

ECCC 8th May 2024. Following the devastating flood Nov 13th 2022, it took ECCC Director Raewyn Molloy only 4 days to set up a temporary area in the grounds of Eugowra Public school. 84 percent of homes in Eugowra had been wiped out. ..Nov 22 a temporary childcare centre opened with equipment from Shellharbour and Orange Day Care Centres. There were 57 students enrolled and 21 could be accommodated at this temporary centre at one time.. As Cr Kevin Beatty, Mayor Cabonne Shire said on the Open Day and Appreciation Luncheon on Wednesday 8th May at the ECCC Buildings, Eugowra Showground, in his tribute to Director Raewyn, that without small children being cared for, parents couldn't return to work and earn money to pay their bills.. The centre was flexible with their days- some long day care till 5.30pm and some short care. Director Raewyn had to accommodate all the requisites of a Childcare Centre with new fencing, play area etc .Staff were paid throughout this time and now in the so thoughtfully attractive furnished demountable, the ECCC employs 21 staff including 13 full time.. 6 or 7 new families have moved into Eugowra and the parents are confident that the ECCC is vital and continuing. 87 children are enrolled now at the ECCC .

With community ownership, 7 volunteers form the Committee under Director Raewyn Molloy. This committee is so very grateful to all the organizations that have donated money so that the colourful furnishings of this demountable and the outside play areas, have made such a vital asset to the Eugowra community. The cost of setting up with all necessary approved equipment was \$30,000. There was still sufficient donated funds to support the application to the The Capital Works Grant NSW Govt who have allocated \$5 million. . Biggest ever grant for such a program. Land is in the process of being secured with a Cabonne Council, on Showground with plans submitted and estimated completed end 2026. Presently there are 44 children catered for on any given day. The new service will cater for 87 children per day once built.

When three of us from A50 IW District were welcomed to the Open and Appreciation Day, we were so impressed with all that had been accomplished to see happy little children engaged at play. We were conducted thru the demountable admiring the creative use of space. Groups of supervised happy children were playing under shade cloth on grass outside. 6 or 7 fruit trees were growing in large pots, (donated by Orange Rotary) in preparation for their permanent home in the planned permanent centre.

At the Luncheon about 15 small children were led by staff members to entertain us. First they recited the Acknowledgement to Country, then singing with some indigenous words. We Inner Wheel Members were so humbled to enjoy this experience. Our A50 District was so honoured to be invited to choose a project to receive funding from IWA Crisis Fund. I stay in contact with the Director Raewyn by regular texts and live close enough in Cowra to be able to visit the Centre.

Sue Brown

A50 Immediate Past District Chairman