

# Is your town tickled pink?

ALMOST 50 women are diagnosed with breast cancer every day in Australia. If you look at eight of your female friends, chances are one of them will have breast cancer before they are 85. With these stats, it is a disease that will touch most people.

It certainly touched Mudgee real estate agent Hugh Bateman.

"The number of people I kept seeing getting breast cancer - friends and clients - it was absolutely incredible. So I thought I should do something about it," he said.

Hugh started researching how breast cancer affected women in rural areas in particular and found they tended to battle through the experience alone as their husbands were working on the land and their children were at school.

"Psychologically this makes it very difficult. And I found that the McGrath Foundation's breast care nurses made a big difference. The more research I did, the more I thought this is something worth supporting."

In 2015, Hugh pinked up his tractor and rode almost



**UNITY:** Hugh Bateman said it is easy to get a committee together to Pink Up Your Town. Not only does it bring the community together but also funds a valuable service.

2000 kilometres. The TractorTrek raised more than \$380,000 for the McGrath Foundation.

Not content with a pink tractor, Hugh decided to Pink Up Mudgee in 2016.

"I set up a committee, starting with support from the local business chamber and invited representatives from places like the tourist board, council, sports council - there was no hesitation from any of them.

"We produced bunting and flags, contacted 200 business in town and gave them decorations in return for a \$40 donation, and left a registered donation can with

them. Through that we raised \$140k."

In 2017 the idea had spread to nearby towns and, together with Pink Royale Ball, \$200,000 was raised. Dubbo, Griffith and Port Stephens also pinked up last year.

This year Hugh said he would like to see the Pink Up idea go national.

"It's so easy to set up - you just need to get successful people around you.

"Pink Up brought Mudgee together: the police, sporting teams, the town clock and the post office, the council planted pink flowers on the roundabout - it was just

wonderful. It even became a tourist attraction.

"It created unity in the town through enjoyment and fun. People just wanted to be part of it.

"The only challenge is finding someone to start it. You don't need a big committee - start by talking to business leaders, local media, and look at the Pink Up Mudgee Facebook page.

"There are lots of deserving charities but McGrath stands out for me because of the breast care nurses - their service is free, and they provide invaluable physical, psychological and emotional support, from the time of diagnosis and throughout treatment," Hugh said.

The support of a McGrath breast care nurse is available to women and men across Australia. It costs about \$390,000 to fund a McGrath breast care nurse full time for three years.

If you want to Pink Up Your Town this October, visit pink-upyourtown.com.au now to get started. Not only will you have fun, you'll probably also make a big difference to someone you know.



**FUN:** Pink Up brought Mudgee together, with police, sporting teams, and even town landmarks turning pink, and residents making the most of the opportunity.





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