



Department of  
Primary Industries

A decorative white line-art frame with ornate, swirling flourishes surrounding the central text.

HIDDEN  
TREASURES  
HONOUR ROLL

2014

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



ISSN 1838-4099 (Print)

© State of New South Wales through Department of Trade and Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services 2014. You may copy, distribute and otherwise freely deal with this publication for any purpose, provided that you attribute Department of Trade and Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services as the owner.

Recognising that some of the information in this document is provided by third parties, the State of New South Wales, the author and the publisher take no responsibility for the accuracy, currency, reliability and correctness of any information included in the document provided by third parties.

Hidden Treasures is a joint project of Rural Women's Network (NSW Department of Primary Industries) and The Centre for Volunteering, NSW.

Rural Women's Network  
NSW Department of Primary Industries  
161 Kite Street  
Orange New South Wales 2800

Telephone 02 6391 3620  
[rural.women@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rural.women@dpi.nsw.gov.au)  
[www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn)

## ministers' message

It is my pleasure to present the 2014 Hidden Treasures Honour Roll.

This special publication continues to play a unique role in recognising the dedicated and inspiring efforts of women who volunteer in their communities across rural, regional and remote New South Wales.

A record 153 women are celebrated in this fifth edition of the Hidden Treasures Honour Roll and, as in previous years, the roles these women play are as diverse as the places they call home.

Volunteers are an essential part of community life, and this can particularly be the case in smaller communities where facilities and resources can be limited.

From Broken Hill to Mudgee, Warialda to Cootamundra, the women in this book share a passion for their community and for helping the less fortunate, people with disabilities, and keeping vital community services going.

The Department of Primary Industries' Rural Women's Network started the Hidden Treasures initiative as a way of keeping a record of rural women's volunteering, as well as to pay tribute to those who so generously give their time to help others.

The continuing strong response from people wanting to nominate outstanding volunteers each year is a testament to the strong community spirit that rural Australia is renowned for.

We thank those people who took the time to submit nominations and we congratulate every person in this year's tribute publication.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Katrina Hodgkinson'.

**Katrina Hodgkinson**  
Minister for Primary Industries  
Minister for Small Business



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Victor Dominello'.

**Victor Dominello**  
Minister for Citizenship & Communities  
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs



## 2014 hidden treasures nominees

- |                                       |                                     |  |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| 8 Elizabeth Allen<br>[Dubbo]          | 14 Leanne Blessington<br>[Warialda] | 21 Allyson Costanzo<br>[Port Macquarie]              |
| 8 Norma Allen<br>[Cobargo]            | 15 Shelley Boyce<br>[Bowral]        | 21 Lynette Cregan<br>[Glen Innes]                    |
| 9 Wendy Anderson<br>[Rankins Springs] | 15 Hazel Bridgett<br>[Rous Mill]    | 22 Doreen Cupitt<br>[Iluka]                          |
| 9 Val Anderson<br>[Broken Hill]       | 16 Valma Brill<br>[Ganmain]         | 22 Barbara Cuthbert<br>[Tatton]                      |
| 10 Kay Arthur<br>[Glen Innes]         | 16 Barbara Brown<br>[Tenterfield]   | 22 Gay Daley<br>[Parkes]                             |
| 10 Valerie Audet<br>[Taree]           | 17 Beth Brown<br>[Narrabri]         | 23 Christine Dedobelaar<br>[Parkes]                  |
| 11 Janine Ball<br>[Grafton]           | 17 Linda Bruce<br>[Glen Innes]      | 23 Myra Dempster<br>[Broken Hill]                    |
| 11 Robyne Bancroft<br>[Copmanhurst]   | 17 Carol Bryant<br>[Mudgee]         | 24 Shirley Donald<br>[Glen Innes]                    |
| 12 Judith Barber<br>[Howlong]         | 18 Annette Byrne<br>[Broken Hill]   | 24 Deborah Donaldson<br>[Uralla]                     |
| 12 Fay Barraclough<br>[Broken Hill]   | 18 Anne Caldwell<br>[Congarinni]    | 25 Ilene Fahey<br>[Lismore]                          |
| 12 Joyce Bell OAM<br>[Yamba]          | 18 Susie Cay<br>[Corowa]            | 25 Margaret Ferguson<br>[Putty]                      |
| 13 Mieke Bell<br>[Lindendale]         | 19 Cheryl Chalker<br>[Taralga]      | 26 Jennifer Filmer OAM<br>[The Angle, near Canberra] |
| 13 Daphne Betts<br>[Cobar]            | 19 Susan Collings<br>[Merriwa]      | 26 Coral Ford<br>[Broken Hill]                       |
| 14 Mary Beven<br>[Broken Hill]        | 20 Marie Coombe<br>[Broken Hill]    | 27 Yvonne Forsyth<br>[Cootamundra]                   |
| 14 Daphne Biggs<br>[Menindee]         | 20 Anna Corby<br>[Nyngan]           | 27 Val Foster<br>[Murwillumbah]                      |

## 2014 hidden treasures nominees

- |                                      |                                       |  |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| 28 Lynne Gall<br>[Broken Hill]       | 35 Iris Herrmann<br>[Leeton]          | 40 Margaret Lang<br>[Taralga]              |
| 28 Valerie George<br>[Lapstone]      | 35 Diana Hoffman<br>[Broken Hill]     | 41 Cynthia Langford<br>[Broken Hill]       |
| 29 Ruth Gorton<br>[Keinbah]          | 36 Leisa Hoffman<br>[Ballina]         | 41 Darlene Lawler<br>[Forbes]              |
| 29 Jodie Greenhalgh<br>[Eugowra]     | 36 Naomi Hogan<br>[Hamilton]          | 42 Mary Leehane<br>[Broken Hill]           |
| 30 Fay Hackett<br>[Kyogle]           | 36 Michelle Houldcroft<br>[Garah]     | 42 Alba Linklater<br>[Tucabia]             |
| 30 Gwen Hallam<br>[Yetman]           | 37 Kath Howard<br>[Murrurundi]        | 43 Pamela Lord OAM<br>[Broken Hill]        |
| 30 Muriel Halsted<br>[Scone]         | 37 Jamilla Hume<br>[Broken Hill]      | 43 Julie Lyford<br>[Gloucester]            |
| 31 Margaret Hanrahan OAM<br>[Corowa] | 37 Marilyn Jennings<br>[Coolamon]     | 44 Sharon MacKay<br>[Broken Hill]          |
| 32 Leonie Hansen<br>[Tamworth]       | 38 Christina Johansson<br>[Narrabri]  | 44 Elizabeth Mackinnon<br>[East Jindabyne] |
| 32 Rosemary Harris<br>[Oberon]       | 38 Sue Jurd<br>[Tenterfield]          | 45 Lynne Mahony<br>[Murrurundi]            |
| 33 June Henderson<br>[Orange]        | 39 Katherine Kennedy<br>[Adaminaby]   | 45 Joanne Marr<br>[Werris Creek]           |
| 33 Wilma Hepburn<br>[Forbes]         | 39 Raelene Kennewell<br>[Broken Hill] | 45 Karen McAllister<br>[Glen Innes]        |
| 34 Maryann Herbert<br>[Corowa]       | 40 Gwen Kent<br>[Tuckombil]           | 46 Margaret McConaughty<br>[Gwabegar]      |
| 34 Kate Herring<br>[Broken Hill]     | 40 Rae Lalor<br>[Ulladulla]           | 46 Kerry McDonald<br>[Warialda]            |

46 Margaret McFarlane  
[Orange]

47 Helen McKelvie  
[Coolamon]

47 Dana Mclean  
[Taralga]

47 Roslyn McLoughlin  
[Gunning]

48 Anne McNally  
[Cootamundra]

48 Sam McNally  
[Cootamundra]

48 Maggie McPhail  
[Forbes]

49 Sharon Meere  
[Boorowa]

49 Jenny Mitchell OAM  
[North Star]

50 Leisa Moody  
[Binda]

50 Annette Moxon  
[Bathurst]

50 Dorothy Mullaney  
[Bega]

50 Lucy Needham  
[Blayney]

51 Molly Neilsen  
[Forbes]

51 Jann O'Connor  
[Gloucester]

52 Mary O'Neill  
[Merriwa]

52 Hannah Orr  
[Cootamundra]

52 Helen Parsons  
[Gloucester]

53 Cheryl Payten  
[Coleambally]

53 Beryl Pepper  
[Mullumbimby]

54 Josie Peter  
[Broken Hill]

54 Maxine Prestwich  
[Broken Hill]

54 Daphne Prior  
[Forbes]

55 Nell Pyle OAM  
[Bolwarra Heights]

55 Lisa Ramien  
[Mudgee]

56 Heather Ranclaud  
[Willow Tree]

56 Rosemary Reed  
[Tocumwal]

57 Robyn Reid  
[Berridale]

57 Juame Reynolds  
[Broken Hill]

58 Olwyn Reynolds  
[Broken Hill]

58 Carol Ridgeway-Bissett  
[Nelson Bay]

59 Thelma Ryan OAM  
[Berrigan]

59 Debbie Saad  
[Thirlmere]

60 Andrea Sauerbier  
[Mudgee]

60 Debbie Schache  
[Bathurst]

61 Elizabeth Seckold  
[Tathra]

61 Gwen Shawcross  
[Anglers Reach]

62 Vickii Simpson  
[Coomba Park]

62 Kathleen Sinnott  
[Banora Point]

62 Genevieve Smith  
[Wagga Wagga]

63 Clare Smulders  
[Howlong]

63 Barbara Swain  
[Alstonville]

## 2014 hidden treasures nominees

63 Margaret Symes  
[Broken Hill]

64 Marion Tanner  
[Blandford]

64 Pat Tate  
[Wootton]

65 Catherine Thompson  
[Temora]

65 Jan Tobin  
[Tweed Heads]

66 Susan Tomkins  
[Orange]

66 Rosemary Toscano  
[Nelson Bay]

66 Jenny Treloar  
[Broken Hill]

67 Shirley Tunnicliff  
[Rylstone]

67 Belinda Turner  
[Bowling]

68 Dorothy Turner  
[Orange]

68 Clare Twomey  
[North Lismore]

69 Bernadette Underwood  
[Baradine]

69 Alison Uphill  
[Forbes]

69 Maree Vanlierop  
[Forest Hill]

70 Julie Virtue  
[Forbes]

70 Beth White  
[Ben Lomond]

70 Di Williams  
[Cootamundra]

71 Margaret Wilson  
[Broken Hill]

71 Christina Woodhead  
[Alstonville]

72 Kym Wooding  
[Hay]

72 Renae Worboys  
[Cootamundra]

72 Nellie Workman  
[Kurri Kurri]

73 Judith Wright  
[Bellbird]



Giving of any kind ...  
taking any action ...  
begins the process of change,  
and moves us to remember that  
we are part of a much greater universe.

MBALI CREAZZO

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

## elizabeth allen [Dubbo]

Elizabeth has been a member of Quota International for 25 years, serving in all local club positions and as District Governor. Having grown up in North Western NSW, and having lived and worked in Sydney, Elizabeth has a passionate interest in the welfare of patients needing to travel long distances for medical treatment. She has been an Earth Angel volunteer assisting Angel Flight since 2004. These interests led to her active involvement, including as Deputy Chair, in fundraising to provide a new diabetes/renal unit at Dubbo Hospital. In time government funding provided the renal unit so the committee refocussed and raised more than \$600 000 for the diabetes unit. In 1996 Elizabeth and her husband formed the Dubbo Prostate Cancer Support Group. She trained as an ambassador with the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia to promote prostate awareness and related men's health issues throughout rural and remote areas. Elizabeth has given more than 100 presentations throughout the West and spent much time helping women, many from distant areas, through their partners' prostate cancer journeys. She contributed to the book, *Advanced Prostate Cancer*, and wrote the booklet, *Men and Women Coping with Erectile Dysfunction*. During her five-year term as Chair of Dubbo Health Council she expanded the council to include members from

across the North West. Elizabeth was instrumental in raising awareness about the lack of affordable accommodation for patients/carers travelling long distances for treatment. This led to the formation of Dubbo Base Hospital Accommodation Project to establish a facility near the hospital—Elizabeth is an Executive Member. Her determination and efforts in support of people of the vast community of North Western NSW make Elizabeth a worthy nominee.

## norma allen [Cobargo]

Norma has worked as a volunteer in her community for the past 60 years. Born in 1946 she grew up in the Bega Valley and has lived there all her life. She had seven brothers and her father died when Norma was eight-years-old. Her mother worked long hours to support the family. Norma married and with her husband raised four children. They have 13 grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren. Norma has worked as a volunteer with the Country Women's Association (CWA), Cobargo Agriculture Show, St Mary's Catholic Church, Yuin Folk Club, Cobargo Folk Festival Organising Committee, Cobargo Cricket Club, Bermagui Senior Citizens Club, Cobargo Garden Club and Bermagui senior citizens and Narira Retirement Home. She also helped raise funds for the Cobargo swimming pool and in her 'spare time' she makes pots of soup for people in the Cobargo community when they are ill. Norma was in her early 20s when she began judging cookery and later became one of the most respected judges in NSW—judging at the Royal Easter Show for more than 20 years.

She has received the prestigious Royal Agricultural Society Life Membership Award. Norma has been a steward for the Cobargo AP&H Society for 50 years and also received an award for that contribution. Norma is a much loved member of the Cobargo community after contributing countless hours as a volunteer. On the benefits of volunteering, Norma says, 'It is not what you gather, but what you scatter, that tells what kind of life you have lived'.

## Wendy Anderson

[Rankins Springs]

Wendy is known throughout the Rankins Springs community for her work within organisations and her efforts supporting families. Together with her husband and sons she operates a successful farming business. Wendy is proud of her family and takes pleasure in spending time with her 12 grandchildren. She is an executive member of the Rankins Springs War Memorial Hall Committee and Treasurer of St Luke's Rankins Springs Anglican Church. The Isolated Children's and Parent's Association also has Wendy's support and assistance, particularly in collating and mailing its annual newsletter. Wendy volunteers time at Rankins Springs Primary School to assist student reading and religious classes. The Griffith Anglican Op-Shop also benefits from her volunteer work. Wendy was a key leader in helping to provide a pre-school bus to travel to outlying towns around Griffith to bring valuable pre-school education to isolated rural communities. She is a founding member of the Rankins Springs Thursday

night dance group which provides the opportunity for couples to gather, in an informal atmosphere, to build friendships and support networks. Wendy assists the catering efforts of local organisations and regularly visits local families and neighbours. In rural areas, when houses are kilometres apart, such visits and the sharing of a cup of tea and conversation helps all community members to feel valued. Wendy is down-to-earth, friendly, approachable, realistic and non-judgmental and has a positive, can-do attitude. As a Justice of the Peace, Wendy offers services willingly and with confidentiality.

## Val Anderson [Broken Hill]

Val is a Life Member of the Broken Hill Women's Auxiliary which raises funds to support the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS). The Auxiliary began in 1951 and today has 20 active members. This group of dedicated women raises funds through raffles and catering but what sets them apart is the two major projects they organise and run each year—The RFDS Ball and their famous 'Christmas Puddings'. The ball is held each May and this year it attracted 730 guests and raised in excess of \$36 000. Each October the Auxiliary organises the making of 2300 Christmas puddings (despite 35°C-plus summer temperatures). Most of the puddings are sold and distributed from Broken Hill, raising around \$35 000 each year. The Auxiliary also provides for the Broken Hill Hospital visitors program, something it has done for 49 consecutive years. Such achievements are a testimony to the extraordinary effort of the Auxiliary members who, like their predecessors,

continue to make a major contribution to the RFDS—not an easy task in the harsh economic climate of a remote region. These outstanding women are unique. Their commitment to the RFDS is reflected not only in their continued dedication and financial contribution but in the tradition that is part of the fabric of the Broken Hill community.

## kay arthur [Glen Innes]

Kay has followed in the steps of two charitable women, her mother and her grandmother, during her 23-year involvement with the Glen Innes Lioness Club. She was born in Glen Innes and has lived and worked in the town for 62 years. Her mother and grandmother were her chief role models. Kay is a past President (one year) and Treasurer (three years) of the Lioness Club and now serves as the Service Director (a position she has held for 17 years). Much of her work has involved encouraging the raising and donation of funds to assist children with disabilities and disadvantaged people. Her efforts have assisted Meals on Wheels (20 years), the Royal Blind Society (Treasurer, 10 years), Multiple Sclerosis fundraising (Treasurer, 18 years) and Parkinson's Disease fundraising (Treasurer, three years). She has served on the local Relay for Life Committee for two years and is herself a cancer survivor. Her 25 years of voluntary service at the local school canteen, and 20 years of billeting for the annual Celtic Festival and Lions Exchange Program, reflect her great love of people and children. She has fostered 18 children in past years and adopted a child from Korea 30 years ago. Kay's awards for outstanding achievement include the

Centenary Medal for Outstanding Volunteer Work (2001), The Lions International Neil Williams Award for outstanding dedication and service to the community (2009) and an Australian Citizen of the Year Award (2010). Kay says she volunteers as the need arises and doesn't count the hours of service. She began volunteering in 1977 when she joined local Pre-School Mothers' Club. She loves giving to the community and the community has been enriched by her dedication.

## valerie audet [Taree]

Valerie (better known as Val) is committed to the cultural life of Taree. She was instrumental in the foundation of the Taree Arts Council as Musical Director and as a vocal coach, providing tireless support to those who needed assistance with speech and vocal roles. She has also made a significant contribution as Musical Director of the Manning Valley Choral Society. The Taree & District Eisteddfod Society made Val a Life Member, recognising her many years as Coordinator of the Vocal and Choral sections. Val championed the building of a dedicated performance space in Taree and has continued that commitment since the Manning Entertainment Centre was built in 1988. Since then she has contributed more than 10 000 volunteer hours. As supervisor of other volunteers Val has played a key role in forming the culture and service attitude which prevails at the Entertainment Centre. For several years Val arranged the volunteer roster, a task requiring countless hours on the telephone and a high degree of skill and charm to ensure there were sufficient staff for every performance at

the Centre. Taree locals are well aware of the difference Val has made to aspiring singers and performers, of her leadership of volunteers and of her kind interactions with patrons at the Manning Entertainment Centre. Outside her musical interests and contributions Val is a support person for a local family with a developmentally challenged child and is an involved and committed member of her local church in several ministries.

### janine ball [Grafton]

Janine is considered the matriarch of childcare in Grafton, having worked in that field in the local community for more than 35 years. She was born in Grafton and has lived in the town most of her life. Janine has cared for the children of three generations during her time in childcare, regularly going above and beyond the call of duty to support families—financially, with clothes, food, furniture and sometimes with accommodation. Until her recent retirement she has worked to raise funds for a range of community organisations including Beauty Zone, New School of Arts, Coldstream Pre-School, Clarence Family Day Care (CFDC) and the church. She is Secretary of the CFDC Scheme, has served on a range of community committees and has volunteered for many local and community events. Janine still volunteers to assist play sessions at CFDC, Coldstream Pre-School and the church. She is known for her strong support of people in need at all times and for the love, values, friendship and community spirit that she fosters throughout the community.

### robyne bancroft

[Copmanhurst]

Robyne is an Elder of the Gumbaynggirr-Bundjalung nation. She was born in Coffs Harbour and has lived most of her life in the Clarence Valley, attending Baryulgil, Coaldale and Copmanhurst primary schools, and St Mary's College in Grafton. She has also lived in Papua New Guinea and Canberra. While working as a public servant in Canberra she set up Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Services (MACS) in every state and territory in Australia. Robyne then studied at the Australian National University, graduating in Archaeology and Anthropology. She is Vice-President of Clarence Valley Women Inc. Robyne also serves on, and does volunteer work for several committees including: the Catholic Elders' Council, the Marist Brothers Education Committee, the Catholic Education Committee, the Clarence Valley Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) and the Grafton Ngerrie Local Aboriginal Land Council Committee. She volunteers in schools, educating students and teachers about Aboriginal cultural heritage by providing hands-on experience with field trips to Aboriginal heritage sites. Robyne is also involved with the Lindt Committee which has been researching the stories behind the Lindt Aboriginal photographs. The story of the photographs and the work of the committee were featured in an ABC Australian Story episode, 'The Light of Day.' Robyne has three children and six grandchildren. She has recently retired after working as a Cultural Heritage Officer with Forests NSW. Robyne has

been involved with Aboriginal cultural heritage for more than 30 years and has made an invaluable contribution to the area, especially through education.

### judith barber [Howlong]

Judith has a gift for knowing when someone in her community needs a helping hand or a positive word. She is a qualified nurse and attained a doctorate Degree with La Trobe University. For many years, when Howlong was without the services of a doctor, Judith would be called on at any time of the day or night to attend to community members needing medical attention. Judith also devoted much time jointly caring for her elderly mother and a developmentally disabled brother. She is known for her diligence and her ability to think outside the square, and she always sees the positives in people and their ideas. Judith is considered thoughtful, supportive, ecumenical, involved and kind-hearted by those in the Howlong community.

### Fay barracough [Broken Hill]

Fay is a member of the Broken Hill Women's Auxiliary which raises funds to support the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS). The Auxiliary began in 1951 and today has 20 active members. This group of dedicated women raises funds through raffles and catering but what sets them apart is the two major projects they organise and run each year—The RFDS Ball and their famous 'Christmas

Puddings'. The ball is held each May and this year it attracted 730 guests and raised in excess of \$36 000. Each October the Auxiliary organises the making of 2300 Christmas puddings (despite 35°C-plus summer temperatures). Most of the puddings are sold and distributed from Broken Hill, raising around \$35 000 each year. The Auxiliary also provides for the Broken Hill Hospital visitors program, something it has done for 49 consecutive years. Such achievements are a testimony to the extraordinary effort of the Auxiliary members who, like their predecessors, continue to make a major contribution to the RFDS—not an easy task in the harsh economic climate of a remote region. It would be impossible to detail the qualities of each Auxiliary member but, suffice to say, these outstanding women are unique. Their commitment to the RFDS is reflected not only in their continued dedication and financial contribution but in the tradition that is part of the fabric of the Broken Hill community.

### joyce bell OAM [Yamba]

When Joyce moved to Yamba 16 years ago she was determined to lead a busy and fulfilling life in retirement, so she volunteered to assist several local organisations. Joyce grew up in the Sydney suburb of Bankstown and moved to Yamba 16 years ago after living in Canberra, Papua New Guinea and Brisbane. She had worked in retail for many years and, while still in Brisbane, joined the Logan Hospital Auxiliary. On moving to Yamba she volunteered to assist the Maclean Hospital Auxiliary, Wellspring Church Op-Shop, Port of Yamba Historical Society and the Meals

on Wheels organisation. However, it has been with the Hospital Auxiliary and the Op-Shop that she has devoted many hours of service. Joyce was Vice-President of the Hospital Auxiliary from 2001–07 and has been President since 2007. The Auxiliary has raised more \$600 000 since Joyce became President. These funds have been used to purchase equipment for Maclean Hospital including patient lifters, heart monitors and new X-Ray equipment. At the NSW State Conference of hospital auxiliaries in 2013 the McLean Auxiliary was awarded a certificate after raising \$100 000 in 12 months. Joyce donates about 20 hours volunteer work a week to the Auxiliary and also works one day a week at the Op-Shop, and she has been doing that for the past 14 years. She has been married to her husband Allen for 60 years and they have two sons, five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Joyce gardens and cooks and was an avid reader before macular degeneration made reading difficult. Joyce was recently awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia.

### *mieke bell* [Lindendale]

For 22 years Mieke has taken a hands-on approach at the Lismore Soup Kitchen spending an average of three days a week providing meals and support, through temporary and permanent accommodation, to the underprivileged of the region. Mieke is a volunteer at the kitchen (known to locals as the LSK) and President of the group that operates it. Together with her husband Mieke is helping many in need to change their lives and regain respect, often providing unemployed and

homeless people with paid work on the family blueberry farm. Mieke is also a volunteer with Kairos Outside, a not-for-profit program providing support for women who have partners who are in correctional facilities. Mieke provides emotional and social support for the women through the program, regularly developing relationships to ensure they receive long-term support.

### *daphne betts* [Cobar]

Daphne (better known as Dolly) was born and raised near Nymagee, a small NSW village in the Cobar Shire. Whenever there is an event in the Nymagee region she is there, quietly and efficiently coordinating the activities. Dolly has organised resources and catering for hundreds of clearing sales, Christmas parties and other special events. As President of the Nymagee Country Women's Association she works to organise the Annual Nymagee Flower Show which, under her oversight, has grown from a small local show to an event with more than 160 entries and a trade show which draws patrons from neighbouring towns. Together with her husband Barry and family, Dolly has been the catalyst for a successful tennis club in Nymagee. While tennis clubs in many small communities have lost support and disappeared over the years Dolly has been involved in efforts to build improved facilities for this well attended, family friendly activity in Nymagee. She has also been actively involved in the Nymagee Bushfire Brigade for more than 50 years, providing support to volunteer firefighters during fire events in the area. Dolly has been instrumental in efforts to preserve local

history at Nymagee and Gilgunnia, helping to produce a book on her family and leading efforts to chronicle graves in the local cemetery. Many families have been comforted by Dolly's support during funerals and life-changing events. She has inspired her family and many friends to continue their involvement in the community. Dolly is the friend, community supporter and historian, who everyone has depended upon to keep Nymagee village going—a true treasure.

### mary beven [Broken Hill]

Mary is a Life Member of the Broken Hill Women's Auxiliary which raises funds to support the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS). The Auxiliary began in 1951 and today has 20 active members. This group of dedicated women raises funds through raffles and catering but what sets them apart is the two major projects they organise and run each year—The RFDS Ball and their famous 'Christmas Puddings'. The ball is held each May and this year it attracted 730 guests and raised in excess of \$36 000. Each October the Auxiliary organises the making of 2300 Christmas puddings (despite 35°C-plus summer temperatures). Most of the puddings are sold and distributed from Broken Hill, raising around \$35 000 each year. The Auxiliary also provides for the Broken Hill Hospital visitors program, something it has done for 49 consecutive years. Such achievements are a testimony to the extraordinary effort of the Auxiliary members who, like their predecessors, continue to make a major contribution to the RFDS—not an easy task in the harsh economic climate of a remote region. It would be impossible

to detail the qualities of each Auxiliary member but, suffice to say, these outstanding women are unique. Their commitment to the RFDS is reflected not only in their continued dedication and financial contribution but in the tradition that is part of the fabric of the Broken Hill community.

### daphne biggs [Menindee]

Daphne is a member of the Menindee Aboriginal Community and is a proud Barkindji woman. She has volunteered her time on Kinchega National Park to help run a culture camp for local children and to help in the repatriation of exposed Aboriginal burial sites. Daphne is always eager to learn new skills and put them into practice, and is dedicated to country and culture. She has put in more than 40 volunteer hours into projects at Kinchega National Park over the past year. As well as participating in Park projects Daphne is an active member of her local Community Land Council and football club. Daphne's enthusiasm for any task that she undertakes inspires others.

### leanne blessington [Warialda]

Leanne has become an invaluable volunteer with the NSW Rural Fire Service since joining the Warialda Rural Fire Brigade on 20 February 2007. She has always had a strong interest in training and gaining the necessary qualifications to become an active firefighter. Leanne attends fire incidents day or night and caters for training and other Brigade events. As the Brigade Equipment

Officer and Catering Officer she is often at the station cleaning up, checking emergency food details on the truck, washing uniforms and generally looking after everyone. Other positions she has held with the Warialda Brigade include Health & Safety Officer, Brigade Vice-President and Treasurer. Leanne is a real trooper and the Brigade's hidden treasure.

shelley boyce [Bowral]

Shelley arrived in Australia as an exchange student, met Phil (who lived in the Southern Highlands), fell in love and married. Together they raised five children, all of them now adults. Shelley has always been involved in her community, initially with pursuits that involved her children—scripture classes in schools, Parents & Friends Associations at three schools and as a Girl Guide Leader for more than 10 years. During these years she was also involved with Meals on Wheels. In the 1980s Shelley became involved in fundraising to help set up the Lifeline service in the Illawarra. She has been a member of Rotary since 1999, was elected President of Berrima District Rotary Club in 2009/10 and has filled several Rotary Director roles over the years. During her year as President she raised funds and helped to build a school in Nepal. The Nepalese Government has since used the school as a template for developing other schools in the area. Shelley has served on the committees of several organisations including the Volunteering Wingecarribee community group, the Starfish charity support group and the Moss Vale Show Society. She is a member of the Arts & Culture

Committee for Wingecarribee Shire Council. Most recently Shelley has been Chair of the Southern Highlands Foundation and has expanded the client base during that time to include other high profile local organisations. Shelley has made, is continuing to make, an enormous contribution to her local community.

hazel bridgett  
[Rous Mill, near Lismore]

Born in England, Hazel migrated to Australia in 1958. A Registered Nurse she became a mature age graduate from the universities of Newcastle and Sydney after raising four children. Hazel moved to Rous Mill in December 1992. Her volunteering spans several sectors. For many years she undertook voluntary roles as a community representative on health service committees before being appointed as a Board Member with the local health district. Her fellow board members have benefited from the knowledge and community linkages that Hazel brings through her many years of volunteering. Hazel's volunteering has also included various roles with the National Parks Association of NSW and almost 20 years with Legacy Far North Coast as the club's Community & Health Officer (she is currently Chair of the Lismore Division). Hazel has represented Legacy Australia on the National Aged Care Alliance and The National Aged and Community Care Committee of the Department of Veterans Affairs. She is a Life Member of Northern Rivers Social Development Council and has worked in mental health and rehabilitation

support. For many years she was a Member and President of the Musica Viva Lismore Committee and has been involved in local choral groups including the Nouveaux Singers, St Andrew's Church Choir and Spiritsong. Hazel is a member and volunteer with Friends of Lismore Rainforest Botanic Garden (LRBG). She is working with Far North Coast Legacy to prepare a submission to the Department of Veterans Affairs for a commemorative garden in the LRBG to feature local botanical equivalents of plants used by servicemen and servicewomen as medicines or food in times of conflict.

### valma brill [Ganmain]

Val was born in Ganmain and educated at Ganmain Central School. She worked as an assistant nurse at Coolamon Hospital before completing her Nursing Certificate at Narrandera Hospital. Val and her husband Barrie farmed 'Glenvale' near Ganmain before retiring to town where she has provided countless volunteer hours for a range of causes. Groups and organisations that have benefited from Val's contributions include the Red Cross, Allawah Lodge, Ganmain Uniting Church, Ganmain Football Club's Ladies Auxiliary, Ganmain Craft Cottage, Ganmain Haystack Committee, Ganmain Show Society and the Ganmain Hall Committee. As President of the Ganmain Hall Committee, Val has led a team of volunteers to restore the town's historic hall to its former glory. Her role as President has involved chairing monthly meetings and volunteering at regular market days, fundraising events, community concerts and a range of other hall

activities. Val was a key organiser of the Ganmain Hall Centenary, a magnificent community celebration. Her special interest in gardening and flower arranging resulted in her donating many beautiful flower arrangements for community events. She also supports younger volunteers in the community offering assistance and quiet words of encouragement at every turn. Val is truly a wonderful volunteer within the Ganmain community.

### barbara brown [Tenterfield]

Barbara was born and educated in Tenterfield. She later studied at Newcastle College of Advanced Education and Newcastle Art School, achieving a Diploma in Art Education. After returning to Tenterfield Barbara married veterinarian John Brown and began working in his business. They have three sons and three grandchildren. Barbara joined Tenterfield Branch of the Australian Red Cross in 2003. She soon became Branch Secretary organising open garden-day lunches, supper at charity concerts held to aid Red Cross appeals, the cattle saleyards canteen, the Meals on Wheels roster for Red Cross volunteers, street stalls and luncheons. Barbara's proficiency and ability to encourage members to become involved has boosted the success of all such undertakings. Barbara is also a great country cook and gardener. Her artistic work specialises in mosaics. Barbara has been a member of the Red Cross Emergency Services (RCES) team since May 2004 and is Team Leader for the Tenterfield Unit. She assisted RCES efforts at the Hunter/Central Coast floods in June 2007,

Mackay Floods in February 2008, Brisbane storms in November 2008, Queensland floods in December 2010 and the North West floods in January 2011. In Moree she was a team leader. Barbara has also completed training in the Red Cross Red Support Outreach program and in May this year attended a three-day senior leadership conference in Canberra. Barbara is always willing to volunteer her time and to assist members to gain experience in Red Cross work.

### beth brown [Narrabri]

Beth Brown has been a volunteer with the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) since joining the Deep Creek Rural Fire Brigade on 1 August 2003. Her committed approach to RFS training has enabled her to become an active operational member of the Brigade. She has been the Brigade Secretary for many years and is also a former Brigade Treasurer. Before joining the RFS Beth supported her husband by keeping the family business going while he was fighting fires or attending to Brigade business. She has always opened her home to the Brigade for meetings and was a driving force behind Brigade efforts which helped initiate funding for a Brigade Station. Beth is considered an exceptional Brigade Member while actively fighting fires or at home arranging food and refreshments for other Brigade Members.

### linda bruce [Glen Innes]

Famous for its sapphires, Glen Innes is home to another rare gem—Goulburn born Linda. The mother of three runs a local butchery with husband Adrian and shines in many volunteer roles in the town. She is the Vice President of St Joseph's School P&C, coaches' assistant at local Junior Rugby League games, the local basketball coach, referee and registrar. Linda carries boundless encouragement and enthusiasm wherever she goes and her happy-go-lucky nature allows her to understand and support those around her. Highly organised, she sorts out large-scale events and fundraising with ease. Her level-headed approach has helped many local committees host successful events. Not only does Linda put many hours each week into volunteering but she changes people's days by listening, hearing and then helping. In a small rural town having someone as multi-talented as Linda around means things happen that can change an individual's outlook. Linda gives unconditionally and expects nothing in return. She has helped many families in Glen Innes and is a pillar of the community as a volunteer and mentor to many.

### carol bryant [Mudgee]

Carol grew up in Leadville in country NSW and worked as a Registered Nurse in Bellingen, Cudal, Wollongong and Mudgee. After retiring from work in 2006, she joined Tai Chi for Arthritis classes at Mudgee Community Health Centre. She began leading Tai Chi classes as a volunteer

at the Centre in 2008 and has since become the only qualified leader of Stage 2 Tai Chi for Arthritis classes in Mudgee. Each week she leads around 40 participants during two classes, each running for two hours. Carol is known for her dependability and her caring attitude towards all Tai Chi participants. The Tai Chi classes would not continue without her support. She also volunteers as a visitor for people in aged care facilities and to lead Tai Chi classes in an aged care facility for an hour a week.

*annette byrne* [Broken Hill]

Annette is a member of the Broken Hill Women's Auxiliary which raises funds to support the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS). The Auxiliary began in 1951 and today has 20 active members. This group of dedicated women raises funds through raffles and catering but what sets them apart is the two major projects they organise and run each year—The RFDS Ball and their famous 'Christmas Puddings'. The ball is held each May and this year it attracted 730 guests and raised in excess of \$36 000. Each October the Auxiliary organises the making of 2300 Christmas puddings (despite 35°C-plus summer temperatures). Most of the puddings are sold and distributed from Broken Hill, raising around \$35 000 each year. The Auxiliary also provides for the Broken Hill Hospital visitors program, something it has done for 49 consecutive years. Such achievements are a testimony to the extraordinary effort of the Auxiliary members who, like their predecessors, continue to make a major contribution to the RFDS—not an easy task in the harsh economic

climate of a remote region. It would be impossible to detail the qualities of each Auxiliary member but, suffice to say, these outstanding women are unique. Their commitment to the RFDS is reflected not only in their continued dedication and financial contribution but in the tradition that is part of the fabric of the Broken Hill community.

*anne caldwell* [Congarinni]

Ann moved to the Bowraville area five years ago and quickly became involved in her community. She worked in Autumn Lodge Aged Care facilities until her retirement. Ann became President of the Bowraville Lions Club this year after serving as Treasurer the previous year. Her family sponsored two overseas students, one from Hong Kong and the other from Sweden, earlier this year. The students lived with her family for two weeks. Ann also provides accommodation for visiting medical students doing work experience with the local medical clinic. She regularly volunteers to work on cake stalls and to conduct fundraising raffles in the town and is an active member of the Valley Cancer Support Group and the Weight Watchers Group. Ann is always there to help community members in times of need.

*susie cay* [Corowa]

Susie is a Director and part owner of the Corowa-based Warrembool Pastoral Co Pty Ltd. Its farming enterprises cover dryland cropping, beef cattle, merino sheep and prime lambs

and its farming interests extend to Holbrook, Cooma and Glenthompson in Victoria. Susie is a quiet achiever, fulfilling a vital role in the community with spirit and commitment. She is the Coordinator of an Ag & Chat group based in southern NSW. This communication network of rural families and farming businesses is linked by a common thread—Susie. For a decade the group has been holding workshops on agronomic issues, the operation of successful farm offices, grain marketing and even creative writing. Originally the group was for women but when husbands started talking about it and thanking her Susie opened it to everyone. Susie started managing the family farm at 23 when her father died. She is a farm business manager, a farm bookkeeper, a gardener, a mother of three sons, and a grandmother. One of the beautiful things about Susie is her quiet strength. She lost her husband, Robbie, to a brain tumour when the two were in their 50s. Susie has a capacity to bring dignity, determination and a cheerful energy to the table. She is a combination of a strong rural woman and a lovely person who is able to bring people together. She believes that individual strength comes first and then overflows into community organisations.

## cheryl chalker [Taralga]

Cheryl is always ready to render assistance wherever it is needed throughout her small community. She stands out as one who gives her time unconditionally to groups and organisations (from church groups to the local football club) and she has been caring for the sick and those

in need in Taralga for more than 30 years. After her marriage Cheryl helped her husband on the land, tending ewes and lambs and assisting with fencing. She has had an active role with the Taralga Pony Club, particularly during the annual club camp. She took on the job of Club Secretary and was involved in the Australian Day Endurance Ride, in which she competed successfully. Cheryl is always keen to assist with the behind the scenes organising needed for the town's annual rodeo and associated events. This year she is also assisting the Secretary of the local Rugby Union Club. Cheryl is a good neighbour and always ready to help those suffering illness or loss of a loved one. She has worked as a Nurse's Aide in palliative care. In difficult times Cheryl is always there for community members who need a friend. Small communities such as Taralga, which lack many of the services available in larger centres, could not function without outstanding women such as Cheryl who are prepared to give so much, and ask for nothing in return.

## susan collings [Merriwa]

From an early age Sue was determined to do things others thought she could not do after she was born with dwarfism. Sue faced even greater challenges when she suffered bone disfigurement and severe arthritis after growth hormone treatment. However, with the help of a loving family, Sue completed school and gained work with Telecom Australia. She married Michael and they settled in Merriwa where they lived happily until Michael's death in 2004. After the loss of Michael Sue wanted to meet people and decided

to seek work as a volunteer. Undaunted after being rejected at one organisation she went to the Merriwa Visitor Information Centre where she began volunteer work, and she still volunteers there today. Sue uses a scooter for transport and a walking stick to walk short distances, but never complains and will give anything a go. Aged 67 she volunteers an average of one day a week, and for up to four days a week around festival time. Sue also makes home-crafted toys and donates them to charity to raise funds for the Merriwa Festival of the Fleeces. Sue is a volunteer for the Merriwa Festival of the Fleeces Committee, Merriwa CTC and Merriwa Visitor Information Centre, and she also teaches handicraft.

### marie coombe [Broken Hill]

Marie is a member of the Broken Hill Women's Auxiliary which raises funds to support the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS). The Auxiliary began in 1951 and today has 20 active members. This group of dedicated women raises funds through raffles and catering but what sets them apart is the two major projects they organise and run each year—The RFDS Ball and their famous 'Christmas Puddings'. The ball is held each May and this year it attracted 730 guests and raised in excess of \$36 000. Each October the Auxiliary organises the making of 2300 Christmas puddings (despite 35°C-plus summer temperatures). Most of the puddings are sold and distributed from Broken Hill, raising around \$35 000 each year. The Auxiliary also provides for the Broken Hill Hospital visitors program, something it has done for 49 consecutive years. Such achievements are

a testimony to the extraordinary effort of the Auxiliary members who, like their predecessors, continue to make a major contribution to the RFDS—not an easy task in the harsh economic climate of a remote region. It would be impossible to detail the qualities of each Auxiliary member but, suffice to say, these outstanding women are unique. Their commitment to the RFDS is reflected not only in their continued dedication and financial contribution but in the tradition that is part of the fabric of the Broken Hill community.

### anna corby [Nyngan]

Anna was born in the Sydney suburb of Blacktown in 1957. Her family later moved to Goulburn where Anna completed her schooling. She attended Melbourne Teachers College from 1977–79, gaining a degree in Teaching. Her first appointment was to a school in the western NSW town of Ivanhoe. In 1983 she married another teacher, Greg Corby, and they moved to Nyngan where they have raised two sons. Anna worked at Nyngan Public School from 1983 until her retirement two years ago. During her last four years at the school Anna also served as the School Librarian and this role allowed her to develop her interest in family histories. Since retiring from the school Anna has become an active local historian, assisting members of her community to trace their family histories, and working for the development of the town's two museums. She is also an active member of the local Garden Club and the local Historical Society. Anna spends many hours each week assisting local community members with inquiries about their family trees

and she volunteers up to 16 hours a week with the museums. She also assists during local bushfire emergencies.

## allyson costanzo

[Port Macquarie]

Allyson (better known as Ally) was born on Australia Day and is an inspiration to the Port Macquarie-Hastings community. For the past seven years she has helped a vulnerable section of the community—those who are deaf and blind. Ally has run Auslan sign language classes, mentored and interpreted for deaf students attending the TAFE College, provided on-site job support for deaf employees and their employers, visited deaf people in hospital and organised social outings for deaf members of the community and sign language students. Ally's compassion, generosity and strong sense of social justice have resulted in the deaf and blind residents being active in her community. She does not seek recognition for her efforts but goes about her volunteering in a warm, dedicated and professional way. Ally is highly respected and loved in the deaf and blind community and her efforts were recognised when she was named Port Macquarie-Hastings Council Citizen of the Year on Australia Day this year. Ally has volunteered time to coordinate the Businesses Using Fingertips Forum and Deaf Awareness Week which enable staff from local businesses to learn how to provide great customer service for deaf and blind customers. Ally is also completing a degree in Social Work at Charles Sturt University, volunteers

and coordinates a huge group of volunteers for the local triathlon and collects bread and goods from Brumbies Bakery for distribution to disadvantaged families in the community.

## lynette cregan [Glen Innes]

Lynette (better known as Lyn) was born and raised in the small community of Dundee. She is a Life Member of the Glen Innes Pony Club and has helped in the club kitchen while her children and grandchildren have grown up. Lyn is also a member of the Glen Innes Show Society Ladies Auxiliary, working in the tea rooms during the annual show. For more than 30 years she has volunteered her time for Meals on Wheels. Lyn has also made contributions to the Netball Association (running the canteen), Junior Athletics (former committee member and canteen helper) and Glen Innes Polocrosse (canteen helper). Once a month Lyn volunteers for St Vincent de Paul and regularly helps at community fundraisers by organising an animal nursery. At the local Saint Joseph's School she formed a Mothers Club and helped in the canteen, and she still volunteers at the school reading group each week during her grandchildren's classes. For years Lyn cared for a stroke victim so his wife could go to work and have outings. Lyn regularly visits a disabled man who refuses home care, takes him on outings and has organised for a television to be provided in his house. Lyn's biggest passion is the Northern District Exhibit at the Sydney Royal Easter Show. She has volunteered to assist with the exhibit for more than 40 years. Lyn has helped manage the exhibit, been a committee member and is

a winner of the Champions of the Show Award. After each show ends Lyn immediately begins the task of organising produce for the next one. She spends three weeks at the Sydney Showground each Easter, setting up the display and the produce for judging. Lyn is also a winner of the Glen Innes Australia Day Award and the Seniors Week Mayoral Award.

## doreen cupitt [Iluka]

Doreen became Secretary and Treasurer of the Iluka Bush Fire Brigade soon after joining the Brigade in 1980 and she still holds that position. Throughout that time Doreen has been an active fundraiser for the Brigade, running weekly bingo at the Iluka Bowling Club. In January 2000 she was presented with a 15 Year Service Award and in 2005 was honoured with Life Membership of the Brigade. In May 2011 Doreen received a Long Service Medal and Second and Third Clasp for more than 30 years active service with the NSW Rural Fire Service. She has volunteered as a cook with the Iluka Meals on Wheels service since its inception and remains an active committee member. Doreen is also on the Iluka residents committee that ensures Iluka residents are nominated for the Australia Day Awards each year. She is Secretary of Iluka Country Women's Association branch and involved with fundraising for the Catholic Women's League and Iluka Seniors Group, and is also actively involved in the History Group for Iluka. Doreen has never asked for anything in return for her support of many community organisations.

## barbara cuthbert [Tatton]

Barbara has completed more than 1300 hours work as a volunteer in policing during the past six years. She provides administrative support to police, typing statements and transcripts. Such work can be onerous and in some cases Barbara is called on to complete tasks at short notice. Barbara's contribution is much appreciated by members of the NSW Police Force.

## gay daley [Parkes]

Gay was born and grew up in Parkes where she completed her schooling. She has raised two children, is a grandmother to five and a great-grandmother to two. Gay worked for 26 years with the Parkes Home Care Branch and since her retirement has become an outstanding volunteer at the Parkes Neighbourhood Centre. As a volunteer receptionist Gay meets, greets and offers advice and support to all who visit the Centre. She also volunteers for Meals on Wheels, the local Community Visitors Scheme and the local Community Transport Scheme. Gay is generous with her time and is always available to assist and support members of her large family as required. She is active throughout the community, helping those in need whether they are a friend, colleague or neighbour. Gay is reliable and has a happy, caring and generous spirit. She has excellent craft skills and regularly knits for local charities so items can be sent overseas to help children in need. Gay participates in all Neighbourhood Centre events, supporting Seniors Week, Open Day and attending

a range of other Parkes community events. She is always willing to assist others. Gay volunteers because she loves to assist her family and the community in any way she can.

## christine dedobelaar

[Parkes]

As a baby, Christine's first bassinette was a timber fruit box that the family placed on the back seat of the car when travelling. Earthen floors, a timber cottage on the edge of a creek and an isolated rural childhood were the humble beginnings for this outstanding woman. Educational opportunities were unsupported by a generation fixed in the belief that women equated to domestics and should be subservient, and children should be seen and not heard. Despite such adversities Christine's development and growth surged, aided by her gift of determination and resilience. Her generous heart and efforts in support of others are now recognised throughout her local community. As a Eucharistic Minister, Christine provides Holy Communion to residents in local nursing homes, to those in hospital and to the housebound. She is a volunteer at the Catholic Church for calendar events, funerals and fundraising and she calls nursing home Bingo. Christine visits those in the community who have no visitors and helps with fundraising on footpaths to support the talent and joy that country music brings to many. She has spent countless hours supporting cancer patients and survivors through Can Assist—including coordinating and participating in 'home renovation' events to help

those in need. Christine loves country music and assists the local Community Transport Scheme, always offering a supportive hand and calm advice. The influence of other families strong in faith and inclusiveness paved a way for Christine being able to give without expectation of return, which is exactly what she does today.

## myra dempster [Broken Hill]

Myra is a Life Member of the Broken Hill Women's Auxiliary which raises funds to support the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS). The Auxiliary began in 1951 and today has 20 active members. This group of dedicated women raises funds through raffles and catering but what sets them apart is the two major projects they organise and run each year—The RFDS Ball and their famous 'Christmas Puddings'. The ball is held each May and this year it attracted 730 guests and raised in excess of \$36 000. Each October the Auxiliary organises the making of 2300 Christmas puddings (despite 35°C-plus summer temperatures). Most of the puddings are sold and distributed from Broken Hill, raising around \$35 000 each year. The Auxiliary also provides for the Broken Hill Hospital visitors program, something it has done for 49 consecutive years. Such achievements are a testimony to the extraordinary effort of the Auxiliary members who, like their predecessors, continue to make a major contribution to the RFDS—not an easy task in the harsh economic climate of a remote region. These outstanding women are unique. Their commitment to the RFDS

is reflected not only in their continued dedication and financial contribution but in the tradition that is part of the fabric of the Broken Hill community.

## shirley donald [Glen Innes]

Shirley has always loved to sing and to share her love of music with others. She was born in Glen Innes where she married and raised two children. During 40 years of voluntary work in her community Shirley has regularly entertained residents of Roseneath Aged Care Centre and for 25 years was active in her local Uniting Church in the choir and doing hands-on volunteer work. She spent 20 years working with the Children of Good News Club—a group for primary school children teaching the gospel using scripture songs. Shirley volunteered for Meals on Wheels for four years and each month visits the Senior Citizens Garden Court Centre community hall. She volunteered at the Country Women's Association Mountain Home for women until it closed and residents were transferred to the Glenwood Gardens facility. Since 1998, Shirley has entertained residents at Glenwood up to three times a month. She has also been entertaining patients at the local hospital for 11 years. Late in her career Shirley learnt to play guitar to enhance her performances. She says she gains much from seeing the smiles on residents' faces during her performances and that the residents have enriched her life. Shirley provides music therapy which has enhanced the quality of lives of countless community members.

## deborah donaldson [Uralla]

Deb is a pillar of many community organisations in the Uralla district. She has a pragmatic, informal, inclusive and hardworking approach to volunteering and to encouraging others to volunteer. As Captain of the Diggings Fire Brigade from 2010–14, she commanded one of the busiest and largest brigades in the Rural Fire Service (RFS) NSW North West Zone. Deb has been tireless in guiding and supporting her team at monthly meetings, planning and convening training sessions, or responding to emergencies. She attended the most fire incidents of any member of the brigade in 2013 (over 71 per cent). Deb joined the NSW RFS in 2006 as a member of the Diggings Brigade. In 2007 she joined the New England Catering Unit and then the Community Engagement Team. Deb has held many ranks and roles through her service years and is not only an active member in fighting fires. She is a Brigade Training Officer, Brigade Driver, Permit Officer and a member of the Brigade Management Team. She assists the New England Zone office as a Deputy Group Officer, as part of the Incident Management Team and as a Duty Officer. As the Recruitment & Retention officer she works to increase the volunteer recruitment rate and to help brigades to retain members. Deb represents the RFS and Diggings Brigade through events such as Australia Day celebrations, community events and the RFS Region North exercises. Deb was a key promoter and entrant in the 2014 Celebrating Women as Volunteers Day. Aside from her contribution as an RFS volunteer, she has worked hard for the Uralla Soccer Club as

a committee member, reviver of the canteen and fundraiser. Rocky River School, an important local asset for this small community, is indebted to Deb for her ongoing efforts to keep the school alive and vibrant. Deb has recently assisted with the Armidale High School Cadet program, providing inspiration and education for the group. Deb is an exceptional role model, well organised and keen to help and assist new members. She gives selflessly to her Brigade, to the Zone and to the cause. Deb is a quiet achiever with a huge heart.

### ilene fahey [Lismore]

Ilene was born at Grenfell on 4 September 1926. Five years later the family moved to Dorrigo to farm dairy and beef cattle after her father left the Police Force in Grenfell. Being the eldest of four children (she has three brothers) Ilene learnt at a young age how to work on the family farm. Her father died when she was 25 and the family moved to the Atherton Tablelands and bought another farm. Ilene got a job but continued to work on the family farm to help support the family. When Ilene was 36 she moved to Lismore with her mother and worked at the North Coast Children's Home for four years. She then gained employment at the Lismore Base Hospital where she worked until her retirement at the age of 60. Throughout her adult life Ilene supported her mother and later cared for her in her declining years. After retiring she began voluntary work at the Lismore Blood Bank, the Lismore Base Hospital Auxiliary and the Lismore Neighbourhood Club. In 2011 she stopped working at the Lismore Blood Bank but she remains an active member of the

Lismore Red Cross, the Hospital Auxiliary and the Neighbourhood Club. Throughout her life Ilene has put others first and in her 80s she is still volunteering.

### margaret ferguson [Putty]

Margaret was born in Greenacre and moved to Putty with her family in 1976. She and her husband, Kendall, bought a property at Putty that year and, together with their two sons and daughter, quickly settled into the small rural community. Margaret is a founding member of the Putty Community Association which organises social events for the Putty community. She has been an office-bearer on the committee for many years. The Association is responsible for the Putty Hall and on behalf of the committee Margaret has applied for government grants to upgrade the building and the equipment it houses. Margaret also helps organise the building maintenance and social events, so that the hall continues to be available to the community. Whenever there is a project involving the hall Margaret is there to help. She has also represented Putty at meetings of the Singleton Council's Rural Halls Committee for several years and is Secretary of that committee. Margaret became involved in the Rural Fire Service in 1977 and in 1999 she and Kendall lobbied government for funding to build a fire station for the Putty Rural Fire Brigade. The station, built by volunteers including Margaret and her husband, was officially opened in 2006. As a trained member of the Brigade Margaret attended many

fires. She has been the Secretary of the Brigade for several years, a position which involves organising community meetings during fire alerts.

## jennifer filmer OAM

[The Angle, near Canberra]

Jennifer was born in Sydney, studied as a psychiatric nurse and, when she married, moved to a game reserve in South Africa. In the late 1970s she returned to Australia to live in a rural community outside Canberra, where she and her husband raised two children. For 40 years Jenny has been an active bushfire volunteer with the NSW Rural Fire Service and 25 years ago she developed a program entitled 'Fire Fighting for Non-Fire Fighting Women'. It empowers women with practical knowledge and skills to prepare for, and to survive, bushfires while looking after children and animals when husbands are at a fire front. In 2003 Jenny was awarded an Order of Australia in recognition of her commitment to the rural community through the Rural Fire Service. After the tragic fires in Canberra in 2003 (when a fire burnt through her property), and in response to the Victorian fires in 2009, Jenny saw a need for her program to be delivered more widely. She turned the program into a book and produced e-books which are now distributed in Australia and overseas. Jenny's passion for the rural community extends beyond her fire service. She studied law and now helps local community members to understand their rights and provides them with guidance on legal matters. Jenny has a

strong commitment to empowering rural women and their families to look after their physical and mental wellbeing in emergency situations.

## coral ford [Broken Hill]

Coral was born in Broken Hill and has built a reputation for giving back to the community through her retail activities and through the many organisations she has been involved with over the years. Coral and her family operated Carasel Jewellers in Broken Hill for 35 years, until the business closed in 2013. Throughout this time Coral was known for her generous support of local charity groups, often on a weekly basis. Coral was President of the Broken Hill Ladies Golf Club for six years and served on its board for nine years. She also served on the board of the Barrier Social Democratic Club for 12 years. As a mother with three young children, she served on the school canteen for many years and also cared for her ailing mother before regularly visiting her in a nursing home throughout her final years. Coral served on the board of the Broken Hill Chamber of Commerce for two years and on the Far Western Regional Tourist Board for several years. Her passion for giving back to her community resulted in her long involvement with The Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) Auxiliary. She has put in countless hours working alongside other Auxiliary members, especially during the RFDS Ball and Operation Christmas Pudding major annual fundraisers. Since retiring from the Ladies Golf Club board Coral has found time to donate her Sundays to the gardens of the course

and to raising funds for club facilities. She also volunteers to raise funds for St Anne's Nursing Home in Broken Hill.

## Yvonne Forsyth [Cootamundra]

Yvonne was born in Cootamundra and attended school in the town, and later at PLC Goulburn. She married, lived on the land and, with her husband, raised two daughters. After the death of her husband she managed the property for 19 years until her retirement. Yvonne has been involved with many organisations over the years, beginning with those at her daughters' schools and the Wallendbeen Red Cross Branch. Her association with the Presbyterian Church began with her teaching Sunday School and taking school scripture lessons, and it has endured since. Yvonne has been an Elder Set Apart for Service in Junee since 2005, Clerk of the Presbytery of Wagga Wagga and President of the Elders' Association NSW for 14 years. She conducts services in Junee Presbyterian Church and at retirement villages in Cootamundra and Junee. In 1998 Yvonne became a founding member of the Cootamundra Centenary of Federation 2001 Committee and assisted in the establishment of the Cootamundra Heritage Centre (CHC). Since that time she has been a committed member of the CHC Management Committee, taking her turn on duty, attending meetings and working bees, conducting tours for visitors (including schoolchildren) and curating exhibitions. Other organisations in which Yvonne has participated include the Country Women's Association (more than 40 years), View Club, Cootamundra Amateur

Dramatic Society, Meals on Wheels, Cootamundra Turf Club, The Smith Family, Tumut Vital Call and the University of the Third Age (Treasurer, 2014–15). She also participates in a hospital visitor program. Yvonne estimates that she volunteers five hours a week on average. When Yvonne sees a need in the community, she always feels that she can contribute.

## Val Foster [Murwillumbah]

Val Foster is the much loved and treasured president of Murwillumbah Hospital Auxiliary which assists the welfare of patients and staff by raising funds to purchase hospital equipment. Val was born in Murwillumbah and spent her childhood at Limpinwood. From that early stage she involved herself in community groups such as Junior Red Cross and Junior Farmers. In later life she has become involved in many other community groups including 15 years with the Pink Ladies and 13 years with the Murwillumbah Hospital Auxiliary (including the past eight years as President). She has been a Member of Toastmasters since 2004 and is also a member of the Murwillumbah Garden Club. Val is an active member of Murwillumbah Hospital's Pink Ladies Group which comprises volunteers who provide a non-nursing service to supplement the professional nursing care at the hospital. She is a tireless worker for all the organisations with which she is involved, but she is the 'very quietest of achievers', never drawing attention to herself. Val's good work does not go un-noticed in the Murwillumbah community where she is a much admired and appreciated figure.

lynne gall [Broken Hill]

Lynne is a Life Member of the Broken Hill Women's Auxiliary which raises funds to support the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS). The Auxiliary began in 1951 and today has 20 active members. This group of dedicated women raises funds through raffles and catering but what sets them apart is the two major projects they organise and run each year—The RFDS Ball and their famous 'Christmas Puddings'. The ball is held each May and this year it attracted 730 guests and raised in excess of \$36 000. Each October the Auxiliary organises the making of 2300 Christmas puddings (despite 35°C-plus summer temperatures). Most of the puddings are sold and distributed from Broken Hill, raising around \$35 000 each year. The Auxiliary also provides for the Broken Hill Hospital visitors program, something it has done for 49 consecutive years. Such achievements are a testimony to the extraordinary effort of the Auxiliary members who, like their predecessors, continue to make a major contribution to the RFDS—not an easy task in the harsh economic climate of a remote region. These outstanding women are unique. Their commitment to the RFDS is reflected not only in their continued dedication and financial contribution but in the tradition that is part of the fabric of the Broken Hill community.

valerie george [Lapstone]

Valerie organises the production of mastectomy cushions for women who have surgery for breast cancer. In 2005 she became a volunteer with the Zonta Club of Nepean Valley to take on this important project for the Club. Later, in 2009, she became a Member so she could have full control of the production process—from the cutting out, to the sewing, to the tontine stuffing of each cushion and the final cellophane wrapping. Then Valerie organised distribution of the cushions to women facing surgery at the Nepean Public and Nepean Private hospitals and to women undergoing operations at various other hospitals. As demand for the cushions increased, Valerie supervised other sewers and wrappers to boost production. After joining Zonta, Valerie became involved in raising funds through barbecues, street stalls and garage sales to purchase satin material and other items used to make the cushions. She donated countless hours supervising the making of cushions and raising funds and her efforts have so far resulted in the production of almost 2000 cushions. For years Valerie has been an advocate for supporting Breast Cancer Research and Pink Ribbon days and she has given much of her time at these occasions promoting the cushions, which are given as a gift. As well as raising funds for the Zonta Breast Care Project, Valerie instigated and coordinates a monthly trading table at club meetings to raise extra funds to help people in need in the community. Valerie was born in the Sydney suburb of Marrickville and spent her younger years in Goulburn, later returning to Dulwich Hill

and Blacktown in Sydney. In her early married life she lived in St Marys, before moving to the lower Blue Mountains. Valerie worked for many years at Anthony Squires where she learnt the tailoring trade and progressed to training apprentices in all facets of the business.

## ruth gorton [Keinbah]

Ruth was educated at Maitland and is married with three children and grandchildren. She has been working to support of the Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW and its Sunflower Centre service for the past 17 years. The Centre provides mental health support, education and advocacy to individuals and communities in the Hunter Region. Ruth's initial involvement with mental health began with the Cessnock Carer & Consumer Mental Health Support Group, of which she is the Founding Member. She has been Group Leader for the past 10 years and part of her role is to coordinate fundraising activities, respite weekends and mental health information stalls, and to organise guest speakers and activities for the Group. Ruth's involvement with mental health also extends beyond the Group. She is regularly contacted by families of people with mental health issues and supports them through their journey, accessing services for their family member. She is a point of contact for referral to mental health services in the region, often due only because of word of mouth as Ruth has a reputation of being caring and helpful in any type of mental health crisis. Ruth is strongly supportive of the Sunflower Centre. She has been extremely active in supporting efforts to continue

the centre's funding, through lobbying of local, State and Federal politicians and attending funding meetings. In 2009 she was awarded life membership of the Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW in recognition of services as Cessnock Support Group Leader. In 2011 she received an Australia Day Citizen's Award for her services to mental health. She is also an active member of Cessnock View Club (The Smith Family) helping to raise funds for Learning for Life Students and for educational programs for disadvantaged children. She has run her own small business 'Achieve Weight Control' for 17 years.

## jodie greenhalgh [Eugowra]

Jodie was born in Eugowra in Central West NSW and grew up in the town. She is a wife and the mother of two children, and one of the forces behind a community-driven plan to revitalise Eugowra and boost its tourism profile. Jodie was among the instigators of the acclaimed Eugowra Murals Project and was acknowledged for her exceptional community work in the town on Australia Day 2013, when she was named Citizen of the Year for the Eugowra District. Jodie is the Eugowra Harness Racing Club Secretary and works hard to promote the renowned Canola Cup held at Eugowra every year. She had a key role in planning of the sesquicentenary of the Escort Rock hold-up and one of the main organisers of a successful Mother's Day function on the banks of the Mandagery Creek. She is the President of the Eugowra Public School P&C Association and still finds the time to operate her home business, 'Jamace Graphic Design'. In 2012 it was named

best home-based business at the annual Cabonne Daroo Business Awards. Jodie donates numerous hours to community groups, utilising her design expertise. She recently worked on a website for the Forbes Auto Sports Club. Jodie is a respected and motivated community member deserving of recognition.

## Fay Hackett [Kyogle]

Fay is married to Des. She cared for their daughter, Tracy who died with cancer and she continued to care for her granddaughter. Her son Brett is the Australian Ambassador in Brazil. Early this year Fay was named Quota Lady of the Year for her charity work in Kyogle. She received the Award at the local Quota Club Friendship Dinner in July. Fay is an inspiration to the people of Kyogle and district. She has been a member of Australian Red Cross for 40 years, is involved with the local Blood Bank and has been a volunteer for the St Vincent de Paul Society in Kyogle. Fay has helped Kyogle Show Society with catering for events at the local showground. She volunteers at Care Connections Seniors Day Centre each week, helping in the kitchen and caring for seniors, especially on outings. Fay enjoys weekly visits to patients and assists with craft activities at Kyogle Hospital. She helped organise a group of residents of the Kyogle Court Aged Care Facility to knit hundreds of jumpers for aids babies in Africa. Fay is a professional hairdresser and cuts hair and does manicures for the residents of Kyogle Court and Kyogle Hospital Aged Care. Recently she was presented with a 10-year Long Service Badge in recognition of her regular visits to the hospital.

## Gwen Hallam [Yetman]

Gwen is a 'heart and soul' woman, wife, mother and grandmother who, at 70-plus, displays enthusiasm, generosity, diligence and humour, uplifting people with her insights. Yetman has been Gwen's home for 57 years, since she married Hugh. Her community involvement includes school P&Cs, polocrosse, camp draft, pony club, cook and a driving force behind progress and the hall committee. The community bus driver, Gwen shares her wealth of life knowledge with humility. She works well under pressure and is a great cook, making anything out of nothing. She is crafty and able to embrace new skills and technologies and is versatile and inspirational. A Country Women's Association member for 25 years, Gwen is a team player, holding many branch and group positions. She can cook and serve scones for a week at a time at the Royal Easter Show CWA kiosk. An adventurous explorer, farm and house sitter, her adventures include travelling and picking fruit with a mate, just because they could! Working for Dial An Angel agency in Sydney for 10 years gave her rewarding insightful experiences into many family situations.

## Muriel Halsted [Scone]

Muriel is a Life Member of the Country Women's Association (CWA). Her time with CWA began in 1945 when she helped form the Garah Younger Set with her then boyfriend, Bill, to raise funds for the war effort. Aged 17, Muriel was the inaugural Secretary and Bill the President. The CWA Younger

Set consisted of men and women and they held dances and functions for the young people in Garah. After her marriage to Bill, Muriel became Secretary of the Garah Branch of the CWA. Bill and Muriel were farmers and moved around several times—including Bullarah, where meetings and functions were held in an isolated tin shed which later became the schoolroom. Muriel's home was closest to the shed/school so the teacher lived with Muriel and Bill and their expanding family. Their next move was to Purlywaugh branch where Muriel became involved in catering, known for her trademark scones or anything else that was needed. She was then Treasurer of the Dungog branch. Muriel raised seven children while assisting Bill on the farm. Eleven years ago, due to Bill's ill health, they moved to Scone to be near family. Once again Muriel quickly took on the job of Secretary at the Scone & District Branch of CWA, a position she held for some years. Her historical knowledge of CWA and her expertise in catering are assets to the branch and her stories are priceless. Muriel attends the monthly meetings and the handicraft and friendship day twice a month and is the branch historian and publicity officer. Although the CWA is a large part of her life, it is not all she does. Now in her 80s Muriel is the self-appointed carer in her retirement village, looking out for her neighbours, and has assisted in rescuing those in need on several occasions. Muriel is interested in the wellbeing of everyone she comes in contact with. She is hospitable, cheerful and generous. Muriel is on the committee of the Friends of Strathearn (the local aged care facility), working actively to raise funds to improve conditions for the residents. Muriel is also an active member of Scone Ladies

Probus Club, attends the weekly 'Heart Moves' exercise group and is involved in an embroidery group that meets weekly. Muriel is known by many as a surrogate mother figure in the community.

margaret hanrahan OAM  
[Corowa]

Margaret (better known as Peg) was born in Corowa in 1922 and grew up on a farm at Lowesdale. She joined the Army at 21 and trained as a Dental Nurse, serving in the South Pacific during World War II. When the war ended Peg returned to the farm before marrying and starting a family. Membership of the Catholic Women's League spanned over 43 years including serving as President and Secretary and a Life Membership in 1991 and resulted in the Leonine Cross Papal Award presented by Bishop Brennan in 1994. Corowa Shire recognised Peg's contributions with Citizen of the Year Award in 1993. A lifetime of volunteering has included: Past President of Corowa RSL Women's Auxiliary (22 years), Executive Committee Diocese Wagga Wagga (15 years), Corowa Red Cross (four years), Laurel Club, working to establish Glowry House, which provides low cost accommodation for country people in Melbourne, past Secretary of Corowa Tennis Club (and keen player), Red Cross, Karinya House Women's Auxiliary, Chair of Corowa Branch Albury Legacy, member of 2/5 Australian General Hospital Association, Probus, Meals on Wheels and Friends of the Library, Life Member of Corowa Rutherglen Football Netball Club and Corowa RSL. All of this has been intertwined with a dedication

to family and friends. Peg received the Order of Australia Medal in June 2014 and her words, *'I absolutely love being involved in as much as I can and even at my age now I still want to help out where I'm needed'*, reveal the passion that motivates this modest treasure.

### leonie hansen [Tamworth]

Leonie grew up in country Victoria, attending school at Echuca. Her first job was working in her father's legal office. In 1989 Leonie and her husband Alan left Sydney and moved to North West NSW where they ran a general store and bakery. In 1994 the family moved to Narrabri and Leonie worked in a legal office as a senior paralegal. Leonie completed her degree in 2004 and in 2005 was admitted as a solicitor. Leonie has 20 years' experience in giving corporate law advice to not-for-profit (NFP) boards in particular. She also spent several years as in-house counsel for a multiple-entity NFP group, focussing on corporate governance, compliance, risk, employment and industrial issues and the property matters that came with the operation of multiple sites—27 across NSW alone. Leonie has more than 30 years' experience as a member of a number of boards, including the areas of country disability services and service organisations. Leonie is a strong advocate for advancing the status of women and is an active member of Zonta International, having served in a local club (Tamworth) and in district capacity (District 24). She is the mother of four young women who are now making their mark in their chosen careers. Leonie is a knowledgeable and

enthusiastic volunteer, and is to be commended for generously giving her time and expertise to help organisations understand the intricacies of governance.

### rosemary harris [Oberon]

Rosemary was born in Australia and grew up as a war orphan following the death of her father in Singapore during World War II. Her mother and four siblings were exposed to the great support and assistance of Legacy, which influenced Rosemary to become a Legatee after the death of her husband. As a Legatee, Rosemary visits five war widows and takes them on visits, out to lunch and for medical appointments if necessary. She also attends Family Welfare meetings in Sydney four times a year and monthly business meetings at Bathurst to identify and manage maintenance issues for widows and veterans and initiate fundraising activities. Prior to her retirement, Rosemary was a Special Education Teacher in Early Childhood Development, teaching hearing impaired children at the Shepherd Centre in Sydney. She subsequently opened and managed the Bathurst Branch of the Shepherd Centre for the Hearing Impaired until her retirement. Rosemary is also a long standing member of the Hospital Auxiliary, holding the position of President for 12 years. She bakes and knits for the monthly stall where her damper is in great demand! The stall is manned by volunteers who sell produce, run raffles and raise money for the purchase of hospital equipment. Rosemary is in regular attendance, usually the first to arrive and set up. In addition to these commitments,

Rosemary has been a member of the Oberon Health Council since 2006, holding the positions of Secretary and then Chair for two years respectively. Her background in Legacy and Early Childhood Development has been a useful adjunct to the Heath Council.

### june henderson [Orange]

Originally from England, June is a passionate 'people' person devoted to family and the community of the Orange area for 25 years. Formerly working in healthcare and a mother and grandmother, June has worked with aged people in care, including creative therapy, and later studied family counselling. She has given her time generously in many spheres and she has a rare talent for lifting the spirits of everyone she meets. Friends and acquaintances receive handwritten notes, a visit or phone call, especially in times of hardship. June's passion for people, her care for her community and her generous encouragement, especially of the young, are expressed through her involvement in the community. She volunteers weekly with a telephone counselling service, provides holiday respite care for a disadvantaged child, is a weekly organiser for a Breakfast Club and leader for a mentoring program at a local primary school, volunteers for Shine—a personal development program for high school girls—and is a leader at an after-school children's club. She visits underdeveloped or stressed communities overseas and also serves as a pastoral carer. June is a fine role model with a jovial sense of fun and a passion for creative pursuits.

### wilma hepburn [Forbes]

Wilma moved to Forbes soon after coming to Australia, and raised her children there. She is involved in several community organisations, giving freely of her time. Her community activities include the Friends of the Forbes Hospital Organisation, raising funds to improve the facilities and services at the Forbes Hospital, Forbes Probus Women's Branch and the Seniors Water Therapy Classes where she assists other members less mobile than herself. Wilma is an active member of the Forbes Garden Club and is seen on a regular basis selling raffle tickets and assisting at a variety of community events including weekly indoor bowls, a weekly commitment of at least three hours. Wilma has been a member of the Forbes Branch of the Australian Red Cross and has held the positions of Vice President and President since 1999, continuing in this position at present. Wilma has been the Regional Liaison Officer for 12 years. Her outstanding service to this organisation was recognised this year when she was awarded the Red Cross Australia Outstanding Service Award. Red Cross is a minimum of two hours per week commitment, including merchandise sales and routine paperwork, for Wilma but in March this increases to fulltime for Red Cross calling and the Annual Bowls Day and Cake Bake. Wilma is an essential member of this community.

## maryann herbert [Corowa]

Maryann was born in Melbourne in 1951 where she completed her schooling and graduated from Teachers College. While teaching in Coburg she met Alastair. They married in 1973 and moved to Corowa in 1979. Having three children led Maryann to be involved in school based committees, and being awarded Life Membership of the Corowa Swimming Club. Maryann played netball, was an active member of the Newcomers' Club and, in 1988, became a leader of the Corowa Girl Guides. Her contributions to Guides over 27 years have included terms as Region Program & Outdoors Advisors, being a cast member of Albury Gang Show, creating the 2012 State Jamboree program and organising annual camps. Over 150 girls have been Corowa Girl Guides during this time. Receiving Citizen of the Year in 2003, nominated by local guides, and the Banksia Award for meritorious service in the wider guiding community in 2007 reflects the community esteem and gratitude for Maryann's generous devotion of time and energy. Maryann is an active volunteer with WIRES and her passion for the environment led to her involvement with Corowa District Landcare, focussing on planting native vegetation.

## kate herring [Broken Hill]

Kate is the Secretary of the Broken Hill Women's Auxiliary which raises funds to support the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS). The Auxiliary began in 1951 and today has 20 active members. Kate represents the younger members that the Auxiliary and is always seeking to attract new members. This group of dedicated women raises funds through raffles and catering but what sets them apart is the two major projects they organise and run each year—The RFDS Ball and their famous 'Christmas Puddings'. The ball is held each May and this year it attracted 730 guests and raised in excess of \$36 000. Each October the Auxiliary organises the making of 2300 Christmas puddings (despite 35°C-plus summer temperatures). Most of the puddings are sold and distributed from Broken Hill, raising around \$35 000 each year. The Auxiliary also provides for the Broken Hill Hospital visitors program, something it has done for 49 consecutive years. Such achievements are a testimony to the extraordinary effort of the Auxiliary members who, like their predecessors, continue to make a major contribution to the RFDS—not an easy task in the harsh economic climate of a remote region. These outstanding women are unique. Their commitment to the RFDS is reflected not only in their continued dedication and financial contribution but in the tradition that is part of the fabric of the Broken Hill community.

## Iris herrmann [Leeton]

Iris is an inspiring quiet achiever in the areas of farming leadership, community service and family relations. As head of a multi-generational farming family near Leeton, Iris, at 89, continues to lead an active share-farming life, providing guidance to her farming sons, grandson and neighbouring families. She has a keen interest in water issues affecting the family farm, as well as the community in which she lives. Her recent endeavour has been to integrate the On-Farm Water Use Efficiency Program on her home property. Iris is an active participant in each annual rice industry conference, voting and voicing her opinion relating to shareholder rights and responsibilities. She participates in NSW Farmers surveys, voting and membership. Iris holds the position of President of the Leeton Garden Club, a club in which she was an inaugural executive member, and has previously held executive positions in Red Cross, Probus, Anglican Women, Mother's Union and Country Women's Association (CWA). Iris is Life Member and Cultural Officer of the Murrumbidgee branch of the CWA, of which she was also inaugural President over 60 years ago. She is a very active parishioner at the Leeton St Johns Anglican Church, in which she has been Synod representative, Parish Councillor, Building Committee and Choir member and volunteer at the Anglicare Op-shop. Iris also visits the sick and elderly, new mothers and family members.

## diana hoffman [Broken Hill]

Diana was born in Bexley in 1940. Educated at local schools and Sydney Teacher's College, Diana trained as a High School Science teacher. She later moved with her husband to White Cliffs on the opal fields in outback NSW and they ran the General Store there from 1987–2004. Diana is a strong believer that if you live in a community you should be a participant in the community. Her input is confirmed by her many volunteer activities: Chair, Far West Region National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) Advisory Committee, 2002–present; NPWS State Advisory Council, 2001–06, appointed chair 2004–06—the first woman to fill this role; Community Representative Broken Hill Health Council, October 2011; member of the White Cliffs Community Association, 1995–2011, 1989–chair; President, White Cliffs History Group, 1984 to present; Secretary, White Cliffs Tourist Association, 1988–2010; Community Representative, White Cliffs P&C, 2004–10; Volunteer, Broken Hill City Library Archive, 2010–present; General Committee Member, 2013–14, Contact Inc—a program addressing the impacts of isolation for children, families and communities. Diana shows her commitment and passion by continuing to volunteer for at least 15 hours a week and still champions community, children and conservation.

## leisa hoffman [Ballina]

Leisa grew up in the Lismore area. Her father set an example through his valued volunteering efforts and Leisa's first experience with volunteering was at the Ballina Coast Guard and Paradise FM radio station. Leisa experienced mental health issues for many years and wanted to give back to others in similar situations, completing training to become a Peer Worker in the mental health sector. Now she applies her skills and experience volunteering two days per week in the Lismore Adult Mental Health Unit. She is also a committed and highly valued Consumer Representative of the NNSW LHD Mental Health Forum, Health Services Development Committee, Consumer Workers Working Group, Rights & Responsibilities Committee/Sexual Safety Committee, ECT Policy Committee, LIEP Steering Committee—CRS Australia and Community Mental Health, Recovery Training Facilitator, BDCSA Ballina—Support work for people in the disability sector. Leisa is passionate about empowering service users, community and policy makers on all levels to understand that mental health recovery is possible for everyone. Leisa shares her life experience as a role model for recovery, showing that despite life's challenges you can still lead a rewarding successful life with sometimes only a small change in thinking.

## naomi hogan [Hamilton]

Naomi is the Campaign Manager of the Wilderness Society at Newcastle. As well as overseeing many projects and the lobbying for funding to enable the Wilderness Society's work, she has thrown herself passionately into highlighting the risks of the coal seam gas industry to agricultural land and national parks in the area. She has lent her experience and skills to many farming communities and social groups concerned with the protection of these precious areas. She forgoes holidays and weekends to organise meetings and school and community engagements. The manner in which Naomi undertakes these efforts, tackling demanding and difficult problems, demonstrates a confidence and humility beyond her years and her tenacity and enthusiasm is valued greatly by the communities and groups she supports.

## michelle houldcroft [Garah]

Michelle was born and raised in Mungindi and now lives on a Garah district mixed farming property, 'Mena', with her husband and two children. She helps with the day-to-day running of the property and during the winter months assists Mungindi Junior Rugby League Club. On Tuesdays she organises a fun fitness program for all club members and on Thursdays she assists the coaches with training. This year Michelle also managed a Balonne Barwon representative team at the State Carnival. On days when Mungindi has

a home game, Michelle organises and runs the club canteen. Her hard work reflects her strong commitment to the sport and her children.

## kath howard [Murrurundi]

Kath has worked in home care for 38 years and has no thoughts of stopping. She is a caring person who often goes beyond the call of duty, and she builds a strong rapport with all her clients. Kath is also an active supporter of her family, friends and the local community. She has assisted Meals on Wheels and is involved with Legacy as a Legatee. Kath is a past member of the local Council Community Services Committee. She is also a Director of the family business, Howard's Bus & Charter Pty Ltd. This year Kath was nominated for an Australia Day Award. Kath's efforts in caring for older people and people with disabilities inspire many in her community.

## jamilla hume [Broken Hill]

Jamilla is a member of the Broken Hill Women's Auxiliary which raises funds to support the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS). The Auxiliary began in 1951 and today has 20 active members. This group of dedicated women raises funds through raffles and catering but what sets them apart is the two major projects they organise and run each year—The RFDS Ball and their famous 'Christmas Puddings'. The ball is held each May and this year it attracted 730 guests and raised in excess of \$36 000. Each October the Auxiliary organises

the making of 2300 Christmas puddings (despite 35°C-plus summer temperatures). Most of the puddings are sold and distributed from Broken Hill, raising around \$35 000 each year. The Auxiliary also provides for the Broken Hill Hospital visitors program, something it has done for 49 consecutive years. Such achievements are a testimony to the extraordinary effort of the Auxiliary members who, like their predecessors, continue to make a major contribution to the RFDS—not an easy task in the harsh economic climate of a remote region. It would be impossible to detail the qualities of each Auxiliary member but, suffice to say, these outstanding women are unique. Their commitment to the RFDS is reflected not only in their continued dedication and financial contribution but in the tradition that is part of the fabric of the Broken Hill community.

## marilyn jennings [Coolamon]

Marilyn was born in Coffs Harbour and moved to Coolamon as a young teacher in 1976. She lives with her husband Ian on their family property 'Raywood', just outside Coolamon. Marilyn taught for 25 years at the Coolamon Central School and her dedication left a lasting impression on her students. She gave many hours of service, particularly in the role of librarian, while at the school. Marilyn has been Treasurer of the St Andrew's Anglican Parish for the past eight years. She is a founding committee member of the Coolamon Up 2 Date Art Exhibition, an annual event which showcases regional artists at an Awards Night which is followed by a week-long exhibition of their artworks in Coolamon's historic

Up-to-Date Store. Marilyn has dedicated countless volunteer hours towards organising, coordinating, publicising and manning the exhibition. It raises funds for St Andrew's Anglican Church and will celebrate its tenth year next year—a credit to Marilyn and the exhibition team.

## christina johansson [Narrabri]

Christina grew up in Finland and Sweden before migrating to Australia with her family as a teenager. She and her husband Wolfgang moved to Lightning Ridge in 1978 where they established an electrical contracting and retail business. They have two children and in 1992 Christina gained an Arts Degree after completing external studies with the University of New England. Since 1993 she has been involved in volunteer community work with a special interest in assisting people from Culturally & Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds. Christina established and was President of the Lightning Ridge & Regional Transcultural Community Council, and she supervised the activities of a migrant information and referral worker. She has been a member of the Management Committee of the Yawarra Meamei Womens' Group Inc. The Group provides early intervention, case management and crisis accommodation for women and children who are homeless due to domestic violence. Other community organisations Christina has been actively involved with include the NSW Community Relations Commission Advisory Council (2005 CRC Volunteer Award), the Far West Area Health Service Board, Lightning Ridge Arts & Crafts Council Inc., the Outback Arts Inc. Board,

Lightning Ridge Historical Society and the Walgett Shire Reconciliation Committee. She has also had managerial roles with the Home Care Service of NSW, Walgett Shire and Yawarra Meamei. All her adult life Christina has been dedicated to the welfare of others—often the most vulnerable. Her gentle, kind and non-judgemental disposition means she is a much respected and loved member of her community.

## sue jurd [Tenterfield]

Born and educated in Tenterfield, Sue followed in her father's footsteps when she joined the Tenterfield Star newspaper at age 16 and became one of the first females in the NSW printing trade. She started her apprenticeship as a compositor and, while undertaking external studies, was actively involved in her family's newspaper. Earlier, at the age of 14, Sue joined the Tenterfield Show Society as a steward. She remains involved with Society today after filling many roles over the years including the position of Show Secretary (2006–10). While raising her children Sue volunteered many hours to assist Tenterfield Physical Culture Club. In 1994 she became a founding member of the Borderline Regional Arts Association, a group that encourages artistic development through workshops and exhibitions. Through this group and her own business, 'Eyzer Designs', Sue has worked to capture the Australian countryside in her original hand-dyed silk artwork. Her involvement with 'It's a case of Art in the Mill' (an annual exhibition of local arts across various mediums), Stanthorpe Regional Art Gallery and other textile events has given

Sue experience with hundreds of exhibitions, both community based and of regional/state importance. In December 2010 she accepted an invitation to become the Honorary Secretary/Treasurer of Tenterfield Showground Trust, little knowing that by January 2011 (with just weeks before the annual show), her negotiating and organisational skills would be tested when the historic Showground suffered massive infrastructure damage in a flood. In 2013 Sue's community spirit was acknowledged when she received Tenterfield's Citizen of the Year Award.

## katherine kennedy

[Adaminaby]

Katherine was born in the Old Adaminaby (the Snowy Mountains town that was submerged under 30 metres of water in 1957 when the local valley was dammed to form Lake Eucumbene). She was one of 11 children—six boys and five girls. Katherine married in 1965 and worked as a registered nurse. She has been volunteering in Adaminaby for more than 40 years. In 1971 Katherine set up a play school with 25 children attending. By holding barbecues, wood raffles and Easter fair stalls she has helped raise funds for computers for local schools, a wind break for the local swimming pool (\$7000), the local Touch Football Club and the local Pony Club. From 2000–09 she organised an old time dance each year, raising thousands of dollars to buy chairs, carpet and other items for the town's Community Hall. Katherine has donated many hours of voluntary work at the hall, making

curtains for every room. She also instigated a program of exercises for local senior citizens and organised for a podiatrist and a beautician to visit Adaminaby. An avid sewing enthusiast Katherine has been involved with the making of a huge wall hanging designed to attract tourists to the town. She also started the Adaminaby Craft Group. Katherine has received many awards for her years of community service, including an Australia Day Award in 2006.

## raelene kennewell

[Broken Hill]

As a member of the Broken Hill Hospital Kiosk Auxiliary, Raelene has been volunteering for the past 14 years. She volunteers at the kiosk Tuesdays, Thursdays and on Saturday mornings and has been known to fill in for anyone who calls in sick or is on holiday. Raelene has also been volunteering with Far West Home & Community Care for the past 23 years and volunteered at the Day Care Centre for 23 years until it closed in 2013. In 2014 she was a National Volunteer Week Community-Individual Award Winner. In addition to her volunteering Raelene stands out in her community for her continued commitment in helping others, for her kindness and her willingness to assist anyone in need. Her genuine love of what she does and the fulfilment she gets from helping others is evident to all who know her.

## gwen kent [Tuckombil]

Gwen trained as a registered nurse at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney before training in Midwifery. As a Nurse/Midwife she had the opportunity as a young woman to travel and work in Africa before marrying an Englishman in 1954 and moving to England. In 1972 Gwen and her husband moved to a farm in Ballina on the North Coast of NSW where they raised a family. In 1985, when the first Cancer Unit opened at Lismore, Gwen answered a call for volunteers and she has been volunteering in the Unit ever since. Gwen has seen many changes in services, technology and the roles of volunteers. She recalls that in her early days with the Unit there were no social workers and she performed many tasks, including some home visits. Although Gwen jokes that her role today is that of a tea lady it is much more and includes activities such as reading and talking with patients, and generally assisting with their comfort. At 88 years Gwen is still visiting the Cancer Unit twice a month and says she is available for more visits if needed.

## rae lalor [Ulladulla]

Rae has been a volunteer and committee member for the Ulladulla & District Community Resources Centre since 1984. She has also been involved in a variety of community service groups for more than for 30 years. During that time Rae has instigated projects and worked in areas including Home Care, Aged Care, Foster Parenting, Cancer Support, Palliative Care and Primary and High

School Scripture. She started the local Interagency Forum and Caring Neighbours and is a Co-founder, Management Member and volunteer with Ulladulla's Centre for Food Store. She has also served as a Lifeline Counsellor and is an Accredited Community Worker. Although in her 80s Rae's level of commitment is outstanding. She attends regular Resources Centre & Food Store meetings and still finds time to organise The Biggest Morning Tea and Pink Ribbon breakfasts. Over the past 20 years she has been involved in Seniors Week, organising activities and utilising her people skills to entertain, encourage friendship and improve the lives of individuals. In her spare time she has raised a family and now has great-grandchildren. Rae continues to inspire members of the local community with her dedication to Cancer Support, Church activities, raising funds and assisting families. She is an excellent example of how one person can make a difference.

## margaret lang [Tarauga]

Margaret has lived in Tarauga all her life and in 1955 she began work as the switchboard operator on the local telephone exchange at the age of 15. She held the position for more than 30 years until phone services became automated in the late 1980s. Throughout that time local switchboard operators played a critical role in their communities, connecting people with the help they needed during critical situations such as bushfires or farm accidents. Margaret's contribution during those times may not have always been recognised but it was always

appreciated. Today Margaret is still quietly going about helping and supporting her community. As a working mother of three, and a grandmother of nine, Margaret still finds the time to volunteer, from coordinating the caretaking of the local cemetery to buttering thousands of slices of bread for the Australia Day Rodeo and spending hours collecting historical data for the local museum. Margaret is also Chief Steward for the Cookery Section for the Taralga Agricultural, Pastoral & Horticulture Society Show. Margaret's work in her community is truly valued and appreciated.

### *cynthia langford* [Broken Hill]

Cynthia is a member of the Broken Hill Women's Auxiliary which raises funds to support the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS). The Auxiliary began in 1951 and today has 20 active members. This group of dedicated women raises funds through raffles and catering but what sets them apart is the two major projects they organise and run each year—The RFDS Ball and their famous 'Christmas Puddings'. The ball is held each May and this year it attracted 730 guests and raised in excess of \$36 000. Each October the Auxiliary organises the making of 2300 Christmas puddings (despite 35°C-plus summer temperatures). Most of the puddings are sold and distributed from Broken Hill, raising around \$35 000 each year. The Auxiliary also provides for the Broken Hill Hospital visitors program, something it has done for 49 consecutive years. Such achievements are a testimony to the extraordinary effort of the Auxiliary members who, like their predecessors, continue to make a major contribution to the

RFDS—not an easy task in the harsh economic climate of a remote region. It would be impossible to detail the qualities of each Auxiliary member but, suffice to say, these outstanding women are unique. Their commitment to the RFDS is reflected not only in their continued dedication and financial contribution but in the tradition that is part of the fabric of the Broken Hill community.

### *darlene lawler* [Forbes]

Darlene was born in Dalby, Queensland, one of eight children. She credits her mother with instilling in her a strong sense of community and volunteering values. Darlene married into the Australian Army when she was 19 and moved 13 times in 17 years. In every community that she has lived in she has made a significant contribution through volunteering. In 2004 Darlene joined Forbes Lions Club and she has been active in a range of community activities ever since. Her achievements include working with the local Early Childhood Centre to develop a reading nook, fundraising for the Children's Cancer Institute, sorting and packaging relief packs during Cyclone Yazi and during the Victorian bushfires, Christmas shopping for Barnardos and helping with the canteen for local sporting clubs. Darlene leads by example and encourages others to become involved in volunteering. She is enthusiastic about passing on volunteering values to younger members of the community and is always looking for ways to engage young people.

mary leehane [Broken Hill]

Mary is a new member of the Broken Hill Women's Auxiliary, which raises funds to support the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS). She contributes to the auxiliary despite having a demanding role as Far West LHD Volunteer Manager and being a wife and mother. The auxiliary began in 1951 and today has 20 active members. This group of dedicated women raises funds through raffles and catering, but what sets them apart is the two major projects they organise and run each year – the RFDS Ball and their famous 'Christmas Puddings'. The ball is held each May and this year it attracted 730 guests and raised more than \$36 000. Each October the auxiliary makes 2300 Christmas puddings (despite 35°C-plus summer temperatures). Most of the puddings are sold and distributed from Broken Hill, raising around \$35 000 each year. The auxiliary has also provided for the Broken Hill Hospital visitors program for the past 49 years. Such achievements are a testimony to the extraordinary effort of the auxiliary members who, like their predecessors, continue to make a major contribution to the RFDS—not an easy task in the harsh economic climate of a remote region. Each of these women is outstanding and her commitment reflects a tradition that is part of the fabric of the Broken Hill community.

alba linklater [Tucabia]

Alba was born and lived in the Sydney's St George area for 60 years. In 1975 she and her husband sold their service station business and Alba started work with Department of Labour & Industry, initially as an Industrial Relations Field Officer and later as a Country Supervisor. The work involved extensive travel throughout country NSW and Alba was soon attracted to the beauty of the Clarence Valley. In 1991 she and her husband purchased a farm at Tucabia. Alba eventually retired to the farm after working part-time in Goulburn. In 2004 she joined the Grafton Sub-Branch of the United Hospitals Auxiliary (UHA) of NSW, and was later elected President—a position she has held for almost 10 years. Under her leadership, the Grafton UHA continues to raise funds for Grafton Base Hospital. Alba is energetic and entrepreneurial, regularly identifying new ways to raise funds. She has entered into an arrangement with the local newspaper to allow UHA volunteers to deliver newspapers to the wards—for a fee. Alba has also negotiated with a local vending machine company so that the UHA receives a commission from sales. Recently, she has been lobbying the hospital for space to allow an Op-Shop to be opened on hospital grounds. The shop will help to raise funds for equipment for the hospital. Alba is well connected with the local community and uses her networks to great effect.

pamela lord OAM [Broken Hill]

Pamela is a Life Member of the Broken Hill Women's Auxiliary which raises funds to support the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS). She has an OAM, and was 2013 NSW Volunteer of the Year, Orana Far West 2014 Murray-Darling Woman of the Year and winner of the Nydia Edes Hall of Fame Award in May 2014. The Auxiliary began in 1951 and today has 20 active members. This group of dedicated women raises funds through raffles and catering but what sets them apart is the two major projects they organise and run each year—The RFDS Ball and their famous 'Christmas Puddings'. The ball is held each May and this year it attracted 730 guests and raised in excess of \$36 000. Each October the Auxiliary organises the making of 2300 Christmas puddings (despite 35°C-plus degree summer temperatures). Most of the puddings are sold and distributed from Broken Hill, raising around \$35 000 each year. The Auxiliary also provides for the Broken Hill Hospital visitors program, something it has done for 49 consecutive years. Such achievements are a testimony to the extraordinary effort of the Auxiliary members who, like their predecessors, continue to make a major contribution to the RFDS—not an easy task in the harsh economic climate of a remote region. These outstanding women are unique. Their commitment to the RFDS is reflected not only in their continued dedication and financial contribution but in the tradition that is part of the fabric of the Broken Hill community.

julie lyford [Gloucester]

Julie has lived in Gloucester since 1986 after emigrating from the UK in 1975. She trained as a nurse in London and Sydney before she practised in Muswellbrook. Married to Garry, a local GP, and with three children, Julie has dedicated a large part of her life to community related activities and is an inspiration to all in the Gloucester Valley and surrounds. She is a former mayor of the local council and chairs Groundswell Gloucester, a local group determined to have a say in the economic, social and environmental future of the Gloucester Valley. The group was formed in the face of the proposed large-scale expansion of open-cut coal mining and coal seam gas development in the region. Julie is committed to the wellbeing of the Gloucester community and its natural environment. Among many other roles and achievements, she founded the Gloucester Environment Group in 1989, the Gloucester Arts & Cultural Council and the Gloucester Gallery in 1999, ran the Gloucester Shakespeare Festival for four years and chaired the NSW Rural Women's Gathering Committee in Gloucester in 2011. Julie has also taken a leading role in lobbying the NSW Government to change legislation relating to mining to balance the protection of environment and community with the drive to promote economic development in the state.

## sharon macKay [Broken Hill]

Sharon is a member of The Broken Hill Women's Auxiliary which raises funds to support the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS). The Auxiliary began in 1951 and today has 20 active members. This group of dedicated women raises funds through raffles and catering but what sets them apart is the two major projects they organise and run each year—The RFDS Ball and their famous 'Christmas Puddings'. The ball is held each May and this year it attracted 730 guests and raised in excess of \$36 000. Each October the Auxiliary organises the making of 2300 Christmas puddings (despite 35°C-plus summer temperatures). Most of the puddings are sold and distributed from Broken Hill, raising around \$35 000 each year. The Auxiliary also provides for the Broken Hill Hospital visitors program, something it has done for 49 consecutive years. Such achievements are a testimony to the extraordinary effort of the Auxiliary members who, like their predecessors, continue to make a major contribution to the RFDS—not an easy task in the harsh economic climate of a remote region. It would be impossible to detail the qualities of each Auxiliary member but, suffice to say, these outstanding women are unique. Their commitment to the RFDS is reflected not only in their continued dedication and financial contribution but in the tradition that is part of the fabric of the Broken Hill community.

## elizabeth mackinnon

[East Jindabyne]

Elizabeth was born near London in 1931. Following schooling, she trained as a Physical Education (PE) Teacher, teaching in Somerset for three years. She then moved to Australia, teaching PE at New England Girls' School in Armidale. There she met her school teacher husband Jock and later, with their four children, they spent time in Sydney, Perth, Wollongong, Adelaide and Canberra. During these years Elizabeth brought energy to being a mother, headmaster's wife, making chapel kneelers, teaching tennis in youth groups, running a ceramics studio, singing in church choirs, sailing and teaching PE. Elizabeth and Jock retired to Jindabyne in 1999. Recognising a need for exercise and social involvement, Elizabeth initiated a 'Gentle Exercises for the Over 60s' program. She takes five classes each week in Cooma, Berridale and Jindabyne. Up to 60 people, ranging in age from their late 50s to 101, participate in classes each week. Participants donate to cover expenses and the classes are now in their 11th year. Music accompanies the exercise sessions and fun and laughter are considered as important as the physical benefits. Elizabeth has also volunteered for many years to organise and train singers in Jindabyne for Snowy Monaro Arts Council's community performances of Handel's Messiah and the 'Together to Remember' Remembrance Day commemoration. Elizabeth is always happy to volunteer her time and talents to look after the health and wellbeing of others.

## lynne mahony [Murrurundi]

Since moving to Murrurundi in 1991 Lynne has worked in aged care with Hunter Integrated Care (now known as Integrated Living) for eight years and with the Murravale Aged Care Facility. She was Secretary of Murrurundi Lions Club for two years and President for four years, before stepping down in 2013 due to her commitments as the President of the local branch of the Country Women's Association. Lynne teaches Tai Chi once a week and volunteers for Meals on Wheels. She is an active participant in bi-monthly local Community Leaders' Forum. She is a member of Land Care Tidy Towns Group and the Pages River Warriors group which is working to beautify the river through a native species replanting program. Lynne is a member of the Murrurundi Central Business District Committee and the local Turning the Pages Committee, and a member of the local Garden Club.

## joanne marr [Werris Creek]

Joanne has been involved with the Rural Fire Service (RFS) for 25 years in the Werris Creek community and surrounding areas. She has held numerous positions with the local Brigade including Senior Deputy Captain for three years. Her dedication and contribution to the RFS is outstanding and she has participated in many emergencies during the past 25 years. Joanne has been a member of the Werris Creek Sporting Complex Committee for 20 years, donating many hours of volunteer work organising sport events

and helping to maintain the complex. She is also committee Treasurer. Joanne has been an active committee member of the Werris Creek Touch Football Association for more than 20 years, organising competitions and as Treasurer for the past 10 years. She has developed invaluable skills, knowledge and experience from her volunteer work and is held in high esteem by the local community.

## karen mcAllister [Glen Innes]

Karen is a successful local basketball coach, referee, mentor, mediator, informal 'on-court child psychologist' and mother of three. Every Wednesday afternoon, along with her sister Linda, Karen runs a basketball competition for the children of Glen Innes. For hours she chases participants up and down the courts, refereeing, coaching and giving the children an understanding what it is to have pride in themselves and their team. Karen is renowned for her patience and persistence in offering all the children advice they need to become successful adults. The fact that the children all look forward to their Wednesday afternoons with Karen is a tribute to her volunteer work. She has given them the gift of loyalty, honour and pride.

## margaret mcconnaughty

[Gwabegar]

Margaret has been a member of the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) as a volunteer with the Gwabegar Rural Fire Brigade since February 2006. She has actively volunteered her time for all RFS training and that has enabled her to become an active operational member of the brigade. Before joining the brigade Margaret supported her husband for years during fire events, making and delivering meals for brigade members, day and night. She also managed the family property for her husband when he was called out of the area to fight fires.

## kerry mcDonald [Warialda]

Kerry is a Justice of the Peace, wife, mother and grandmother who is always open to learning, sharing and helping others. She possesses a range of business and rural skills and has held many community positions. Kerry is Gwydir Shire Councillor and former Trustee/Secretary for Copeton Dam Park Trust. She has served on several tourism, health and school committees, coached sporting teams and had local Girl Guide, Historical Society, St Vincent De Paul and Diocesan School Board involvement. She is also a delegate and past President/Secretary of Inverell Livestock Exchange. Kerry is a Life Member of the Warialda Pastoral & Agricultural Association and a trustee of the Showground Reserve Trust. She was the first local female Show President and is

a former Showgirl and Show Steward. Kerry has served as a coordinator of zone finals, helped to produce a show centenary book and was a former delegate the North West show group. She is an active member of the County of Burnett Branch of the Country Women's Association, has held branch Secretary and Treasurer positions and has served at a Group Council Delegate and Gwydir Group Vice President. Kerry's zest for living/sharing is infectious and inspiring. She and her inseparable twin sister, Suzie, bring life and fun to all whose lives they touch. Their vibrant personalities, insight and wisdom are unforgettable.

## margaret mcFarlane

[Orange]

Margaret is a Founding Member of the Premi-Babes Association of Orange, which was incorporated in 1973, and she is still a dedicated and hard-working member. During those 41 years Margaret has reared five children, mostly as a single mother. She has often held several jobs at the one time as she worked to support her children. Margaret has always been actively involved with her children's schools and their sporting activities, and she is now involved with her grandchildren and their activities. Over the years Margaret has regularly helped with association fundraising, selling raffle tickets and seeking donations from local businesses for prizes. On many occasions when there were not enough prizes Margaret made up the shortfall at her own expense. She helps out at Association

barbecues regardless of the weather. For more than 40 years she has visited new mothers and presented them with a small gift on behalf of the association, initially at the old Maternity Hospital and now the Women's & Infants Unit at Orange Health Service. She liaises with staff and the Association when families need help in obtaining special equipment for ongoing treatment of sick babies after the babies go home.

### helen mckelvie [Coolamon]

Helen was born and grew up in in Tumut. She worked as a nurse at Junee District Hospital, then married and lived in Dulacca, Queensland and Marrar in the NSW Riverina before settling in Coolamon in 1970. Helen has four children, 13 grandchildren and four great-grandsons. She has been volunteering since her children started school, holding executive positions in the local Mothers Club, P&C Association, the local Swimming Club, Girl Guides and Scouts. As a member of the Country Women's Association for 53 years Helen has held all positions at branch level and represented Coolamon branch at numerous state conferences. At group level she has been Treasurer and Vice President. She was a Secretary of the Coolamon Ladies Golfers group for 22 years. Helen volunteers once a week at the Coolamon Craft Shop as roster coordinator and is a volunteer guide at the Up 2 Date store. She is also a volunteer at the Anglicare Op-Shop in Ganmain and involved with Anglican Church, assisting with catering and church flowers. Helen delivers Meals on Wheels and is a community transport driver. She holds the position of Joint

Treasurer of the Coolamon Rural Women's Gathering Committee. Helen enjoys volunteering around 10 hours a week in the community and loves meeting people.

### dana mclean [Taralga]

Dana has lived most of her life in Taralga, married a local farmer and has two children. She fits in well in the community, has a happy disposition and is always willing to help out. Dana was Secretary of the Showground Cooperative for several and ensured that ground facilities were kept clean and in working order as well as attending to paperwork. She maintains the showground website, which highlights local events and functions. Dana served two years as Secretary of the local Pony Club where both her children are members. She is a Pony Club Zone Delegate and takes an active part in running the family's cattle property.

### roslyn mcloughlin [Gunning]

Roslyn (known as Ros) was born and raised in Cootamundra. She moved to Bowral and then to Sydney where she raised a family. In 2006 she moved to Gunning and has been active in the town's community life ever since. Ros joined the Lions Club of Gunning and has been Secretary for four years. She regularly attends business and dinner meetings and deals with up to 50 club correspondence items a month. Ros is the Editor of Lions' fortnightly publication *The Noticeboard*.

She spends up to two days a fortnight coordinating advertisements, events diary and contributed news items, as well as organising the printing, collation and distribution of more than 1000 copies. Ros served on the Management Committee of Gunning District Community & Health Service for six years. Three years ago she helped establish Creative Gunning as an outlet for craft items and to provide social support for people who enjoy making craft. She volunteers there for more than two days a month. Ros is a volunteer director and secretary of Gunning Independent Living Limited (which is establishing a retirement complex), spent seven years on Gunning Focus Group's committee (music and drama) and has served in a variety of voluntary roles with Lifeline for almost 30 years.

*anne McNally* [Cootamundra]

In July 2010 the first community kitchen in Cootamundra opened its doors. The Cootamundra Community Soup Kitchen is still going strong, run tirelessly by volunteers and offering a free meal every Wednesday night to anyone in need. The community kitchen came about to provide comfort, support and fellowship to disengaged and disadvantaged local people who were in great need—whether physical, social, spiritual or emotional. *'The food we provide is only a small part of what we do in reality. A lot of what we are about is nurture: providing friendship, with no strings attached, and fellowship to those in our community who are on the outside,'* Anne McNally says. These volunteers incorporate into their already busy family lives the coordination of team

rosters, volunteer and donation requirements, food ordering, financial management and liaison with the community. These women are at the kitchen every week and take the time to sit and share a meal with someone, providing friendship and companionship to people who need it most.

*sam McNally* [Cootamundra]

In July 2010 the first community kitchen in Cootamundra opened its doors. The Cootamundra Community Soup Kitchen is still going strong, run tirelessly by volunteers and offering a free meal every Wednesday night to anyone in need. The community kitchen came about to provide comfort, support and fellowship to disengaged and disadvantaged local people who were in great need—whether physical, social, spiritual or emotional. These volunteers incorporate into their already busy family lives the coordination of team rosters, volunteer and donation requirements, food ordering, financial management and liaison with the community. These women are at the kitchen every week and take the time to sit and share a meal with someone, providing friendship and companionship to people who need it most.

*maggie McPhail* [Forbes]

Maggie spends many hours each year preparing for two community garage sales that raise funds for Camp Quality, Angel Flight, Can Assist and local charities. Maggie started the fundraisers 20 years ago with the help of her husband, Neil.

The two events are held each year at their family home. Maggie spends months taking delivery of goods donated by community members for the sales and sorting items that are saleable from those destined for recycling or another purpose, often finding hidden treasures in the donations and turning them into funds for charities. Sale day is busy for Maggie and her helpers with the first customers arriving around 6.30 am and the last leaving late afternoon.

### sharon meere [Boorowa]

Sharon owns and operates a small business in Boorowa NSW. Although she works long hours to maintain her business she still finds time to support the local community. Sharon is a volunteer Board Member for Boorowa Rotary Club, Boorowa Business Association, Boorowa Australia Day Committee and the local retirement facility. She is actively involved in other volunteer roles in the community, such as making brunch for the Army Cadets on Anzac Day, official duties on Australia Day (after briefly closing her business then running back to reopen it in time for travellers to have lunch), taking on roles with local St Patrick's Day Committee, selling raffle tickets for Rotary and attending changeover dinners across the region. Sharon is always there with a smile on her face, ready to take on any job. She not only joins volunteer groups, she often takes on the hardest role to fill in any volunteer organisation, that of Secretary.

### jenny mitchell OAM [North Star]

Raised at Bugaldie, Jenny moved to North Star after her education in Sydney and married Ran. They have raised five children and now have 10 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Together they fostered children in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s and provided teacher accommodation for many years. Jenny is a Foundation Member (North Star) for Royal Far West Children's Health Scheme. Over the years she has donated her time and skills to assist the inland mission, flower shows, fashion parades, sport events and musicals. She has also served as a pony camp matron and Anzac Day services presenter. As an Anglican parishioner, Jenny adds lay preaching, scripture teaching, parish and diocesan counselling and rural and family counselling to her many hats. Jenny's long-standing interest in and affinity with Aboriginal people saw her wisdom and compassion utilised as a Reconciliation Council of Australia member and a Social Justice Committee member. Jenny has had an ongoing involvement with the Country Women's Association of NSW, as a Foundation and Life Member of the North Star Branch (joining in 1958). She has held branch, Gwydir Group and State Executive positions and was State president for three years. Jenny's passion for international work encompasses Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW) membership and roles as Secretary and Vice President of the world body, as well as time as the South Pacific Area President. Jenny is a mentor, friend and listening ear to many—a remarkable woman.

## leisa moody [Binda]

Leisa Moody goes out of her way to help others. She runs a volunteer support group online, 'Stop Domestic Violence', through Facebook and a website. She helps people deal with situations of domestic violence, guiding them to the right services and provides emotional support and care for a woman in Goulburn. She also supports the 'Aspect' autism organisation, White Ribbon Day and the Cancer Council. Despite her own disabilities, Leisa is happy to assist people in need and to help where help is needed, as volunteering is her passion.

## annette moxon [Bathurst]

Annette was born in Newcastle and completed her schooling in Bathurst, going on to work for Western Stores and Bathurst Paint Store. For the past 20 years she has been a volunteer with a number of local groups including the Bathurst Information Centre, Glenray Industries Ltd—an organisation that caters for people with intellectual disabilities—and most recently at Bathurst Seymour Centre, a centre-based day care for older people who are frail aged, people with a disability and their carers who live in the Bathurst regional area.

## dorothy mullaney [Bega]

Dorothy grew up in Narooma, one of 10 children. She left Narooma at 16 to live in Bega where she obtained her first job at the old Bega Hospital, followed by jobs in the kitchens of local hotels. Dorothy met and married Ron and raised a family of four children. She worked for the Parents & Citizens Association while her children were at school and also joined the Bega Family Day Care Association, serving on the committee for 10 years as Vice President and then President, before being appointed a Life Member. Dorothy joined the Bega Hospital Auxiliary and served as President for eight years, working to broaden the activities of the Auxiliary and increase its fundraising capabilities, particularly through catering initiatives she introduced. She is Vice President and Catering Officer of the Bega Hospital Auxiliary and organises catering events, sells raffle tickets, helps in the hospital kiosk and regularly does Meals on Wheels. Dorothy is on the committee of Australian National University Rural Medicine Students Group and supports medical students when they are in Bega.

## lucy needham [Blayney]

Lucy is a mother, grandmother and hard-working voluntary supporter who cannot step back quickly enough when congratulations, accolades or praise are being handed out. Lucy began her nursing career training at the NSW Masonic Hospital in Sydney then as a Registered Nurse at Royal North Shore. She also worked as a doctor's

receptionist before the first of her two daughters was born. In Blayney, Lucy's professional and personal dedication to nursing and service to the community rose to the fore. Lucy became the first Community Nurse to work in the Blayney area and she completed her professional career with Brest Screen Central West. In particular, Lucy is passionate about the health and wellbeing of children, especially their oral health. It was this passion that drew her to the Rural Dental Action Group (RDAG) which, due to Lucy's knowledge and dedication, far exceeded its original goals. Inner Wheel, the Anglican Church and the School of St Jude are beneficiaries of Lucy's current efforts. To hear Lucy encouraging a young person beginning a career in nursing reveals her passion for and dedication to the community.

### *molly neilsen* [Forbes]

Molly has been actively involved in many volunteer organisations for more than 50 years. She was recognised in 2013 by the Royal Far West for 51 years of service to the Forbes Sunshine Club, a club that raises funds to assist rural and disadvantaged children and their families to access specialised medical services through the Far West hostel in Manly. Molly is also a volunteer for the Community Transport Program, the Forbes Country Music Association and the Forbes Branch of the Men of League, and has more than 10 years of service with Neighbourhood Aid. Molly volunteers regularly at community events. She has coordinated the refreshments and attended the Annual Special Sports Day, organised by OCTEC, which has just completed its 33rd year. This

event provides a fun day for disabled people from around Western NSW. The common theme with Molly's volunteering is that is for the benefit of others and for the joy brought by helping others achieve quality of life.

### *jann o'connor* [Gloucester]

Jann is an advocate for those who care for someone with a mental illness. Born in Sydney, she trained in nursing and left to marry and have four children, later training as a teacher. Her eldest son, Richard, was diagnosed with mental illness in his early 20s. As he lived with her over many years, Jann sought to be better informed about mental health in order to be effective in her caring role. Now in his mid-50s, Richard lives independently but Jann visits regularly, calls weekly and supports practically. She began volunteering in the early 1990s when she became secretary of the Mullumbimby/Byron Mental Health Carers' Group. She focussed on fundraising and advocacy. Moving to Ballina in 2000, she began the Ballina Mental Health Carers' Group. Now in her mid-70s Jann, with her sharp English teacher's mind, contributes to reviews of health and mental health policies, programs and procedures and is active on a range of mental health forums, committees and sub committees. She is a member of the Peak Body Committee of ARAFMI and, a Carer's voice on the National Alliance for Rural & Remote Mental Health. Within the Ballina Mental Health Carers' Group, Jann is a valued mentor and advocate for carers 'in crisis'.

In 2011, International Year of the Carer, Jann was awarded NSW Senior Carer & Senior Ambassador of the Year.

## mary o'neill [Merriwa]

Mary has devoted her life to community service. She and husband Kevin arrived in Merriwa in 1974 to establish a thoroughbred stud and cattle breeding property. In 1992 they moved into the residential area of Merriwa and Mary was widowed in 1994. For 16 years Mary compiled and stapled about 1500 weekly copies of the local newsletter. She was a Member and Secretary of Probus for 15 years, Secretary and Treasurer of the Senior Citizens Association for over 20 years, a Meals on Wheels worker for 20 years and a Board Member and Treasurer of the Merriwa RSL club for 12 years. She contributes to many other local organisations and can be found selling Legacy and Anzac day badges, raising funds for seniors, the Sub-Branch and the school band. At age 89, she remains active, organising functions, medical trips, pension counselling, street stalls, movie days and trips for seniors. She helps runs raffles at the RSL and three days a week helps out at the RSL. She has been recognised for her community service through the Premier's Award in 2000, the Paul Harris Fellowship from Rotary International in 2000, Merriwa Citizen of the Year 1996, Life Membership of the RSL League in 2009 and Life Membership of the Merriwa RSL Club 2012.

## hannah orr [Cootamundra]

Hannah was born in Western Australia and raised in Clarencetown, moving to Cootamundra four years ago. Two years ago she approached Council staff to volunteer at the dog pound and has since given many hours to assist in the welfare of all animals at the pound. She has introduced a network of rescue organisations to Council officers and works to ensure that every animal that comes to the pound stands the greatest chance of being re-homed, to the extent that very few animals have to be euthanized. She voluntarily temperament-tests animals and has instigated a Cootamundra Pound Facebook site and a Friends of Cootamundra Pound website. She also assists Gundagai, Harden and Young Pounds in re-homing animals. She has assisted at RDA and has taken dogs to the local nursing home as part of the Pets as Therapy Program. Hannah spends countless hours volunteering her expertise and love of animals and her efforts have resulted in many animals having loving homes.

## helen parsons [Gloucester]

Helen has dedicated many years of service to various groups and organisations in the Gloucester Shire. A member of the Uniting Church, she is the Secretary of the Church Council, President of the Ladies Fellowship and Chief Organist. A Member of Quota Gloucester branch for more than 27 years, Helen has held office bearer positions including President and Secretary and is currently Vice President. She

has been a dedicated member of the Red Cross for more than 20 years and is Branch Secretary for the Gloucester branch of Red Cross. She is heavily involved in the day-to-day running of the local branch and until recently was the Deputy Group Leader of the Disaster Relief Unit. Until recently, Helen was the sole organiser of Meals on Wheels in Gloucester and was responsible for its smooth operation for many years. She is Secretary of Gloucester Charities, an organisation that provides short and long-term assistance for local people of all ages and deals regularly with people in crisis situations and has been an active member since 1994. Helen has been a member of the local Choral Society since 1984 and is pianist and Choir Mistress for the group, dedicating many hours to the musical development of the choir. Helen assists those less fortunate and is highly regarded for her dedication to helping others.

### cheryl payten [Coleambally]

Cheryl grew up in Wagga Wagga, married Barry and had a farm in Coleambally before moving to town nine years ago. She has been a volunteer carer at Lions Nicola Camp, which provides respite care, for 27 years. She has cared for 6–10 people at a time with physical, sensory and/or learning disabilities. Responsibilities include showering, toileting, feeding, dressing, medicating and supervising activities over a period of a week. She also provides those at the camp with personal items of clothing, toiletries, and so on. Cheryl has assisted at Travelling Tasties, a cafe established to provide employment for people with intellectual disabilities, for over 20 years.

Cheryl conducted craft and money skills programs as well as driving clients to and from work five days a week for seven years. She also takes the girls into her own home for weekend respite care. Cheryl has made morning tea for the residents at Cypress View Lodge, an aged care facility, as well as conducting Bingo and card sessions for many years. For a number of years she delivered for Meals on Wheels to clients in Coleambally and assists seniors of our town on their outings. As a member of the local garden club she has been known to assist seniors with the maintenance of their own gardens. Cheryl is a real hidden treasure.

### beryl pepper [Mullumbimby]

Beryl was born in Hillston in 1937 and, growing up, was involved in Sunday School Teaching, Merriwagga Presbyterian Church and Goolgowi Presbyterian/Methodist Church, Goolgowi Junior Farmers, (inaugural) Treasurer and Grey Owl with Goolgowi Brownie pack. She worked on the family farm and as a telephonist/postal assistant at post offices in the area. In 1969 she married Trevan and moved to Mullumbimby. Beryl has continued her charity work since coming to Mullumbimby. She has volunteered with Meals on Wheels for 41 years (inaugural Secretary at Hillston) Red Cross 31 years (25 as Treasurer), Life Education for 28 years, RSL Auxiliary for 20 years (19 as treasurer) and with the Uniting Church—teaching Sunday school and scripture, lay preaching, as an elder and parish council representative, women's fellowship and other church activities. Beryl has great energy and is happy to cook when that

cuppa or meal is needed. She is supportive to people facing a hard time including the homeless. She has two sons, three grandchildren, six step-children (one deceased) three grandchildren, 12 step grandchildren and 3 step great grandchildren.

### josie peter [Broken Hill]

Josie is a member of the Broken Hill Women's Auxiliary, which raises funds to support the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS). The auxiliary began in 1951 and today has 20 active members. This group of dedicated women raises funds through raffles and catering, but what sets them apart is the two major projects they organise and run each year—the RFDS Ball and their famous 'Christmas Puddings'. The ball is held each May and this year it attracted 730 guests and raised more than \$36 000. Each October the auxiliary makes 2300 Christmas puddings (despite 35°C-plus summer temperatures). Most of the puddings are sold and distributed from Broken Hill, raising around \$35 000 each year. The auxiliary has also provided for the Broken Hill Hospital visitors program for the past 49 years. Such achievements are a testimony to the extraordinary effort of the auxiliary members who, like their predecessors, continue to make a major contribution to the RFDS—not an easy task in the harsh economic climate of a remote region. Each of these women is outstanding and her commitment reflects a tradition that is part of the fabric of the Broken Hill community.

### maxine prestwich [Broken Hill]

Maxine is a Life Member of the Broken Hill Women's Auxiliary, which raises funds to support the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS). The auxiliary began in 1951 and today has 20 active members. This group of dedicated women raises funds through raffles and catering, but what sets them apart is the two major projects they organise and run each year—the RFDS Ball and their famous 'Christmas Puddings'. The ball is held each May and this year it attracted 730 guests and raised more than \$36 000. Each October the auxiliary makes 2300 Christmas puddings (despite 35°C-plus summer temperatures). Most of the puddings are sold and distributed from Broken Hill, raising around \$35 000 each year. The auxiliary has also provided for the Broken Hill Hospital visitors program for the past 49 years. Such achievements are a testimony to the extraordinary effort of the auxiliary members who, like their predecessors, continue to make a major contribution to the RFDS—not an easy task in the harsh economic climate of a remote region. Each of these women is outstanding and her commitment reflects a tradition that is part of the fabric of the Broken Hill community.

### daphne prior [Forbes]

Daphne was born in Forbes and grew up in the village of Wurrinya. She left school at 15 and worked in the Wurrinya Store as a telephone switch operator. She met her husband there and they raised three children on a farm in Wurrinya.

She then became the local school bus driver and postie. Daphne appreciated the community spirit in the small village and identified with the saying, 'it takes a community to raise a child'. Daphne was Secretary and Treasurer of the lively Werrinya Tennis Club and is now a life member. As a member of the Werrinya WAGs, she participated in many fundraising shows to raise money for the local hall. She has also been active in raising money for the local Kidney Car rally team, which raised over \$100 000 in eight years. She has been heavily involved in local rugby, as her husband and sons all played. She initiated the Ben Hall Shears pavilion at the local showgrounds and was involved in competitions as penciller and organiser for 20 years. Another significant contribution to the community has been involvement for more than 50 years with the Lachlan House with No Steps, 20 of these as biscuit supervisor. Daphne puts a significant amount of time back into the Forbes community.

*nell pyle OAM* [Bolwarra Heights]

Nell was born in Sydney in 1924 and her family moved to Maitland 10 years later. She trained in primary teaching at Armidale Teachers College and taught at a number of schools. She married Doug Pyle in 1949 after they met at the inaugural meeting of Maitland Repertory Theatre. Both are foundation and life members and, as well as acting, Nell was Secretary for some years and wardrobe mistress for over 50 years. Both have received NSW Government Senior Citizens Award for Education & Lifelong Learning 2011 and Nell the Maitland Medal for Volunteers 2004

plus nomination for Maitland Citizen of the Year 2012. Nell's outstanding achievement is Founder of Maitland's Australian Museum of Clothing & Textiles (the only public one in Australia) with initial advice and assistance from Sydney's Powerhouse Museum. As a Friend of Maitland Library and 'Living Book' she regularly reads to visually impaired residents at a local retirement village and is also a Friend of Tocal College and Homestead Historical Society where she regularly helps and gives displays of clothing for various charity groups. Nell has continued to volunteer numerous hours, even while writing books on family and local history and is about to publish *History Hidden in Hunter Wardrobes*. She also helps organise Maitland's Multicultural River-lights Festival and annual senior citizens dance.

*lisa ramien* [Mudgee]

Lisa, a paramedic and recipient of a Bravery Award, decided she wanted to contribute more to her community and when she had her first child, Lachlan, in the local hospital she noticed room for improvement to maternity ward facilities. Soon after, she set up a charity 'Fun 4 Funds' to begin fundraising for a wish list provided by midwives. Lisa coordinated a fundraising market at the local church grounds and successfully raised thousands of dollars. Her efforts included advertising and marketing, sourcing sponsors and donations, sourcing all the products on the wish list (often collecting purchased items, assembling them and installing them at the hospital herself, while pregnant with her second child—right up to a week before the birth of Lauren). Lisa has

continued to look for projects to support and is currently lobbying for a parents' room in the Mudgee town centre.

## heather ranclaud

[Willow Tree]

Heather lives at Warrah Creek with her family on their mixed farm where they breed commercial Murray Grey and Angus cattle and run a free range egg enterprise. She has an interest in renewable energy and has invested in solar power for most of the family farm's energy requirements. Heather has been a member of the local Landcare group since 1990, is a past member of the Namoi Catchment Management Authority and is a committee member of Regional Development Australia Northern Inland. In 2012, she joined a concerned group of health professionals, academics and landholders who formed a steering committee to advocate for a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) for the Gunnedah Basin. Her strong commitment to sustainable agriculture, food production and environmental conservation has led to her involvement in the campaign to protect the Liverpool Plains from the impacts of coal mining and coal seam gas proposals. Heather has coordinated submissions to State and Federal governments on behalf of the Upper Mooki Landcare Group and in 2014, made presentations to Planning Assessment Commission hearings at Narrabri and Gunnedah, advocating for a HIA to be conducted in the Gunnedah Basin. Heather works for Upper Hunter Shire Council as a community services officer and in that role

helped coordinate the 2013 NSW Rural Women's Gathering held in Scone. Volunteer commitments include advocacy with the NSW Cancer Council, judging Inland Tourism Awards and since 2008 as an assessor with the Keep NSW Beautiful Tidy Towns Sustainable Communities program.

## rosemary reed [Tocumwal]

Rosemary has contributed to the community of Tocumwal in many roles and organisations over the past 40 years. Her lifetime association with the Tocumwal Anglican Church has seen her fill roles including Parish Councillor, Organist and Guild Member and volunteering at the Hunter's Haven Op-Shop. Rosemary also played the organ and helped train debutantes for the Sacred Heart Ball over many years. She became involved in the local primary school when her children started school and over the next 30 years was a P&C office bearer, trained the school choir and worked as Secretary for 21 years until her retirement in 2003. She continues to have a close relationship with the school. As a committee member and Treasurer of the Tocumwal Football Club, Rosemary won an administration award from the Murray League. Rosemary has spent time as Secretary of the Tocumwal Bowling Club and has had a long association with Little Athletics. She has been an active volunteer at the Tocumwal Visitor's Information Centre and the Tocumwal Singers have benefited greatly from her involvement with the group. Rosemary is involved with Fire & Rescue NSW Firefighter Championships

Association where she contributes to the timing of events and registration at championships and compiles the association's quarterly newsletter.

## robyn reid [Berridale]

Robyn, who says she has 'always been a farmer', began life on a farm outside Jindabyne. Aged 20 she met fellow farmer, Phillip, and so began a new dynasty of farmers at Yarrabin, Rocky Plains, west of Berridale. As well as bringing up Heidi and Craig, Robyn farmed and worked as a receptionist at a motel in Berridale for 10 years. In 1990 she became a fulltime farmer, successfully developing a Hereford Stud. Prior to 1990 there were two fulltime farm workers as well as Phillip, Robyn and Phillip's parents, Alan and Gwen. Now it was just Phillip and Robyn with help from Heidi and Craig. Phillip worked six months a year off the property, haymaking. In 1987 when Phillip became Captain of the Rocky Plains Bush Fire Brigade Robyn became Welfare Coordinator, organising people and food. She has remained in that role ever since. During the devastating fires of 2003 she and her volunteers provided 5500 meals for crews from all over the country. She also took shifts in the Forward Control Centre. Robyn's other community work has included seven years on the Berridale P&C, six years in the Monaro High School tuckshop and time as Treasurer then President of the Berridale Tennis Club. 'Rocky Plains is a great close-knit community where everyone looks out for everyone else,' says Robyn. She personifies that each day of her life.

## juame reynolds [Broken Hill]

Juame is a representative of the new face of the Broken Hill Women's Auxiliary, which raises funds to support the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS). She contributes to the Auxiliary despite her workload in running a large station with her husband. The auxiliary began in 1951 and today has 20 active members. This group of dedicated women raises funds through raffles and catering, but what sets them apart is the two major projects they organise and run each year the RFDS Ball and their famous 'Christmas Puddings'. The ball is held each May and this year it attracted 730 guests and raised more than \$36 000. Each October the auxiliary makes 2300 Christmas puddings (despite 35°C-plus summer temperatures). Most of the puddings are sold and distributed from Broken Hill, raising around \$35 000 each year. The auxiliary has also provided for the Broken Hill Hospital visitors program for the past 49 years. Such achievements are a testimony to the extraordinary effort of the auxiliary members who, like their predecessors, continue to make a major contribution to the RFDS—not an easy task in the harsh economic climate of a remote region. Each of these women is outstanding and her commitment reflects a tradition that is part of the fabric of the Broken Hill community.

## olwyn reynolds [Broken Hill]

Olwyn has a long association with the Broken Hill Women's Auxiliary, which raises funds to support the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS). She is the current Treasurer. The Auxiliary began in 1951 and today has 20 active members. This group of dedicated women raises funds through raffles and catering, but what sets them apart is the two major projects they organise and run each year—the RFDS Ball and their famous 'Christmas Puddings'. The ball is held each May and this year it attracted 730 guests and raised more than \$36 000. Each October the auxiliary makes 2300 Christmas puddings (despite 35°C-plus summer temperatures). Most of the puddings are sold and distributed from Broken Hill, raising around \$35 000 each year. The auxiliary has also provided for the Broken Hill Hospital visitors program for the past 49 years. Such achievements are a testimony to the extraordinary effort of the auxiliary members who, like their predecessors, continue to make a major contribution to the RFDS—not an easy task in the harsh economic climate of a remote region. Each of these women is outstanding and her commitment reflects a tradition that is part of the fabric of the Broken Hill community.

## carol ridgeway-bissett [Nelson Bay]

Carol was born at Soldiers Point and has lived on the Tomaree Peninsula most of her life. She is a direct descendant of the original inhabitants of this area. At a young age Carol became acutely aware of how the environment embraced her and her culture and, through life-experiences and training, she became an expert in the history and cultural significance of this area. In 1998 Carol, together with like-minded community groups, won a seven year battle to save a significant parcel of land earmarked for housing development. This Aboriginal sacred site for women has been preserved as Wanda Wetlands Reserve. Through Carol's dedication and tireless energy another land parcel of cultural significance for the local Maaiangal people was saved from development and has been preserved as Mambo Wetlands Reserve. Carol is part of Mambo Wanda Wetlands Reserves and Landcare 335c Committee formed in 1999. Her support has been instrumental in helping to preserve both wetlands and making Port Stephens Council and the community in general aware of their cultural significance. Carol is highly respected for her cultural knowledge and environmental work. As a Community Educator she volunteers in collaboration with schools, the council, and numerous committees at local, state and federal levels. Over many years the community has been enriched by Carol's achievements in raising cultural awareness.

## Thelma ryan OAM [Berrigan]

Thelma has been involved in the community for many years, and has won many awards through her involvement with the Berrigan Branch of the Australian Red Cross. These include the Service Award 2001, 40 years Long Service 2005 and Distinguished Service Award 2007. Thelma has held the positions of Treasurer 1994, President 1995–2007. Publicity Officer, Shop Coordinator, Disaster Team Member, Special Services Volunteer 1992–97 and Red Cross shop worker. She has been inaugural President of the Berrigan Evening Ambulance Auxiliary (1995–98) during 10 years of service, inaugural President of the Berrigan Heritage Committee (1996–2002) and current committee member, President of the Berrigan Public School Centenary (1990–92) and President of the local Girl Guides Association (1976–1980). She has been involved with St Columba's Parish over a period of 48 years, as Catholic Women's League Treasurer (1966–67), President 1968–70, Vice President 1971–73, 1979–80 and 1993–94, member of the Diocesan Committee Parish Council, extraordinary minister of the Eucharist and reader for 20 years and a worker and supporter for St Vincent de Paul Society. Thelma has been a member of the Berrigan Branch of United Hospital Auxiliary for 12 years, Vice President of School Auxiliaries and involved in canteen duties. She served as a member of the Lawn Cemetery and Main Street committee, was involved with Meals on Wheels and hosted a sewing group to make items for underprivileged children overseas. Thelma was awarded the Order of Australia Medal in 2008 for

her service to the community. She is currently the President of the Red Cross branch and with the help of a committee is organising the Centenary of the branch in August 2014. To mark 50 years membership Thelma received the 'Laurel Wreath' Award in 2014.

## debbie saad [Thirlmere]

Debbie Saad was born in Cowra. She moved to Wagga at 18 to undertake a teaching degree and undertook various teaching posts until she settled into married life in Thirlmere, Wollondilly. Debbie taught at Buxton for 16 years, juggling life as a school teacher and busy mum. When she decided to retire early, it didn't take Deb long to seek out a worthy charity where she could continue nurturing children. Debbie has been a volunteer for Focus on Families for five years and she donates six hours a week to support vulnerable families. Debbie shares her life experience with socially isolated mothers who may have postnatal depression, lack confidence in their parenting ability or have children with a disability. Debbie makes weekly home visits, showing up with a smile, offering a non-judgemental ear and often a shoulder to cry on. Twelve months ago, when Focus of Families was struggling to provide outreach into Wollondilly due to lack of resources, Debbie telephoned businesses, explaining her role as a volunteer and seeking financial support to save the service. Debbie's persistence and genuine pleas for help resonated and she secured enough funding to keep the service in Wollondilly for another two years.

## andrea sauerbier [Mudgee]

For many years Andrea has been quietly supporting numerous organisations and individuals in the Mudgee area. She is a talented musician who uses her gift generously and regularly by playing the piano for residents in the local nursing homes and hostel. She plays for schools and accompanies children at eisteddfods. She plays the organ for church services and funerals. Andrea is a widow who nursed her husband through Motor Neurone Disease prior to his death a few years ago but then got straight back into serving the community. Andrea has been delivering meals on wheels regularly for over 15 years, supporting people with a disability through Mudgee Crossroads for over 20 years and taking children and adults (some with high support needs) into her home as a respite volunteer for the past 12 years. She is a retired nurse who uses her training, strengths and abilities for the good of others—particularly those less fortunate. Andrea is a visitor with the Community Visitors Scheme, a volunteer at the local museum and a Founding Member of Mudgee U3A where she has led various groups including the bell ringers and bush walkers. Andrea is always willing to help, keen to learn new things, is cheerful and enthusiastic about any task she takes on and does so without seeking personal reward or recognition.

## debbie schache [Bathurst]

Debbie is one of Bathurst's silent achievers and works behind the scenes to show concern and compassion to people who need help. Even though working fulltime, she has immersed herself in voluntary work within her community and her contribution and achievements have been significant. Debbie joined the Rotary Club of Bathurst Daybreak Inc in 1997 and has served as Secretary, Treasurer, Bulletin Editor, President and Foundation Director, consistently showing commitment to the ideals of Rotary service at community and international level. She has contributed extensively to Rotary at District level serving as Assistant and Secretary to the District Governor while also undertaking her club volunteer work. For the past eight years Debbie has served on the District Youth Exchange Committee, coordinating exchanges with overseas countries and conducting interviews, delivering training and providing support and encouragement for the youth involved in the scheme. For 10 years she has served as Secretary to the Blayney to Bathurst Bike Ride, a major charity fundraising event in the Central West. On top of all this, Debbie actively advocates for Riding for the Disabled, Lifeline, Community Transport, and Daffodil Cottage—the local cancer support centre. Debbie is a role model for advancing goodwill, peace and humanitarian service in her community.

## elizabeth seckold [Tathra]

Elizabeth (Liz) was born in Yorkshire, England during World War II and spent many of her early years under the heavy oak dining table or at an air raid shelter. She arrived in Australia with her '10-pound Pom' parents and younger brother and sister in 1955. After securing a scholarship, Liz trained to be a teacher at Sydney Teachers College and Charles Sturt University. She taught for 43 years at schools in NSW and the ACT, moving to Bega 32 years ago with her husband, children and step children. During this time Liz has volunteered for Cobargo Public School, Cobargo Swimming Club, Bega Public School (fundraising for seven years), Little Athletics (10 years), Bega Netball Club (fundraising 10 years), In theatre (young people's drama group 12 years) and Kings Theatre. She spent 25 years teaching at Bega High School. She was the first Head Teacher Welfare in 1992 appointed in NSW. In addition she undertook several extra roles working 60 hours a week. This included running the Student Representative Council, supporting students and families in need, integrating students with disabilities, anti-bullying programs, induction of Year 7, gender equity programs and supporting Year Advisers. In 2004, she received the Award for Excellence Service to Public Education & Training. She has been an active supporter of the Australian Labor Party and was elected to local government almost six years ago. Including her council duties she works 30 hours a week, continuing to volunteer as a member of several committees including Clean Energy for Eternity, Friends of Old Bega Hospital, Sapphire Coast

Marine Discovery Centre (association) on track (old Bega Racecourse) Pig & Whistle (Tathra Museum) Youth Council and Sculpture on the Edges Cultural Planning Committee. She is also a board member of South East Arts and South East Regional Sports. Liz considers her most important volunteer role was establishing and now Charing Bega Valley SPAN—Suicide Prevention action Network.

## gwen shawcross [Anglers Reach]

Gwen and her husband, Lindsay, moved to Anglers Reach from Echuca after they retired in the 1990s. Since her arrival, Gwen has been actively involved in supporting the community in a quiet, dependable way with good humour and without fanfare. Gwen joined the Adaminaby Branch of the Country Women's Association where she has held many positions, including President for three years and International Officer for a number of years. As one of the younger members, Gwen often does more than her share. One of her unsung roles is quietly assisting members in the local community. A keen handcraft worker, Gwen helped to revitalise a group that meets in the local fire shed each month to learn new skills and enjoy the fellowship of like-minded people. Gwen assisted in the handwork on the Adaminaby Hall Stage Curtain and is also actively involved in other community activities such as the photography group.

## vickii simpson [Coomba Park]

Vickii relocated to Coomba Park in 1992 to support her mother after her father's death. She was nominated as President of the Coomba & District Progress Association in 1993. Vickii introduced a local newsletter 'Connections' which is distributed locally and to absentee property owners. Now in its 22nd year, *Connections* has financially supported the Progress Association by subscriptions. During Vickii's term of office, the Association has funded the construction of a balcony on the community hall to overlook Wallis Lake and on the Association's 30th anniversary, published a 96-page illustrated book on the history and heritage of Coomba Park. In 2007 the Association, being aware of the lack of social outlets in the community, introduced the 'Sunday Brunch Cafe', which has been manned by volunteers at the community hall on Sunday mornings. The cafe has financed many items in the community hall such as central work bench in the kitchen and other upgrades and has received a grant from the ANZ Bank for kitchen improvements.

## kathleen sinnott [Banora Point]

Kathleen is a long-standing and dedicated member of the Tweed Hospital, whose services are recognised by the Tweed Auxiliary Branch of UHA (United Hospital Auxiliaries NSW). Kathleen, who qualified as a nurse in the UK, moved to the Tweed from Canberra with her husband Michael in 1995 when she retired after 40 years of nursing.

That year she joined the Tweed Hospital Auxiliary. During 19 years she has volunteered in a range of areas, including secretarial positions, working in Auxiliary Gift Shop, helping with trolleys throughout the hospital wards and organises stalls at fetes. She has been a model at Fashion Parades and for the past 16 years has been the Auxiliary's Coordinator at Border Park Raceway where Auxiliary members sell raffle tickets. During this time over \$86 000 has been raised for the Tweed Hospital from the Raceway Raffles. Kathleen's nursing background shows her caring attitude towards people and is recognised in the way she and other members go about raising money to purchase much needed equipment for the local hospital. She is a 'silent achiever' who goes about volunteering her services in a very methodical and unselfish manner. Over the years, and even now, Kathleen averages approximately 80 hours per month in volunteering her services to the Hospital Auxiliary. Kathleen and her husband Michael have four boys, 14 grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

## genevieve smith [Wagga Wagga]

Alongside an already demanding lifestyle, Genevieve volunteers her expertise, time and own resources across a number of rural and regional issues in the community. Highly respected and valued in the Wagga Wagga community for her work as Chair of the fundraising committee for the Women's Health Centre, she has donated many hours a week to administration, marketing

and securing funding in various ways, organising Governors dinners, movie nights and foundation funding initiatives including performing to raise funds at the Take 2 Wagga Wagga annual performance event. At the same time, and as a working mother of two with a high level marketing role, Genevieve has supported environment groups, mental health initiatives with Riverina Blue Bells, chaired 'women in business' events to support local business operators and other women in organisational leadership roles in the community. She has participated in local theatre productions and attended many charity events across our community. Genevieve's inclusive, inspiring and engaging approach has brought many stakeholders together in raising significant funds and support to local needs, ranging from the Mayor, Federal and State MPs through to community members and business operators, and this is always with a smile.

### clare smulders [Howlong]

Clare is known for being someone who helps her neighbours, turning up within minutes if help is needed. Her care and concern for the community includes volunteering for Meals on Wheels since it started in Howlong over 25 years ago, the Howlong Community Op-Shop since 2007, over 35 years for the Catholic Women's Association, Life Member of the Howlong Netball Club, councillor with Hume Shire (Howlong) for over 25 years and bingo caller for the Howlong Senior Citizens. Clare has also volunteered in many aspects of the Howlong Grapevine Community Magazine since it started 36 years ago.

### barbara swain [Alstonville]

Barbara was born in Worcestershire, England. She married and had two sons, before coming to Australia in 1988 and teaching at Lismore High School. Barbara formed the Mental Health Support Group in Alstonville in the mid-1990s, after her son took his own life, as a way to deal with the grief and do something positive for people living with a mental illness. The volunteer-run group, which is now a fully registered charity, provides clothing and toiletries for the inpatient unit and runs a range of fundraising activities. They have provided 178 handmade quilts for the units, household items of outpatients who find managing their finances difficult and help fund activities for the Child & Adolescent Inpatient Unit. Barbara believes volunteering has to be enjoyable and concentrates on letting the volunteers know how valuable their work is. She organises working bees and maintains close involvement with the volunteers. An active member of the Anglican Church, Barbara has been an Official Visitor, is a JP and volunteers with Rotary and Inner Wheel, a group for partners of Rotarians. They raise money for cord blood research and make mastectomy cushions for local hospitals. Barbara is a fundraiser and volunteer extraordinaire.

### margaret symes [Broken Hill]

For the past two years Margaret Symes has been the President of the Broken Hill Women's Auxiliary which raises funds to support the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS). During that time she has

overseen many changes and improvements in the Auxiliary. The Auxiliary began in 1951 and today has 20 active members. This group of dedicated women raises funds through raffles and catering, but what sets them apart is the two major projects they organise and run each year—The RFDS Ball and their famous ‘Christmas Puddings’. The ball is held each May and this year it attracted 730 guests and raised in excess of \$36 000. Each October the Auxiliary organises the making of 2300 Christmas puddings (despite 35°C-plus summer temperatures). Most of the puddings are sold and distributed from Broken Hill, raising around \$35 000 each year. The Auxiliary also provides for the Broken Hill Hospital visitors program, something it has done for 49 consecutive years. Such achievements are a testimony to the extraordinary effort of the Auxiliary members who, like their predecessors, continue to make a major contribution to the RFDS—not an easy task in the harsh economic climate of a remote region. These outstanding women are unique. Their commitment to the RFDS is reflected not only in their continued dedication and financial contribution but in the tradition that is part of the fabric of the Broken Hill community.

### marion tanner [Blandford]

Marion is a respected resident of Blandford, near Murrurundi in the Upper Hunter Shire, whose achievements include involvement with the Red Cross for many years, including a time as President. She has also had 20 years involvement (with her late husband Craig) in the annual Bersheeba Day commemorations of the

Murrurundi 12th Light Horse Troop in October each year, assisting with administration and catering. Marion opens the gate to ‘Eyton’ each year for the Blandford Public School cross country and while not wanting acknowledgment for this or her other contributions to the community, she enjoys having the school students visit her property for the annual sports event.

### pat tate [Wootton]

Pat has been a volunteer within the Wootton community for many years, obtaining playground equipment, organising a kids’ club and participating in the Wootton Progress Association. She is an original member of the Wootton Community Network that obtained funding 10 years ago to build the Wootton Resource Centre, which houses a volunteer-run cafe and invaluable meeting place. Although most of the original volunteers have left the area, Pat has remained on the network committee and has made newcomers feel welcome. She regularly volunteers in the cafe on weekends and helps organise community events (monthly dinners, movie nights, art display openings) all including food preparation, setting up and clean up. One of her main achievements is the bimonthly Wootton Valley News, which helps new residents get a feel for the Wootton community. Pat produces this newsletter with the assistance of another local resident and it includes information about local wildlife and flora, stories about residents and other articles of interest. Pat has devoted

a huge amount of time and energy to building community facilities and strengthening the sense of community in Wootton.

## catherine thompson [Temora]

Catherine married and moved to Temora in 1959 where she went on to become Operating Theatre Sister at Temora & District Hospital. After having three children she focused her energy as an active member of the Temora P&C. Catherine led the way for woman in the 1960s becoming the first female P&C President of a high school in the Riverina. She was President of Temora High P&C from 1975–78 and Vice President from 1978–84 going on to represent the P&C at local, regional and state levels and hosting the annual regional P&C Conference 1977. Catherine served on the Education Department's In-Service Committee and various local school programs and was awarded Life Membership of NSW P&C Association in 1987. She has continued her involvement with schools, adjudicating debates in local and regional schools and judging Lions Youth of the Year competitions at local and regional levels. She was a Foundation member of the Temora View Club in 1975, holding all committee positions, including Zone Councillor. She was involved in organising the Temora Centenary Fashion Parade in 1980, the TAFE Outreach Women on Land Project Home Landscaping' course in 1987, the Women's Gathering Temora in 2003 and Women's Health Night Seminar in 2004. Catherine has made a contribution to international understanding with farm hosting of overseas exchange students, group study teams, students

from Temora's sister city Izumizaki, agricultural researchers and scientists and diplomats. She was a Founding Member and is current Secretary of the Temora Women's Network where she worked tirelessly to empower and enrich the lives of women.

## jan tobin [Tweed Heads]

Jan's involvement in volunteering and community service over many years is a testament to her commitment and energy. Born in Ryde in 1947, she completed her education in Grafton. Jan became involved in community work around 1968, as Grafton Hospital Auxiliary Treasurer, helping with reading at Grafton Infants School and catering for many years for Grafton Scout Training Group Training weekends. She volunteered for View Clubs of Grafton and then Tweed. Her move to Kingscliff saw her continue volunteering with Meals on Wheels Kingscliff for three years. She then returned to fulltime work at Tweed River High School as an Administrative Assistant. One of Jan's most rewarding experiences was working with children with behavioural problems, saying, *'Every day with them was a challenge but a very rewarding one in the end.'* Jan assisted Red Cross Telecross for about 15 years and Kingscliff Respite Centre for a year. After retiring in 2008 she joined Tweed Hospital Auxiliary, 'looking for more to do'. Jan continues to hold several positions with the Auxiliary, serving on the committees for the Auxiliary Executive, Gift Shop, Fashion Parade, and trains new members to work in the gift shop. Jan is married with two sons, six grandchildren

and one on the way. Her enthusiasm and passion for her community and her work are valued and admired by all.

## susan tomkins [Orange]

Susan was born in Orange and grew up in Trundle on the family farm, going to school in Tullamore. She has spent all her life in Central West NSW. After her father's death in 1976 she moved with her mother to Orange and nursed her mother until her death. Through her mother's illness Susan made connections with Uniting Care Wontama Village Nursing Home and for the past eight years has volunteered at the nursing home and at Clancy Western Lodge. She volunteers for up to five days a week and spends time with the elderly residents. Susan has also donated her time to the RSPCA in Orange for the past three years, until recently visiting weekly to help socialise and groom the animals.

## rosemary toscano [Nelson Bay]

Rosemary and her husband Laurie settled in Nelson Bay with their two children, Anna and Michael, in 1980. Her son Steven was born in 1984. Being a stay-at-home mum Rosemary undertook many volunteering and committee roles at Karingal Pre-School Nelson Bay Primary and High Schools. When the Nelson Bay Polyclinic Fundraising Committee was formed in 1993 Rosemary became part of the group striving to

have a palliative care unit built at the Polyclinic to enable Port Stephens patients to be near their family and friends instead of being in Newcastle. The Unit was completed three years later. The committee of eight members undertook up to six fundraising events each year for the next 10 years. Fundraising included raffles, Melbourne Cup days, a Health & Wellness Expo, Fashion Parades, Art Displays, Silent Auctions and International Dinners. Rosemary continues her involvement with palliative care as the President of the renamed Port Stephens Palliative Care Fundraising Committee Inc. a palliative care volunteer and also a member of Port Stephens East Local Health Committee. In 2010 Rosemary undertook the Hunter New England Health training course for palliative care volunteers. She has provided transport to Newcastle of patients undertaking chemotherapy and specialist appointments. Currently Rosemary's commitment to palliative care is approximately five hours per week which includes monthly meetings for volunteers, bi-monthly Local Health Committee and fundraisers meeting, liaising with the nurses about home care equipment needs of patients, purchasing equipment and communicating with various charities and service organisations who donate to the palliative care fund.

## jenny treloar [Broken Hill]

Jenny is a Life Member of the Broken Hill Women's Auxiliary which raises funds to support the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS). The Auxiliary began in 1951 and today has 20 active members. This group of dedicated women raises funds through

raffles and catering, but what sets them apart is the two major projects they organise and run each year—The RFDS Ball and their famous ‘Christmas Puddings’. The ball is held each May and this year it attracted 730 guests and raised in excess of \$36 000. Each October the Auxiliary organises the making of 2300 Christmas puddings (despite 35°C-plus summer temperatures). Most of the puddings are sold and distributed from Broken Hill, raising around \$35 00 each year. The Auxiliary also provides for the Broken Hill Hospital visitors program, something it has done for 49 consecutive years. Such achievements are a testimony to the extraordinary effort of the Auxiliary members who, like their predecessors, continue to make a major contribution to the RFDS—not an easy task in the harsh economic climate of a remote region. These outstanding women are unique. Their commitment to the RFDS is reflected not only in their continued dedication and financial contribution but in the tradition that is part of the fabric of the Broken Hill community.

### shirley tunnicliff [Rylstone]

Shirley grew up in Rylstone and has lived there for 81 years. She married Bill in 1956 and they have three children. Shirley worked in a local retail shop until her children were born and then helped her husband run their transport business. She spent over 40 years in the Guiding movement, from when she was a Guide herself to becoming a leader as Brown owl or as her Brownies knew her ‘Lubaroo’. She was a District Leader in Guides until well into her 60s. Shirley has been heavily involved in the local Show Society Committee

as Secretary for over 10 years, and has been a delegate for the Castlereagh Show Group looking constantly at improving attractions, safely, to rural shows. She has travelled to Sydney for meetings at the Agricultural Show Headquarters for the last 14 years and, although now retired, still maintains contact and imparts her knowledge to help support the Castlereagh Show group. Shirley has been a member of Rylstone MPS Advisory Council for over 12 years, focusing on improving hospital services. She was instrumental in forming the Pink Lady volunteer service at Rylstone Hospital, which has raised over \$12 000 for the hospital for equipment. She is a tireless historian of Rylstone and surrounding district and supports the local Historical Society with her knowledge. She is a past president and current treasurer of the Rylstone Red Cross.

### belinda turner [Bowning]

Belinda (known as Bimbi) grew up on the family property ‘Bertangles’, Bowning, the second of the three Weir children. Bimbi completed her education at Frensham before training as a Mothercraft Nurse. In 1974 she went on a Safari trip through Africa, and travelled on to England and Europe. On her return she worked on the family property, while continuing Mothercraft nursing. At this time she met and married her husband Kim Turner. Bimbi and Kim have a son and a daughter and four grandchildren. As well as being a successful and passionate sheep/lamb and wool producer and keen horsewoman, she still has some work commitments in Sydney. Bimbi is a Lay Preacher in the Anglican Boorowa/

Yass Parish and has been active in securing grants and fundraising to assist with restoring the 1889 All Saints Tangmangaroo Church. Following her parents' example, Bimbi generously supports many organisations, participating in Relay for Life and assisting her husband with Rotary commitments. She is a member of the Bookham Agricultural Bureau and Red Cross and is willing to coordinate fashion parades and open gardens for charity. Bimbi is interested in heritage buildings and has a magnificent collection of heritage clothes.

## dorothy turner [Orange]

Dorothy has lived in Oberon for over 40 years and in that time has made an incredible contribution to many different aspects of her local community. She moved to the area from the Blue Mountains with husband Geoff and three children in the 1970s. Through the family's involvement with horses, Dorothy became Secretary of the local Pony Club and the Oberon Show Society. Her exceptional contribution was later recognised with life membership to both associations. Dorothy was also a Board Member of the local Showground Trust. While the children were growing up, she was an active member of the school community as a member of the P&C and canteen committee. She also worked on the Meals on Wheels program and was involved with the annual Anglican Flower Show. Dorothy has continued her commitment to the local community and is an avid bowler who enjoys the companionship of the local and regional bowling communities. She has held executive positions

at the district and club level for nearly 20 years and is a qualified umpire. Dorothy is involved in the bowling club's fundraising program and the opportunity to use those funds to support local community projects. Dorothy believes in staying busy and active and is also a volunteer for the local community craft shop and has recently become involved in University of the Third Age. Through her involvement with the local community she has formed lifelong friendships, connecting with the community and reaping the satisfaction of helping others.

## clare twomey [North Lismore]

Clare formed the Knitting Nannas Against Gas in June 2012, with co-founder Lindy Scott. She had learnt of licences in the Northern Rivers area for unconventional gas exploration or development. After visiting Queensland to see gas field industrialisation first hand, Clare heard from impacted families and she decided to act. Her idea of action contained novel ingredients: a group that knits fun and generosity into all they do. Since then the Nannas have become one of the best known groups working to protect farmlands, water and communities from unrestrained gas field development. With their yellow berets, arresting knitted artefacts, cheeky smiles and winning ways, the Nannas now have Loops (branches) across Australia, the UK and Japan. Their trademark humour is matched by creative, determined advocacy, as expressed in their 'Nannafesto'. Clare's intelligent use of irony is apparent in Nanna events and cultural productions. This has empowered many women

to express themselves regarding rapid expansion of gas and coal developments. Importantly, the Knitting Nannas Against Gas convey a strong commitment to principles of nonviolence, and deploy hugs, cups of tea, and calming knitting lessons to people who may become overwhelmed by feelings of anxiety or powerlessness. Skilful Nanna interventions have calmed many an anxious moment. Nanna's generosity also extends to numerous fundraisers events designed to generate fun and funds in equal measure. In crafting all this, Clare deserves recognition for a unique contribution to rural Australia.

## bernadette underwood

[Baradine]

Bernie may have been born to be a nurse and care for sick people. Leaving school, she moved to Sydney to do her four-year nursing training at St Vincent's Hospital before moving back to Coonamble working at the local hospital. She married Tom and while their children were young she worked at home but never really left nursing behind. Bernie responded to serious accidents at their local timber mill, helped children with epilepsy and cared for workers with cancer. When her children started school, she returned to nursing at Baradine Hospital, working there from 1987 until retirement. During this time she became a big part of the community and continues to dedicate herself to local healthcare. Although retired, Bernie still runs the Asthma Clinic fortnightly. She is on both Baradine and Dubbo health councils and is very involved in

local health promotion. More recently she has helped organise a Youth Health Day, adolescent health education packages, general health awareness days and mental health education. Upon the birth of her grandchild, Bernie saw the need for a local mothers' support group and successfully organised this. Bernie is always looking for new ideas to support the wider community and is a strong advocate for the local GPs and for maintaining good healthcare in the community.

## alison uphill [Forbes]

Alison was born in Forbes and grew up in the small village of Wirrinya. She has volunteered in many organisations and is currently the Treasurer of the Forbes Rugby Club. She spends approximately 10–15 hours a week in the role and also runs the canteen and memberships. Alison sees her volunteering as a way to give back to the community.

## maree vanlierop [Forest Hill]

Maree has been a volunteer with the NSW Police Force for the past 13 years and during this time has volunteered more than 5000 hours. She cares about helping others in the community and provides follow-up victim support to people who have suffered trauma.

## julie virtue [Forbes]

Julie has been a pastoral carer in the community for 30 years. She came to Forbes in 1999 as a Salvation Army Officer with husband David. She is a mother of four, who experienced the death of one of her children aged five, and a grandmother of two. For the past 10 years Julie and David have been the managers of Havanna House— a haven in Forbes for the homeless, families and mothers and babies. At present there are 33 people staying at the house, which is the first step for accommodation before permanent housing. Julie offers skills in general living such as budgeting, cooking, vegetable gardening, sewing and household maintenance, also teaching the importance of self-respect and respect for others. Julie says the help of many volunteers keep the wheels in motion, as there is no government help. She had a hard childhood, which has contributed to her desire to help so many people through community service. Havanna House is only part of Julie's life. In 2011 she was nominated for NSW Woman of the Year and in 2012, Julie and David were Forbes Citizen of the Year.

## beth white [Ben Lomond]

Beth gives many volunteer hours to the Ben Lomond community each week. She is an active member of the Ben Lomond War Memorial Hall Trust Management Committee and visitors on bus tours enjoy her talks on the history of Ben Lomond and the area. She is involved in organising the Australia Day Breakfast and Anzac Day Service

held at the hall and catering for the committee's fundraising functions, setting up, cooking, serving and cleaning. Beth is a Trust Board Member of the Ben Lomond Recreational Reserve and helps with maintenance at the Reserve. She is also an active member of the Ben Lomond Landcare Group. Beth has spent many voluntary hours researching history of the area and speaking with past residents and recording information. She produces two community newsletters: *Altitude Living*, a biannual publication highlighting facets of life in Ben Lomond and the area, and *Message Muster*, a monthly newsletter with dates and information about coming events. Both publications are eagerly received and are even mailed to people who have moved away. A former school teacher, Beth is still actively interested in Ben Lomond's primary school and its students. She tutors children of all ages in her own time. Beth is interested in the health and wellbeing of the community and was instrumental in having gym equipment installed in a public area in Ben Lomond, in conjunction with the Healthy Highland Program and Landcare.

## di williams [Cootamundra]

In July 2010 the first community kitchen in Cootamundra opened its doors. The Cootamundra Community Soup Kitchen is still going strong, run tirelessly by volunteers and offering a free meal every Wednesday night to anyone in need. The community kitchen came about to provide comfort, support and fellowship to disengaged and disadvantaged local people who were in great need—whether physical, social, spiritual or

emotional. These volunteers incorporate into their already busy family lives the coordination of team rosters, volunteer and donation requirements, food ordering, financial management and liaison with the community. These women are at the kitchen every week and take the time to sit and share a meal with someone, providing friendship and companionship to people who need it most.

## margaret wilson [Broken Hill]

Margaret has been volunteering with the Broken Hill Hospital Kiosk for 20 years. 'Ma', as she known by her community, remembers when the Kiosk Auxiliary was a small tin shed opposite the old Broken Hill Base Hospital. She volunteered two days a week in the early days, sometimes working for 10 hours a day. Ma raised nine brothers and sisters, her own three children and two grandchildren. Her home was affectionately called 'Ma's Café' as she would welcome newcomers to Broken Hill (including teachers, police, a professor, doctors and priests) with a cuppa and chat. Although Ma now only volunteers on Saturdays, old habits die hard and she still wakes at 5 am to be in the kiosk by 7 am to prepare homemade sausage rolls, scones and apple turnovers. Ma does not seek credit or accolades for her hard work and dedication to the Auxiliary and the Broken Hill Hospital and says it is just part of who she is—something she loves doing for her community.

## christina woodhead

[Alstonville]

Christina trained as a Registered Nurse at Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford England graduating in 1955. She raised four children in Wales while juggling life as a farmer's wife and volunteering at St Johns Ambulance teaching cadets, children in the village and providing first aid at Agricultural Shows. Christina and her family immigrated to Australia to a farm at Lennox Head in 1973 where she worked as a part-time nurse with Ballina Community Nursing and at the Lennox Head fitness camp. In 1982 Christina moved to Alstonville and in 1985 she returned to volunteering after she attended the first meeting of the Patient Support Service for oncology patients and has continued in this volunteering role, now visiting at least twice a month. In the late 1980s working with Palliative Care patients at both Lismore Base Hospital and St Vincent's Private Hospital in Lismore was added to the volunteer's role. This additional work initially involved a lot of home visiting and provision of assistance and comfort in the patient's home. Christina is valued member of the Lismore Base Hospital Cancer Unit Volunteers who provide valuable support which includes accompanying patients to scans and radiotherapy, simple shopping tasks for Palliative Care patients and assistance with morning tea and lunch. Next year marks the 30th anniversary of the volunteer service and Christina has been a volunteer the whole time.

## kym wooding [Hay]

Kym has lived all her life in Hay and worked in retail and hospitality services before marrying Wayne and purchasing a carpet cleaning business. As a teenager, Kym raised money for the Epilepsy Foundation with the support of her mother. She was an active member of the Hay Pony Club representing Hay at all the local surrounding shows and pony club events. Kym has been an active member of Can Assist Hay Branch for 10 years and has been the strength behind the branch's fundraising activities. She started a Facebook page for Can Assist and her involvement is well known to the services' Head Office in Sydney. Kym's involvement with Can Assist began when Wayne was diagnosed with bowel cancer soon after they were married. The newlyweds asked Can Assist for help and ever since have been returning the support given to them, helping others through their journey of treatment and sharing their story with others. Their children Corrinne and Jake have been brought up with Can Assist and they attend most fundraising functions as a family. Kym also helps with fundraising at St Marys Catholic School and Hay Public School.

## renae worboys [Cootamundra]

In July 2010 the first community kitchen in Cootamundra opened its doors. The Cootamundra Community Soup Kitchen is still going strong, run tirelessly by volunteers and offering a free meal every Wednesday night to anyone in need. The community kitchen came about to provide

comfort, support and fellowship to disengaged and disadvantaged local people who were in great need—whether physical, social, spiritual or emotional. These volunteers incorporate into their already busy family lives the coordination of team rosters, volunteer and donation requirements, food ordering, financial management and liaison with the community. These women are at the kitchen every week and take the time to sit and share a meal with someone, providing friendship and companionship to people who need it most.

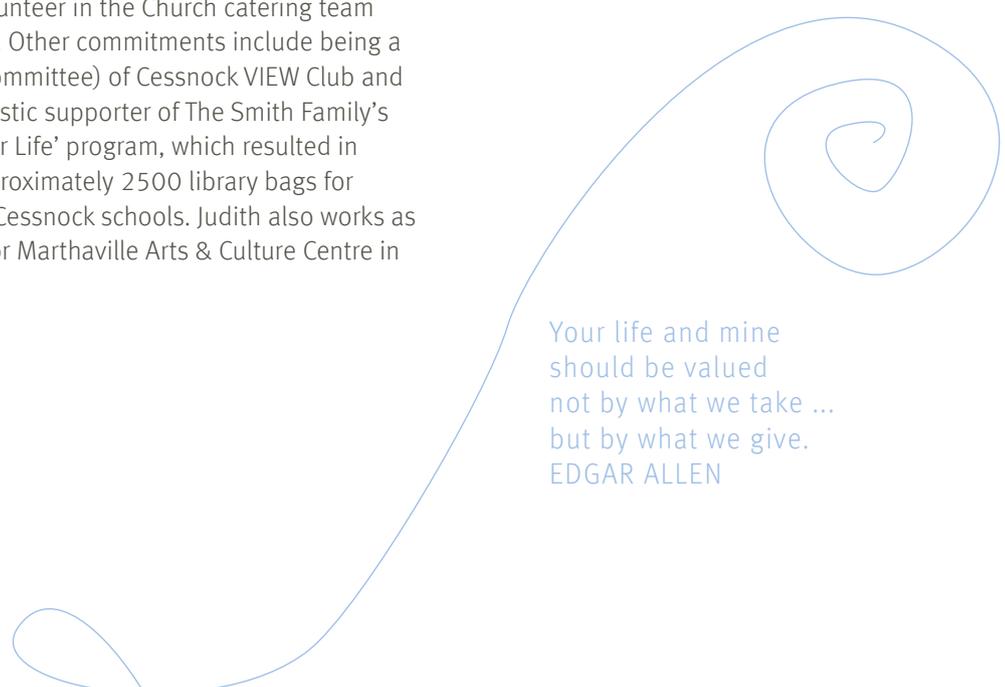
## nellie workman [Kurri Kurri]

At 58 Nellie became a widow. Having been mum to 18 boys, she later became a volunteer with Rural Aged Care and completed a course to help people through Telelink. Nellie then became involved in transporting people to do their shopping, attend doctors' appointments etc. She became involved with the association of Civilian Widows and held an executive position for nine years. After this she became president of Weston Senior Citizens and a volunteer for Coalfields caring services, visiting one of their clients every Tuesday for 14 years and becoming part of the family. At Kurri Community Centre she was the first driver to use the bus and has been a helper with various other services including Literacy and Barkuma Aboriginal Services. She became a member of the board of directors and was involved with the food service. Nellie decided to retire at 85 and only work for Tobie's Place, a refuge for victims of domestic violence. She also takes fresh fruit to patients at Kurri Kurri District Hospital, is a Member of Kurri Retired

Mineworkers (recently made a Life Member) and volunteer at the Edgeworth-David Mining Museum.

## judith wright [Bellbird]

Judith developed a love of needlework during her school years and she continues to encourage women in the community to enjoy this form of creativity. Judith was born in 1944 and has lived in Cessnock all her life. Before retiring, she worked for Home Care for 20 years and during that time studied the TAFE course 'Working for Older People'. An active member of her church and a member of the Mothers' Union Judith formed a craft group, learning new ideas and making rugs and bears for Ronald McDonald House in Newcastle, nursing homes and other charities. She is a volunteer in the Church catering team for funerals. Other commitments include being a member (committee) of Cessnock VIEW Club and an enthusiastic supporter of The Smith Family's 'Learning for Life' program, which resulted in making approximately 2500 library bags for children in Cessnock schools. Judith also works as volunteer for Marthaville Arts & Culture Centre in Cessnock.



Your life and mine  
should be valued  
not by what we take ...  
but by what we give.  
EDGAR ALLEN

# volunteer agencies

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

## Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc, NSW

02 9550 5666  
[www.aecg.nsw.edu.au](http://www.aecg.nsw.edu.au)

## Aged Care NSW

Freecall 1800 200 422  
[www.agedcareaustralia.gov.au](http://www.agedcareaustralia.gov.au)

## Agriculture Societies Council of NSW Ltd

02 9879 6777  
[www.agshowsnsw.org.au](http://www.agshowsnsw.org.au)

## Angel Flight

Toll Free 1300 726 567  
[www.angelflight.org.au](http://www.angelflight.org.au)

## Army Cadets NSW

Freecall 1800 674 192  
[www.armycadets.gov.au](http://www.armycadets.gov.au)

## Arts Council NSW

Freecall (within NSW) 1800 358 594  
[www.arts.nsw.gov.au](http://www.arts.nsw.gov.au)

## Australian Home Care

1300 303 770  
[www.ahcs.org.au](http://www.ahcs.org.au)

## Australian Museum

02 9320 6000  
[www.australianmuseum.net.au](http://www.australianmuseum.net.au)

## Australian Red Cross, NSW

02 9229 4111  
[www.redcross.org.au](http://www.redcross.org.au)

## Australian Red Cross Blood Service

13 95 96  
[www.donateblood.com.au](http://www.donateblood.com.au)

## Barnardos Australia

Freecall 1800 061 000  
[www.barnardos.org.au](http://www.barnardos.org.au)

## Basketball NSW

02 8765 8555  
[www.nswbasketball.net.au](http://www.nswbasketball.net.au)

## Camp Quality

02 9876 0500  
[www.campquality.org.au](http://www.campquality.org.au)

## Can Assist – Cancer Assistance Network

02 8217 3400  
[www.canassist.com.au](http://www.canassist.com.au)

## Cancer Council, NSW

13 11 20  
[www.cancercouncil.com.au](http://www.cancercouncil.com.au)

## Catholic Women's League

02 9390 5153  
[www.cwlsydney.org.au](http://www.cwlsydney.org.au)

## Centre for Rural & Remote Mental Health

1800 011 511  
[www.crrmh.com.au](http://www.crrmh.com.au)

## Community Health Centres

02 9391 9000  
[www.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au)

## Community Transport

13 15 00  
[www.transport.nsw.gov.au](http://www.transport.nsw.gov.au)

## Country Women's Association of NSW

02 9358 2923  
[www.cwaofnsw.org.au](http://www.cwaofnsw.org.au)

## Cricket NSW

02 8302 6000  
[www.cricketsw.com.au](http://www.cricketsw.com.au)

## Driver Reviver

02 9999 6200  
[www.driverreviver.com.au](http://www.driverreviver.com.au)

## Epilepsy Australia

1300 852 853  
[www.epilepsyaustralia.net](http://www.epilepsyaustralia.net)

## Football NSW – Junior Rugby League

02 9359 8558  
[www.playrugbyleague.com.au](http://www.playrugbyleague.com.au)

## Foster Parenting

03 8796 0000  
[www.fosterparenting.org.au](http://www.fosterparenting.org.au)

## Garden Clubs of Australia Inc

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

## Girl Guides Australia, NSW & ACT

02 8396 5200  
[www.girlguides-nswact.org.au](http://www.girlguides-nswact.org.au)

## Golf NSW

02 9505 9105  
[www.golfnsw.org](http://www.golfnsw.org)

## Home Care Service of NSW

1300 881 144  
[www.adhc.nsw.gov.au](http://www.adhc.nsw.gov.au)

## House with No Steps

02 9451 1511  
[www.hwns.com.au](http://www.hwns.com.au)

#### Independent Living Centre NSW

1300 452 679  
www.ilcnsw.asn.au

#### Landcare NSW

0411 113 590  
www.landcarensw.org.au  
www.landcareonline.com.au

#### Laurel Club

02 6583 3570  
www.legacypmh.org.au

#### Legacy

02 9248 9000  
www.legacy.com.au

#### Life Education, NSW

02 9673 3222  
www.lifeeducation.org.au

#### Lifeline

13 11 14  
02 6215 9400 (National)  
www.lifeline.org.au

#### Lions Club Australia

02 4940 8033  
www.lionsclub.org.au

#### Lismore Soup Kitchen Inc

02 6624 6080  
www.winsome.org.au

#### Meals on Wheels, NSW

02 8219 4200  
www.nswmealsonwheels.org.au

#### Multiple Sclerosis

Freecall 1800 042 138  
www.msns.org.au

#### Nature Conservation Council – Environment Groups

02 9516 1488  
www.nature.org.au

#### NSW Aboriginal Land Council

02 9689 4444  
www.alc.org.au

#### NSW Rural Fire Service

02 8741 5555  
www.rfs.nsw.gov.au

#### Parents & Citizens Association

0404 802 637  
www.pandc.org.au

#### Parkinson's Support Group

02 8875 8900  
www.parkinsonsnsw.org.au

#### Pony Club NSW

02 4229 8977  
www.pcansw.org.au

#### Probus

1800 630 488  
www.probus.com.au

#### Relay for Life

1300 656 585  
www.relay.cancercouncil.com.au

#### Riding for the Disabled Association, NSW

02 8116 9726  
www.rdansw.org.au

#### Royal Australian Historical Society

02 9247 8001  
www.rahs.org.au

#### Royal Flying Doctor Service

1300 669 569  
www.flyingdoctor.org.au

#### Rural Dental Action Group

02 6366 8593

#### St. Vincent De Paul Society

02 9568 0262  
www.vinnies.org.au

#### Scouts Australia – NSW

02 9735 9000  
www.nsw.scouts.com.au

#### The Smith Family

02 9085 7222  
www.thesmithfamily.com.au

#### United Hospital Auxiliaries of NSW

02 9391 9716  
www.uhansw.org

#### View Club of Australia

1800 805 366  
www.view.org.au

#### WIRES – NSW Wildlife Information, Rescue & Education Service

1300 094 737  
www.wires.org.au

#### General Contact

NSW Centre for Volunteering  
02 9261 3600  
www.volunteering.com.au







*Hidden Treasures* is a joint project of  
Rural Women's Network  
(NSW Department of Primary Industries)  
& The Centre for Volunteering, NSW



Department of  
Primary Industries

