

# Community Builder of the Week



# Help youth help themselves

**ROB CLARKE**

with wife Alecia as support

**How long have you lived in Alice Springs?**

Rob was born in Alice and lived his 54 years here. Alecia has spent the past 34 years in Alice Springs.

**Favourite sports teams, band or movie and why...**

Carlton Football Club as my grandmother was a Carlton supporter. So was my dad, so it is not really my fault because it ran in the family. Shawshank Redemption would be my favourite movie.

**What role do you play in your community group/activity/action?**

I am the founder, president and general organiser of the Redtails Pinktails Right Tracks Program and coach, organise trips and all the running of the program with Alecia and Ian McAdam in support.

**Why is your community group/activity/action important?**

The Redtails Pinktails Right Tracks Program has been running since 2011. It gives people in remote regions here in Central Australia opportunities that people in other regions, cities and metropolitan areas get that they otherwise may not.

It creates leaders in family units, in classrooms, in workplace environments and in the sporting arena.

**Why do you volunteer? (or why did you initiate the activity/response)?**

I volunteer because it is rewarding to see people do good for themselves and to see them helping others. I began the program because a young lad I was developing and mentoring, Josh Palmer, lost his life in an incident that happens too often and I wanted to do something that could help to stop that from happening again. That's what drives me.

I believe in our organisation and I think there will be others who have come through our organisation who will step up and take on its leadership and continue its work.

**What achievements are you most proud of?**

The Redtails Pinktails Right Tracks program sees success on the sporting field, in workplaces. It sees leadership happening in classrooms and in family units and I am proud of those successes. It is actually all of that I am most proud of but more importantly, it's not just about getting a job or being successful on



DEDICATED: Rob Clarke with players who have been a part of the Redtails Pinktails Right Tracks Program.

Picture: SUPPLIED

the sports field, but it's the striving to do better in that job or to come to five trainings a week rather than just two. It just starts to happen for the participants and I get a real buzz out of seeing that... seeing a young person under-

stand they have the ability to be better and to help themselves to be better.

**Anything else you would like to say?**

A key to the program is that the young people in it realise that they can't keep asking for help

and they work out that they have the ability to help themselves and others. When you see them start to help others and get that sense of satisfaction from that, that is when we feel like we've got there.

# Faces of Australia

Ted Egan



## The legend of Granny Lum Loy

The first Darwin-born person I met in Darwin was an esteemed local Chinese chap known as Hoonga – the Flying Chinaman. That was early 1950 and he was my boss at Department of Works and Housing. He was a champion at every sport he played – Aussie Rules, basketball, tennis, soccer. Like the West Indian cricketers, the Darwin Chinese have exotic “western” names. Hoong's Chinese name was Chin Xu Hoong, his English name was Ronald Gordon Chin.

He loved to sing and did so enthusiastically: his “party piece” was The Donkey Serenade.

I quickly came to know his wonderful maternal grandmother, the revered Granny Lum Loy. To the delight of her many descendants, I composed a song about “Granny” – which was how she was known to all citizens of Darwin...

*She was a sprightly little cricketer  
The thickness of a stick, it seemed  
She never ever stopped,  
Scurried daily into Darwin  
Where all the people knew her  
Everybody loved her  
Everyone just called her Granny  
Watch her walking down Cavanagh Street  
Silk pyjamas, slipped feet  
Selling mangoes, vegies, eggs  
And she'll run you off your legs  
Bamboo pole, baskets full  
Waving to the kids at school  
That's the way it is, with Granny.....*

Granny came to Australia at age seven and died in Darwin ninety years later. Her funeral

was one of Darwin's biggest to that date. She was skilled at horticulture: she had vegetable gardens wherever she lived. She determined to stay in Darwin after the 1942 bombing, to “look after the Temple” – which was called the Joss House in those days.

*And when Granny died in Darwin  
We took her for a ride  
To every place she'd lived  
In her long and active life  
The Darwin traffic halted,  
The policemen all saluted  
Everybody waved to Granny  
Watch her driving down Cavanagh Street  
Silk pyjamas, slipped feet.  
Sue Wah Chin, Albert Chan,*

*Henry Lee – White Chinaman  
Eddy Quong the baker man  
Pearly Chin, Old Chin Gong  
Lorna Lim and Alec Fong  
Lee Hang Gong, Yot Cheong Loong  
There's her grandson Chin Xu Hoong  
Everybody waved to Granny.*

Granny's English was not strong, so when I was asked to interview her I arranged for Hoonga to translate. We had to discontinue when she said to Hoonga; “ I suppose Ted wants to know who were the opium suppliers in the old days?”.....That's a wrap!

What a woman. As I say: “The cutest little butterfly”.....

See you next week. Aritjinanga . Ted Egan