



Let's do this one for Wendy!

G'day folks!

Anna Rose here. Wendy has her hands full at the moment, so she's let me loose with this newsletter to catch you up on the latest from down on the farm at Calliope in the beautiful but soggy Clarence Valley.

The good news is that finally, after two postponements in 2020 and 2021, the eighth annual Clarence Valley Country Muster is on again ... God willing, and the creeks don't rise!

Wendy knows only too well about rising waters. Having endured numerous floods during her time there, this last deluge was a bank-breaker in more ways than one.

Wendy could only watch on in tears as her entire infrastructure: sheds, canteen, stages, practically everything she and her team had built or planted over the past 10 years, floated down the Clarence.

To make bad news even worse, her gardens, filled with floral masterpieces and bursts of colour at every turn, were totally destroyed.

And now for the clean-up

It's only in the past week or two the ground has dried sufficiently to allow her to get in and tidy up with the chainsaw and some good old-fashioned girlpower.



Tracy's pretty handy with a hedge trimmer and chainsaw. She just gets in and does it!

Wendy and best mate Tracy sawed up and burnt off all the ruined agapanthus, hyacinths, conifers, photinia and flowering gums which sadly won't be replaced.

Getting the grounds shipshape, rather than pretty, is the main priority right now. Thanks to the support, generosity and love of fabulous family, friends and neighbours, work has begun on pre-Muster preparations.



For the first time since the flooding, Wendy has been able to have her access roads repaired. After a few more tons of gravel and crusher dust they should soon be ready to welcome the stream of caravans and motorhomes to the property in a few short months' time.

Great neighbours are priceless at times like these, and Wendy has some absolute rippers in Wayne and Kaye Chevalley and Pam and Steve Wratten, who've been there for her in every way that counts.

The Clarence Valley Country Muster was born out of a desire by Wendy and her family to make a difference and help flood victims on the Northern Rivers.

Each year since then proceeds from the Muster have been a huge help to one charity or another including Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service, the McGrath Foundation, CWA Drought Appeal, the SES and many more.



The cycle continues

A decade on and we've come full circle. The Northern Rivers has once again been devastated by floods and this time I believe charity really should begin at home.

Let's make this year's Clarence Valley Muster a welcome hand up for the girl with big heart behind it all - our beautiful Wendy Gordon.

It just might be the incentive she needs to keep putting one gumboot in front of the other as she prepares the site for our October gathering.

Within a few days of the devastating floods, longtime Muster supporters and great friends of Wendy's, Geoff and Cathy Nap, arrived - only they could have been mistaken for Santa and Mary Claus!

The Naps arrived bearing gifts above and beyond the expectations of any friendship. Essential clean-up items including an industrial strength pressure cleaner, washing machine, dryer, power tools, clothesline and so much more ... and over the next week made sure they all worked.

They rolled up their sleeves, scrubbed, washed, cleaned and helped fill the skip bins Geoff had cleverly thought to order ahead. After each day's hard yakka these good people would join Wendy in a glass of something bubbly before a quick sleep and then doing it all again the next day.

Clarence Valley Flood Help arrived and cleaned up the downstairs area which had been inundated. No matter how high things were stacked, it wasn't high enough to avoid the muddy waters. They pressure cleaned the floors and even washed some of the crockery that had been salvaged. RFS volunteers emptied out all the bins around the property which were full of water and cleaned down both the Tex Morton Stage and Main Stage.



Geoff Nap puts some high pressure on the mud that was seemingly everywhere after the flood.



In each previous flood, the Main Stage had been the last bastion, where everything you didn't want underwater was stacked. Not this year. The Main Stage had a metre of muddy water rush over the top of it, taking away most of the stored items in a torrential swirl.

Great Muster mates John Nutting and Wendy's #1 girl, Tracy were rounding up stray chairs, reels, crates, and other Muster items from several paddocks downstream for a week or more.

Her skills aren't limited to the chainsaw. Tracy's a dab hand at chair wrangling, too, broken wrist and all ... there's no stopping some people.

Other good friends simply sent a card, letter, email or a small donation to help with rising clean-up costs.



“I think it’s the phone calls and the texts that keep me going,” Wendy says. “I am a strong person but sometimes you hit the wall.

“God bless Chad (Morgan). He texted me often. It just meant so much to me during that time.

“Our beautiful, extended Muster family ... Ian Grant, Robyn McIntosh, everyone who thought to reach out was very much appreciated. We will come back stronger, but it’s been really tough, I must admit.”

Book soon ... it’ll be here before we know it!

Let’s make this Muster the best ever - and maybe our golden girl Wendy might even have some change left over to plant some more flowers, trees and shrubs to replace her losses to the Clarence.

When she’s not out in the yard working like a navvy, she does love to answer the phone, particularly when it’s good people on the line booking or confirming their site for the 2022 Clarence Valley Country Muster. Give her a call today on 0432 741 947.

That’s all from me for now. In the next newsletter there will be a heap of news on all the fabulous artists who can’t wait to entertain you!

Cheers for now,

Anna Rose