



Dear Friends of BCEF

**May 2015**

The Foundation wishes to report on progress during this financial year as follows:

#### **Bursaries and Scholarships**

The Foundation maintained the value of *Secondary Boarding Bursaries* at \$1,000 for 2015. It approved 35 bursary applicants and rejected a further 7 because they did not meet criteria in terms of distance and/or hardship. Two additional scholarships at Charles Sturt University were funded for the Sciences through family bequests in honour of Dr Peter Pockley and Emeritus Professor Garth Gaudry. The successful candidates are enrolled at the Wagga Wagga campus. BCEF now funds four scholarships at CSU valued at \$9,000 each over 3 years. Our "*Thru-to-TAFE*" program is continuing for a further two years. To date the program has had 100% success with students moving either to full time apprenticeships in essential industries or gaining entry to university.

#### **Meeting at Parliament House, Sydney**

The Board met to make changes to the Constitution, welcome two new Directors and hold discussions with the State Executive of the ICPA, a parent lobby group representing isolated remote area families whose children study through Distance Ed. or secondary boarding schools.

#### **HSC Success**

BCEF's "*Thru-to Uni*" scholarship holder achieved the highest HSC score of any student in the west and was accepted at the University of Sydney. The Board approved a special "*Start Up*" grant for first year recognizing her outstanding performance as an isolated boarding student.

#### **Donations**

The Commonwealth Bank, Teachers' Mutual Bank, NRMA, Foundation for Regional Renewal, St John's Gordon Opp Shop and the Order of Knights of St Lazarus of Jerusalem have assisted in meeting our commitments to outback children together with the support of individual donors for which we are so grateful.

#### **New Faces**

The Board welcomed Richard Dougan and Jenetta Russell as Directors with Richard elected as Chairman on 30<sup>th</sup> March foreshadowing my retirement. Both new members have strong links to rural NSW and not-for-profit institutions and have already made significant contributions to this charity. Directors also welcome Isabel Heaven as the incoming Secretary occasioned by Sue Cowdroy's retirement after 18 years of dedicated service.

#### **Fifty Years of Service**

The 30<sup>th</sup> July 2015 marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Foundation and a number of functions are being planned during 2015-2016 to celebrate this charity's continuous service. Directors have prepared a booklet which outlines progress in assisting bush children in a context of social, educational and climatic changes, which have occurred over the last 50 years. It will be published for this anniversary.

#### **Drought**

We appreciate and continue to rely heavily on your support for outback children of NSW especially now that the North West is experiencing the longest period of drought in the history of European settlement, with no sign of relief. The latest drought map indicates more affected areas.

With Best Wishes

Cliff Cowdroy  
Director