



# HOEDOWNS FOR COUNTRY TOWNS

ABN: 15 815 035 489

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## The Nuts & Bolts

Two 20-something country gals, Claire Harris and Kate Strong, hitting the road and driving in excess of 20,000km around Australia from March to November 2022, teaching line dancing to anyone, anywhere and raising money for rural charities along the way. We plan to attend and teach at big country events and festivals, as well as in pubs and halls, and at iconic Australian destinations.

## The Reason

Those who believe they can turn their dreams into reality, are the ones who do. Travelling Australia line dancing is something we have wanted to do for a few years now, ever since the first day we met and became good friends at a line dancing barn in Toowoomba in mid-2018. With both our jobs requiring frequent rural travel, and with country connections all across Australia, we are all too aware of the importance of bringing rural communities together through 'not to be missed' events.

We are hoping to instill a love of line dancing in people right across the country, but not in a regimented way. When teaching, anyone and everyone is invited to give bootscooting a try, with FUN as the number one priority.

We are raising money for rural charities along the way and have chosen seven charities to support. Each charity has a different focus, but helping rural people is a common denominator.



## Kate Strong

**Age:** 24

**Hails from:** Clifton, Qld

**Lived until Feb 2022:** Yeppoon, Qld

**Job until Feb 2022:** Agricultural consultant/youth and exuberance officer at Resource Consulting Services

**Bootscooting is bliss because:** It allows me to express myself while connecting with fellow dancers of all age groups.

**Top 3 line dancing memories to date:**

1. Dancing at Maslin Beach, SA, with Claire and not being able to hear the music over the waves.
2. Starting a line dancing group in the aisle at a very muddy CMC in 2019
3. Starting a line dancing flash mob at Beef Week 2021 in Rockhampton and making random friends on the floor and teaching dancing as the night went on.

**Other interests:** Rugby 7s, netball, my Scottish Highland cattle fold, taking any chance I can to find and explore a dirt road or farm, and rolling down hills.

**Proud to be:** Known among friends as Country Music Shazam.



## Claire Harris

**Age:** 25

**Hails from:** Brisbane, Qld

**Lived until Feb 2022:** Adelaide, SA

**Job until Feb 2022:** Agricultural journalist for Stock Journal, SA's weekly rural newspaper

**Bootscooting is bliss because:** Anyone can do it, it fast becomes a (healthy) addiction, and even the simplest of dances look mighty impressive if everyone is grooving together and enjoying themselves.

**Top 3 line dancing memories to date:**

1. Getting a crowd of bootscooting newbies dancing at the 2018 Boulia Camel Races, Qld, it was about 5 degrees but the crowd was as enthusiastic as ever.
2. Dancing with Kate out the front of the Plant Breeding Institute, Narrabri, NSW, a few days before Christmas 2019, wearing Santa hats and seeing how many vehicle toots we could get in one song.
3. Teaching line dancing at a friend's 50th birthday... I got through a whole 30 minutes before the inevitable 'let's dance to Achy Breaky Heart' chants started.

**Other interests:** All sports, Bruce Springsteen concerts, cooking, and long road trips with good music and good company

**Proud to be:** A diehard West Coast Eagles fan.

## The Route

Kicking off from South East Queensland in March 2022, we intend to drive in a roughly anticlockwise loop around the country, finishing up back in SEQ in mid-December. Our route will be confirmed to the extent that we have roughly 10 existing country events we will definitely attend, COVID-19 permitting. In between these events, we have a number of destinations and towns where we wish to visit and host classes. We intend to organise these classes as in advance as possible, while leaving dates spare to teach on request in caravan parks, at birthday parties, schools, sport club fundraisers or anything else that pops up, while also attending any other events that time well with our travels.

Further details of our route will be provided through our trip.



## The Finances

We intend to seek grants and sponsorship to cover as many equipment and running costs as possible. At big events, we intend to carry donation tins for our chosen charities. When running our own classes, we will charge participants a small per person fee to cover venue costs. Any extra funds will be split between contributing to our running costs, and being donated to our chosen charities. The amount being donated to charities will depend on how successful we are with grants and sponsorships - the more successful, the more we will be able to donate to charity. We are certainly not aiming to make a profit for ourselves. Our aim is to raise at least \$25,000 for charity, to be split between our chosen beneficiaries.



## The Pandemic

It is obviously impossible to predict what the COVID-19 situation will look like this year. Like everyone, our fingers are crossed that things will largely be back to normal sooner rather than later. On our trip, border crossings will be minimal, ie once we are in a state, we will in general remain there until moving to the next state rather than playing jump rope with a border. If we have to lock down in an area, so be it. But, with the vast majority of our time to be spent in rural and regional areas, we are hopeful that if a lockdown is to occur that will affect us, it will be a short-lived lockdown, as opposed to city lockdowns which have been shown to potentially stretch for months. There is the possibility that some of the events we plan to attend will not run, we will aim to keep on roughly the same route regardless of this, and will only majorly change our route if COVID-19 ends up throwing a particularly large spanner in the works. We will abide by any social distancing requirements that are in place through the year, as well as other COVID-19 management requirements, such as providing QR check-in codes, and hand sanitiser.

People could argue that during a pandemic is not an ideal time to begin a venture like this, but we would argue that it is now more than ever that society needs a reason to smile, and we hope teaching dancing to people can bring smiles to the faces of many, right across the country.

## Reference

When Claire came for a visit and a dance she mentioned that Kate and herself were planning their venture, 'Hoedowns for Country Towns', I couldn't contain my excitement. I cannot endorse these girls enough! They have the energy, the smarts and the enthusiasm to make this adventure epic! I am happy to be a part of it from here at the home of Toowoomba Line Dancing Fun & Fitness (TLDF) in

Toowoomba and look forward to the videos and the doco that may follow.

| Cass Daniells - Founder & Head Groover TLDF



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