

PROUD COUNTRY: FOUR CORNERS

Monday 1st October 2018



Proud Country: A portrait of a community surviving the drought.

"You may be on a bed of roses today, but the thorns always prick. So you just got to pull yourself together. Everyone pull together." Country Women's Association Branch Secretary

On Monday night, **Four Corners** brings you a story from the heart of the drought, a portrait of the land and its people, where the lack of rain is biting hard.

"I'd be joking to say that it's not tiring and I'm bit too old for this sort of stuff, but anyway, that's how it is." Farmer

It's pushing some to breaking point, but many in this proud country community are doing all they can to give others the strength to carry on.

"Yesterday was very emotional. A little old lady rings me up and she said to me 'I'm 92 I'm going to give you \$2000' and I thought 'oh my godfather!'" Country Women's Association Branch Secretary

The people of Quirindi live and work on rich black soil country that they like to boast is the best in the land. Except when it hasn't rained properly for more than a year.



"I can remember looking at the cows and thinking, 'Bloody hell, what are we going to do?'" Farmer

They opened their homes and their lives to reporter Michael Brissenden. Along the way, he encountered characters so large, they could have walked from the pages of Banjo Paterson story.

"Drought has no respect for a person, whether you're rich or poor." Country Women's Association Branch Secretary

From the thriving hub of the Country Women's Association, to an unexpected local victory on the dusty rugby field, he found people trying to find a sense of purpose and some joy under the relentless sun.

"It's a tough time at the moment so it's just good for the town to have something to rally around." Captain of the Quirindi Lions

Some are finding practical ways to make life that little more bearable with the donation of a haircut or a new pair of jeans.

"If we can make a few people feel a little bit better about themselves and know that there are people out there that care, I think that's just some small little gesture that we can do." Hairdresser

Despite their best efforts, you can sense the quiet desperation sitting just below the surface.

"Every week it's getting worse. You wouldn't think it could get worse, but it is. It's just got that real bad feel about it." Grain supplier

The parched landscape, exquisitely captured by **Four Corners'** cameras, reveals the profound impact this drought has had. And with winter slipping away, there are fears for what summer may bring.

"We're going into the hottest time of the year... the days are hotter, people haven't got water and there's no feed. So, time will tell." Contractor

Proud Country, reported by Michael Brissenden and presented by Sarah Ferguson, goes to air on Monday 1st October at 8.30pm. It is replayed on Tuesday 2nd October at 1.00pm and Wednesday 3rd at 11.20pm. It can also be seen on ABC NEWS channel on Saturday at 8.10pm AEST, ABC iview and at abc.net.au/4corners.

For more information or to request an interview:

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