

BtN: Episode 08 Transcript 24/03/15

Coming up.

- We look at the effect Cyclone Pam had on Vanuatu.
- Find out why bananas could one day go bye-bye in Australia.
- And how much of the human body can now be replaced by robot parts?

The answer might surprise you!

Hi I'm Nathan and that's just some of the stuff you'll see a bit later on BtN.

But first today:

Vanuatu Recovery

Reporter: Emma Davis

INTRO: To Vanuatu which was hit really hard by a cyclone recently. Seventy percent of the population there is now homeless, and every school has been either badly damaged or destroyed. Emma found out how the country is getting back on its feet.

EMMA DAVIS, REPORTER: When Cyclone Pam hit Vanuatu, it ripped up trees, destroyed buildings and flattened whole towns. Amongst all that was nine year old Sharna. She stayed in her house with her family but the rain caused it to flood.

SHARNA: During the cyclone I was right here. (How did you feel?) I feel scared.

Vanuatu is here, in the South Pacific. It's made up of about 82 islands. Vanuatu is known for its warm, tropical weather and it's these conditions that help create cyclones. Here's how:

If the surface of the sea gets above 26.5 degrees Celsius, water starts to evaporate. This warm humid air then rises into the sky. As it moves up through the atmosphere it releases heat and water, making thunderclouds. This process can kick-start a chain reaction, evaporating more water and making bigger clouds. The last ingredient needed to make a cyclone is the rotation of the Earth which causes the clouds to spin around faster and faster.

The middle of the cyclone is called the eye. It's actually nice and calm. The walls of the cyclone are totally different. Here, the wind is the strongest and it's these wind speeds that help experts classify cyclones. There are five different categories of cyclone. Category one is the lowest and category five, with wind speeds of 280

kilometres an hour or more is the highest. Cyclone Pam's wind speeds were more than 320 kays an hour.

Sharna's house was damaged by the storm.

SHARNA: The light-post broke in two and fell in our yard. Then the rain rained hard so a bunch of windows shattered and it got open so my mum had to move me to another bedroom.

Sharna lives on the main island of Efate but a lot of the country's smaller islands have also been really badly damaged. The only way to get to many of them is by boat so relief workers, like these ones, haven't been able to travel there to see if everyone is ok.

SHARNA: There's no light, we're living in dark so we light candles at night

Near Sharna's s home a lot of people don't have any power or running water so aid groups like World Vision are working hard to give people food to eat and fresh drinking water.

JONNY, WORLD VISION: Of course cooking and food are of absolute paramount importance so we provide kitchen sets, basic utensils for cooking for boiling water to make use of food provided by other agencies.

Evacuation centres have also been set up so people without a home can stay somewhere safe. And kids can't go to school because almost all the schools in Vanuatu were damaged or destroyed by the cyclone.

SHARNA: I can't go to school because the Prime Minister said no school one week. Because of the cyclone I think.

It's a bit early yet but World Vision are hoping to get a temporary school set up eventually so that kids like Sharna can start to recover from this disaster. It's going to take a very long time for everything to get back to normal but the people living here love their home and they want to work hard to make Vanuatu beautiful again.

The Wire

To other news now and Cyclone Nathan has struck North Queensland and the Northern Territory with violent winds and rain.

Many people had to be evacuated from smaller islands and residents took shelter as the storm battered towns across the region.

.....
Former Liberal Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser has died aged 84.

Fraser was Prime Minister for more than 7 years in the 1970s and 80s.

During that time he created the SBS and helped change Australia's refugee policy paving the way for more people to settle in Australia.

Fraser also strongly opposed racism in South Africa and after retiring from parliament campaigned against racism in Australia too.

.....

Researchers have found that these 80's style scrunchies stop pet cats from attacking some native wildlife!

Each domestic cat is believed to kill about 30 native animals in Australia each year.

But WA researchers have found these collars can stop cats creeping up on prey by more than 50 per cent!

.....

And Tony Abbott has sent a message to kids as a part of BtN's anti-bullying campaign '#BehindYou'!

PRIME MINISTER: If you are being bullied I want you to know that I'm behind you, your teachers are behind you, and your family is behind you as well.

Schools all over Australia got involved in the campaign on the National Day of Action against Bullying last Friday.

And speaking of, I'd like to thank all of you guys for getting behind our campaign too. We got some amazing videos and pics of classes from all over Australia getting involved so we'll show you some of them at the end of today's show.

Now for our next story.

Banana Disease

Reporter: Eloise Fuss

INTRO: They're a popular snack, but soon they might be a rare one. An untreatable banana disease has been discovered on a farm in Northern Queensland which if it spreads could wipe out most of Australia's huge banana industry. Eloise got the inside word on what's being done to stop it.

Just imagine a banana split, without the banana!
A banana milkshake, without the banana
Banana bread, without the banana

It sounds sad but it could become true, because this incredibly popular fruit is facing a big threat.

The drama all began a few weeks ago when a farmer near a little town named Tully in North Queensland noticed his banana plants didn't look quite right. So he sent some samples in for testing to find out what the problem was.

The results were not what anyone expected - Panama Disease Tropical Race 4. It's a particularly big, particularly bad banana disease, that's been described as the worst banana disease in the world!

This strain of Panama disease doesn't make all bananas dangerous to eat, but it does stop banana plants from producing fruit properly. It's actually a fungus that sits in the soil. It gets into the roots of banana plants and travels up to where the fruit grows. Here it blocks the water supply, and without water, good quality fruit can't grow.

To make things worse, it can't be treated either. Once this disease is in the soil it stays there for many years, and bananas can never be grown in that spot again.

A big part of the problem is that the disease has been found in this type of banana, the Cavendish. It's the most popular banana to eat, and the one we see most in the supermarket. So while these bananas are still fine to eat, they might become increasingly hard to find if the fungus spreads further.

Australia's banana industry is worth around 600 million dollars. And 95 per cent of those bananas are grown in yep, Northern Queensland, where this rascal Panama disease has sprung up. So banana splits won't be the only thing at risk. The whole industry is at threat.

Twenty years ago, Panama Disease wiped out Northern Territory's banana industry, leaving just one commercial farm. It also caused massive damage in the 1990's in Asia, wiping out every Cavendish plantation in Malaysia in just four years. Experts say the disease is so strong all it takes is a speck of dirt from an infected plantation stuck to the bottom of your shoe to spread it.

Luckily Panama Disease is just on one farm right now. But no one has ever been able to contain it before, so Queensland's banana farmers are hoping they'll be the first. They're fencing off crops, stopping trucks going onto properties, and washing their cars and shoes all the time. Scientists are also busy working on creating a new kind of banana that can't be infected.

So there are lots of people joining the fight to save this healthy, tasty fruit, and stop one of our favourite desserts from disappearing for good.

Quiz 1

Okay who's keen for a banana quiz?

What kind of plants do bananas grow on?

Herbs

Trees

Vines

Answer: Herbs

They might look like trees but they're actually classed as herbs because their trunks don't contain any woody tissue. Okay.

Bionic Body

Reporter: Carl Smith

INTRO: Recently researchers announced they'd successfully replaced a sheep's heart with a fully robotic one. It's an amazing achievement which got us thinking how much of the human body can now be replaced with bionic parts? The answer might surprise you. Here's Carl.

This is the moment one lucky kid got to meet his hero.

ROBERT DOWNEY Jr: Hey Alex how are you? Pleasure to meet you.

Yep that's ironman, an **actual** super hero.

ROBERT DOWNEY Jr: I thought I'd drop by.

Thank you.

Yeah it's a pleasure, nice bow tie by the way.

Thank you.

How were your travels?

Very good.

Alex was born with a partially developed right arm and he hopes something known as bionic technology can replace it.

ROBERT DOWNEY Jr: You ready?

Yep

Great

Each one looks the same.

Actually I think yours might be better than mine.

Well maybe not better than this.

But certainly more realistic.

ROBERT DOWNEY Jr: God it's even cooler than I thought!

Both of these guys are wearing bionic body parts. That's basically any technology or robotics that can replace parts of our body or make them better.

Although Tony Stark wore the ironman suit to make him stronger, for Alex, and the guy who made and donated this arm, bionic technology is more about restoring parts we've lost, weren't born with, or that aren't working anymore.

And you might be surprised to hear that Aussie kids were among the first users of this type of technology. The cochlear implant, also known as the bionic ear, is an Australian invention. Designed in Melbourne in the late 1970s, it lets those without hearing experience sound again. And it's already helped hundreds of thousands of people around the world! But that's not the only bionic technology around. Arms and legs were some of the first wave, and they've become incredibly sophisticated!

But scientists and engineers have even had some success developing replaceable organs - things like bionic hearts, lungs and kidneys. Some scientists in the US have even replaced a small part of the brain in rats, mice and monkeys. And these world-first bionic eyes are currently being developed in Australia.

There's even engineered bones, cartilage and skin! If we throw all of that together some scientists argue about 60 per-cent of the human body could now be replaced with bionic parts. And to show that, the Smithsonian museum made this documentary called the bionic man.

Rex can move. It, or he, can hear and see basic things. Its lungs, heart and kidneys are all partly functional. It even has artificial blood made out of plastic! Even if Rex looks a bit clunky, the experiment shows just how far we've come in developing these parts, and how they might help someone. And with 3D printing it's even easier to make this stuff.

But not everyone is happy with the idea of bionic technology. Some are concerned about what could happen if those spare parts are stronger, faster or more durable than our human body. Maybe people would *choose* to get them! But no one knows if that's really going to happen.

So in the mean time these bionic inventions are all focused on making peoples' lives better, and finding new ways to let people like Alex experience the world just like everyone else.

Online Poll

Now it's pretty clear that during your lifetime the area of bionic body parts is going to move ahead dramatically which raises an interesting question for our poll this week.

Do you think people should be allowed to replace their body parts with bionic ones that perform better?

Head to our website to place your vote.

Now last week we asked you if the government should close any indigenous communities in the outback.

And we had a pretty overwhelming result. Out of more than 4000 votes most of you said we should keep them all open.

As always, thanks for voting!

Australian Accents

Reporter: Emma Davis

INTRO: Okay now we've all heard people from overseas try to do an Aussie accent. It can be pretty embarrassing to listen to. But is there just one accent or do Australians from different areas or walks of life speak in different ways? Here's Emma with more about one research project helping to answer that very question.

EMMA DAVIS, REPORTER: Australia is known for its unique accent. It's something a lot of people overseas struggle to copy. But have you ever wondered where it came from?

Well 200 years ago people came to live in Australia from all over the place. While most of them spoke English, they didn't all speak it in the same way. By taking different sounds from all the different people around them, the next generation developed a totally new accent and the next generation built on it, and the next after that and pretty soon the Aussie accent was born!

Since then it's changed a lot, and experts now say there are actually a few different variations on the Australian accent. There's the broad Aussie accent you sometimes hear in the country. Then there are voices like this, where people sound a little more English. But the most common style of Aussie speech is General Australian.

Other countries have different kinds of accents too but they're a lot more obvious than ours! Look at England. While two people might only live a few towns away, their accents can be completely different. And the same goes for the United States!

Back in Australia, it's these variations in accent that researchers now want to study so they've decided to create a massive database of voices from all over Australia. The aim is to track how our accents develop and why. Another thing researchers will be on the lookout for is whether other countries' accents are having an effect on ours. These days we watch heaps of TV shows and movies from places like America and England and researchers think eventually all these different accents might start to change ours. So while this is how we sound at the moment, in 100 years time, our Aussie accents might end up sounding completely different.

Quiz 2

Okay. Let's go to another quiz.

What does fair dinkum mean?

Is it:

That something is true or correct

That someone is a fun person

or that something is light in colour

The Answer: That something is true or correct

The Score

Okay. Missed something this week in the world of sport? We've got you covered.

You might remember last year we told you about the fight to save the Aussie paralympic football team after its funding was cut.

One of the leaders of that campaign was 12 year old Claire who wrote a letter to the PM.

CLAIRE: We should be able to play games and get the same amount of funding - boys or girls - it doesn't matter if you're disabled or not.

Well some good news for Claire. The Football Federation of Australia has now responded with a plan - to raise the money needed for the team to compete in the world championships this June.

Well done Claire!

.....
To the cricket world cup and Australia are through to the semi-finals after beating Pakistan.

Josh Hazlewood set the team up well taking four wickets and helping to keep the Pakistani total to a modest 213.

The Aussies went on to a 6 wicket victory.
.....

And finally. The next time you find the urge to pick your nose like NBA star DeAndre Jordan. Well don't do it in the first place.

But if you really have to, make sure you don't do it on camera and definitely don't wipe it on your team mate!

Women's Cricket

Reporter: Eloise Fuss

INTRO: As you saw there the Aussie men's cricket team has done some amazing things during the world cup with both bat and ball. But did you know the art of over-arm bowling might actually have been pioneered by women? If the legend is true, it's just one of the many amazing contributions girls have made to the sport over its long history. Here's Eloise with more.

Cricket is mostly just a boys sport right? Wrong. In the last year, the number of girls playing cricket across Australia has increased by 39%. In fact, one in five cricketers are now girls - like this sporty bunch. These girls are training with the Kensington Cricket Club, and they love the sport.

CRICKETER 1: The numbers are increasing, there's plenty of girls coming out to training now and I'm meeting new girls almost every week coming out to training, so the numbers are getting bigger and it's definitely getting more noticed.

CRICKETER 2: I really like the mateship and I like that it's a bit of a different game, you can spend a lot of time together, as well as play and be athletic.

CRICKETER 3: My favourite thing about playing cricket is I like to hit the ball in different positions and get lots of fours, and it keeps me fit.

But whilst this might seem like a new thing, girls have been involved with cricket much longer than you probably realise. Let's take ourselves back to England in the 1800's.

Cricket back then was quite different indeed, especially when it came to bowling. Back then men and boys didn't bowl over arm like they do today, they bowled underarm. But some people say that women might have been the ones to change that.

The story goes that ladies found they simply couldn't bowl this way due to the width of their skirts. So they began to bowl like this – over-arm.

BOY: Hm, not bad, not bad at all.

But the influence of girls on this supposed 'boys' sport didn't stop there. It wasn't Bradman, but Betty who was the first Australian cricketer to score a Test Century. And it wasn't Michael Clarke, but Belinda Clark, who first scored 200 runs in a one-day international event. And the first World Cup, yep the women got there first too in England in 1973.

But despite all of these achievements, these days it's still usually men in the cricketing spotlight. That's not to say female cricketers aren't starting to shine though. The Australian Southern Stars women's team is shimmering on the world stage. Last year they won the T20 World Cup in Bangladesh, and in 2013 they took World Cup victory in India.

And the future's looking pretty bright too, each year more and more girls across Australia are heading in to bat.

CRICKETER 4: My dream is to play for Australia.

CRICKETER 3: Girls rock!

So if you love cricket why not grab a bat and a ball and hit the pitch, and follow in the footsteps of all Australia's great cricketers.

Closer

And that brings us to an end for today!

We'll leave you with a look at just a few of the messages we received from you guys for our #BehindYou campaign! We'll also post as many of them as we can in full on our website too. Thanks and see you next week!