

# THE COUNTRY NETWORKER

REACHING ACROSS AUSTRALIA

JULY/AUGUST 2025

GROWTH

ACROSS THE COUNTRY

OLD BANK BUILDING CASTLEMAINE





## CONTACT US

### COUNTRY NETWORKER

[editor@countrynetwork.com.au](mailto:editor@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!.

- The way the world is going, it's too easy to become despondent. I think we need more humor and lightheartedness, and that's why I'm going to share with you my tips for feeling better.
- Join in Country Network's Sunday evening Zoom chats. In my experience, they're always fun and interesting, and you don't have to speak until you're ready.
- Dark chocolate is said to lift your mood. Eat some!
- Be kind to yourself. Give yourself treats
- Catch up with family and friends. Search member profiles on Country Network's website. You might find someone near you or someone you'd like to visit.
- And if all else fails, visit a new town or city or other place you've always wanted to go to.

John Holden  
[john@countrynetwork.com.au](mailto:john@countrynetwork.com.au)

## EDITORIAL

*John Holden.*  
Editor

## DESIGN

## CONTRIBUTORS

*Jeffrey Sproal*  
*Colin Armstrong*  
*John Holden*  
*Paul Ward*



A heartfelt shoutout to the Country Network members who put their all into organising events for the enjoyment of other members.

To help make the event truly special, and to ensure there's enough room, food or drinks for everyone - Please remember to RSVP.

Check your Events! Your response will make planning so much easier and will guarantee a fantastic time for everyone.

Don't forget to RSVP!

Let's show our appreciation for all the hard work behind the scenes that makes a gathering to remember.

Thank You

*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.*



# president's report



Hello Members and welcome to the July/August edition of the Country Networker. This Networker has been prepared by June 5<sup>th</sup> and left sitting here to go out early July, as Pete and I are spending most of June travelling around Japan on a Trip A Deal escorted tour. At the moment we are looking forward to this great adventure. The itinerary looks very good, although we re visiting many shrines, temples and gardens. We also travel on the fast train and have an overnight ferry trip.

As I mentioned in the last Networker, one of the great things about Country Network is the long-established practice of Hosting. I do hope you as members read the article in the May/June Networker and reply courteously to those members who make contact with you. Hosting is really great and a way to meet members of Country Network as you travel around the country. I know there have been several members who have not had a very pleasant experience when seeking out hosting stays. One member actually left the Association. Please accept a request to host as a first point of contact and if you cannot host please reply to the member letting them know that you cannot host. A quick email is all it takes.

We are quite excited about our visits to local Pride events. Membership Chair Colin is attending the Leeton Pride in June along with Gavin Peacock from Wagga Wagga. In November there is a gaggle of members going to Rainbow on The Plains to be held at Hay. Attending these events brings Country Network into the public arena in these country areas. Hopefully we gain some members, but at the very least we let people see that Country Network is maybe an organization they could seek out and look at. June also saw Ian Howells and members at the Darwin Pride. Many thanks to these members devoting much of their time to Country Network and engaging with non members. Puts our organization out there.

Our AGM is under full planning and we have members already applying for registration. It is exciting to let you know that two members will be travelling from Western Australia to join us at Mulwala. This is most encouraging and I look forward to welcoming them to our AGM along with all other members who attend. It will be a wonderful time and many of you who attend will make some lifelong friendships which is what we are all about. So pack those baggies and head to stay and play at Mulwala.

I am encouraged to see that several members are looking to start a meeting group or an event in their area. It is really up to you how you organize it, a coffee meet, a lunch or brunch or meet for drinks at a favourite watering hole. All it takes is a little step out and you never know what may eventuate. We can help by sending to you names of members in your area so you can make that personal contact and we can cover any costs that you incur.

*Jeff*

President Country Network  
[jeffrey@countrynetwork.com.au](mailto:jeffrey@countrynetwork.com.au)



# 2025 AGM

## 3rd to 7th October 2025

### MULWALA, NSW



Are you looking forward to our AGM in October, I am for it will be a great time. There are lots of new members to meet and hopefully our old friends will show up to enjoy the fun and games. We can't wait for you to join us in **Mulwala, NSW**, for a weekend of meeting new members and catching up with old friends.

#### **Booking your accommodation.**

**Please note that accommodation bookings are per room, not per person.**

Some rooms are \$150.00 per night (2 sharing) and some rooms are \$225.00 per night (3 sharing) No matter what the room price each member pays \$75.00 per night (\$300 for 4 nights)

Standard/Premium Room (19 rooms) 2 sharing \$600.00 (4 nights) 3 sharing \$900.00 (4 nights)

These rooms have a king bed and a single or 3 singles

Premium/Executive Room (15 rooms) 2 sharing \$600.00 (4 nights). These rooms are two people only.

We are staying at the:

**Club Mulwala Resort, 271 Melbourne Street, Mulwala, NSW, 2647.**

**Phone: (03) 5744 233 Email: [catering@clubmulwala.com.au](mailto:catering@clubmulwala.com.au)**

*PLEASE NOTE: THE COST IS PER ROOM, **NOT** PER PERSON. Please divide the room cost by the number of people in the booking to work out a cost per person. For example: If the room houses three people, divide the cost by three, and that is the per-person cost. The prices quoted are for 4 nights and we would like you to stay the 4 nights, as that is the price Club Mulwala has given us based on 4 nights occupancy..*

If sharing with someone, or you would like to be assigned a roommate, you must let us know on the booking form. This will be sent out early May.



### **GETTING TO AND FROM MULWALA.**

The drive time from Sydney to Mulwala down the M31 is: 6 hours, 53 minutes.

The drive time from Melbourne to Mulwala using M31 is: 3 hours 26 minutes.

Drive time from Albury Airport to Mulwala is 1 hour 11 minutes.

Virgin Australia direct flights every day between Gold Coast (OOL) and Albury (ABX).

Qantas has direct flights from Sydney (Kingsford Smith) Airport to Albury Airport

NSW Rail station is Albury/Wodonga. A connecting bus is available to Mulwala.

### **Country Network AGM 2025 All Activities    \$142.00 PER PERSON.**

Friday: Arrival and Meet & Greet

Saturday: AGM Lunch

Saturday Night: 3 course Formal dinner

Sunday: Full Day Bus Tour including the Silo Trail, wineries and farm gate stopovers.

Sunday Night: Dinner is your choice whether the resort or elsewhere.

Monday: Cruising on Lake Mulwala with a BBQ lunch.

Monday Night: Farewell Dinner, Informal Dinner at Resort at your own cost.

As this is our AGM we would like you to attend all activities as the prices are based on 60 people attending. Country Network has also subsidized some events.

AGM Enquiries Please contact: [jeffrey@countrynetwork.com.au](mailto:jeffrey@countrynetwork.com.au)

**APPLICATION FORM FOR THE AGM HAS BEEN EMAILED TO ALL MEMBERS EARLY JUNE. DOWNLOAD A PDF, FILL AND RETURN TO THE [JEFFREY@COUNTRYNETWORK.COM.AU](mailto:JEFFREY@COUNTRYNETWORK.COM.AU) OR POST TO JEFFREY SPROAL 229/11 RESORT ROAD KEW NSW 2439**

### **2025 Country Network AGM Gathering 3rd – 7th October 2025**





# PRIDE NEWS

## REGIONAL PRIDE FESTIVALS

In the last Month Country Network has been represented at two Pride Festivals which is fantastic. Gavin Peacock from Wagga Wagga Joined me at Leeton to Celebrate Leeton Pride where we had a stand please see pictures. We had a great time and was good to network with organisations such as Acon and others who were very interested in our organisation.

Then on the same day in Darwin Ian Howell represented Country Network at Darwin Pride – he also had a successful day – which even gives us more energy to continue this project – we have a break for a while and our next one will be Logan Pride in South East QLD in October the week after the AGM of Country Network. In November we journey to Hay for “Rainbow onThe Plains” and in Victoria visit “Out in The Open” at Shepparton.







## POLO SHIRTS



### Country Network – Polo Shirts – Order form.

For those who wish to pre order our 2025 CN Polo Shirts please complete this form and email it to [Secretary@countrynetwork.com.au](mailto:Secretary@countrynetwork.com.au).

The Secretary will close orders at 5pm on the 28th August 2025. He will then place a bulk order with the manufacturers for delivery to an Executive Committee member or our nominated Shirt Coordinator.

The shirts will be available to collect at the AGM.

The 2025 AGM Gathering Country Network

Club Mulwala Resort – Mulwala

October 3rd – October 7th 2025

Member's Name: .....

Home Address: .....

Phone: .....

Email Address: .....

SHIRT ORDER All are the same colour – GREY, with our CN Logo. Price \$40.00 each

Size selection and amount required

Small \_\_\_\_

Medium \_\_\_\_

Large \_\_\_\_

XL \_\_\_\_

XXL \_\_\_\_

Total Shirts \_\_\_\_\_ Amount owing \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Pay Country Social Network Inc:

**Westpac Bank BSB 034 093    Account 942448**

Reference is your FAMILY name and initial plus POLO – Example P G BLOGS POLO

Once the treasurer [treasurer@countrynetwork.com.au](mailto:treasurer@countrynetwork.com.au) has confirmed with the Secretary that funds have been transferred, he will advise the Secretary who will complete the order.

Any orders received AFTER the closing date will be CANCELLED !



# membership update



From the Membership Coordinators Desk .....

Membership as at:- 16th June 2025

Country Network Members Total	306
New Members for the period	8

Hi to all members, well it is coming up to that time of year when you will hear from Country Network to inform you that your Subscriptions are due. We do hope that you gain engagement, social networks and inclusion from being part of Country Network. We always love to get feedback positive or negative on how we can improve and be better organisation for you to belong to. If you would like to contact me with your ideas or thoughts email me at [colin@countrynetwork.com.au](mailto:colin@countrynetwork.com.au) or Phone or text me on 0481 302 327 – if texting me just say your name and State in the text.

For our Melbourne members I am very excited to advise you that we will be having a regular Monthly catch up – something we have not done for a few years, all Melbourne members have been emailed and more details will be on the Website and Private Facebook page (which all current financial members can join).  
Till next time – cheers Colin A

Colin Armstrong  
Membership Coordinator  
[colin@countrynetwork.com.au](mailto:colin@countrynetwork.com.au)

## Invite a friend!

**Why not invite a friend to join Country Network?**

**Country Network is a great place to introduce your mates to other great guys around Australia.**

**When they sign up, ask them to mention your name!**

**We're always looking for more members to join and experience the fun and friendship of the Network.**

## Welcome new members

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

Mike Cranshaw  
Steve Berg  
Stephen Edwards  
Tony Robertson  
Mick Sonder  
Graham Eddy  
James Barton  
David Tucker

Ashley Fleming  
Wayne Pratt  
Shaun Cram  
Ray Tickner  
Brian Mills  
Clinton Clark  
Billy McNamara  
Jack Collier





# Calling all photographers!

**Would you like your landscape photograph featured on the cover of the Country Networker?**

Send your Australian Landscape photos to [editor@countrynetwork.com.au](mailto:editor@countrynetwork.com.au) and the best photo each month will be chosen as the cover photo for the magazine.

Photos should be in portrait orientation if possible, and not contain identifiable people.

Show off your part of the world to other Country Network members.

Please also include a short introduction about your photo, a little about yourself and where the photo was taken.

So get clicking and we look forward to featuring the winning photograph on the cover of the next issue of the Country Networker.





# SUBMITTING A CN EVENT

It's great to see new events popping up around the country!

Don't forget, anyone can start an event in their area, it's really easy and we will support you by letting all members in your area know about your new event.

There is an easy to follow guide to hosting an event found [HERE](#). To get started just fill out the [event submission form](#) and we will help you with the rest, it's that easy!

Country Network is excited to introduce Event Grants. This is a concept where we provide members with a financial grant to arrange an event in Country Network (CN).

## Why are we doing this?

We would love to see our members come together, get to know each other better, and spend some face-to-face time. And hopefully encourage you to arrange more events.

## What do I need to do?

All you have to do is arrange an event for your fellow CN members.

## What sort of event?

It could be anything, but some ideas could include:

- Weekends away    Attending a LGBTI festival or large annual event in your area.
- Camping.    4WDing.    Fishing.    Bushwalking.    Caravanning.    Winery tours.
- Photography weekend.    Christmas get-together.    A tour of a historic area or an area of natural beauty.

The list is endless so feel free to use your imagination.







# SUBMITTING A CN EVENT

## What else do I need to know?

We are open to hearing all your ideas, but there are a few guidelines as to what sort of an event:

- It needs to be open to all CN members and be inclusive.
- It needs to be something that all members would be comfortable attending and participating in.
- It needs to have a focus on country/rural Australia.
- It needs to be easily accessible by car, public transport etc. Or you can provide lifts or car share.
- It needs to be something substantial like a weekend away, not a coffee morning, pub night or lunch.
- It needs to have a minimum of five people.

## How much is the grant?

The amount will vary depending on how many people attend your event, the number of overall submissions we receive and the overall costs of your event, but as a general guideline, we will offer between \$500 to \$1000 as a grant. The money, to be shared among all event attendees, can go towards accommodation, food, transport, general costs etc. However, you can't claim more than the event cost.

## What do I do next?

Just submit the following event details via email to [president@countrynetwork.com.au](mailto:president@countrynetwork.com.au)

- Event idea
- Location
- Type of accommodation (if applicable)
- Time of year (approx. is okay)
- Number of people you require to attend, or hope to attend (approx.)
- Planned/possible activities for the event.

## What else do I have to do?

The event organiser or an attendee will need to write a short article for the CN newsletter (100-200 words) plus supply some photos within a month of the event happening.

## What if I have some questions?

If you have any questions or would like to run an idea past someone, please contact President Jeff on 0412 651 429 or at [president@countrynetwork.com.au](mailto:president@countrynetwork.com.au)





# BITS AND BOBS – ADVERTS FOR COUNTRY NETWORK

'Belong to a Group of Mates across Australia'



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membership@countrynetwork.com.au  
www.countrynetwork.com.au



## countrynetwork

**"Belong to a group of mates across Australia"**

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From its early beginnings at Dubbo NSW in 1977, Country Network was founded to connect isolated gay men in rural Australia. Early gatherings shaped the networks structure. Over time, it expanded, held annual meetings, then becoming a web based organisation. Now with both rural and our city dwelling members boosting our membership numbers.

Country Network promotes and fosters networking and friendship among male-identifying members of the LGBTIQ+ community across Australia. Whether it's catching up for a chat or a get-together, Country Network is a great way to be part of your community.

Look out for Country Network as we visit Pride Festivals across regional NSW S.E Queensland and Victoria in 2025


**Join Today!**  
countrynetwork.com.au  
Enquiries to membership@countrynetwork.com.au







## countrynetwork

REACHING ACROSS AUSTRALIA



Keeping Our Members Informed



**Stay Connected with Your Community!**

We don't want you to miss out on the exciting stories, events, and updates that are happening in our community! 🌟

By joining our private Facebook group and visiting our website, you'll gain access to inspiring member stories, the latest news, and details about upcoming events that celebrate and uplift our vibrant community. It's the best way to stay informed, engaged, and connected with everything we're working on together.

Be sure to:

- 🌈 Join our private Facebook group for exclusive updates and discussions.
- 🌐 Visit our website regularly to stay in the loop.

We look forward to sharing more with you—because your voice and presence matter to us! Let's make our community stronger together.

Also don't forget, Country Network has a Public Facebook page and for those who use Instagram, we are there. 🍌

<https://www.instagram.com/countrynetworkaustralia/>

<https://www.facebook.com/countrynetworkaustralia>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/CountryNetworkAustralia>

<https://countrynetwork.com.au/>





# JOKES

## THREE LABRADORS.

Three Labradors strike up a conversation at the vets.

The black lab asks why are you two here.

The yellow lab says "I'm a pisser I piss on everything, the sofa, the drapes, the cat, even on the kids. The final straw was last night I pissed in the middle of my owners' bed. So the black lab says, "so what do you think the vet will do?" He's going to give me PROZAC said the yellow lab, all the vets are prescribing it, "supposed to work for everything".

The black lab then turns to the brown lab and asks "why are you here"? I'm a digger I dig under fences, in flower beds. I dig just for the fun of it, the last straw was when I dug a great hole in my master's couch.

The black lab says what do you think they'll do to you?

"Looks like it will be PROZAC for me," said the dejected lab.

The brown lab then turned to the black lab, what are you here for, the black lab says "I'm a humper. I'll hump everything, the cat, the pillows, the table legs, the wife's leg."

The last straw was last night, when my owner got out of the shower and was brushing his teeth, he dropped the top of the toothpaste on the floor, he got down on his hands and knees to look for it. I just couldn't help myself I hopped up on his back and pumped away best hump I've had in years."

The brown and yellow labs exchanged sad glances and said, "So its PROZAC for you too huh." "OH NO, the black lab said, I'm here with my master to get my nails clipped....

An army general is newly stationed in a desert post. On his first day, he calls for a soldier to show him around. While doing this, he notices a camel randomly tied to a tent.

He asks the soldier, "Soldier, why is that camel tied to the tent?"

The soldier looks awkward and answers, "Er, well Sir, as you know there are no women on the base so er, the camel is there for when the men get certain... um...urges"

The general nods in understanding and says, "Well I don't condone this behaviour, but I suppose I understand" A few weeks into the post, the general starts feelings these urges himself. He calls for the soldier to bring the camel to his tent. He then goes outside, gets a stool, and has wild animal sex with the camel.

After he's finished, he climbs confidently of the stool and sees the soldier staring at him, wide-eyed.

"So" the general says with a grin, "Is that how you boys do it here?"

The soldier answers, still wide-eyed, "No Sir, we usually just ride the camel into the nearby town where the boys are"

Donald Trump was sitting at his desk in the Oval Office when an aide came in.

"Sir, here is today's list of casualties from the coalition in Iran. I'm sorry to say that we lost a Brazilian.

Trump dropped his head into his hands. "Oh no...oh no...oh no..."

The aide felt bad. He had never seen him so distraught. "Sir, is there anything that I can do for you?"

Trump looked up and asked with pain visible in his eyes. "Yes...just tell me...how many is a Brazilian?"



## LETS GET COOKING



RECIPETINEATS.COM

### Lemonade Scones (3 ingredients)

Scones from scratch, made using only 3 ingredients! Soft and moist, and must be served with copious amounts of cream and jam.



### Lemonade Scones 3 ingredients from scratch.

The scones made with only three ingredients. These are truly miracle They must be served with copious amounts of cream and jam. That's a given.

#### Ingredients.

3 1/2 cups self raising flour. Plus extra for dusting.

1 cup thickened cream. Heavy cream not whipped.

1 cup lemonade. (Any good fizzy sweet lemonade)

#### To Serve

Whipped cream and Jam.

#### Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 200°C. 390°F. (180° fan forced). Line tray with baking or parchment paper.
2. Combine the flour, cream and lemonade in a bowl and mix until flour is mostly combined. Do not over mix. It will make the scones dense. The dough should be soft and fairly sticky.
3. Turn out onto a floured surface and knead gently just three to five times to bring the dough together, then gently pat into a disc shape. 2.5 cms. thick.
4. Use a 6 cms. round cutter to cut rounds – press straight up and down. Don't twist. Flour the cutter in between.



5. Use a knife or similar to scoop up, (avoid touching the sides) and place on tray, slightly touching each other as they will help each other to rise.
6. Brush the top lightly with milk, (gives a golden top).
7. Bake for 15 minutes until golden on top. Place on rack to cool. Place tea towel over them to stop the tops from getting crusty.
8. Serve with copious amounts of cream and jam, and of course tea!







**Emen8 launched in May 2017 as Australia's biggest and boldest online sexual health and wellbeing initiative for gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men.**

The following three articles you can read by clicking on the link.

How to get a HIV self-test kit at a pharmacy

<https://emen8.com.au/health/sexual-health/how-to-get-a-hiv-self-test-kit-at-a-pharmacy/>

Does PrEP = better sex? The important question nobody is asking about sexual health

<https://emen8.com.au/sex-and-dating/sex/prep-better-sex-important-question-nobody-asking-sexual-health/>

How to get PrEP in Australia during a supply issue

<https://emen8.com.au/health/sexual-health/how-to-get-prep-in-australia-during-a-supply-issue/>



## Support services

### Adult

**Lifeline:** 13 11 14

[lifeline.org.au](http://lifeline.org.au)

**Suicide Call Back Service:** 1300 659 467

[suidecallbackservice.org.au](http://suidecallbackservice.org.au)

**Beyond Blue:** 1300 224 636

[beyondblue.org.au/forums](http://beyondblue.org.au/forums)

**MensLine Australia:** 1300 789 978

[mensline.org.au](http://mensline.org.au)

### Youth

**Kids Helpline:** 1800 551 800

[kidshelpline.com.au](http://kidshelpline.com.au)

**headspace:** 1800 650 890

[headspace.org.au](http://headspace.org.au)

**ReachOut:** [ReachOut.com](http://ReachOut.com)

### Other resources

**Head to Health:** mental health portal

[headtohealth.gov.au](http://headtohealth.gov.au)

**Life in Mind:** suicide prevention portal

[lifeinmind.org.au](http://lifeinmind.org.au)

**SANE:** online forums [saneforums.org](http://saneforums.org)

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander:** [healthinonet.ecu.edu.au](http://healthinonet.ecu.edu.au)

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

**Culturally and linguistically diverse:** [embracementalhealth.org.au](http://embracementalhealth.org.au)



**Mindframe**

An initiative of



**EVERYMIND**



@MindframeMedia

[mindframe.org.au](http://mindframe.org.au)

# BITS AND BOBS – ADVERTS FOR COUNTRY NETWORK



Welcome to  
**Country Network Australia**

*Members Only*

**Private Facebook Group**

*You have more friends than you think  
all over Australia*

 [countrynetwork.com.au](http://countrynetwork.com.au)

Country Network acknowledges the traditional owners as custodians of this land, waters and community. We pay our respects to Australia's First Peoples and their elders past present and future.

Since 1977, Country Network has promoted and fostered networking and friendship among male-identifying members of the LGBTIQ+ community across Australia. Whether it's catching up for a chat or a get-together, Country Network is a great way to be part of your community.



**MEMBER EVENTS**

**countrynetwork**  
REACHING ACROSS AUSTRALIA

**UPCOMING ARE WE MISSING AN EVENT?**

**LET US KNOW!**

Coffee Morning, Lunch or Dinner events

... to keep our Facebook group & Website updated, please advise of any events you have planned ...

**MEMBERS DO NOT FORGET TO SEND YOUR EVENT INFORMATION TO [EVENTS@COUNTRYNETWORK.COM.AU](mailto:EVENTS@COUNTRYNETWORK.COM.AU) THIS ALLOWS US TO KEEP MEMBERS INFORMED THROUGH OUR PRIVATE FACEBOOK MEMBERS PAGE AND THE COUNTRY NETWORKER.**



**bent couch counselling**

Anyone who identifies as a man is welcome at Bent Couch Counselling, where they will find a supportive and therapeutic setting. In addition to online group support sessions geared specifically towards men, I also provide individual online counselling sessions for those who require it. I'm compassionate, deal with insight and empathy and I can assist other men in dealing with these and similar challenges. By dealing with my own personal experiences to seek inner healing, it has allowed me to find purpose in helping others.



**Shaun Williams**  
**Counsellor & Facilitator**  
**0499 487 492**

**Bent Couch Counselling. "Let's Connect"**  
[www.bentcouch.com](http://www.bentcouch.com) | [admin@bentcouch.com](mailto:admin@bentcouch.com)