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Community news for Ballina and The Plateau

Issue 31 | May 2024



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Autumn Escape

Have holidays lost the essence of simplicity?

It seems, just as our everyday lives feel overloaded, so do our holidays. Travel trends seem to push us to see everything, do everything and taste everything!

But does this leave us feeling well rested, centered and present? Perhaps not. The remedy? Simplicity.

Tap back into those core childhood memories of a holiday. Which ones are the most visceral? We can take a guess that the ones that provoke the most nostalgia, are the simple moments.

Getting ice cream from the local parlour after a long day at the beach, enjoying fish & chips whilst watching the sunset, and searching for sea shells in rock pools.

Reminiscing on these memories might feel like peering into a distant past you can no longer experience. But we'd like to remind you, those moments are not lost. There are certainly plenty more to be made. Especially in beautiful Ballina where you can head out for a bike ride along North Wall, grab some fish and chips at Shaws Bay or pop down to the Farmer's Market on Sundays by the river.

So allow us to welcome you at Ramada Ballina, simply pack your bags and we'll take care of the rest. Put your feet up, admire the sunset from your balcony. Take a stroll along the boardwalk and watch the boats go by. Or simply see the dolphins dance with delight in our Marina.

However you choose to spend your stay, we hope you feel peaceful, present and restore that childlike wonder once again.

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Whilst the weather might be cooling down, things are heating up across the Ballina Shire this month as the Northern Rivers bursts to life with activity. Over the next few weeks, we are spoilt for choice as many old-time favourite events return for another year - from the Bangalow Billycart Derby and the Love Lennox Festival, to Primex Field Days and Casino Beef Week. Whether you're into high speed carts, carnivals or cows, there really is something for everyone.

Also showing us that they're not slowing down are our community groups and fundraisers - tirelessly going the extra mile. With National Volunteer Week running 20-26 May, this month we acknowledge many of these individuals who give up their time and use their expertise to provide support and improve life for many across the region. If you're interested in volunteering, please be sure to reach out to one of the many amazing organisations listed within these pages.

Finally, the big topic of the moment across Ballina Shire is the reported increase in crime. Our local Councillors have shared their reflections on the matter (page 10-11) and we also talk to Andre Els, a Ballina Shire local and a former NSW Police Officer who has quickly become the face of a community movement determined to find a long term solution to the growing issue (page 29).

Until next month,
Kate Parry, Managing Editor.

Contact us

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We want to support you to stay living at home, active and connected within your community. If you're aged 65 years and over, or Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander aged 55 years and over, why not enquire about how home support services could assist you.

Our trained, local staff will guide you through the services available and create a flexible, personalised plan that helps you live life to the full at home.

"We have a fairly big yard, I've tried to keep it nice. The Southern Cross Care team have organised mowing the lawns for me. Gardening makes me feel a lot better. It keeps the mind active."

– Home Care Client Bill

"I like going to the pool. I've noticed it's easier for me to get up and down, and I'm walking a bit easier."

– Home Care Client Judith

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- Home Maintenance & Modifications
- Respite for Carers
- Personal Care
- Nursing Care





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What: BACCI Art & Craft Show
When: Saturday 4 and Sunday 5 May
Where: Ballina Masonic Hall

Head along to the annual Ballina Art & Craft Centre Inc (BACCI) show where members will display and sell their work. There will be paintings, photography, woven art, woodwork, sculpture, ceramics, jewellery, lights, cards and much more.



What: Our Kids Day Out
When: Sunday 5 May, 9.30am
Where: Missingham Amphitheatre, Ballina

A free, family day out to support our children, especially those who have been in the Children's Ward and Special Care Nursery. There will be clowns, rides, shows and the emergency services on display.



What: North Coast Junior Barista Championships
When: Thursday 9 May, 10am - 3pm
Where: 494 Bruxner Highway, Alstonville

Coffee aplenty, live music, food, community camaraderie and possibly a little dancing as Junior Baristas compete to become the 2024 champion.

For more information visit: northcoastcc.edu.au



What: TOGETHER Arts & Community Wellbeing Day
When: Saturday 11 May, 10am - 1pm
Where: NRCG & Ignite Studios, Ballina

A free, half day of arts, culture, creativity and connection. A range of creative workshops and playful activities will be on offer for all to enjoy. Take a look, drop into a workshop, or experience immersive performance activations.



What: Melbourne International Comedy Roadshow
When: Saturday 11 May, doors at 7.30pm
Where: Ballina RSL

Australia's best comedy spectacular is setting off on its 26th annual road trip around the country, featuring a line-up of comedy royalty alongside fresh sensations from the Festival in one show.



What: Ross Noble Live
When: Tuesday 21 May, 8pm - 9.30pm
Where: Lennox Head Cultural Centre

Jibber Jabber Jamboree is Noble's 21st solo stand-up tour. Join him for an evening of inspired nonsense and freewheeling stand up.

Tickets: communityspaces.com.au

Monthly Markets

1st Saturday	Brunswick Heads
1st Sunday	Byron Bay Pottsville Beach Lismore Car Boot
2nd Saturday	Bangalow Flea Market Woodburn
2nd Sunday	The Channon Tabulam Hall Coolangatta
3rd Saturday	Mullumbimby Murwillumbah Salt Village, Casuarina
3rd Sunday	Federal Uki Pottsville Beach Lismore Car Boot
4th Saturday	Byron YAC Flea Market Wilson Creek Kyogle Bazaar
4th Sunday	Bangalow Nimbin Coolangatta Murwillumbah Yamba
5th Saturday	Bangalow Flea Market
5th Sunday	Nimbin

Weekly Farmers Markets

Tuesday	New Brighton Organic Lismore
Wednesday	Murwillumbah Nimbin Newrybar Hall
Thursday	Byron Bay Lismore
Friday	Mullumbimby
Saturday	Bangalow Uki Blue Knob Gallery Lismore Markets
Sunday	Ballina

For more information visit
discoverballina.com.au



Plans underway to duplicate Ballina bridges



Ballina Shire Council has started preliminary investigation works at Fishery Creek Bridge, on River Street, and Canal Bridge, on Tamarind Drive, as part of their plan to duplicate the bridges.

The project also involves raising portions of the roadway on sections of River Street, between Teven Interchange and Ballina Island, and Tamarind Drive, between Ballina Island and Cumbalum Interchange.

Duplicating the existing bridges and raising these sections of road will improve evacuation options during flooding events and build a more resilient road network.

Once constructed, the duplicated bridges will provide dual lanes in and out of Ballina Island, improve traffic flow and increase the roads' capacity to comfortably cater for future traffic demands.

The Evacuation Route Raising (including bridge duplications) project will be completed across three years and has been funded by \$40 million from the Australian Government through the Northern Rivers Recovery and Resilience Program (NRRRP), which is administered by NSW Reconstruction Authority.

The Australian Government has provided \$150 million to the NSW Government to deliver 36 flood mitigation and resilience projects

across all seven Local Government Areas (LGAs) in the Northern Rivers impacted by the devastating 2022 floods.

Following the 2022 flood events, Ballina's evacuation routes were inundated, unsafe and remained closed for a significant period. This project will reduce some low points on key access roads to Ballina Island.

Pre-construction work will continue during 2024. Council will then move into the design and approval phase, with bridge construction anticipated to start in 2025.

Ballina Shire Council will continue to inform the community at each project phase. For more information or to register for updates visit: ballina.nsw.gov.au/BallinaBridgesDuplications

Pictured: Fishery Creek Bridge (River Street) concept design.

Funding for Ballina Shire coastal estuaries



Pictured: Maguires Creek catchment.

Tamara Smith MP, Greens Member for Ballina, has announced funding from the NSW government for the rehabilitation of three key coastal estuaries in the Ballina Electorate, as part of the implementation stream of the 2023-24 Coastal and Estuary Grants Management Program.

The projects being funded include:

- \$321,999 to fund the design, approval and works of a rehabilitation project on the Western foreshore of Lake Ainsworth, Lennox Head

- \$31,559 to restore dunes that have been impacted by coastal processes at Cavanbah and Belongil Beach in Byron Bay
- \$240,672 to fund restoration of a large stretch of riparian area with high importance to the Richmond River Coastal Zone Management Plan, along Maguires Creek in Ballina Shire.

Reflecting on the importance of securing funding for these three critical restoration projects Ms Smith said, 'It's never been more important to invest in our critical environment.'

When asked about the funding for Maguires Creek she added, 'I want to acknowledge the amazing work of students at Alstonville High School, who have partnered with Landcare groups and organisations like OzFish to lead the charge in protecting Maguires Creek from degradation and the negative impacts of extreme weather. I'm hopeful this funding will facilitate even wider involvement from the community in protecting the creek.'

For more information on the projects and the Coastal and Estuary Grants Program visit: environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/water/coasts/coastal-and-estuary-grants



Beach Safety Program the first of its kind



This new program includes Critical Response Kits and Rescue Tubes installed at numerous locations from North Wall and East Ballina to Seven Mile Beach at Lennox Head. This is in addition to the emergency markers, angel rings and an emergency response beacon already installed along Ballina Shire’s coastline.

‘Each of the Critical Response First Aid Kits includes a trauma bleed kit, CAT tourniquet, defibrillator, and a CPR pack inside a portable rescue box. The Beach Rescue Tubes include a foam surf rescue device, rope and lanyard inside a rescue box,’ said Ballina Shire Council’s Manager of Open Spaces, Cheyne Willebrands.

This equipment has been provided for community members to access in the case of an emergency and aims to improve patient outcomes.

The initiative has been a joint effort and made possible with the donation of defibrillators from the Matthew Hardy Memorial Project and the assistance of NSW Department of Primary Industries and Surf Life Saving NSW.

‘Beach users can now surf, swim and play, with peace of mind knowing safety and first aid equipment is available in key locations,’ added Ballina Shire Council’s Mayor Sharon Cadwallader.

The Critical Response Kits and Rescue Tube boxes feature QR codes, enabling the community to easily report incidents, damage or missing items to Council. By fostering community awareness and ownership, Council aims for these safety items to be respected and used in emergency situations only.

Ballina Shire Council has rolled out a new Beach Safety Program to improve the safety and first aid infrastructure available along the Shire’s beaches.

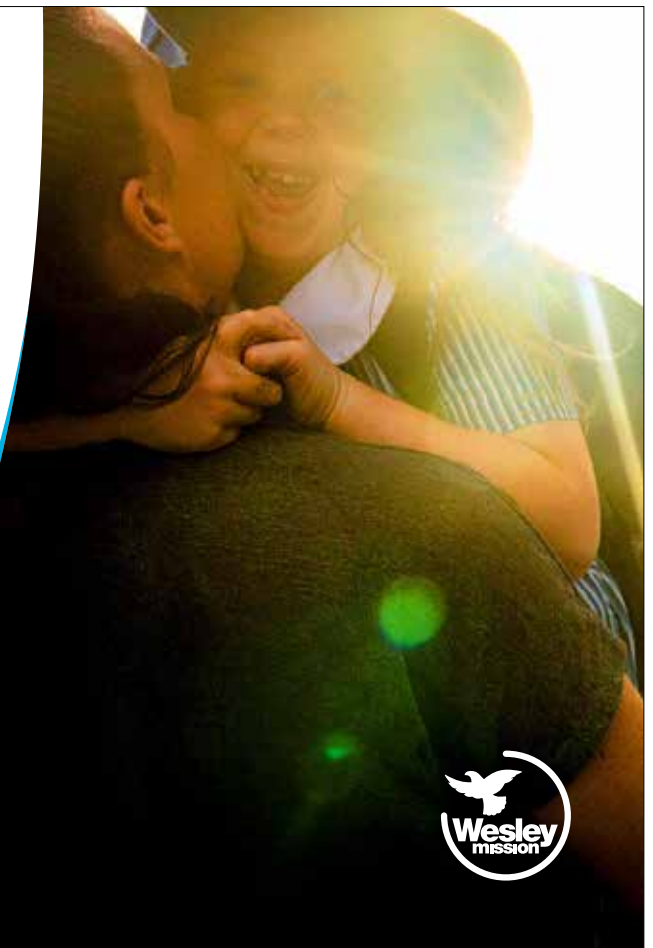
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Councillor column: Local crime concerns

The Ballina Wave invited all A and C Ward Councillors to share with readers their reflections on the recent increase of local crime and subsequent community concerns. Responses received are shared below. All opinions are those of the author.

Mayor Sharon Cadwallader

I was pleased to support Cr Rod Bruem and members of the community who organised the recent public meeting to discuss concerns over crime issues. The big turnout on a Sunday morning was a good indication of the number of worried people in our community, particularly over home break-ins and car thefts. Council's own regular community survey shows that crime prevention is of great concern for residents in Ballina Shire. Special thanks to Chief Inspector Bill McKenna for attending the meeting and giving direct and honest answers to questions from the floor.

It has been reassuring to see over the weeks since the meeting Chief Inspector McKenna and his police colleagues have worked tirelessly to bring some of the alleged repeat criminals before the courts.

There is still much more to be done and this is certainly not a problem unique to Ballina Shire. Official crime statistics show up to 90% of crimes, including vehicle theft breaking and entering, sexual assault and domestic assault are happening in NSW regional communities, where there are fewer police than in metro Sydney.

CCTV cameras are urgently needed in Ballina Shire's CBD areas. Ballina Police have offered to monitor the cameras which makes sense as the police station is manned 24/7. Such cameras exist in other regional communities and it's time Ballina caught up. Green's MP Tamara Smith made an election commitment to fund the cameras so once the plan is complete, we will be asking for the funding for their installation.

Deputy Mayor Eoin Johnston

The Ballina Shire is not exempt from what is reported nationally as a rise in criminal activity. A meeting at Ballina, called by Cr Rod Bruem, was well attended by residents who have actually been recent victims and those who are concerned about a perception of a surge in crime, particularly by young offenders.

Many victims of crime feel that more emphasis is placed on the welfare of the young offenders than on those who have suffered. At a recent meeting in Moree, attended by our Premier, senior police and prominent rugby league identities, the emphasis was attending to and facilitating actions to assist the 'at risk' offenders and those who may, by association, be enticed to offend.

It is my view that no amount of government money, think tanks, photo opportunities or the clusters of publicly funded community support centres will compensate for a lack of firm and responsible parenting or love and care from at least one adult. Therein lies the fundamental problem. No politician or academic is going to suggest that the breakdown is occurring within the home, from a very early age. It is far more politically expedient to deal with a social crisis by throwing more money at it.

And then we have the 'accountability' question which is rarely subjected to detailed scrutiny. What can we do in our community? Listen to the police: report all crimes, no matter how minor, and overcome your reluctance to become a witness. Policing relies on data and statistics and if they don't know, they can't guess. Support them and, if they have assisted, convey your thanks.


There is a state wide shortage of police and recruiting at the academy is not what it used to be. There are no longer applicants competing for acceptance. The job is not as attractive as it once was and, one of the reasons for the decline in trainees, along with our other 'coalface' occupations such as teachers, nurses and paramedics, may well be the disrespectful behaviour they are subjected to on a daily basis.

Protect your property and look out for each other. There are times when you don't have to 'mind your own business'.

Cr Rod Bruem


A big thanks to those who were able to attend our recent meeting to discuss concerns around crime activity in Ballina Shire. A video of the meeting is now available and can be viewed via this link: bit.ly/BallinaCommunityMeeting

Since our meeting, local police have been making good progress arresting alleged repeat offenders. Thank you again to Chief Inspector Bill McKenna for coming to our meeting, answering



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questions, and taking the lead in these recent attempts to curb the spate of break-ins and car thefts.

I am working with Goonellabah community crime campaigner Andre Els to make sure key recommendations from the Ballina and Lismore community meetings are put forward to the NSW Parliament Inquiry into regional youth crime.

I'm also looking forward to working with community representatives to explore ways we can further support young people in our shire with activities to occupy their time and better equip them grow into citizens who contribute to our society.

There have been thousands of downloads of the WeWatch app in the Ballina Shire, with hundreds of alerts raised regarding crime incidents or concerns in local neighbourhoods. It is already proving to be an effective tool to help prevent residents become victims of crime and to give them some added peace of mind.

Should WeWatch be rolled out state-wide with the support of police as a modern Neighbourhood Watch tool? This is something we will include in our recommendations to the parliamentary inquiry.

Cr Stephen McCarthy

If youth crime is even rising in our community, for which I believe we are well below state levels, we'd need a culture change, led by the community where everybody is engaged. It is understood the motive of the perpetrators of youth crime is to gain social status and/or recognition by their peers.

While we need to increase our personal and home security measures ie. lock our homes and cars, and don't leave anything valuable in our cars or around our homes; we could educate troubled youth to find 'public value'; in-kind support. We must provide a *subsidium* (Latin term) for bona fide need. Moral obligations. We want citizens to flourish. A collaborative good¹.

We need an intervention when our youth are known to be at risk. I believe our local government and private agencies are sufficiently capable to provide the necessary services to youths at risk. But they need support. Are members of our community prepared to provide alternatives in physical and other activities to engage children who are at risk?

We need to find solutions. The funds spent on facial recognition security cameras would be better utilised for on-the-ground campaigns to provide alternative programs to interest and

distract children at risk. Fear campaigns do nothing. It takes a community to raise a child.

¹Drew, D.J. (2022). *Saving Local Government - Financial Sustainability in a Challenging World*

Cr Simon Chate

It has been very disturbing to hear of the increased level of youth crime in our region. At the recent 'crime' meeting in Ballina, when the question was asked: 'Could you please put your hand up if you are a recent victim of these sorts of crimes?', the number of hands that flew into the air surprised me. There were many people from our community who have suffered at the hands of some of these young offenders - all people who have been the victims of serious crimes such as break-ins, robberies, car thefts, etc. I am really sorry to hear of these unwanted intrusions and serious incidents.

I understand the community needs to stand firm against such crime. Break-ins, car thefts, robberies, etc are all traumatic and potentially life-altering events and the community support that was shown at the recent meeting was inspiring.

While I am pleased to see the community saying 'no' to crime, and very pleased to note that our police are well aware of what's going on and are working hard to protect our homes and belongings, it's really important that we don't paint all young people with the same brush. The police at the meeting clearly stated that there were a small number of repeat offenders and that not all of them come from our region.

As a high school teacher, I work amongst young people every day and the vast majority of the young adults whom I come into contact with are excellent, law abiding, caring and considerate young people. These young adults wouldn't dream of engaging in criminal activity of any sort. It's also important to remember that sometimes young people hang out in groups or wander around town in the evening or after dark with their peer group or friends. This is natural and normal behaviour for these kids and by no means is it an indicator that they are up to no good.

While there are definitely a few 'bad apples' around, our police are well aware of the majority of them, but in general, we need to remember the presumption of innocence is important when it comes to making judgments about the intentions of our young people.

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Harvest



Now in its eighth year, the iconic Harvest Food Trail is the perfect opportunity to spend two days wandering into the paddocks, kitchens, bottling rooms and packing sheds of some of the Northern River's finest food and beverage producers - all at your own pace.

When: Saturday 4 - Sunday 5 May
Where: Northern Rivers
Info: northernriversfood.org/harvest-food-trail

Primex



Primex Field Days have been bringing city and rural communities together since 1985. Attracting 25,000 attendees over three days, this iconic event showcases the latest in agriculture, machinery, and primary industries with over 350 exhibitors and 1,200 companies represented. Food, entertainment and lots to see and do.

When: 16-18 May, 9am - 4pm daily
Where: Casino
Info: primex.net.au

Beef Week



Join the annual celebration of this iconic Australian industry and the rural way of life at Casino Beef Week. Taking place over nine days, the festival provides entertainment, education and an authentic country experience for the whole family. With more than 100 vibrant events to enjoy, there is no shortage of fun things to enjoy.

When: Saturday 18 - Sunday 26 May
Where: Casino, various locations
Info: casinobeefweek.com.au

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Love Lennox



The Love Lennox Festival is set to return to the shores of Seven Mile Beach for a day packed full of unique street stalls, entertainers, musicians and artists.

Popular food vendors invite you to taste the Flavours of Lennox including Mexican, Thai, Indian and Japanese. There will be kids activities, the cutest of dog shows and entertainment all day long.

Grab your friends and family, listen to some great music and enjoy the relaxed coastal atmosphere. This is a free event.

When: Saturday 1 June from 9am

Where: Ballina Street and Cultural Centre, Lennox Head

For more information, visit: lovelennox.com.au

Billy-carts are back



Get set for the Bangalow Billy Cart Derby, a cherished tradition since 1994, now bigger and better than ever. Hosted by the Bangalow Lions, this family-friendly extravaganza invites competitors of all ages to conquer the thrilling main street descent.

From fearless youngsters to seasoned seniors, there's a race for everyone, with categories spanning Traditional, Home Grown, Novelty, and more, showcasing innovative designs that never fail to captivate the crowd.

When: Sunday 19 May, races from 9am

Where: Byron Road, Bangalow

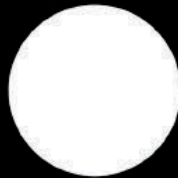
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Chris Treks For A Cause



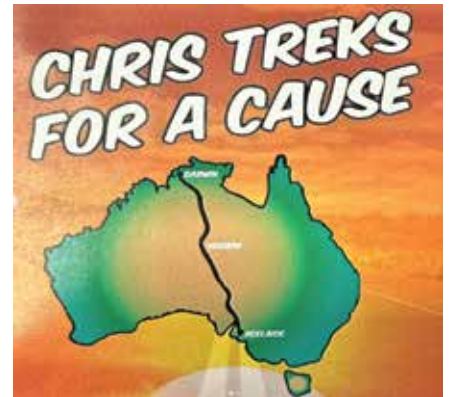
Pictured: Chris all smiles ahead of the adventure.

Long time resident of the Ballina Shire, Chris Woods, is a mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. She is also a passionate fundraiser who volunteers and has spent many hours supporting those in need.

When Chris' husband of 38 years passed away, she started planning to do something different with her life.

She has always been the first to put her hand up for fundraising activities, or when someone needs a hand, however this time, things look a little bit different. She is stepping out and embarking on a solo fundraising adventure which will see her walk 3,060km from Darwin to Adelaide. Departing on 1 May, Chris Treks For A Cause is planned to take 103 days, at an average pace of 30km a day.

'I've been planning this for some time but with COVID, border restrictions and personal complications, this walk has been delayed for four years,' said Chris. 'Now, I'll be doing the walk at 72 years of age and I can't wait.'



Aiming to raise awareness and support for mental health, assist fathers, and strengthen community bonds, all funds raised by Chris Treks For A Cause will be shared between Black Dog Institute, Dads4Kids and Beyond Blue.

To follow Chris' journey visit Facebook/Chris Treks For A Cause or to donate visit: mycause.com.au/p/342500/chris-treks-for-a-cause



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Where shhh happens

by Robert Hutton, Ballina Library



Once upon a time, libraries were quiet places, similar to churches, where people spoke, if at all, in hushed, reverential tones. Librarians were famous for shushing people. In fact, the collective noun for a group of library workers is a shush of librarians. Now, when you enter a public library, you are more likely to hear the vibrant hum of people conversing, mobile phones ringing, maybe even large groups of people clapping their hands and singing nursery rhymes.

The noisiness of modern libraries is the result of a number of factors. Firstly, the role of libraries in the community has changed dramatically in recent years. We are no longer simply a place for people to come and borrow books or to sit and read. Modern libraries have evolved to become community hubs where people come together, whether it be for children's programs, author talks, Social Circle (for seniors), craft groups like Sew Can I, school holiday workshops, Tech Savvy computer and phone assistance, chess and scrabble clubs and so on. Secondly, libraries have made a deliberate effort to become more inclusive, actively encouraging a range of people to come to the library where, in the past, they may have felt unwelcome or even asked to leave. Thus, parents with young children (who may occasionally cry or squeal) are welcome, as are people with a disability, some of whom talk in loud voices or make involuntarily sounds. Also, the provision of free wi-fi by libraries has meant many people come to the library specifically to use their phones or laptops.

Many of you will be thinking right now that you miss the days when libraries were deathly quiet, and we understand that. But others will be thinking how much they like bringing their children or their disabled clients to the library without being asked to be quiet or leave. At Ballina Library, we are trying to get this balance right. We have designated quiet areas at the back of the library and we ask people to wear headphones when using computers. We have a designated video conferencing room and we ask people having long conversations on their phone to take them outside. We have signs alerting people when we are holding children's programs. While we realise it is impossible to please everyone, we will continue trying to get the balance right. And, yes, we may still occasionally ask you to shush!

Mayor gives thanks



Ballina Shire Mayor, Sharon Cadwallader (pictured middle) has met with Governor General the Honourable David Hurley, and his wife Linda to thank him for the unwavering support provided during his tenure which ends in July.

In appreciation of his assistance, particularly during the 2022 floods, Mayor Cadwallader presented the pair with a small gift, which included a few copies of *The Ballina Wave*.

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Join the Northern Rivers Youth Orchestra



Young musicians from across the region are invited to join the Northern Rivers Youth Orchestra (NRYO) for an unforgettable three days of music-making, learning and inspiration this July.

Hosted by the esteemed Northern Rivers Conservatorium, the orchestra brings together talented young musicians for an intensive program of rehearsals, workshops, and performances. Led by inspiring guest conductors from associated regional conservatoriums, students have the chance to work with some of the best music educators in the country and learn from their wealth of experience.

Members of the NRYO will hone their skills, collaborating with other talented musicians, and performing at the Whitebrook Theatre in a public grand finale concert.

It's also a great opportunity to make new friends and be part of a supportive and inspiring community of young musicians who share a passion for music.

Northern Rivers Youth Orchestra participants can expect to learn a wide range of music from the high energy to the sublime, sourced from blockbuster movies, iconic bands and famous classical works, featuring many well-known composers, contemporary and historical.

The Northern Rivers Youth Orchestra comprises full orchestras, concert bands, and string ensembles. The cost for seniors (AMEB 4+) is \$190, and for juniors (AMEB 1-3) it is \$170. An early bird discount of \$20 applies until Monday 3 June.

The event will run from Tuesday 9 - Thursday 11 July.

Enquiries can be emailed to: nryo@nrcac.edu.au or to enrol visit: enrol.nrcac.edu.au/enrol-workshops

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French flavour on the Northern Rivers



The Alliance Française Côte du Nord has been bringing French culture, language and entertainment to the region for over 30 years, preparing exciting events to celebrate and appreciate all things French.

Enrol in French lessons from absolute beginner level (face-to-face in Ballina) to advanced conversation via Zoom.

Share a French meal at one of the area's wonderful French restaurants, a favourite being Che Bon in Ballina, where the group have celebrated La Fête Nationale, Beaujolais Nouveau and birthdays for many years.

The AF French Film Festival at the Byron Palace cinemas shows over 50 late release French movies. Every month the Star Court Theatre in Lismore hosts a Café du Coin in their Gatsby's Bar, where everyone is welcome to stay for a discussion over

a wine or cheese platter.

Join in a game of petanque (boules) regularly at the piste (or ground) at Pop Denison Park, East Ballina, or get scrabbling over a coffee.

Listen every Saturday from 12pm to 2pm as RiverFM 92.9 hosts *French Connection*, a weekly immersion in French news and music. Those wishing to learn how to run such a radio program are welcome. French book groups meet every six weeks to discuss novels written within the last 10 years by Francophone authors.

For more info visit: afnorthcoast.org.au

Ballina Men's Shed

Community and craftsmanship



The Ballina Men's Shed is a community space where men can gather and work together on personal and community projects. Opened in 2021, its aim is to improve the well-being of members with companionship and social activity between 8am to 12pm every weekday - they down tools for 'smoko' between 9.30am and 10am.

The Shed is a good retreat for men who are retired, bored or lonely and is a great place to learn new activities such as woodwork and metal work. There are excellent facilities for gardening, woodwork, including carving or turning, and a well supplied metal workshop. Many members are highly skilled and never miss a chance to pass on their skills to new members.

The group can make or repair almost anything and specialise in rejuvenating old furniture. They hold a monthly BBQ from time to time which is an opportunity to get together and listen to a guest speaker. There is also an annual Open Day and you'll see them selling their creations at craft shows in Ballina and Alstonville.

Visitors are welcome any time during weekday mornings so head along if you have something you'd like repaired or if you're interested to see what they make.

Address: 44 Fisheries Creek Road.

Enquiries via email: ballinamensshed2478@gmail.com



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Cumbalum Residents Association

by Kay Oxley

At our March Cumbalum Residents Association (CRA) ordinary meeting we welcomed new members to our Association. Thank you for your interest and support, and remember if you want to know more about the CRA please go on the website to read our latest news, here you can also fill in a membership application form if you'd like to become a member: cumbalum.wixsite.com/residents/support-us

A report back from the Council A Ward meeting of 12 March included an update of the **Shopping Village Complex for Cumbalum**. There are two stages with the Stage 1 Development Application that includes an office and shop/café complex being progressed. The developer is being requested for further information which is causing some delays. A Development Application for Stage 2 which includes a supermarket and bottle shop was lodged with Council in late January.

An **update on youth crime** and the implications for the Ballina Shire Council is a topic worth mentioning. The Council recognise that the strategy for managing this issue needs more focus with community meetings being held. There is

an app called WeWatch available which allows you to record any crime in your area. If you have suggestions on how our community can manage this increasing epidemic, we will welcome your contribution.

The Association is in discussion with Council regarding the **connectivity of North Ballina and West Ballina**. The works for the connecting road were originally planned to commence this year, however due to changes in Council funding priorities, this has been delayed significantly. The CRA will keep this issue on the agenda to improve road accessibility for the community. Costs for the duplication of River Street and Tamarind Drive are reported by Council to possibly present further opportunities for this to occur within a reasonable timeframe.

The topic of the **southern entry and exit on the Cumbalum Interchange** was also discussed. Cr Sharon Cadwallader has approached the relevant State Government body to put it on their agenda. The Association will continue to approach other relevant government representatives to voice our campaign.

The **Cumbalum Sporting Fields** have been monitored by Council in recent times for dogs off leash. This is due to dog owners not cleaning up after their dogs and causing health concerns for sporting clubs. There is an identified need to have a designated dog exercise area. Our representatives are working towards identifying suitable land and funding opportunities.

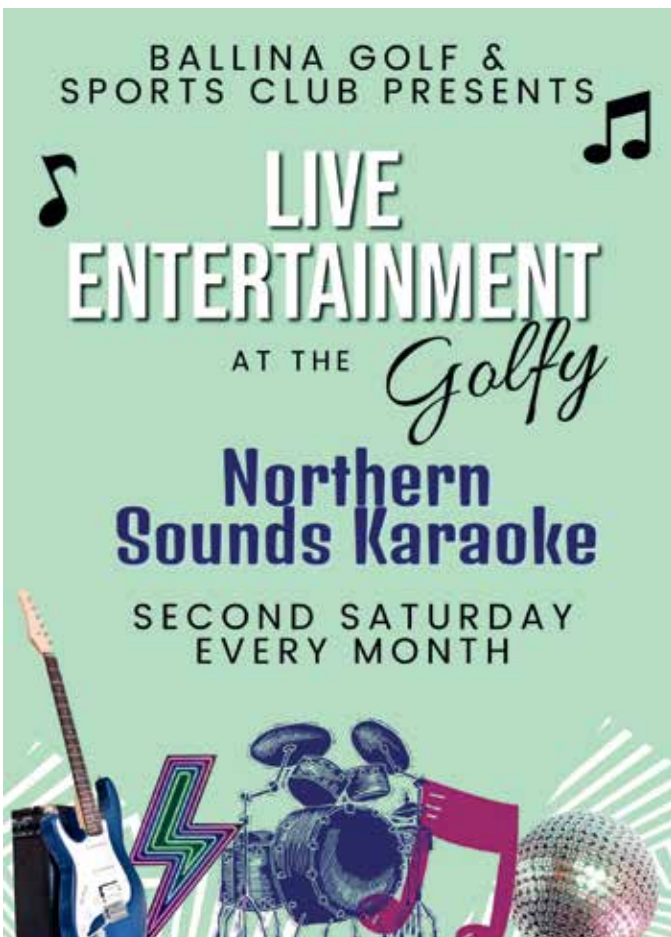
The **Bush Fire Risk Management Plan** for our area is under review. Comments have been provided to the Rural Fire Service regarding the dangers to our community due to its location adjacent to high bushfire risk areas. Plans to have a representative attend our meeting in July are progressing.

Comments have also been provided on the **Draft Housing Strategy** and the suitability for some land in our estate for development.

The CRA has plans for a **community day** which will provide an opportunity to bring our community together and to welcome all newcomers to the area.

A sub-committee has been formed to further our **land care management** initiative for our local wetlands which is a habitat for many native bird species (141 species so far sighted, including five rare magpie geese). The sub-committee will meet and present back to the Association.

Our next meeting is on 21 May, commencing 6pm at the Cumbalum Sporting Complex. Join us if you can, and register your attendance on our website through the events page: cumbalum.wixsite.com/residents/events





Community unity

by Ballina Rotary-on-Richmond



Pictured (L-R): Rotary at the Fossil Rock event; Delivering bikes to Wardell.

On 15 March, the Boaty Boys and Channel Chicks held a Charity Gala Night at the Lennox Hotel. The event was designed to help raise funds for Love Bites, a Respectful Relationships program for youth, and enable us to continue our domestic and family violence campaign. The Lennox community came together and supported this event in person and with auction and raffle prizes. The silent auction bidding was fierce, but there were plenty of great prizes to go around. Over 100 guests enjoyed a fun night with MC Mandy Nolan.

Also helping us raise funds for our campaign were the band, Fossil Rock, who celebrated 25 years together with a fundraiser for Rotary at Cherry Street Sports Club. Wow, these guys and gals know how to rock. Five hundred fans danced and sang along to the brilliance of their music. A massive thanks to Fossil Rock and Cherry Street Sports Club who worked non-stop ensuring everyone had a magical time.

We appreciate everyone who joined us across these events. Your generosity is overwhelming, together we are helping our youth and community.

Throughout 2024 you will continue to see Purple Shirt Friday rolling out across Ballina Shire businesses. Shirts can be purchased by businesses and community members, contact us for more details.

Our Rotary Australia Repurposing Equipment team have also been busy, recently collecting 14 recycled push bikes donated by Surfers Sunrise Rotary for the Wardell Community Village. The youth were very excited to try out the bikes.

This month, on Saturday 18 May, we are hosting the Rotary District Conference at the Ballina RSL Club. We have a wide range of speakers, including Craig Foster AM. Members of the public are welcome to attend our Rotary conference. Please see the flyer on page 24 for booking information.

Finally, we are excited to announce our annual Duck Race will be held on Sunday 10 November at Fawcett Park. The quack is back and we are in the early stages of planning. Mark it in your diaries.

If you are interested in Rotary and being part of our dynamic Club, please contact us on ph: 0427 287 627.

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Community in brief

Alstonville Probus Club

The Club has had a full, exciting and informative couple of months. February's guest spoke of a housing project occurring in Nimbin and other Northern Rivers areas, something of which members had no prior knowledge. These projects are providing emergency accommodation in flood affected areas. The next speaker, Julie Stewart, Manager of Ballina Airport, informed the group of the history and future plans for the airport. Both these speakers were well received by members.

The mystery bus trip, which included a homemade morning tea en-route to shopping in Murwillumbah and lunch at Flutterbies in Tyalgum, was a highlight for the month.

The group has also held its AGM which saw a changing of the committee with Margaret Paddon taking over as President. The changeover lunch in April was a happy day with some fun local entertainment.

Australians in Retirement

The Association of Independent Retirees is now officially Australians in Retirement, still known as AIR Ltd (Far North Coast Branch). Rules and regulations are the same - any retiree is welcome to become a member or simply visit the meetings which are held on the first Friday of each month, at 9.30am for 10am commencement, at the Ballina RSL Club. Each meeting has a guest speaker, who shares about interesting matters of importance. Previous speakers have spoken about macadamias, the sugar industry, and Colin Lee from Richmond Rotary Club visited the group to advise on the Club's flood recovery program.

Morning tea is provided at meetings prior to the guest speaker's presentation, lunch is then partaken downstairs in the Boardwalk restaurant at the Club. Lunch is at member's own cost, and a meeting charge of \$5 is collected from all attendees to help subsidise running costs of the group.

Any queries to Secretary, Bob Taylor, ph: 0421 972 192.

Australian Order of Old Bastards

The next couple of months will be a busy time for the Northern Rivers Branch of the AOOB.

We will continue to offer our monthly BBQ at the Northern Rivers Animal Service adoption days. These happen on the first Saturday of the month at 61 Piper Drive, Ballina. It is a great chance to come along and enjoy a bite to eat while you admire the cats and dogs (a pet adoption would be nice, but is not essential).

On Monday 20 May at 5.30pm, the group will be holding its AGM at the Henry Rous Hotel, Ballina. At the meeting, they'll decide where to distribute the funds raised over the last year, and plan activities for the months ahead.

In exciting news, Monday 10 June - the King's Birthday holiday - will see the running of the inaugural AOOB Cup at Ballina Racecourse. The seven-race event will no doubt become an annual highlight on racing and social calendars.

It's an exciting time to be an Old Bastard. Life membership costs only \$25, and is a great investment in good times, and doing some good. The OBs can be contacted via email at: aob.nr@gmail.com

Ballina CWA

The Ballina Branch of the Country Women's Association of NSW holds their monthly Branch meeting on the third Monday of each month at the CWA Rooms, 236 River Street, Captain Cook Park, Ballina from 9am.

Each Wednesday, 9am - 11.30am, a Handicraft/Friendship morning is held in the Rooms - everyone welcome. Head along, make new friends, enjoy some morning tea for \$3pp and perhaps you might learn a new craft. Additionally, on the first Wednesday morning of each month there is a stall

in the CWA Rooms selling handicraft, baking and preserves. Please accept this as your invitation to come along and buy the homemade produce.

On Friday 22 March the group held a street stall on River Street. It was an extremely successful stall and all funds raised are to be donated to Ballina Marine Rescue.

The next stall will be a Mothers Day stall at Ballina Fair on Friday 10 May. Then on Wednesday 29 May there will be a Biggest Morning Tea and fashion show by Postie Fashions along with raffles and lucky door prizes at the CWA Rooms - \$10 entry fee. All funds raised go to supporting the Cancer Council of Australia.

For further information contact Branch Secretary Janet Henderson, ph: 0435 323 079 or email: balcwa@hotmail.com

Ballina Hospital Auxiliary



The group held its annual Easter Street Stall and Raffle in River Street on Thursday 28 March. The stall had its usual display of cooking and craft donated by members and other generous individuals. The event was very successful, raising just over \$1,500. The raffle was won by Katrina, Ticket Number 03510.

Many thanks to the Ballina community for its generous support and also to group members for their efforts.

At the last meeting, the group approved the purchase of approximately \$75,000 of equipment for Ballina Hospital, including items for the renal unit, rehabilitation and the general ward.

Ballina Ladies Probus

The guest speaker for this month's meeting, held on 1 May, is Col Lee OAM. He will be discussing the



amazing work done by Rotary on the flood recovery. A Friendship Morning Tea will then be held on Wednesday 15 May at 10am at Coffee & Kitchen, East Ballina, at own cost.

Ladies are welcome to head along and join in. Enquiries to Beryl ph: 6681 6360 or ph: 0409 285 282.

East Ballina Lions

East Ballina Lions are urgently seeking new members to support and grow the Club. The group hold regular BBQs at Forty Winks, and the athletics at Shelly Beach three times per year. Funds raised at these events go to support local causes such as scholarships for schools.

For more information or to join, call Wayne on ph: 0439 605 654.

Probus Club of Ballina Waters

A new Executive has been elected, supported by an enthusiastic Committee. The new Executive is President Margaret Ball, Secretary Brian Lewis, and Club Treasurer Joan McFarlane. The group look forward to an exciting year of activities with lots of fun, friendship and fellowship.

The regular monthly lunch will continue to be on the last Friday of the month. These are in addition to

the regular monthly meetings on the third Wednesday, where there is an interesting guest speaker.

Men and women are invited to join the group for a range of social activities. Probus is a social club for fun, friendship and fellowship, and it does not involve any service work or fund-raising activities.

Quota Alstonville

Every year Quota hosts a High Tea to celebrate Women in The Community. The event is to recognise and acknowledge women who volunteer and work in the many organisations in our community. New connections are made and experiences shared over the lovely luncheon spread at Summerland House Farm. Enquiries for the High Tea to Judy ph: 0429 330 517.

Quota is a group of women who work together to bring better outcomes for the disadvantaged in the community. Its major fundraiser each year is the Craft and Garden Fair held in August. With over 90 stalls of the best craft and artisans as well as stalls of plants and outdoor living items, there is something for everyone. Funds from this event allows the group to support many local groups and families.

Wollongbar Probus Club



Pictured: Newly elected Office Bearers and Committee Members for 2024/25.

The Wollongbar Probus Club not only had their General meeting back in March but also the AGM which meant the election of Office Bearers plus Committee members for the year 2024/25. A Change-over lunch followed and the Rotary President, Geoff Vidal, accompanied by his wife Carol, gave a toast to the Club and wished them well for the ensuing year, Rotary being the group's parent Club.

Regular friendship and fellowship gatherings are back on the agenda. All welcome, meeting details on page 23.

There will be a bus trip to Robina shopping centre on Wednesday 26 June. Cost is \$26, and everyone is welcome. For more info, call Pamela ph: 0405 776 977.

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Community meetings

Alstonville Plateau Historical Society

When: 2pm, third Sunday of each month
Where: Crawford House Museum, 10 Wardell Road, Alstonville
Contact: aphis2477@yahoo.co.au

Alstonville Probus Club

When: 10am, last Thursday each month
Where: Alstonville Plateau Sports and Bowls Club
Contact: Kevin Walsh, President, ph: 0435 337 472

Alstonville Quota Club

When: 6.30pm, first Tuesday of each month
Where: Alstonville Plateau Sports and Bowls Club
Contact: Diane Parker, ph: 0416 214 012

Alstonville Red Cross

When: 1.30pm, second Thursday of each month
Where: 3 Newbon Street, Alstonville
Contact: Carol, Secretary, ph: 0424 742 774

Australians in Retirement, Far North Coast Branch

When: 10am, first Friday of each month
Where: Ballina RSL Club
Contact: Bob Taylor, Secretary, ph: 6628 3401

Ballina CWA

When: 9am, third Monday of each month
Where: CWA Rooms, next to Ballina RSL
Contact: Lyn Davidson, President, ph: 0404 034 654

Ballina Evening VIEW Club

When: 6.30pm, second Wednesday of each month
Where: Ballina RSL Club
Contact: Julie, President, ph: 0434 988 770

Ballina Hospital Auxiliary

When: 1.30pm, third Tuesday of each month
Where: The Solarium, Ballina Hospital
Contact: ballina.uha.secretary@gmail.com

Ballina Ladies Probus

When: 10am, first Wednesday of each month
Where: Ballina RSL Club
Contact: Beryl, ph: 6681 6360 or ph: 0409 285 282

Ballina Lighthouse RSL Day Club

When: 10am-2pm, every Thursday
Where: Richmond Room, Regatta Avenue, Ballina
Contact: Lorraine Fox, ph: 6687 4350 or ph: 0439 301 249

Ballina Waters Probus Club

When: 10am, third Wednesday of each month
Where: Cherry Street Sports, back deck
Contact: Brian Lewis, Secretary, ph: 0432 277 170

Crowley Care Auxiliary

When: 3pm-4pm, fourth Monday of each month
Where: Crowley Care Education Centre
Contact: Helen, President, ph: 0467 445 377

East Ballina Lions

When: 2pm, first Tuesday of each month
Where: Cherry Street Sports
Contact: Wayne, ph: 0439 605 654

Inner Wheel Club of Alstonville

When: 11am, Third Wednesday of each month
Where: Alstonville Plateau Sports and Bowls Club
Contact: Julie Lee, ph: 0414 396 520

Inner Wheel Club of Ballina

When: 1130am, first Wednesday of each month
Where: Various locations
Contact: Joan Hetherington, President, ph: 0402 885 091

Northern Rivers Day Prostate Cancer Support Group

When: 10am - 12pm, second Wednesday of each month
Where: Alstonville Plateau Sports and Bowls Club
Contact: Robert Corney, ph: 0400 747 630

Northern Rivers Evening Prostate Cancer Support Group

When: 7pm, first Wednesday of each month
Where: Workers Sports Club at Goonellabah
Contact: Bob Johnson, ph: 6622 5792

Rotary Club of Alstonville

When: 6pm, second and fourth Tuesday each month
Where: Alstonville Plateau Sports and Bowls Club
Contact: Bob Costello, ph: 0410 598 523

Rotary Club of Ballina-On-Richmond

When: 6pm, first three Thursdays of each month
Where: Ballina RSL
Contact: Jodie, ph: 0427 287 627

Richmond-Tweed Family History Society Inc

When: 2pm-4pm, first Saturday of each month
Where: Ballina Players Theatre, 24 Swift Street, Ballina
Contact: secretaryrtfhs1@yahoo.com

Scope Club of Ballina

When: 7pm, first Monday of each month
Where: Ballina RSL
Contact: Leonie Dahl, President, ph: 0429 813 493

Wardell Red Cross

When: 10am, 1st Wednesday of each month
Where: Wardell & District Memorial Hall, 49 Richmond Street
Contact: Ros Walsh ph: 6683 4111

Wollongbar Probus

When: 10am, third Thursday of each month
Where: Alstonville Plateau Sports and Bowls Club
Contact: Lorraine Hunt, ph: 6628 0542

Zonta Club of Northern Rivers

When: 6pm, third Wednesday of the month
Where: Alstonville Plateau Sports and Bowls Club
Contact: Bobbi Crane, President, 0409 980 729

Other monthly events

Northern Rivers Animal Shelter Adoption Days

When: 10am-1pm, first Saturday of each month
Where: NRAS Rescue Shelter, 61 Piper Drive, Ballina
Contact: Email: shelter@nras.org.au, ph: 6681 1860

Rotary Conference

Sat 18 May 2024

Ballina RSL Club

Members of the public are invited to attend our inspiring, exciting, diverse and vibrant Conference.

Day Session \$65
Evening Dinner \$80

We look forward to our community joining us. Purchase tickets to attend.

GUEST SPEAKERS



CRAIG FOSTER AM

Former Socceroo,
Human rights activist



FAY JACKSON

Emeritus Deputy Commissioner
Mental Health Comm. NSW



Fr MORGAN BATT

International Alpine
Mountaineer



SCOTT TANNER

Superintendent
NSW Police Force



KIRRA PENDERGAST

The Online Safety Agency
Safe on Social



DAMIAN LOONE

Retired Detective Sergeant
'Lynette Dawson case'



Prof MICHAEL GOOD AO

Institute for Glycomics
Malaria Vaccine Project



MICHELLE TANNER

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The Plateau's Silver Screen

by Cathy Cohen and Jan Regan, Alstonville Plateau Historical Society



Pictured: Amusu Theatre, 1923 -c1939.

The Amusu Picture Theatre opened in Alstonville in 1923 but sadly closed in 1939. However, in 2023 a group of film-loving enthusiasts formed the Duck Creek Film Society, named after the original name for Alstonville - Duck Creek Mountain - with the aim of bringing the silver screen back to the Plateau. With the support of the Alstonville Plateau Historical Society, four film events have been planned to take place this year at Alstonville Public School.

The Amusu Theatre complex was situated in Main Street on the eastern side of the Federal Hotel. It consisted of two shops, an entrance to the theatre between the shops, an engine room with a generator for producing electricity behind the theatre (mains-power electricity did not arrive in Alstonville until 1933) and a three-roomed house. The complex was built by Clarence (Clarrie) Duncan McIntyre, who had moved to Alstonville in 1905 to take up the position of Secretary of the Alstonville Butter Factory. For about five years before the Amusu's opening, he showed pictures at various venues, including the Alstonville Showground, Brooklet and Federal.

The opening of the Amusu on 27 October 1923 was a grand affair. At the official ceremony, Clarrie McIntyre was on stage with Tintenbar Shire Councillor JA Daley, who opened the theatre, together with representatives from Paramount Pictures, Premier National Pictures and Australian Films Ltd. Mrs Daley was given the task of switching on the electricity. This was followed by a free matinee for children, with ginger beer and cake, and in the evening there was a Grand Deluxe Movie Program which featured movie star Norma Talmadge in the silent movie *Smilin' Thru*.

The Amusu not only screened the latest movies such as *Pack Up Your Troubles*, starring Laurel and Hardy, and *The Idle Class*, starring Charlie Chaplin, but it was also used to host visiting live entertainment such as Raymond the Escapologist, *Jack and the Beanstalk* and *Puss in Boots*, as well as local entertainment by the Lismore Methodist Choir and the Lismore Citizens' Band, and even a play starring Clarrie McIntyre himself.



Pictured: Amusu Theatre, Official Opening, October 1923.

Elegant functions were held at the Amusu over the years. At the Anniversary Ball in 1924 attendees wore glamorous fancy dress. At the Amusu Movie Ball in 1927, rainbow-coloured streamers were suspended from a huge electrically illuminated star and a 2,000-candle power electric arc lamp was suspended in the centre, giving the place a gold appearance.

The Amusu was also used for many other purposes: meetings and fundraisers by local businesses, sporting clubs, charities, churches and schools; cribbage and euchre tournaments; weddings and anniversary celebrations; welcome ceremonies for visiting dignitaries such as the Governor General, Lord Stonehaven, and his wife in 1927; and farewell ceremonies for those leaving the town, including the McIntyre family in 1930, at which Councillor Daley said, 'the McIntyres had shown courage in trying to push ahead the town by building the fine hall in which they were gathered that night'. As was customary in those days, Mr McIntyre was presented with a wallet of notes as a gesture of appreciation, while the Red Cross gave Mrs McIntyre an aluminium kettle.

Despite fires in 1928, 1931 and 1933, the Amusu continued to operate under various managers until 1939. There were upgrades with the introduction of sound systems to accommodate arrival of the 'talkies' and the theatre continued to be well used for a wide variety of activities. However, the complex was sold in 1940 and subsequently experienced many changes in ownership and uses. It was demolished and the current complex erected in the early 1990s.

What's on this month at Crawford House Museum

Find out what Alstonvillians were up to during the 1880s, 1890s and 1900s and enjoy the latest exhibition at Crawford House Museum, *Digging Deeper*, where you will discover the story behind the fascinating artefacts dug up on our own doorstep. We've delved deeper into the Museum's collection and discovered some rarely seen objects, including those from Alstonville's very own archaeological site, the former Ocean View Hotel at Perry's Hill. The exhibition runs until Sunday 30 June.

The Museum is at 10 Wardell Road, Alstonville.
For more information visit: aphsmuseum.org.au



Meet the Farmer: May Ly

by Kylie McGregor, Ballina Farmers & Producers Market



Pictured: Farmer May Ly with son, Kai.

After arriving in Australia as a Vietnamese refugee child, May Ly grew up with an instilled understanding of the importance of growing your own food and being self-sustainable. Today, she passes that knowledge on to others via the Conscious Ground farm.

How did you get into farming?

I've been on this project for the past five years. Arriving in Australia as a Vietnamese refugee infant, my parents always converted the garden space into everything that was edible. We harvested from the backyard for our meals and collected eggs daily. I was surrounded by the importance of growing your own food.

Where is your farm and what do you grow?

We are in Myocum on 230 acres, originally a certified organic citrus farm with lemons, limes, oranges, mandarins, yuzus and native Gulling (fingerlime). We now have a market garden with the usual salad, beets, carrots, cabbage to subtropical crops like loofah, wing bean, snake beans and okra, a food forest with beautiful exotic fruits like custard apples, jackfruit, soursops, jaboticabas, mango and black sapote

as well as an agroforestry market garden where we grow our seasonal South-East Asian herbs and native bush foods. We follow biodynamic and regenerative principles as well as managing our land with cattle, pigs and chooks.

Our goal is education and local food security, which is why we have incorporated so many different systems in the one place.

What is your connection to the Ballina/Northern Rivers region?

My partner, Richard, chose this region for its capacity to create what we have now at Conscious Ground: rich nutrient-dense soil, clean water and air. The reward of being in this region is being amongst like-minded people, with care and awareness and who genuinely care about the planet and future.

What do you find most rewarding about farming?

Growing food for me is beyond commercial practices, it is a sense of finding home. When our family was approved to settle in Australia and we left the refugee camp, my oldest brother was seven and my grandmother gave him a packet of seeds and said, 'When you arrive in Australia, plant these seeds. This is how you will feed yourself and this is how you will make your new land your home.'

What do you love most about being at the farmers' market?

The interaction with people is the best part about being at the market. We love to share the education on where the food comes from and our philosophy and dedication on growing the most nutrient-dense foods that don't impact the earth. We grow a lot of 'unusual' crops so getting people to explore different foods is what lights us up.

How important is it for our community to be able to shop at the farmers' market?

Buying fresh from the farmers' market where local growers are able to connect direct to the consumer is so critical for so many reasons: it supports the local economy, reduces the carbon footprint of food from zero to very little packaging required, along with food miles being minimised and retaining the highest nutrient density without storage, transport and sitting on a shelf for weeks after harvest.

Out of everything you grow, do you have a favourite? And any secrets on how to use it in recipes?

My favourite is the versatile taro as it can be used sweet or savoury and is so simple to cook with. You can use them like a potato: boil, bake or mash them. Taro is high in fibre as well as a being a resistant starch which becomes food for the beneficial gut bacteria. To me it's far superior to potato. I love making taro hash browns - the recipe can be found on our Instagram page.

Ballina Farmers & Producers Market runs every Sunday from 7-11am at Commemoration Park in Ballina.



Finding purpose in volunteering: Ivan Leahy

by Kate Parry



Pictured: Ivan Leahy with his wife, Judy, who also plays a vital role volunteering.

Since moving to the Ballina Shire in 2000, just a short jump from his previous homebase of Wyrallah, Ivan Leahy has become firmly embedded in local community service and welfare. With a professional career spanning diverse sectors and a heart dedicated to helping others, the impact of Ivan's volunteering efforts extend far beyond the borders of his local community.

This level of dedication recently saw Ivan named as joint recipient of Volunteer of the Year at the 2024 Ballina Shire Australia Day Awards.

'It was a lovely surprise,' said Ivan. 'I have always volunteered because it's important to help others in life. It's a belief I share with my wife Judy, who has also worked tirelessly on our projects.'

Having spent two decades as the Operations Manager at Thursday Plantation, where he started as employee number five, Ivan's subsequent ventures into entrepreneurship with Ballina Hot Water and Dave Bazaar Plumbing marked a transition towards retirement and a newfound focus on volunteerism.

In the local sphere, Ivan has helped many through his role as Chairperson of the Ballina Hope Haven Women's Refuge. Initially starting with one night of volunteering per week alongside Judy, Ivan's leadership over six years was instrumental in providing support to those fleeing domestic violence.

Beyond the refuge, Ivan's dedication extended to initiatives like the Five Loaves Mobile Soup Kitchen and the Ballina ADRA Op Shop, where he continues to volunteer his time to ensure smooth operations.

Internationally, Ivan and Judy work with communities in Kenya, where he serves as the volunteer Operations Manager for Kenya Health. His involvement began through a serendipitous encounter with a group of nurses from Murwillumbah during a visit to Kenya in 2013. Since then, Ivan

and Judy have made 14 trips to Kenya, managing operations, fundraising, and leading volunteer healthcare teams.

'Our trips to Kenya see our team run a mobile clinic where we head out to remote villages and slums,' said Ivan. 'We treat up to 6,000 patients per year, annually averaging five surgeries, many which are life saving.'

Back home, Ivan's empathy has also shone through by the extension of support to victims of flooding and refugees. His unwavering dedication to humanitarian causes reinforces a deeply ingrained commitment to serving others.

When asked about his motivation for volunteering, Ivan's response reflects his clear sense of purpose. 'Volunteering can be challenging, but it is always fulfilling,' he says. 'Find what you're passionate about and see where you can help. Doing so will be like becoming a part of a family - you won't regret it.'

Ken Delany (joint winner)

Ivan shares the award of Ballina Shire's 2024 Volunteer of the Year with Ken Delany who passed away on 6 March. A dedicated volunteer with Ballina Marine Rescue for over 15 years, Ken was a pillar of strength and reliability in the Ballina community.



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Labor



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Rise in local crime sparks concerns

by Kate Parry



Across Australia, regional towns are grappling with a surge in criminal activities that has left residents concerned and authorities scrambling for solutions.

'The Northern Rivers is no exception,' says Andre Els, a Ballina Shire local and a former NSW Police Officer who has quickly become the face of a community movement determined to find a long term solution to the growing issue. 'During a meeting with Grant Ericson, the Commander of Lismore Police, he advised that this time last year, local crime was nothing like it is now.' This jump has been so dramatic, that reported figures indicate a 100% rise in opportunistic crimes like break-ins and vehicle thefts across the Ballina Shire over the past year.

After several break-and-enters in his local community of Goonellabah, Andre jumped into action, organising a community forum aimed at giving a voice to victims and exploring ideas for reducing the rising trend. Following a strong turnout, a second gathering was held in Ballina a few weeks later, drawing a crowd of concerned residents, active and retired law enforcement officers, and local Councillors. With approximately 190 individuals in attendance, there was a palpable sense of determination to confront the challenges head-on. Such is the concern, Andre has since been asked to arrange meetings in Byron Bay, Evans Head, Casino and Helidon in Queensland.

So what's behind this sudden surge in unlawful activities? Andre points to a multifaceted problem, attributing the spike in crime to a combination of cultural shifts and legislative changes.

'It is a troubling picture of a youth culture marred by substance abuse, lack of parental guidance, and a disregard for authority,' notes Andre. 'In some cases, young individuals wield control over their households, leaving parents powerless to rein in their destructive behaviour. The consequences of this breakdown in familial structure are dire, with youths emboldened to engage in criminal activities without fear of repercussions.'

One of the most concerning aspects of this trend is the alleged formation of gangs among youth, exacerbating the

threat posed to public safety. Andre describes how these gangs, comprised of individuals as young as 10 and as old as 25, operate with brazen confidence, using intimidation tactics to assert dominance over their peers and community members alike. He explains, 'Of particular concern is the behaviour of youth aged between 10 and 14, who seem to be motivated by 'post and boast' aggravated incidents where perpetrators film and photograph the crimes to share online.'

In the face of such challenges, Andre proposes a bold solution: the imposition of stricter consequences for criminal behaviour, particularly among youth offenders. By breaking the cycle of impunity, he believes that meaningful change can be achieved, restoring faith in the justice system and empowering law enforcement to effectively address criminal activities.

However, it's important to note that youth are not the sole perpetrators of crime within the Ballina Shire. Andre acknowledges that the problem extends beyond age demographics, implicating individuals of varying backgrounds and circumstances. Addressing this complex issue requires a multifaceted approach, encompassing community engagement, enhanced law enforcement efforts, and targeted interventions to address underlying social issues.

So as the Ballina Shire grapples with rising crime and the call for action grows louder, it's imperative that residents also safeguard their own well-being and that of their neighbours.

With a reported 70% of crime being committed being preventable, NSW Police are encouraging people to take some simple steps to increase their home security. These include an overarching call to 'lock it or lose it' - when at home lock your doors and windows, do not leave keys, wallets or other valuables visible from outside your home or near the entrance. Also be sure to lock your vehicle and remove keys and garage remotes. Statistics indicated 8/10 homes are entered via unlocked doors or windows; 8/10 cars are stolen using the owner's keys; and 50% of cars stolen are unlocked and have the garage key inside them.

Adding to this, Andre suggests, 'Lock your security screen with the key, take out the key, then put it under your bed or a place where they can't be found - not on a hook in the kitchen.

'It's also advised to install security cameras that have human detection/smart image enhancement/voice assistance and no monthly fees. I recommend Eufy Cameras which retail for around \$730 for four or Human Detection Lights which are only \$32 at Bunnings.

'Finally, if you are able - get a yapping dog. They have incredible hearing.'



Ballina Bites

by Brett Hyde

Rain and, at times, floods are not uncommon events at this time of the year. Even though this most recent rainfall has caused most of our rivers and creeks to reach a height just under minor flood levels, it has left the river in a very discoloured state. At present, the discoloured water is pushing out to sea, and has covered much of the close reefs.

Before the rain, we had seen a reasonable run of mackerel and a few mullet being caught in close, but this influx of fresh will slow the fishing up slightly for a week or two. It will cause the mackerel to remain lower in the water column, so anglers will have to use different methods keep their baits in this area, or use lures that will

dive deeper when trolled or sink down past the fresh water on the top.

The fresh usually signals the mullet to move in around the mouth of the river. The lower visibility and turbulent conditions makes it the perfect time for the mullet to ambush bait fish, mullet and tailor that may be in the area.

Anglers throwing large hard body lures of soft plastics can be rewarded with quality fish from the breakwalls and even some of the other rock platforms close to the river mouth. Due to the large volumes of water leaving the river, it can be difficult to keep a bait on the bottom of the river, but if you do want to try, large sinkers will be required and I would recommend some mullet or bonito filets.



If we do not have any significant follow up rain, we should see the river begin to improve over the next couple of weeks, especially with some larger tides around the next moon phase.

For now, most anglers will be targeting the bream close to structures such as rockwalls, jetties and bridge pylons using oily or smelly baits like mullet and pilchards. The flathead will respond to similar baits as well as metal blades, vibes and paddle tail plastics in bright colors.

Well, that's about all from me for this month, till next time - tight lines and happy times.



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The golden years

by Graeme Eggins



Escape into real life. It's great.

More and more people are trying to get back to nature in response to the increasing digitalisation of our lives. If we don't, we run the risk of suffering from NDD - Nature Deficit Disorder.

The American author who named this feeling, Richard Louv, claims that most people, particularly young children, are becoming detached from nature by spending too much time immersed in technology, especially phone and tablet screens.

Numerous studies have shown the mental and physical benefits of reconnecting with the outdoors. For some people it took the COVID pandemic and stay-at-home orders to appreciate their need to answer the call of the wild.

The growing movement to reconnect with nature is reflected in the popularity of outdoor activities like jogging, camping, bush walking, hiking and gardening, as well as the increasing availability of 'natural' products, such as organic foods in supermarkets.

Research by the Australian Institute of Family Studies shows that the majority of Australian school children spend more than the recommended two hours daily limit for screen time watching television, engaging with computers or playing electronic games. Their parents and even more likely their grandparents at a similar age would have spent most of their free time outside running about.

US research has shown access to green space is linked to a child's well-being. For example, adding greenery to school playgrounds has been shown to increase social behaviour in children. They help, cooperate, comfort and share more; the loss of access to this greenery has the opposite effect.

A 2013 study found that even viewing nature scenes can reduce stress and regulate heart rates in adults.

Some social commentators say that with the transformations being made through artificial intelligence, ordinary humans feel a stronger need for a nature fix.

In Japan, one of the world's most technologically advanced countries, 'forest bathing' is more and more popular. This involves immersing yourself in the sights, sounds and smells of the forest by finding a place where you can be alone and contemplative.

Here in Ballina we are spoilt for choice. To quote our Visitor Information Centre, 'The Ballina Coast and hinterland is home to 32km of pristine coastline, lush subtropical rainforest, untouched national parks, diverse wildlife, quaint hinterland towns, stunning waterfalls and world-class surf breaks.'

In Ballina itself you can take the historic 4km Riverfront Walk or stroll out on the North Wall to look for whales and dolphins. Alternatively, you can bike or walk along the clifftops overlooking the restless sea. Otherwise, explore nearby streets and admire beautiful front gardens. You'll find few 'maintenance free' AKA 'all concrete' gardens here.

And if mobility is a problem, find out how you can bring nature indoors or to restricted outside areas such as balconies. Ballina Library has heaps of books to help you create your own living sanctuary from today's increasingly frenetic world.

As one philosopher wrote: 'In blending the brilliance of AI with the wisdom of natural ecosystems, we may find the keys to sustainable living on this planet - a harmonious integration of the best that both worlds have to offer.'

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French in the Northern Rivers



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- Radio Program 92.9 fm
- Petanque (boules)
- French Scrabble



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Insights from a curious mind

by Lainie Chait

This is my first time writing for *The Ballina Wave* and my thoughts were to go to my easy default of writing which is comedic or get into some authenticity and connect with you at the heart centre before we start our journey together. I chose the latter.

I have just won an unfair dismissal case against a former employer. The case should have taken a few months. It took 2.5 years.

I got fired because I decided in 2021 to buckle under pressure and get the COVID vaccination. The reason was that my parents lived in the most locked-down city in the world, Melbourne, and I needed evidence of inoculation to visit them. If I had waited four more months, that rule was overturned.

I was working remotely for a wellness clinic which sold medicinal cannabis products at an affordable price. These products were made from exceptional plant material that assisted people with ailments from short or long-term health issues.

When I started working for them, it was discussed that I would assist them in talking with individuals who presented

with epilepsy. This is an area that I am well versed in as I have been living with, treating and managing my own epilepsy diagnosis, in and outside of allopathic medicine for 35 years.

For one year I worked remotely three to four times a week as a client care consultant. The consultations were thorough, followed a protocol and had the best interest of the person always at the forefront. An order was made, and the products were sent to the people with follow-up calls.

I loved the work; I was good at it. Through my own health journey, I have developed a wealth of knowledge about self-care, personal responsibility and empathy to understand how to work with others effectively.

I have spent the last 15 years being a patient advocate, to empower people who are dealing with health concerns to rise above the initial diagnosis and be part of their solution instead of handing the reins over to any practitioner.

I wrote an autobiography about my life with epilepsy called *Electro Girl*, stating how I needed to do more research



to understand my diagnosis so that I didn't feel like a number in the system.

I turned that book into a stage show so more people could access the empowerment. I started a podcast called *Love Your Diagnosis* where I interview people who have got back in the driver's seat of their condition and are now part of their own treatment. I also do a radio version of that on BayFM every Monday at 11am.

Following my vaccination, the company discarded me as though I had done something wrong. What I do in my private life has nothing to do with you, sir. Why are you opposed to me getting this vaccine and still allow me to work for you even though I take anti-epileptic medications? Ironic.

I thought I'd share this story as a message to stay in tune with your health and your choices around them. Let's stay healthy and vibrant and project loads of love to ourselves and our community.

See you with some more (hopefully) insightful antics next time.



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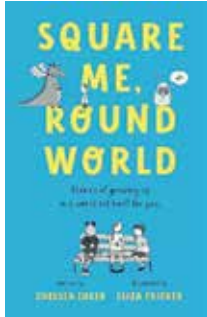
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Book review

Square Me, Round World by Chelsea Luker

Square Me, Round World is an illuminating collection of short stories that delve into the distinctive experiences of those who navigate life feeling like square pegs in a world of round holes. From social challenges to sensory differences, this book aims to foster greater empathy, understanding, and a drive for a more inclusive world.



Ever felt like a square peg in a round hole? Dive into tales of growing up in a world where you just don't seem to fit. From the challenges of making friends and masking your authentic self, to the overwhelm of sensory overload and restless nights, these stories will resonate with those who know what it's like to feel different.

Reviewed by Amy Lynch

On the surface this book looks like a simple read for young people, but it has real depth and some amazing messages - it could be marketed to any age.

It is the perfect gift for anyone who feels a little bit different, a little bit overwhelmed by the world, or a little bit lonely and misunderstood. This is an important read for those who find themselves on any end of the spectrum, but is also an important resource for parents and teachers looking to support their loved ones.

Chelsea Luker, the author of the book, is an autistic/ADHD psychologist based on the Northern Rivers, and is the mother of two neurodivergent children. She is the founder of Connect Us Psychology, an expert in her field and has worked with individuals of all ages and from many different walks of life.

To discover more about embracing the neurodivergent child, check out Chelsea's article on page 39.

Car of the month



Sunbeam Alpine 1967

A car with great sentimental value, this beauty has been on quite a journey. Cameron Shipway shares the backstory.

'My brother, Colin, got the car in 1996. He had been diagnosed with lung cancer and went on a road trip in the USA. He found the car in the New Mexico desert and bought it for USD\$400 as a present for our mother. He hired a small truck and trailer and towed the car to a seaport, put it in a container and sent it back to Australia.

'After my brother's death, our father and mum's brother-in-law restored the car. It has been re-engined with a Nissan turbo CA18det.

'The Sunbeam Alpine was the first James Bond car in *Dr No*. You may also recognise it as the car Maxwell Smart drove in *Get Smart*.'



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Cooking with CWA

Toad-in-the-hole



Preparation: 30-40 minutes

Cooking time: 40 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 red onion, cut into wedges, layers separated
- 8 thick pork sausages
- 1 tsp olive oil

For the batter:

- 100g plain flour
- 1 medium egg
- 300ml milk
- 2 tsp wholegrain mustard
- 1 tsp fresh thyme
- salt and pepper

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C.
2. Tip the onions into a small shallow non-stick tin. Arrange the sausages on top of the onions, then trickle over the oil and roast for 20 minutes.
3. While the sausages are roasting, make the batter. Sift the flour into a bowl, drop the egg into the centre and beat in the milk a little at a time until it makes a smooth batter. Stir in the mustard and thyme and season. Let the batter sit whilst the sausages cook.
4. Pour the batter quickly into the tin and return to the oven for 40 minutes until batter has risen and is golden.
5. Serve with steamed carrots and cabbage.
6. Enjoy.

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Cupola, Lennox Head

reviewed by Milt Barlow

You may have strolled along Seven Mile Beach and wondered who is lucky enough to live in the apartment above the delightful Shelter restaurant in Lennox. Well, there is good news - now you can enjoy the space whilst having a short staycation, as Troy Noonan and the superb management of Shelter have created Cupola.

This cozy two bedroom apartment sits directly across from the beach with its veranda and wide windows letting you savour every moment from the rising sun, to the evening stars or simply watching surfers catch a wave, dolphins at play or, in-season, whales going past. Heaven.

The space

The apartment, recently and tastefully renovated, features two bedrooms with queen size beds, a lounge area with lush velvet couches, a fully equipped kitchen and an excellent bathroom featuring a terrific rain shower. If you are returning from the beach there is also an outdoor shower by the back entrance.

With soft textiles and a terracotta color palette, it's a lovely little nest for a few relaxing days, or more. A big wall mounted TV in the lounge area, wi-fi and washing machine completes the picture and of course, the highlight is the deck with panoramic ocean views across the road. An added bonus is you can bring your pet.

Food

You can cook for yourself or indulge in the award-winning Shelter restaurant underneath. Shelter is one of the Northern Rivers' finest restaurants - consistently good and now under the supervision of new Michelin starred chef Cameron Irving. Wander down for breakfast, lunch or dinner or have it delivered to your apartment. No stress here.

Cupola is a perfect retreat for visiting friends and relatives or just treat yourself to a staycation. The venue has also been used for the bride and groom after a private function at Shelter.

Prices start from around \$450 a night and you need to book well in advance.

Visit: shelterlennox.com.au/accommodation

ACCOMMODATION

FOOD

OVERALL



Author was a guest of Cupola.



Happy Mothers Day

from Wollongbar Community PreSchool



Dolcee

What is something your mums always say to you? They love me.

What is their favourite thing to do? Going to the park with me.

If your mums had super powers what would they be? To freeze everybody.



Bodhi

What is something your mum always says to you? I love you.

What is her favourite thing to do? Be at work.

If your mum had super powers what would they be? Speed like lightning.



Charlie

What is something your mum always says to you? I love you.

What is her favourite thing to do? Hang out with me.

If your mum had super powers what would they be? She would swim under the ocean.



Millie

What is something your mum always says to you? She loves me.

What is her favourite thing to do? She likes to have some alone time.

If your mum had super powers what would they be? She could run fast and fly.



Lottie

What is something your mum always says to you? I love you.

What is her favourite thing to do? Go to the playground.

If your mum had super powers what would they be? Swimming powers without breathing.



Jade

What is something your mum always says to you? I love you.

What is her favourite thing to do? Going to the gym.

If your mum had super powers what would they be? She could turn people into ice.



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Kids corner

Q. Why do cows wear bells?

A. Because their horns don't work.

Q. What do you call a sleeping bull?

A. A bulldozer.

Q. What do you give a pig with a rash?

A. Oinkment.

Q. When is it bad luck to see a black cat?

A. When you're a mouse.

Knock, knock... *Who's there?*

Stopwatch. *Stopwatch who?*

Stopwatch you're doing and let me in!

Can you find me in the pages of this magazine?



Spot the difference

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Embracing neurodiversity in children

by Chelsea Luker, Psychologist/Author



A neurodiversity-affirming approach to supporting your autistic/ADHD child.

Why neurodiversity-affirming? What does this mean? Why should we support our children to understand and embrace their neurotypes?

As an autistic/ADHDer psychologist who primarily supports autistic/ADHDers, these are questions I am often asked. Many people are aware that we have started to move away from a pathologising and medicalised approach to autism and ADHD, but often don't know why this happened or why it is important.

Simply put, a neurodiversity-affirming approach recognises that diversity in neurotypes (ie. types of brains) is expected and advantageous to society. As such, neurotypes that differ from the neuromajority (ie. neurotypical brains) are not 'disordered' - rather they are different. The focus of the medical model towards autistic and ADHD neurotypes is placed on encouraging the individual to engage in behaviours that are typical of the neuromajority (eg. maintaining eye contact). Conversely, in a neurodiversity-affirming approach the focus is on understanding each individual, their strengths and challenges, and adapting their environments to best meet their support needs. That is, one approach tells our children they should pretend to be someone else because their

authentic self is 'disordered', and the other tells our children we accept them just the way they are.

So, how can we support our autistic/ADHD children in a neurodiversity-affirming way?

Embrace their unique selves

Celebrate your child's individuality and honour their unique way of experiencing the world. Embracing neurodiversity means recognising that there isn't a one-size-fits-all approach to parenting. This may mean that what works for your child is different to what works for other children - and that's OK.

Create a safe and supportive environment

Establish a nurturing environment where your child feels safe to express themselves. Encourage open communication (in whatever way works for your child and which may not always be verbal) and actively listen to their thoughts, feelings, and needs. Express to your child: I am here, I will listen, I will believe you, and I will do the best I can to help you.

Educate yourself

Take the time to learn about autism and ADHD from a neurodiversity-affirming perspective, which can be found through social media platforms across lived-experience and allied health practitioners within the field. Understanding the strengths and challenges associated with these neurotypes will empower you to better support your child. Knowledge is key to fostering empathy and effective communication.

Value your child's interests

Connect with your child through their interests, share in their joy and passion. Encourage them to share their interests with others and create opportunities for them to do this.

Establish routine and structure (if this works for your child)

Predictable routines can provide a

sense of stability and security. However, be flexible and open to adjustments as needed to accommodate your child's individual needs.

Cater to your child's sensory needs

Support your child to identify their sensory needs (note, they may need to reduce some sensory input and increase other sensory input). Work with your child to adapt their environments to ensure their sensory needs are accommodated.

Promote self-advocacy

Empower your child to advocate for themselves and their needs. Support them with their communication (eg. by providing them access to alternative forms of communication if required) and encourage them to express their preferences, boundaries, and concerns.

Facilitate social connections with neurokin (ie. people who share their neurotype)

Encourage socialisation in environments where your child feels comfortable and supported. Facilitate friendships based on shared interests and mutual respect.

Supporting your autistic/ADHDer child through a neurodiversity-affirming lens means valuing your child for their unique experience of the world and supporting them to engage with the world in a way that works best for them. This also means making environmental changes so the world around them better meets their individual needs.

'Different isn't less. It's just different - and that's perfectly okay. In fact, sometimes, it's brilliant.' – *Square Me, Round World*.

Chelsea Luker is an autistic/ADHDer psychologist. Drawing from her lived and clinical experience, Chelsea wrote 'Square Me, Round World' to provide a deep dive into the lives and minds of autistic and ADHDer individuals. Discover at: connectuspsychology.com

Artist spotlight



Pictured above: Work by Judith Leuenberger.

Judith Leuenberger

Ballina Arts & Crafts Centre Inc member, Judith Leuenberger was born in Yorkshire in May 1954. She is the youngest of four daughters, all whom became art teachers while developing their own art practices.

Judith has taught art and exhibited her work in several countries, including London, Switzerland, Singapore and Australia. 'I have taught art for over 30 years in high schools all over the world,' says Judith. 'I am now producing my own paintings and textile work which I call *Klematte*.'

Judith's art practice takes many forms including sculpture, printmaking, painting and drawing. 'My paintings focus on landscapes which emanate a particular mood,' explains Judith. 'The paintings often have large areas of sky with stormy clouds. My intention is to create an atmosphere of swirling energy. Light is very important in my work: how light is created, how it transforms everything it touches.'

'My textile work is based on an ancient craft that my grandmother taught me when I was five years old. Each piece is quite large and can be hung either way. One way looks like an Indigenous dot painting. The other side has glorious textures with the loose fabric.'

Judith's work can be viewed at: judithleuenberger.com.au



Pictured (L-R): Work by Kathleen Harding; The Pear by Janet McInnes.

The Creative Artisans Gallery is a Ballina based not-for-profit organisation, created to provide a channel for talented local artists and artisans to display and sell their work. This month's featured artists are Kathleen Harding and Janet McInnes.

Kathleen Harding

Kathleen is a local artist who has lived on the Northern Rivers for much of her life. She has a love for nature and finds inspiration in her tropical garden and surrounds.

Kathleen paints mainly in acrylics although uses other mediums to create and produce interesting outcomes to make the work completely unique. As a Monet fan, Kathleen loves the impressionist style and has a love for water lilies. She won the Peoples Choice Award at the Bentley Art Prize in recent years and held her very own Solo Exhibition at Lennox Arts Collective in 2019.

Janet McInnes

Janet has been making mosaics for 15 years and is attracted to this form of artistic expression by the colour and texture of the medium. Having previously dabbled in patchwork and count thread cross-stitch, she was used to putting little pieces of colour together to create an effect. Mosaics takes this to a whole new level. It is such a useful and durable art form as testified by works created many thousands of years ago by the Romans and Greeks.

Janet has studied under many teachers around the world, bringing her passion out in her work.



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What's on at NRCG



Coastal biome | LeAnne Vincent

This new work functions to form visual representations characteristic of Anthromes on the east coast of Australia. These natural ecosystems accommodate significant flora and fauna that can go unseen unless viewed closely. *Coastal biome* aims to celebrate natural environments in urban areas, while reminding us of our impact on often unseen ecosystems.



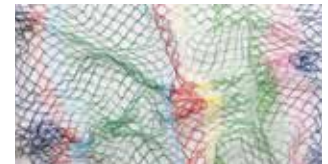
The Importance of Unassuming Things | Susan Gourley

Drawing upon the still life genre, this exhibition utilises the humble, versatile, and mimetic qualities of discarded materials to replicate new, used, and disused, small life-size objects found in everyday life. The material, symbolic and metaphoric capacities of rubbish are used to explore ideas and of consumption and waste.



Mutual | Billie Baker

Mutual reflects upon the interconnection of human mysticism to land based grounding practices. The work involves varying methods of weaving, painting, sewing and photographic processes in a textile based format, that explore the material process of making as well as the beauty of partnership.



Re-present | Lyndall Phelps

Re-present focuses on two women who played an active role in producing the rich illustrations in early ornithological publications. Phelps' installation includes textiles, sculpture and works on paper, and highlights local bird species that are classified as vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered.

Exhibitions run until 23 June. For more info visit: nrcgballina.com.au
NRCG is located at: 44 Cherry Street, Ballina.

TOGETHER: art and wellbeing day



This month the Northern Rivers Community Gallery is teaming up with artist and educator Claudie Frock and the Ballina Shire Council Community Recovery Team to deliver TOGETHER Arts & Community Wellbeing Day - a free, fun-filled arts and cultural event for the community to explore, connect and play together through creativity.

Throughout the event, creative workshops and playful spaces will be on offer for all to engage with. The program will include gentle natural fibre weaving with Tania Marlowe and Deb Cole from Jugan Dandii; Roundabout Theatre's Pop Up Play Space with the Lollipop Ladies - a fun and colourful games installation located in the NRCG green space; DANCE THE ART: Inclusive Gallery Movement Tours with dancer and performance artist Katie Cooper-Wares; and youth virtual reality art workshops and digital storytelling with Sean Spencer from Social Futures Computer Clubhouse.

When: Saturday 11 May, 10am - 1pm

Where: NRCG, Cnr Cherry St and Crane St, Ballina



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Seeing double

by Rodney Falconer, Conservation Officer, Birdlife Australia, Northern NSW



Pictured: A double-banded Plover who arrived, needing to feed, Flat Rock, March 2024.

Autumn is almost gone and most migratory shore birds have flown north to breed in the Arctic, Mongolia, or even Alaska. Their voyage is fraught with dangers and the possibility of starvation since many places they need to stop and feed in have been 'developed' by humans along the East Asian coast.

But one tiny wader does the opposite. It comes here for the winter.

Double-banded Plovers breed in New Zealand where they are still fairly common but in decline due to introduced predators and habitat loss. Plovers from the South Island lowlands fly to North Island for the winter. But those from southern mountains fly all the way to Australia instead.

Here they adopt drab camouflage plumage. Their job is to feed in a warmer climate.

No one knows why these particular birds choose to come here instead of joining other relatives in New Zealand.

These little plovers scamper along our beaches feeding on tiny crustaceans, worms and flies. They will sometimes hide amongst seaweed and driftwood hoping not to be seen. At night they find isolated rocks and sandbars where they'll be safe.

Habitat loss is a problem here too. Most of our sandbars, rocks and beaches are no longer secluded. Many coastal areas have been developed and occupied by thousands of humans, their dogs and vehicles.

Ballina contains some of the best remaining shorebird habitat in the Northern Rivers.

Remember that their tiny bodies need to be ready to either recover from flying or to return. Please don't let your children or pets chase after them. They can easily use up the resources they need to survive their long trip.

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Right now, the NSW drug driving laws that facilitate police roadside drug testing are unjust. Many locals are increasingly being prescribed medicinal cannabis by their GP for effective treatment of chronic pain and other conditions, but current driving laws leave hundreds of unimpaired patients falling foul of the law for driving with traces of lawful cannabis medicine in their system.



Scan here or visit tamarasmith.org.au/FairDrivingLaws to sign the petition calling on the NSW government to reform this discriminatory system.



TAMARA SMITH MP
MEMBER FOR BALLINA

THE GREENS

Authorised by Tamara Smith MP, Member for Ballina. Funded using parliamentary entitlements.



Pet of the month



Hello, my name is Marlo and I'm six months old. I was named after the sleepy coastal town near Orbost, where my dad taught himself to surf. I'm a long haired dachshund, which means my temperament is much gentler and sweeter than the stubborn short haired sausages around because I was bred with cavaliers a long time ago. I'm still growing into my nose and long bod, but my legs won't get any longer.

Wherever I go, blue butterflies manifest which is pretty special because I love anything that flies. I love a good breeze too, the feeling of it in my ear curls is delicious.

Dad is life, and he's my best friend. But I hold a special kind of excitement for Mum too and am a bit over-excited to see her when she gets home.

My favourite toys include monkey, bunny and the rope thing I love to tug and tug and tug.

I say hello to everyone, and I'm the prettiest girl in the world, (or so my parents tell me daily).

If you'd like to see your pet feature in *The Ballina Wave*, simply email us at: editor@theballinawave.com.au

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A day in the life of an ASTR rescuer

by Steve Whalan, PhD, General Manager, Australian Seabird & Turtle Rescue



Australian Seabird and Turtle Rescue (ASTR) has been rescuing stranded/injured seabirds, turtles and sea snakes for years. Sadly, it is a service we provide because the incidents of injured animals needing care never appear to cease. We are largely a volunteer group and this article is about putting the call out for people who would like to help

with our rescue service. But what does an ASTR rescue volunteer do? I'm glad you asked - I'll do my best to present a day in the life of a rescue volunteer.

First step, take charge of the ASTR mobile (hotline) and rescue vehicle, a Landcruiser troopy, fully decked-out for rescues. Typically, calls will come in throughout the day from the public encountering stranded wildlife. It's 9:30am and numerous calls come through about turtles being stranded in Newcastle and Coffs Harbour. Easy solution. We seek details and provide immediate instructions to the finder and then link up rescue services in that part of the state - we only attend to rescues from the Tweed to Sandon River. At 11:30am we get a call about a turtle in trouble at Sharpes Beach. After confirming details on the condition of the turtle we head to the rescue site, rescue and transfer the turtle to ASTR HQ where our team assess and provide triage. It's now 1:30pm and we get a call about a pelican entangled in fishing gear at Fishery Creek. We attend, and armed with copious quantities of mullet, entice the bird to enable capture with a noose or net. Patience is required. Adrenalin will be spent, even for the most hardened adrenalin junkie. A successful capture and initial assessment are followed by a visit to our friends at Byron Bay Wildlife Hospital (BBWH) for a full vet check. We return to the BBWH late afternoon to pick up two previous patients, a seagull and a cormorant, both ready for delivery to ASTR HQ for long-term rehabilitation after successful treatment by the BBWH vet team. Finally, the day ends. A rewarding day, and indeed a satisfying volunteer pursuit.

If this sounds like you, please come and talk to us. We are desperate for motivated wildlife lovers who can help us out one day a week (or fortnight). We provide full training to get you in the rescue zone and surround you with experienced ASTR rescue mentors. All our rescue volunteers agree it is epic to be able to give these animals a second chance at life, but don't take my word for it, come and check it out for yourself. Email: admin@seabirdrescue.org.au or call ph: 6686 2852.



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Attracting the Richmond Birdwing Butterfly

by Jennie Goeldner, Wollongbar Garden Club



Planting the Birdwing Butterfly Vine (*Pararistolochia praevenosa*)

It is a tropical vine so needs a nice moist, semi shaded spot, about 1-2m away from the trunk of a native tree, that does not lose its leaves. As the vine can only twine around a branch no thicker than your wrist, it will need some leader stakes to help it reach up the tree.

The butterfly will lay its eggs on the underside of the leaves during the warmer months.

They will hatch into tiny caterpillars coloured from grey through to black with a single line of spikes along their back, each tipped with yellow. As they eat (only this particular vine) they will grow. So that they are not obvious to predators they will move across to the host plant's leaves to shed their skin several times, even transitioning into their chrysalis state on these sturdier leaves.

After 28 days a beautiful butterfly will emerge. The female is red, black, white and yellow with up to a 16cm wingspan, the male is smaller but no less impressive with bright blue and black colourings

So, if you have an early morning sun spot where the vine could drape over a fence or climb a tree please consider helping out this beautiful creature and giving it a place to be in your garden.

This information was originally shared by Marilyn at the monthly meeting of Wollongbar Garden Club. For more information on meeting times see page 23.

Dedicated volunteers, with the help of local councils, have been working for years to establish corridors of the vine that the Richmond Birdwing Butterfly relies on for its existence.

Originally you could find the vine, therefore the butterfly, from the Sunshine Coast down through Brisbane and spread throughout the Richmond Valley. Alas, now it is only found around the Sunshine Coast Hinterland and between Nerang in the north and Wardell to the south.

You could help it survive by planting a vine in your garden, if you have a suitable spot.

All about Tromboncinos

by Francoise Sauvere, Ballina Community Gardens



In Spring 2023 we planted a few seeds of Tromboncino - considered 'the new zucchini' at the garden.

Tromboncino is known by many other common names including: zucchetta rampicante, climbing zucchini, climbing crookneck, trombolino d'albenga, trombetta and serpentine squash. It is an heirloom, originally from Liguria, and remains popular throughout Italy and abroad.

It has a sweeter flavour than zucchini and the long neck is always free of seeds. Its flesh is denser and less

watery, more like that of a butternut pumpkin. It is a long slender neck with a bulbous base, and just to make it more interesting, it curls if it touches anything so you can actually get some crazy shapes where it gets caught up in its own vine. If you've got the room to let this thing sprawl, you'll find it more productive than zucchini.

Tromboncino plants can be left to mature into a winter crop. If allowed to ripen, the fruits can grow over 80cm in length. The flesh is delicious roasted or when prepared in a stew or soup.

It is more tolerant to some common summer squash pests, including powdery mildew, than the types of zucchini that grow in this area. The fruit colour is usually pale green, fading to beige upon maturity, and it is picked around one foot long as a summer crop.

What we did learn this season about this plant is that it is a very vigorous plant and that it is better for it to grow on a strong trellis. One or two plants are definitely enough and next time we grow it, we will give it sufficient space.



The transformation of Lighthouse Beach

by Leslie Beardmore, Ballina Coastcare



Pictured: Lighthouse Beach, 1959.

It is valuable to reflect on the positive change that hard-working community groups provide. This is for the benefit of visitors, residents, and newcomers alike.

The Lighthouse Beach Dunecare group was one of three community groups that came together to form Ballina Coastcare Inc. It was Lighthouse

Beach Dunecare who were responsible for bringing about the transformation of vegetation at Lighthouse Beach, Ballina. In 1990-1991 Lighthouse Beach Dunecare was founded by the late Ruth Readford. In the years that followed, the Dunecare group, supported by the community and Council, nurtured and tended the area. Dunes that were once harsh and degraded - strangled by exotic bitou bush - were transformed into diverse native vegetation, but not without the ever-present challenge of exotic and invasive weeds.

Today, Ballina Coastcare volunteers continue to put in many hours of care to sustain the efforts of the past. Weeds such as *Ipomoea cairica* (coastal morning glory), *Rumex*

sagittata (turkey rhubarb), *pasture weed* *Macroptilium atropurpureum* (siratro), and *Euphorbia cyathophora* (painted spurge) - just to name a few - continue to keep volunteers busy.

Our regular weekday groups now concentrate on Flat Rock, Angels and Shelly Beaches as well as Allawah Nature Reserve. We tend to Lighthouse Beach on a needs basis as it is largely self-managing.

If you're interested in lending a helping hand, please stop by when you see us out and about on the coastal path on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings (8-11am). Or check our website for more information and details of monthly Sunday work between Sharpes and Flat Rock Beaches: ballinacoastcare.org

shape our community's future your voice matters



Our community lies at the heart of everything Ballina Shire Council does.

You are invited to review Ballina Shire Council's 2024/25 Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

These plans are vital as they outline how we will resource and maintain the services and infrastructure that impacts our daily lives, including water, wastewater, waste management, open spaces, footpaths and drainage.



HAVE YOUR SAY

Send in your questions about upcoming projects or suggestions on improvements like playgrounds, roads or community facilities. Your questions will be answered online by the General Manger and Directors at yoursayballina.com.au/delivery-program

INFORMATION SESSIONS

Join us at a Community Information Session in person or online:

- ▶ **WARDELL WAR MEMORIAL HALL**
6pm Wednesday 15 May 2024
- ▶ **ONLINE VIDEO PRESENTATION**
posted to YourSayBallina.com.au

Note: Please check our website for any updates on session details.

➔ **Submissions close:**
Wednesday 5 June 2024



yoursayballina.com.au/delivery-program





Ask a waste expert

with Justine Rowe, Ballina Council



Hello Waste Warriors,

Thanks to our community for going back to basics with our FOGO bins. As a reminder, the NSW EPA has asked us to put only food or garden waste into our organics bins. Australian certified compostable bin liners (AS 4736-2006, look out for the green seedling logo) and small amounts of paper or newspaper to wrap scraps can still be used. Fibre-based products like dirty cardboard, tissues, paper towels or food packaging that claims to be compostable must now go into the red landfill bin.

I've received some questions about tricky waste items, particularly batteries and e-waste. These items should never go into any bin as they contain valuable materials that should be reused and harmful materials that can pollute the air, water, and soil. Small e-waste items like mobile phones and chargers can be brought to any Community Recycling Station and larger electronic items to the Community Recycling Centre at 167 Southern Cross Drive, Ballina, all for free.

Batteries present an environmental and fire hazard, and a huge waste of scarce natural materials like lithium, cobalt, and copper that can nearly all be reused when recycled properly. Please, help us to conserve earth's precious materials and keep toxic materials out of our homes and environment by following these steps to safely and properly dispose of used batteries:

- remove batteries from appliances if not embedded
- tape the terminals using clear sticky-tape to prevent fire risk
- transport them to the CRC, any CRS, or any B-Cycle drop off point (bcycle.com.au/drop-off/)

If you have questions or concerns about problem waste or any waste at all, don't hesitate to reach out to me via email at: Justine.rowe@ballina.nsw.gov.au

And my final tip this month is: *Let's Refuse Single Use and Rethink Reuse*. Reusable, washable towels and cloths do a better job of cleaning and drying and can be reused hundreds of times. Pack your bag with a reusable water bottle, coffee cup, food container and cutlery so that you can refuse single use. Once you get into the habit, reusables become like your phone and wallet, you won't leave home without them.

Justine is the Resource Recovery Education Officer at Ballina Council.

Compost workshop

Home composting is a wonderful way to recycle our food and garden waste, create our own fertiliser for plants and contribute to a better environment.

Whether you are a beginner and wanting to know which home composting system will work best for you and what types of things you can put into your home compost, or whether you are an advanced composter and need some trouble-shooting advice, there is an upcoming event being held in Ballina Shire that will support you on your composting journey.

As part of International Compost Awareness Week, North East Waste, Ballina Shire Council and Ballina Community Gardens have joined forces to celebrate all things compost. A free family event will be held at the Gardens and includes a composting workshop, kid's activities and give-aways. Join NE Waste compost expert, Nicki Walker and learn how to compost, troubleshooting common issues and the best compost tools and systems.

Date: Saturday 11 May
Time: 10am – midday
Where: Ballina Community Gardens
 Corner of Clarence Street and Swift Street
 Ballina Council, ph: 6681 0568

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NSW Croquet Tournament coming to Ballina

by Debbie Jones



Pictured: Early entries in the NSW event Wendy Gilmore (Cherry Street Croquet) Debbie Jones (Holroyd) and Jenny Dorward (Cherry Street Croquet).

This July, Ballina Cherry Street, Ballina, Byron Bay and Lismore Croquet Clubs will welcome local, intrastate and interstate croquet players competing in the 2024 NSW Golf Croquet Division 3 Doubles and Singles events. The event will be held 9 to 13 July, and is the fourth consecutive year that a NSW State croquet event will be held in the area.

Tournament Manager, David Scott, welcomes the return of Lismore Croquet Club following the devastating 2022 floods which saw their lawns unplayable for the 2022 and 2023 NSW events.

Planning is well underway to ensure the events are successful, so visiting participants want to return to the area.

Most NSW events are held within the Sydney region, so local club members are excited to once again welcome the tournament to their home turf. Non-local members are also excited and are looking forward to the prospect of combining a NSW croquet event with a holiday in the best region within Australia.

All Golf croquet players on a handicap of 9 or higher are encouraged to enter.

For any enquiries please call David Scott ,Tournament Manager, ph: 0414 241 290.

Cherry Street Croquet

by Gregory Porter



Pictured: Ray Chapman and Phyllis Waters with Tournament sponsors Libby and Kellie, McGuinness Funerals Murwillumbah.

With many tournaments on the agenda in 2024, some local players have started competing with mixed success, and it's looking like a full season ahead with many members travelling to tournaments throughout NSW and QLD.

Mike Gidding competed in the Australian Men's Association Croquet Singles Championships, finishing a creditable 9th and a 1st in Y Division.

In the Margaret Mitchell Memorial Association Handicap Doubles tournament at Murwillumbah, Phyllis Waters and Ray Chapman played well as a team and finished a close 2nd to claim the Runners Up trophy.

Phyllis also had a 4th placing in the Bribie Island Association Division 3 event.

David and Penny Scott travelled to Sawtell for three days of Ricochet. David played in A Block finishing 4th in the singles, and 1st in the doubles with Colleen Brooks.

Penny finished 2nd in the B Block singles to gain the Runners Up trophy. It was nice to see Penny, a former NSW Runner Up in Division 3 Golf Croquet Singles (2021), back on the podium.

Barbara Wellings was recently was awarded her 10 year service certificate for assistance and commitment to the Club. As the Club's welfare officer, Barbara has been a wonderful asset over the years with her thoughts and kindness to all our unwell members and those in need.



Ballina Lawn Bowls outstanding success

by Sue Grady



Pictured, L-R: Wendy Clarke, Sue Grady, Hayley McDonnell and Maree Grant.

The recent NSW State Bowls Championships held in Dubbo witnessed a thrilling showcase of talent, camaraderie, and intense competition. Among the notable performers were the teams representing Ballina Bowling Club.

Wendy Clarke was the standout at this event, as she delivered a masterful performance in the finals of the Senior Women's Singles event. Despite facing initial setbacks, Wendy showcased her resilience and skill, mounting a remarkable comeback to clinch the title and be crowned the State Senior Women's Singles champion, much to the delight of the Ballina contingent and supporters. Ballina Bowling Club and Cherry Street Sports Club are very proud to have a state champion within our Club.

In the mixed pairs category, the dynamic duo of Maree Grant and John Harley represented Ballina with finesse and determination during a few very close games against strong competition.

Meanwhile, in the Women's Open Pairs event, Hayley McDonnell and Maree Grant demonstrated exceptional skill and teamwork, securing a place in the semifinals and just missing making it through to the finals by one shot.

The Senior Women's Pairs category saw Sue Grady, substituting for Kay Huett, teaming up with Wendy Clarke to showcase their formidable partnership on the greens making it to the semifinals, however missing out on a finals berth by the team who were the eventual winners of the event.

In the Men's Open Fours category, the team comprising Warren Rixon, Phil Power, Luke Jones, and Indi Conlan represented Ballina with grit and tenacity. Their stellar performance saw them reach the semifinals, showcasing their ability to excel as a cohesive unit on the greens.

Overall, Ballina's strong representation and outstanding performances in the NSW State Bowls Championships in Dubbo underscored the region's rich bowling culture and the depth of talent within its ranks. The achievements of the teams and individuals not only reflect their dedication and skill, but also serve as a source of inspiration for aspiring bowlers across the state.



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Ballina Netball grows

by Lauren Theodossiou, Ballina Netball Association



Pictured (L-R): All Abilities team at Mullumbimby carnival with Casino opponent; Boys team at training with Julie Davies.

2024 is a big year at Ballina Netball. Along with our regular rep teams of 12-Opens females we have introduced our first ever all male rep team and our first All Abilities team.

This takes our total teams for State titles this year to eight. A massive effort from all involved to get to Sydney in June and July to compete against the best in NSW. Both these new teams are a first for our region and we are beyond proud to be taking them to senior State titles.

Our All Abilities team, led by Coach Karen Wilson, has been playing in our Saturday competition for many years. This will be their first trip as a Ballina rep team and we can't wait to see what they bring to the courts.

The team played their first local carnival a few weeks ago in Mullumbimby and was by far the most popular team on the day, cheered on not only by Ballina, but all teams.

We hope to increase the All Abilities

genre by engaging more players. They show us that there are no barriers to playing sport - anything can happen and anyone can play.

Our Boys team has stemmed from our successful Twilight competition. These under 17s players are also a first for our region. Representing a shift in the netball space, we hope they inspire more males to play our sport.

For more information please email: info@ballinanetball.com.au

Ballina Bridge Club welcomes new players

by Rob Eldridge



Pictured: Starlette Beaumont and Margaret Cusack receiving their award for the Rookie Swiss Pairs event.

Two of Ballina's newer players recently travelled to the Tasmanian Festival of Bridge held in Hobart, and returned home triumphant. Starlette Beaumont and Margaret Cusack decisively won the Rookie Swiss Pairs event against 23 other pairs from across Australia. They also came 10th in the Restricted Pairs against 59 other pairs - a significant result, given it was in a section well above their ranking.

The latest group of new players has completed the beginner lessons at the Ballina Bridge Club. They were presented with their certificates by Vice-President Ken Jones, and enjoyed a celebratory cake. Bridge lessons are regularly held for new players, with the next being in July. They are held over a six week period, twice weekly on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. The cost is \$80. For more information please contact Judy Forsyth ph: 0407 664 337.



The last toast

a short story by Charla Rallings

Hugh and Cynthia stood at the end of the River Wall, waiting in the pre-dawn light for the first glimpse of the sun. More people gathered, huddling in the brisk air. Cynthia whispered, 'It should be a good one. There's just the right amount of cloud.'

Hugh agreed and was about to respond, when he was cut-short by an abrasively-loud Irish accent. 'I reckon, every morning, someone say somethin' like that. The bloody sunrise will be sick of hearing it by now.' Finn chuckled, as he and Erin took a place at the couple's side.

Hugh snorted. 'Now, this is a surprise. I didn't think you could get up this early, mate.'

'Kicking and screaming,' Erin replied before Finn could retort. The top of the sun burst over the horizon and the four watched as it rose higher, lighting up the sky in brilliant pinks and orange hues. As the group began to walk back down the wall, they made plans to meet at the RSL for lunch, extending the invitation to their other friends too. Later in the day, Harold and 'Mahjong' Margaret, and 'Bingo' Bev joined the group at the RSL. Around the table, Harold was researching the rules of snooker, for a post lunch game, and trying to explain it to Hugh, while Beverly and Margaret discussed their last Mahjong game. Finn clutched Erin's hand under the table, and she nodded, knowing what he was about to do. Standing, he announced, 'My friends, I have something to say.'

The table became quiet and all attention turned to him, until Cynthia gasped and shouted, 'You're pregnant!'

Finn patted his belly. 'No, not me. I've just been going to the bakery a little too often. But Erin,' she stood and took Finn's hand, 'is pregnant. We are expecting a wee little bairn to join our family soon.' Everyone lit up with joy and offered their congratulations to the couple who hailed from Ballina, Ireland, and had reunited and rekindled their love in Ballina, NSW.

Erin spoke, apprehension clear in her voice. 'We're very happy, however, we also have some sad news. We're moving

back to Ballina.' There was pregnant pause and some confused looks. Erin clarified, 'Ireland. Ballina in Ireland. My family is there and I feel the need to be close to home.'

Hugh hung his head and Cynthia sniffled. Finn was quick to interject. 'I know it may seem like sad news, but our hearts reside in two Ballinas now. We'll be back eventually and the lot of yer are always welcome to come over for a visit.'

'We're happy for you both,' said Hugh. 'We're just going to miss you, your jokes, and you're newly-wed bickering.'

Finn nodded. 'You know, in Ireland, a recent survey of married women had the following results. Eighty percent thought their bum was too fat. Fifteen percent of married women said their bum was too thin. The remaining five percent said they didn't care; they would have married him anyway.'

Harold howled with laughter, his face turning bright red, and the mood was immediately lifted. Margaret tutted at her husband and said, 'I hope you're not planning an Irish goodbye. We must have a proper send off for you both.'

Bev spoke up, 'Great idea, Margy. We should incorporate all the things we've loved and shared these last few years. Maybe we can go to another raffle or go whale watching.'

Cynthia smiled, 'I'm sure Hugh, the newbie foodie, would love to cook another Irish Stew.' Erin nodded eagerly at the suggestion, and Finn made more plans for their farewell celebration - including a game of golf with Hugh and Harold.

Hugh raised his glass in a toast. 'Here's to us,' he declared, his voice tinged with emotion. 'To the laughs we've shared, the tears we've shed, and the bonds that hold us together. May our adventures continue for years to come.'

'No matter where life takes us,' Finn said, glassed raised high. 'We'll always have Ballina.'

This is the last story in the Adventures of Hugh and Cynthia series. Stay tuned for something new next month.

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This month

with Milt Barlow

At the movies

Welcome to May and a really diverse line up of entertainment this month.

Golda (2 May), is a timely release with everything that is currently occurring in Israel and the Middle East. This biographical drama depicts the actions of Golda Meir, the fourth Prime Minister of Israel during the Yom Kippur War. Helen Mirren is superb as Golda Meir and delivers a compelling performance under the excellent direction of Academy Award winner Guy Nattiv. It's a great watch.

Also opening on 2 May is *The Taste Of Things*. If you're a French cinephile this beautiful love story is for you. Starring the fabulous Juliette Binoche and supported by Benoit Magimel, it tells the story of romance between a cook and the gourmet for whom she works.

For a complete change of pace, check out *Kingdom Of The Planet Of The Apes* (9 May) where the big hairy ones are back in the 10th outing of the Planet Of the Apes franchise. Many years after the reign of Caesar, a young ape goes on a journey that will lead him to question everything he has been taught about the past and make choices that will define a future of apes and humans alike. This latest version really gives new life to this franchise. It moves along at a cracking pace, has great special effects and very realistic looking apes. This epic is a lot of fun, and must be seen on the big screen.

As I mentioned, this month has something for everyone and *If* (16 May) is set to be a fun watch for kids, grandkids and the children in all of us. Ryan Reynolds, Steve Carell and Emily Blunt star in this live action/animated fantasy comedy about a young girl and her neighbour who find themselves able to see imaginary friends. It's no Oscar winner, but it's a fun family flick to lose yourself for a few hours.

The big one for May is *Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga* (23 May). George Miller is back delivering another jaw dropping episode in the Mad Max series. Anya Taylor-Joy stars as Furiosa who, after decades, embarks on an epic journey to return to her family, whilst Chris Hemsworth plays the evil Dr Dementus. Again, don't wait for this to come to streaming - this baby is made for the big screen. The action never lets up and you will probably need a good lie down after nearly three hours of it.


Finally, the little furry critter is back in *The Garfield Movie* (30 May). Treat the family to this adorable and fun day out as Garfield has an unexpected reunion with his long lost father, a scruffy street cat who draws him into a high stakes heist. It's a hoot.

On the couch


My pick this month is *Shogun* (Disney+). In 17th century Japan, shipwrecked British sailor John Blackthorne rises from outsider to samurai, while being used as a pawn in Japanese leader Toranga's struggle to reach the top of the ruling chain. Its an excellent epic and worthy of a few good nights on the couch.

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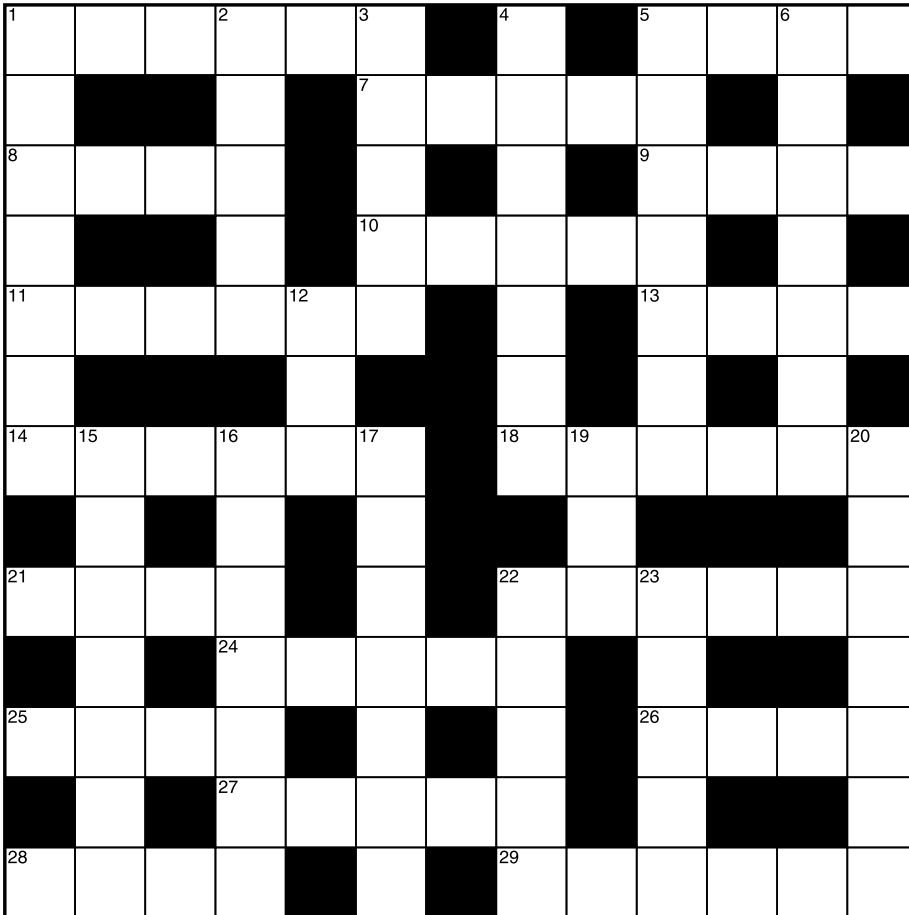
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May crossword

© Lovatts Puzzles



Across

- 1. Series of rabbit tunnels
- 5. Look before you ...
- 7. Consumption
- 8. Large
- 9. Australian gem
- 10. Erected
- 11. Recesses
- 13. Eve's mate
- 14. Masted vessels
- 18. Nakedness
- 21. Pencil end
- 22. Canoe oar
- 24. Wear by rubbing
- 25. Global hostel chain (1,1,1,1)
- 26. Charitable
- 27. Dessert, ... pie
- 28. Cash machines (1,1,2)
- 29. Occurred afterwards

Down

- 1. Feminine
- 2. Attain
- 3. Anaesthetises
- 4. Actress, ... Monroe
- 5. Dancer's costume
- 6. Unrelenting
- 12. Devour
- 15. Try
- 16. Wheel covers
- 17. Wound with claw
- 19. Illinois is there (1,1,1)
- 20. Surrendered
- 22. Short pasta tubes
- 23. Highest ranking peers

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May horoscopes

by Patsy Bennett - patsybennett.com



Aries

Mars in your sign will provide you with a welcome boost of energy and motivation. You'll gain the opportunity to invest in yourself; in your well-being and also to improve finances. Just be careful of power struggles as these could escalate quickly, especially on the 1st, 13th and 17th.



Taurus

Venus in your sign until the 23rd brings the chance to indulge in a little luxury and to improve your love life and health. Be proactive, as the Taurus new moon on the 8th can help you turn a corner in relationships and Mercury in Aries can help improve your daily and work schedule too.



Gemini

Communications and travel will gain steam especially after mid-May. You may need to be careful with itineraries in the first two weeks, as your work and fitness schedules will fluctuate. An exciting opportunity towards the end of the month promises to broaden horizons.



Cancer

Be prepared to see yourself in a new light. Your career, direction, status and even personal life are all open to change, making this an excellent time to consider your plans and options carefully. Circumstances around the new moon on the 8th will illuminate your best path ahead.



Leo

You like to have exciting projects on the go because otherwise you can feel lacklustre. You'll be pleased that May will deliver options to liven up the fun aspects of your life and your home life. Just be careful with some communications to avoid giving or taking offence.



Virgo

Being a meticulous zodiac sign you tend not to take kindly to people's ineptitudes. So in May, a little patience will go a long way, as people's actions will influence and impact you more than usual. If you put in the effort at work, you'll make great headway this month.



Libra

May is ideal to focus on your own nurturance and well-being, as duties and areas you share with others will be demanding. You'll manage to balance all the various balls you're juggling, but you must avoid taking others' actions personally. Make your own happiness.



Scorpio

The new moon on the 8th will bring a fresh chapter in a key relationship if you were born before 10 November; and in your work or health-schedule if you were born later. Be prepared to be adventurous about entering fresh territory, as doors are opening.



Sagittarius

You'll gain the chance to improve your work and personal life in May. The full moon in your sign on the 24th will encourage you to turn a corner in your health and daily schedules, enabling you to include more excitement and adventure in your daily life.



Capricorn

You'll gain the chance to improve your personal life and to establish a sense of stability, purpose and well-being by engaging a careful blend of strategy, planning and courage. Be prepared to exit your comfort zone towards the full moon on the 24th; you'll be glad you did.



Aquarius

Pluto retrograde in Aquarius will offer the chance to cool your heels after several months of activity or uncertainty. Take the time to find ways to anchor your plans and then to step confidently into fresh circumstances towards the full moon on the 24th if necessary.



Pisces

While so much focus will be on your finances, relationships and personal well-being, there will be a shift towards the end of May towards your big-picture goals and your general direction. So take time early in May to ask yourself what you want, and then be sure to take action.



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