

THE COUNTRY NETWORKER

REACHING ACROSS AUSTRALIA

DEC/JAN 2022



CHRISTMAS
IN THE SUNSHINE

BEEAC GARDEN SPECTACULAR
PICTORIAL FEATURE

2022 AGM
GATHERING

BETTER LIFE: MPX
PRICK, PAUSE, PLAY



Autumn Gathering



BOAT YOUR WAY DOWN THE MIGHTY MURRAY WITH US!

It's time for our Country Network Autumn Gathering and what better way to celebrate than house boating on the Murray River?

What you need to know!

Dates:

17th – 20th March 2023

Cost:

\$530 + refundable bond per person twin share, includes Houseboat hire and all meals.

Where:

Mannum, South Australia,

Getting There:

Mannum is located approximately 84km East of Adelaide. Flights via Qantas, Jetstar or Virgin. Airport transfers may be possible if enough interest.

Contact:

Jeffrey P. Sproal

☎ 0412 651 429

✉ jeffreyps2@gmail.com

Keep your diaries free, you will not want to miss out on our 2023 Country Network Autumn Gathering!

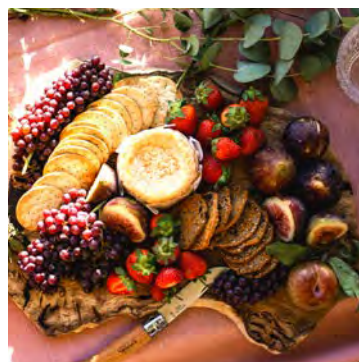
Four glorious houseboats, full of Country Networkers gently floating in a parade down the Murray River. Filled with good food, great wine and ideal company. What could possibly go wrong?!

Costs are indicative at this stage and will include all meals and houseboat hire.

Could there be a better way to relax, catch up with old friends and make some new ones? We don't think so.

Express your interest to secure your spot on the boat today.

✉ president@countrynetwork.com.au or jeffreyps2@gmail.com





new email



CONTACT US

COUNTRY NETWORKER

networker@countrynetwork.com.au

Write a book review, Report on a group activity. It doesn't have to be a literary masterpiece, but of interest to our members

Any article ideas are accepted for review. Our member interests are wide and varied, so share your favourite topic with our members!.

So, you may have noticed that there is someone else writing the Editorial this month.

Sadly, Phillip has been forced to step down as Editor due to health issues. Like me, I'm sure that the whole of Country Network wishes Phillip all the best, and a speedy recovery, as well as a big thank you for the great job that you did as the editor. I'm sure that everyone appreciates your contribution.

As an interim measure, I have stepped in as a temporary editor. Of course, this means that we are after a new editor for the Country Networker. A few ideas for this role are:

- Someone takes on the role for the long term.
- Someone may like to be a Guest Editor, which means that you may edit just one edition every so often.
- There may be a few people who would like to work as part of a team of editors.

If you have a passion for writing and feel that you can make a contribution, please feel free to contact myself or any other member of the committee with your thoughts.

We would love to hear from you!

Just email networker@countrynetwork.com.au



*We acknowledge and pay respect to the past, present and future
Traditional Custodians and Elders of this nation in which we work, play and live.*



"We want to see all our members grow and succeed!"



As most of you would know, the new Country Network website is close to being launched. With the new website, we feel that this is the start of a new period of growth and renewal for Country Network. And as part of that change, we are looking to grow the membership and start offering new events and activities. We know that you, the members, have great ideas for how to make Country Network a better place, be it things for the members to do, or bring in new members. The committee will seriously consider all ideas and will support and help you develop your ideas. We want to see all our members grow and succeed!

And remember, if you would like to submit an article or have an idea, please let us know. It can be a couple of paragraphs about a recent trip, something that you attended etc. And don't worry if you don't think that you can't write. We can make you sound amazing!!! And we are happy if you want to stay anonymous. Just email networker@countrynetwork.com.au

Anyway, this edition of Country Networker has been put together as a bit of a last-minute thing. We hope that you enjoy it.

Finally, I hope that everyone has a safe and happy Christmas and New Year.

All the best and I look forward to seeing you in 2023.

Andrew

new email

Acting Editor

networker@countrynetwork.com.au



Support services

Adult

Lifeline: [13 11 14](tel:131114)

lifeline.org.au

Suicide Call Back Service: [1300 659 467](tel:1300659467)

suicidcallbackservice.org.au

Beyond Blue: [1300 224 636](tel:1300224636)

beyondblue.org.au/forums

MensLine Australia: [1300 789 978](tel:1300789978)

mensline.org.au

Youth

Kids Helpline: [1800 551 800](tel:1800551800)

kidshelpline.com.au

headspace: [1800 650 890](tel:1800650890)

headspace.org.au

ReachOut: ReachOut.com

Other resources

Head to Health: mental health portal

headtohealth.gov.au

Life in Mind: suicide prevention portal

lifeinmind.org.au

SANE: online forums saneforums.org

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander: healthinonet.ecu.edu.au

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and/or intersex: [1800 184 527](tel:1800184527) qlife.org.au

Culturally and linguistically diverse: embracementalhealth.org.au



An initiative of



@MindframeMedia

mindframe.org.au



president's report



Hello Friends,

The weather held, the company was great, the food fabulous and the activities superb. This was our AGM in Wodonga. My thanks on your behalf to Neil for organising the weather and the various activities. I am sure all who attended had a great time.

Our AGM was great and achieved the aim of getting us back on track with our face-to-face meetings. From the AGM, we have a full Committee and Executive. Our new Secretary, Tony Bayfield was appointed after the meeting with some fast talking by yours truly. Thank you for stepping up to the plate Tony and taking on an important position in the Country Network Executive.

Those who attended the AGM would have found the food was great, the beds comfortable, the activities fabulous and the making of new friends and meeting old acquaintances just fantastic. I especially enjoyed the Sunday activity and a bonus was we got to meet the famous Coxy of Rutherglen. We all enjoyed a fabulous lunch. If you are ever in Rutherglen call into "The Other Place" a great little restaurant for lunch and make yourself known to Coxy.

I was led astray after lunch by my driver Cameron and another fellow who shall remain anonymous. We were supposed to go Campbells winery which we did and then onto Chiltern for scones etc. but I was forced to visit a winery far of the beaten track. It was a great little winery and enjoyed by all. However, we returned to base, Neil was not happy and deducted points from our score.

Our Autumn Gathering for 2023 has been set for Mannum, in South Australia, where we will go a cruising on river boats for four days. Should be great fun. The booking form should be out soon. Keep a lookout for it.



"I was forced to visit a winery far of the beaten track!"





I am pleased to see and hear of a number of areas and groups getting back together again. We have a new area coordinator for the Sunshine Coast Rodger Thomson and Dean Shawcross is looking after the Albury Wodonga area. Over the coming months, we will be looking at the various areas and making adjustments to balance out those areas. Hopefully the new website will allow us to make these changes.

"I would like to wish all our members a very happy Christmas and a safe New year."

In this issue, you will see an article on Monkey Pox from a group called Emen8. I receive information from the group and have always found it informative and up to date. Please follow the link provided and learn about Monkey Pox. Emen8 have given us approval to use information and articles from their website. You may care to get this information straight to your email inbox by subscribing to the group.

Christmas is fast approaching, and I would like to wish all our members a very happy Christmas and a safe New Year. Travel safely guys in all that you do.

Jeffrey P. Sproal

President

Welcome new members

Robert Jones	Picton NSW
Franklin Chinasi	Forrestfield WA
Philip Keegan	Orange NSW
Darcy Callaghan	Orange NSW
Emmanuel Apiran	Toukley NSW
Sam Hansen	Annerley QLD

Take a moment to say hi to all our new members, either in our facebook group or via the member profile section of our new website!

New members, don't forget to check out the new member section of our new website!





Meet your new committee

As you would all know, the AGM held in Wodonga in October, saw a new committee elected for the coming year.

So, in case you were wondering, the new committee consists of:

President: Jeffrey P. Sproal

Vice President: Andrew Jeffery

Treasurer: John Conway

Secretary: Tony Bayfield

Committee Members: Cameron Sharp, David Peplow, Paul West and Phillip Jones.

Our new committee will be featured on the Member's home page on the new Country Network website.

Stay tuned for the next Country Networker magazine for some more details about the new committee, who they are and what they hope to achieve during their year on the committee.



Jeffrey
President



Andrew
Vice President



John
Treasurer



Tony
Secretary



Cameron



David



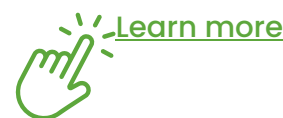
Paul



Phillip



membership news



When we turn on the new website, you will receive an email that invites you to join Country Network under a membership plan, based on your current membership situation. All you need to do is click the link in the email, sign in with your email and set your new password!

Is my membership changing?

No, all memberships that are transitioning over to the new website will remain the same. However, there may be differences depending on if you have paid your membership fees for 2022/23 or not.

Each membership plan is outlined below:

I am a single member and I have paid my 2022/23 membership fees

You will receive an invitation to join a membership plan which will expire on 30th June 2023. There are no costs associated with this plan as you have already paid. You will not have to enter any payment details at this stage

.About two weeks prior to the 30th June 2023, you will receive an email inviting you to renew and to provide your payment details to automatically join our annual membership plan for 2023/24.

I am a single member and I have NOT paid my 2022/23 membership fees

You will receive an invitation to join our annual membership plan at a pro-rata amount for 2022/23 membership. For example, if you join on 1st Jan 2023, you only pay for the remaining six months of the Country Network year to 30th June 2023.

When you join this membership plan, you will be invited to provide your payment details. This plan will renew automatically on 30th June 2023, and you will be notified about two weeks prior to this date that your plan is due for renewal.

I am a joint member and I have paid my 2022/23 membership fees

You will receive an invitation to join a membership plan which will expire on 30th June 2023. There are no costs associated with this plan as you have already paid. You will not have to enter any payment details at this stage.

Each member will need to join as a single member and your profiles can be linked via your bio within your profile. Two weeks prior to the 31st June 2023 you will be invited to provide your payment details and join our standard annual membership plan. You will receive a discount code to apply to your membership that will equate to a joint membership price for both members. That is, you will still pay the same amount per couple.

I am a joint member and I have NOT paid my 2022/23 membership fees

You will receive an invitation to join our annual membership plan at a pro-rata amount for 2022/23 membership. For example, if you join on 1st Jan 2023, you will only pay for the remaining six months of the Country Network year to 30th June 2023.

Each member will need to join as a single member and your profiles can be linked via your bio within your profile on the website. You will receive a discount code to apply to your individual memberships that will equate to a joint membership price for both members. That is, you will still pay the same amount per couple.

When you join this membership plan you will be invited to provide your payment details. This plan will renew automatically on 30th June 2023, you will be notified about 2 weeks prior to this date that your plan is due for renewal. You will receive a discount code to apply to your individual membership that will equate to a joint membership price for both members. That is, you will still pay the same amount per couple.



Network news



Wodonga

AGM REPORT

The Country Network AGM was held in Wodonga this year in October. It was great to get everyone back together again with over 50 members coming along.





AGM GATHERING REPORT

Friday night, kicked off proceedings – a great time to catch up with old friends, meet new members, grab a drink or three, and play a few games prepared by Neil Warner.

Saturday was the first full day of the gathering which included the actual AGM. With that, the election of the new committee, which is made up of some existing committee members and a few new ones as a well. You can meet our committee members in this edition and over the coming months, with some exciting developments in place including our new website.

Speaking of our new Country Network website, which was presented by the digital team. It was a great way to let everyone know what was happening and what they can look forward to when the website launches. In fact, by the time you read this, the new website will be ready for you to explore!

Saturday night was a great meal and night out at the Balldale pub, a fantastic country pub not far from Wodonga. Well worth a visit if you're ever in the area.

Sunday was a day to remember, with a cavalcade of members setting off across the countryside in a carefully organised scavenger hunt of epic proportions! Thanks again Neil Warner. The ensuing shenanigans included dubious bonus points, wayward presidents, a scone rush and some questionable directions followed. A great time was had by all, with a delicious lunch from The Other Place in Rutherglen which was greatly appreciated by all members. I think we were grateful that everyone made it back for a wonderful evening Sunday roast.

The meat was not the only thing being roasted, with our outgoing and hard-working secretary, Neil Warner receiving a roasting of his own! After many years of being on the committee, Neil Warner has decided to step down and take a well-deserved break. Thanks Neil for all your service and support to Country Network.

The final day of the gather was the picnic out at Dartmouth Dam. All reports that it was a great day especially with the dam full and over flowing.

It was great to see that everyone pitch in and help make it the weekend a success that it was. Thanks to all the volunteers and everyone who made a contribution. Our next national gathering is our Autumn Gathering which will be held in Mannum in South Australia.





BEEAC GARDEN SPECTACULAR

Another year and another Beeac Garden Spectacular. And this one lived up to the hype as always!

For those who don't know, one of the Geelong members, Bob, hosts an end of year BBQ at his property just outside of Beeac.

This year, there was approx. 30 guys from all over Victoria turning up for an afternoon for great food and even better company in the beautiful setting that is Bob's Garden.

So, a big thank you to Bob for hosting and opening his house to us. Plus, a big thanks to everyone who helped organised the afternoon and helped cook and clean etc.

For more great photos of this event, visit the member section of the new website! www.countrynetwork.com.au





community



HAAAAAAAAAY!

Heading inland past extensive floodwaters to a rainbow oasis in country NSW. The Hay Rainbow on the Plains festival is a bright, colourful and fun weekend. well worth the trip!





A few Country Network members decided to make the trek to Hay to be part of the Rainbow on the Plains Festival. For those who don't know, Hay is just over 400km north of Melbourne, and about 500km west of Canberra. It's a small town of just under 3000, in a very flat, but beautiful part of the country. It claims to be the start of the Outback and it is definitely big sky country.

Friday night was Drags of Fortune. A fun night of games hosted by Broken Hill's one and only Shelita Buffet and Amanda Scretly. We missed the Drags of Fortune After Party as it was way past our bedtime.

Saturday was the big day of the festival with the parade, led by Dykes on Bikes, starting at 12.00 down the main drag and then over to the Fair Day at Hay Park (where else, I guess). A fun afternoon of food, drinks and market stalls and the Mr Gay Pride Finalists!! They also beat the world record for the biggest rainbow – take that Daylesford!!!

Saturday night saw the Gala Ball Party!! From all accounts it was a fun evening, but details are scant! (our lips are sealed!)

Two things that I loved about the festival was that it was strongly supported by the community and that it was just about having fun and not taking itself too seriously.

For more information about the festival, go to: rainbowontheplains.com.au

The festival was covered by the local ABC, click below to view!



[Learn more](#)

They are going to make this an annual event, so if you are thinking of going next year, definitely make the effort.

**Tell us
your
news!**

What's happening in your neighbourhood?

We would love to hear what our members are up to in their part of the world.

Whether it's a monthly lunch, a bush walk, a get-together, or a local scandal, bash out a paragraph or two and email it to: networker@countrynetwork.com.au



The rise of the Demisexual

As most of us know, a lot of gay male culture seems to be geared towards hot looking guys, hooking up and well, you know the rest. But some gay men may experience sexual attraction only after they have established an emotional connection with another man. In other words, a demisexual.

What does demisexual mean?

Demisexuality is a sexual orientation where people only experience sexual attraction to other people that they have close emotional connections with. In other words, demisexual people only experience sexual attraction after forming an emotional bond. Or they may rarely experience sexual attraction and may rarely desire sex though they still may decide to have it.

The prefix “demi-” means “half” or “partly.” While asexual people experience little to no sexual attraction a, demisexuality implies a sort of middle ground.

What is the difference between asexuality and demisexuality?

Some people think demisexuality is the same as asexuality, that is they have little to no interest in sexual activity. While the terms are related, they're not the same. They are widely considered to be on the same spectrum due to the lack of sexual desire, but they should not be confused with one another.

Asexuality is the complete or near-complete absence of sexual attraction to anyone (of course, this depends on the individual), while demisexual people are capable of feeling sexual interaction but only after an emotional bond is formed.

Am I demisexual?

Here are some indications that you may be demi:

- You don't feel attracted to people unless you've gotten to know them and made 'a connection'.
- You feel no stirring in your loins for hot strangers.
- You routinely develop feelings for friends.
- You either don't get flirting or it makes you uncomfortable.
- You've noticed a difference in the way you get attracted to people versus your friends.





What kind of bonds are there?

This emotional bond isn't always love or romance, although it can be. For some demisexual people, it may be friendship including platonic friendship. They might not necessarily love the person whether romantically or platonically at all.

Also, there are various kinds of attraction. Sexual attraction relates to the desire for sexual contact. This is not the same as romantic attraction, emotional attraction, or, say, aesthetic attraction.

This means that a demisexual person's approach to sex, dating and their identity might be massively different from another demisexual one. The definitions are way less clear cut, and it's why there are lots of more and "newer" labels to better define these experiences.

Why does demisexuality need a label?

Your orientation describes who you're attracted to. Demisexual people experience attraction to a select group of people.

You might wonder, "But don't many of us wait to feel an emotional connection to someone before having sex with them?" Yes, many people do choose to only have sex with people they have a bond with whether it's marriage, a committed romantic relationship, or a happy and trusting friendship. The difference is that demisexuality isn't about having sex. It's about the ability to feel sexual attraction to specific people.

You can be sexually attracted to someone without having sex with them, and you can have sex with someone without actually feeling attracted to them.

Demisexual people aren't simply people who decide to date someone for a long time before having sex with them. It isn't about deciding to have sex, but rather feeling sexually attracted to someone.

That said, some demisexual people might choose to wait a while before having sex with a romantic partner.

What does the demisexual flag look like?

The origin of the flag is unknown, but the colours are widely considered to represent asexuality (black), demisexuality (grey), sexuality (white) and community (purple).





Monkey Pox – Prick, Pause, Play!

Emen8 has launched Australia’s biggest and boldest online sexual health and wellbeing initiative for gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men delivered in partnership between ACON and Thorne Harbour Health.

Their latest national campaign raises awareness of monkeypox in Australia to help prevent outbreak.

Their campaign, Prick – Pause – Play, features messages around knowing the symptoms, risk factors, prevention strategies and the importance of getting the vaccine.

Monkeypox, or MPXV, is a viral infection that causes a rash. It is spread by skin-to-skin contact including during sex. Since May 2022, there has been a global increase in MPXV cases reported from multiple countries where MPXV is not usually seen. Anyone can get MPXV, but most of the cases are in gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men.

Please click the links below to get the full story on Monkey Pox or visit emen8.com.au

[Prick – Pause – Play campaign to raise awareness of monkeypox](#)

[Local community transmission in Australia – what you need to know](#)



[Learn more](#)



[Learn more](#)

Monkeypox vaccination key points

- A safe and effective monkeypox vaccine is available now to eligible people
- The vaccine is provided free of charge
- Maximum protection requires 2 doses of vaccine given at least 28 days apart
- It takes 2 weeks for each dose of vaccine to reach the highest level of protection in your body
- Vaccinate ahead of travel and party events and as soon as possible in your state or territory

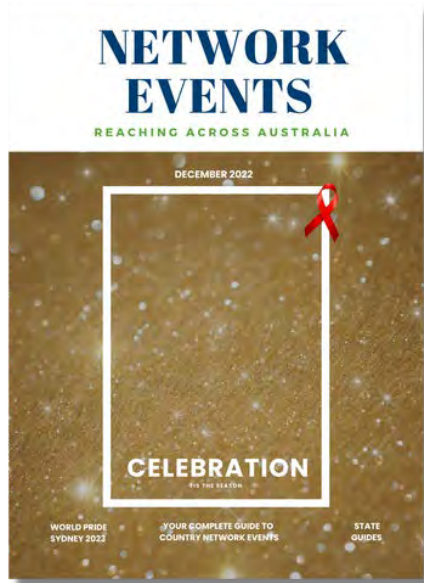


Find out about all upcoming events in the following locations:

- Country Network Private Facebook Group
- Country Network Events Monthly Newsletter

Once the new website is up and running all events will also be listed on the website.

Don't forget if you would like to organise an event: contact our events coordinator, Hector or your regional coordinator.



Click cover to download



Coffs Coasters Walking Group

Second Friday of the month

Various Locations

Details in monthly Network Events & CN private FB group. Lunch after walk. BYO Drinking Water

Jack Ellis

☎ 0425 391 235

Casuarina Falls – Dorrigo National Park

Trail information: (from National Parks)

- Duration: 2.0 to 2.5 hours
- Distance: 4.8 km loop.
- Grading: 4. Some steps and short steep hills
- No dogs allowed (National Park)

Date: 13th January 2023 (the second Friday in January)

Time: 10.30 am at the Never Never picnic area

Getting there: Head towards Dorrigo from Bellingen on Waterfall Way. About 1 km before Dorrigo, turn right onto Dome Rd and continue 2 km to the Rainforest Centre. Just before the car park (and Rainforest Centre), turn left and follow Dome Rd for 10 km to the Never Never picnic area. The last 6 km are not sealed, but in good condition. I checked this out with a work colleague a few days before I went overseas in August. Picnic area is very pleasant, and there is a long-drop toilet.

After the walk we can have a picnic lunch or have lunch at the pub in Dorrigo.

Car pooling: I suggest that those of us who are in the immediate Coffs Harbour area meet at the old Catholic Club on West High Street at 9.00am for a 10.30am start at the Never Never picnic area.

Next Network Events Guide Release: Summer 2023 (Jan/Feb) Released 15 Jan 2023 Submissions by 6 Jan



happenings



Western Australia

Cards and Board Games Afternoon

11th January 2023

Venue to be advised
(Mt Lawley)

1:30pm start

RSVP Cliff

☎ 0422 799 729 (after Dec 22)

✉ cliff12@iinet.net.au



Western Australia

Coffee Morning

Dome Hotel

1st January

293 Alton

Next coffee morning will be on 5th February

Booked under
Cliff's Hart or Prime Timers.

Cliff Moores

☎ 0422 799 729

✉ cliff12@iinet.net.au



Western Australia

Luncheon Group

27th Dec 2022 then 24 Jan 2023

Woodbridge Hotel,
50 East St, Guildford

12:00pm

Table booked under Cliff
No need to RSVP just turn up.

Cliff Moores

☎ 0422 799 729

✉ cliff12@iinet.net.au



Drag'd Out in Beechworth

For those of you unfamiliar with Beechworth, it's a beautiful, old gold mining town in the high country in northeast Victoria. And they have just started Drag'd Out Beechworth which is a queer positive all-inclusive event, featuring mainly (surprise, surprise) drag!

One of our members, Rod decided to head over and check it out and from all reports, it was a great weekend. All the events were a huge success with sell-out crowds. In fact, the feedback was so positive, that they are planning on running the festival again next year.

So, if you're in the area next November, you might want to join in the fun!

If you want to learn more, there's a great article on the ABC website.



And of course, the Drag'd Out [website](#).



our best friends



Want to feature your best furry friend in the next Country Networker?

Send us a photo of you and your pet to the editor here: networker@countrynetworker.com.au

We'll send you a couple of questions to answer and before you know it' you and your best furry friend will be featured in the Country Networker!



Tell us who you are, where you're from and who's your pet?

I'm Dean Shawcross, a CN member now based in Wodonga. My best friend, housemate and bed space thief's name is Callisto Mups. She is a Murray River Retriever (MRR), a not-so-well known Australian icon and Australia's only home-grown retriever/gundog breed. Find out more here: mrr.org.au. They were only officially recognised as a purebred gundog by Dogs Australia from 1 January, 2022.

Where did you meet?

In mid-2018 I was living in Euroa, and was looking for a rescue/rehome dog. One weekend I came across an ad seeking a rehome for a six-month-old female MRR in Seymour. After doing some internet research, I contacted the owner and arranged to meet up with them. We all met up the following weekend at a sports field in Seymour. The very first moment I met Callisto (Rosie) at the Seymour sports field in 2018, she excitedly leapt up to lick my face when I crouched down to meet her face to face, and I then joyfully observed her very spirited and tireless sprint of independent freedom around the oval. I immediately felt an affinity with her energetic spirit, nervous energy and very happy personality. One week later, I picked her up and bought her home to become her forever owner.

Why did you choose them? Or did they choose you?

I grew up on a farm down near Geelong, and my father was a keen hunter. We had a German Shorthaired Pointer and I have had a lifelong love, affinity and connection with dogs - gundogs in particular since then. I felt an instant affinity with the MRR despite never had any interest in guns or hunting, but I love the intelligence, energy, personality and trainability of gundog / retriever breeds.

Tell us something quirky or funny about your pet?

At Bob's yearly CN gathering in Beeac, someone launched their drone in the middle of the afternoon. Callisto's strong gundog prey drive kicked in, and she's in her own world. I can't control over her behaviour when she hears or sees a drone. She is also absolutely obsessed by moving beams of light on the walls, ceiling or floor. I think a disco mirror ball would drive her over the edge!!

Anything else that you would like to share about your best mate?

I recently commissioned Maggie Dannatt, a very talented Ballarat based artist to do a portrait of Callisto. If anyone is interested in seeing some of her amazing work, have a look at her website maggiedannatt.com



Our Private Facebook Group A Brief History

The Country Network Private Facebook Group was conceived during dinner at a member's home in Coffs Harbour to celebrate Country Network's first ever Sydney Mardi Gras in 2016.

After a discussion about the underutilisation of the CN website, it was decided to open a Private Facebook Group page and in February 2016, it was born under the administration of Bernie and David.

The membership took a little while to get on board, as the page is only open to financial members. Plus, some members use different names on their Facebook page.

But slowly over the months, our members started coming on board with the leadership of Bernie and David, the page has grown in size with lots of items gleaned from the internet, other gay social pages, and Facebook gay groups.

The page has been a great way to advertised events that were going on around Australia for Country Network as well as CN events and photos of members at various functions like lunches, dinners, outings, AGM and mid-year gathering.

In 2017, the Events Coordinator Hector decided after our success at Mardi Gras and Mardi Gras Fair Days, that it was time to go public with Country Network. And so, the Country Network Public Page was developed.

The public page has general articles of interest articles to the gay community from other gay Facebook pages, gay press publications etc. This is open to the general public, and they may comment on any posts.

It was then decided that the private page would only have member only articles, events and photos, with the hope that members would it to advertise things happening in their area, other gay groups or their businesses.

The Country Network committee has set down guidelines for this page for members to follow and the administrators have the authority to remove any derogatory, discriminatory or offensive posts or comments.





To date, there are about 150 members using this page, which is not open to the general public. Any members who are interested in joining the Private Facebook Group page just have to apply through the link below:

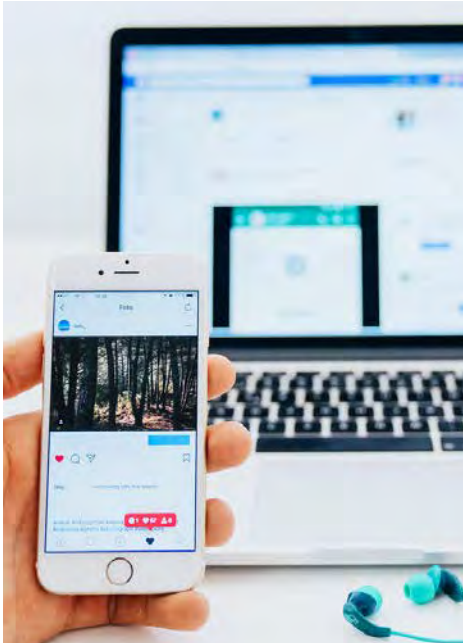
facebook.com/groups/CountryNetworkAustralia

There are three questions to answer, and if you are using a pseudonym, please let us know, so that we can add you easily. We also look forward to welcoming many new members into the Private Group, as it was set up to enhance members socialising and networking experience.

Finally, with the imminent release of the new CN website, we will see more interaction between the website and the Private Group page.

Bernie

Country Network Facebook Administrator



Website: countrynetwork.com.au

Public Facebook Page: facebook.com/countrynetworkaustralia

Private Facebook group: facebook.com/groups/CountryNetworkAustralia



better life

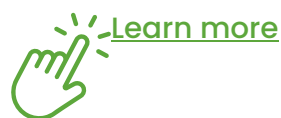


Supporting a Friend

We have all had friends go through some sort of break-up be it an end of a romance, or a serious relationship or a falling out with a friend. You want to help. You want to be there for them. You want to support them. After all, it's a tough time for everyone.

But sometimes knowing what to say or what to do can be difficult, as you want to make a bad situation better, not worse.

Click the link below for some practical advice and support that may help.





As most of you would realise, the new website is about to be launched! Yaahh!

After months of work, hours of conversations and countless meetings, we are now at a stage to launch the new website.

We know that a few of you have wondered why this has all taken so long. And yes, there are websites that can be knocked up in a weekend. But this has been a huge process and more complicated than expected due to:

- The unique nature of Country Network.
- A complete audit & update of the member database.
- The fact that we had to scrap everything and start from scratch.

Things that have made this process more complex than originally thought are:

- The need for increased privacy and security for our members, especially in light of the recent hacking of some corporate websites.
- The need for a map to locate all the members across Australia. This took quite a bit of research to find appropriate software.
- The need to find solutions that were effective and within the Country Network budget.
- The need to find a software package that can manage the member details in a manner that suited Country Network.
- The need to find a safe and secure solution to manage member payments.
- The need to ensure that the website was easy to use regardless of a member's technical ability.
- The days of research that all of these issues required.



This is the first step in developing the new Country Network website. As we move forward, we hope to improve the website and make it even better.

So, if you have any thoughts about how to improve the website, or have ideas about new functionality, we are always open to **positive, constructive** and **helpful** feedback.

We hope that you enjoy the new website.



pot luck

270g sultanas, roughly chopped
270g currants
270g seeded raisins, chopped
120g Australian dried apricots, chopped
60g prunes, stoned and chopped
140ml brandy
270g softened unsalted butter
60 g mixed peel
40g slivered almonds
225g plain flour
1 tsp baking powder
1 tsp ground cinnamon
1 tsp mixed spice
1/4 tsp freshly grated nutmeg
250g dark brown sugar
5 large eggs, beaten
1 tbsp golden syrup
whole blanched almonds for decoration.



1. Put dried fruit into a large glass or ceramic bowl and add 100 ml of the brandy. Soak overnight.
2. Next day, preheat oven to 150°C (if you have a fan-forced oven, preheat it to 140°C).
3. Grease a 22 cm x 7 cm deep round cake tin well with 20 g of the butter and line with a double thickness of baking paper or brown paper.
4. Put mixed peel and slivered almonds into a large bowl and coat with a little of the flour to prevent clumping.
5. Sift remaining flour with baking powder and spices.
6. Cream brown sugar and remaining butter in an electric mixer until light and fluffy.
7. Add eggs and flour mixture alternately, then add soaked fruit, treacle, and almond mixture. Mix well.
8. Turn mixture into prepared tin and scoop centre into a slight hollow to allow for rising.
9. Place whole almonds in a circular pattern around edges of cake.
10. Bake for 3 hours. Insert a fine skewer and, if it does not come out clean, reduce oven to 110°C and check again after 15 minutes.
11. When cooked, remove from oven and drizzle remaining brandy over cake. Allow to cool completely in tin before turning out. Wrap cake in several layers of greaseproof paper and then in foil and store in an airtight cake tin until Christmas Day.

Smaller cakes: If you wish to make 3 smaller cakes, use 3 x 13 cm x 6.5 cm deep round tins. For 2 log cakes, use 2 x 25 cm x 10 cm x 6.5 cm rectangular tins. Cook for 2 hours.



on the page



2022 Lambda Literary Award Finalist – LGBTQ Erotica

It's a hot summer down under and everyone's got sex on the mind. Eighteen year-old James has had a tough year. Having lost his mom to cancer and fought through grief to finish high school, he's now got secret desires to contend with.

It's Christmas in Sydney, and he's ready to cast his worries aside for the summer holidays, a time of poolside parties, bush walks and ocean swims. But who is the seductive young man who's moved into the spare room?

In this steamy coming-of-age novel, James and the men around him discover transformative new desires with the power to up-end lives or, possibly, unlock a brighter future.

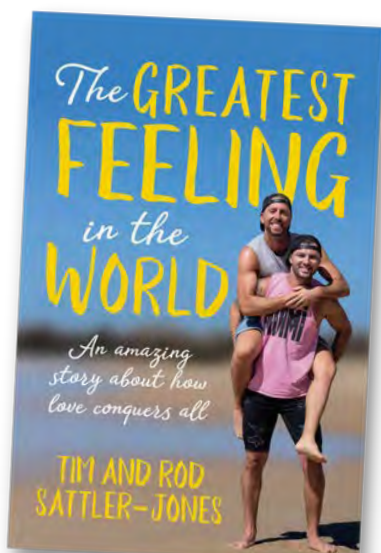
This promising debut explicitly captures rites of passage in an era of fluid sexuality and elusive masculinity. In this short kaleidoscopic novel, four men act on new sexual desires, and in doing so, clarify who they are, who they want to be, and perhaps even what they stand for. With an authentic voice born of lived experience, Levi Huxton deftly and movingly portrays how sexual desire can lead us to come of age and re-invent ourselves, however old we may be.

An amazing story about how love conquers all!

Tim and Rod grew up a few suburbs from each other in Newcastle, NSW. They were gay but their worlds were not. Before they found each other they were alone and miserable, marooned in a sea of impossible expectations. Rod was shackled by a conservative Christian upbringing, while Tim felt unmanly and inferior beside his macho, sport-obsessed older brothers.

After enduring their own private versions of hell, Tim and Rod crossed paths on a dating app. They swiped for Mr Right, and suddenly everything clicked.

Since then they have taken on the world, including winning The Amazing Race in 2019 as the first married same-sex couple on an Australian TV series. As their book shows, when you've been to hell and back, you don't let anything get in the way of *The Greatest Feeling in the World*.



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