



Newsletter from the Clarkes

Rural Circuit Ministry 2009

End - Year Two

July saw us back in Roma. The month was scattered with visitors, some from the west and some local. Alison went off to the *Be Creative Country* camp at the Agricultural College in Dalby. Alison proudly produced a wooden jewellery box; she is sure this was only possible because of the encouragement from the teacher and other ladies. This was the first *Be Creative Country* and a great success.

A week later I was in Dalby for the Ministry Training Day (a day for ministers and lay preachers to be encouraged and up-skilled), another first, which will continue.

August, back to Charleville. Alison was head-hunted to do some short term contract work with kids on their writing at the Catholic school. I travelled to Stanthorpe for Presbytery – the weather was beautiful, a shame we had to be indoors most of the day. I began a marriage enrichment course with a couple from one of our congregations.



We flew out for a few days for Mum and Dad's 60th wedding celebrations. The luncheon at the Hope Island Golf Club was a delight. It was good to catch up with some of Mum and Dad's old friends and some of the nephews and nieces.

The Q150 Steam Train steamed into Charleville with a huge community welcome. We bought

seats to Quilpie and returned the next day. We both enjoyed the trip immensely and over nighted with a Christian family in Quilpie. Alison went to the Writers Evening the day before our train trip. I was part of the SES team that provided the overnight security for the Q150 outdoor musical "The Road We're On". On one shift Alison counted 7 layers of clothing! At the end of August we attended the thankyou dinner for the SES security detail.



September was back to Roma where Alison was involved with the Eisteddfod. We were also around for the 'Fire and Fest' in Roma. Alison continued to sing with the 'Westhaven Warbling What Knots' at the retirement home once a week. We continued our practice of filling in at the Info centre and the tourist train. I joined an STAQ (Science Teachers Ass) meeting by phone to discuss progress on the safety in science manual for schools - updating of the old Education Department version. I have been making contributions to the project.

I had two funerals this month too. Although always stressful they often provide for ongoing fulfilling relationships. Alison visited a property near Dulacca to choose fabric for the quilt that our contacts in the Roma art world are going to make us to remember our time out here.



October found us in the Bunyas for a couple of nights – I had meetings in Bell; Alison had a delightful day of bird watching and two nights of open fires! We both filled in on Meals on Wheels in Roma. We assisted with

the Mental Health Week Service, which was held in the Anglican Church. October was also the climax of the SU4H (Stock Up for Hope). This charity cattle drive is the biggest in Australia and raises money for school chaplains in rural and remote schools. We wandered around during the auction of almost 500 head at the cattle yards and attended the Gala Dinner along with 460 other people that night.

Alison flew out for a week to help Mum and Dad move house. I think this was of a great help to Mum and Dad. Shortly after Alison's return, I was off to St George for the first of two weekends to complete the SES flood boat course. After the weekend I spent a day at Jandowae School doing voluntary work – to be completed next year.



At the end of that week we had to make the decision to put Scruffy to sleep. She was having difficulty breathing; both of us have missed her even more than we expected. She had been part of the family for 15 years.

November, back to Charleville, and for me, that meant back to St George to complete the flood boat course. This second weekend was all practical and quite demanding. I

successfully completed the course. Then Alison was off again to attend the formal of her class at Nerang. And Peter Barson (the big boss from Brisbane) came to visit.

The second year is drawing to a close. Our appointment has been extended until mid 2012. We continue to encourage and to be encouraged by the people we meet. God has blessed us through this work. In many respects we are only beginning the work; establishing contacts and becoming known is not an overnight event. As we spend time in each place more opportunities open to us. We are confident that God will continue to use us, and we appreciate your prayers and support.

Nathan has completed his prac teaching with flying colours. He has accepted a vacation job at Dreamworld. He and Megs are doing fine. Meg's brother, Ken is visiting them from Japan. He is hoping to study architecture in Australia next year.

Adam is also chasing more work. He hates not working full time. Adam has a girlfriend, Renee, who Alison has met but I will have to wait till our holidays.

December is annual leave and we are off for a week in Binna Burra and time with Mum and Dad and family, catching up with friends. For me, it will also be presiding over my first wedding! Next year we start off in Roma on January 1.

Rainbow
Bee-eater

Charleville.

Love Bruce & Alison

