



The Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc.

A 0004857F ABN 55 584 949 677

Patron – Her Excellency the Honourable Linda Dessau AC, Governor of Victoria

Friday 1 May 2020

Good Morning Members

I hope you are enjoying the change in the weather. Here is this week's reading of branch activities.

Kind Regards

Marion



Hi Marion

Just a friendly email - thought you might like to see this photo. This is a photo of my (baby) sister (13 yrs younger than me) Athalie – she sent yesterday from Adelaide. Her 'message' was: Used the recipe from the apron. They're great! Xx.

Years ago, when CWA HO brought out Aprons for Anzac – with the biscuit recipe on them, I gave one to Ath next time we visited them in SA. I remember the first year she had the apron she said one had to read the recipe upside down, ha ha!!!!!!

Thinking of you three in there today doing the Pop up shop. What a great idea. I sent out lots of emails advertising the 'shop' but a lot of people said they are not 'going out' at all, especially some of my

older church friends who are always interested in what CWA is doing.

Tim's Cub Scouts (3rd Beaumaris Group) made Anzac Biscuits in their own kitchens last Wed. night...on ZOOM...Tim just participated in Zoom, not the cooking here of any biscuits,



ha ha...They and the Scouts are meeting each week and having a proper program. This cooking night will give some of them a head-start to their Cooking Badge. Scouts this week made red cardboard poppies, Tim said the pattern was so easy and they came up well.

Thanks for the latest Newsletter. Our branches are doing amazing things - always an interesting read. I will get our Branch Secretary to send you a report for next time on what our girls did (today) on and for Anzac Day

Good morning Ladies

Information for you attached. I read in State President Marion's newsletter that beanies and mittens are required by Mission to Seafarers...might interest knitters!!

It seems other branches are working on projects, does anyone have ideas of something we as a Branch can do?

(i.e.) Craft wise - for our street stall & raffle or donation to a worthy cause...perhaps our International Officer can give us some information on country of study Botswana??

Happy Birthday to March and April 'Girls'. Hope you were all able to celebrate in some way ladies. 🌹🎂

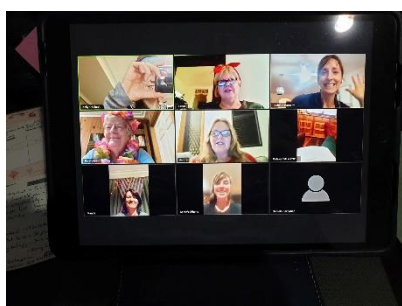
We have now set up a Facebook Page, makes it easier to post photos etc. If you can't do it or don't have FB, have a friend post for you!!

Anyone can join and invite their friends. Have a look and share what you have been doing in isolation. 😊

Have a great Anzac Day.

Lake Boga/Tresco branch members keep in touch via phone calls, we had an interview on ABC Mildura recently about our Winter Warmers project.

Hello my name is Annette. I have been writing cards and sending them to everyone around Australia. Why don't we all do that as a whole organisation to share the love and stay in contact. I have contacted old and young. Some people don't have a computer, so this is a personal way to keep in touch. Stay safe and well.



Hi Marion

We trust this email finds everyone safe and well. We wanted to share with you a picture of our meeting in March. Our March meeting was a Virtual Meeting using Zoom. We even had a guest, our Day Branch President also joined us on Zoom. I have attached a photograph taken of the meeting gallery with all our smiling faces. Interestingly, it was our best attended meeting. We held a short meeting then each member contributed with sharing something positive that has

come out of being in physical isolation, something from the past we have reconnected with, and something we hope to learn/discover from this experience. Our next activity is scheduled to be a Virtual House Party and Quiz Night. We are only a small group and we have kept very much connected during this time.

Thank you so much Marion. Keep smiling. 😊

Thanks Marion,

You are onto a real success here. With or without internet service, all the branch ladies are receiving your letter. Enjoying the regular CWA contact, and very appreciative of your efforts. In a broader sense possibly your letter helps us all feel a bit more connected to our Victoria wide 'sisters'.

Hi Marion,

Many thanks for passing on all the news from other branches. Some members are very **creative**, well done. We circulate your email to all who have internet connection and Treasurer, Elaine drops off printed copies to those in town who otherwise cannot receive it. Members are keeping in touch via phone calls and emails and the occasional hello from the front gate, dropping off surplus eggs, fruit or vegies to some members. Our small craft group are busy knitting squares to make into rugs or bed capes. Unfortunately we missed out on celebrating our 50th Birthday celebrations. Hopefully when the virus abates completely we will celebrate then. Our President came up with a brilliant idea by purchasing a journal for our members to write in or place photos of their activities in their isolation. The journal is passed on to each member by mail or letter box drop. Our branch had a weekend planned mid

May to stay at *Umina* and take in a show and visit other attractions in Melbourne. Of course this has now been cancelled and we hope it will take place at a later date.

Greetings to all other branches. Stay safe. 🌸



Hi Marion

Our members have been keeping in touch via email and for those members not on email, by mail. This year we could not attend the ANZAC Day ceremony and lay a handmade wreath as we normally do. One of our members made two floral tributes of poppies and placed them at the Memorial. These are the two either side in the attached photo. Some of our members

dawn service with their watched the service from the then the service from The Melbourne with a cup of tea my granddaughter and Members have been busy has finished a double bed attached a photo. She has will have a rest from



marked the day with a driveway candles and poppies. I got up and War Memorial in Canberra and Shrine of Remembrance here in and an ANZAC biscuit made by dropped at my door.

with their craft and one member cathedral block quilt, and I have done a wonderful job but says she cathedral blocks for a while.

Thank you for sending your emails containing news from other branches, they are very interesting and make us feel more connected.



Dear Marion,

The Ladies are keeping busy the last week with Anzac Day celebrations. We also did our first Skype session with a few hitches to sort out. We also sorted out our Face Book page. On ANZAC morning a few of our members and many of the town folk placed themselves at the end of their driveways to remember our fallen and those still serving. One member made a wreath out of egg cartons beautifully painted with rosemary attached, two members then placed it on our local Cenotaph. Attached you will see some of the teddies that have been knitted for Dorevitch Pathology. One member is also busy sewing bags for the local hospital.



Lesley Nye
My ANZAC wreath, poppies from an egg carton.



Hello Marion,

Thank you for your Email Letter to Members. Anzac Day was just so different for everyone. I placed a lighted candle on my letter box with sprigs of Rosemary and a pamphlet on Anzac

traditions with Ode. A hand knitted red poppy too. We all missed going to the regular services at 11am, then our usual visit to our R.S.L Club for lunch with friends after watching the march. We did remember all who fought for our freedom of our country and for all souls who lost their lives in these terrible wars especially at Gallipoli.



Good evening Marion,

Not sure how it works as to how we get our message to other branches in your newsletter but this is what we have been doing.

With over 150 poppies made by our members and a beautiful quilt we have made a wonderful Anzac Day tribute. Our members all got behind this and were busy knitting poppies and one of our ladies made a magnificent quilt for the display.

We have also been busy making scrubs for the hospital. When the call went out our members were only too happy to help cut and sew

(all with approval from our police and health department) and all at appropriate physical distancing, so we are still keeping busy.



Dear Marion

Thank you for the latest Email to Branches. Our members stay in contact via the telephone as only 2 of us have electronic devices. I have been knitting mittens for the Mission to Seafarers. These are easy to do but the casting on and off needs to be tight so that they don't unravel. I see some CWA branches and groups have done some previously. [It is a knitted square folded over and sewn up with a small gap for the thumb] Also, they need beanies.



Hi Marion,

Greetings from our Branch. It has certainly been an eerie and unusually quiet Easter, school holidays and Anzac long weekend. No crowds, beaches closed, but there was still a run on toilet rolls, flour and pasta!!

Seems with our social distancing and isolation people in the street are much more likely to say hello and smile.

Sadly we had to postpone our branch's 85th anniversary and our shop's 50th birthday due to Covid 19. We will just have to keep the fruit soaking until we can make that cake!!! However our talented window decorators were able to do a celebratory display in our shop window to remind the community of the long term existence and commitment of the Country Women's Association.

Anzac Day saw a beautiful memorial window done by one of our long term members. I will send you a photo.

Recently our Executive had a Zoom meeting, a new experience for some of us. Now we would like to extend that invitation to all members for a general meeting next week.

Meanwhile our members are home schooling, teaching, knitting, crafting, making preserves and missing grandchildren. We have really enjoyed reading about the activities of industrious Victorian members statewide.

3 Lansell Road, Toorak Victoria 3142 Australia Telephone: (03) 9827 8971 Facsimile: (03) 9826 1710

Email: Administration: cwaadmin@cwaofvic.org.au Reception/Sales: reception@cwaofvic.org.au

Bed/Breakfast: bandb@cwaofvic.org.au Membership: membership@cwaofvic.org.au

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State President's Email Letter to Branches

8 May 2020

Dear Members

Thank you for your contributions.

May I encourage you to send your notes and photos to the Editor to be printed in the magazine.

Is your Branch busy making vegetable bags for the Showbags? If so, would you tell us how many your Branch is making and when they will be ready, please?

Look for news about our Mothers Day Pop Up Shop on Facebook.

Kind Regards

Marion

Thank you for sending through the weekly letter/newsletter keeping us all connected.

I am pleased to report that a newly formed night branch held its first online Zoom Branch meeting last month in April. We had 7 sign in for this inaugural meeting.

It was lovely to see the girls and also it was great for our newest member to meet us for the first time as her inquiry came back in early March and as we weren't able to hold a March meeting, I was pleased that she could join us at our first online meeting.

I was able to share my screen so we could do the Collect and Motto, very impressed with this technology. We also discussed holding our craft afternoon via Zoom I believe we are scheduled to do baking. Most want to learn how to make scones. So that should be very interesting to see how we all go.

I hope that this email finds you well in these strange times. This should have been sent to you a couple of weeks ago, however my laptop crashed and getting someone to help me retrieve files etc was a little challenging to say the least. So our branch met on the 1st of April, via zoom and it was a great meeting - we plan to meet this way until all the social distancing restrictions are over. We had a very robust conversation about lots of things and a couple of the issues, we really felt to take direct to you and would appreciate your feedback when you get the time.

Just a note to say "hello" to yourself and the team...and all of the other Branches that make up CWAofVIC. President Bev has phoned all members to touch base...our older and esteemed member Judy sent each member a beautiful cut out of a teapot + a verse of friendship with an attached teabag. Whilst Barbara made a little pack of 6 Anzac biscuits with a couple of gumnuts attached and delivered these to all members with the May Group Notes. We are all well and looking forward to when we can see each other at our next meeting. Bye for now and keep the home fires burning at Headquarters.



My rabbits have gone into "ISOLATION"

Thank you very much for your weekly emails which our ladies are enjoying very much - we do the same in our Branch to keep in touch and weekly letters to the ones not on the internet. I wonder if it would be possible in your future emails to add the name of the Branch also, without necessarily needing to mention contributing members by name, but just the Branch name would be good. A few of our members have mentioned they would like to see it there and the emails would have more meaning to them with the Branch name attached. Thank you for keeping us all in touch in this way.



Some of our members took up their knitting needles and the scarves and beanie we produced have now been donated to the staff at the local Childcare Centre.

On Anzac Day our President quietly laid a wreath at the local War Memorial in lieu of the normal official ceremonial observations of the day.

It was so nice to see many homes and businesses around our town marking the day with window displays, wreaths on front gates, poppies and in many other very creative ways.

We have been exchanging news and keeping in touch by email and over the phone.

Settling In

It has been a week since we came to the Cottage at Marathon Station but it was Wednesday before we actually moved in. There are things still in the van but we have most necessities inside the house. The van is parked alongside so it is easy to get to if we discover there is something we need that we haven't yet got inside.



I found the first few days difficult as Lindsay went out with Bernie on the buggy to see where the troughs and bores were. I didn't want to disturb Donna as she was washing, cleaning and packing so I kept to myself in the van. I managed to sew a holder for my knitting needles to fill in some time. We all went down to a waterhole on Monday evening for a drink while the dogs, (Sally, their dog, Ash, a working dog and

Bella the house dachshund), had a swim which was a lovely break.

On Tuesday evening we went to the main house when I met Meg, the lady who lives there and Peter, her son who is the guy we have been dealing with to get the position. He came over to grade some roads so we know where we have to go to do the water run as Lindsay said they were just tracks in the grass.

The other couple left on Wednesday morning and we were able to move in. The house is huge. When I was told it was a cottage I was expecting it to be small but there are 3 bedrooms, a sleepout area at the front and the back with kitchen, dining and lounge area as



well as the bathroom and toilet with the washing machine outside. The yard is fenced but the garden isn't anything to write about. Too many grasshoppers around at the moment. Then Thursday came around and we headed to town to get some supplies. It is 50km to Richmond so it is a nice outing. We made the most of it having to go to the chemist and the post office, we bought a water bottle to take out with us on the runs and bought Lindsay a couple of long sleeve shirts.

We filled the gas bottle and filled the car as well as buying groceries from the supermarket and meat from the butcher. A few dollars flew out of the account but we will be right for a while. And we even bought some ice cream, something we haven't had for a while.

Saturday we had planned on doing a water run but that was put on hold when I saw the temperature was to hit 38. We went down and had morning tea with Meg and we were expecting a fuel truck to come with a delivery so it would have been too late and hot to get it done. Needless to say we were out early today to do some of the run. It will be done in 2 sections as there are 14 troughs to check and clean and we have to find our way to them all. There were 5 in total we did today which were the easier ones so it may be a big day tomorrow to complete them. We go in the buggy and Ash the dog comes with us. Along the way we saw 2 wild pigs, a heap of pelicans and galahs, a couple of roos, some plovers and of course cows, calves and bulls and Lindsay even saw a snake on the road.

The stock had drunk one trough dry so we stopped there for a while to make sure it got a bit of water in it. One of the bulls came groaning along from a distance and when he got there I wasn't arguing with him and let him have a drink. Once he had his fill he wandered off while



a mob of others waited patiently to get some clean fresh water. It was fabulous riding along with the wind blowing through our hair, (what hair she asks?) and I was thinking how lucky we are to have 55,000 acres to explore during these trying times. I know we will be OK here.

Take care everyone, look after each other and know that this too will pass.

Love Heather

Mustering

What a huge week it has been, especially for Lindsay. Up before dawn, off to work at 6.30am and some days not finishing until 5.30pm.



Monday was the start of it all when the group met at the quarry and rounded up the cows from that area with the help of a helicopter. There were 5 men, 3 in buggies, 1 on a 4 wheeler and 1 on a motorbike as well as a woman on a 4 wheeler with her working dog. It took them hours to get back to the yard where the animals were drafted and the calves marked and branded. On completion they were

taken back to the same area they came from. Tuesday to Friday the same routine continued herding the cows from different areas. The helicopter was only used twice Monday and Thursday.

I went to the main house in the morning to help with smoko, do the dishes then prepare lunch. Then I was back later for lunch and the dishes. I made a fruit cake on Sunday that saw the week out and made scones as a treat on Thursday. CWA scones with jam and cream, which were a big hit.

One day I went to the yards to watch the men work, Lindsay pushed up the calves while another man put them in the crush and 3 of them did the branding and marking. They sure were efficient and made it look so easy. I guess they have grown up doing it so it is second



nature to them. Each evening we would go down to the house and have a drink and chat together before tea.

I was surprised by the number of neighbouring cattle that were on the property. There were well over 120 and the neighbours had to come in trucks to pick them up.

Apparently it happens all the time on properties. Another thing that surprised me was the number of bulls here. That is a 3% ratio so I was told.

Well it was an interesting week and a new experience. I was feeling like a deserted housewife by the end of it and his work hasn't finished yet as 2 brothers are still here and he has been out fencing. For the past 2 weeks he has only had 1 day off so today he has taken the afternoon off, thank goodness.

Who knows what the next week will bring?

Take Care and Stay Well,

Heather

3 Lansell Road, Toorak Victoria 3142 Australia Telephone: (03) 9827 8971 Facsimile: (03) 9826 1710

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Email Letter to Branches 15 May 2020

Good Morning Members

Just a reminder about merchandise available from the CWA Shop – the new green pens \$4 (see magazine for a photo) (1-5 posted to you for an additional \$3 p&h), cookbooks and teatowels, as well as the other usual items.

Qantas is 100 in November:

So, we want to celebrate Australians who have made a positive impact on our country and the world, those who are doing something innovative and inspiring. We will feature 10-12

people a month, starting in the March edition (out now); some will be well-known and some will be unsung heroes. They will come from fields as varied as design, business, entertainment, sport, science, food and wine, arts and culture, community and charity, education, sustainability and more.

And we would love to feature three generations of women from the same family who are active CWA members. (If this is your family, please contact me as soon as possible.)

Enjoy the text and the photos.

Kind Regards

Marion

Thank you Marion for keeping us up to date with what's going on in CWA. Hopefully it is only 2 days and we will be allowed some personal freedom to catch up with family and friends on a limited basis. Not sure when our Branch will be able to have a proper meeting as our meeting venue is in a church. We will be able to do social distancing there. None of our members have homes big enough to accommodate us and social distance. Meantime we stay in regular touch and so far we have all been virus free. Best wishes to you all.

Just yesterday I read from news reports that children in the USA have been diagnosed with Kawaski syndrome after coming in contact with the COVID-19 virus. For me alarm bells rang as thirty years ago I was diagnosed with Gillain-Barre syndrome after having had a severe virus myself. Gillain-Barre syndrome is different from Kawaski syndrome but both have the same autoimmune response where the body's immune system mistakenly attacks itself. In both syndromes the symptoms takes weeks to show itself. Whilst a Syndrome is not infectious it is caused from an infection which triggers an equally if not worse effect on the body as the virus. I am sending this message to reinforce warnings from our Health Department and our Premier for us to stay at home. This is not only for ourselves but for the safety of our families friends and all others to stop the spread of the virus and in turn prevent any further complications such as the Kawaski syndrome occurring here in Australia. I am sending this email to you in the aftermath of your email on age care visits I believe in the light of the virus having so many variables that are unexplained it is important for us to heed health authorities and do as they ask. Stay home and help yourself to stay safe and in turn others.

Thank you for your newsletters and emails keeping us up to date and together during this very exacting time. I am forwarding this account of the things our branch has been doing to come together during this unfortunate time. This has been compiled and photographed by our newest member Jenny and it would be lovely if you could acknowledge her as the originator in your newsletter please. As you can see we have a wonderful group of ladies who answered my question "What can we do to help?" in this way. We have been greeted with lots of smiles and laughter and under other circumstances there would have been many hugs as well. Hoping all members stay safe and well.

Courtesy of Pyrenees Advocate May 6 2020 Cakes of appreciation

Recently members wanted to do something for all of the people working to deliver goods and services to the local area. They came up with the idea of cake. Everyone loves cake! And there are no better cooks in the district than the CWA ladies. So the ladies set about baking some delicious cakes and muffins and began distributing them last week

"This is just a little something we can do to show our appreciation for the work that they are doing and the service that they are providing for us all at this difficult time. We hope they enjoy the cakes for their morning tea," the Branch President said. CWA Members hope to

continue with the gifts of cakes to other businesses and organisations over the next two or three weeks and we'll run more photos in coming editions of the Pyrenees Advocate.

By Jillian Elwin



Although we are not holding meetings the wheels of the branch continue to turn. Anzac Day was commemorated by some of our members standing at their front gates at the allotted time of 6.00 am and a member placed a wreath of flowers on behalf of our branch at the War Memorial. We have also been busy knitting poppies needed by the RSL to extend the existing poppy blanket.

Our Branch Secretary is sending out a Newsletter timed to coincide with when our Branch meeting would have been held, with articles submitted by a different member each month on Botswana, any Welfare details and what has been happening with our members.

Two of our members enjoyed catching up with all our members when they called with a Welfare and Hello check up of members. It was nice to see members face to face and their surprise at seeing them unexpectedly at their front door, albeit standing at a distance with one passing over a balloon with hearts and a 'Hi' message written on it, homemade fudge and a small colourful handmade paper teapot containing two teabags, and the other standing at a distance taking photographs. They visited all 23 member's homes but travelled in separate cars so as to do the right thing and stay at the 1.5m length distance which is impossible in a car. Those members not home were welcomed when they returned by the balloon tied to their front door and teapot and fudge left close by.

We have also answered the call for warm knitted jumpers, beanies, scarves for the farmers and families affected by the bushfires in Gippsland and the North East of Victoria earlier this year, so easy the forget these families are still suffering with all the news now covering the COVID-19 pandemic. So far over 30 beanies plus many scarves and jumpers and rugs have been made by our members and more to come.



Just thought you would like to see the teddies I took into Dorevitch this morning. Thanks to everyone for all their contributions. Thanks to everyone who is knitting Teddies they are much loved and appreciated. Hope you are all well and Keep Safe, until we meet again.

From the Bushfires Here is something to read about the bushfires (and dealing with a crisis) from the Anglican Dioceses in the affected areas:

My Diocese of Gippsland:

https://www.gippsanglican.org.au/assets/00TGA/2020/TGA_February_20.pdf

The Diocese of Wangaratta:

https://www.wangaratta-anglican.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/FEB_ADV_FINAL_reduced.pdf

The Diocese of Melbourne - with thanks for a second copy from Julie Denyer (Dingley Village) – this article appears below the link:

<http://tma.melbourneanglican.org.au/opinion/crisis-ten-things-120520>

Ten things I wish others knew about crisis before trying to offer support



The Revd Jude Benton with Bishop of Gippsland Richard Treloar during Bishop Richard's visit to Mallacoota in January.

PHOTO: ANDY BENTON

By [Jude Benton](#)

MAY 12 2020 *The Revd Jude Benton, priest-in-charge of the Cooperating Parish of Croajingolong, was on the ground during the devastating Mallacoota and Cann River bushfires and has stayed and served the community since then. Here, she offers her advice on how clergy and congregation members can best support people during crises like bushfires, and highlights some of the common responses by well-meaning people that can actually make life harder.*

She says: "Please, if you've done any of these after a crisis, don't feel guilty. I have too. But this is what I've learned this year, and so I pass it on for next time there's a crisis."

1. People in crisis are unable to process information properly. Their brains are running on high adrenaline which causes a narrowing of vision / understanding to what is essential for survival right now. Complex offers of assistance, or requests for information beyond the essentials, are difficult to process. Almost everything non-essential will be forgotten.

2. The basic requirements for normal life may not be re-established for some time. After the fire we had no power at home for 18 days. That meant only a gas hob to cook on, using torches at night, fridge and freezer defrosting, no washing machine, no hot shower, no ability to charge a phone or computer at home. We also had to wear masks down the street, the roads were closed, the supermarket was running low, the smell of smoke was everywhere, and our garage and backyard were a burnt and twisted pile of wreckage. Yet we both continued to work dawn till dusk despite these challenges.

3. Admin is not a priority for the first few weeks. Adrenaline calls for action, not sitting doing admin. On top of this there are only two mobile networks in Mallacoota, and one crashed for three weeks – that's the one my iPad usually uses for emails. Without power at home I needed to go to the church to power the laptop (after power was re-established there about day five) and use a weak mobile hotspot to download messages. The first time I logged on it took more than 24 hours to download an inbox full of emails.

4. Keep the phone line clear. Imagine a parallel relationship between the length of time you've known the person and how close your relationship is, and then translate that into how long it should be before you phone them. My phone went constantly the first four weeks, with many calls from people I didn't know. Each phone call was exhausting, and while I was on one call, the message bank would fill up with more to respond to. I had no energy left for calling parishioners or even my family and friends for support. As mentioned before, charging a mobile was an effort. Turns out those old corded landlines are a Godsend in an emergency! A month on, the person will be more appreciative of your call than in the first few days or weeks.

5. Keep contact to business hours. Do you enjoy being rung by strangers, about work issues, at home at 9pm on a Saturday? No, and neither does the exhausted disaster worker. It wasn't uncommon for phone calls to start at 8am and finish late in the evening. People in disaster need rest, time to recover, and opportunity to communicate with family and friends. Be professional and keep their evenings free.

6. Give money not goods. Australia is a wealthy country, with a government and organisations that provide essential food, toiletries etc for relief in the immediate period after a disaster. Then a second disaster happens as well-meaning people deliver more and more food, clothing and goods that are unnecessary and require exhausted volunteers to spend hours sorting and even redistributing to other communities. If you are going to give goods, ask first what is required (noting points #4 and #5) and ensure that everything is good quality before it is sent. The best clothing delivery we had was all good quality, washed, bagged into categories and labelled, for example 'women's summer tops size 8-12'.

7. Give money with an open hand. A common phone call went like this: "I want to give you money, but I want it to be used for 'XYZ', and I want you to ensure that the right people get it ...". If you choose to give, trust the person / organisation you give to to use it wisely. Requests like the above added considerable unnecessary stress, and to me undermined what the churches' role in a disaster is: to be there for all people. We are truly grateful to those who gave generously and with open hands as this allowed us to ensure that the churches' ministry could be maintained through this period as well as using funds to bless the community for the long term, rather than just the immediate when there were multiple other agencies available for instant money.

8. Give time for decision making, for recovery is a marathon not a sprint. Imagine walking through a swamp. That's how a post-crisis brain operates. It takes three to six months before the post-adrenaline exhaustion even begins to wear off and for normal creativity and reasoning to be re-established. Offers of assistance may initially be rejected as it seemed too complicated, but later on the bits of the jigsaw fit together and the offer will be accepted. Be patient. Give space and allow for changes of mind. Four months in and we're only just beginning to work out what a longer-term plan is (or at least we were until COVID-19 happened). This is the time where we need all the ethereal offers of help to become reality. This is the time for other organisations and unknown people to call and offer genuine support and longer-term partnership. If your initial call was ignored in the first month or so, try again now that people have more ability to look ahead rather than just being overwhelmed by the immediate circumstances.

9. Prayer is powerful; pray for the people. The expression "held in the prayers of the people" was very true to me over the immediate fire response. I felt out of my depth, exhausted, and so busy that prayer was illusive, yet in all this I felt closer to God and held in the prayers of others than I've ever felt before. Not sure what to pray? Pray for wisdom, health, energy, compassion and courage to keep going.

10. Ask before rushing in to visit with a group. A traumatised community is a sensitive and emotional being. Due to people being evacuated and slowly returning it took close to two months before the whole church congregation had regrouped. Well-meaning people wanted to rush in with groups and "cheer us up" but we needed space and time to be alone, to re-live and re-tell the stories, and to grieve together. Wait three to four months before you begin to talk about bringing a group to a disaster zone, and six+ months before you actually do it ... and when you come, don't take photos of the damage or the locals will chase you with pitchforks.

The Revd Jude Benton is priest-in-charge of the Cooperating Parish of Croajingolong (Mallacoota, Genoa and Cann River). She is supported in her ministry by the [Bush Church Aid Society](#).

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The Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc.

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Patron – Her Excellency the Honourable Linda Dessau AC, Governor of Victoria

Email Letter to Branches 23 May 2020

Good Morning Members

Happy Volunteers Week!

You may have seen these three National Volunteer Week posts on Facebook:



Scone Challenge 'twins' with CWA of VIC Pop Up Shop during National Volunteer Week

The CWA of VIC Pop Up Shop opens on Saturday 23 May 10-2 to offer Scones

Deputy State President Pam challenges all members to

- *bake a batch of scones – plain, sweet or savoury*
- *take a photo and post it*
- *share some and include the message slip*
- *sell some and donate the proceeds to your branch to be included in your donations to Head Office*
- *eat some and enjoy being a volunteer*



Here's a scone from CWA
Hope you're doing OK today

*Members of the Country Women's Association of Victoria are **Changing Communities** as I write this post, by – sourcing warm clothes for farmers in fire affected areas – delivering the clothes to the fire affected areas – arranging for the distribution of the warm clothes.*

*Members of the Country Women's Association of Victoria are **Changing Lives** as I write this post, by – delivering a meal to a neighbour – making a phone call to an acquaintance – knitting for a prem baby or crocheting for an aged person.*

*Join a Branch near you <https://cwaofvic.org.au/> and **volunteer** as a member of the Country Women's Association of Victoria to improve the lives of women, children and families while adding to your personal development at the same time.*

Thank you Members for all your volunteering efforts throughout the year. Board and Staff congratulate you for 1,947 hours at the 2019 State Exhibition, 5,000 hours at the 2019 Royal Melbourne Show and an average of 813 hours per Branch during 2019.



Did you attend a Country Cuppas Event last year? I attended the one at Parliament House with State Treasurer Marie and Executive Director Lynne while Deputy State President Pam hosted one at Lansell Road. Are you hosting a Virtual Country Cuppas event this year? The Board has decided in the affirmative and I have registered to host an event.

There is only one email response from branches this week – it is the continuation of a story from last week. To end today's letter I have included emails from a WI member in Scotland. I hope you enjoy reading them.

*Kind Regards
Marion*



Cakes, Soup and Certificates of Thanks: Members have been busy. The members wanted to do something to thank the local businesses and organisations that stayed open to serve and support the community over recent weeks. To begin with the ladies made cakes, they then moved on to soups and finally to certificates of thanks. The cakes were given close to morning

tea times, so they were very well received. Soups were delivered close to lunch time, so they also were well received. The presentation of certificates is still ongoing but so far they have been appreciated, laminated and hung in prominent positions in businesses around the town.



Greetings from Scotland Friday, 3 April 2020 7:52 AM

Hello Ladies

I am writing following a phone conversation with Vic CWA office on 13 March
 We have several OZ members & friends who have relatives & friends in Victoria and were horrified at your bushfire disasters reported in our media. We subsequently raised \$1,220 in a fun afternoon tea in our Harburn Village Hall to forward to you with our blessings. We hope that it will help further the work of Victoria CWA in the divisions that particularly suffered so badly in the fires, when current circumstances permit.
 In reply, would you kindly forward the receipt to "Ray Kew" at Harburn.

If you could possibly post 2 magazines to Ray Kew, we would appreciate learning more of CWA's Vic work. Meanwhile our sincere wishes that your members stay safe in these pandemic times.

With Best wishes, Ray Kew, Harburn SWRI

PS \$1,220 should have arrived in your a/c 30 minutes ago.

Scottish Rural Magazines

Hello Marion

Just a few words to thank you for sending those interesting magazines. It is nice to see what the CWA is doing in Victoria. On glimpsing the cover of one, I was reminded that I hadn't seen any sign of my mint emerging in the garden. It prompted me to go check, and I was worried. However all is well - it had only escaped into the long grass! ... Spring is just around the corner, so we're told.

I have enclosed 2 Scots magazines, though not current. The Rural Institutes in Scotland are in recess at the moment. - mostly through that nasty coronavirus... heard a news bulletin this morning reporting that Sydney was beginning to "open up".....some churches were requesting their members to "phone ahead to book their seat"! . Here, England is intending to open schools, shops next week, while Scotland & Wales will be a few weeks behind. Meanwhile, our garden is benefiting from our lockdown. I hope that the coronavirus hasn't caused extreme heartache in your rural area.

Over the years I've had the pleasure of staying at Lansell Rd on a few occasions on my way to or from Bendigo ... a very welcome respite it was too, and I'm sure much appreciated by thousands of women. It is so "handy" for finding one's way in Melbourne!.

With best wishes for the challenges that lie ahead for you and the Vic CWA during 2020. It has certainly been an awful year so far for everyone.

Regards, Ray Kew, Harburn Rural.

Hi Marion

Thanks for your email.... Our world (along with most of the world) has been turned upside down, with 35,000 UK deaths from covid.... I thought that until today, (Wed) we had been stuck in Winter (having lost 6 tomato plants to frost in the polytunnel) But with 25 degrees C of sunshine today we feel uplifted...!! (England has been enjoying great sunny days for weeks)

Yes spring was so welcome in the garden. The daffodils have gone over, but there's more colour on its way. But frustratingly, the garden centres are not allowed to open yet!.

I'm sure that your members will appreciate your efforts in keeping CWA life "together" until it can resume again. I feel that it will be September/October before our Rural life can resume....then it will be approaching winter... Shivers!

With Warmest regards, Ray Kew

3 Lansell Road Toorak Victoria 3142 Australia Telephone: (03) 9827 8971

State President: statepresident@cwaofvic.org.au 0427 519 534

Administration: cwaadmin@cwaofvic.org.au Reception/Sales: reception@cwaofvic.org.au

Bed & Breakfast: bandb@cwaofvic.org.au Membership: membership@cwaofvic.org.au

'For Country and City Women'