

BtN: Episode 24 Transcript 25/08/15

Coming up:

- Find out how these kids in Nepal are faring four months after a massive earthquake devastated their country.
- An op shop insider tells us some of the grossest stuff that she's ever seen donated.
- And meet the author who published her first book at just 12!

Hi, I'm Nathan and welcome to BtN! You can see all that later but first:

Asking the People

Reporter: Matt Holbrook

INTRO: After weeks of debate about whether to change Australia's marriage laws, the Government now says that asking the people is their preferred option. But how? Well the two options being talked about are a referendum or a plebiscite. Here's Matt to explain the difference.

What do these things have in common? The Queen, our national anthem, and military service? Well, they're topics that all Australians have voted on in the past. And soon, there's a chance we could be having our say on another topic - whether or not to change marriage laws to allow same sex couples to get married. It's an issue a lot of people have very strong opinions about, so Prime Minister, Tony Abbott, says the decision shouldn't be just up to politicians. He reckons the whole country should vote on it.

TONY ABBOTT, PRIME MINISTER: This government wants the people to decide.

But in recent weeks, there's been a bit of disagreement on how that vote should take place.

SCOTT MORRISON, MINISTER FOR SOCIAL SERVICES: Everyone's views should be considered equally in this debate and that's why we need a referendum.

CHRISTOPHER PYNE, MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: There's no legal basis for a referendum.

GEORGE BRANDIS, ATTORNEY GENERAL: The way to do it would be through a plebiscite.

The two options being discussed are a referendum and a plebiscite. They're both ways of asking Australians what they think, but they're actually a bit different.

Here in Australia, a referendum means making a change to our constitution. The constitution's a set of rules that explains how Australia works. So changing it is really serious stuff. Everyone over 18 has to vote. It's always a yes or no question. And for a referendum to be successful, most of Australia has to vote yes, and most of the voters in at least four states have to vote yes as well.

When that happens, it's a big deal. The most recent referendum was back in 1999, on whether Australia should become a Republic. Spoiler alert, it didn't.

A plebiscite is a little bit simpler. It doesn't affect the constitution. There are no strict rules about how they have to be run. And even if everyone votes yes, nothing has to be changed. It's mostly a way for the government to get an idea of what people think. But plebiscites can still be really important.

Back in the First World War, plebiscites were held on conscription, which is whether or not the government should be able to make people serve in war. That idea was rejected. And in 1977, a plebiscite even helped pick what would eventually become our national anthem. Although in all the years since, some of us still haven't learnt the second verse.

But this debate isn't just about the best way to ask people what they think, because some people argue we shouldn't be asking in the first place. For starters, a change to the constitution isn't needed to change marriage laws, parliament already has that power. Plus, either a referendum or a plebiscite could cost a lot of money, more than 100 million dollars. And some say there's no need for a vote anyway, because polls show most Australians support same sex marriage. So they think that putting it to a vote just delays things for those that have been calling for these changes for a long time.

So it's an issue that's a lot more complicated than deciding between these two voting options.

The Wire

To other news now and the PM has made a big trip to the Torres Strait. That's a collection of 270 islands scattered in the stretch of water between Australia and Papua New Guinea. And Tony Abbott's the first Aussie PM to visit in 18 years. Today he paid his respects at the grave of Eddie Mabo who was famous for campaigning for Indigenous land rights.

But over the next few days he's hoping to spend some more time with locals. And find out about some of the issues Torres Strait Islanders are facing.

Melbourne has been voted the most liveable city in the world for the fifth year in a row! It got a near perfect score in a liveability survey, which is based on things like health care, education, safety, culture and the environment.

Adelaide also scored pretty high in the rankings at number five!

Australia's best young portrait painters have been recognised at the Young Archies Awards. The 5-8 year old category went to Daniel from Horsley who painted his sister. Marium from Arncliffe also drew her sister and she won in the 9 to 12 year old category.

While 15-year-old Ellie from High Range took out her section with this painting. Congratulations to all the winners!

Nepal Revisited

Reporter: Amelia Moseley

INTRO: It's now been 4 months since the country of Nepal was hit by a massive earthquake. In the days and weeks after we checked in to see how kids were being affected. Now we're going back. Have things returned to normal? Or is there still a lot more that still needs to be done there? Here's Amelia.

Ishy: Hi BTN,

I'm Ishy! I live here in Nepal just outside the capital city of Kathmandu.

And for the past four months we've been trying to rebuild the orphanage building after massive earthquakes hit the country.

AMELIA MOSELEY, REPORTING: The last time we met Ishy, life was pretty scary. A 7.8 magnitude earthquake had recently destroyed big parts of his country and killed thousands of people. Many aftershocks had struck too, making recovery difficult.

Four months on, there are still reminders of the earthquake all over the place. But locals like Ishy are trying to get life back to normal as best they can.

Ishy helps take care of more than 50 orphan kids. They've been living in this temporary home, which they built from bamboo a month after the quake.

Ishy: All the children, they live there and we sleep there, we eat there and we spend most of our time down in the cottage.

Nepalese. Kid: Our house is damaged and we are very, we are very worried.

They still can't afford to fix their damaged orphanage and the government has put this red sticker on it, which means the building is too dangerous to use.

Ishy says heavy rains and flooding are making it worse too.

Ishy: The boys are working behind me just to make sure that the water doesn't go inside the building and we desperately need enough funds to repair the building.

But there is some good news. The kids of Ishy's orphanage couldn't go to school for a long time after the quake, but now they're going again and they couldn't be happier about it!

In the centre of Kathmandu, these kids are lucky enough to be going to school again too, but only in tents in the middle of the square.

Aid organisations have been putting up as many tents as possible, but there are too many kids to teach.

School kid: Pretty bad.

Reporter: Why is it bad?

School kid: Because there are many people started coming and we are a problem.

Out in the suburbs, these kids are still homeless, living in tent cities with hundreds of other families. Their villages were destroyed, so their parents moved here to find work - but it isn't easy. Nepal was a popular spot for tourists, but since the earthquakes, it's been quiet and that's making recovery even harder.

Many governments and charities around the world are still helping people here by sending things like food, clean water, tents and medicine. But they need other things too like builders, tools and supplies to rebuild homes and businesses. And many of those things are in short supply or the price for them has gone up dramatically.

Ishy says it's important other countries don't forget the people of Nepal now that four months have passed since the earthquake.

Ishy: If people in Australia could help us to raise funds then that would be greatly appreciated.

Because while things are starting to improve, many of their worries aren't going away anytime soon.

Quiz 1

Okay, let's go to our first quiz now. Nepal has the highest mountain on earth, called Mt Everest. How high is it?

Is it 848m

8,848m

Or 80,848m

The answer is 8,848m

Wave Hill

Reporter: Carl Smith

INTRO: This week marks 40 years since a very important moment in our nation's history called the Wave Hill walk off. It was a turning point for Indigenous Australians

and led to the return of vast amounts of land to its traditional owners. Here's Carl with the full story. But first a warning to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander viewers this story contains images of people who've died.

Gough Whitlam: I solemnly hand to you these deeds as proof in Australian law that these lands belong to the Gurindji people.

This moment, 40 years ago, is one of the most famous in Australian history.

Paul Kelly song: and through Vincent's fingers, poured a handful of sand. From little things, big things grow.

It's the moment former Prime Minister Gough Whitlam handed back ownership of this land to Aboriginal leader Vincent Lingiari. It happened in 1975. But the journey to get here was incredibly difficult and it started many years earlier on August 23rd 1966.

News reporter: These Aboriginal stockmen are on strike, this is the Wave Hill mob.

At the time Wave Hill in the Northern Territory was the biggest cattle station in the world. It was controlled by the British landowner, Lord Vestey.

News reporter: The British beef baron who owned 20 square miles of the Northern Territory.

The Gurindji people, who had lived on the land for generations before the British arrived, were working for Vestey. But the conditions were tough. They weren't paid well and they wanted their land back. So their leader Vincent Lingiari said it was time to act.

Vincent Lingiari: And I said, "What was it before Lord Vestey born and I was born?" It was blackfella country.

He, along with 200 Aboriginal workers, walked off the job and set up camp at an important sacred site called Dagurago, on Wattie Creek. That moment came to be called the Wave Hill walk off, and the Gurindji people said they wouldn't move until the land was returned to them.

People across Australia joined the campaign to return land to Aboriginal people. Finally after years of hard work they saw some progress.

Gough Whitlam: We will legislate to give Aborigines land rights.

The strike lasted eight years. One of the longest strikes in Australia's history! But finally in 1975 it ended with this simple gesture.

Gough Whitlam: We are determined that Aboriginal Australians everywhere will be helped by it.

Vincent Lingiari: (Subtitled) *Everybody has come together from long way away. We're going to show them, make them understand our way. We're all friendly now! We all mates! We all mates.*

Now 40 years later, thanks in part to the walk off, Aboriginal people are recognised as the owners of big parts of Australia.

And every year in August people still say thank you to those who fought for Aboriginal land rights.

Michelle Donald: If it wasn't for Vincent Lingiari and my Dad, and the other fellas we wouldn't have anything.

Maurie Ryan Japarta: without your land, you're nobody. This land is and always will be blackfella land.

Quiz 2

Okay, next up we're going to take a closer look at op shops for National Op Shop Week. But first a quiz about them. What is the 'op' in op shop short for?

The answer is Opportunity.

Op Shop Week

Reporter: Amelia Moseley

INTRO: And 'opportunity' shops around Australia are celebrating their national awareness week this week. So we thought it was a great opportunity to head down to one to find out what happens to your stuff when you donate. Here's Amelia with the details.

AMELIA MOSELEY, REPORTING: We all have things we probably don't need anymore, like books you've read a million times, clothes you've definitely grown out of, or toys you never play with!

TWINS: We have quite a few clothes from when we were younger that we obviously don't use anymore.

BOY 1: I probably don't need my baby clothes or toys or any games that I had.

While all this stuff might seem useless now, it could mean a lot to someone else.

BOY 2: I'll be giving my stuff to Vinnie's and hopefully they'll be sold to other people that need them.

Opportunity shops, which you probably know as op shops, help people by selling all sorts of second-hand things at cheap prices. The money they make then goes towards other charity work that helps a growing number of Australian people in need.

But the benefits don't stop there! Instead of ending up at the dump, unwanted goods get another life; so, op shops are actually a form of recycling.

BOY 1: When they're finished with it, they can do it again. And then when the next people are finished with it they can do it again and it keeps going on and on.

But to keep up all the good work, op shops need a hand.

Reporter: Hey Lauren, how's it going? So you're in high school, but you're volunteering at this op shop right? So tell me why'd you decide to do that?

Lauren: Well I decided that instead of sitting around during the school holidays, I'd actually get out and help some people, you know, do something good for the world kind of thing.

Reporter: Well tell me, do you want to show me what you actually do at the op shop.

Lauren: Well a lot of the stuff we actually do is out the back, so..

Reporter: OK let's go.

Lauren: So this is the sorting room where we do tagging, sorting out what we need; all the nice clothes that are going to go out to the store.

Every year, Australians donate about two billion items to op shops.

Lauren: So the original tag on the little material bit, stick it through and you just press and you pull.

Reporter: I didn't do it. Oh no, I failed.

Lauren: Well that's how it's supposed to look.

But even with so many donations, op shops still struggle to get enough stock to sell because a lot of it is more trash, than treasure. In fact, charities lose millions of dollars a year paying to dispose of all of the dodgy donations they're given.

Lauren: There's been a few times when we've just got umm clothes that come in that are kind of smelly and wet.

Reporter: Gross! Nobody wants that.

Op shops can only sell good quality items that are clean and in good condition. And a lot of op shops aren't allowed to accept any electrical goods, because they could be faulty.

Lauren: It's really important we get you know bedding, pillows and toys for the kids, teddies and cooking ware is really important as well.

Op shops say volunteers like Lauren are super important and stores couldn't run without them. While Lauren says it's one of the best things she's done.

Lauren: It's a great experience and everyone should get into it because you get to meet a lot of nice people, get to make new friends and it's just a great experience!

And even if you can't volunteer, remember, you can still bag some bargains or find your old favourites a nice new home.

Poll

Okay so that's how op shops work but do you actually buy from them? Let's find out.

Have you ever shopped at an op shop?

Head to our website to place your vote.

Now last week we asked you if you enjoy studying maths.

And it seems most of you are happy to add and subtract whenever your teachers want!

As always thanks for having your say

The Score

Time for the biggest plays of the week now!

Here's sport:

The Aussie's might've lost the Ashes but they've managed to salvage a bit of pride in their Fifth and final test match against England. Australia bowled out the home side for 286 winning by a massive innings and 46 runs. The win was Captain Michael Clarke's last for the national side so he was given a guard of honour and a standing ovation from the crowd.

The Diamonds have enjoyed a hero's welcome at Parliament house after taking out the Netball World Cup last week. School kids and politicians from both sides of parliament came together to congratulate the players on a great victory.

ABBOTT: Today we salute our world champion netball team, the Diamonds, not only the Commonwealth games medallists but world cup winners thanks to an absolutely thrilling victory over New Zealand.

Ex NRL player Jarryd Hayne has already impressed in his quest to make it in American Football or Gridiron. In only his second trial game since leaving the rugby league, he pulled out some amazing runs for the San Francisco 49ers.

"G'day mate! He does this a couple more times we're all going to be eating vegemite up here!"

And a 4 year old boy has accidentally ended up right in the middle of a rugby game. It was a charity match between NSW and QLD. And the players decided to just go with it. They handed him the ball chased him down the field and after dodging several tackles he managed to get a try.

Young Author

Reporter: Matthew Holbrook

INTRO: Schools all over the country are celebrating Book Week this week, so we thought we'd join in the fun by introducing you to Hannah. Hannah wrote and had her own book published at just 12 years old. Now it's been read by kids all over the world. Here's Hannah to tell you how she did it.

HANNAH: Hi, I'm Hannah Chandler and I'm the author of 'I Don't Like Cheese'. Today I'm going to talk to you about how at the age of 12, I was fortunate enough to get a book published. I Don't Like Cheese is a story about a mouse named Mike who thinks he doesn't like cheese. So the little girl of the house, Ashley, brings him foreign cuisine every night, until she goes on a holiday and Mike is forced to eat cheese. Now we're going down to my primary school where this whole story began.

HANNAH: I'm here with my primary school principal, Mr Holland, who was the motivation behind 'I Don't Like Cheese'. How did it come about that you asked me to write a children's story?

MR HOLLAND, PRINCIPAL: Your teacher at the time in Year 5 told me about your interest in writing and that you were a very talented writer. And the idea just came to mind to set you that challenge of writing a book. I remember you presented it to me in Book Week. This was the original version of 'I Don't Like Cheese', with illustrations from your friend Jordan. And the story itself was fantastic.

TEACHER (reading book): This house is home to the walker family but they're not the only family who lives here.

I thought this has got to go further. All I did was jump on the internet and google a bunch of Australian publishers. There was a list of over 200 and I just sent them out with a bit of hope that one of them would be interested and find it as exciting as we did.

HANNAH: Shortly after I gave my book to Mr Holland, the local media ran a story in the newspaper, and I did an interview with Kids' Book Review. We're now going to talk to Anouska Jones, the publisher at Exile, and how she discovered my book.

ANOUSKA JONES, EXILE PUBLISHING: We're looking for books that have a great message, great characters, and a great story. When I read your manuscript it ticked those boxes for me.

TEACHER (reading book): It didn't matter what type of cheese his mum gave him, Mike refused to eat it.

ANOUSKA JONES: It all worked together to be a good book for our list so I gave you a call.

HANNAH: Once Exile selected Lauren as the illustrator we had the opportunity to meet up and discuss our ideas for Mike. I really loved seeing the book come to life, but the most amazing experience was getting to hold my book in my hands for the first time. Since the age of three I've always wanted to become an author and I would tell my mum stories, which she would write down. For anyone else out there who has a dream keep at it, because you never know what could happen.

Closer

And that brings our show to an end. But the fun will continue on Friday in our weekly #AskaReporter session!

This week's topic will be Matt's 'Asking the People' story. If you'd like your school to get involved there are instructions on our website. Thanks for joining us and see you then!