

# Always Mates

“Good Morning, over” or “Cheers over” is what our kids who are on school of the air hear when they are becoming friends over the airways, from kindy right through to year 6 and 7. They shyly make friends (at once a term events), and get to know each other with small online chats as they begin their school journey. They start to look forward to hearing each other’s voices, and form bonds as they learn and grow together.

These kids who generally can have a full conversation about what’s happening on the land, the rain, wether mum and dad need a hand and can easily converse with any adult they meet, find it more difficult talking to kids their own age when they leave home to go to boarding school.

Fitting into everyday school yard politics is often hard for these kids who have grown up in adult worlds. Going from checking dams and troughs and dealing with live (and dead) stock, to what are you wearing at the formal just doesn’t go down with these kids.

But in saying that, it’s amazing how from little tiny voices chatting away with each other, these kids come together to support each other while they are 100km’s away from their homes. They get on the phone and quietly ask each other to go as their partners to these big noisy events. They swap boots for heels, dust for makeup and swiping flies for corsages as they stand tall and proud and by each other’s

**Nic Greenfield, South Gap Station, helps Madison Morris, Thurlga Station, with her corsage**



side as they help the other into this world they are not used to.

These dusty bush kids emerge as beautiful young men and women to tackle the night, and world, with their mum’s and dad’s sitting in the back ground with lumps in their throats and tears of pride in their eyes, wondering where their babies have gone. This was us this year as we watched our children support each other at their

school formals in the big smoke as the other kids of the same age and SOTA journey do.

We have watched the young ones in our area helping muster paddocks on their own for the first time, starting the process of the love of the land and helping out in the yards whenever they can. We have watched the older ones helping and being their parents right hand man and we look forward to them supporting each other, catching taxi’s and planes together so they can be a part of their local community gymkhana, helping in the kitchen, on the grounds and in the office.

We are so proud of these kids, as no matter which part of the country they come from, they all step up to the plate and show us how very capable they are.

***Katrina Morris  
Pt Augusta Branch***



Bonnie Morris, Thurlga Station