

# Red Earth Community Foundation Annual Report

2023-2024



**RED EARTH**  
Community Foundation



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I love that Red Earth is independent and there are no hidden agendas. It’s about bringing out the best in people in rural communities for the best outcomes. That’s what I value about Red Earth.

*Melinda Thorburn*

”

# An Introduction to the Red Earth Community Foundation

*"Investing in people"*

With over a decade of runs on the board, Red Earth has become part of the fabric of the Burnett Inland. Established in 2013, **Red Earth Community Foundation** is one of only three Community Foundations in Queensland. Red Earth operates in the Burnett Inland (which encompasses South Burnett, North Burnett and Cherbourg Local Government areas) and is led by a capable and passionate Board of Directors who either live in, or love, the Burnett Inland region. This love for the region is also shared by the Red Earth team who work tirelessly and joyfully for the benefit of their community.

Red Earth's mission is to invest in people as a catalyst for the Burnett Inland to thrive into the future. It is a vehicle for involving, supporting, building, advocating for, and investing in the region.

***We show our heart through our actions.*** Some of the ways we have demonstrated that this year include:

The **Red Earth Community Leadership Program** - With over 220 Alumni, Red Earth's flagship program continues to significantly invest in the personal and professional development of those in the Burnett Inland, and beyond.

The annual **Red Earth Leadership Forum** - An opportunity for people to be inspired, to connect, to collaborate, and to co-design the future of the region.

The current **Disaster Resilient: Future Ready Program** which is being delivered in partnership with Future for Rural & Regional Renewal (FRRR) to increase disaster preparedness and strengthen resilience.

Red Earth's **philanthropic structure** allows us to auspice fundraising initiatives that meet the needs of the Burnett Inland, i.e. the recent South Burnett Mental Health Golf Challenge which raised \$70,000 for mental health initiatives in the region.

**Red Earth plays a vital role in fostering local philanthropy and empowering the region to address their unique challenges and opportunities.**



## *Our Vision*

Growing an even better Burnett Inland

## *Our Purpose*

Red Earth Community Foundation exists to invest in people and act as a catalyst for the Burnett Inland region to thrive into the future.

## *Our Values*

We care  
We have courage  
We collaborate  
We have commitment

## *How can you be part of the impact?*

### **Time**

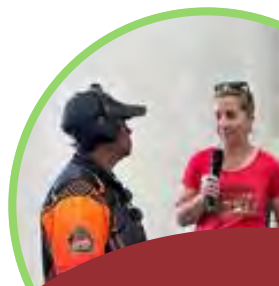
Volunteering your time and talents through our work, including involvement in our Red Earth Leadership Program, Leadership Forum, fundraising or other working groups that build an even better Burnett Inland for the future.

### **Talent**

Sharing your ideas with other like-minded people about how to respond to the immediate needs now and help co-design our long term future to maximise the opportunities in our region.

### **Treasure**

Consider making a one-off or regular donation today, or work with Red Earth to establish a fund that continues your legacy for tomorrow. Red Earth can make your giving impactful through supporting causes important to you and your family.



# Chair's Message

*by Georgie Somerset*



Transitions and growth, change and yet stability, looking over the horizon to what the possibilities might be while making the most of the resources we have, enabling our region to design its future and being in current conversations across both everyday and complex topics – these are all part Red Earth.

*Red Earth invests in people*

We know our communities thrive because of the people in them, and we know by investing in human capital, we are investing in our region's capacity to respond positively to opportunities and challenges – together.

This year our investment has included our flagship community leadership program, small group discussions in community, involving community members in national conversations and sitting in conversations that will impact the landscape of the future.

We have relished the opportunity to invest in people throughout the year – it is an investment that continues to grow its return year on year, and Red Earth celebrates so many achievements for the Burnett Inland and beyond.

The 2024 Red Earth Community Leadership program was our 10th, and also marks the end of an era as we transition facilitation – thank you Pam McAllister and Heather Ellis for such a significant investment in our region, supporting the development of the program and caring for our participants over the decade. We know your deep connection with our region will remain and you will always be part of the Red Earth family.

Our annual Leadership Forum with a focus on Circularity gave light to conversations that will shape activities into the future both here in our region and in neighbouring communities.



# Chair's Message

Enabling the South Burnett Mental Health Challenge to harness local support – and a passion for golf – with programs that will connect and support the mental health of our communities is not only critical but also rewarding, and we look forward to our Community Foundation being able to support other local initiatives into the future.

Working with FRRR on the Disaster Resilient: Future Ready program is enabling community conversations in some of our smallest communities, and being able to engage with the national conversation on disaster is so relevant for our region, where we know there will be events we need to be ready for in the future. The team supporting Red Earth has seen transition this year and I thank all who have been part of the work, and to those in the team now for the energy you bring to your roles.

Focussing on the years ahead, the Red Earth board gathered in the Bunya Mountains to ensure we are clear on how we can be 'future fit' – we are excited about the impact our philanthropic structure can have for our regions, and recent changes to taxation legislation will also enable us to provide additional options for individuals and organisations.

As part of national network of rural community foundations, we know there are opportunities ahead, and we are working to support our communities to navigate these for long term legacy and impact.

Thank you to all who have supported Red Earth – our team, the board, community members who give of their time, treasure and talent, and our region, for being proud of who you are.

We look forward to building our investment in the region and seeing the return in the years ahead.

*Georgie Somerset*



# Strategic Pillars



## **Celebrating**

We celebrate and share stories that highlight the successes of both Red Earth Community Foundation and the people in our region. It's about recognising and valuing local culture, building pride in who we are, and investing in people to grow their leadership skills and potential. By celebrating what we achieve together and sharing these stories, we can inspire positive change and strengthen the identity of our region.



## **Investing in People**

We recognise that everyone is a leader and look for opportunities to support them to grow and make a difference in their communities. One of the ways we deliver on this is through the annual Red Earth Community Leadership Program, which creates opportunities for learning and empowering local people to step up and lead. We invest in people to help people build the skills and confidence to shape their future.



## **Innovative Collaboration**

By bringing people together, we scaffold the creation of new ideas and help drive positive change. Red Earth Community Foundation is a catalyst for good things! It provides opportunities for collaboration, such as the annual Red Earth Leadership Forum which ignites innovation when we bring people together to design the future of their region. By supporting partnerships, encouraging local philanthropy, and fostering relationships, we help spark solutions that benefit our region.



## **Enduring Impact**

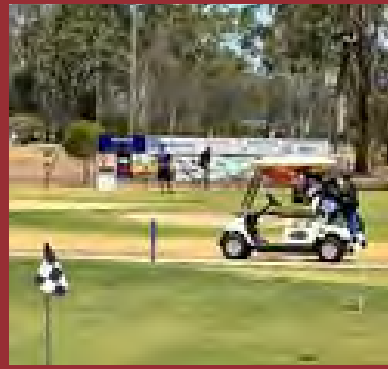
Red Earth Community Foundation has a philanthropic structure that aims to create lasting legacy that will benefit future generations. Our model allows giving both to and through the organisation for the purpose of strengthening our region. By future-proofing our organisation and initiatives, we aim to leave a positive and enduring mark, securing long-term growth and success, both for the Foundation and the region.



## **Trusted Partner**

Red Earth Community Foundation aims to be a reliable and respected voice for the region, advocating for what matters most and having a positive impact on people and communities. We act as a backbone structure for the Burnett Inland, providing support, coordination, and leadership opportunities to strengthen the community.





*Our year  
in review...*





# 2024 Red Earth Community Leadership Program

## *Empowering Leaders, Strengthening Communities*

**At the heart of Red Earth is the belief that leadership is about more than individual growth—it is about developing local leaders and building local networks to strengthen our community's future. The 2024 Red Earth Community Leadership Program (RECLP) brought together 20 passionate leaders to embark on a transformative journey of individual self-awareness and growth, building enduring connections.**

## *Stories of Impact*

This year's program immersed participants in self-discovery, authenticity, and growth. Through meaningful conversations and reflections, they gained confidence, built connections, and embraced their leadership potential.

*"The program helped me better my ability to lead and inspire others—to do better for themselves, their families, and their communities. It pushed me to be comfortable with the uncomfortable, lean into the unfamiliar, and embrace vulnerability. I walked away feeling empowered, shedding self-doubt, and embracing my strengths. This opportunity was magical and life-changing, from the beautiful location to the deep personal insights. I am forever grateful."*

Vicki Bock

*"The RECLP sharpened my focus on values, leadership styles, and how we interact with others. I learned to understand people better, hold space, and ask the right questions—lessons that are now an unconscious part of my life. This program isn't just about leadership; it's about uncovering parts of yourself you rarely explore. I recommend it to anyone ready to grow and give back to their community."*

Matt McCauley

*"The program taught me the importance of values—when they're compromised, life feels intolerable. I've learned to create space for others, listen deeply, and embrace silence. These are life-long learnings that continue to enrich my life and relationships."*

Melinda Thorburn

# 2024 Red Earth Community Leadership Program

## *The Power of Partnership*

RECLP thrives on the dedication of its sponsors and partners. This year's program was proudly supported by Ken Mills Toyota, Powerlink, Stanwell, Swickers, Nutrien Ag Solutions, Sunpork, Buma Australia, South Burnett Regional Council, North Burnett Community Service, the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, and Thorganics.

Their unwavering belief in the value of investing in leadership development and community networks will shape a brighter future for the Burnett Inland region and beyond.

## *A Moment of Inspiration*

A standout moment was when board member Donna Digby shared her powerful story during Module 1. Her honesty and authenticity created a space for deep connection and reflection.

*Donna shared, "Having the opportunity to share my story so early in the leadership journey for the 2024 participants, I felt seen, heard, and valued by the group. The cohort held space for vulnerability and authenticity, leading to honest conversations and the foundation of a new network."*

Donna's commitment to Red Earth, even from outside the region, exemplifies the value of the Foundation and the strength of its connections.

“

*As an alumni of the 2023 program, stepping into the role of coordinating future programs has been a full-circle moment for me. RECLP marked a turning point in my life, aligning seamlessly with my core values of family and community.*

*Now, as a staff member, I give back not just through my role but by dedicating personal time to ensure the program remains rich, magical, and full of opportunities. My passion for RECLP drives me to contribute my time, talent, and treasure, helping future leaders flourish and our communities thrive.*

*Kimberley, Red Earth Community Leadership Program Co-ordinator*

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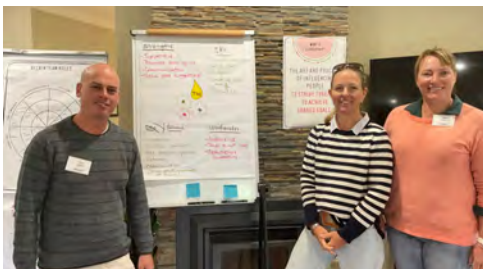


# Red Earth Community Leadership Program

## February and March 2024







“ This program isn’t just about leadership; it’s about uncovering parts of yourself you rarely explore.

Matt McCauley  
2024 RECLP Participant

”





# Disaster Resilient: Future Ready Program

## *Working with Hearts and Hands*

While the DR:FR program is a big part of what we 'do' with our hands and feet at the moment, it is led by heart, purpose and intention.

Red Earth's commitment to invest in people shines through as we work side-by-side with awesome people in multiple small communities. Over food and through regular meetings, we not only connect people to a program that celebrates co-design, community empowerment and drives local problem-solving... but we connect people to each other and that's where the gold is. We see relationships being mended, voices being heard, conflict being resolved in healthier ways, empathy and understanding rising, the value of working together being seen, and a deeper desire to advocate for vulnerable community members coming to the fore. These social and emotional outcomes can last a lifetime and really help shape the future of an individual, a community and our region.

**It's all about people and community.**



“

'Working in community' is about bringing people together, helping them connect, building trust, increasing knowledge, and supporting them as they work towards a shared vision and common goal. The fact that we get to be part of their journey is such a joy.

Amanda  
DR:FR Project Officer

”

“

I love seeing people come together over a meal and a good chat. Knowing that we're helping communities take the lead in designing their own solutions makes it all worthwhile.

Kimberley  
DR:FR Project Officer

”



# Disaster Resilient: Future Ready Program

## *Building Resilience in the Burnett Inland*

In partnership with the Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal (FRRR), Red Earth Community Foundation is proud to deliver the Disaster Resilient: Future Ready (DR:FR) program across six small communities in the Burnett Inland: Kalpowar, Dallarnil, Tansey, Proston, Kumbia, and Cherbourg. This initiative is part of a national effort to strengthen disaster preparedness, improve community wellbeing, and build resilience to the challenges posed by climate, disasters, and other disruptions.

## *Community Engagement*

At the heart of DR:FR is a commitment to supporting community-led resilience-building activities. In each of the six participating communities, local people are generating ideas and driving initiatives that address their unique challenges and opportunities. By collaborating with local organisations and stakeholders, residents are increasing their knowledge of climate risks and enhancing their capacity to lead disaster preparedness, response, and recovery efforts at a local level, while working within the broader ecosystem of disaster management.

Progress in 2023-24 included implementing the DR:FR program framework in each community, fostering stronger connections, and empowering local leaders to innovate and adapt. These community-driven efforts ensure that resilience initiatives are rooted in local knowledge and priorities.

## *Regional Initiatives*

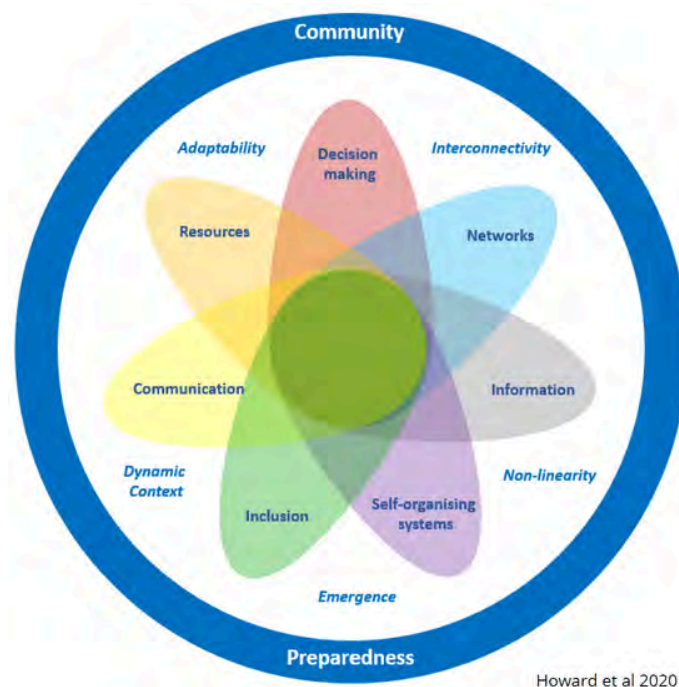
Beyond the work within individual communities, the DR:FR program also focuses on regional initiatives aimed at broader resilience and preparedness. Red Earth and FRRR, in collaboration with the Internal Advisory Group, are working to develop and refine projects that address regional challenges and opportunities, such as agricultural networks, youth engagement in the disaster space, and Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness (P-CEP) training. These initiatives leverage the networks, expertise, and resources of all partners, aligning with the local disaster preparedness, response, and recovery ecosystem, as well as dovetailing with existing programs and Council initiatives within the region.



# Disaster Resilient: Future Ready Program

## *Amplification of the Resilience Dimensions*

The Disaster Resilient: Future Ready program amplifies FRRR's **Resilience Dimensions** by fostering connectedness, enhancing community leadership, and building adaptive capacity across the Burnett Inland. Through community-led initiatives, the program strengthens social networks and encourages collaboration between individuals, organisations, and regional stakeholders. By equipping local leaders with the tools and knowledge to address climate risks, it promotes innovation and supports long-term sustainability. The focus on both local action and regional initiatives ensures that the program not only builds resilience to immediate challenges but also fosters an enduring ability to adapt and thrive in an ever-changing environment.



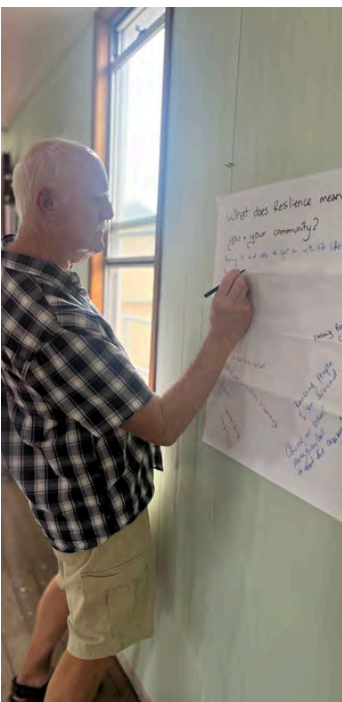
## *Acknowledgements*

This vital work has been made possible through support from the Australian Government's National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), under the Preparing Australian Communities Program – Local Stream, and the Minderoo Foundation. In partnership with FRRR, Red Earth is building a stronger, more resilient Burnett Inland by empowering communities and driving regional innovation. The Disaster Resilient: Future Ready program is a testament to the power of collaboration and community leadership in creating meaningful change and building the capacity of local leaders in the Burnett Inland.





# Disaster Resilient: Future Ready





# 2023 Red Earth Leadership Forum

## *Redesigning the Burnett Inland's Future*

**There is something wonderful about seeing a room of people light up, get excited, contribute their ideas and support the thoughts of others. This kind of room vibrates with energy, inspiration and togetherness. It is conducive to solutions, collaboration and action. Each year Red Earth proactively identifies emerging trends for Burnett Inland people to explore, understand and ready ourselves to consider or embrace new opportunities. Bringing local, state, national and international thought leaders together in a room filled with energy and passion to explore topics close to everyone's hearts - like shaping the future of our region - there's bound to be action!**

The Red Earth Leadership Forum, held in October 2023 in Murgon, was a positively-charged gathering of over 80 community leaders committed to shaping a thriving Burnett Inland. With the theme "Re-Design - the Burnett Inland Future," the forum spotlighted circularity, encouraging innovative approaches to sustainability, resourcefulness, and regional development.

## *Highlights and Impact*

- **Panels with Purpose:** Local leaders shared their stories of success and struggle, sparking relatable and actionable ideas.
- **Big Ideas:** Attendees generated ideas and developed action plans, from creating innovation hubs to advocating for improved connectivity.
- **Strong Networks:** The event fostered collaboration, with 86% of attendees valuing the opportunity to connect with like-minded individuals.

## *A Day of Connection and Vision*

Through keynote addresses, expert panels, and interactive workshops, attendees explored how circularity could drive innovation across diverse focus areas, including **Food Systems, Tourism, Industrial Development, Liveable Communities, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Workforce Capability, Natural Resources, and Connectivity.**

“

Be the ripple, the stone  
has been dropped in your pond.

John Carey

”



# 2023 Red Earth Leadership Forum

Keynote speaker Professor Veena Sahajwalla (UNSW Sydney), a global leader in sustainable materials research, challenged attendees to see waste as a valuable resource for new opportunities. Her insights resonated deeply, inspiring ideas to transform end-of-life products into sustainable solutions.

Dr Chad Renando (Rural Economies Centre of Excellence) shared a global perspective on circularity and how it can be applied to the Burnett Inland, while Stephanie McMahon (General Manager Strategy and Sustainability at Stanwell) shared her learnings from a recent study tour after coming home with some truly valuable insights around circularity.

## *Community Led Action*

Eight breakout groups tackled pressing challenges, crafting “Big Ideas” to reimagine the Burnett Inland. Outcomes included a focus on **reducing waste, fostering youth engagement through summits, promoting regional tourism, and enhancing workforce capabilities**. Each initiative reflected the forum’s goal: to co-design a vibrant, sustainable future for the Burnett Inland.

## *Acknowledgements*

This impactful event was made possible by the generous support of sponsors, including Stanwell, Powerlink, and the Department of Agriculture & Fisheries. Their contributions demonstrate a shared commitment to the region’s success.

“  
We can all be  
world changers,  
from right here in  
the Burnett Inland.

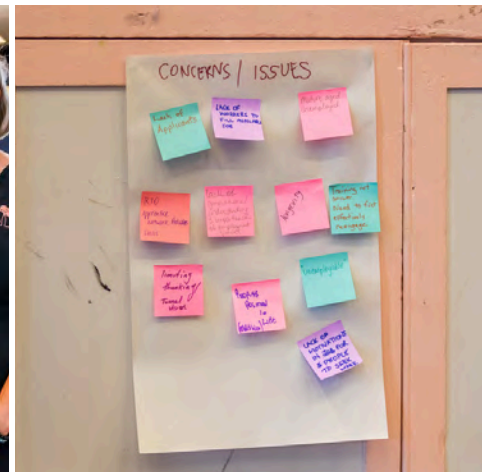
*Andrew Bryant*

“  
It’s a great time for  
community groups and  
businesses to come together  
to network and share ideas  
and start putting some  
actionable tasks in place to  
start making a difference in  
our community.

*Megan Nilon*

“  
Don’t wait to be the  
most qualified  
person in the room,  
take action now to  
make a difference.

*Stephanie McMahon*



# 2023 Red Earth Leadership Forum







# Cherbourg Leadership Program

## *Placed Based and Powerful*

**Celebrating culture, sharing stories, building pride and growing people's leadership skills and potential are all part of Red Earth's purpose to be a catalyst for a thriving region. These elements are the heartbeat of a growing and changing community, and are the very things that underpin why we are working to develop a place-based, culturally appropriate, powerful leadership program in partnership and under the guidance of Elders and community leaders in Cherbourg.**

The Cherbourg Leadership Program, which is funded by the Queensland Government and Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal (FRRR), will design and deliver a tailored leadership program that meets the specific needs of Cherbourg's community. By empowering emerging and existing leaders, the leadership program will enhance community engagement, build resilience, amplify leadership skills, foster a positive vision for the future, and empower individuals to respond to change, challenges and opportunities.

## *Progress and Milestones*

- Consultations with Cherbourg leaders, community members and key stakeholders to gain insights and wisdom that will inform the program design phase, which begins in December 2024.
- Defining a program format that enables participation and identifying strong themes that will inform program design.
- Development initiated for an outcomes-focused program framework addressing locally-identified issues.
- Future milestones include the refinement of program design, facilitator engagement, and delivery of the pilot program.
- Evaluation processes will ensure the program's effectiveness, with participant feedback shaping the program's final iteration.



**There is so much enthusiasm for this program! We are loving working with the Cherbourg community to gain their wisdom, hear their desired outcomes and seek feedback to ensure the program will be beneficial and culturally appropriate. We have been welcomed by community leaders and feel privileged to be part of this.**

*Amanda, Cherbourg Leadership Program Co-ordinator*





# Local Philanthropy: Giving to and through Red Earth

## *Investing Where Your Heart Is*

At Red Earth Community Foundation, philanthropy isn't just a concept—it's the heartbeat of our community. It's how we transform potential into progress and dreams into reality. Our unique model empowers people, businesses, and organisations to reinvest in their community, creating a ripple effect of generosity and growth long into the future.

## *Small Acts, Big Impact*

Take the inspiring story of a Kingaroy high school student. As a teenager, her community rallied to support her journey to compete in sporting events. Today, she's paying it forward by establishing a sub-fund within Red Earth's philanthropic platform, ensuring future young athletes have the resources to chase their dreams. This is the essence of local philanthropy: turning small acts of kindness into legacies of opportunity.

## *Community-Driven Solutions*

Philanthropy isn't just about giving; it's about addressing real challenges and seizing new opportunities. A prime example is the South Burnett Mental Health Golf Challenge, which raised an impressive \$70,000 this year to enhance access to local mental health services. What began as a vision from local leaders to improve mental health support in the community quickly gained the backing of local golfers and the business sector, demonstrating that when we unite around a shared cause, we can achieve extraordinary results. Similarly, "Dinner with the Captains" brought our community together in support of the Cancer Council Queensland's Relay for Life campaign. With \$50,000 raised, this initiative contributes funding for life-saving efforts locals often need to access.

## *Rich in Resources, Richer in Generosity*

At Red Earth, philanthropy is simple yet profoundly impactful. Our Red Earth Future Fund, launched in 2023, invites individuals, families, and businesses to reinvest wealth. These investments become drivers of transformative change—supporting scholarships for aspiring leaders and skills, enhancing community facilities, and creating a legacy of progress for generations to come.

## *The Invitation to Make a Difference*

Imagine the possibilities: the success of your business funding education for a young mind, or your family's contribution building a better tomorrow for the Burnett Inland. Philanthropy is more than a transaction—it's a gift to the future, an inheritance of hope and opportunity. Join us in shaping the future of our region. It's never been easier to give back to the place we all call home.

# Dinner with the Captains

## *A Night of Inspiration and Impact*

On August 6, 2023, the Red Earth Community Foundation proudly served as the auspice organisation for the **Dinner with the Captains**, an extraordinary evening held in Kingaroy. The event raised an impressive **\$50,000** for the South Burnett Relay for Life campaign, benefiting Cancer Council Queensland. This achievement was made possible through the generosity of over **35 donors** from across the Burnett Inland region.

The evening featured a captivating lineup of guest speakers, including **Jodie Purves**, **Natalie Cook**, and **Allan Langer AM**, who shared their inspiring stories in interviews led by former Australian cricketer and event Chair, **Carl Rackemann**. After years of cancellations due to COVID-19, the return of this event marked a celebratory moment for the community.

With the help of sponsors such as Stanwell, TAFE, McDonald's, Bendigo Bank, BUMA, RES, Crow FM, Southburnett.com.au, and Burnett Today, the dinner brought together **242 attendees** for an unforgettable night of connection and purpose.

General Manager Melinda Jones expressed her gratitude: "We feel immensely privileged to have been part of this special evening, which raised a phenomenal amount for a great cause."





# South Burnett Mental Health Golf Challenge

## *A Community Driven Success*

The **2023 South Burnett Mental Health Golf Challenge**, auspiced by **Red Earth Community Foundation**, displayed the incredible power of collaboration and community spirit. Working closely with Gavin “Spud” Jones and Scott “Hook” Henschen, Red Earth provided vital administrative support to ensure the success of this initiative. Together, they raised an impressive **\$70,000** to fund mental health initiatives across the South Burnett and Cherbourg regions.

## *Transforming Funds into Regional Initiatives*

The funds raised have supported numerous impactful initiatives that support mental health services and support throughout the region. These include:

- The **Murgon Junior Rugby League Squad Nights**: Providing a safe space for social connection and mental wellbeing education for players and their families.
- The **Rosalie North Landcare Mental Wellbeing Bus Trip**: A unique opportunity for participants to learn about land care, connect with others, and gain access to mental health resources.
- The **Kingaroy Head to Health Centre Community Garden Project**: Developing a peaceful outdoor area for gardening activities and community interaction.
- Funding for **Essential Health Services’ Hand Up Project**: Offering mental health services to 60 community members, breaking down barriers to access care.
- **Nanango & District Netball Association Free Netball Clinic**: Engaging young participants in fitness, mindfulness, and mental health care to stay strong for life.
- **South Burnett Karate Association’s Neon Night Walk**: An inclusive evening event promoting mental health wellbeing and community connection.
- **Feeling Low Children’s Book Distribution**: Providing schools, libraries, and hospitals with a mental health resource to educate young readers about seeking help if feeling low
- **South Burnett CTC’s Nanango Community Centre**: Supporting the establishment of a community center in Nanango to assist with the resources to support people access mental health support locally.

# South Burnett Mental Health Golf Challenge

- **Maidenwell Music Mix Mental Health Event:** Hosting a music event and raising funds to support mental health services in rural communities.
- **Farmers Mental Health Evening at The Washpool:** The second mental health evening coordinated by Scott "Hook" Henschen, featuring a guest speaker to support and connect farmers with each other and local services.

*These diverse initiatives reflect a commitment to addressing mental health needs across sectors, ages, and communities in the South Burnett and Cherbourg.*

## *A United Effort*

The great success of the South Burnett Mental Health Golf Challenge was achieved through a series of golf competitions held at clubs across the South Burnett. Golfers, businesses, and community members came together, contributing donations, sponsorships, and auction items. The funds raised are a testament to the community's dedication to making a tangible difference.

*Gavin Jones reflected, "The support just kept growing. Hook and I could not hold back the tears of appreciation when the numbers were tallied at the final event at the Kingaroy Golf Club."*

Red Earth's Deputy Chair, John Carey, added, *"This initiative is a powerful example of how local collaboration can support mental wellbeing and create lasting change in our community."*

## *Creating a Legacy of Connection*

The South Burnett Mental Health Golf Challenge stands as a testament to the strength, unity and capacity of our region to create its own solutions. By funding impactful programs and creating spaces for local people to focus on their passion, Red Earth has been behind the scenes assisting this initiative have a lasting contribution to the Burnett Inland.

Red Earth Community Foundation is proud to have enabled these much-needed mental health services in partnership with the community.



# South Burnett Mental Health Golf Challenge

## *A Local Story of Support...*

Rosalie North Landcare would like to express our heartfelt gratitude for the sponsorship we received from the South Burnett Mental Health Golf Challenge. This generous funding was instrumental in supporting our Wellness Bus Tour held in March 2024, enabling us to host a guest speaker who delivered an inspiring "PEPP Up and Vitality" presentation to approximately 25 participants.

The event focused on fostering mental wellbeing, genuine connections, and positivity. Morning tea was provided, setting the stage for meaningful conversations and an uplifting experience. After morning tea, the group were taken by bus to a local plant nursery and then on to the Upper Yarraman Farmers Hall for lunch and an "R U Ok?" presentation.

Highlights of the day included raffles, a coffee van, nutritious food, and energising live music, all of which contributed to a vibrant atmosphere of community spirit.

The tour had a profound impact, sparking great discussions around mental health and emphasising the importance of finding joy and connection in everyday life.

We are proud to have made a positive difference in the lives of rural community members and are deeply appreciative of the South Burnett Mental Health Golf Challenge for helping make this possible.

*Jane Hodgkinson*  
Treasurer, Rosalie North Landcare



# Red Earth's Giving Sub Fund

## *Empowering our Region*

Through our partnership with the **Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal (FRRR)**, the Red Earth Community Foundation continues to strengthen its ability to support impactful community initiatives across the Burnett Inland region. This unique collaboration allows donors to contribute to our mission, knowing their funds are securely managed and distributed where they're needed most.

## *Fundraising*

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, the Red Earth Community Foundation FRRR Account reached an ending balance of **\$31,764.07** as of June 30, 2024. These funds are a testament to the collective effort of individuals, businesses, and organisations who share our vision for a thriving region.

## *A Trusted Partnership with FRRR*

FRRR acts as a philanthropic backbone for the Red Earth Community Foundation, ensuring:

- Funds are securely held and professionally managed.
- Donors can choose to remain anonymous or share their details.
- Administrative oversight and transparency.

Red Earth's philanthropic structure and partnership with FRRR also enable tax-deductible donations, making it easier for community members and businesses to give back meaningfully.

## *Moving Forward*

This financial partnership ensures that Red Earth can continue supporting vital community projects across the Burnett Inland, including:

- Leadership development programs.
- Resilience-building initiatives.
- Funding support for grassroots efforts that align with our values.

We express our deepest gratitude to all our donors and partners for their continued support. Together, we're creating opportunities that empower our region to thrive.



# Gifts in Memory

## *Honouring Loved Ones*

Our “Gifts in Memory” initiative is a heartfelt way to honour loved ones who have passed away by providing an opportunity to make a donation in memory of someone special, either as a one-off tribute or on meaningful anniversaries.

When you make a “Gift in Memory,” our team will work with you to create a beautiful written memoir celebrating your loved one’s life. These personal stories are shared on our website and social media, creating a lasting tribute that brings their memory to life in our community.

You can choose to direct their gift to specific areas of support, such as leadership development, or to our growing corpus, helping to strengthen our region for everyone.

Through “Gifts in Memory,” the Red Earth Community Foundation is honored to help families and friends keep cherished memories alive while supporting a brighter future for our community.

“

The memory of a loved one is never truly gone –  
it lives on in the hearts of those they inspired  
and the actions they set in motion.

”



# Ambassadors Program

## *Spreading the Word, Building the Future*

The Red Earth Ambassador Program is an opportunity to become part of a growing community of supporters helping to elevate the work of the Red Earth Community Foundation. The best part? You don't have to live in the region to make an impact – Ambassadors are welcome from all over.

The Ambassador Program is essential to the Foundation's continued success. It brings together individuals, many of whom are already connected to Red Earth's activities, and encourages them to learn more about our goals, projects, and the progress we've made. It's a simple yet powerful way to spread the word and help us grow our local Community Foundation.

As an Ambassador, you'll have the chance to provide valuable feedback on community issues, while sharing insights with your own networks to help build a deeper understanding of the Foundation's work. Your involvement helps us reach a broader audience, ensuring that we continue to connect with diverse groups and strengthen our region for the future.

We invite you to join us in actively shaping the future of the Burnett Inland.

If you'd like to get involved, please reach out to any of the Red Earth team or Directors – we'd love to have you on board.

“

The future is shaped by those  
who choose to act today – together,  
we can create the change we wish to see.

”





# Meet the Red Earth Board

**Red Earth is fortunate to have eleven capable, passionate, skilled volunteers who form 'the Board'. Their expertise guides Red Earth's investment in the region and their vision shapes the future of the Foundation.**



*Georgina Somerset AM*

**Chairperson**

Georgie is a rural leader who grows beef at Durong with her family. She established her first business at the age of seventeen, setting her on a career path that has focused on rural and regional communities ever since. Georgie is a connector of ideas, networks and people, as comfortable in the cattle yards as she is in the boardroom, using her well-honed skills to navigate the road in between. Georgie is General President of AgForce Queensland, deputy chair of the Royal Flying Doctor Service - Queensland Section, and also serves as a director for the ABC, the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) and the National Farmers' Federation. As founding Chair of Red Earth Community Foundation, Georgie seeks to invest in her regions' future for generations to come. A believer in investing in people and lifelong learning, she invites all to come on the journey to create an even better future for all!



*John Carey*

**Deputy Chairperson**

John is a highly skilled engagement professional with many years of experience in building and nurturing long-term relationships and networks that facilitate outcomes for individuals, community organisations and industry, particularly in rural and regional Qld. He has enjoyed a diverse career encompassing banking and finance, public service, local government, and is currently a long term employee in the energy sector. Having grown up in rural Queensland, John possesses a deep understanding of the unique challenges and opportunities that exist in regional areas. He brings a blend of strategic thinking, care and compassion and practical application of his expertise and experiences to Red Earth and has been instrumental in many of the initiatives that are helping the Burnett Inland create solutions and pathways towards their preferred future.



*Andrew Bryant*

**Director**

Andrew is a Learning Manager with the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation, designing and delivering leadership programs. Outside of that role, Andrew also provides workshop facilitation (leadership, emotional intelligence, suicide prevention) and hosting/MC services. Andrew was a resident of the Burnett for a total of 35 years, and still resides in the Wide Bay Burnett. Andrew believes the Burnett Inland is underestimated in the level of potential its people and resources have that are yet to be developed. Andrew still cares for the region, as it gave him a great start in his professional and leadership journey, and would like to continue to give back, and see it increase its level of influence across the state and nation.

# Meet the Red Earth Board



*Grace Campbell*

**Director**

Grace is a director at an agribusiness-focused accounting firm in Bundaberg. With a love for agribusiness and sustainability, she envisions thriving regional towns and businesses. Her passion lies in supporting the next generation of agribusiness owners, fostering sustainable practices, and guiding financially sound decisions for enduring success. Grace's expertise extends beyond conventional accounting; she navigates taxation legislation specific to primary producers, crucial for prosperity into the future. Proficient in various accounting programs, analysis tools and farm production software, Grace advises clients on innovative solutions for business growth. Grace's adventures have seen her with roles in the remotest parts of the Kimberley, Gulf and Western QLD. Balancing her professional role with her personal life and cherishing moments with her young family, you will find Grace in the garden in her spare time. To Grace, Red Earth Community Foundation is a proactive force that promotes connection to the community, ensuring long-term sustainability as a thriving region that will benefit future generations.



*Donna Digby*

**Director**

Donna is passionate about showcasing the best of regional Australia: the strength and perspective of local people, the places and working with others to create a vibrant future and thriving regions. She values authenticity, inclusion, collaboration and creating a positive impact. Donna embodies a people-centred, place-based and purpose-driven approach. For the past two decades, Donna has worked with local people in Victoria and the NT to inform, shape and achieve their futures. She is an inclusive and community focused leader that believes we can achieve richer outcomes for our communities when we create spaces and opportunities to draw on the ideas, experiences and expertise from within our community as well learning from other communities in Australia. Donna is driven to support community leaders to reach their leadership potential by drawing on their lived experience, creating pathways for leadership development, building networks, mentoring and attracting investment to facilitate this. Donna is the current NT Chair – Agrifutures Rural Women's Award Alumni, Board Director of Red Earth Community Foundation and Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR), Graduate of the Australian Rural Leadership Program, Australian Institute of Company Directors and has completed a Bachelor of Environmental Science with Honors.



*Carl Rackemann*

**Director**

Carl knows a thing or two about harnessing the power of community through his role as patron of the annual South Burnett Relay for Life fundraising event. While the rest of Australia knows him as a handy cricketer, Carl's local reputation is based around his agricultural business and his outstanding commitment to the local branch of Relay for Life, which has raised over \$1M for the Queensland Cancer Council to date under his patronage. He cites his decision to return to his childhood farming roots over a potential coaching career in international sport as the only rational choice. That decision allowed him to share time with his family and friends in a rural community setting, where he began creating the connections and networks that would lead him to Red Earth. Carl understands the long-term value of Red Earth Community Foundation to the region and sees a future where the Burnett has developed a healthy community confidence and high level of self-reliance.



# Meet the Red Earth Board



*Andrew Zerner*

**Director**

After completing a Bachelor of Applied Science in Rural Management through the University of Queensland, Andrew returned to the family farm where he ran a successful dairy operation with his parents near Murgon. Later, this operation was converted to a beef enterprise allowing Andrew to work both on and off farm, where he worked part-time for local agribusinesses including developing and implementing Quality Assurance programs. Today, Andrew and his wife Katie continue to live on the family property and run a commercial beef trading enterprise, where Andrew follows his passion for Regenerative Agriculture by profitably increasing soil carbon with cattle via grazing principles. This first-hand experience is valuable in Andrew's role as a consultant for RCS Australia, working with farming clients across Australia, using knowledge and appropriate management to reduce inputs and improve profitability and balance in people's lives. Andrew sees Red Earth as a critical component in building vibrant farms and communities; where people are happy, healthy, secure and at peace; where people feel supported and connected and the next generation has wonderful opportunities to create wealth and then pay it forward themselves.



*Scott McLennan*

**Director**

Born and spending his early years in the South Burnett, Scott has always had a distinct passion for all things related to life in regional and rural Queensland. Once university life in Brisbane was completed Scott began a 12-year journey working throughout the entire state, in relieving and education roles in every major (and many minor) hospitals in regional Queensland. Scott has now over 35 years experience in the Medical Imaging field. In more recent times he has focussed on the delivery of Radiology services both in his own business interests, as a consultant and mentor for other like-minded professionals in the regional Australia private and public sector. An enthusiastic proponent for espousing the benefits of professional health careers (or any careers for that matter) Scott has very recently collaborated with a number of universities to provide positive career pathways for high school and university students who hail from the country. He sees the untold potential in many bush kids, who often possess hard work ethics and community values. Scott has a love of his young family, and enjoys his precious spare time with them, on a golf course (sometimes in different parts of the world) and on a push bike. The French and Italian Alps and the wines and champagnes from those countries are a particular delight.



*Elizabeth Beavis*

**Director**

Liz has lived and worked in the South Burnett region since 2010. She was Operations Manager and Engineering Manager at Stanwell's Tarong Power Station, before taking the role of Site Manager for GE at Coopers Gap Wind Farm (the largest in Australia at the time). After two years in that role, she started as Portfolio Manager – Renewables for Worley Power Services, responsible for the operations and maintenance of multiple wind farms across Australia. Liz has leveraged her background in Chemical Engineering and a PhD in Coal Gasification, to become a respected leader in Australia's power generation industry. Liz is passionate about mentoring and leadership as the key to developing people to meet their full potential, both at work and in the community. Before becoming a Director at Red Earth, Liz also volunteered on the Kumbia Memorial Hall Committee to organise the monthly market, where she sells handmade soap and honey.

# Meet the Red Earth Board



*Belinda Wake*

**Director**

Belinda's memories of growing up on a farm in the South Burnett highlight the value of connections made from community engagement whilst displaying an understanding of both the challenges and rewards of rural life and primary production enterprises. After a 25-year career in rural and remote education, Belinda seized the opportunity to remain in Kingaroy to develop her knowledge and utilise her skills to lead the expansion of an agricultural company. During this experience she has realised the value of inter-generational weaving and is committed to building supportive, strong, and resilient teams. Belinda believes the greatest outcomes are achieved if we harness strengths and provide opportunities to develop weaknesses. She views Red Earth Community Foundation as a driver to foster vibrant communities, providing an investment in Burnett Inland for generations to come. As an alumnus of the Red Earth Community Leadership program Belinda is passionate about providing such opportunities to allow individuals to embrace leadership within their own lives – at individual family, community, or corporate governance level.



*Bobby-Leigh Redgard*

**Director**

Bobby has always had a passion for helping people, a passion which was enriched when she met her husband and his family. They have been great advocates for their community of Mundubbera for many years and taught her the importance of everyone having equal opportunities and that rolling up your sleeves to lend a hand is not for praise or recognition but just to lend a hand. If you are counting the hours of community service you do, you might just be in it for the wrong reason. Bobby has carried this in personal and professional life. Bobby's own family taught her hard work and education is the key for moving forward. All these attributes makes Bobby passionate about the Red Earth Leadership program, because a good leader, no matter what level or title, is able to bring out the best in people, working together to achieve the same goal. As a Community Service Coordinator, Bobby is usually on the front of seeing people at their worst, whether it be during financial struggles, grief or a surprise change in circumstance. She takes great pride in being able to navigate people through these times with empathy and respect but most of all allowing them to choose the right path for themselves. Bobby is a strong advocate and believes projects need to be community driven to allow our communities to have greater ownership. She likes to remind the community during all events, the Monto Neighbourhood Centre isn't hers, it is theirs, and if they want to see something, come in to discuss as she has an open-door policy to all. Bobby has seen that with events such as flood and drought within the North Burnett, all communities come together to pick up the pieces and start again. *"The resilience of the Burnett communities is unlike any other, they work well to achieve their goals and are passionate about their small communities."*

## ... and the Red Earth Team





## *Melinda Jones*

**General Manager until April 2024**

With almost 30 years experience within the tourism, economic and community development sectors, Melinda is skilled in non profit organisations, business and strategic planning, youth and community development, business coaching, grant applications, event management and tourism and hospitality industry practices. Melinda has a passion to enable and strengthen communities, establishing strong partnerships at a grass roots level and within all levels of government. Melinda also embraces and supports innovation to create social and economic change for the betterment of regional communities.



## *Jane Hodgkinson*

**Administration Officer until June 2024**

Jane is passionate about her region and community. She is one of the founders that established the Nanango Heritage Community Bank. Jane and her family run the family-owned and operated Firebreak Farm, located in the Neumgna district on Wakka Wakka country in the foothills of the Bunya Mountains. Jane is also an active member of the Wild Horse FM 997 Community Radio and runs Yoga sessions in the South Burnett and Toowoomba region.



## *Kimberley Kunde*

**Project Officer since September 2023**

Born and bred in the South Burnett, Kimberley has called Murgon home for most of her life. Married and raising 5 children to be good humans is high on her list. Kimberley's spirit shines in her commitment to lending a hand and getting the job done! With a diverse background spanning banking, administration, and numerous other pursuits she is a treasure trove of knowledge and eager to contribute and create positive change. With her roots firmly planted in this vibrant region, she brings a wealth of experience and passion for making a difference.



## *Amanda Woodward*

**Project Officer since October 2023**

Amanda is passionate about empowering people and loves seeing others grow and thrive in their personal journey, professional development, and community involvement. Amanda enjoys problem solving and project management. Having lived in the North Burnett her whole life, also raising her two children there, she has an understanding and passion for rural and regional communities, and a desire to see them grow, adapt and thrive. Amanda has a particular interest in youth empowerment, valuing the voices of the next generation and believing their input is essential to the shape the future.



## *Sarah Aberdein*

**Project Officer since March 2024**

Sarah is a proud 2019 Red Earth Community Leadership Program Alumni with a passion for empowering and celebrating rural communities. Sarah is a fourth-generation farmer who, together with her husband and three children, raise beef cattle near Biggenden. With 14 years of experience in administration and media, Sarah brings expertise, dedication, and a collaborative spirit to the Foundation.



# Our Future is in our Hands

We invite you to consider how you can help shape the future of the Burnett Inland.

*Here are a few ideas:*

**Volunteering** your time and talent. Together we can continue to invest in people to grow local leaders, and see the ripple effect throughout the Burnett Inland.

Establish a **Memorial** for a special person, ensuring their legacy continues with a named fund, scholarship, program or project.

Become a one-off or regular **Benefactor** by making Tax Deductible Donations through FRRR to the Red Earth Resilience Fund.

Invest in people through annual **Sponsorship** of the Red Earth Community Leadership Program

Utilise Red Earth's philanthropic structure by setting up a **Sub Fund** that can grow and be distributed according to your charitable purpose.

If you would like to invest in any of these ways, or would like to find out more, please contact one of our Board Members or any of the team.

**We acknowledge the founding members of the Red Earth Community Foundation working group and are grateful for their support and dedication in establishing the Foundation's journey:**

Karen Seiler  
Georgie Somerset  
Louise Judge  
Nina Temperton  
Keith Campbell  
Carl Rackemann  
Barry Green  
Deb Frecklington  
Anne Martindale  
Sue Goddard  
John Carey  
David Ballin  
Libby Daniels  
Claire Kapernick  
Mandy Bishop  
David Carter  
Cheryl Dalton  
Ros Heit  
Dellese Heit  
Susan Mortimer  
Kathy Duff  
Jeff Connor  
Wayne Kratzmann  
Nicole Connolly  
Jacki Vreeken  
Trudi Bartlett



To be kept updated about Red Earth,  
please subscribe to our mailing list via  
our website [www.redearth.org.au](http://www.redearth.org.au)

*To find out more about any of our programs, our  
philanthropic structure that enables you to give to  
and through Red Earth, or simply to learn more about  
the Burnett Inland's own Red Earth Community  
Foundation, reach out to any of our board members  
or team. We'd love to connect with you.*

# **RED EARTH** **Community Foundation**



*Investing in people*

as a catalyst for a **thriving** Burnett Inland

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