN HILL] | 41 Katie White [NYNGAN] |
| 30 Elizabeth Newstead [MOLONG] | 36 Margaret Stanworth [DENILIQVIN] | 41 Vicki White [MANILLA] |
| 30 Frances O'Connor [WOOTTON] | 36 Jeanette Stephens [BURONGA] | 42 Sue-Ellen Wilkin [MOORE CREEK] |
| 31 Ita O'Regan [CASSILIS] | 36 Maureen Strutt [DENILIQVIN] | 42 Justine Williams [GEURIE] |
| 31 Lorraine Osmond [NARRANDERA] | 37 Mary Sutcliffe [NARRANDERA] | 43 Margaret Zell [GILGANDRA] |
| | | 44 Volunteer Agencies |



The following stories celebrate and acknowledge rural women volunteers across New South Wales and were submitted by appreciative members of their communities.

louise amey [CASINO]

Louise has spent nearly all her life in Casino and is a devoted and dedicated long-term volunteer with animal rescue organisations, both locally and interstate. She spends a lot of her own time and money to work with many rescue organisations to get animals to safety. Louise always goes out of her way to make sure that no animal suffers and ensures all animals find a suitable home and are cared for extremely well. This could include driving to Sydney or Brisbane (or further afield) to transport stray, abandoned or surrendered animals. She also runs the local animal shelter for Richmond Valley Council and is its companion animals education officer. On top of this, Louise is also a committee member of the Casino Meals on Wheels. The town would not be the same without her!

lynda atkinson [DELUNGRA]

Awesome with flaws (flawsome), Delungra's Lynda Atkinson describes herself as 'not a day over fabulous!' Dynamic, capable Lynda grew up in a family of unconditional love, learning and awareness to have empathy and kindness for others less able and to be of service to others when needed. Wife of Peter, mother to eight,

grandmother of 14, Lynda infuses her family and the community with her 'live, laugh, love' mantra. With careers in finance, real estate and counselling, she is involved in many volunteer groups in the community including the Inverell Life Foundation and its Rural Outreach Centre, the Rural Financial Assistance Scheme, the P&C, local playgroup, the dementia home and also in activities such as bingo and the RSL girl-in-a-million. A member of the Delungra District Development Committee's Rural Support Network Service, she is often approached by others wishing to donate or help, particularly in the areas of domestic violence and the ongoing drought. Lynda is also involved in the Myall Creek branch of the Country Women's Association of NSW, is the international officer for the Gwydir group and is on the Delungra rooms committee. She is extremely dedicated to helping others and admits to sometimes not saying 'no' enough; the stimulus for the book she is writing. In 2018, Lynda was awarded a Community Volunteer Award and in 2019 was named Delungra Citizen of the Year. Our community is so fortunate people like Lynda don't say no more often. They encourage us to appreciate everything and aim to be flawsome!

emma ayliffe [LAKE CARGELLIGO]

Emma grew up on vast sheep stations in pastoral South Australia but a career as an agronomist has seen her work across NSW and become an owner of her own consulting business by the age of 28. Keen to give back to organisations that have helped her along the way, she volunteers her time with the Local Cotton Growers Association,

Tulli Young Farmers and Picture You in Agriculture programs, Young Farming Champions and the Youth Voices Leadership Team. In winter she also donates her time to her local netball club. Emma estimates she spends up to 10 hours each week in a volunteer capacity. Emma finds her volunteer work with Picture You in Agriculture to be particularly rewarding. As a Young Farming Champion she goes into schools with The Archibull Prize to engage with students face-to-face about the cotton industry with innovative games such as Good Bug, Bad Bug. She has also been known to beam live from a paddock directly into classrooms, which is popular with students and teachers alike. Emma is the acting chair of the Youth Voices Leadership Team, a group of professional agriculturists who aim to provide a youth leadership voice to community, media and industry, and to support new inductees into the Young Farming Champions program. Emma also shares her experiences as a public speaker at industry and community events. By paying forward the support and encouragement she has received over the years, Emma hopes to give similar opportunities to the next generation.

wendy bawn [JOHNS RIVER]

Wendy was born in Sydney and moved to the sleepy little village of Johns River in 1979, with her husband and three children. Being a 'city girl', Wendy had to quickly adapt to the new challenges of farming life on a 100-acre property. Since moving to the country, Wendy and the family quickly became passionate about their local community and started the journey of

volunteering. Over the years, Wendy has been very involved in the local school P&C, instrumental in starting the local school canteen and was a Sunday School teacher at the local Salvation Army Church. Now in her 77th year, Wendy may have slowed a little but her passion for volunteering continues. Current roles include treasurer of the Johns River Community Hall and her role as land and sea bird coordinator for wildlife organisation FAWNA (NSW) Inc. Wendy has been volunteering at the community hall for the past 34 years and with FAWNA (NSW) Inc. for more than 15 years. She cares for and rehabilitates injured wildlife, including numerous Tawny Frogmouths and her beloved Pelicans. One of her greatest achievements was to capture and rescue a badly injured Pelican (named Mr Rippon), which had been evading capture for weeks. Mr Rippon had suffered horrific damage to his pouch. Wendy caught him, drove him 45 minutes to a vet, who was able to operate and repair the pouch, and then released him back after another 45 minute journey. Wendy spends 18 hours a month at the hall and upwards of 10 to 15 hours per month for FAWNA and is worthy of the honour roll.

pamela bell [PEAK HILL]

Pam has called Peak Hill home for the past 55 years, after marrying husband Robert in 1964 and living on the family farm until they retired into the township. Pam has worked tirelessly and volunteered her time to improve education and health services in our rural community. Pam completed the Leaving Certificate at Dubbo High School and completed an Honours Degree in

Applied Science at the University of NSW. This led to a career as a wool research scientist with the CSIRO and in 1962 Pamela was invited to the University of California, USA as a textile scientist. However her heart remained in Australia! After completing her teacher training at New England University in 1973, Pam commenced her successful career as a secondary teacher at Peak Hill Central School and finished her career as principal of Tullamore Central School, always striving to achieve the best educational outcomes for her students. As chair of the Kooringle Nursing Home (now part of the Tullamore Multipurpose Service) Pam led a team of dedicated volunteers to ensure accreditation standards were met and its future assured. As chair of the Peak Hill Health Council, Pam represented the community on the planning committee for Peak Hill's Multipurpose Health Centre. As an active member of the Peak Hill branch of Australian Red Cross for more than 20 years, Pam became the representative of all the country branches on the NSW divisional board, a role that was recognised with an honorary life membership of Australian Red Cross in 2017. As the centenary of Dubbo High School approached in 2017, Pam led another team of dedicated volunteers to compile the school centenary book 'Milestones and Memories'. Pam is an active member of Peak Hill Leisure Arts and Craft Centre, where she continues to encourage others to develop their skills and undertake leadership roles, which has ensured the sustainability of the centre. Pam also donates her time to fundraise and support the local show, scripture classes, seniors' luncheon, street stalls, voluntary work at the information centre and caring for the elderly in our community. Pam is

quoted as saying "voluntary service is the rent we pay for our room on earth and I am blessed with 5-star accommodation!"

judith bond [DENILIQVIN]

Judy Bond was born in Brisbane, Queensland in 1937. Sadly, Judy's father passed away at the age of 37 when Judy was just 10 years old. Judy's mother went on to remarry and Judy was thrilled that the marriage resulted in a new half-sister. Judy worked as a stenographer until she met and married her husband Frank when she was 19. They went on to live in Melbourne's bayside suburbs and had six children together. The family enjoyed camping holidays and always dreamed of travelling Australia in a caravan. In 1966, the family were invited to set up a caravan park at Lake Eppalock, where they went on to spend 20 years managing the park. During this time Judy and Frank purchased an 800-acre underdeveloped property just outside Deniliquin, as they had always loved the area. After selling the park, they went on to purchase a house in Deniliquin, where two of their children were living with their families. Judy and Frank continue to regularly travel all over the country and overseas in caravans, yachts and motorhomes. Judy volunteers each Monday at the Deniliquin Visitor Information Centre (seven hours a week); as an experienced caravanner she provides our visitors with wonderful insight into the best spots to camp, eat and experience during their stay. Without dedicated volunteers like Judy it wouldn't be possible to keep our centre open. Judy is a

very active member of the community and also volunteers at other community organisations such as Lions Club.

sarah boorer [BATHURST]

Sarah Boorer is a young woman who joined our board of management in 2018. Sarah is a well-known local identity so we were extremely pleased to have her join our team. Sarah is enthusiastic and has lots of new ideas, which are very welcome. One area in which Sarah has particularly provided assistance and support is the promotion of Bathurst Seymour Centre, which is vital in the current climate of competition. She adds to the excellent governance team that we have at the centre. Sarah is also involved in other local groups and charity, which she does with good humour, diligence and common sense.

maria cameron [MERRIWA]

Maria works for Local Land Services (LLS) in the Hunter as the regional drought support officer. While working for LLS in community engagement she has worked over and above her role description assisting with both the Sir Ivan bushfires in Cassilis and more recently the drought being experienced across NSW. Maria is both professional and personable ensuring the needs of people and bureaucracy are met 110% and a worthy hidden treasures nominee. Maria enjoys getting involved in her local Merriwa community where she has lived for 25 years

on the family's beef cattle property with her husband David and her four children. She has filled numerous volunteer positions with Merriwa Preschool, St Joseph's P&F, Merriwa Central School P&C and Merriwa Pony Club committees and was a founding member of Merriwa Activity Centre providing after-school and vacation care for the rural community. Maria has enjoyed stints as the local zone pony club and stock horse camp cooks serving with her team up to 160 hungry riders and helpers. An experienced rural journalist, she helps many committees promote events and obtain funding through penning successful grant submissions. Maria is passionate about the future of her local Merriwa Show committee (now established 110 years) and in an effort to keep local youth involved initiated an annual Interschool Challenge event, which has now been running for six years with associate judging opportunities across all show sections, the Group 3 Junior Judging Finals and workshops with show stewards, and the popular Merriwa Farm Safety Day for Upper Hunter schools.

kerry cassells-noble [MOREE]

Kerry was born and bred in Moree. She did all her schooling in Moree and worked locally at Permewans and Hong Yuen before embarking on a 46-year career as an enrolled nurse, registered nurse, midwife and now clinical nurse specialist. She has worked in Moree Hospital, Auburn Hospital, Westmead Hospital, Pius X Aboriginal Corporation medical service and now Justice

Health for the past 20 years nursing the most vulnerable of patients who are incarcerated at the Moree Police Cells. Kerry was the first full-time police cell nurse in NSW and all other police cells are modelled on Moree, where the patients (inmates) are looked after as if they were in a hospital environment and ward situation. Her compassion and empathy is well known and she is both culturally and spiritually aware of the needs of the Aboriginal people she comes in contact with. Kerry also volunteered in rugby union for 22 years starting at the Moree junior rugby club for 14 years, Central North rugby club as manager and secretary for 14 years then manager of the 17s and 18s NSW Country Juniors for nine years and later vice president of NSW Country Juniors. As Kerry says, NSW Country Juniors is where legends are made. Kerry, along with two other women, developed and started a support group for Family and Friends of ice users and got 10,000 signatures on a petition to go to government in support of a MERIT program for Moree and district to have other options apart from going to jail for drug and alcohol related crimes and to reduce recidivism. Kerry is now a councillor on Moree Plains Shire Council, where she is the councillor for the Reconciliation Action Plan, Community Development Committee chair, Community Safety Committee for Moree and Boggabilla chair, Justice Reinvestment member and South Moree development committee. She has a great love for her town and shire and her platform is all about inclusiveness and liveability to ensure the younger generation have a town they can be proud of. Kerry has three sons, Dane, 35, Rua 29 and Alex 24. All her children are role models in the community. They have all played

at a high level rugby union, rugby league, boxing, fitness, cross fit and basketball. And now their children are performing at excellent levels in athletics, gymnastics, boxing, rugby union and netball. Kerry is a hidden and not so hidden treasure in our town and shire, and well known in the rugby, athletics and gymnastics fraternity. I wish her well.

heather christie

[NARRANDERA]

Heather started volunteering when her children started school. First, the Infants School Mothers Club, then the school P&C. This involved helping in the school canteen, at stalls at the school fetes to raise much needed funds and at major school sports days. Her most notable contributions were making hundreds of toffees on fundraising days and making and sewing dance outfits for eight girls and eight boys for two years for the eisteddfod. Her own children were involved in swimming club, Brownies, Girl Guides, Cubs and Scouts, where she helped wherever possible and also held various executive positions. Heather joined Soroptimists seven years ago and has been the club reporter responsible for collating all work and volunteering done by members and any funds raised and sent to Soroptimist headquarters. Soroptimists raise and donate thousands of dollars every year. They make and sell donuts at local festivals and school fetes. Heather is on the local Meals on Wheels committee and a volunteer

delivering hot meals to clients. She is also a member of the local Probus club, where she is first hospitality officer.

lucy collingridge [NARRABRI]

Lucy is a passionate advocate for all things agricultural. She has both graduate and undergraduate qualifications in agriculture from the University of New England, and is driven to help people understand the importance of agriculture in our community, and in particular, the important role of young people in the future of rural communities. Her volunteer work focuses on educating people about agriculture, and supporting young people in the field. Rural shows are where Lucy really shines – she started her association with shows in 2007 when she was involved in the high school show team. She joined the Cootamundra Agricultural Youth team, and took on the steward's role for shearing and junior judging competitions. She was the Cootamundra Showgirl in 2015, as well as the Zone 7 finalist, and competed in The Land Sydney Royal Showgirl Competition in 2016. Lucy then stepped up to become chief steward for photography, steward for the beef cattle and overjudge for the fleece competition. Lucy also took on the role of social media coordinator and is responsible for the Cootamundra Show Facebook page and website. On moving to Narrabri, Lucy joined the Narrabri Show committee, becoming a beef cattle steward, and coordinator of the young judges competition. She is also the joint coordinator for the Wee Waa showgirl competition, and, because she isn't quite busy enough, is also a steward at the Condobolin

show. Lucy is an ambassador with the Young Farming Champions program, helping to promote positive perceptions of farming for consumers through programs such as Art4Agriculture and Picture You in Agriculture. She is a Royal Agricultural Society Youth Group Member, and has travelled to Canada and Argentina on scholarships to study and promote Australian agriculture. This is just the beginning for Lucy and we know she has great things ahead of her, and will do great things for the rural communities that she serves.

elizabeth cotching [BURONGA]

For many years Elizabeth Anne (called Anne by friends) Cotching and her husband Danny have resided at Mourquong. It was late last year, when the Districts Meals on Wheels roster was available at Buronga Post Office that I became aware of the enormous distance Anne Cotching and others were travelling to deliver meals to recipients of the Wentworth Meals on Wheels service (Anne first joined the service in the 1980s, giving them time for two years, until the responsibilities of motherhood were prioritised). During 1981 a steering committee for the construction of a much needed preschool centre in the Gol Gol/Buronga Districts was formed. An inaugural member, Anne was appointed as treasurer. Fundraising to build a preschool centre was essential, constant and hard work for everyone involved. When the Alcheringa Preschool became a reality, Anne remained as treasurer. With Danny and Anne having five children, Anne later concentrated her time at the

Buronga Public School as treasurer while also working with children there, both one on one and with group work. Her public life was an extremely busy time; Anne involved herself in the Girl Guides movement, enjoying five years as an assistant guide leader, then training to become a qualified guide leader. “Camping out and singing etc were my strongest points and we enjoyed such fun”. Anne is also an accomplished guitarist who has volunteered countless hours of music and song for the enjoyment of others living throughout our district. Anne is a member of the Sunraysia Community Choir and also two instrumental and singing groups, the “Stray Notes” and the “Strum Chums” bands. At the Lions Club Australia Day breakfast at Buronga this year the very popular Strum Chums played traditional Aussie music, creating a very joyful atmosphere for the huge crowd. They also make regular weekly visits to various aged care residential facilities and entertain the elderly residents. Anne expressed, “it is beautiful to see how the elderly respond to the music, a tap of a finger or a smile is so rewarding to us”. The Stray Notes also enjoy providing entertainment on a regular basis at the Inland Botanical Gardens, various market days and major events. Since retiring from the workforce about six years ago, Anne resumed her volunteering with the Meals on Wheels Service and is currently a committee member for this service. I regard her to be both a true rural woman and one of our hidden treasures.

anne crowther [FALLS CREEK]

Anne was born in England to two quiet, frugal and intelligent parents. Her father worked on the Over-the-horizon radar and spoke fluent calculus, but didn't care much for socialisation or conversation. He was quiet and reserved, and much of her background was isolated from the normal experience of kids of the 1960s. She was directed to give away her only toy to a less fortunate child. She grew up simply without expectation and without aspiration. In her late teens, she met her now husband who had also moved from England to South Australia as a young child. Their common thread ended there, however, as Keith's mother was as exuberant as they come, full of life and energy! They married and raised two children, instilling in them to follow their dreams, fulfil their passions, be a good person and contribute much to society. But Anne remained shy. When adult kids, and grandkids beckoned her to NSW, she found herself alone without the comfort of her lifelong friends in Adelaide, without a support network, and with trepidation she reached out to the Country Women's Association (CWA). It was at this point, in her sixth decade of life, that Anne found getting out of her comfort zone, meeting other rural women, and uniting in purpose that she found new skills in confidence building. She has been vice president and secretary of her local CWA branch for some years now and has transformed the lives of others as much as the CWA has transformed hers. She has a great network of like-minded women working with her to create change for isolated women in more remote country areas, as well as regularly helping

to facilitate local community events and dialogue around how to best meet the needs of today's rural woman.

wilma cunningham [GRIFFITH]

Wilma joined the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) in 1994 in the Blue Mountains communications brigade, where she was very active. Assisting at incidents by running the communications between the ground and the incident management team. In 2004, Wilma completed her Aviation Radio Operator qualification and did air comms at a variety of incidents in the Blue Mountains area, from hazard reductions to major fires. Wilma continued her very active role within the brigade in training and communications all over the state. Wilma moved to Griffith, NSW and joined the MIA Operations Support Group, where she has taken on the senior deputy role. This role entails organising the training of the group, as well as a weekly roster to look after all radio communications during the week and in the fire season. In 2016, Wilma was awarded her 20 year long service medal. Wilma is a worthy recipient to go on the Hidden Treasures Honour Roll.

carol david [DENILIQUIN]

Carol David was born in Cardiff, Wales in 1946. Carol's father was in the navy so she and her family lived with her aunt, before relocating to Ely and again to Llanrumney when Carol was nine. Carol was the oldest of five siblings and

enjoyed a fun-filled childhood. When Carol was 15 her family relocated to Australia, where they eventually settled in Shellharbour, NSW. She attended school at William's Business College and later completed a secretarial course. After marrying her husband, she moved to Tumut and then Young in NSW before finally settling in Deniliquin. Carol has worked in many different roles including customer service, selling Avon products and babysitting. When her youngest child started school, Carol completed a business course at the local TAFE, which led to a role with the public service where she worked her way up to a human resources role, where she stayed until retirement. Carol volunteers each Monday at the Deniliquin Visitor Information Centre (seven hours each week), where she warmly welcomes each visitor into the centre and helps promote the town and its many attractions. Carol's enthusiasm and diverse local knowledge make her a valued member of the team – without dedicated volunteers like Carol it wouldn't be possible to keep our Visitor Information Centre open. Carol has been volunteering at the centre for 10 years.

judy doddridge [DENILIQUIN]

Judy Doddridge was born in Eudunda, South Australia in 1941 and grew up on a farm at Neales Flat about six miles from Eudunda. Over the years Judy has lived in Adelaide, Kingston, Wakool and Deniliquin. Judy worked as a primary school teacher in South Australia before moving to Deniliquin, where she began working as administration manager at Deniliquin South Public School. She worked in this role for 33 years

before retiring in 2008. Judy is the secretary of the Deniliquin Garden Club, secretary of St Paul's Anglican Church and visits Navorina nursing home each Thursday afternoon with a small group of singers to entertain the residents. Judy volunteers each Wednesday at the Deniliquin Visitor Information Centre (seven hours a week), where she warmly welcomes each visitor into the centre and helps promote the town and its many attractions. Judy's kind nature and diverse local knowledge makes her a valued member of the team – without dedicated volunteers like Judy it wouldn't be possible to keep our Visitor Information Centre open. Judy has been volunteering at the centre for 10 years.

donna falconer [DUBBO]

Donna Falconer was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2009. She is the founder of the Pink Angels, launched in 2011, who provide care, help and support for breast cancer patients throughout central west NSW. From as far north as Lightning Ridge and west to Cobar, care packs provided by Pink Angels are given to women and men undergoing breast cancer treatment and are distributed by the region's breast care nurses. Fundraising is organised by the Pink Angel committee members, which enables the not-for-profit charity to provide help with cleaning, meals, travel vouchers, fuel vouchers and more. Many people have benefited from this generous charity which Donna created. Four years ago Donna sold her home and purchased a RV, she called the RV the "Groovy Booby Bus" and now travels mostly around NSW raising funds for Breast Cancer

Network Australia (BCNA) and the Glen McGrath Foundation. She is a guest speaker at events to inspire and encourage fundraising activities in many towns. Donna has travelled to central Queensland and the Northern Territory in the Groovy Booby Bus, continually spreading the word about breast cancer awareness. Donna wanted to write a book about her journey with breast cancer so she held a photographic exhibition with help from breast cancer survivors as the subject and raised enough money to have the book written and published. She now sells the book and donates half of the funds to BCNA and half to Glen McGrath Foundation. Donna continues to work as an advocate for breast cancer, she has saved many lives from her continual campaigning and inspired endless people throughout Australia. For more information about Donna's story: <http://www.groovyboobybus.com/about>

belinda fergusson [DUNEDOO]

Belinda is vibrant, busy, has a laugh and a smile you can't miss and a heart of gold. She was born in Nyngan and grew up in Carinda, before moving to Dunedoo to finish high school. She completed her textiles/home science teaching degree at Hawkesbury Agricultural College and worked in Gunnedah and Moree, before coming home to marry a farmer. Stirling and Belinda have three children and have lived, worked and been a part of the Dunedoo community for most of their lives. While her children were growing up, Belinda volunteered her time with the Dunedoo junior league and netball club, Dunedoo tennis club and the Dunedoo P&C. She is currently

the secretary of the Dunedoo Lions Club and a director of the Dunedoo Sports Club. She would spend no less than 10 hours a week attending meetings, applying for grants and organising events for both organisations. She has been the driving force behind “Tunes on the Turf,” one of the sports club’s biggest fundraisers, for almost 10 years and is an advocate for the volunteer work the Lions Club does for the small town of Dunedoo. In 2017, Belinda’s family and farm were severely affected by the Sir Ivan fires – she volunteered cooking meals for BlazeAid, who were in turn helping rebuild the fences on her property. Community is a big part of Belinda’s life – she loves volunteering for the social connection, to make a difference in her town, and to challenge herself outside of her career.

Tamara Ferguson [TAMWORTH]

Tamara grew up in many little towns around NSW before living the majority of her childhood in her hometown of Glen Innes where she was a valued member of the community volunteering for the Australian Celtic Festival, Touch Football Association and many other clubs. In 2014, Tamara was involved in a car accident which resulted in her being transported by the Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service. After a lengthy recovery Tamara showed her gratitude to the organisation by joining its volunteer rescue club in Glen Innes. Tamara then moved to Tamworth where she continued volunteering for the service until she landed her dream job within the organisation. Tamara now very passionately runs events, liaises with community

groups and volunteers to ensure this invaluable service continues to be free for all. Tamara also volunteers for a range of community groups in Tamworth including the Junior Business Chamber and recently entered the Queen Quest at the Tamworth Country Music Festival. Tamara is one of the hardest working young volunteers in the region and is a role model for all young people.

Bev Fletcher [CABARITA BEACH]

On behalf of the Murwillumbah Hospital auxiliary we would like to nominate our member for the past nine years, Bev Fletcher. Bev was born locally and moved to Sydney as a teenager before returning to Murwillumbah in 1995. Apart from her contributions as a member of the auxiliary, Bev spends untold hours making quilts. Bev made her first quilt in 1990 for a niece and since then has donated many, many of these beautiful quilts to the auxiliary for our fundraising events such as raffles, conferences, AGMs to name a few. For the past 11 years she also has been supporting volunteers at a Christian Community FM radio station. She has also donated more than 50 quilts to the station for fundraising at its radiothon. More recently Bev has been donating quilts to palliative care at the local hospital for each of their patients, the only stipulation being that the quilt is taken home by the family after the patient has passed. She has made nine such quilts in the last 12 months. Bev also makes quilts for family and friends and also donates quilts for sick children, especially those suffering from cancer.

val fletcher [QUIRINDI]

Val Fletcher was born in Quirindi. She knows that small towns need the help of volunteers and by volunteering she can give back to the community what she has been given. From the age of 14, Val taught Sunday School on a weekly basis in Quirindi and monthly in several small centres in the shire while at the same time she ran a girls' youth group. In 1968, she received a Rotary Youth Leadership Award, which she says was the best leadership training she has ever had. While her three children were at school she was actively engaged in Mothers' Club, primary school and high school P&C associations, also conducted school craft classes, helped with reading and taught religious instruction classes at Quirindi and Willow Tree Primary Schools and Quirindi High. She has been awarded life membership of the Quirindi High School P&C. Val led the Brownies for 10 years, was involved in fundraising for the Boy Scouts and helped to run the Junior Cricket and Junior Hockey Associations. The latter has awarded her life membership. There are many other groups that Val has helped over the years — Nursing Mothers, Quirindi Show Society, the Arthritis Foundation, Habitat for Humanity and Liverpool Plains Shire Council's Youth Scholarship Scheme. Her involvement with the Presbyterian and Uniting Churches has been both extensive and intensive as a member of the Property Committee, Church Council, Elders and Youth Groups. She is still a volunteer at the Christian Venture Bookshop, takes a church service at Eloura (the local retirement home) bi-monthly, does Meals on Wheels and helps

organise the Quirindi Community Garden. For many years she has been a super active member of the Quirindi branch of Quota International Inc, serving as president, secretary and now treasurer and coordinating many Cancer Council Daffodil Days and Pink Ribbon Days. There is no doubt that Val is a very worthy person to be included in the Hidden Treasures Honour Roll.

moira franklin [GLENIFFER]

In 1975, Moira, Kevin and their three children arrived in the Gleniffer Valley, Bellingen to build a home on their property. It was only natural that Moira would be drawn to a community where she could immerse herself in local country life having been born in Lithgow. At 10 years of age, her family moved to Parramatta and Moira trained as a primary school teacher at Balmain Teachers' College. On arrival in Gleniffer, Moira volunteered to be the secretary, organist and chief organiser at the Gleniffer Community Church (current to this day including becoming a trustee). Moira is driven to help others, use her musical skills and thrives on being challenged to bring fulfilment and pleasure to all. Moira has a broad interest in the community, volunteering as a Venturer Scout leader for 15 years (awarded a merit award for service), SES, Pony Club, swimming club coach, secretary Gleniffer Progress Association, catering for functions at Gleniffer Hall and ongoing fundraising events. Moira has been a breastfeeding counsellor with the Australian Breastfeeding Association and was the group leader of the Bellingen branch for 20 years. She volunteers as a pianist for the Bellingen Choral

Group and Bellorana Aged Care singalongs, is secretary of the NE NSW Hunting Club, accompanies her husband visiting schools on behalf of the RSL to teach children about Anzac Day and assists in conducting services for Anzac and Remembrance Day services at our nursing homes. Moira volunteers with Landcare in our public reserves and this is all done silently — a true hidden treasure.

gillian fraser [DENILIQWIN]

Gillian Fraser was born in Blayney, NSW in 1941, where she lived until she was five years old. Her parents then moved to a farm between Cowra and Boorowa, before later relocating to a farming property in Grenfell. Gillian attended school in Sydney and went on to work in Sydney, London and Switzerland. Upon returning to Australia, Gillian married and lived at Harden, Murrumburrah, Willow Tree and Cowra before recently settling in Deniliquin. Throughout the years, she held roles as an assistant, nanny, administration officer, art gallery manager and horse stable assistant. Gillian volunteers each week at the Deniliquin Visitor Information Centre (seven hours a week), where she warmly welcomes each visitor into the centre and helps promote the town and its many attractions. Gillian's kind nature and strong work ethic make her a valued member of the team – without dedicated volunteers like Gillian it wouldn't be possible to keep our Visitor Information Centre open.

sheena qeppert [COBAR]

Sheena was born and grew up in Cobar and loves her community. Sheena knew at an early age that she wanted to help people. She spent time volunteering at Lilliane Brady Village aged care facility in her later school years. Sheena also volunteered to help raise funds for multiple sclerosis. Sheena is married to Paul and they have four young boys who love getting into mischief on their property 'Restdown', east of Cobar. The Cobar district is in severe drought and Sheena recognised the need to support struggling farmers around Cobar. In 2018, Sheena helped set up a community committee to conduct a 'Night for the Farmers' event in Cobar. This event was hugely successful with more than 300 farming family members attending the night. Based on this success, Sheena again motivated the community committee to deliver another Night for the Farmers in 2019. Sheena worked long hours to make this event a success while helping husband Paul feed stock and being a mother to their sons as well as taking grocery packs to needy farmers. This event was held on 27 July with more than 400 farming family members attending the event and a Shannon Noll concert, which Sheena was able to arrange at the venue as well. These events have been of immense value to our farmers in reassuring them people do care and that support is available. Sheena is a real Cobar local treasure.

sue gordon [YOUNG]

Sue Gordon is truly a hidden treasure. Sue's adult life has been about her family, community and making information and education opportunities available to both young and old. Sue grew up on the family farm at Wakool in the Riverina, completing her secondary schooling at St Leonards School, Melbourne. Sue continued her education focusing on nursing at The Alfred Hospital and Royal Melbourne Hospital (Midwifery). Sue moved to Young in 1984 following her marriage to Richard, a farmer and chiropractor. After arriving in Young, Sue became a counsellor with the Nursing Mothers' Association, which continued for 10 years. Sue was a leader in establishing the Brock Street Preschool Kindergarten in 1988, and Annette's Place preschool and childcare centre. Sue was appointed to represent the South West Slopes on the NSW Government Advisory Committee for Country Childhood Multi-Purpose Services. In 2001, Sue joined the State Council of the Isolated Children's Parents' Association (ICPA) and was elected state treasurer. Between 2001-2012, Sue served as treasurer, vice president and president. In recognition of Sue's work with ICPA she has been awarded a life member of the Lone Member Branch. Sue was elected to the Young Rural Lands Protection Board and served as a director from 1997 to 2008. Sue has held executive positions on the South West Slopes Sheep Breeders Association between 1998 and 2019, serving as treasurer and secretary, and at times both. Sue joined the Young branch of Rotary International

in 1996 and has served as treasurer and was president during 2011 and 2012. Sue is certainly a hidden treasure.

terese gunn [FORBES]

In 2015, Terese (together with a friend, Cassandra Tyack) organised the first Forbes Can Assist Dancing Stars event in Forbes. The ladies were hoping to raise at least \$15,000 for the local Can Assist branch, but astounded everyone by raising \$36,000. Forbes has a population of 10,000 so this was amazing. The event ran again in 2016, 2017 and 2018 raising (including the first event) \$200,000. This exceeded all expectations and allowed our local Can Assist branch to provide more assistance for families in need. This event is major taking nine months each year to organise, while also working full time and suffering with a debilitating condition herself. Terese devoted all her energy into this event and was passionate to the max for a cause close to her heart. In the 2017-2018 financial year, Forbes Can Assist provided more than \$88,000 in financial support to individuals and families affected by cancer. This nomination is seconded by John Schrader, president of Forbes Can Assist.

jillian hamling [SCONE]

'If you see the need, you create the opportunity to achieve your goals and outcomes' was the inspiration for Jill to develop the Showstoppers program. Jill has lived in Scone for almost 40

years, initially working in the local preschool with special needs children. She went on to become a dance teacher at the Scone Academy of Dance and after 10 years of teaching, Jill bought the business. This kept her busy for 20 years, at which time she started looking for the next big challenge. Jill realised there was a significant need in the Upper Hunter for a performing arts program catering to people with disabilities. She was volunteering her time to run a performing arts program at a local disability service when she first noticed the gaps in service delivery. Jill then created an innovative new service model acknowledging that each and every one of us has the capacity and ability to achieve our dreams. Showstoppers registered as an National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) service provider and a not-for-profit incorporated organisation in 2017, working from the Country Women's Association rooms in Scone. The service has now moved to a much bigger premises at the old convent. Jill has volunteered countless hours to develop the service. Her team is very busy providing programs to facilitate life skills, performing arts, health, wellbeing and fitness, work placement and much more. Having the courage to apply for the NDIS and create a program that enhances individual abilities is a highlight for Jill. Her contribution to the disability sector and the wider community is invaluable.

elaine hardinge [EMPIRE BAY]

Elaine has been a volunteer for the past 35 years. Elaine has four daughters, 10 grandchildren and more than 17 great grandchildren. She has been a very caring Mum, which is reflected in her close-knit family. She is also a wonderful friend to many. After moving to the Central Coast about 16 years ago, Elaine still travels once a week to deliver meals on wheels, now situated at Holly Lane Beverley Hills. She also volunteered with Hurstville Meals on Wheels in the office for three days a week while recruitment was being undertaken for the position. Now in her 83rd year, Elaine thoroughly enjoys her volunteer work and nothing would stop her from getting on the train to come and carry out her duties. Her service over 35 years has been greatly appreciated by the community and Elaine is a very worthy recipient of this great honour.

janice headon [HAY]

Jan has been an active member of the NSW Rural Fire Brigade (RFS) since 1992, attending many training courses during this time and has always encouraged younger members of the community to join the RFS and to continue with their training. Jan has been actively involved in the RFS Hay Headquarter Brigade. Jan has often catered for the brigade and has been an active secretary since 2005. Jan has catered for training courses, meetings and many functions that the

Hay Headquarters has been involved in. Jan still attends the Hay Show and assists with the RFS community engagement stand.

carol hill [CORAKI]

Carol Hill is a proud member of a local pioneering family. She continues the family tradition of community spirit and for many of her early years she was involved with the Junior Farmer organisation. Carol is well known for her farming and animal husbandry skills and is often called upon to 'mother' an orphaned calf and a variety of other animals. She also has a green thumb and does not know the meaning of the word no when it comes to helping a friend or a neighbour in need. Carol has been involved with the Dairy Spectacular, Primex and other farming events and planning groups. She is a hardworking, reliable, very loyal and valued member of several local community organisations including Coraki branches of the Country Women's Association (CWA), the United Hospital Auxiliaries of NSW and the Community Reference Group for Health Services. Her work with the CWA includes being a longstanding and essential member of the management committee of the CWA branch and CWA preschool. Carol manages to balance her community work with being a wife and business partner, mother and grandmother. She also cared for her parents in their later years. She is a fine example of pioneering farming spirit.

mary hollingworth [GUYRA]

Mary has been a valuable volunteer for more than 35 years to the local and wider community. Her contributions have been significant and have provided many long-lasting benefits to the community. Mary began her volunteer work as acting president and member of the Deepwater Playgroup, implementing numerous activities, programs and fundraisers to improve the range of services. She was also on the Outreach Peter Pan Preschool P&F, which soon led to volunteering at the Deepwater School for 10 years. During these early years, Mary was heavily involved with the Emmaville Pony Club (25 years) and with the Uniting Church (20 years) as an elder, teaching weekly scripture, coordinating fundraising and the Cameron Uniting Church's Celtic Festival dinners. She then went on to give of her time at the Glen Innes public and high schools and Toowoomba Grammar and Fairholme College. For 30 years, Mary has been a member of the Glen Innes Show Ladies Auxiliary and is the chief steward of the cooking section. Over the years she has organised or hosted many successful events, forums and seminars aimed at educating rural families, especially women. Of particular note was the 2014 Glen Innes Rural Women's Gathering of which Mary was the chair; a successful event which received an honourable mention in Parliament. In the past nine years she has volunteered with the Hunter New England Health Local Health Advisory Board, the Red Cross, the Country Women's Association, the Glen Innes Community Centre Board and the Australian

Celtic Festival. This amazing small community and district has been richly blessed by Mary – in her words “It is in giving we receive”.

dione howard [MILBRULONG]

Twenty-five-year-old Dione is a Wagga Wagga girl through and through. She was born in the town, grew up as a sixth generation farmer on ‘Robin Hood’ 70 kilometres away, attended schools at Lockhart and Walla Walla and studied at Charles Sturt University (CSU). She now works as a district veterinarian in Wagga. Dione’s role as a veterinarian sees her specialise in sheep and she uses this experience in her volunteering capacity. Representing the wool industry she volunteers with Picture You in Agriculture (PYiA), WoolProducers and as a mentor in CSU’s Veterinary Science Alumni Network. With PYiA, Dione works with programs such as Young Farming Champions, the Youth Voices Leadership Team and The Archibull Prize and, names as a highlight, seeing the look of wonder when school students learn something completely new in the classroom during Archibull Prize visits. With WoolProducers, Dione was Australia’s inaugural Youth Ambassador in 2018, which saw her volunteer 16 days during the year. Combined with her PYiA commitments and the time she dedicates to assisting university students, Dione is a powerhouse volunteer, and she does this to ensure the community has an appreciation of where their food and fibre comes from. She believes young people in agriculture have

wonderful stories to share and wants to help them tell these stories, make a change and leave their own mark on the world.

rachael hyde [NARRANDERA]

Rachael was born in 1971 and has lived her whole life in Narrandera, completing her education, employment, marriage to husband Damien and raising their four children. In 2017, Rachael was recognised as Narrandera’s ‘Citizen of the Year’ in the local Australia Day awards. After working for 10 years in the banking sector, she changed her lifestyle to work with local disability support group, the Cypress Centre (now known as Kurrajong) and has been there for 16 years. As well as working there, she voluntarily organises trips to football games, State of Origin matches, ANZAC Day test matches and various other activities for the supported workers. Rachael voluntarily started a ladies sewing group about five years ago, which is held in her home. Here she teaches them to cut out, sew and quilt. Rachael’s passion is running, so she voluntarily trained a group from both the Narrandera & West Wyalong Kurrajong workplaces, and for the past three years has taken them to a running festival held at the Dubbo Zoo. She has also competed in many charity fundraising fun runs as well as a 42 km marathon to raise funds. Rachael is also a founding member of ‘Narrandera Bidgee Boxing’ a not for profit, volunteer run, community gym, which brings together people from all walks of life in a safe supportive environment. She has obtained her personal trainer’s certificate and teaches many classes including boxercise, fitness

and healthy lifestyle. Rachael is an invaluable asset to the town she adores and is definitely a hidden treasure.

margaret jefferies

[DENILIQVIN]

Margaret Jefferies was born in Melbourne, Victoria in 1947, her family then relocated to Deniliquin in 1952. Margaret completed her schooling in Deniliquin and went on to work at the local ANZ Bank before marrying her husband and raising four children. Margaret volunteered at Napier Special School, which led to part-time employment as a special teacher's aide at Deniliquin South Public School and Deniliquin High School. She then went on to manage a community tourism and accommodation facility with her husband. Margaret volunteers each week at the Deniliquin Visitor Information Centre (seven hours a week), where she excitedly welcomes each visitor into the centre and helps promote the town and its many attractions. Margaret's strong work ethic and enthusiasm make her a valued member of the team – without dedicated volunteers like Margaret it wouldn't be possible to keep our Visitor Information Centre open.

helen karrasch

[ORANGE]

Helen Karrasch is a member of the Country Women's Association (CWA) Orange branch and is also a valued member of Ionians and Probus. She is wife to Roger, mother to Haimish and Jodie and

grandmother to their four young children. Helen joined the CWA after her arrival in Orange from Brisbane in 2014. Since then Helen has been active in all the branch's activities, projects and events using her broad range of domestic and other skills. When asked about her willingness to help she says "I wouldn't have joined if I didn't want to make a contribution and a difference". She attends meetings regularly, arrives in time to help with setup and is one of the last to leave. She volunteers for roles and projects and has been successful as branch cookery and publicity officer. Helen also takes on challenging projects. In 2016 she reviewed 90 plus years of the branch's monthly meeting minutes. Her simple and clear summaries provided vital evidence of ownership of the branch's hall for its owner, CWA of NSW. In 2018–19, Helen project managed a \$25,000 renovation of the branch's kitchen. She sourced suitable suppliers and tradespeople and supervised all aspects of the work. Typically, she personally attended to many final details. She also sourced a donor for some of the material used, which resulted in significant savings. The project was achieved on time and on budget and Helen's efforts saved the branch around \$5,000 in project management costs. She is our hidden treasure.

lynette keanelly

[OAKDALE]

Lynette has been a part of the Dilly Drought Drive since I started it. She has given up her time, even though she herself is struggling from the drought. Not only did she help other farmers, she gave up her shed to hold all the hamper donations to

make a pantry for farmers to come and grab much needed food for their families. Lynette is married and a mother of two children; she also runs her farm by herself. This includes an orchard of 550 trees (60 less because of the drought) and a Christmas tree farm of more than 5500 trees and Lynette is about to plant another 2500 Christmas trees and 120 fruit trees. She also has tours to her property to educate children and adults on farming life, women in farming and how to live sustainably. Every weekend you will find her at the local farmers' market selling her produce, except Christmas time when she is selling trees from her farm. Over the years she has done a lot of other volunteering like the Rural Fire Service, helping the local heritage centre and more. At present, she helps twice a week with reading at her children's school. She may always be in the background, but without people like Lynette, so many of us could not do what we do without them. Thank you for your time.

karryn keed [PEAK HILL]

Karryn is a proud Wiradjuri woman who grew up in Peak Hill. Karryn still lives in the house she grew up in. Her father Harold Keed operated a successful boomerang factory in the back yard. Karryn has many memories of tourists pulling up out the front and coming through the house to have a home baked scone from the old wood fire made by her mother Rita. Karryn has six children and 14 grandchildren and raised her niece Lilly from the time she was three weeks old. The local Bulgandramine mission is 42 kilometres from Peak Hill. Karryn's parents grew up here. Karryn

is instrumental in the Back to Bulgandramine gathering. Karryn worked at Aboriginal Education and Training unit at TAFE for several years. She remains an active volunteer through the Peak Hill working party throughout the year ensuring the mission is maintained, attends numerous meetings and writes countless submissions. During the lead up to the event no one sees the 35-hour weeks and tears that go into ensuring the event is professional and honours the lives of the Elders past and present. During this time Karryn is completely dedicated to her work. The mission was a place where her grandmother would have to walk into town over three days to attend the police station to get permission to go to the doctors. The event is important because it honours the hard work and culture of the Peak Hill families that lived on the mission. Karryn's mother Rita Keed is now an elderly patient at the Peak Hill Hospital. Karryn and her sister Gail spend most nights at the hospital with Rita, who still tells them stories about her beloved Bulgandramine. Karryn is also on hand for her daughter who is epileptic and makes the journey to Bourke several times a year to look after her grandchildren. This is a person whose inner strength and love is exerted on everyone around her. She doesn't leave herself much and would give away her last \$20 to help someone in need. The Back to Bulgandramine event for 2019 was a success because of people like Karryn and just wouldn't happen without her.

lorraine kefford [WHITTON]

Lorraine has been a member of the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) since 2007. In this time, Lorraine has been an active fire fighter and has also held the positions of treasurer, president, vice president, permit officer and training officer. Lorraine assists in school visits, fundraising activities and local and district training. Lorraine has always been an active community member. When her children (now in their 20s) were at school – both primary and high school – Lorraine held every position on the P&C. She assisted with reading and the canteen. Lorraine organised family fun days and many fundraising activities. Lorraine is heavily involved in the Leeton Whitton Crows Football Club, organising and running the canteen. Lorraine has been an integral part of the Whitton Skate Park committee, which supported young people to fundraise and build a skate park in Whitton. Lorraine has been a member of the Whitton Tidy Towns Committee and the Whitton Infrastructure Committee to name a few. Lorraine is always willing to lend a hand within her local community whether she is on a committee or not. It's people like Lorraine who keep our rural committees going.

jillian kelly [COONAMBLE]

Jill grew up in the rural centre of Coonamble and has been a passionate supporter of her local community and the rural sector for her whole life. Jill is a district vet with the Central West Local Land Services and goes above and beyond to support

her local landholders. In fire, flood and the current drought, Jill continually puts others before herself to help ensure their livestock are taken care of. From workshops to property visits, Jill is at the forefront of livestock management supporting her landholders. Jill is one of the committed members and organisers of the Coonamble Challenge & Campdraft, an event that attracts hundreds of horse men and women to the town each March. Apart from helping to run the event on the day and competing with her horses, Jill is also the social media and sponsorship steward for the event. In her spare time, Jill likes to relax and paint in watercolour. An extremely talented artist, Jill is the first to put her hand up and offer an original for auction for many local charities and organisations. Recently, Jill and a small committee of Coonamble locals held the Coonamble Raindance, an event attracting 900 people to their small town to celebrate the resilience of rural communities in the current drought and supporting each other through these hard times. Jill is a massive asset to the Coonamble community and the Australian agricultural community. If there was anyone I would call on in an adversity it would be Jill, without a doubt.

helen knaqqe [NARRANDERA]

Helen is a very special lady. Although she is hearing impaired and has no language, it doesn't stop her doing an enormous amount of volunteer work for our community. Every Tuesday she goes to the Community Transport Office for at least four to five hours where she folds letters and flyers, puts them in envelopes and adds a name label

to them. She also stamps their name on their receipt books. The local public schools bring their new books and Helen covers them. The staff say Helen is wonderful to have as a part of their team. On Wednesday mornings between 10 am and 12 noon, Helen joins the Nattering Nitters group at the local library. Spokesperson Margaret says they absolutely adore Helen, she joins in with everything that we do and does a lot of laughing with us. Every two weeks she has enough crochet squares to make a rug, she sews them together and they are sent to someone in need. Helen likes to choose her own wool in the colours she likes, which she pays for, rather than take wool from the group. The group does help her by way of a small donation towards her costs. On Friday mornings, Helen is back at the library where she covers all the new books, which she loves doing, and does very well. Staff say she is a delight to work with, she interacts with everyone and always has a smile. Friday afternoon sees her at the 'Sew Fab' craft shop, where owner Leanne cuts out fabric to make bags and Helen sews them together. The bags are used by the Anglican op shop, the local Vinnies Fruitz shop and the local public school for library bags. Leanne is flat out keeping up with Helen as she works so quickly. Helen also likes exercising, Monday morning she goes to the gym and on Thursday again, but this time it's boxercising. Helen walks a lot and always has a smile and a wave for everyone. She is loved by all she works with and knows. She is truly a hidden treasure!

julie lee [BALLINA]

Julie Lee is a highly regarded and valued member of the Alstonville Inner Wheel Club, who gives generously of her time across many local community events and charities to help make the community a better place. Born in Kyogle, Julie has lived in the local area for most of her life and has now retired after a successful nursing career. In 1984, she became secretary and coordinator for the Ballina Masonic Debutante Balls for four years and in 1985 she became a committee member of Ballina branch of Life Education, fundraising and touring the drug awareness program around schools throughout the Lismore Ballina region. At this time, Julie also became very involved with Heartfelt House Alstonville organising car rallies and fundraising events and assisting with the refurbishment of the new Life Education facility in Wollongbar. In 1988, Julie was on the Ballina Bicentenary Ball committee, which was one of the biggest social events ever staged in Ballina. In 1991, Julie became a charter member of a women's support group holding all executive positions, which she currently still holds. Julie always volunteers her time with the Rotary Club of Ballina-on-Richmond and was awarded a Paul Harris Fellow in 2009 for her contributions to Rotary. In 2010, she was on the Ballina Our House fundraising committee, which raised more than \$300,000 for the Lismore Cancer Care units and she still assists with any Our House fundraising. In 2010, she joined the Alstonville Inner Wheel holding various executive positions including currently as vice president. Julie was presented with a Paul Harris Sapphire

in June 2019 in recognition of her outstanding contribution to Ballina Food and Wine Festival committee over 10 years.

debbie matheson [NYNGAN]

Debbie is a little pocket rocket. Known for her kindness and generosity, she can be seen at any given time in any situation volunteering her time. Over the years she has been heavily involved in many organisations and has given over and above assistance simply just to help out. Currently she is investing her time into Nyngan Golf Club and has been working hours and hours to make sure the local club stays viable and keeps running for the wider community. Only those close to her are aware of just how much time she volunteers as she is never one to say. It is people like this who are the true ‘most valuable players’ of our community and who keep rural communities alive. I am proud to be her friend.

joy maunder [QUIRINDI]

Joy Maunder has faithfully served Quirindi Rural Heritage Museum and Village for the past 13 years working tirelessly in the coffee shop. Joy has also served as treasurer for the group for several years. She has also supported her husband with the miniature rail at the village. Joy has supported many not-for-profit organisations as their auditor for many years. Finding competent auditors in

small country towns can be an issue and Joy has filled this task brilliantly for years. She is a quiet achiever admired by all.

lyn mccormick [BYRON BAY]

I have had the pleasure of knowing Lyn for a relatively short time, though the impact she has had on me and also on the charity organisation Byron Youth Services (BYS) has been life changing. Lyn has nearly single-handedly turned the organisation around from the brink of implosion to a viable charitable enterprise that supports the youth in the region. She has selflessly committed herself to take on a significant hands on role in the organisation, guide it through its past turmoil and reinvigorate the organisation. Lyn has done all of the above without quabbling or trouble — even though this has involved her being at the cold face of many tough discussions and hard decisions. Her role as president in BYS has covered all aspects of the organisation while she has rebuilt it from the ground up — supporting not just the staff in the organisation, but also extending the support into the broader community by engaging more programs to help troubled youth. The personal respect Lyn receives from not only BYS staff/volunteers but also the broader Byron Bay community is absolutely appropriate for the calibre of person she is. This position Lyn has held is volunteer based. The board of BYS fully endorses this nomination. BYS is a not-for-profit charity incorporated association committed to providing services for young people between the ages of 12 and 24 years. <https://www.bys.org.au/>

janice mcgilvray [NARRANDERA]

Jan was born in Narrandera and has lived here most of her life. She has been a member of the Narrandera Golf Club for 41 years and for all that time she has volunteered on the course, in the club house and served as women's captain for many years. She remains a member of the women's committee. Jan was a member of the local View Club for several years where she also held an executive position. View Club supports the Smith Family. The local Meals on Wheels service also benefitted from Jan's assistance for more than five years, as has the Narrandera Visitors Centre for the past eight years. On Tuesday mornings, Jan operates the Christian book shop at the CRC Church. Through the Church's mission work she has volunteered in Sri Lanka at a girls' and boys' home. This home supports children up to 18 years old who may or may not have parents, but who need somewhere to live. She has also been to Serbia to a church which also supports the needy in that community. Jan has crocheted countless rugs, which have all been donated to the needy. On Thursday afternoons she is at the local library, helping with whatever is needed. Jan is also an active Soroptimist member.

cassandra mclaren [MERRIWA]

Cassandra opened a social media page 'One Day Closer' to give people experiencing drought a voice and to let everyone know a little about what is happening on the land. Little did she know the impact that page would have, with her Facebook page now receiving tens of thousands of followers, likes and messages. Cassandra worked tirelessly to help bridge the gap between farmers in need and those wishing to donate in the time before formal structures were established. Her work is 100% voluntary.

sylvia micallef [CASINO]

Sylvia has been volunteering for RSM Community Transport (RSMCT), previously known as the Uniting Care Casino Transport Team, for seven years. RSMCT is a 24/7 service providing medical and health related transport to disadvantaged residents of the Richmond Valley Shire and Kyogle in the Northern Rivers, NSW. Sylvia volunteers as a driver using both her own vehicle and the service's 'caddy' vehicle, which is capable of transporting clients in wheelchairs. Sylvia also volunteers her time in our office, answering phone enquiries, entering transport bookings in our database and allocating trips to the appropriate volunteer driver. Sylvia often takes the after-hours phone overnight and on weekends. The after-hours phone handles last minute trip cancellations and changes to transport, such as when a client is kept in hospital longer than expected and a replacement volunteer driver

needs to be found. Sylvia is one of our four driver representatives who meet monthly to discuss issues raised by drivers. Sylvia then brings the issues to the coordinator with recommendations from the representatives, which are passed on to the management committee. Sylvia also supports our fundraising committee by helping out at fundraising and promotional events whenever an extra pair of hands is needed. Sylvia dedicates seven days a week to our service, doing everything she can to ensure people in our community get to their medical appointments and treatments. The truly amazing thing about Sylvia is that everything she does, she does with a positive attitude and a smile. We would be lost without her.

elizabeth naldar [GILGANDRA]

Nan was born and raised in the Gilgandra district and has been a wonderful contributor to the community all of her life. She met her husband Robert at a Methodist youth camp and when they married, lived on the family farm near the small village of Curban. As well as raising her family and participating in school and sporting activities and helping on the farm, she also became a member of the Curban branch of Red Cross. She joined Gilgandra branch of Red Cross when she moved to Gilgandra some years ago and has held many executive positions over the years, served as president in 2018–2019 and was recently elected as president for the 2019–2020 year. Last year Nan received her 60 year member rosette. Other activities associated with her involvement in Red Cross include fundraising,

catering, cooking and street stalls. She has made and laid the wreath at Anzac Day ceremonies over the years. Nan was one of the original members of the ladies auxiliary at Cooee Lodge Aged Care facility when it commenced in the mid-1980s. This volunteering included regular visits to residents and fundraising events such as the Cooee Fair. She is still volunteering on a regular basis with catering for and serving afternoon teas to the residents. Nan is also part of a regular hand and nail care activity conducted for the residents. She is also a long-term active member of the local Unity Church and assists with the fellowship of the church through singing, flower arranging, funeral service catering, visiting others who need a friendly word and playing the organ, which she also did at Curban when she lived there. Nan was president of the Women's Bowling Club on the occasion of the club's 50th anniversary. Her involvement over many years included travelling and driving ladies to many district towns to play competitions with other clubs, catering for bowls functions, flower arranging and participating in entertainment. Nan is also one of the volunteers who helps to run the Christian bookshop in town. Over a number of years Nan has been involved with Gilgandra Entertainers participating on stage, assisting with costumes, singing and anything else that needed to be done. Nan has recently taken on the office of president with the local Probus Club. She has held a number of positions over the years and also continues to be welfare officer, sending get well cards to sick members and visiting those who need a friendly visit. With her friendly, caring and outgoing personality Nan is certainly a great asset to her community to which she gives countless hours to volunteering.

elizabeth (betty) newstead [MOLONG]

Betty was born on in 1936 at Menindee and grew up in a large family home on the river bank with seven siblings. Betty, an accomplished dancer, cut a stunning figure on the dance floor. She moved to Newbridge, raised four children and now has seven grandchildren, 18 great grandchildren and one great-great grandchild. She has strong family ties and always helps others. Betty's generosity of spirit motivated her to: join the Country Women's Association at Broken Hill and Menindee; become a member of St John Ambulance, Broken Hill a one and a half hour drive one way to attend training meetings and teach first aid at schools; enter first aid competitions at the mines, being very successful; attend sporting and community events where she provided first aid services such as football; join Molong Cadet Division 1998 and become an officer and volunteer 40 years of service, awarded the Service Medal; be awarded the member of The Order of St John medal presented by the Governor of NSW in 2011; be an active member of the Molong SES for 15 years, awarded the National Medal; and play golf at Molong and be the secretary for several years. Betty has worked tirelessly, over countless hours, to provide a high standard of service to the community. I commend Betty for the Hidden Treasures Honour Roll for 2019, as she has given extended volunteer service in many local communities and has been an exemplary role model for rural women and youth. Her exuberant personality lights up any place and makes people feel welcomed and cared for in any environment.

frances o'connor [WOOTTON]

Fran O'Connor was born in Scotland in 1947. She and husband, Jim, raised two children and led a very active life in Britain — rock climbing, skiing, walking, bike riding, and are still active in Australia. Moving to Sydney in 1995, they took up kayaking, leading them to discover the lakes and waterways of the east coast including around Wootton. They moved to a five-acre property in Wootton in 2005, to “keep them busy in retirement”. They quickly became involved in the local community group, the Wootton Community Network, at a time when the group needed an enthusiastic boost. They provided energy, ideas and a love for the community. Fran will have a go at most things — from cooking a cake, running a marmalade-making session, using a chainsaw, driving a ride-on mower, cleaning up or putting together a trivia contest. With Jim as barista and go-to Mr Fix-it, they were part of the volunteer group who regularly ran our community cafe. She has organised and cooked for many a community dinner, most memorable being the Scottish themed Robbie Burns night. Fran took on the sometimes-arduous job of secretary for many years, only just recently relinquishing the role. Particularly admirable is her sense of responsibility to follow through on anything she commits to. I can say, without a doubt, that our community group would have floundered many years ago if not for Fran. She understands what makes a good community and how valuable it is. She has put countless hours into the community and I believe she does this because when she arrived in Wootton, she immediately benefited

by walking into our little community cafe and making connections with locals she may never have otherwise met. She has made sure that any new person has that same opportunity to connect; through the volunteer-run café, monthly community dinners and other activities. She is truly a hidden treasure.

ita o'regan [CASSILIS]

Ita has assisted with coordination of drought relief including sourcing thousands of bales of export hay from Western Australia as well as pellets and other goods to distribute to needy farmers in the Cassilis–Merriwa–Turill areas. Ita has also worked hard to help the community devastated by this ongoing drought and is also the secretary of Cassilis Country Women's Association.

lorraine osmond [NARRANDERA]

Lorraine was born in Narrandera in 1945 and from early childhood became involved in many community minded organisations, such as Church Fellowships, Ambulance Younger Set, Rotaract, Meals on Wheels and Children's Medical Research local branch (secretary for two years). She was a volunteer helper with Little Athletics, Junior Football and Narrandera Amateur Musical & Dramatic Society as secretary. In 1978, she married Jeff and in 1980 their son Jamie was born with Down syndrome. As well as assisting her husband managing the Lake Talbot Swimming Complex, Lorraine became involved with Jamie's

welfare. For the next 36 years she spent many hours volunteering at Kurrajong - (facility provider for disability services), at Jamie's schools and his workplace, the local Cypress Centre Laundry, now Kurrajong laundry. Here she was involved with assisting with work, social events and very popular for the birthday cakes that she made for each of the workers for more than 20 years, which she continues to do to this day even after losing her son Jamie to leukaemia three years ago. Her busy lifestyle however did not deter her from joining Soroptimist International Narrandera where she has been an active member and held the position of secretary for the past three years. Lorraine is truly a treasure.

mary (liz) pattinson [BOWRAL]

Liz Pattinson was born in central west NSW to a farming family. She grew up in Parkes alongside three brothers. Liz attended boarding school at MLC Burwood and then trained as a teacher at Bathurst in the late 1950s. Liz returned to Parkes to teach where she met and married her husband Brian. They had two sons and moved to Dubbo where Brian managed an asparagus farm. Liz was a teacher/librarian at Narromine School where she fostered a love of books in many young people. She was also involved in distance education based at Dubbo. Faith has been an important part of her life and Liz has served as an elder at both Dubbo and Bowral Uniting Churches, where she also provided

grief and loss counselling. The Red Hats was another support group Liz gave of her time. Brian is a long-term Rotarian and Liz an Inner Wheel member and they have made several trips together to Fiji to assist in building schools and libraries. They have also generously hosted Rotary Youth Exchange students. In 2006, Liz moved to Bowral and immersed herself in community service, conducting V3A classes in creative writing and more recently acting as a scribe at The Abbey Nursing Home recording stories for the elderly for family and friends. Liz has been a country girl all her life and has served her community well. Besides that, she is a caring and delightful person who deserves the title hidden treasure.

wendy robb [NYNGAN]

Born and raised in Nyngan, Wendy is a quiet achiever who has spent her life sharing, caring and helping others in the community from a young age. As a teacher she goes above and beyond for her students encouraging them to strive for their best and often tutoring for free. While her children were growing up Wendy was treasurer of the Nyngan Preschool Committee, which saw the instigation of the long day care facility, relocation of the preschool to larger premises and an upgrade of the facilities. Throughout her children's primary school years Wendy was secretary of St Joseph's P&F, instigating many projects at the school which have contributed greatly to what it is today. During this time she was also president of the Western Studio of Performing Arts Parent's Committee. For the past 10 years, Wendy has been the secretary

and treasurer of the Nyngan Jockey Club working to secure the club's long-term sustainability and promoting racing within the region. She also organises the local Anzac Day races and assists with other local race meetings. Wendy has been involved in many other committees over the years. She has been the secretary of the Hermidale Gymkhana for the past five years, is treasurer of the Blue Sky Ball in Nyngan and is secretary of Nyngan Touch Association. She is also on the fundraising committee of Nyngan Pony Club, is a steward at the Nyngan Show, assists with Nyngan Junior Rugby League, Nyngan Senior Rugby League and Nyngan High School and raises funds for Angel Flight. Wendy is a vital component in the success of these many organisations and without her our small community would be lost. She is most definitely a hidden treasure in our community.

kerry roberts [NARROMINE]

Kerry Roberts has made a phenomenal contribution to the wellbeing of her hometown of Narromine by being a champion of sporting club development since moving back in 2016, as well as working and raising her young family. Kerry was the inaugural president of the Macquarie Yabbies Swimming Club, established in 2017 and running its first season over 2017/2018. She liaised with Swimming NSW and Narromine Shire to establish the club, which had more than 100 members in its first season, and ran a seamless carnival with nearly 300 swimmers from across the region. She also sits on the Western Region Swimming Committee. She was integral to the

process of bringing the worldwide phenomenon of Parkrun to the town, taking on the role as co-event director and sharing responsibility for running the free, weekly, timed event open to all community members, including managing volunteer rosters and processing results. She has held the position of treasurer for the Little Athletics Club, is the publicity officer for the Narromine Netball Club, umpires in Dubbo, plays competitive grade netball and assists in coaching her daughters' teams. Kerry recently established a committee to establish an annual triathlon event in Narromine, which has already gained approval from Council and hopes to attract participants of all ages and abilities to the town in early 2020. Kerry never seeks recognition for her efforts and works tirelessly and cheerfully to ensure that our small country community has access to as many sporting and recreation opportunities as possible.

sarah rushton [NARRABRI]

Sarah Rushton is a Narrabri local who joined the NSW State Emergency Service 13 years ago. As a first responder with the SES she has attended many incidents, predominantly floods and storms, but also land searches, rescues and assisting other agencies during major incidents such as bushfires. Sarah stepped up to become training officer, a position she held for nine years, and in 2019 she took on the role of unit commander for the Narrabri SES Unit. She is both the first female, and youngest unit commander that Narrabri SES unit has had. Sarah is a qualified incident controller and manages operations for all local incidents, handling requests for

assistance and tasking crews. She is a qualified trainer and assessor, and is skilled at working at heights and on flood boats. She is a passionate advocate for the SES, promoting the organisation through community education events and social media. Sarah is also a busy mother of two young children and works two jobs in Narrabri. For the last two years she has organised the debutante ball in Narrabri on behalf of Lodge Namoi. Sarah is always the first to put up her hand to help, volunteering at her children's school and day care centres, helping with sports, and always helping other people get their children to various after school activities. She even babysits the children of other emergency service personnel to allow them to go to incidents. We don't know how she fits it all in. Sarah's generosity, willingness to get in and get the job done, and unending desire to help others make her an asset to the Narrabri community and a true hidden treasure.

janice saunders [DARETON]

Janice Saunders has resided in Coomealla, NSW from the age of four. When Janice married, her husband Barry worked away on outback stations. She has resided at her home in Dareton for more than 50 years and raised their five sons there, mainly in Barry's absence. Throughout these years, her preferred employment was mainly on various horticultural properties at Coomealla. During Barry's rapid terminal illness, Janice nursed Barry in their home until his death in August 1996. Janice's achievements and contributions to the District of Coomealla have been many and varied. During the years raising

their five children, Janice always volunteered her time for horticultural work at the Dareton Primary School Endowment Block working bees. Janice also served as Committee member of the Little Athletics Club over a long period of time. A member of the Coomealla Memorial Club Indoor Bowls Team, Janice has served in both executive and general positions. There she remains very much a part of this club. Janice is also a smiling face, selling raffle tickets for our Communities Benefit. Supporting the Coomealla Senior Citizens Club, she is currently in her second term as vice president. Janice understands the meaning of volunteering, hard work and stepping up to assist others because this is the way she has always lived her life. It has been a privilege to pen Janice's story and I commend her to join the ranks of our state's hidden treasures.

kay scott [MCLEANS RIDGES]

Kay Scott was born in 1943 in Lismore. Her loving parents lived in Goonellabah and were actively involved with the Anglican Church, teaching Kay to care from early on in her life. Kay's schooling took place at Goonellabah Public School, which at that time was a two-teacher school, followed by three years of secondary education at Lismore High School. Girl Guides was a great pastime in Kay's early life. After leaving school, Kay assisted her father in his business, where she carried out many tasks required to run the business. These experiences were invaluable to her when dealing with people. Kay's extraordinary commitment to her church began with singing in the St Andrews Anglican Church choir from an early age. She

taught Sunday School and joined the Young Anglican Fellowship. At 17, Kay became a Girls Friendly Society leader for girls aged 8 to 10 years. Kay has continued to be actively involved with church activities whether it be craft, cooking or working in op shops. Kay married Mack in 1963 and they lived a full life together for 51 years, despite the fact that Mack's work often took him away. They raised four children and Kay was always heavily involved with all activities in the children's lives, such as school, tuck shop, and P&C. Family get-togethers and dinners are still talked about today with her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. A lot of family love! After her children left home, Kay became involved with Mental Health Support Group for the next 30 years. Mack passed away (2014) after a long illness. Kay dedicated herself to caring for Mack during this difficult time, yet continued to be involved with her community duties. Recently, Kay has been actively involved with Lismore Lions Club (since 2004). Her club badge states that her occupation is Management of Home Affairs. She was president for one year and is always on a committee. Kay says that her career is helping people of all walks of life. Since 2000, Kay has continued to act as a volunteer cooking for the local soup kitchen. Kay says that she is happy with her life — make the most of each day.

alison shurmer [BATHURST]

Alison is a member of the board of management at Bathurst Seymour Centre. She has been a Board member for three years and her current role is

secretary. Alison is a very proactive member who is always looking for opportunities to improve and enhance the services we provide. She has an excellent knowledge of elderly people and the disability sector and she is happy to share information and provide useful insights, which we can apply to improve our services and maintain a high quality and standard. She is also willing to learn new things and to be innovative. Alison has many useful links within the community and she is a valued part of Bathurst Seymour Centre.

kay smith [DENILIQUIN]

Kay Smith was born in Casino, NSW in 1939. She has called a number of Australian towns home, having lived in Casino, Sydney, Collarenebri, Gilgandra, Nowra, Narrandera, Bourke and Deniliquin. After leaving school Kay worked as a trainee colourist at a photography studio, before working as an office junior at the registrar's office at University of Sydney. Kay then progressed to secretary at the registrar's office before becoming secretary to the University's accountant. Kay then went on to work as an air hostess with Butler Airlines (before it was taken over by Ansett Airways), however she had to resign when her intention to marry became public as married women were not permitted to work as air hostesses at the time. Kay now resides in Deniliquin with her husband Roger. Kay volunteers each Wednesday at the Deniliquin Visitor Information Centre (seven hours a week), where she warmly welcomes each visitor into the centre and helps promote the town and its many attractions. Kay's vibrant personality and

stories make her a valued member of the team – without dedicated volunteers like Kay it wouldn't be possible to keep our Visitor Information Centre open.

helen spilsted [BROKEN HILL]

Helen is 72 years old and has always been a rural lady. She was an inspirational mother having been left to raise three very young children alone when she was 26 years old. Having been married very young and with no trade, she took in washing and ironing and cleaned houses to support her family and encouraged them in their educational and sporting abilities. Helen has always volunteered. She was very involved in their schools and was president of the P&C at both the primary and secondary schools during her children's schooling years and also assisted slow learners through the Bridging the Gap program. She thoroughly enjoyed seeing them progress. For more than eight years Helen volunteered two days a week at the high school tuck shop and also put on morning tea to raise money for cancer. For 28 years she was on the Meals on Wheels committee and delivered meals throughout the community. Later in life she moved to Broken Hill to support her daughter where she has resided for more than 20 years. Helen was also a very active member of the Lions Club, often organising guest speakers. She also loves knitting and does hundreds of hats for premature babies in Sydney hospitals, as well as outfits for children in Africa. I have no hesitation in saying Helen is a worthy recipient of the hidden treasures award.

margaret stanworth

[DENILIQUIN]

Margaret Stanworth was born in Koo-Wee-Rup, Victoria in 1944. She lived in Pearcedale until she was 15 years old, before relocating with her family to Echuca in 1973. Margaret worked in clerical roles before she married a farmer from the Riverina. She returned to work in 1987 as an accountant and worked in this role for 30 years before retiring in 2017. Margaret volunteers each Tuesday at the Deniliquin Visitor Information Centre (seven hours a week), where she warmly welcomes each visitor into the centre and helps promote the town and its many attractions. Margaret's attention to detail and extensive knowledge of the local area make her a valued member of the team – without dedicated volunteers like Margaret it wouldn't be possible to keep our Visitor Information Centre open.

jeanette stephens [BURONGA]

Jeanette is an amazing rural lady. The eldest daughter in the family, Jeanette has always been an incredible support to her mother after her WWII veteran father was injured at war. She was also a caring sister to her brothers and sister and has always looked after her nieces and nephews as they grew up. Jeanette married in 1968 and raised three daughters in a wonderful Christian family home. She has always been the first to volunteer in anything the family was involved in. She worked in both the primary and secondary school tuck

shops, attended the Parents & Citizens meetings and has worked tirelessly over the years for Guides coordinating fundraising and catering for events and camps. As well as all of this Jeanette supported her husband on the property and fostered many young children. For more than 20 years Jeanette has volunteered at Dareton Public School in the reading program and has delivered Meals on Wheels. Jeanette has always been very involved in her church, teaching Sunday School, something she has done for more than 40 years. Jeanette is currently the secretary of our Church Guild and the Parish Church where she is also a Warden and is secretary of the Coomealla Action Team and works with the Indigenous community as well. Jeanette has organised the Dareton Street Markets for some years, which has been a great boost to the town. Jeanette also looked after her mother until her recent death at 95 and is currently caring for her brother. Jeanette is a true hidden treasure.

maureen strutt [DENILIQUIN]

Maureen was born in Deniliquin, NSW in 1947. After attending school in Deniliquin, she commenced her career in nursing in 1965. Maureen trained at the Royal Melbourne Hospital and worked as a community nurse, diabetes educator, palliative care nurse and work health and safety advisor for the Murrumbidgee Health District. Since retiring from nursing in 2015, Maureen gives many hours of her time each week as a volunteer in the Deniliquin community. Maureen dedicates at least seven hours each week at the Deniliquin Visitor Information Centre,

where she warmly welcomes each visitor into the centre and helps promote the town and its many attractions. Maureen's local expertise and wonderful customer service make her a valued member of the team. She also spends two afternoons a week at the Orana Aged Care Hostel. Maureen is currently in the process of establishing an auxiliary for the hostel and enjoys her role in assisting with the activities, including two recent fashion parades, which the residents thoroughly enjoy. Maureen is also president of the Meals on Wheels Committee and she delivers Meals on Wheels in Deniliquin twice a month. Without dedicated volunteers like Maureen it wouldn't be possible to keep our Visitor Information Centre open and many important community services would struggle to survive.

mary sutchiffie [NARRANDERA]

Renowned within the Narrandera community for her contribution to the arts and music, Mary has been accompanying various individuals and groups within the Riverina over the last 50 years. Mary's music ability started at a very young age in both piano and violin. Moving to Narrandera in the early sixties, Mary's ability became apparent and her dedication and talent led to vast opportunities. Her involvement with the M&D Shows, such as Pyjama Game, Calamity Jane, Call me Madam, South Pacific, Dimboola and Bye Bye Birdie; Mary accompanied all singers on piano for rehearsals/productions. Locally, each Saturday night, Mary would play the piano for a singalong at the Criterion and later at Duncan's hotel. From the early 80s onwards, Mary began

accompanying dancers, school choirs, singers, string musicians for eisteddfods in Leeton and Wagga Wagga. Mary assisted with musical and dancing exams. Mary has been the lead pianist in a number of local Narrandera musical productions. Messiah performed twice under the direction of Adrian Kirk and Grunt; a gospel story written by local Dr Romeo. Mary volunteered her time and expertise for local school productions such as Narrandera High School's Music Man and St. Josephs' Alice in Wonderland in 2018. Mary has accompanied Narrandera Choir for 20 years, Carols in the Park for the last 30 years and other community groups – Sing Australia, Anzac Centenary, Classic Debutante Ball, Australia Day Celebrations and the community orchestra. After 30 years not playing violin, she joined with a group of musicians and they produced Mozart in the Garden. Mary was awarded citizen of the year in 1996. Mary plays for the Riverina Men's Choir, Leeton Girls' Choir, for the weekly Catholic Church Mass, funerals, Teloca aged care home and when called upon. We believe Mary is a worthy nominee due to the endless volunteer hours she still makes available 50 years on and her dedication to sharing her craft.

joanne tailby [BOGGABRI]

Joanne Tailby is a born and bred country girl with three children and has been married to Paul for the past 23 years. Joanne is a very caring person who nursed her sick mother prior to her death and loves to spend time with and support her grandchildren. She provides whatever assistance is required to anyone who asks, coordinating

fundraising raffles, running events, preparing food, loading firewood, walking the streets gathering donations and participating in Relay for Life. For 11 years, Joanne has been a major performer and organiser of the skit evening entertaining hundreds of people at the annual Lions Club Drivers' Campfire. Joanne was the treasurer and canteen organiser of junior league for seven years, PTF committee, donations from mines' barbeque organiser and organiser of fashion parades even after her children left Sacred Heart School. She was president of the swimming club for 10 years and had the high diving board reinstated as well as organising bingo and garden tours as fundraisers. She gets up at 3.00 am to cook barbeques at the mines to raise money for the Boggabri Hospital auxiliary as well as models in fashion parades. For the past eight years Joanne has filled more than 100 Samaritan boxes and donated them. Joanne is a member of the board of directors at the RSL Club giving countless hours. Her most recent project has been as a vital team member raising funds for a young mother with cancer. Joanne never seeks the limelight nor has expectations of anything in return for her efforts.

bessie Thomas [COBAR]

At 31, Bessie has transformed from an urban girl to a rural woman, moving from her city-based career as a journalist to the role of wife, mother and grazier on a property in western NSW. With most of the state in drought, it has been a challenging introduction to agriculture and while motherhood and sheep are demanding

of her time she also prioritises volunteering. Bessie believes we all have an ethical and social responsibility to live by actions that leave communities, people and the world feeling valued, appreciated, supported and better off than we found them. Bessie volunteers as the communication coordinator for the Youth Voices Leadership Team (YVLT), which is the youth-led voice of Picture You in Agriculture. As communication coordinator, she creates and rosters social media content, liaising with more than 100 Young Farming Champions to collate their activities and events. Bessie, herself, has volunteered as a Young Farming Champion since 2013 and in this role enjoys engaging with school children about her life growing fibre and food. The highlight of her volunteer activities is the opportunity to connect and collaborate with talented young people, who are considered inspirational leaders of the agricultural industry: movers and shakers, and future decision makers. Volunteering is Bessie's way of sharing their stories, and also to lay foundations that may provide a bright future for her daughter.

denise Thomas [DENILIQUN]

Denise Thomas was born in Parkes, NSW in 1949. Denise's father was a policeman which resulted in the family moving frequently, meaning Denise made friends with many children throughout NSW. When Denise was 17 years old her father was transferred to Deniliquin and as they say, the rest is history. Denise married a local farmer and went on to have four children who grew up on the farm. She was heavily involved in the

school P&C for many years as well as many other local organisations. Denise was a member of the inaugural committee for the Deni Ute Muster, serving two terms as president. After spending 35 years on the farm, Denise and her husband retired and relocated into town. Before becoming a dedicated volunteer at the Deniliquin Visitor Information Centre, Denise worked at the centre for 18 years. Now, she volunteers regularly (at least seven hours a week), where she warmly welcomes each visitor into the centre and helps promote the town and its many attractions. Denise's local expertise and excellent customer service make her a valued member of the team – without dedicated volunteers like Denise it wouldn't be possible to keep our Visitor Information Centre open.

Lyn Tout [SCONE]

I believe Lyn Tout should be included on the 2019 Honour role. Lyn is a born and bred Scone resident, raising three children with her husband Ross. Lyn is one of those quiet achievers who gets in and does what she can with no fuss. Over the years she has been actively involved in community events such as: an active member and president of the Red Cross Scone branch; hand and nail care at Strathearn Village for more than 10 years; volunteering in the canteen for the sale yards, primary and high school; president of Scone High School P&C; Meals on Wheels volunteer; Daffodil Day volunteer; hospital visiting and the library trolley. Lyn is currently president of the Country Women's Association, a group councillor and delegate for the state conference.

Lyn is a beautiful and caring soul and a huge asset to the Scone community. A true hidden treasure!

cassandra tyack [WIRRINYA]

In 2015, Cassandra (together with a friend, Terese Gunn) organised the first Forbes Can Assist Dancing Stars event in Forbes. The ladies were hoping to raise at least \$15,000 for the local Can Assist branch, but astounded everyone by raising \$36,000. Forbes has a population of 10,000 so this was amazing. The event ran again in 2016, 2017 and 2018 raising (including the first event) \$200,000. This exceeded all expectations and allowed our local Can Assist branch to provide more assistance for families in need. This event is major, taking nine months each year to organise, while also running the family farm and working part time in town. Cassandra devoted a lot of time and effort for a cause close to her heart. In the 2017–2018 financial year, Forbes Can Assist provided more than \$88,000 in financial support to individuals and families affected by cancer. This nomination is seconded by John Schrader, president of Forbes Can Assist.

Tia veech [WILTON]

Tia grew up in the Illawarra region. She has worked in the public service in Sydney and Campbelltown, for a newspaper in Glebe, a plumber in Bulli, a trotting club in Bulli, family day care in Wilton, and has worked for herself as

an aromatherapist and oil supplier for around 24 years and training others in the safe use of essential oils. She has dabbled in kids' classes, scrapbooking and selling educational books. She has been married for 31 years and is a mother of two girls who turn 12 and 14 this year. Her volunteering includes jumping on board to raise money for causes like MS Read-a-thon to supporting local initiatives like Christmas hamper drives, community pantries, fundraising and raising awareness of many local initiatives. Tia volunteers to oversee the administration of many local community based Facebook pages to help foster community interaction. She has been active in the local primary schools P&C from the inception of the new school in 2011. She was asked to join the board of the local community bank about six years ago with no banking experience but because of building a profile in her community running local markets. She has been chair of the bank for the past four years and has been involved in many community projects like mud stomps, events, festivals, fundraising and community initiatives. Most recently, Tia took part in the Dilly Drought Drive, which helped 25 local farmers, all while running her own business and raising tweens. In just over 12 months, the Dilly Drought Drive raised more than \$600,000 to help local Wollondilly Farmers and has had more than 37,000 recyclable cans returned through the return and earn recycling initiative with all funds being donated direct to the Dilly Drought Drive. Without Tia, I could not have done and raised as much as I have for the local farmers. She has also helped with the Light Up The Oaks Christmas Night for the past six years, organising all the stall holders.

rhonda watt [CUMNOCK]

Rhonda married a local farmer 34 years ago and ever since has been involved with the Cumnock community. She works tirelessly with her husband in a grazing operation and an off-farm enterprise but she is forever helping in town. She actively supported her children's local school eventually becoming P&C president for several years. She has coordinated the Show Society luncheon for 20 years (a meal recognised far and wide not to be missed!). Her cheerful nature, organising skills and preparedness to work encourages the community to get involved. She was a key member of the village beautification committee and instigator of the Painting of the Power Poles in the main street. She became secretary of the Progress Association 10 years ago and has since spearheaded numerous projects including Australia Day celebrations, Daroo Award dinners, Molong Players' suppers, Zoo 2 Zoo breakfasts and upgrading the showground facilities. Rhonda is deeply involved with a massive refurbishment of the recreation area in the town centre spending many hours working with contractors. She has developed a close working relationship with our local council; her ability to access and write grant applications to benefit the community is outstanding. Her last application has been adopted by council as a template for other communities. She's an active member of the Fire Brigade and recently printed and distributed names and contact details of all residents in case of an emergency. She has also found time to help coordinate fodder drops and distribute vouchers

to needy farmers suffering from the drought. Rhonda is a wonderful, passionate volunteer who cares deeply for our village's sustainability.

lee watts [SCONE]

Lee Watts has been a part of the Scone community for as long as I can remember. Lee manages the Scone Neighbourhood Resource Centre and stands as a councillor for the Upper Hunter Shire Council. Both of these roles include many, many volunteer hours. From helping feed hungry kids on their way to school in the mornings to assisting homeless people, Lee is the community's go to person. Lee also organises community events that are enjoyed by those in our local area. Lee is a driving force behind many community events and I believe she should be recognised for her tireless efforts.

katie white [NYNGAN]

Katie was born in Nyngan and grew up there, attending school and always playing a leading role as SRC president and vice captain of her school. Katie was diagnosed with epilepsy in her early teens and quietly went about coping with her new life in a way that was amazing to watch. She attended Charles Sturt University where she obtained her degree in social work and since then she has worked in many organisations bettering the life of those around her. In the past four years she has been running the Community Hub in

Nyngan, a Red Cross organisation that aims to bring communities together with activities and information for every age group. Katie has been outstanding in her field and has gone above and beyond by creating events for young and old, bringing together other service groups and just being a general support to the many people she sees in her everyday job. She volunteers in several groups and teaches dance in her spare time. She has been a go to person for many at risk teenagers who feel safe with her and her empathetic nature. She quietly goes about her work expecting no accolades and it is so great to see such a beautiful role model in our small town. She is most certainly a hidden treasure in our local community.

vicki white [MANILLA]

Growing up on a beef farm in Glen Elgin, having to share a house with six siblings in a small farm house of two bedrooms, Vicki aspired to be helpful no matter where she went. She created her own gardening business, often carrying out pro bono work for the elderly, and reducing rates for those who were financially struggling. She was able to raise two daughters with a single income. Since her partner passed away when the girls were quite young, she aimed to help those who helped her overcome his death. She volunteered at Greta Public School, creating a water wise and self-sufficient school yard, which won awards for best garden in the local area. She then had to move to Manilla, when the girls were young (oldest was in year 3) when the bank took her house. She ascertained a position at the Manilla

Central School, where she often stays back late to maintain the grounds. Annually, she runs and stewards the local show in the cattle show section. She is the senior deputy captain for NSW RFS and volunteers her time to fighting fires such as the recent Tingha Plateau, Warrabah National Park and Borah fires to name a few. I understand that this may be bias, but my mother does all of this without the need of a thank you, and I would like to see her realise how much she is loved and appreciated within the community.

sue-ellen wilkin [MOORE CREEK]

Sue-Ellen grew up on the north coast of NSW as one of nine children in a mixed farming family, which always seemed to be struggling to make ends meet. Her working career includes time as a live-in nanny and training in beauty therapy before marrying and raising her own family of three. In 2018, Sue-Ellen recognised the growing need to support drought-stricken farmers and responded by championing a new charity Doing it for Our Farmers. The charity receives and distributes donations of non-perishable food, toiletries, etc from across a broad area of NSW via its two pantries based at Tamworth and Murrurundi. The charity has a network of tireless volunteers and 23 coordinators based across NSW, who have assisted hundreds of farmers. Sue-Ellen is grateful for the free rent which has been generously provided in the past to house the pantry and any assistance is always gratefully accepted. The donations - some of which are

cash - are administered under the auspices of the Uniting Church at Tamworth. The charity provides its services without charge and provides a valuable touch-point and referral base to other support services for those suffering from the drought. Sue-Ellen is known to comment that the work can be exhausting but at the same time also very rewarding. She is driven by a deep desire to help make a positive difference to those who might be in need of a hand-up and has been known to put others' interests first, even when suffering from her own health challenges. I strongly commend Sue-Ellen and indeed all her colleagues and volunteers in this charity for recognition on the Hidden Treasures Honour Roll.

justine williams [GEURIE]

Justine was born and raised in Sydney and came to the Central West with her husband in 2002. She is the wife of Warren and mother of Emma, Heidi and Amelia. Justine runs a small business from home - Workabout Australia - which assists people travelling around the country and seeking jobs. Justine is also a keen long-distance runner and has taken part in the Sydney City to Surf, the Dubbo Stampede, the Orange Fun Run and Blue Mountains Marathon. With some of her running, Justine raises funds for Epilepsy Australia. She has also acted as secretary of the Geurie Public School Parents and Citizens and supports the Geurie community with fundraising.

Margaret Zell [GILGANDRA]

Margaret is a very special friend and an outstanding volunteer. In the true spirit of the word, for more than 60 years she has volunteered in many roles in the local and broader community, gifting thousands of hours to make life a little easier and more rewarding for others. Growing up at 'Cherrywood' in the Gilgandra Shire, Margaret moved to Tooraweenah in 1955 when she married her husband Don. Margaret's involvement with the Tooraweenah Public School included volunteering for the tuck shop, preparing for communion, cleaning, and in later years she taught scripture. She also drove the school bus and organised multiple fundraising activities. Margaret was also the leader of the Brownies group and organised working bees and fundraising activities to support and maintain the Tooraweenah Tennis Club. For many decades she was an active member of Tooraweenah Country Women's Association, serving various executive positions including president, secretary and treasurer, as well as judging many local show cooking competitions. Over the years Margaret has shared her love of cooking with the younger generation and has been active in many catering roles; including morning teas, lunches and afternoon teas during the annual Tooraweenah Show, Tooraweenah Endurance Ride and at clearing sales. Margaret's most outstanding role was as a founding volunteer member of a group who worked tirelessly to establish the Castlereagh Rural Financial Advisory Group in 1988 to support rural farming families and rural businesses during drought and ongoing difficult times. Margaret

was also a founding volunteer editor of the Toora Bungles community newsletter, which was established 1994. Margaret has always kept in touch with people who are going through tough times, always there to help when needed.

volunteer agencies

Volunteers make an extraordinary contribution to Australian society. They are the lifeblood of our community and come from all walks of life. They are working people, students and professionals; they are young people and retirees. They come from every suburb and community and from a variety of cultural, educational and religious backgrounds.

Volunteering is a chance to give something back to the community—to use your skills and experience to make a difference in the lives of people who need assistance the most. For others, it is a chance to develop new skills and experience in a supportive environment.

The following contacts are for key agencies and groups represented in the nominees profiles.

Aboriginal Medical Service
02 9319 5823
<http://amsredfern.org.au>

Aged & Community Services Australia
1300 877 855
www.acsa.asn.au

Agricultural Societies NSW
02 9879 6777
www.agshowsnsw.org.au

Angel Flight
Toll free 1300 726 567
www.angelflight.org.au

Anglican Church of Australia
02 8267 2700
www.anglican.org.au

Arthritis Foundation of NSW
1800 011 041
arthritismsw.org.au

Arts Council NSW
Freecall (within NSW)
1800 358 594
www.arts.nsw.gov.au

Australian Breastfeeding Association
02 9634 3915
www.breastfeeding.asn.au

Australian Bushman's Campdraft & Rodeo Association
02 6767 9200
www.abcra.com.au

Australian Celtic Festival
02 6730 2410
www.australiancelticfestival.com

Australian Red Cross
1800 733 276
www.redcross.org.au

Australian Rules Football (AFL)
03 9643 1999
www.afl.com.au

Bathurst Seymour Centre
02 63321449
www.bathurstseymourcentre.org.au

BlazeAid
0418 990 267
www.blazeaid.com.au

Bowls NSW
02 9283 4555
www.rnswba.org.au

Breast Cancer Network Australia
1800 500 258
www.bcna.org.au

Byron Youth Service
02 6685 7777
www.bys.org.au

Can Assist
1300 226 277
www.canassist.com.au

Cancer Council – NSW
13 11 20
www.cancercouncil.com.au

Catholic Church NSW-ACT
1300 432 484
www.catholic.org.au

Community Broadcasting Association of
Australia
02 9310 2999
www.cbaa.org.au

Community Transport
1300 679 286
<https://www.cto.org.au/>

Country Women's Association
of New South Wales
02 8337 0200
www.cwaofnsw.org.au

Cotton Growers Association NSW
0429 722 857
www.cottonaustralia.com.au

Cricket NSW
02 8302 6000
www.cricketnsw.com.au

Dilly Drought Drive
www.facebook.com/DillyDroughtDrive

Disability Services Australia
1300 372 121
www.dsa.org.au

FAWNA Wildlife rescue
02 6581 4141
www.fawna.org.au

Football NSW - Rugby League
02 8756 7000
www.playrugbyleague.com.au

Garden Clubs of Australia Inc
0412 638 373
www.gardenclubs.org.au

Girl Guides Australia – NSW/ACT
02 8396 5200
www.girlguides-nswact.org.au

Golf NSW
02 9505 9105
www.golfnsw.org

Habitat for Humanity NSW
1800 88 55 99
www.habitat.org.au

Heartfelt House
02 6628 8940
www.heartfelthouse.org.au

Hockey NSW
02 9764 1911
www.hockeynsw.com.au

Ionian Club
www.ionians.net

Inner Wheel Club

www.innerwheelaustralia.org.au

Isolated Children's Parents' Association

02 6231 9799

www.icpa.com.au

Landcare NSW

0458 168 225

www.landcarensw.org.au

Libraries NSW

02 9242 4000

www.lgnsw.org.au/policy/libraries

Life Education NSW

1300 427 653

www.lifeeducation.org.au

Lions Australia – NSW

02 4940 8033

www.lionsclub.org.au

Little Athletics NSW

02 9633 4511

www.lansw.com.au

Local Community Services Association

1800 646 545

www.lcsnsw.org.au

McGrath Foundation

02 8962 6100

www.mcgrathfoundation.com.au

Meals on Wheels

02 8219 4200

www.nswmealsonwheels.org.au

NSW Business Chamber

13 26 96

www.nswbusinesschamber.com.au

NSW Junior Rugby Union

nswjuniorrugby@gmail.com

www.nswjuniors.com.au

NSW Federation of Hunting Clubs

0421 710 528

Facebook: Federationhuntingclubs

Netball NSW

02 9951 5000

<https://nsw.netball.com.au>

NSW Performing Arts

02 8289 6588

www.create.nsw.gov.au/category/arts-in-nsw

NSW Rural Fire Service

02 8741 5555

www.rfs.nsw.gov.au

NSW Touch Football

02 9558 9333

www.nswtouch.com.au

Parents & Citizens Association

1300 885 982

www.pandc.org.au

Picture You In Agriculture

0407 740 446

www.pictureyouinagriculture.com.au

Pink Angels

0400 697 031

www.pinkangels.org.au

Pony Club NSW

02 4229 8977

www.pcansw.org.au

Probus

1300 630 488

www.probusouthpacific.org/tags/NSW

Quota International

berispritchard@gmail.com

www.quota.org

Racing NSW

02 9551 7500

www.racingnsw.com.au

Return Services League NSW

02 9264 8188

www.rslnsw.org.au

Rotaract NSW

1300 476 827

<https://rotaract.org.au/find/region/new-south-wales/>

Rotary Australia

02 8894 9800

www.rotaryaustralia.org.au

Royal Agricultural Society NSW Youth Group

02 9704 1160

www.rasnsw.com.au/youth/youth-group

RSPCA

02 9770 7555

www.rspca.org.au

Rural Outreach Support Inverell

02 6721 0855

www.ruraloutreach.net.au

Scouts Australia – NSW

02 9735 9000

www.nsw.scouts.com.au

Soroptimist International NSW-ACT

02 8096 6072

www.siswp.org/events/region/82-si-region-of-nsw-act

State Emergency Service – NSW

02 4251 6111 / 13 25 00

www.ses.nsw.gov.au

St. John's Ambulance

1300 360 455

www.stjohn.org.au

Swimming NSW

02 9763 5833

www.nsw.swimming.org.au

Tennis NSW

1800 15 30 40

www.tennis.com.au/nsw

Tidy Towns NSW

02 8594 4000

www.kab.org.au/tidy-towns/nsw

The Salvation Army

13 72 58

www.salvos.org.au

Uniting Church of Australia – NSW

02 8267 4300

nswact.uca.org.au

United Hospital Auxiliaries of NSW

02 9424 5786

www.uhansw.websytle.com.au

VIEW Clubs of Australia

Freecall 1800 805 366

www.view.org.au

Visitors Information Centres – NSW

www.visitnsw.com/visitor-information-centres

Westpac Helicopter Service

Freecall 1800 155 155

www.rescuehelicopter.com.au

WIRES – NSW Wildlife Information, Rescue & Education Service

1300 094 737

www.wires.org.au

Young Farming Champions

0407 740 446

www.youngfarmingchampions.com

GENERAL CONTACTS

The Centre for Volunteering

02 9261 3600

info@volunteering.com.au

www.volunteering.com.au

Volunteering NSW

02 8753 8543

www.volunteering.nsw.gov.au

Indigenous Community Volunteers

1800 819 542

www.icv.com.au

2020 honour roll: nominate a rural woman


The 2020 Hidden Treasures Honour Roll will be launched at the NSW Rural Women's Gathering to be held at Forbes from 23-25 October.

We invite you to nominate a friend, family member, colleague, community worker—any rural woman who you believe makes your community a better place to live.

Nominations for the 2020 Honour Roll open 18 May and close 24 July 2020.

For more information or to nominate a hidden treasure contact:

Rural Women's Network
NSW Department of Primary Industries
02 6391 3612
rural.women@dpi.nsw.gov.au
www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn



There is no better exercise for your heart, than reaching down and helping to lift someone up.

BERNARD MELTZER



Hidden Treasures is an initiative of
Department of Primary Industries
Rural Women's Network



Department of
Primary Industries