



Mparntwe Alice Springs Community Foundation Community Builder of the Week

Captain Lara paves the way

ENCOURAGING, supporting and amplifying positive community action.

Name: Lara Harding

How long have you lived in Alice Springs?
Lived there my whole life, 27 years.

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

Favourite sports team has to be Sydney Swans. I like all sorts of different music and I like Coach Carter.

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

Captain of the Central Australian Football Club Pinktails in the Redtails/Pinktails Right Tracks Program

Why is your community group/activity/action important?

It's just such a positive program. With everything that is going on it is good to just do something positive, especially with how things have been in Alice Springs lately, especially in the broader media. It has been very negative so we are trying to create some positivity around the town.

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

Because I have lived in Alice my whole life, it is good to give back to the community.

I work at the Middle School, and I work in

the STARS Foundation Program which is a program for Indigenous girls to help keep their attendance up and it has a huge focus on their wellbeing and all of the girls that I work with are down at Pinktails.

What achievements are you most proud of?

The Pinktails is just such an amazing space. Really good people and I just love being there.

Anything else you would like to say?

I was very impressed by our team's effort against North Adelaide (a dominant win by the Pinktails). We have been training about five times a week. We've been putting in the hard work, especially with our fitness.

A big thank you to Rob and Macca and everyone else that works in the program. It's pretty much their whole life. They volunteer all the time and they are so positive, encouraging and do so much for us.

If you'd like to nominate someone to be the Mparntwe Alice Springs Community Foundation Community Builder of the Week, email editorial@centraliantoday.com.au and let us know who, why you think it would be great for the community to know about what they are doing and how to contact them.

LEADER: Pinktails captain for the recent match against North Adelaide, Lara Harding. 381227

Picture: BRYAN LITTLELY



Faces of Australia Ted Egan



Bush Woman an education in outback drive

WE were filming on the little train The Gullfander, which travels from Normanton to Croydon, north Queensland. Happy tourists, plus our camera crew, enjoying the rickety ride. The train shuddered to a halt at a sign that announced BLACK BULL. "We must film this," said Gary, our camera man, so we all followed him as he jumped off the train. Alas! All there was to film was a bull's skull, perched on a post alongside a watertank.

Disappointed, we stretched our legs, but suddenly....Chug, chug, chug... a tractor appeared from nowhere and pulled up. Off she jumped and ran towards us. "Sorry I'm late folks". She ran towards us - shorts, check shirt,

Williams boots, big hat, carrying a huge cane basket and a card table. "Anybody like a cool drink and cake?". We all assembled around her. "Now, it's not free", she announced. "It's \$2 each and all the money goes to the Flying Doctor Service". She quickly laid out assorted cakes and home made ginger beer. I took off my hat, collected the money from the group and put it in her money bag. Our group murmured approval.

"So what's your story?" I asked. "Well, I'm fairly ordinary" was her measured reply. "My husband and I run a cattle station close by here. We have six kids - I'm their teacher would you believe? I've set the kids their school work

so I can meet you people. When I get home, we'll knock off school: we're mustering the top paddock this arvo, so we'll all be on our horses until dark. Just another day!". She laughed, a joy to behold.

The train driver blew his whistle. All aboard! The woman packed her gear, ran to her tractor and waved as we chugged away and she headed for home. When we arrived at Croydon, I didn't go straight to the BAR, my normal behaviour. No, I went upstairs to my room and wrote this piece, in the delightful awareness that I had just met one of many hundreds of women like her in Australia, perhaps our greatest pioneers? Fairly ordinary? Nah...

THE BUSH WOMAN

She's living on a station, in an outback situation

The first things that you notice are the lines on her tanned face

But those wrinkles frame the twinkles that light her face with laughter

As she talks about her children and the fact that she's their teacher:

"Isn't that amazing? I myself had little schooling".

But she reckons it's her duty, give the kids an education

For she'd never leave the station life she's leading, with her husband,

Somewhere, in the outback, in the bush.

Fits the Correspondence Lessons in among the thousand other jobs

A woman in the bush has to do, like - bleed the generator;

Bake the bread; tend the chooks; late at night she does the books.

Bottle feeds the little Joey the kids had promised they'd look after

Checks the baby, has a cuppa, then recalls she must be up

At six to go to town, to get the part to make the grader start.

Turns her snoring husband on his better side, says "Night, night, Sexy"

Wearily, she tumbles into bed.

She's about as soft as butter, as gentle as a kitten

She's as tough as rugged granite, as savage as a tiger

If you jeopardise her children you'd quickly wish you hadn't

But she'll laugh and lead the singing at the ICPA meeting

She'll make the ginger beer, bake a sponge, run the cake stall

Nothing special, nothing flash, but nice to raise a little cash

Money for the Flying Doctor, never know, it might be your turn next,

When you're living in the bush.

And maybe once, twice a year, certainly her husband's birthday,

Organise a baby sitter, just the two of them for dinner.

All frocked up and looking gorgeous, on the second glass of bubbly

She gets just a little woozy, looks into her husband's eyes

Says "Oh, I love you - really love you"

He says "Shoosh", but she can tell: he's feeling great,

As well as mate, he knows that she's his lover

There could never be another, they're sharing life together

Somewhere, in the outback, in the bush

She's the backbone of this country, she's alive and well today

The mainstay of Australia, that's all there is to say.

My songs are available on iTunes Ted Egan.

Back next week. Aritjinanga.

Invitation to submit Tender: 2023 – 22ST

Alice Springs Town Council invites tenders for



TENNIS COURTS RESURFACING

Tender documents available from www.tenderlink.com/astc or the Civic Centre, 93 Todd Street, from **Thursday, 21 December 2023.**

Responses must be lodged with Tenderlink, or deposited in the Civic Centre Tender Box, by 3pm (ACST), **Thursday, 25 January 2024.**

For further information, contact the Project Administration Officer on astc@astc.nt.gov.au or (08) 08 8950 0500

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