

community report

FRRR

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Foreword



FRRR gratefully acknowledges the generous sole support of the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government in the production and distribution of this report.

It is my pleasure to provide an introduction to the 2009 Foundation for Regional and Rural Renewal (FRRR) Community Report.

The FRRR is an important conduit for philanthropy to our rural and regional communities with many organisations, large and small, channelling funds through the Foundation. I want to take this opportunity to thank the Foundation for its hard work.

I would also like to acknowledge the Myer family for their support and involvement in the Foundation.

The Australian Government recognises the vital role that our regions play in the economic development of the nation, as well as the special challenges they face.

The past 12 months have been particularly difficult as Australians deal with the worst global economic recession since the Great Depression, and many of our communities rebuild following unprecedented bushfires and flooding.

Over that time, the resilience of Australians has come to the fore as governments, community organisations, businesses and families work to support local communities and economies.

Through its latest Budget, the Australian Government is investing more than \$24 billion in rural and regional Australia to build stronger communities, deliver better infrastructure, and protect communities from the worst of the global recession.

Our investments include the \$1 billion Community Infrastructure Program, which is funding the construction of local community centres, town halls, sports grounds, swimming pools and local environmental infrastructure.

The FRRR's Report outlines the many philanthropic initiatives it has undertaken in partnership with local organisations to support regional and rural communities.

I wish the Foundation every success in the future as it works to assist Australians in need.

The Hon Anthony Albanese MP
Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional
Development and Local Government

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FRRR Board of Directors

Left - Right: Andrew Long (Company Secretary), Mike Taylor (Director), Samantha Baillieu (Director), Ian Allen (Director), Lady Southey (Patron), Ian Sinclair (Chairman), Paddy Handbury (Director), Wendy Craik (Director), Mark Bethwaite (Director), Bill Kely (Director), Tim Fairfax (Director), Margaret Smith (absent)



FRRR Staff Left - Right:

Leeanne Dell (Executive Assistant), Amanda Winchcomb (Grants Assistant), Sylvia Admans (CEO), Kerry Anderson (Grants Manager), Esmée Barnes (Office/Finance Manager - Absent)



Introduction

Message from Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC

Governor-General of the
Commonwealth of Australia
FRRR Patron In Chief

I have seen the rough roads, the stretching drought and the dry gullies that test our rural communities. I have felt the strain of their travels, their anxious watching of dim horizons.

Yet I have also seen their enormous courage and will, their adaptability, the way they weather change. I have felt the strength and warmth of our social fabric, held in my hands the promise of country that endures.

I observe it at work in our networks and neighbourhoods, some a thousand miles wide. I witness it in the energising and generous actions of the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal.

I am the very proud patron of this marvellous philanthropic endeavour. You engage the support of our wider community to ensure that our country is sustained and protected, that people are connected with one another and with the resources they need, that possibilities flourish in the bleakest ground.

From town halls and men's sheds, to school uniform vouchers, technology for home schooling parents, and music lessons in Indigenous communities: you are creating opportunities for experience, renewal, and richness. You are furnishing coming generations with purpose and a sense of place.

As you take stock of 2009 and what lies ahead, I give my praise and thanks for your inspiring efforts, and watch with you as you plant and nurture hope.

FRRR works by attracting support (cash and in kind) from businesses and other trusts, foundations, private individuals and communities. These donations are then distributed through a number of programs as grants for the benefit of rural and regional Australia. Communities and projects wanting support send in written applications. These are then assessed. The FRRR board then approves projects, according to available resources and FRRR staff distribute grants accordingly. At the completion of each project, recipients are required to provide a project report. Following are the programs through which grants are distributed:

Annual Helping Hands Grants: This program provides grants of up to \$50,000 for projects that demonstrate economic benefit in their communities.

ANZ Seeds of Renewal: This program provides grants of up to \$10,000 to rural communities.

Australia Post Victoria, Tasmania & NSW: This program offers grants of up to \$1000 for youth, education (especially in literacy), arts and culture projects in rural and regional Victoria, Tasmania and NSW.

Back to School: This program delivers vouchers mainly through community foundations to help families meet school costs such as uniforms, books, shoes etc.

Caring for Ageing in Rural Australia: This program provides grants of up to \$10,000 for community projects that address ageing and aged care issues in rural Australia

CATCH: This program provides grants of up to \$20,000 for cultural, arts, tourism and community heritage projects to service populations of up to 10,000 people.

Community Foundations: FRRR supports Community Foundations in which locals invest money in their own foundations and then use these investments to leverage funds from elsewhere.

Donation Accounts: FRRR receives tax deductible donations on behalf of eligible organisations, projects and regions.

Gardiner Foundation Working in Dairying Program: This program provides grants of up to \$5000 for community projects to Victorian dairying communities with 5000 or less people.

McEwen Foundation: This program provides grants of up to \$15,000 for charitable projects within the Goulburn Valley District with Deductible Gift Recipient Status (DGR)

Small Grants for Small Rural Communities: This program, supported by many partners, provides grants of up to \$5,000 for small rural communities of up to 10,000 people.

Repair, Restore, Renew: This program funds natural disaster-recovery projects throughout Australia.

Rural Early Childhood (REACH): This program provides grants of up to \$20,000 for early childhood development projects in communities of up to 10,000 people across rural and regional Australia.

Rural Education Program: Led by private donors, this program funds education projects, particularly in drought-affected areas.

RASF E3 – Encouraging Educational Excellence Program: A Royal Agricultural Society of NSW and FRRR initiative (available in NSW only) which seeks to ensure that quality education remains accessible to children in rural and remote communities regardless of climatic and economic conditions.

A Message from the Chairman



The Rt Hon Ian Sinclair AC

FRRR has had a successful year although conditions have been hard.

Protracted drought across southern NSW, most of Victoria and all South Australia, tragic bushfires

in country Victoria, repeated flooding in Queensland and the NSW north coast created havoc.

These natural disasters were followed by the impact on investment, commercial activity and employment of the global financial crisis.

FRRR priorities have been to assist environmental, social and economic recovery, to encourage young people socially through better educational opportunities and to restore hope, particularly in areas hit by natural disaster or economic downturn.

In spite of adversity with remarkable determination and some Government and philanthropic help including that from FRRR, people have continued their daily activities, rebuilding local community infrastructure, battling the odds, educating children, caring for the aged and sick and getting on with life.

In its nine years of operation, FRRR has allocated some \$25M to more than 3,500 individual projects mainly through small grants including the Rural Education Program, Back to School \$50 vouchers, ANZ's Seeds of Renewal and many others.

This granting has been possible with funding from the Australian Government but significantly through shared programs with different businesses, corporations, private individuals, trusts, other foundations and communities themselves.

Full details of all FRRR granting programs are set out elsewhere in this report. All are important and the Board is very grateful to each partner and donor for their generosity and support. Varying objectives in the programs enable different grants to not-for-profit community organisations for local projects and through local charitable bodies to school children and disadvantaged individuals.

A significant achievement is that for every FRRR dollar, another nine dollars are assessed as being leveraged to the funded programs, an additional \$225M.

FRRR continues its financial support for Community Foundations, helped by the Regional Donation Account facilitated by Commonwealth legislation. This enables FRRR to receive tax deductible donations on behalf of Community Foundations for granting to rural and regional communities. It is pleasing to report that many are now pursuing their own granting programs.

In program delivery, FRRR operates a small but essential administrative base in Bendigo, Victoria, keeping costs low and seeking reports from recipients to monitor the effectiveness of the funds provided.

In addition to moneys granted, to offset market volatility FRRR has set aside funds to cover the \$10M initially allocated by the Australian Government.

FRRR was formed in a partnership between the Australian Government and the Sidney Myer Fund and the ongoing involvement of each is important. They are our shareholders and as a philanthropic foundation with legislated tax deductibility, FRRR is particularly grateful for the Government's support.

Our Patron-in-Chief, Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC, Governor General has displayed her personal interest in FRRR programs and their objectives. This is appreciated.

Mr Baillieu Myer AC and Lady Southey AC, Patrons of FRRR have continued their active support. We are indebted to them.

Sadly Mr Richard Pratt, a committed donor to FRRR, passed away recently. To his widow and family I extend the deepest sympathy of all in FRRR.

FRRR Directors, now including Mr Paddy Handbury, give considerably of their time and energy and I thank each of them for their considerable voluntary commitment.

Members of our staff, so ably lead by CEO Sylvia Admans, have again rendered exceptional service - to each special thanks. The excellent outcomes and satisfied donors, partners and grant recipients reflect well on your efforts.

To friends of FRRR, I give my assurance that your support works towards the betterment of the lives of all in regional, rural and remote Australia.

Rt Hon Ian Sinclair AC
Chairman

CEO's Message



Sylvia Admans

It's nine years since FRRR was established and we are clearly fulfilling our mission to form partnerships to give back to rural and regional Australia. In those nine years, FRRR has granted more than \$25M to more than 3500 projects established and carried out by communities across the nation.

We've also been able to increase our partnerships with organisations ranging from banks and businesses, from foundations and communities themselves wanting to support projects in rural areas. We've also boosted the total amount of funds raised for these purposes while keeping our administrative costs relatively static.

We have developed new grant-giving programs and attracted new partners in response to constantly changing circumstances in rural and regional Australia. An excellent example of this is our Repair, Restore Renew program in response to floods in Queensland and fires in Victoria. FRRR has provided leadership and coordinated a philanthropic response, giving communities a one-stop shop or single entry point for applying for grants and reporting back on disaster recovery projects.

We have recently created a REACH program, which will fund projects to develop early childhood education. Another new program, CATCH, is specifically dedicated to boosting cultural, artistic, tourist and heritage projects in rural and regional Australia.

Over the past two years FRRR has also developed a terrific and vital relationship with ABC Rural Radio. This has given FRRR comprehensive exposure across our shared constituency. Together, through projects such as MeChange and Drought Not Out, we've been able to spread the word about FRRR's existence and purpose and we've encouraged communities to bigger and better things.

In 2008, it was also my great fortune to travel to the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States on a Churchill Fellowship to examine how philanthropy works in those countries. FRRR's new Community Foundations Sustainability Grants Program is a direct outcome of this trip. Grants made through this program will help Community Foundations get on their feet by providing administrative funding over three years.

In closing, I'd like to acknowledge the highly valued contributions and constant support of FRRR's partners. FRRR's dynamic staff, Amanda Winchcomb, Esmee Barnes, Kerry Anderson and Leeanne Dell, really are a dream team and I thank, also, past Grants Managers Audrey Elston and Jo Mason for their hard work and dedication.

Without the consistent hard work and constant support of FRRR's Board and Chairman, philanthropy in rural and regional Australia would be hugely lacking.

Sylvia Admans

CEO

About this Report



This report includes stories about some of the projects FRRR and its philanthropic partners supported in 2008-2009. The stories identify those characteristics that clinched FRRR's support. It's hoped this will help future funding applicants understand what makes a project ripe for FRRR's support.

FRRR has 13 main aims. They are to:

- Help rural communities build their own capacity to develop by encouraging leadership training, mentoring, networking and partnerships
- Recognise and enhance the role of women in rural community building, farm management and business development.
- Develop innovative and economically and socially sustainable business ventures, especially those that use advanced information technology
- Enhance community wellbeing by improving rural communities' ability to plan and manage
- Support people to get training and education to improve their job prospects, especially in new or expanded business
- Support environmental projects that add value to existing products, use best practice in natural resource management and sustainable development while creating jobs
- Support Indigenous Australians to realise their economic and social aspirations
- Recognise and help volunteers build rural communities
- Support young people to remain in secondary and tertiary education, to enhance their leaderships skills and to reduce youth unemployment
- Establish regional community foundations
- Cultural projects that boost a sense of belonging and create jobs
- Economic and social research projects that add to the body of knowledge available to rural and regional communities to enable them to plan their futures more effectively
- Health or community services projects which address key issues in rural areas such as suicide, depression, preventive health, or seek to improve access to services through the development of new networks of links which extend current services

If you would like to donate to FRRR or want to apply for a grant:

*check www.frrr.org.au
or email info@frrr.org.au
or phone 1800 170 020
or (03) 5430 2399*



FRRR Annual Helping Hands Program



Modernising a bush theatre (Victoria)

Charlton Community Theatre - \$20,479

When Charlton's Rex Theatre almost closed in 2005, the community rallied to save it. In 2½ months \$92,000 was raised to secure Federal Government funds to buy the grand

1938 art deco building. A grant from FRRR helped and the theatre is now owned and operated by the community, a significant result in a town facing prolonged drought and population loss. About 60 volunteers help maintain and operate the theatre which offers entertainment and brings money and tourists to the town as well as kudos, including a 2007 Regional Achievement and Community Award for Volunteering and a Museums Australia Victoria Award nomination.

A digital projector, also bought with an FRRR grant, has given the Rex access to digital films which means the theatre can pursue paid on-screen advertising for revenue and show many more Australian features. It also means it can show new release movies sooner than competitors in larger towns. Charlton Community Theatre Chairperson David Pollard says the theatre can now screen concerts and events live via satellite including simulcasts of major international performances of opera, concerts and stage shows.

"We can bring art and culture into a rural community where (otherwise) it wouldn't be available," he says. "In just eight months the projector has clocked up 163 hours. It is opening up more possibilities than I ever imagined."

FRRR had already worked with the Charlton Community Theatre Committee with a donation account and was aware of its importance to this drought affected Mallee town. The grant has enabled even greater economic outcomes for this important community project.

Demonstrating green living (Victoria)

The Ballarat Community Foundation - \$28,526



The first day it opened for viewing in June 2009, 70 people streamed through The Ballarat Foundation's 7-star low-energy charity home. Built on the western edge of the regional city, the new home is rated seven stars for its energy efficient design and fit-out. It's for sale but for at least three months it will remain open to the public, offering a chance for people to check out the design and fittings that make it low cost, low energy-use living. Made with conventional materials, it includes solar-powered water heating and electricity supply, energy efficient lights, insulation, underground water tanks, low-flow showerheads, toilets and taps double-glazed windows, central heating, insulation and grey water diverters to send washing water to the garden.

FRRR's grant funded the photovoltaic cells that generate power as well as the system that monitors the amount of energy used in the home and a booklet detailing the home's energy features.

"FRRR's Annual Helping Hands Program provides grants ranging from a few thousand dollars to \$50,000 and create economic returns for a broad range of community projects which demonstrate local benefits, by strategically investing in important community initiatives, FRRR helps create community renewal."

Sylvia Admans, CEO, FRRR

“This model is one that could easily be replicated in other communities around the country providing awareness, education and a financial return to the community,” FRRR’s CEO Sylvia Admans says.

The home is a bold move for the foundation but one that’s already yielded multiple benefits including extensive promotion, especially among tradies and the construction industry. Chief Executive Officer Noel Trengove says the idea evolved when he heard a woman suggest she couldn’t have solar hot water heating because that meant she’d be without hot water in winter. “It triggered the realisation that we needed a lot of education about these sorts of things. The foundation had decided to build a home to raise funds and thought why not design and fit it out with all the attributes families expect for modern living. By opening it for display, people could come and see for themselves what they can do to make their own homes low energy. The idea is three-fold. It will help us raise the foundation’s profile right across our region, the house sale will raise funds and it’s educational, for our community and a model for other foundations.

“We’ve now got tradespeople and suppliers who know about the foundation. The secondary outcomes are extraordinary. We had one chap turn up on launch day who sent the foundation a cheque the next. It’s been a major undertaking but because we are already getting these other benefits, it’s been really worthwhile.”

FRRR’s Helping Hand grant did just that for the Ballarat Community Foundation. It helped provide funding where others couldn’t. It is an outstanding example of community capacity building at the social, economic and environmental levels.

Providing accommodation for outback volunteers (Queensland)

National Seniors Community Foundation - \$50,000

Di and Graham Agnew, a retired nurse and builder, are among a growing army of seniors heading outback to help educate, train and mentor indigenous students. The Brisbane couple joined INSTEP, the Indigenous Skills Transfer and Exchange Partnership run by National Seniors Australia and spent three weeks at Hope Vale indigenous community, 370km north of Cairns in July 2008.

INSTEP encourages retired and semi-retired senior citizens to volunteer their time, skills and experience in indigenous communities.

“The first week we helped with the Hope Vale Police Citizens Youth Club that looked after kids during the school holidays and the next two weeks we spent in the schools,” says Di “The kids were pretty unruly. They don’t have any role models but the teacher handled them wonderfully. Volunteers are really needed because the kids’ attention span is short and one teacher can’t do it all.”

The Agnews took their own caravan but many INSTEP volunteers don’t have this luxury so FRRR’s grant paid for a caravan that’s sited permanently, 19kms from Hope Vale, at Endeavour Falls. “I can see how valuable this would be,” says Di.

Karen Furnivall, of National Seniors Australia, says the FRRR caravan saves recurring volunteer accommodation costs, estimated at \$45,000 annually. “It means our volunteers always have somewhere nice to stay without imposing on the community at Hope Vale.”

FRRR grants aim to create benefit and coverage for local communities. The caravan enables volunteers to be housed, saves on costs to the organisation and mostly benefits young indigenous Australians with their education.

Renovating a men’s drop-in kitchen (Western Australia)

Wamba Niglee Burru Ngardu

Aboriginal Corporation - \$17,000



Many of the men who drop in to the Derby Men’s Centre in the West Kimberley region relish the chance to cook their own lunch, especially

when there’s an expert there to guide them. The centre is open daily from 8am to 4pm and has washing machines, a woodworking shed and, thanks to FRRR’s Helping Hands grant, a renovated kitchen. Centre manager Peter Gargenung says many of the men are battling alcohol problems and have diabetes. They range in age from their early 20s up to their 60s. They come for breakfast (provided) but are encouraged to cook other meals. Recently the centre hosted a visiting dietician. “She taught the boys how to cook,” Peter says. “She hid the salt, said it wasn’t allowed and showed them how to make a nice mince meal without salt.”

Peter estimates up to 30 men drop in most days. Many are illiterate. Some have never used an electric stove but the centre is working to change the men’s attitudes to hygiene and diet.

This FRRR grant exemplifies the foundations philanthropy, which is both practical, being the means not the end. Fundraising in small remote community can take away from the necessary service provision.



ABC Drought Not Out



The ABC has been able to drive the Drought Not Out and Me-Change campaigns through its radio and on-line networks, backed up by funding from the FRRR, which has enabled communities to take control of their future.

The ABC Rural & FRRR partnership is a great example of each partner bringing their respective strengths to the table. The end result is great for rural Australia.

Culgoa Community Sports Club

ABC Drought Not Out - \$50,000

The day was hot. The beer was cold. The steaks were big and tender. Out on the claypan oval at Culgoa community Sports Club, ABC cricket commentator Jim Maxwell padded up and faced the-not-so-furious bowling forces from North Bourke NSW.

Whatever the outcome, the folks at Culgoa were already the winners having been handed \$50,000 in the national Drought Not Out competition. Selected for their emphasis on community spirit, the club was one of 102 entries in the competition run by the ABC Rural radio service and sports program ABC Grandstand. President of Culgoa Community Sports Club, Grant Vlach and his wife Melissa farm 10,500 hectares north of Boruke. The couple went bush 4 years ago and are among an influx of newcomers who've teamed up with the district's long-timers to spend the prize caring for the grounds and fixing up the local hall.

Now derelict, the hall once hosted dances for the solder settlements and smaller leaseholds that made up the community back in the 1950's. Time has also set a lean in the bough shed that once shaded racegoers of yore, and the club's racetrack is redundant. However, the tennis courts, cricket pitch and the oval have already had a makeover of sorts.



"You can see the effort that people years ago put into this club," Grant says. "We started doing stuff but it was hard doing it one step at a time. With this grant we'll be able to do it 10 steps at one."

Funded by the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal, the ABC's competition also awarded \$10,000 to six runners-up. They were Girgarre Reserve, Vic; Blythe Sporting Complex, SA; Ltyentye Apurte Ovals, NT; Boxwood Hill Combined Sports Ground, WA; Nebine Community Centre, Qld; and Brighton Agricultural Society, Tas.

Slimming down in the bush

ABC Rural Radio "Mechange" - \$100,000



Fancy rural Australia having a weight problem? It seems unthinkable that a nation of shearers, and fencers and farmers and other hard-working

types would turn obese. Yet rural Australia's lean and healthy hard labourer image has disappeared with the sheep shears and wheat bags once lugged about and, in fact, two out of three men in regional Australia is overweight. A 2007 report showed that out of 800 people in two rural communities, 74 per cent of men and 64 per cent of women were obese or overweight. These sorts of figures prompted FRRR to team up with ABC Rural Radio to run its Mechange competition and offer \$100,000 in grants to communities to trim down and get healthy.

The competition drew communities from Ceduna in South Australia to Pannowonica in Western Australia to Roma in Queensland to talk to the nation on radio about how they'd invest their grant money to get fit and healthy should they win. Food gardens in indigenous communities, cooking lessons for the elderly and for isolated men, healthy eating programs in schools, weight loss and fitness programs, sugar drink bans, walking challenges, mobile gyms, farmer's market promotions and healthy eating programs in schools came forward to share their ideas. Competition categories were for communities of 10,000, 5000 and 2500 or less people, with \$20,000 for first prize, \$5000 for second and \$3000 for third. Judges also awarded a special effort grant of \$16,000.

ABC Rural Programs National Editor Leigh Radford says the competition attracted entries from more than 150 small rural and regional communities and gave 10 winning projects funding from FRRR to take steps to tackle obesity.

"Winners included a project to connect shoppers with local fruit and vegetable growers in north-west Tasmania, and a bush tucker garden in the remote Kimberley community of Fitzroy Crossing," Leigh says. "Both projects had a strong community development element, which is of great importance to us here at ABC Rural."

Among the winners was Tasmania's North-West Environment Centre at Burnie, which plans to spend the money encouraging food consumers to link with farmers in one of Australia's first community-supported agriculture programs. It's also begun workshops for women offering education on how they can cut down their energy and transport costs and produce and prepare food that's healthier for their families. Netty Schrammeyer of the centre's Women in Sustainable Environments Network says the region has high rates of unemployment, obesity and smoking, despite having dairy, vegetable and berry farms. "We've already had a few workshops and women are dying to know more." The centre's president David Henderson is passionate about their goals. "We have some of the worst health statistics in Australia so we really want to engage the community in healthy eating and living. We have taken this on because we think it's possible to change. It's not as if we're sitting in the middle of Melbourne here. The Mechange win was a real boost."

The ABC Rural & FRRR partnership is a great example of each partner bringing their respective strengths to the table. The end result is great for rural Australia.

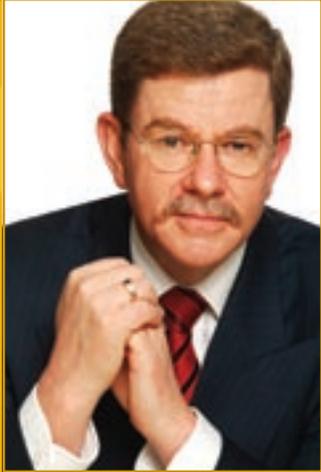


"The partnership between the FRRR, ABC Rural and ABC Sport, has been extremely positive. Together we've been able to raise awareness of health issues such as obesity, and the impact of the drought on sport and social life in country Australia. Even more importantly, we've managed to bring about very real, lasting change in many small rural and regional communities. There are strong synergies between ABC Rural and the FRRR. Both have a big investment in the future of rural and regional Australia."

Leigh Radford, National Editor, ABC Rural



ANZ Seeds of Renewal



"We are committed to regional Australia in the good times and the hard times. The Seeds of Renewal program and our partnership with FRRR help us support local communities across regional Australia. The program is especially important for smaller areas that are facing challenges due to the global economic downturn or recent natural disasters.

One of the real benefits of this partnership is the involvement of our staff in regional areas. Our staff are part of their local communities and they help promote the program to customers and their own networks, while FRRR provides the networks and independent expertise to ensure the grants are going to the most deserving applications.

We know that many people living in regional areas can feel isolated and it can be hard for them to access support that is available in larger centres. It's satisfying to know that with FRRR, we can provide a grant that will make a real difference to the ongoing health of local communities in regional areas.

Communities that have received grants in previous years are truly inspiring and reinforce the positive impact the program is having in the communities where we operate."

Louis Hawke, Managing Director, Retail Distribution, ANZ

Building a culture of film (South Australia)

Flinders Ranges Tourism Association - \$4200



South Australia's Flinders Ranges feature in many Australian movies. Sunday Too Far Away, Robbery Under Arms, Australia, The Shiralee, Serenade, Kangaroo and The Last Ride are just some. So popular was the region for film making that production companies were based there in the mid 1900s.

Yet most of the small towns in the ranges have less than 1000 people and no communal capacity to screen films. "We wanted to try and do stuff that not only created events that would bring people together but we also wanted to encourage local film makers by giving them an opportunity to show their films locally," says audio-visual artist Cindi Drennan who, with the support of the Flinders Ranges Tourism Association and other keen local volunteers, established Flinders Flicks. The volunteer-run organisation were able to set up and to purchase a cinema projector with FRRR's grant. It now screens films across the region from Quorn (1400 people)

45km north east of Port Augusta, to Melrose, Wilmington, Booleroo Centre, Hawker and Wilpena Pound, small towns whose residents otherwise would travel to Port Augusta and Adelaide for entertainment. Says Cindi: "most people living here, work in mining or farming, and very few local residents are involved in making the films that are made in the region, but we are hoping to build local knowledge and skills to change that." Twelve months after Flinders Flicks was formed, a core group of people has learnt to run a film screening, operating projectors and PA, producing film posters and promoting screenings. Local film makers John Mannion of Ororoo, David Campers of Quorn and Dave Wade of Whyalla have shown their films and now other organisations are booking Flinders Flicks to run screenings. "We are creating an archive and helping people build skills so they can be more resourceful and we're encouraging people to get away from their televisions and be more objective and appreciative about what they see on screen," Cindi says. "The FRRR grant was the stamp of support that made everyone commit wholeheartedly to this project. We thought if FRRR believes in us then we've got to stick to our challenge and make it work. That was one of the key foundations for getting us going."

Through the provision of an essential piece of equipment the ANZ Seeds of Renewal Program kick started a diverse and sustainable project to benefit remote communities.

Connecting wildlife saviours (Victoria)

Wildlife Reconnection - \$2500



The power of an Internet forum for wildlife rescuers came into its own during Victoria's devastating bushfires early in 2009. Wildlife Rescue and Protection or WRAP, established with six members in

Gippsland in 2006, rescues, cares for and rehabilitates native birds and animals. "We rescue wildlife hit by cars, injured in oil spills and occasionally by human cruelty," says founder Peter Haydon. "The animals are taken to a shelter, injuries are tended to and when they're well enough and mature enough they are let go back into the wild."

The self-funded, not-for-profit organisation includes registered animal shelters and carers from east Gippsland across to Ballarat. Members give talks in schools and WRAP also offers training for would-be wildlife rescuers, carers and wildlife shelter operators. Its services are well promoted through WRAP's website but in June last year, with FRRR's support, a private forum for organisation members was added. Just in time too. WRAP members can log on to share tips for nursing animals back to health, seek help and find vacancies when others are overloaded. In January and February when fire burnt vast acreages sending wildlife running for survival, demand for WRAP's services rocketed and the forum ran hot as members checked on each other's safety, offered help where they could and shared the care of animals with horrific injuries. The experience affirmed WRAP's existence and the online forum's value. "In the past we have thought people believed we were weird but during the fires in particular we got so much support from all over Australia," Peter says. "We felt really good. So many people were telephoning and emailing and we would have had a lot of trouble communicating without the forum." Today WRAP has 130 members. "Our membership is so

widespread and we need up-to-date information to function. That's been the forum's greatest outcome."

Supporting environmental projects was a priority for the 2008 ANZ Seeds of Renewal Program which FRRR has delivered over 7 years. This project shows the sustainability of investing in small projects.

Fuelling an outback town (NSW)

Gulargambone Community Enterprise - \$8000

It's 50km from Gulargambone in central NSW to the nearest towns of Gilgandra and Coonamble. For the local tradespeople including the rural merchandiser and owners/managers of the two supermarkets, the coffee house and milk bar /vegie shop plus the pub and bowling and golf clubs, that's 50 good reasons why the broadacre farming town of 300 people needs its own petrol station. "If we lose the fuel, we'll be history," says Steve Colwell, who heads the Gulargambone Community Enterprise and runs the rural merchandise shop. "Once people start heading out of town for fuel, they'll buy everything out of town and it'll be lights out."

It almost happened when the previous owners of the petrol station closed up and left town in 2007, but a community enterprise group was formed and since then about 30 rostered volunteers have manned the community-run fuel station. It's open from 8.30am to 1pm Mondays to Saturdays. An \$8000 grant bought an air compressor, highway signage, safety equipment, a till and a computer.

It's not ideal and it's hoped a commercial supplier will soon install a self-serve fuel system but it's helped keep the town's shops open.

The economic benefits which flow from a project such as this made it stand out. FRRR & ANZ Seeds of Renewal are proud to help communities help themselves.

Making music (South Australia)

Instrumental Music Service

- Riverland Primary Schools Ensemble - \$3697



The Riverland Primary Schools Ensemble plays jazz, rock, blues and classical music. The ensemble, comprising students from schools in Berri,

Waikerie, Loxton and Renmark, is the brainchild of teacher Aaron Lipp who wanted to boost music among the schools, so he gathered the students together for weekly rehearsals and regular performances. New drum and guitar amplifiers, funded by FRRR's grant, helped boost the ensemble's sound quality. "We put concerts on in schools to drive music education and try and get more kids with instruments in their hands," says Aaron. "We're offering a social learning environment and music helps the kids develop their cognitive skills as well. Some music is already offered in some of these schools but the focus of the ensemble is to lift the standards." Behind the scenes, Aaron knows many parents, hit hard by changing water allocations in this rich food bowl and horticultural region, struggle to pay instrument hire fees. In 2008 the ensemble had 27 players and was extended to higher grades and into secondary schools. Aaron says the ensemble will regroup later in 2009.

Through ANZ Seeds of Renewal grants FRRR seeks to engage community coordination and cooperation. This project linked 4 primary schools and has the opportunity to include others, demonstrates this feature.



ANZ Seeds of Renewal



Reclaiming land for farming (Victoria)

Millewa-Carwarp Landcare Group - \$10,000

Winds cause havoc in Mallee farming country in north western Victoria, shifting vast areas of soil in desert-like dunes. They strip the slight hilltops of light, sandy soils and create ruts and gullies and sand dunes so steep that they're difficult and dangerous to farm. Using a grader board, the soil can be redistributed and the land made

suitable again for farming. The Millewa-Carwarp Landcare Group comprises 150 members across 75 farming enterprises on about 500,000 hectares of land from Mildura west to the South Australian border. "The landowners have fairly big landholdings but the hills tend to be isolated," says Kevin Chaplin who co-ordinated the group until his more recent appointment as a regional Landcare manager. "The grader board we bought with FRRR funds drags dirt back to the hills and into the ruts and gullies so it can be farmed again. It stops the ground moving further. Our main purpose is to reclaim land and increase the area of native vegetation. Most farmers are using it to bring land back into production but some plant the rehabilitated areas out with trees. It's probably brought thousands of hectares back into production."

Bill Duncan, who farms 100km west of Mildura, used the grader board this year on land that had eroded badly for 80 years. "We got a bulldozer in first to make it safe to work. The windward side was a sheer drop and we had to flatten that out to make it safe. Then we used the grader board to improve the contour on the hill. We smoothed it out and we've sown it down with cereal and vetch. Hopefully we can stabilise the country. The primary aim is not to get a crop but to stabilise it first."

This project provided both economic and environmental outcomes for an important region of Victoria and Australia. ANZ Seeds of Renewal projects aim to ensure the ongoing viability of rural production and the environment.

Re-roofing a Hall (NSW)

Tathra Hall Committee - \$9000

It's not every day in Australia that a little extra money can save someone's life but at Tathra, long-time resident Kevin Cole reckons that's what happened when re-roofing of the hall began. The hall, built in

1913 in the southern NSW coastal town was 'modernised' 30 years ago with a new façade. "We decided to re-roof the hall because there was some leakage," says Kevin. "We called tenders and had a bloke on the roof checking out the job when he leant against the brick façade and it just started to give way. The entire front of the hall had to come down. It was pulled down the next day." Never ones to miss an opportunity, the Tathra Hall Committee of which octogenarian Kevin is the secretary/ treasurer, worked to recreate a heritage hall in fitting with the town's heritage-listed wharf. "The grant for the re-roofing led to the spending of another \$40,000 or so," he says. "It made the hall restoration a much bigger job but certainly more attractive. If we hadn't discovered how weak the façade was it could have fallen on someone. People walk underneath that wall every day so the ANZ Bank's \$9000 could well have saved a life." Today the hall is used daily as a venue for yoga, ballet, aerobics, tai chi and playschool. It's now the third most used hall in the Bega Valley Shire behind the Merimbula and Bega halls. "Our ugly old hall has been turned into a real historic showpiece," Kevin says.



The ANZ Seeds of Renewal Program by supporting projects such as this contribute to their economic and social life of the community. Vital community infrastructure must be maintained to have healthy local economies.

Staging a play (NSW)

Monaro Family Support Service - \$6000

A play about domestic violence that packed community halls in the Monaro district of south-eastern NSW has earned plaudits across the state for its powerful message. The play, staged by the amateur Cooma Little Theatre, ran in eight venues over two months in late 2008, drawing 80 to 200 people each time. Called "Farmer Will Swap Combine Harvester for Wife" and written by Hugh O'Brien, the one-hour comedy offered people in the drought-ravaged area a rare chance for a night out and an even rarer chance to see live theatre. "One woman said she hadn't been able to get her husband off the farm for a long time and it had been years since she'd seen him laugh the way he did at the play," says Ann Lehmann, coordinator of the Monaro Family Support Service and secretary of the Monaro Domestic Violence Committee. Those two groups worked with Little Cooma Theatre to gain FRRR's support to tour the play. Organisers sought funds from other sources to help employ a professional director and to offer free entry.

In follow-up calls, some audience members revealed that either they or close friends had been victims of domestic violence and were glad these issues had been brought out into the open. "People are still talking about it," Ann says. Since its showing the project has featured in a state-wide publication as a family services success story.

"The fact it was free in some of the areas really suffering in drought was important," Ann says.

The Seeds of Renewal Program over the past 7 years have given priority to drought affected communities. A project such as this was able to reach a lot of the Monaro region.

Supporting an island community (Norfolk Island)

Norfolk Community Information and Resources
Co-operative Association - \$4000

About 1800 people live on Norfolk Island, 1600km off the Australian coast half way between Sydney and Fiji.

The 40 square kilometre island runs its own government, tax system and airline and formerly relied on custom taxes on imports for its main source of income. However import tariffs are disappearing as a result of changes in the Australian market and so the island has introduced its own Goods and Services

Tax. The change has meant the island's people need information on how to gain access to grants for community projects. A new Community Information Centre, a joint project of the island's community and government, opened in June 2009. It's located in the island's retail and commercial sector at Burnt Pine.

The ANZ Bank's grant provided through FRRR's Seeds of Renewal program has funded software that will allow locals and visitors to log on to the Internet to find out about the island's services and how to apply for grants and assistance. "We have up to 600 itinerant workers servicing our tourist sector at any one time and about 30,000 visitors a year," says the Norfolk Community Information and Resources Co-operative Association secretary Allen Bataille. "All those people come seeking information. Over six months we'll find out what information and services people need so we can respond accordingly."

FRRR aims to support all of the rural, regional and remote Australia. A grant to Norfolk Island insured FRRR achieved this need. The ANZ support enabled the island community to become more self sufficient.





Australia Post "Stretching the Envelope"



Australia Post is proud to support the Stretching the Envelope program, coordinated by the FRRR. This is our fourth year of involvement. We have been delighted with the extremely worthy groups that have received grants as a result. The grants offer community groups the opportunity to find their own ways to support the areas where they live. This strongly aligns with Australia Post's commitment to support regional Australia. Local Australia Post staff present the grants to recipients. This furthers our relationships with rural and regional communities across Victoria, Tasmania and NSW.

Nadine Lyford,
Communications Manager
Victoria/Tasmania,
Australia Post.

Building healthy diets (Victoria) Ararat Neighbourhood House - \$1000



Like many communities, Ararat North faces the challenges of high unemployment, low incomes and higher than average numbers of one-parent families. When families are under stress, the effects show at school. Self-esteem affects behaviour and children's health can suffer

from poor diet and lack of exercise. "A lot of kids don't eat breakfast and dinner is party pies or frankfurts," says Geoff White, student support worker at Ararat North Primary School. At the school graduation dinner, teachers had noticed that kids didn't eat vegetables. "We also wanted them to learn about social etiquette so they could be more comfortable eating at a table and using cutlery. Socialising over a meal was not something they were used to."

FRRR contributed to a lunch program set up at Ararat Neighbourhood House to address some of these issues. Known as 'Kids in Da House', the seven to nine-week program taught children to cook and to share nutritious meals using vegetables from the school garden. The YMCA ran fitness sessions; the hospital dietician held a class and a beautician taught the students about skincare. Soft toy-making allowed opportunities for conversation and individual attention. At the end of each course, students invited teachers and families to a meal which they proudly cooked and served.

"We saw a noticeable difference in self-esteem in 95% of the kids who took part," says Geoff. "Kids took recipes home to improve the family diet and have cooked meals at home. A few now have vegetable gardens and a couple of families took up referrals for support from a dietician."

The school now participates in the Kitchen Garden in Schools program, which integrates similar aims into the school curriculum.

Social participation, increasing self esteem through practice based learning made this a perfect Stretching the Envelope Grant which used education as a platform.

Discovering indigenous culture (NSW) Central Mangrove Public School - \$1000

School excursions cost. In Central Mangrove, about an hour north of Sydney, the entire public school of 95 students was able to join a day out to a nearby wildlife sanctuary and take part in follow-up lessons in which they acted out Dreamtime plays and painted boomerangs, thanks to Australia Post's Stretching The Envelope grant. The students visited the Australian Walkabout Wildlife Park where they saw ancient Aboriginal rock paintings, learnt about bush tucker and bush medicines, how to track animals, paint faces for ancient ceremonies and how to build bush shelters. Later, classes performed plays titled Rainbow Snake, The Moon and the Rainbow and Tiddalick the Frog.

School spokeswoman Kerrie Koopman says it was a vital opportunity for the students to learn about the rich Aboriginal heritage in the surrounding district.

"Many students are on farms started by their grandparents or great grandparents and the school is the focus of this community. Without this

grant many families would have faced an extra financial responsibility for this extracurricular activity. In these hard economical times, our school tries to ensure all students are able to attend such activities. Funds like Stretching the Envelope guarantee no student is disadvantaged.”

FRRR welcomed Australia Post NSW in 2008 to the program. Grants are given which support projects for young people with a focus on education, literacy, arts and culture. This project met all the criteria and achieved great results for the students.

Entertaining island kids (Tasmania)

Bruny Island Arts - \$1000



When it comes to school holidays, the community of Bruny Island, off Tasmania's south-east coast, makes its own fun. Set amid a paradise of forests and beaches the island's 560 permanent residents have ferry access to the Tasmanian mainland. The last ferry for Bruny Island leaves at 6.30pm

most nights, meaning a night out generally entails an off-island overnight stay. Such constraints have their positives.

A few motivated parents who wanted creative things for their children to do during the long Christmas break began an annual children's event.

Called Kids Artzone and catering for two to 14-year-olds, the January program organised and supported by Bruny

Island Arts Inc has run annually for about nine years. In 2009 with \$1000 from Australia Post, and support from the Bruny Island Community Association, about 100 enrolments were registered for the five-day program of workshops. Kids made their own ukuleles, postcards, puppets and dragons, flags, felt pictures and sand sculptures. They learnt to dye Batik-style and how to make pizzas and ice-cream and, in the best of Bruny traditions, they shared funny and thought-provoking stories in a performance with international actor Justus Neumann. Bruny Island Arts secretary Irene Cowell co-ordinates Kids Artzone. "It began because local people with school-aged children wanted interesting and creative activities for them during the school holidays," Irene says. "At the end, we invite the whole community to come along and see the children's achievements. It's a special time because there is a lot of social interaction and the children enjoy showing what they have learnt to others. The local businesses benefit because many families come here specifically for the program and it makes for very positive interaction between Bruny Island Arts and the wider community."

The Stretching the Envelope Small Grants Program in Tasmania, supports young people's learning, not just through school education but also through value adding projects such as Kids Art Zone.

Thrilling skaters (Tasmania)

Scamander Skate Park Interest Group - \$900



If ever there was an example of a small grant for an obscure purpose having a huge impact, this one is it. It was granted to fund fibres in a concrete mix. The result is

a skate park in the coastal farming and tourist town of Scamander in north-east Tasmania, designed and created by a bunch of kids. Damian Ross was just 15 when the Scamander Skate Park Interest Group was formed in 2003. Two hundred members joined up and Damian and his mates set about designing the plan. The kids worked through Pro-Skaters to learn all about skate parks and what made them work well. Damian came up with a design, drew the plans and even created a model. The kids also raised \$7000 and with guidance from project manager Christina Mackeen, they secured grants including \$49,000 from the Federal Government Regional, \$22,000 from the local Break 'O Day council, \$8000 from the Tasmanian Premier's Fund and \$5000 from the Tasmanian Community Fund. They turned to FRRR when they realised they hadn't accounted for the cement fibres cost. Today the park, 50 metres from the beach, is skater, blader and BMX heaven. "It's a beautiful location. It's like a sculpture in itself, says Richard Faulkner 16, who catches the bus from his home town at St Helen's 15 minutes away to skate there after school and on weekends. "It's so much fun to skate," says Richard. I've skated there three to four times a week since it was built and I'm not sick of it." Christina Mackeen says the park was bound to be a success even before it was started. "From the day the group was formed until it opened in November 2008, all the kids in the district who ride scooters or BMX bikes or skateboards worked on it. Some of our members were as young as nine. This was driven completely by youth."

FRRR through Australia Posts support was able to help put the finishing touches (fibres!) in this project. Philanthropy can meet these particular needs to ensure the total project success.



National Coverage



Back to School Program



Boosting school support (Victoria)

The Ballarat Foundation

Schools are always looking for extra funds. Around the Victorian regional city of Ballarat, 1½ hours west of Melbourne, a community foundation has helped some schools boost the number of Back to School vouchers they receive.

“As well as their normal allocation, one large school contributed \$1000 (equal to twenty \$50 vouchers) but because they gave that to The Ballarat Foundation, we were able to give them forty \$50 vouchers,” foundation chief executive officer Noel Trengrove explains.

Like many foundations, Ballarat helped get on its feet with the Back to School vouchers, arranged through the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal. “The very first task I had when I started

here in 2007 was to deliver vouchers to eight schools,” Noel says. “In 2008 we delivered them to 24 schools and this year they went to 68 out of 70 state primary schools in our region which stretches from Bacchus Marsh to Ararat and from Lake Bolac to Daylesford.”

The vouchers discreetly help families meet schools costs such as uniforms, books and shoes. One school, where the unemployment rate among parents is high, used the vouchers to buy each child a pair of socks which allowed them to feel supported without feeling demeaned, the principal reported.

The vouchers are also a powerful way to let people know about the foundation, its goals and how it works. Established in 2001, the foundation



has more than \$1million (raised from grants and donations) earning interest to be poured back into the community. In eight years it’s given more than \$1million out in community support. Typical are grants of \$5000. Recipients have varied from scouts to arts, carer and other support groups.

“Our goal is to encourage the health, wellbeing and development of our region,” Noel says.

The Back to School Program initiated by the Sidney Myer Fund who wanted to assist families at the pressing financial times of returning to school. FRRR designed the program to work with Rural Community Foundations and others, and which other funders could join. This has happened and FRRR thanks all Back to School Partners.

Becher Foundation Halls of Fame



Protecting a striking hall entrance (South Australia)

Netherton Hall - \$3158



Netherton's hall has had a number of lives. Built as a church, it doubled as a school until 1945 and as the region's

hall. Today, along with the tennis courts and fire shed, it's the social hub for the 20 or so farming families in the surrounding grazing and cropping country, north of Coonalpyn. "It's very important to our little community," says the hall secretary Kay Cattle. "It's where we gather. It was the church until 10 years ago. Now it's the hall only. The tennis club uses it every Saturday. The bible group meets there."

The hall itself is in good nick given that it will be 100 years old in 2010 but special efforts have been made to protect its striking gothic front doors. Late last year, in preparation for the centenary celebrations, the community rallied to build a protective veranda over the doors. The Becher Foundation through FRRR found a perfect target in supporting the project, making Nethertonians very happy.

"We were just so thrilled to receive that grant," Kay says. "You have no idea what a morale boost it was for everybody in this community to know that some-ones cares about our country halls and their place in our lives," Kay says.

Reroofing a community hall (NSW)

Bunyah Public Hall - \$4760



In 1926, thanks to three district farmers, Bunyah got a community hall. The farmers had bought land for five pound in 1922 and raised funds to build the hall four years later by selling five and 10-pound bonds. From 1957, the hall's supper room served as a classroom for Bunyah's first school.

In the 82 years since its construction, apart from some additions, it had stood without any major upgrades, and it was beginning to tell. The Bunyah Country Cloggers were forced to stand buckets in the hall to catch water leaking through the roof when they met for practice. Worse, on really wet days, events had to be cancelled. In 2008 the hall's 16 committee members decided enough was enough and applied to FRRR for funds from the Becher Foundation. They wanted to reroof the hall and put comfort back into their major community hub. "It's the nucleus of this community," says committee chair Neryl Simpson. "It plays an integral part in our community's well-being. It's where we bond. We have tennis there every Monday and Wednesday, Landcare, water catchment and other rural training courses, first-aid courses, children's playgroup, our fire brigade meets there and we use it for major charity fund raising."

The committee worked with the Great Lakes Council which, upon seeing that the community had successfully sought funds elsewhere, hired a qualified roofer and did the job. The wider rural district of about 4000 people, more than 50kms west of Forster and 300kms north of Sydney which is home to the lauded Australian poet Les Murray, now has a comfortable place to meet. "We are so over the moon about this," says Neryl. "We still have more work to do to upgrade our facilities but we now have a heart for our coming generations."

"Susan Varga and I established Rural Australians for Refugees (RAR) in the NSW Southern Highlands in 2001 so we

have been quite involved with regional issues. We were impressed with the work FRRR was doing especially getting much needed small grants to rural community organisations. Susan and I are both very strong believers in having public spaces for communities to meet, gather, organise and discuss. We know how important halls are to small communities."

**Anne Coombs, Co-founder,
Becher Foundation**



Becher Foundation Halls of Fame

BECHER FOUNDATION
Supporting Social Innovation

Warming a country hall (Tasmania)

Ellendale Hall - \$4000



Mid-winter 2009, the Ellendale Hall did something untoward. It hosted an art show. Hall committee treasurer Stavroula Jacka heard about the touring show and was delighted to

put her hand up for it. Until recently, bitterly cold winters and poor heating in the hall meant the town of 450 people, 80km north-west of Hobart, could never entertain such a prospect. Eight tiny 1000watt strip wall heaters did little to warm the large space. In 2008, with \$4000 from the Becher Foundation through FRRR, the seven-member hall committee staged a revolution and installed a wood heater. "It's totally changed things," says Stavroula. "The number of times the hall is used and the way it's used has gone up. We can host art shows now because it's so much easier to find volunteers to man and open it because they no longer have to sit in a fridge."

The hall also now hosts play group, craft groups, tai chi lessons and family and social functions. "We have no school, no doctor, public transport or any other public building and this means we can use the hall all-year round whereas before it was unusable during winter," Stavroula says. "The temperature gets to minus five Celsius about 40 times a year here and short of packing people into the two tiny meeting rooms at the back there is nowhere else to go." Soon after the wood heater was installed, an information night was held at the hall featuring candidates in a state government election. At 10.30pm people were still standing around chatting. "We had to kick them out!" says Stavroula.

The Becher Foundation Halls of Fame funding is within FRRR's small grants for small rural communities program. We understand the utmost importance of community gathering places, such as halls. So often small rural communities are responsible for maintenance of the local facility. FRRR is pleased to have a partnership with the Becher Foundation who recognises this critical role for small rural communities and has extended their support a further 3 years.

Caring for Ageing in Rural Australia

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Creating a men's shed (NSW)

Coolah District Development Group - \$4700



Fifteen years ago when the sawmill closed at Coolah, the community rallied. The farming town amid rich basalt soils in NSW's central west,

136km north east of Dubbo, refused to surrender to decay and residents formed the Coolah District Development Group, sparking the birth of a jazz festival, an open gardens day, a bike track and tourist walk, town hall refurbishment, street beautification and lots of other improvements. The group's latest innovation is a men's shed, soon to be opened in a former garage in the main street. The chairman of this project is Michael White, 72, a retired sheep and cattle farmer. "There was a real need for it," says Michael. "A lot of older men have retired to town from farms and men are not good at networking especially when they retire to town. Men have work networks. They don't have other networks so when they retire they become dependent on their wives and partners. A lot have admitted to being quite depressed so the shed will really give them a place away from gambling and alcohol that's filled with tools and computers and tvs where they can come and do whatever they want."

Using FRRR's grant, Michael and others have leveraged a further \$28,000 of in-kind support from tradesmen and other sources to fit out their shed. Their plan is to run a repairs shop there to raise self-sustaining funds. "We started with nothing and we got a group of 22 enthusiastic men most of whom are quite old and retired. We have one young disabled bloke but the rest would be aged 65-plus. Mostly they are old farmers and the men who worked for them. We keep the rubbish tip tidy. We run a farm chemicals drum recycling program, called DrumMuster in partnership with the Lions Club and we run raffles. Our raffle sellers can make \$15 a hour."

Michael reckons for every bloke that's involved, another three people – wives, family carers etc – benefit.

FRRR supports small rural communities such as Coolah, NSW, as they are working towards an overall strategy of community renewal. A project such as the men's shed ensures the needs of the aged are met in a very positive way.



I have had the privilege of working with FRRR for most of its history. As Chairman, ANZ Trustees I represent ANZ Trustees on The William Buckland Foundation.

More recently, two other foundations in the ANZ Trustees "stable" have partnered with FRRR - the JO and JR Wicking Trust and the Sylvia and Charles Viertel Charitable Foundation - in order to directly benefit ageing citizens in their local communities

and to support projects that help to redress disadvantage caused by remoteness. Being able to age at home or in a community in which one has spent one's life is vital to quality of life for us all as we grow old. ANZ Trustees is enabled and supported in making these gifts by FRRR as its trusted partner.

Bruce Bonyhady, Chairman, ANZ Trustees.

ANZ Trustees is sole trustee of the J O & J R Wicking Foundation and co-trustee of The William Buckland Foundation and the Sylvia and Charles Viertel Charitable Foundation. ANZ Trustees offers a comprehensive range of specialist trustee services, including the management of investments of charitable foundations, representative on the Buckland Foundation and (Charles and Sylvia) Viertel Foundation.



Caring for Ageing in Rural Australia

Beautifying a senior citizens' village (NSW)

Batlow Senior Citizens' Village Association - \$7000

Demand is hot for low-rental small units for senior citizens in the Snowy Mountains apple town of Batlow in south-eastern NSW. With just over 1000 people, the town has long been self-reliant, thanks to its mountainous location. Long-time resident Margaret Sedgwick says the community built the first six village units for senior citizens in 1983 with some funds from government but since then has added another 10 with funds raised by the community. "They are independent living units. Residents rent them and the Batlow Senior Citizens Village Association is responsible for their gardens, maintenance, insurance and exterior lighting. There has been great community spirit here for a long time. The people built these facilities because no-one else would." Rising costs, however, have presented greater challenges to the voluntary, not-for-profit village association and in recent years unit renters have been asked to contribute returnable deposits to kick-start construction of new units. FRRR's grant for landscaping the area around the four newest units was welcomed. Incorporated into the landscape were pavers acknowledging donors. "We were terribly grateful for FRRR's grant because we didn't have any money left over after construction," Margaret says. "In fact we had to borrow money which we've just managed to pay back so FRRR's grant was such a tremendous vote of confidence. It was a wonderful gift. For the village residents being able to stroll around the beautiful gardens and enjoy the colours and smells is hugely beneficial to their wellbeing."



The Caring for Ageing in Rural Australia (CARA) Programs focus is to assist small rural communities with the needs of their ageing populations. Batlow was one such community solving its own problems. The grant ensured a successful project outcome.

Decorating for dementia care (Queensland)

RSL (QLD) War Veterans Home - \$5000



Retirees moving into the RSL War Veterans Home in Longreach have often lived in outback towns and communities from Mt Isa down to Quilpie and across to Rockhampton.

Some come from

towns called Muttaborra, Aramac, Jundah, Stonehenge and Isisford, tiny remote outposts where the vistas are vast. Their carers at the residential care home in Longreach, 1200km north-west of Brisbane, acknowledge the huge adjustment required of new residents and asked the FRRR for funds for murals for an outdoor area. The murals include outback scenes designed to prompt conversation and memory sharing. "We wanted to provide a familiar landscape for our residents, most of whom have either worked or lived in western Queensland, and we wanted to give them an area that felt like home," says carer Sharon Gibson. "The murals are paintings of Cobb and Co coaches, shearers and bush landscapes. They've given our residents great pleasure."

Projects which can enhance the quality of residential care for dementia patients are at the heart of the support from ANZ Trustees, Wicking and Viertel Trusts. FRRR selected this project because of the broad beneficiary base.

Dressing museum volunteers (Queensland)

Queensland Dairy and Heritage Museum - \$1245



Col Pearen was a telephone technician when Australia's telephony system was owned by the nation. In his time with the old Post Master General's (PMG) department, public telephone exchanges were staffed and manually operated. Today Col, 92, operates one such exchange

at the Queensland Dairy and Heritage Museum in Murgon just north of Kingaroy. He's one of about 30 volunteers, whose average age is 72 years, who bring the past to life in the former dairy farming town's museum. Since the dairy industry was deregulated in the 1990s, most of the surrounding farms have switched to other enterprises including grape growing, so the museum's daily butter making by hand is a big hit among tourists. Each year it hosts hundreds of visiting American school children and about 100 other visitors a week. Oriel Black, 75, reckons that over the past five years she's made at least 10,000 salad rolls for the visiting US children which earns the museum greatly needed income. Largely, though, it relies on donations upon entry and the goodwill and time of its ageing volunteers. They run a highly regarded and well kept museum and like to look good so they appreciated new uniform shirts and name badges funded by FRRR's grant. Best of all the shirts and badges were made locally.

FRRR's partner, the Sylvia & Charles Viertel Charitable Foundation supports CARA projects in Queensland. The grant ensured the valued work of the volunteers is recognised.



Community Foundations



The first community foundation began in Australia in Melbourne in the 1990s.

Now there are 28, mostly in rural and regional areas from the Eyre Peninsula and Mt Gambier in South Australia to

Rockhampton in Queensland, across Victoria and Tasmania, through Canberra, New South Wales and up to Mackay in Queensland.

The Western Australia Community Foundation manages a number of community funds in Western Australia. Community foundations encourage local people and companies to invest back into their own communities and regions. The most marked achievement is the growth in their funds and grant making, plus their growing recognition and involvement in communities. There's no doubt FRRR's support has been a key driver in their establishment. Recently FRRR began supporting new community foundations with funding for one paid staff member a day a week. This will encourage and assist the foundations to build their own capacity to fund administrative staff within three years. That's been a wonderful kick along.

Andrew Lawson, Community Foundation Development Officer, Philanthropy Australia

Building a solid base (South Australia)

Stand Like Stone Foundation - \$30,000



Some Girl Guides from Bordertown are off to the International Girl Guides gathering next year, Penola

will get a men's shed and disabled children will get to continue swimming classes despite government pulling the plug on their funding thanks to south-east South Australia's Stand Like Stone Community Foundation. With FRRR's support, the seven-year-old foundation has also handed out more than \$105,000 in \$50 Back to School vouchers to all schools in the Limestone Coast region to help parents meet costs for books and other essentials for their children. And in a program that encourages students facing extra challenges, the two foundations have partnered to offer \$500 scholarships to encourage young people to stay at school. Foundation chairwoman Sue Charlton says teenage mums have been among the recipients. "Sometimes it pays for babysitting, nappies, food, costs the girls need to cover while they're studying and the proviso is they meet with our representative three times a year to report on their school progress. The feedback we've had from this is incredible."

With around \$500,000 now invested and after having given out \$30,000 in grants, Stand Like Stone is really starting to flex its inventive muscle and find its way into the region's heart. It has run a Swinging with the Stars fundraiser for two years now. Local celebrities team with experienced dancers for the night. Ticket sales and votes, costing \$1, in the people's choice for most popular performance have pulled in big dollars for the foundation. Yet much of this has been done on volunteer time and the generosity of its directors and part-time executive officer Sally Klose as the foundation strives to minimise administration costs. A \$30,000 enabling grant, from FRRR, to be offered in three lots of \$10,000 for three years will help Stand Like Stone pay for administrative support. "We will have to go out and raise funds to match it," Sue says. "However people are really starting to get comfortable about Stand Like Stone now. People are approaching us about contributing. This grant from FRRR will help us reassure them their contributions are spent on supporting and investing in their community."

The broad range of community benefits which flow from a community foundation are exemplified by the Stand Like Stone Community Foundation. The needs to stick with the development of perpetual foundation is a long term commitment and this foundation has the local leadership to do this.

Making community foundations sustainable

Community Foundations Australia wide - \$480,000



Starting a community foundation takes thousands of hours, lots of dedication and attention to detail. Guidelines and agreements, trusts and accounts have to be established, there's promotion to be done, relationships to develop and lots of community consultation, all by volunteers, most of whom have jobs, family and other priorities.

Motivated by the desire to encourage people to invest in their own communities where they live, volunteers give time and energy to get the foundations up and going. Most prefer donations to go to community ahead of paying administrative staff, yet this also has its risks. Volunteer burn-out is one. Missing opportunities is another. Recognising this, FRRR established a special granting program. "Community foundations were having trouble raising funds for administrative costs so these grants will put legs under them, give them funds to employ staff, pay the phone bills, get established," says FRRR's CEO Sylvia Admans.

Sixteen community foundations will receive grants of \$10,000 annually for three years from 2009, but the foundations

have to raise matching funds. In the second year, each recipient foundation will have to raise \$5000 towards its own administrative costs and in the third and final year each will have to raise \$10,000 for this purpose.

Chairwoman of the Community Foundation for Bendigo and Central Victoria Sue Clarke says the first \$10,000 has already paid off. "We've employed an executive officer one day a week (she volunteers another two days) and because of this she's been able to develop a relationship with a company that had second-hand computers to spare. The company rebuilt the computers and updated software for \$87 each. We've been able to give 16 computers to secondary and university students who lost theirs in the Black Saturday fires around Bendigo. We are now the vehicle for many more laptops to be passed on to those in need. That wouldn't have happened without our executive officer being around to build those relationships. That's the sort of benefit you don't get if you don't have some-one giving dedicated time to developing relationships."

The Stand Like Stone Foundation in the Mt Gambier region says the grant will allow the foundation to reassure donors their contributions are directed as promised.

"Persuading people to support you with administrative costs is pretty hard and we want to reassure our members that we will only ever spend a maximum of two per cent of their donations on administration so this helps hugely," Chairwoman Sue Charlton says.

FRRR has been an original supporter of the community foundation movement in Australia. We have seen them emerge, work with resolve and leadership, supporting them in assessing feasibility and then seed funding. Eight years on it was evident that FRRR should evolve to support the current needs of rural community foundations.

Starting afresh (South Australia)

Eyre Peninsula Community Foundation \$30,000

A study tour to Canada prompted the idea to establish a community foundation in South Australia's rich fishing and farming communities along the Eyre Peninsula. In 2004 a feasibility study endorsed the idea and then in 2005 fires hit the region. The idea took a back seat. Three years later, encouraged by the Eyre Peninsula Regional Development Board and the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal, part-time co-ordinator Heidi Woodstock set about recruiting directors for a steering committee. Heidi says it was a visit by FRRR CEO Sylvia Admans and Philanthropy Australia's Andrew Lawson in December 2008 that really opened the region's eyes to a community foundation's potential. "I'd been living and breathing community foundations but even then some of our steering committee members were not quite sure what we could and couldn't do so it was great to have those two visit and explain." Since then the foundation's steering committee representing the region from Cowell to Port Lincoln, up to Ceduna and across to Kimba has ramped up its activities ahead of the foundation's official launch in February 2010. FRRR has granted the foundation \$30,000 to help get it established. "We have developed 30 policies and procedures manuals which we're happy to share by the way," says Heidi, "and we hope to make our first grants next year."

FRRR encourages communities to establish and develop community foundations to harness the time, treasure and talent of the region. The Eyre Peninsula is one such region.



Community Foundations

Tackling a major community wide-challenge (Victoria)

Tomorrow Today Foundation

In February 2007, the north-east Victorian regional city of Benalla suffered a major blow. A major social study placed the city and surrounds in the top 40 most educationally disadvantaged places in Australia. "That was such a blow for Benalla," Barbara Alexander recalls. "The report by Professor Tony Vinson mapped the levels of social disadvantage across Australia. It was very public. There was no covering it up."

Just five years earlier, the region had established a new foundation called the Today: Tomorrow Foundation to strengthen the Benalla district community and to build its resilience and prosperity. Prof Vinson's challenging findings landed on fertile territory. He said improving education outcomes could address the disadvantage.

The foundation responded. It set up a steering committee chaired by foundation board member Liz Chapman, called in academic experts on literacy and numeracy and began to examine what needed to be done. It investigated local educational needs and service gaps and identified opportunities where investment could improve outcomes for children and young adults.

"We knew it wasn't something we could fix overnight, that it would take 10 years or more, that we'd need to introduce programs for parents and kids before their kids started school, during the school years and after," says Barbara who is the foundation's executive officer. "These were not education add-ons, not the job of the Education Department. It was our community's responsibility."

The foundation sought and won a grant, employed a research officer and developed a scoping study to map out what needed to be done.

It soon became evident that the foundation, which was independent of governments and bureaucracies and whose very reason for existence was to invest in and nurture Benalla's long-term future, was in the perfect position to bring the community together. "It was wonderful to have an independent organisation to do this," Barbara says. "We were able to get the principals in private as well as public schools on side, along with the Education Department, local government etc. We ran focus groups asking people's opinion of our plans to address these disadvantages, we told them it would cost a lot of money, that we'd need family support workers and lots of other help and overwhelmingly we have been supported."

The findings of the foundation's study have now been adopted by the Benalla Rural City Taskforce and work is under way.

Not surprisingly when the Today Tomorrow Foundation launched its inaugural appeal this year the response was better than expected. "I'm sure it's because of all the work we've been doing," says Barbara. The foundation has also given out \$100,000 in Back to School vouchers to help parents buy books, pencils and uniforms for their children. It has a Quarterly newsletter and ambassadors who spread the word about the foundation and its goals. Despite its challenges the region has a wonderful community, Barbara says. "People are always willing to help. Sometimes they don't know how or what the problem is but they have certainly developed trust in the foundation to show them."

The community development role in providing the necessary leadership is just the reason community foundations exist. FRRR commends the foundation on this important initiative.

Donation Accounts

Purchasing a grand piano (Victoria)

Friends of Mildura Arts Centre



Few country communities have the resources to fund a \$230,000 concert grand piano yet Mildura in north western Victoria, six hours drive from Melbourne and Adelaide, found a way by working with FRRR. In 1998 the Friends of the Mildura Arts Centre began a campaign to raise funds for the piano. They wanted to attract the best of the nation's and the world's pianists to their riverside town and to give local pianists a concert-standard instrument. A \$100,000 bequest helped, and a keyboard campaign began. People were invited to buy a key on a sculpted marble keyboard for \$1000. Then an anonymous local donor, keen to honour the work of

district volunteers, offered a \$2000 incentive for each of the first 50 keys purchased.

By setting up the keyboard campaign donation account through FRRR, those donations earned tax deductibility. "That really made achieving our goal a tangible reality," says Friends of Mildura Arts Centre President Kay Sylvester.

In October 2008, the regional city's dream was realised and, best of all, two young Mildura pianists, Alison Lever and Domenico De Pieri, joined leading Australian pianist Michael Kieran Harvey in a gala concert performance to celebrate the arrival of the new Steinway and Sons Model D Grand Piano.

"Having the Steinway really puts us among the country's leading concert venues and gives us the opportunity to attract top musicians," says Mildura Gallery and Heritage Co-ordinator Antonette Zema. "It'll be great for all our events and festivals and because it belongs to the Mildura Arts Centre, it's used in the regional gallery and theatre as well."

FRRR is keen to work with rural Australia to realise projects which would not otherwise happen without the right giving structure. FRRR's donation accounts allow communities to optimise their giving for local benefit. The example in Mildura is but one.

"FRRR helps regions, communities, donors and their projects to become reality through the Donation Accounts Program. This program allows others to be philanthropic without setting up their own infrastructure. FRRR receives tax deductible donations for approved accounts and then works with communities to maximise the economic and social benefits. This program ensures FRRR helps rural Australian communities achieve their full potential."

Sylvia Admans, CEO, FRRR



Gardiner Foundation Working in Dairying Communities



GARDINER FOUNDATION



The Gardiner Foundation invests in a portfolio of projects for the benefit of the Victorian dairy industry, its communities and the wider community, from income generated by \$70 m of invested funds. A key program of Foundation funding aims to strengthen small dairying communities.

Industry research shows that of the 100,000 people engaged in the dairy industry, 60,000 live in and contribute to small rural communities of less than 5000 people. These are the communities that provide labour for dairy farms and factories together with support for dairy farming families in the form of schools, police, community health, sport and culture.

The Gardiner Foundation Working in Dairying Communities Small Grants Program, administered by FRRR, helps the Foundation build vibrant dairy communities. We've seen some amazing outcomes where we have put small amounts of money, sometimes less than \$5000, into very active communities which have gone around and leveraged this to get other donors, voluntary work and donations of material.

Even more important is the long term legacy the Gardiner Foundation and FRRR leaves within that community: how to mobilise a team to address issues in the community; skill in where to obtain funding; how to write a compelling funding application and project management. Above all these grants give small dairying communities a sense of pride that they can make a difference and go on to bigger and better projects.

Chris Nixon, Chairman, Gardiner Foundation

Easing the load for market volunteers (Victoria)

Girgarre Development Group - \$5000



When FRRR funds helped start a farmers' market, Girgarre, in northern Victoria, was reeling from years of drought and dairy industry rationalisation. Dispirited locals had reformed a development group with a plan to revitalise the town. The market started small but, in four years, has grown to include almost 120 stalls.

Such success has tested the 40 volunteers in the town of about 400 people who set up in the early morning, look after patrons, run community group stalls and pack up at day's end. Older members do much of the lifting while younger adults are milking cows. So, with

funds from The Gardiner Foundation which helps dairy farming communities, a tandem trailer was bought to store tables, chairs and other equipment. It's cut the workload – setting up now requires just five people instead of 10 - and supported volunteers to stay involved. It's used for other community functions too. "It's a great asset. Everything is ready to go, we can just hook it up and take it wherever it's needed," says retired dairy farmer and kindergarten teacher, Jan Smith, who heads the Girgarre Development Group. Jan says the group's aims - to provide quality food, a revenue stream for the community and a place for people to join together - are all being met. "People stop me in the street saying 'Can't wait for the next market. It has become a real social hub."

There are other spin-offs. The market has raised funds for the community car, the Country Fire Authority, recreation reserve and the school. It's also given birth to a music festival.

"We had no idea how this whole movement would grow," Jan says. After playing at the first market, a musician friend of hers returned with others to anniversary celebrations and the music festival was born. This year 120 musicians took part in the Girgarre Moosic Muster that attracted 3000 people to the Sunday market.

Filling Fire Trucks (Victoria)

Nilma North Rural Fire Brigade (CFA) - \$5000



There was big debate at the Nilma North Rural Fire Brigade when it was suggested they acquire an expensive new appliance. Even with government funding, the

voluntary brigade would need at least \$40,000 to pay for it. For the 24 members, the prospect was daunting. However parts for their 30-year-old pump were no longer available and they couldn't risk being without a unit. With strong CFA support, pledges from its West Gippsland Group, a grant from the Gardiner Foundation through FRRR, and other donations, the small dairying community took it on.

Their 'Big Fill' appliance, a large-capacity pump custom built onto a 4WD cab chassis, can pump from dams, rivers or a reticulated water supply and fight fire directly but its ability to fill several tankers at the same time is a real innovation. In the aftermath of the 2009 Black Friday bushfires, it was in constant use for nine days filling tankers that sprayed threatened pastureland. When fire escaped control lines, the unit was taken to the scene. "It filled four trucks in about 1½ minutes," says brigade captain Ted Osler. "We could keep trucks out in the fire line."

Other brigades have benefited from Nilma North's know-how and technical experience with the pump. It's also helped renew enthusiasm and attract new members. People, older or less physically able, can operate it.

The 'Big Fill' vehicle doubles as a great form of transport and is a hit for fundraising. "We hook up a trailer of firewood to raffle at Longwarry market," Ted says. "That boosts our presence in the community, brings funds and educates people about what we do. It is also reassuring for locals to know that if trucks are called away to other fires, we can use this unit to fight a local fire."

Creating play space (Victoria)

Willow Grove Kindergarten - \$5000



The Gippsland dairying community of Willow Grove makes good use of its hall. The kindergarten shares part of the building with the playgroup and on wet days the children let off steam in the main hall. A bark chip area is used for outdoor play but a larger grassed area had been out of bounds because fencing did not meet safety requirements.

"Fundraising to meet running costs is difficult enough in a small community," says dairy farmer and kindergarten committee member, Jacqui Morrison. "The cost of a new fence was daunting so we were elated to get help from Gardiner Foundation and FRRR."

Construction was delayed because fencing contractors were needed in bushfire-affected communities. Willow Grove had also been threatened by the February 2009 fires so they didn't mind waiting.

With 20 children enrolled, up from 10 last year, access to the outdoor area is essential. The children now have space to run, to throw balls and exercise. Teachers can plan outdoor learning experiences and activities that foster co-ordination and physical development.

"The new fence is great. It has really boosted team morale," Jacqui says.

Restoring an avenue of honour (Victoria)

Leongatha RSL Sub Branch - \$4000



Nicole Pouw and Jeanne Dekker married second-generation dairy farmers in Victoria's Gippsland district, east of Melbourne in the late 1990s. Driving home through an avenue of trees together one day, Nicole said she loved the old trees and that they'd been planted in honour of the district's World War I soldiers. "Jeanne said that she had heard that too and we both thought it seemed sad that the avenue was in such disrepair," Nicole says. Among the oak and elm trees was a wall of saplings and undergrowth of strangling ivy.

With their husbands' support, the friends and their families vowed to get the trees restored. Leongatha RSL auspiced the project. With support from the South Gippsland Shire, the Department of Veterans Affairs and the local dairy co-operative, volunteers cleaned up the site to reveal the stately avenue. The Gardiner Foundation's \$4000 grant, through FRRR, funded work to preserve and improve the health of the remaining trees.

In July 2008, on the 90th anniversary of the original planting, more than 80 people turned out to a commemorative ceremony and planting day to replace missing trees.. "This project honours the sacrifice of past residents but has really helped to give the present community a sense of connection, pride and identification with Wooreen as a place in its own right," says Nicole.

FRRR, in working with the Gardiner Foundation, seeks to support a diverse range of community development projects in small Victorian dairying communities. The breadth and depth of projects in the partnership is spectacular, as are the outcomes. After 7 years Victorian dairying communities have completed a diverse and impressive body of work benefiting small rural communities across the State.



McEwen Foundation



The McEwen Foundation was established to support projects that benefit people and communities in the Goulburn Valley district, which Sir John McEwen represented in the

Federal Parliament from 1934 to 1971. The region covers the Goulburn Valley from Kyabram east to Cobram and from Wangaratta south to Mansfield in Victoria. It was established by Lady Mary McEwen. It supports projects that contribute to the development in social and community welfare, economic, environmental, health, education or cultural areas; and that are for a charitable purpose. This includes projects such as improving hospital and aged care. It reflects the McEwens' attachment to this region.

Because of its affinity with and knowledge of what's happening in rural and regional Australia, the FRRR fits very well as a partner for the McEwen Foundation.

**Bruce Lloyd, AM, Community Representative,
FRRR McEwen Grants Advisory Committee**

Bathing the elderly (Victoria)

Kellock Lodge, Alexandra - \$11,537

Most of us love a bath but for the elderly in residential care, a bath can be a major undertaking. Sometimes residents are too frail to be lifted in and out and in many cases it's just impossible. Trudy Webb, chief executive officer of Kellock Lodge, an aged-care residential home at Alexandra in central Victoria, says that in the 10 years she's been in the job, the bath at Kellock Lodge has never been used for the elderly. The lodge has 37 permanent residents and also hosts visiting residents for respite care. Most are local or their family members live locally. In recent years the lodge added a new wing with 17 large, ensuite resident rooms and other areas so it seemed a good time to consider adding a bath but one that made bathing the aged and frail easier. FRRR kicked in to help buy one that was subsequently fitted with a hydraulic platform, bought by the staff fundraising committee, to safely lower and raise residents in and out without putting them and their carers at risk of injury. "We can sit the residents on that, they can swivel around and then we can lower them into the water," Trudy says. "We have one particular lady who does enjoy her bath. She always had one in her own home and we're pleased to be able to do that for her."

Equipping a small rural hospital (Victoria)

Nathalia District Hospital - \$5000

Out in the bush, distance is no excuse for lagging standards and when it comes to health, regular medical equipment upgrades are vital. The hospital at Nathalia in northern Victoria knows how difficult this is, especially for small hospitals like its own.

"Staff were begging for better equipment but the usually generous agricultural community around us has been severely hit by drought and lack of water allocations," the hospital's manager Leigh Giffard says. Leigh turned to FRRR and was pleased to get help from the McEwen Foundation to buy a vital signs monitor. It measures body temperature, blood pressure and blood oxygen levels – basic but crucial for monitoring patients. Accurate information is obtained quickly and the mobile stand allows the equipment to be taken to the patient.

Nathalia has 1500 people and a further 2000 live in the hospital's catchment. The nearest ambulance services are about 55km away so the hospital's emergency department is called on to stabilise and transfer patients

"The monitor is in constant use and much easier to operate and it's great for our staff who are keen to keep up to date," Leigh says. "The clients we serve deserve the same level of care as in larger centres."

Helping pregnant women and mums (Victoria)

The Caroline Chisholm Society - \$5000



For more than 30 years the Goulburn Valley Pregnancy Support Service has provided practical and emotional support and material aid to pregnant women and families with young children. The service is a branch of The Caroline Chisholm Society, which relies on local and state-wide supporters to fund two part-time staff and running costs. "FRRR's grant is greatly appreciated," says Mary D'Elia, who has worked with the society for 15 years. "It has helped towards the costs

of operating the branch in order to continue providing much needed support."

The Greater Shepparton area, where most clients live, has a high birth rate when compared to the state average. Recent growth in teenage pregnancies and the settlement of migrant refugee communities have led to a demand for pregnancy services for families who often do not have wider social and family supports. The Goulburn Valley service recorded more than 420 client contacts in 2007/08.

Dedicated local volunteers emulate the work of the society's namesake, Caroline Chisholm, who was also concerned with the pressures facing women and families. They have worked thousands of hours over the years to foster provision of baby goods and clothing, pregnancy testing, counselling and support, pregnancy loss counselling and early parenting information and support. Volunteers also knit, sew, and make beautiful packs for new-borns, and toys for older children.

Refrigerating food for the needy (Victoria)

Moira Healthcare Alliance - \$7559



The Moira Shire is in a large food bowl. A major dairying, fruit and vegetable growing area in northern Victoria's Goulburn Valley, it boasts large food processing industries. It's also home to many disadvantaged communities and families severely affected

by drought. Started in 2004 by a few people in a small room, Moira Foodshare gets excess food to those who need it. With significant help from the region's sporting clubs and businesses, 60 volunteers support paid a paid manager to source, pack and distribute food to people in need. Fresh fruit, vegetables, milk and packs of dry food are distributed throughout the region and supplied to other agencies. Drought packs go to people in crisis who receive drought assistance or Home and Community Care services.

Moira Foodshare has gone large-scale. It has two shopfronts, a distribution warehouse, vans, freezers and cool room – all essential for safe and efficient food handling. In a single year, more than 63,000 clients receive food worth more than \$4 million. That's a lot of food saved from landfill!

FRRR/McEwen Foundation helped Moira Foodshare fund refrigeration equipment, packaging materials and a motor for the warehouse roller door. "The door was a real issue for the mostly older volunteers," says Donna Richards, CEO of Moira Healthcare Alliance, which auspices the project. "It's about 20 feet high, very heavy and had to be hauled open with a chain. It means a lot to be able to support those who give so much to help others."

FRRR gives grants from Lady McEwen's Estate (ANZ Trustees) for the benefit of the Goulburn Valley District. As a recognised specialist grants maker in rural Australia FRRR is able to enhance ANZ Trustees giving into this district.



The Pratt Foundation Partnership



"The Pratt Foundation 's contributions to FRRR began about a decade ago with Richard Pratt 's donation of \$1 million for improving efficiency with water use and reducing salinity. Since then The Pratt Foundation has donated a further \$1.5million to a range of FRRR programs. We have observed first hand the distribution of money to very needy causes in rural and regional Australia with maximum efficiency. The Pratt Foundation has also assisted FRRR with staff development and the governance of the foundation.

FRRR is a great opportunity for prescribed private funds because the structure of FRRR enables money to go to causes without deductible gift recipient (DGR) status in rural and regional Australia."

**Ian Allen, OAM,
Trustee, The Pratt Foundation**

Banking online in the outback (Northern Territory)

Warlpiri Media Association - \$3890



Yuendumu, 300km north west of Alice Springs, is home to Warlpiri and Anmatjere language people. There are no banks or bank agencies yet the families living in this remote Aboriginal community of 800 need to transfer money. With funds from FRRR and the Pratt Foundation, two computers were bought and installed in a public access room at the offices of Warlpiri Media Association. Manager Susan Locke says the computers are used a lot. "At first they were used for buying things online but that requires credit cards and involves complications so they're mostly used for a whole suite of reasons to do with family, to transfer money between family members. They're used more for basic banking now."

FRRR small grants recognise that technology can reduce isolation and encourage skill development in remote communities.

Building composting toilets (Northern Territory)

Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation - \$30,418



Some of Australia's most remote areas are no longer the exclusive domain of the occasional adventurer or indigenous dweller. In the dry season, up to 10 cars a day visit Cape Arnhem for example. Here on the farthest tip of north-east Arnhem Land, human traffic flow has posed challenges. The Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation which looks after the region including 92,000 hectares of land and 8000 hectares of sea in their Indigenous Protected Area, saw a big increase in visits when the nearby bauxite mine and refinery at Gove was expanded in 2004. The town's population grew to 4000. The traditional owners wanted to install toilets in recreation areas.

The first of the composting toilets was built at Binyadjarnja (Daliwuy) with help from the Nhulunby Rotary Club and Parks and Wildlife officers. "We've also installed a rainwater tank there. The toilet works pretty well, so well in fact that we're about to install another just further north of there," says Larrpan Concu, a Dhimurru project facilitator. "These are important cultural sites and we want to protect them as best we can."

From the original \$1M donation from Richard Pratt in 2001, FRRR has been able to support a varied range of responses to efficient water management. This project in a remote area has insured responsible use of a range of resources.

Establishing a training kitchen (Western Australia)

Avon Youth Community Family Services - \$3225

Knowing how to make a good coffee can be a step up for young people seeking paths to jobs. At Northam, north-east of Perth, a new commercial training kitchen at a youth centre is in the pipeline. It's hoped the kitchen will give the region's young people a chance to develop and hone life skills around food and nutrition. Skills in budgeting, meal planning and meal preparations are planned but it's also hoped the kitchen can host professional development courses such as barista training. Avon Youth Community Family Services champions and redresses disadvantage in the region. It has 7000 people in town and another 7000 in the surrounding areas and welfare dependency is high. The organisation offers services ranging from accommodation assistance to support for school kids and young mums.

Spokeswoman Sue Carter says that by renting out the kitchen, the organisation will be able to generate income for other training programs. "As well as feeding hungry homeless kids we'll train them so that they can cater for events in the big hall next door." The kitchen is expected to open in late 2009.

FRRR gives priority to community development projects which involve young people. This project assists in training, caring for and skilling young people.

Cooling an opportunity shop (South Australia)

Cummins Community Op Shop - \$3000

Most of the 34 volunteers behind the counter at the Cummins Op Shop are women up to 75 year old. The youngest is 40. On a hot day, there was little reprieve without air-conditioning in their new premises in the main street of the farming town, 60km north of Port Lincoln. "It was just too hot and when you have ladies in their 70s who are good enough to help out in the shop, you need to look after them," says op shop committee treasurer Beth Meaney, who helped secure FRRR's grant to buy an air conditioner. Indeed you do, for these women who work three-hour shifts to open the shop every Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, earn invaluable income which is poured back into community groups and projects. In just 18 months since opening the new premises, the op shop has given \$18,000 to projects ranging from a new stove for the St John's Ambulance base to new whitegoods at the local doctor's residence and has supported the local Kids Club. "We don't keep a lot of money in the bank," Beth says. "Every month we give our profits out - to the netball association, the hall committee, the playground, whoever needs our support." Run since 1996, the op shop relies on donated goods which it sells for bargain prices - \$5 is about the biggest cost item - and goods it sells for a 15per cent commission. Beth's heart warmed when the shop was able to provide clothes for an impoverished local woman re-united with her children. "We try and keep our prices down for people who can't afford to go and buy new clothes. Lots of travellers go through Cummins on their way to the Yorke Peninsula and they love the op shop."

FRRR grants often support organisations which in turn, give into their local communities. The Cummins Op Shop is a great example of this.





The Pratt Foundation Partnership

Expanding a crafty outlet (South Australia)

Coorong Cottage Industries - \$3000



Ever since the Murray River stopped flowing down into the Coorong wetlands in South Australia, the people of Meningie on the shores of Lake Albert just before the river mouth, have witnessed change on an extraordinary scale. Yet some things remain constant. Among them is the small band of locals who run a country crafts shop, selling locally-made craft and home-made specialities. Treasurer of this Coorong Cottage Industries community co-operative is Michelle Ousley. When a local coffee shop closed down, Michelle and her fellow co-op members installed a coffee machine and began to offer travellers refreshments. "Meningie is between Adelaide and Kingston. Our craft shop is in the old town hall. The coffee shop that had operated in there closed so we just expanded and put a coffee machine in. There's an open fire here. People stop and get a drink and have a look around. We give local information, promote the town and area and sell country craft."

Coorong Cottage Industries is a community co-operative owned by the people who make the items for sale; they include knitters, quilt makers, leather plaiters, woodworkers, jam and jewellery makers and more.

"We're open every day of the year from 10.30am to 4.30pm except for Christmas Day," Michelle says. "We're a very diverse group but we have stayed together. We're an incorporated, not-for-profit body, although I like to say we're running a business and are ambassadors for our town, rather than volunteers."

FRRR grants aim to support volunteer contributions wherever possible. This project rewarded the volunteer effort and ensured an economic benefit to the community.

Improving outback accommodation (South Australia)

Nepabunna Community - \$4925



At Nepabunna, school's been out since 1995 when the aboriginal settlement's school closed. The self-managed community of 55 Adnyamathanha people in South Australia's northern Flinders Ranges enjoys proximity to beautiful surrounding countryside which tourists love to visit. In recent years, the community's people have begun taking tours through the nearby Gammon Ranges National Park and the old school has become an overnight resting place for visiting groups. The accommodation is basic but slowly it's being upgraded and with FRRR's grant the community has paved some areas nearby. Simon Duke, a former Adelaide builder turned administrator at Nepabunna, says FRRR paid for the pavers while the community provided the labour to lay them. "We have two large dorms that hold about 20 people each, and a communal kitchen and eating area. School, university and church groups and government workers stay here. This is a budding opportunity which provides some additional income that the community is proud to raise. They help maintain the buildings as well as taking group tours."

Simon says community members learnt paving skills and were proud of their work. "The paving between the two old school buildings has reduced the dust and dirt that's walked into them."

FRRR's practical philanthropy is on show in this project. It provided skill development, created a more pleasant environment and used local labour.

Watering an outback sportsground and rodeo ring (NSW)

Upper Horton Recreation Trust - \$15,000

Tapping underground water has put a kick into the social and sporting life of Upper Horton. Things looked grim when the community's main source of water the Upper Horton River largely dried up, threatening the community's 55 year-old camp draft and rodeo. Without water there would be no showers for visitors, no drinking water for stock and the Upper Horton Sports Ground would turn to dust. The local recreation trust, which maintains the sports ground, sunk a bore with Pratt Foundation funds, delivered through FRRR, in early 2008. Since then the grounds including a rodeo ring, a camp draft ring and the cricket ground, have been well watered. Other regions without water have spotted the potential of the oasis and in 2010/11 the grounds will host the Australian Bushman's Carnival and Rodeo Association Championship, an event likely to bring at least 3000 head of cattle and thousands of people. "If we didn't have the water there is no way in the world we could run these things," says trust president and local cattle breeder Philip Steiger. "Since we put the bore down, the Cutting Horse event which used to happen here once a year now happens twice and runs for two days each time. We've also upgraded the children's recreation areas and will soon have new play equipment."

FRRR has looked at different ways to manage a water resources effectively with a view to creating sustainability and community renewal. The provision of a licensed supply of water has led to a diverse range of outcomes for this locality.

Backing a community (NSW)

The Community Foundation for Tumut Region



When Richard Pratt's Visy Pulp and Paper arrived in Tumut at the foothills of the NSW Snowy Mountains in 1999, the company was swamped with requests from local organisations for financial support. Around the same time, the Community Foundation for Tumut Region was being established.

The Pratt Foundation, established by Richard Pratt and his wife Jeanne in 1978, along with FRRR, played a key role in getting the Community Foundation for Tumut Region up and going. It was launched in 2004. One of its key innovations is a financial model that allows donors wishing to give money to certain projects to gift it through community foundations and earn tax deductions. This means tax deductible donations can be given to small organisations and projects without deductible gift recipient (DGR) status. This model grew from the three foundations – FRRR, Pratt and Tumut region – working together and is now used Australia-wide.

The Pratt Foundation has continued to support the Community Foundation for Tumut Region, granting it \$50,000 a year for the past three years and recommitting the same for the next three years.

Since 2004, the Community Foundation for Tumut Region has made grants to 48 different organisations from Tumut to Adelong, Batlow, Talbingo and Brungle. It has given out \$85,000 in \$50 Back to School Vouchers for kids needing uniforms and items for school. It's set up a Friends of Tumut High School education program encouraging former students to invest back into their alma mater and, with a bequest, has a \$1000 annual Colyer Memorial Scholarship for first-year tertiary studies. It's also establishing a workplace giving program and developed programs encouraging community leadership and striving for excellence in the creative arts.





Royal Agricultural Society of NSW Foundation (RASFF)



One of our goals in working with FRRR is to help small rural and regional communities throughout NSW.

Most of our assistance goes in the form of literacy and numeracy projects because that's what's needed. Literacy and numeracy are the essential tools for learning and people who can add up, articulate properly and write well are vital for rural Australia.

FRRR helps direct where our assistance goes. They do a huge amount of work finessing projects and submissions. From an administrative point of view, that's very helpful. It's early days for us but our partnership with FRRR is giving the RASFF a good name and exposure in rural and regional areas.

**John B Fairfax, Director/
President, Royal
Agricultural Society of NSW
Foundation**

Encouraging literacy (NSW)

Pambula Pre-School - \$935



In quiet time at Pambula Pre-school, the children will sit down with their books and plug their headsets in to the listening post. This way they can follow the words in their books as they hear them through their headsets. Sometimes they use hand puppets to retell familiar stories. Such resources are invaluable for early learning says the pre-school's director Pam McCambridge. They were bought with a grant from the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW Foundation which aims to encourage educational excellence. "They've really

enriched our children's literacy environment," Pam says. "We believe strong literacy foundations can be built in the children's early childhood years if they have experiences rich in print and language." The pre-school has 92 children from families of varying socio-economic backgrounds. It's managed by a parent committee with some funds from the state. "Our funding and fees pay the wages and cover the cost of running the place but we raise funds for extras so it was great to get this grant and these extra resources," Pam says. "We use them all the time."

The FRRR & RASFF partnership aims to assist young people in NSW rural areas have access to necessary resources and services to ensure better educational outcomes. This project illustrates how a small amount of support can make a big difference.

Promoting reading (NSW)

Booligal Parents and Citizens Association - \$5298



In a poem about Booligal in 1896, Banjo Paterson wrote, "Just now there is a howling drought, that pretty near has starved us out," It could well have been 2009. The Riverina town of Booligal is isolated. A small cluster of houses on the Lachlan River, population 20, with possibly 80 people in a 60km radius, it is surrounded by grass plains and saltbush as far as the eye can see. In good times, the sheep and cattle industries have thrived and station properties employed workers who bring business to the town and children to the school. In tough times, workers go and properties get sold off. When their farm was sold, the Ireson family didn't want to leave the district. "Anyway we couldn't, the school would have closed," says Sandra whose family have managed to buy back and stay.

In 1999 the school went into recess but the locals don't give in easily. In 2003 it re-opened with great excitement but few resources. "Those that were left were archaic," says Sandra. "Children needed reading recovery work and our teacher had to scrounge resources, photocopying or borrowing from distant schools." RASFF funds through FRRR helped buy home readers and a guided reading package. "The new books excite the kids and really encourage their reading," Sandra says. "Without a grant, the kids would have had to wait until we could budget for the books. It really helps to give people a sense that there's someone else out there."

Booligal P & C deserved to be supported in the reopening of the school. This grant injected much needed and valued resources into an isolated community.

Repair Restore Renew (RRR)



Improving rescue services (Queensland)

Central Queensland Helicopter Rescue Service - \$29,000

During the Mackay floods of February 2008, one of the region's most valuable rescue services could not operate because phone landlines crashed and mobile phones were overburdened. "We lost the telephone system because without electricity, the landlines went down and we didn't have enough people to respond to the mobile calls and the mobile service became overburdened and went down too," says Phillip Dowler, the general manager of Central Queensland Rescue, a non-profit community rescue helicopter provider. "Once that happened we lost all forms of communication and our service was effectively made redundant. It became evident that we needed a back-up power supply because we must be able to communicate with the State Emergency Services and police directly during disasters and we must be able to respond to callouts." Disappointing though it was, Central Queensland Rescue knew then it had to make changes and has since established a disaster response room, complete with its own power generator and handheld UHF radio system and charger. FRRR through its Repair, Restore Renew program funded the generator and radio. It was a valuable donation. The service which employs a manager, business development manager and administration assistant full time and a part-time



receptionist relies on the Queensland Government and taxpayers for 40 per cent of its funding and on donations for the rest. "FRRR's grant was quite unique," Phillip says. "Most other funders will give you money only if you're spending it on infrastructure so FRRR's support was tremendous."

In more recent flooding, the investment returned big time when the service got callouts in similar circumstances. Three pregnant women were transported to hospitals out of flood zones where they delivered their babies safely. The helicopter crew also delivered a special formula for a baby with severe allergies that has been isolated with family by floodwaters. Food was delivered to other stranded families.



The February 2008 flood impacted on the Mackay region greatly. It caused a lot of devastation: about 4000 properties were water damaged. FRRR CEO Sylvia Admans and grants program manager Jo Mason visited in September and by that time most

signs of devastation were gone but people were still hurting terribly. There were still shipping containers in front yards storing things because homes were still being repaired. Funds delivered through FRRR's Repair Restore Renew program helped community organisations get on their feet.

One community park was washed away and FRRR gave them \$5000 to re-establish a place for their kids to play. It's not a lot of money to a lot of people but to that community it was like a million dollars.

FRRR was flexible and so easy to work with. They're so practical and full of common sense.

**Di Rollo, Executive Officer,
Mackay Region Area Consultative Committee**



Repair Restore Renew (RRR)



Restoring a flood-damaged kindergarten (Queensland)

Pioneer Valley Kindergarten and Pre-school - \$23,533

When floods brought six inches of water through the Pioneer Valley Kindergarten and Pre-school, west of Mackay, it might have been the last straw in a line of challenges.

First, changing regulations had necessitated the kindergarten's move from the CWA hall so the small rural community, in the heart of Queensland sugar-cane country, banded together to raise funds. The kinder moved in to a new debt-free building in 1994.



Then came the floods of February 2008. The community rallied again and, with help from FRRR, the parent-run kindergarten has been refurbished. Walls have been painted, curtains replaced and new shelving purchased for books and puzzles. Large castor wheels were installed on shelving units so that blocks and other play equipment can

be moved easily. They're now stored above the flood levels. Old well-used mattresses, which no longer met health and safety requirements, have also been replaced and the centre has lovely new floor rugs.

"After the flood we had the old ones cleaned, but they curled so that children were tripping over them. We tried having them edged but they still curled," says committee member Sue Mattson. "It's really nice to have the centre safe, fresh and comfortable again."

Teacher Trisha Gehrke is delighted. "The new rugs are beautiful, so lovely and thick," she says. "They make such a difference to group time and children's rest time."

Renewing an SES group (Queensland)

Mackay Regional Unit, State Emergency Services - \$16,700

Changing demographics in recent decades has spelt the end for smaller SES teams in Queensland's Pioneer Valley region. A mill and railway line closure at Finch Hatton, a town of about 500 people, an hour inland from Mackay meant its SES unit folded. Yet its need was felt when rising flood waters isolated some members of the community during the February 2008 floods. "Many were cut off for several days," says Mackay SES controller Justin Englert. "During this time there was no active SES group in this community so to protect the people in Finch Hatton, the Mackay Regional SES unit decided to re-open the Finch Hatton Group."

The Mackay Regional Unit has provided a vehicle but wanted it to be housed well and so applied for funds to build a shed. "We hope this will attract new members," Justin says. "We have about eight members there now. We probably do three vertical rescues in the Finch Hatton Gorge each year. The idea is to train woman and men who are closer than Mackay to respond. We want to get the message out that we're serious about supporting this community."



Restoring a bush camp (Queensland)

Lions Lake Proserpine Community Welfare Camp Kanga - \$28,600



Each year, up to 4000 school children from Brisbane to Cairns head to Camp Kanga at Proserpine, inland from Airlie Beach. Many are from small rural towns. The camp, run by the Lions Club's North Queensland District, was originally the single men's quarters during construction of the nearby Peter Faust Dam. In 1991 it opened as a camp, mostly for school kids, but other groups are welcomed too. "Kids love it because it's far enough out in the bush to make them feel as if they're really in the bush," says Lions Camp Kanga chairman Robin Salmon. "They can run wild without doing any harm. They can put a canoe in the creek, go fishing. It's great. It's about the only camp left in north Queensland where groups of kids can go for this type of school camp. The only other one is at Townsville so it's an



important facility to keep open." In February 2008, heavy rains pelted the camp's 36 cabins. Six were so badly damaged they had to be closed. Bunks were added to other cabins to make up for the loss, but demand means the damaged cabins have to be replaced. The voluntary camp committee which oversees the camp, employs two managers and pours all profits into maintenance and wages, has embarked on replacing the cabins. FRRR's grant through its Repair, Restore Renew program, has funded the first cabin replacement. "We've had people come and help us out to get it finished," says Robin, "but without the help of people and organisations such as FRRR, we'd be a very long time getting things back to their pre-storm condition."

FRRR learned from the work after Cyclone Larry in 2006, that the Foundation needed to be positioned to provide a philanthropic response after natural disasters, which had effect in the medium to long term. From this work the RRR program was developed to repair, restore and renew communities after a natural disaster. When the 2008 floods occurred in Queensland, FRRR found a willing partnership with the Sylvia & Charles Viertel Charitable Foundation who contributed \$200,000 of the \$300,000 grants pool. The Central Queensland and Mackay Region, Area Consultative Committees provided valuable on the ground assistance and local advice. RRR was a real partnership in action.



Rural Education Program (REP)



"One of the things we do as interested REP philanthropists is to take a trip every year around different

areas and different states and look at where we've donated and at projects that are seeking funds. We call these fact-finding trips and we generally visit about 15 projects in two to three days. What we can see in rural Australia is that kindergarten and early childcare resources are really lacking. We don't have teachers or facilities and yet it's very hard to convince governments that there is a missing link there. This is a vital part of a child's education. If we can provide kids with resources and the education at this early stage, it makes life so much easier for them later on."

**Tim Fairfax, Supporter,
Rural Education Program**

Educating children with speech challenges (NSW)

Lockhart Central School Parents and Citizens Ass. – Grant \$12500



Toby Mildren can't talk. The Lockhart kinder kid understands plenty but his autism threatened to leave him and his high-functioning autistic older brother, Riley, under-educated. That was until his mother, Margot, with the help of a friend and the Lockhart Central School Parents and Citizens Association, swung into action. They

organised for the school, in a farming region 80km west of Wagga in south-east NSW, to introduce an alternative communication system, plus courses for teachers, administrative staff, parents and others involved with the school to learn how to use it. "It's for people with no speech or speech difficulties or for whom English is their second language," says Margot. The Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) is a series of cards featuring pictures to represent words. "If Toby wants an ice-cream he will go to the board and choose the picture that says I want, another that says ice-cream and another that says please. He'll put the three of them together then tap them out and I know he wants an ice-cream." FRRR funds helped fund the PECS course. The system is also helping with educate a profoundly deaf child at the school. Margot says it her meant her family could stay in Lockhart, close to her and her husband's parents, their jobs and their strong networks of friends and community. Now the school is planning to expand its facilities and support services for special needs children. "If we can set up the school as a centre of excellence for special needs kids we can encourage families with special needs kids to come and live here," says Margot.

The Rural Education Program of FRRR is keen to partner with other funders. FRRR was able to bring together the RASF & REP for the benefit of Lockhart students. The grant was jointly made with the RASF E3 program of FRRR, making a total contribution of \$25,000

Revealing the night sky (QLD)

The Lab Rats, Richmond State School – Grant \$6600

Five hours' drive west of Townsville sits the town of Richmond, touted as Australia's fossil capital. Once it was buried beneath an inland sea, but the district's vast plains now offer big views of the night sky. With treasures below and in the sky above, students at the Richmond P-10 State School formed an after-school group called The Lab Rats. Their goal is to explore the science that surrounds them.

With the help of FRRR and Rural Education Program along with other local donations, the students bought a telescope. "We've seen many features in our local sky, including the rings around Saturn," says principal Kaye O'Sullivan who declares that the skies are brilliant for astronomy studies. "The prep class was the first to use the telescope. Unlike many six-year-old Australians, station girl Shanelle has seen the rings around Saturn. Her classmate Hunter, who lives in town where his dad is the shire engineer, was thrilled by his telescope-viewing. "You press the buttons and the telescope moves," he says. "Then you put your eye in and close the nother (sic). You can see the moon."

The school plans to run star-gazing nights for each class and for locals and visitors and plans to offer visiting schools a look at the skies too.

Hundreds of busloads of visitors pour into Richmond annually to check out the fossils in the local museum called Kronosaurus Korner. It's hoped The Lab Rats will become host experts, not only in fossils but in stars too.

"The telescope has made our sky come more alive for our students," Kaye says.

Rural students have access to a brilliant night sky. The REP grant supported local initiatives to take advantage of natural resources to combine science and learning and then creating community inclusion.

Science lessons and story writing go bush via video (NSW)

Bathurst Regional Council Written in Stone
Small Schools Outreach Program – Grant \$5000



Getting to the fossil museum at Bathurst when you're a kid at Dunedoo is the equivalent of a Mt Isa art enthusiast's trip to New York's Museum of Modern Art. It's a long

way and the funds aren't always readily available. But the Australian Fossil and Mineral Museum and Bathurst Regional Council have teamed up, with FRRR's help, to close the distance and beam the contents via video live into classrooms. So from where they sit at Dunedoo, Coolah, Cobar, Mingoola and Murrumburrah, up to hundreds of kilometres away, they get to see a Tasmanian lion's skull, a sabre-toothed cat, a crab caught fleeing a volcanic eruption in Italy, all fossilised 10 to 20 million years ago. It's the towering Tyrannosaurus Rex, Australia's only such specimen, that really captures the kids' imaginations. Donated to the museum as part of palaeontologist Warren Somerville's collection, it was a provocative part of a pilot program called Scattered Bones during which author Paul Stafford and Mr Somerville as well as other museum staff took the faraway kids on a video tour down history's track to a time when T-Rex roamed the earth and when lions lived in Tasmania.

"It's a brilliant way to allow all of these really remote schools to access a resource they would otherwise have little chance of seeing and not only that but they got an opportunity to have a palaeontologist walk them through the exhibition and they could ask questions of him," says Paul. He spent a week working via video with about 100 kids (many of whom were reluctant readers and writers) encouraging them to write stories prompted by what they'd seen. Fifth grade Bonshaw Public School student Sean Terrin from Texas in Queensland says the kids in his class, 683kms north of Bathurst, wrote a story about a mad scientist who crossed chicken DNA with T-Rex. The story had all the drama of a sci-fi thriller, complete with an uncontrollable giant creature who lays golden eggs and a shrinking machine. Bonshaw principal Mick Collins says such programs, when refined, will be vital for isolated and remote schools like his. "These kids wouldn't even know where Bathurst was and wouldn't have been there so even from that point of view it's positive."

David Foley, who manages communication technology for remote schools across NSW in the Department of Education and Training says Scattered Bones was based on a similar project which allowed remote schools to visit NASA's Johnson Space Centre in Houston Texas. "This project really shows how far we can push this technology. We can put it in the remote areas and bring the world to them."

The REP Founding Donors recognise the importance both of the value of technology in rural education and access to a broad range of subjects for rural students. This project delivered both aspects.



Rural Education Program (REP)

Taking To The Stage (VIC)

Nanneella Estate Primary School – Grant \$7253

When the 28 children from Nanneella's school in northern Victoria, were declared the winners of the 2007 Science Drama Award in Victoria, chests around the drought-stricken dairying area burst with pride. The school production, *Metals Rock*, argued the case in music and drama for building cars out of different metals. With the guidance of a drama teacher, the costume-making contribution of members of the local Country Women's Association and parents' club, and the stage set-makings skills of a few dads, the kids carried off the Archimedes Award for most outstanding performance by a primary school. The awards are made by the Science Teachers Association of Victoria.

"It was such a buzz for our community," says science teacher Faye King. "Things were pretty dire here and the fact that our little school got the opportunity to go to Melbourne was a highlight in itself. FRRR's grant provided the money for the materials for the costumes which the CWA members made. We were able to buy a video camera and computer to make the required DVD for the Science Drama awards and with this, were selected for the finals. Without the grant, there was no way this small school could have entered the science drama awards."

Year Three student Tannum Foley led the case for the metal, lead. "We learnt a lot about metals and I would love to do it again. We learnt when you are building a car you need lead for the battery, copper for the wires and steel for the frame." Year Five student Anna Roughley who played the Zinc Detector says performing in front of other finalist schools in Melbourne was fun and nerve-racking but made her very happy.

The children performed *Metals Rock* again for the community at the end-of-year concert in the local hall where FRRR funds also helped pay for new



curtains. The costumes will be kept for future productions. This year they starred in a special performance of *Metals Rock* at the local CWA's 50th anniversary celebrations.

The FRRR funding enabled an engineer to work on a weekly basis for ten weeks to guide the students in the process of designing, planning, constructing, trialling and modifying a pushcart. Then it was off to the RACV Energy Break Through Pushcart Challenge in Maryborough. Our Green Speed Machine came third. FRRR funding gave the children wonderful opportunities for participating and learning, not otherwise possible in a small school.

REP was pleased to support the ingenuity of this project and reward the students and teachers extra curricular activities. To learn of their award win justified the support of the project.

Using music to engage indigenous children in education (QLD)

Djarragun College – Grant \$5115

Djarragun College, about 30km south of Cairns, has discovered that enthusing kids about education can sometimes start with a little lateral thinking ... and a hip hop beat. The prep-to-grade 13 school which offers a post-secondary vocational year has 550 students including 100 boarders from Cape York and the Torres Strait Islands. This year, using FRRR funds, the school bought a computer, hip hop recording software and a stage speaker system to teach hip hop and beat box recording, which mixes music with the replicating sounds of a drum machine and voice.

Internet Technology teacher Aaron Agius ran sessions out of class hours teaching kids how to work as a group and building their confidence to perform for an audience. "Using beat boxing, people with little money can create hip hop music," says Aaron. "It's a form of protest music in which people express themselves about issues important to them. In our dj lessons, the students use dj software on a laptop to scratch and mix music from cds and mp3s. They use play, exploration and trial by error, with a little supervision, to teach themselves and each other. We are building teams and literacy with students who are beginning to carry rhyming dictionaries as a status symbol. The look on a young person's face as they leave a stage with a crowd cheering, when only moments before they did not want to go on, is wonderful. Pushing them through their feelings of not being able to do it, and seeing the payoff for them, is a positive experience."



Principal Jean Illingworth says the impact on some students has been profound. "Some of the shyest children are performing and writing their own songs." Ms Illingworth says one student, a troubled boarder who was unco-operative and difficult to teach, transformed within two terms of joining the sessions. "She's a different girl. She's performing in front of the school and writing her own songs and came and asked if she could join art classes. Kids always do better if their self-esteem is in order and this is raising their self-esteem."

Music is often a neglected part of the school curriculum. Projects such as this at Djarragun College demonstrate the benefits which can be created by using music in education.



Small Grants for Small Rural Communities

Bringing bush kids to the beach

South Narabeen Surf Life Saving Club - \$3200

Source: FRRR



In January 2009, 41 indigenous kids tumbled onto the sand and into the surf of Sydney's northern beaches after an 850km bus journey from around Brewarrina in outback NSW. Their visit, a baptism of coastal life in a way, was the fourth annual Bush to Beach trip organised by the South Narabeen Surf Life Saving Club.



The kids, from Bourke, Goodooga, Weilmoringle and Wellington as well as Brewarrina, were instructed in beach life saving. They learnt first aid and got briefed on beach culture, surfing awareness

and marine animals. They visited HMAS Penguin, an operational Navy base in Sydney Harbour, and learnt about Navy careers. They attended a dinner with guest politicians, footballer Wayne Pearce and musician John Williamson and some were taken to a suburban shopping centre.

Surf club life members Ted Billett and Peter Clarke, president Peter Madden, member Ken Passmore and Variety Club member Jack Cannons are among those who've helped organise the annual Bush to Beach trips for four years. Ted, a western suburbs police inspector, reckons the annual opportunity motivates kids. "To be considered for the trip they have to regularly attend schools and be positive role models around their towns," says Ted.

Travelling with the kids were Les and Joyce Doole, elders who provide emergency food and accommodation to kids in Brewarrina. Joyce drives a bus around town collecting kids from violent or unsafe situations.

Ted says the trips break down barriers, reinforce the value of education and always offer healthy food. "It helps overcome the isolation of rural life and renews hope for the kids. We give them positive memories. As a result of Bush to Beach, I got to know Josie Byno an Aboriginal elder from Weilmoringle which has 60 people. Six kids go to the local school. In April this year I brought Josie and four kids from the school to Sydney for the Royal Easter Show. We took them to the Taroonga Zoo and out to the movies. Without the grant for Bush to beach this never would have happened."

Surf club members have reciprocated with a visit to Brewarrina, igniting interest in aboriginal culture and plans by suburban families for outback holidays.

The establishment of a bush to beach program attracted FRRR's attention after visiting the Brewarrina area. Projects such as this encourage reconciliation, break down barriers between rural/urban divides and give the kids a life changing experience.

Celebrating culture (Queensland)

Hmong Qld Association - \$5000

Source: Ian Potter Foundation



Kou Yang came to Australia in 1980 from a Thai refugee camp. Originally a member of the Hmong hill tribe in Laos, he spent 12 years in Sydney moving before to Innisfail where the tropical climate and the opportunity for his people to make a living as banana, pineapple and sugarcane growers has attracted about 1000 Hmong. "Most Hmong people do agriculture in Australia because this is the best we can do. We don't have much reading and writing and we have little English."

Each year on December 26, the Hmong celebrate their traditional new year, a culturally significant event for this smallest of Australian ethnic communities. Guests dress in traditional costume and enjoy traditional Hmong food and dancing. "Relatives come from others areas, from Melbourne and Tasmania and some even come from overseas," says Kou. In recent years external hostilities have threatened this tradition so funds from the Ian Potter Foundation via FRRR covered security costs for the event in 2008. "We really appreciated it because with security we don't have to worry about the problems," Kou says. He says FRRR's support was vital to the Hmong who want a peaceful life in their new country.

FRRR has a stated priority as assisting the resettlement of refugees in rural Australia. The Hmong Community in far North Queensland are supported to retain their heritage in their new home.

Caring for cattle, kids and parents in dry times

Belltrees Public School - \$3100

Source: Yulgilbar Foundation

Every Wednesday at the tiny Belltrees Public School near Gundy, east of Scone, four of the school's 14 children attend to the school's four cattle. The kids wash and groom the steers and put them on a lead. Jack Cook, 11, shares the cattle care jobs with fellow pupils Tegan, Ian and Hugh. The school's Cattle Care Program began in 2007 in response to concerns about the welfare of parents in the district, many of whom were devastated by continuing dry conditions. "We wanted to provide an opportunity for our parents to have something to look forward to and for the children to learn about cattle, showing and farming in general," says principal Kate Jones. "A steer was donated and we arranged twice weekly education and training after-school programs which many parents attend regularly."



At first, the school borrowed steel yards but with FRRR's grant, parents installed a cattle crush where the cattle can be handled safely. Local farmers and the Hereford Society have donated cattle.

Spin-offs include a very proud team of youngsters who have entered the cattle in the Sydney Royal Show's cattle handling and carcass competitions. "It's very nerve wracking," says Jack, who led Frankie the steer in the schools parade in 2009. "It was definitely worth it. The thing I liked most about it was getting in and having a go."

Jack, whose dad is a mechanic, says he'd like to be a farmer. Some of the school's earlier cattle care participants continue to study agriculture at secondary school.

Matching up the Yulgilbar Foundation and cattle development programs was a natural fit. FRRR was able to facilitate this.



Small Grants for Small Rural Communities



Creating a ute sculpture (Victoria)

Boundary Bend Progress Association - \$5000
Source: Caledonia Foundation

Boundary Bend, near the junction of the Murray and Murrumbidgee Rivers, has a stunning sculpture thanks to a youth art project funded by FRRR. The project, aimed at promoting and strengthening community youth engagement, turned a Holden Ute into a masterpiece. "We used to have what we call

bogan parties where we just hang out and have fun," says Year 10 student, Josh Robertson. "We'd end up sitting in the back of someone's ute saying how it would be good to have one set up somewhere we could go." That talk resulted in a group of young people getting together with Swan Hill Rural City Council facilitator, Fiona Gorman, to apply for funding. A local panel beater worked with others to make a donated car body safe and Swan Hill professional artist, Louise Macaulay, guided the young people through the design process. After brainstorming ideas and drawing up templates, they spent the school holidays painting the ute with images representing the local area. Along the way the teenagers learnt about managing a project, seeking sponsorship, art design, Australian heritage and local culture, working with community, collaborating with professionals and lots more. "It was fun too, really cool," says Josh. Since then members of the group have been invited to meetings and youth events and asked for their ideas, says Josh. As members of Robinvale Youth Council, he and others from the project are working to set up a teenage drop-in centre. "We want to stop kids there getting so bored they go writing on walls," he says.

Support from The Caledonia Foundation allows FRRR to make small grants which focus on youth. This grant exemplifies the drive and energy which young people bring the community and their capacity for thinking outside the box.

Attracting a Resident Doctor (Victoria)

Elmore Doctor's Residence Committee Inc. - \$2264
Source: R.E. Ross Trust



Getting doctors to come to rural areas has always been difficult but having a suitable house available can certainly help. Four decades ago the people of Elmore, in north central Victoria,

had the foresight to buy a residence. "A doctor was leaving town and had his house for sale. The hospital committee at the time (which is not functioning since the closure of the hospital) organised an appeal to raise funds to purchase the residence so the committee could offer accommodation of a high standard to attract a replacement doctor. The necessary money was raised and the house bought" says Ron Trewick who is now president of the Doctor's Residence Committee. The committee of local volunteers manages the residence and with funds from FRRR has given the building a much-needed facelift. After a working bee to do some preparation and external maintenance the interior of the house was painted. Elmore is a community-minded town but in the middle of a drought finding money to finance the project would have been difficult. "It's a lovely old house, an asset owned by the community, and we like to maintain it in good condition," says Ron.

FRRR was able to support the original vision of a small rural community as it continued to keep its doctors residence in good condition. It ensured the volunteers efforts are rewarded.

Getting fit (Victoria)

Euroa Health Inc. - \$5000

Source: William Buckland Foundation



Euroa Health staff saw a need for a program to help prevent life-threatening conditions such as heart disease and diabetes. Alison Hermiston and visiting physiotherapist Tony Schneider were aware the town with just 3000 people at the foot of Victoria's Strathbogie Ranges,

lacked exercise facilities and a commercial gym was not viable.

So the former operating theatre of the Euroa Hospital was cleaned up and Alison sought FRRR's help to buy equipment for a Metabolic Syndrome Prevention Program. More than 25 per cent of Australian adults have this syndrome - a collection of disorders that increases the risk of developing type 2 diabetes, stroke or heart disease. Its causes are not well understood but being overweight and physically inactive adds to the risk. "We just needed basic gym equipment – exercise bikes, treadmill, mini trampolines, a couple of gym balls," Alison says.

More than 40 residents of Strathbogie Shire have improved their cardiovascular fitness in program sessions with Tony. Many report weight loss, increased flexibility and a lessening of depression. After the program, participants can continue to use the equipment to maintain fitness. Another group with specific health issues had been travelling to Shepparton for a 'Healthy Hearts and Lungs' program but with a little extra equipment, such as frames and ergonomic pedals, that program is now run in Euroa. Others also use the equipment under a physiotherapist's instruction, so it serves the function of a gym. "The equipment fills an important need and the program works," says Alison. "I know because I took part in it myself."

Creating online learning links (Queensland)

Hughenden Kindergarten and Early Childhood Centre - \$3355

Source: Perpetual Trustees

Some of us yearn for an email-free life but when your TAFE instructor is 370km away, access to the Internet and email is vital. At the Hughenden Kindergarten and Early Childhood Centre, three employees completing a Certificate III qualification in childcare are able to do their course on-line, thanks to a new computer bought with FRRR funds. They prepare assignments and communicate with centre directors in Townsville using the computer.

Situated in remote central Queensland, Hughenden township has 1200 residents and is the centre of a 42,000 sq km shire. Families travel long distances to do business and access services in town. Quality childcare is essential for local families and important for attracting professional people to the community. A kindergarten program is offered two days each week and childcare on the other three although this will soon be extended to five.

Previously an outdated computer at the centre offered no Internet access, which meant opportunities for essential professional development were scarce. "Really staff could only participate if training came here" says Leanne Rogers, president of the centre's voluntary management committee. "Supporting staff to maintain a high level of skill is a priority for us and much easier now that training is available on-line." Directors have their own log-ins and email addresses and so can maintain records and communicate confidentially, an important factor when working with children. Access to teaching resources, support networks and departmental information is available at the click of a mouse! "Our staff have also attended workshops in photo editing and now use digital photos to create child profiles, a great way to capture and record their progress," Leanne says.





Small Grants for Small Rural Communities



Lighting up a stage (Tasmania)

Franklin Progress Association - \$2904
Source: Ian Potter Foundation

Picturesque Franklin on Tasmania's Huon River has become home for Australian mainlanders shifting south to retire and enjoy its beautiful surrounds. The town's Palais Theatre which will celebrate its centenary in 2012 has undergone significant restoration thanks to local volunteers over the past 10 years. The Palais Theatre Committee continues

that work and with funds from the Ian Potter Foundation through FRRR installed a bar to carry new stage lighting. The lighting was installed in March 2008 in time for the Franklin Progress Association's staging of *Showboat of Music*, a locally produced and directed musical production which featured 50 local musicians, singers and dancers who performed to two sell-out audiences. The show was a feature event in the annual Focus on Franklin Festival and raised money for Franklin's aged care facility Huon Eldercare. Since then, the Palais has hosted touring theatre performances including one during Tasmania's 2009 Ten Days on the Island festival. "There's much more to be done but the lighting is a start," says Ray Lyon of the Franklin Progress Association who moved to town from NSW in 2004. Like many, he believes that Franklin is on the cusp of change as the area moves to accommodate sea changers and tourists. The refurbishment of the Palais is clearly geared to enable more live theatre and entertainment.

FRRR sources a range of projects and those with a cultural nature match the Ian Potter Foundation Partnership.

Installing a rainwater tank (Victoria)

Myall Hall Committee - \$3345
Source: Edward Wilson Trust

At Myall, south of Swan Hill in northern Victoria, prolonged dry conditions, water restrictions and poor pasture growth had savaged the irrigated dairying district in 2008 when the community set about restoring facilities at the local hall. FRRR's grant paid for a 22,500 litres water tank complete with fire fighting fittings and a pressure pump to be installed at the local hall. "It's a very valuable resource in the continuing dry conditions," says hall committee chairman Graham Cockroft. Secretary Margaret Kendrick says the tank collects water from the hall's roof. "With irrigation water supplies becoming less reliable access to water for fire fighting becomes critical," Margaret says.

She says it's important that the committee of volunteers gets together for hall working bees during times of hardship to support one another. The hall is also a great meeting place for the community to gather and do the same.

FRRR support from the Edward Wilson Trust focuses on assisting emergency services needs of small rural communities in Victoria. This grant supported multiple uses.

Teaching migrants English (South Australia)

Naracoorte High School & Naracoorte & District

Migrant Support Network - \$2500

Source: Yulgilbar Foundation



Meatworks and vineyards have attracted most of the 25 nationalities of people living in and around the South Australian border town of Naracoorte. Afghanis, Laotians, Cambodians, Koreans and Chinese are but a few of those who come to work there. Responding to this change, the high school and a migrant support network in the town of 5000 established English as A Second Language (ESL) classes in 2007 to help migrants adapt to their Australian life. Volunteer tutors

stepped up to help but they needed books, tapes, dictionaries and teaching packs on Australian workplaces and cultures that would be suitable for all nationalities.

Jo-Ann De Wilt and Carol Lawrie, who administered the ESL project, coordinating volunteers and organising funding, say audio teaching packs, simple computer programs on phonics for children, and readers and books about Australian culture and the work-place, funded by the FRRR, were invaluable resources.

"This was especially so because we started with nothing," says Carol. "These resources are still being used (by volunteers) in private homes and at the Naracoorte South Primary School where a program is reaching out to "migrant mums" and their children (for whom English is the second language). Some female volunteers still visit Afghani women to help them

develop their English skills whilst sharing craft and needlework. Jo-Ann uses the resources with migrant groups in Bordertown as well. Three years after beginning, the resources are still in good use."

A grant such as this shows how a small amount can make a big difference. FRRR was aware of these needs due to work by the local community foundation.

Keeping the doctor in town (NSW)

Sofala Progress Association - \$5000

Source: Yulgilbar Foundation

When the government health service announced it would no longer pay the rent for the visiting doctor's rooms in the former courthouse at Sofala, the local progress association was determined to find an alternative. "We're an old gold mining town with 35 to 40 people in the town and about 200 in the community and I thought if we lose the doctor, that's it," says association secretary treasurer Beatrix Stokes, 67, who moved up from Sydney in 1986. "Otherwise people would have to drive into Bathurst 50kms away to see a doctor and a lot of people here don't drive."

An old hall was converted with funds from the Country Women's Association but the waiting room also needed fixing. With FRRR's funds, the side room of the hall was carpeted, rewired and plumbed. It doubles as a venue for community meetings outside of the doctor's monthly visits. Beatrix likes to add that, since the doctor's 'new' rooms were opened, a weekly visiting nurse service has also resumed.

Retaining medical services in smaller communities is a challenge. The Sofala Progress Association rose to the challenge. FRRR was pleased to provide support.



Small Grants for Small Rural Communities

Supporting volunteer ambulance (Western Australia)

Lake King St John Ambulance Sub-Centre - \$4525

Source: Sidney Myer Fund



About six times a year, an emergency call goes through to the St John Ambulance team at Lake King. The calls are to attend road accidents mostly. At other times, the six volunteer ambos from the small farming community 460km south east of Perth are rostered to attend the region's hockey and football games. The service is completely voluntary. Members attend training upgrades monthly and are on hand to fill the emergency care gap because the nearest

hospital is 75km away at Ravensthorpe. "We have an emergency shed which we share with the fire brigade," says the team's secretary Christine Atkins. "The fire truck is on one side of the shed and the ambulance is on the other." The volunteers hold enough funds to provide medical supplies by running a raffle and other fund raisers locally but extras such as tables and chairs are just that – extras, which means they're rarely replaced. "Our building was in desperate need of some carpet in the main area where we hold meetings. We had one table and our chairs were 20 years old." FRRR's grant has bought new carpet, tables and chairs, an urn, vacuum cleaner and new crockery. "It's difficult to get funds for these things from anywhere else so we're really grateful to FRRR," Christine says.

FRRR is pleased to be able to fund the things others can't. The difference that carpet, tables, chairs and crockery can make to the comfort of these volunteers was important to support.

Supporting women farmers (Victoria)

Victorian Women on Farms - \$5000

Source: FRRR

Each year for 20 years, women from Victorian farms have gathered somewhere around their state to share their lives, lighten their loads and learn. At each of the Women on Farms Gatherings, organisers for the following year's gathering are announced. All are volunteers who work solidly for 12 months to arrange a weekend that will offer support, entertainment, inspiration and encouragement for the women who continue to be the backbone of food production and farming.

In 2008, Berrivillock hosted the weekend. The women in the broadacre cropping region in Victoria's Mallee had been confident when they nominated as organisers that sponsorship would be forthcoming from the grains sector. But continuing dry years made that difficult. "The grains industry had really been struggling and the funding we'd expected to get from grains-related companies just wasn't there," says farmer and co-organiser Caroline Welsh. "We felt really lucky to get some support from government and from the FRRR." FRRR's grant funded workshops over the weekend. They ranged from farm business succession planning and accounting to singing for fun and stress relief massage.

"For the women who are involved and who attend it's such a fantastic event," says Caroline. "It gives them a whole weekend away from their other worries and experiences they wouldn't otherwise get in an environment that's conducive to conversation and sharing."

FRRR only supports a small number of events and always seeks to ensure that knowledge is transferred and communities are more capable. Women on Farms gathering ensure different rural communities benefits each event and that helps across the State.

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"To champion the economic and social strength of Australia's regional, rural and remote communities through partnerships with the private sector, philanthropy and governments."

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