



'Get to know your Candidates' feature p12

Connections Sophie & Brodie p25



Star Pet Gypsy p23



Forster Fortnightly

Your local independent community newspaper distributed to Rainbow Flat, Hallidays Point, Tallwoods, Tuncurry, Forster, Pacific Palms, Charlotte Bay, Smiths Lake, Coomba Park, Bungwahl & Seal Rocks.

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Wednesday 4 September 2024

PROUD TO BE A LOCAL FAMILY-OWNED BUSINESS

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Ted Bickford - Volunteer of the Year!

86-year-old Tuncurry graffiti buster Ted Bickford has been named the 2024 Mid North Coast Volunteer and Senior Volunteer of the Year for his long dedication to a clean and graffiti free community across the region.

Ted has volunteered for more than 30 years, removing graffiti from public areas across the Great Lakes region. He is on call each day to respond to clean up call outs, driving to sites to clean, remove and cover over graffiti. His volunteer work includes community engagement and education at local schools and the justice system.

"I have been doing this for years and I have built a great rapport with all the kids in the area," Ted said. "The message I spread to everyone is about being proud of your community."

Council's General Manager, Adrian Panuccio, said, "Ted does a fantastic job and it's great to see him recognised for his work that he does in keeping our region graffiti free but also the work he does with the youth and instilling a sense of pride and community in them."

Ted received the award on 23 August at The Westport Club in Port Macquarie as part of the 2024 NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards.

Recipients in other Mid North Coast regional award categories were also announced, including young, adult, senior and volunteer



Above: Ted Bickford, Mid North Coast Volunteer & Senior Volunteer of the Year, removing graffiti with students Riley Stuart (on the left) and Nate Hilder at the Great Lakes College Forster Campus in April 2023. Photo by Mary Yule.



Above: Melinda Lightfoot - Mid North Coast Adult Volunteer of the Year.

Staffed by a team of volunteers 5 days a week, the Hub provides over 500 emergency relief packages and 350 no-interest loans to vulnerable community members each year.

The NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards celebrate the work of thousands of individuals and volunteer teams from a diverse range of organisations across the state. The Awards are hosted by The Centre for Volunteering, whose mission it is to promote and support volunteering across NSW.

The Mid North Coast award recipients will be invited to represent their region at the Gala State Ceremony in Sydney at the end of the year, where the NSW Volunteer of the Year will be announced across each category.

www.volunteering.com.au

See page 2 (in Police report) & page 8 for MidCoast Youth Awards.



Volunteer of the Year Awards

team of the year. Melinda Lightfoot from Tuncurry was named MNC Adult Volunteer of the Year and the Forster Neighbourhood Centre volunteers was named Volunteer Team of the Year.

Mid North Coast Adult Volunteer of the Year - Melissa Lightfoot from Tuncurry

Melinda is a founding member of the Great Lakes Suicide Prevention Network where she gives her time to raise awareness and support

Left: Best Mid North Coast Volunteer Team of the Year - Forster Neighbourhood Centre Community Hub representatives with MP Tanya Thompson (on far left).

for suicide prevention. As a volunteer leader, Melinda brings dedicated volunteers together and provides important information to her local community while breaking down the stigmas often associated with discussions of suicide prevention.

Volunteer Team of the Year - Forster Neighbourhood Centre Community Hub Volunteers

The Foster Neighbourhood Centre Community Hub provides much-needed support to people experiencing mental health issues, suicide concerns, homelessness, escaping domestic violence or in financial distress.



Spring is here! See page 28 for the Suberb Fairy Wren by Kym Kilpatrick.



MENU

Check out our new spring menu, featuring a great range of pub favourites & modern Australian cuisine!



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- ▶ \$16 LUNCH SPECIALS
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We acknowledge the Worimi People, the traditional custodians of the land where this newspaper is published. We pay respect to their Elders past, present and future.

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Bungwahl Fuel & Liquor</p> <p>Seal Rocks
Seal Rocks General Store</p> |
|--|---|--|

Manning - Great Lakes Police District update

Dear Readers,
This fortnight I am going to focus on some great examples of the ongoing youth engagement performed by local police – most of which is conducted in partnership with fantastic youth focused organisations:

On Sunday 11 August, local police took nine local Aboriginal kids (who regularly attend Taree PCYC) down to watch the Newcastle Knights v Wests Tigers NRL match at McDonald Jones Stadium in Newcastle (see photo below).

A big thankyou to the Newcastle Knights RLFC (sponsor of the local 'Girls to the Front' Aboriginal Girls Youth Program) and Sergeant Durham, Senior Constable Durham and SC Hofmann for getting the kids there and home again safely.

Many of the kids had not been to an NRL match before - and they had the opportunity to meet several NRL players as they made their way around the stadium after the game - so a great time was had by all!



The NRL Voice Against Violence program was designed as an interactive and educational workshop which was intended to increase awareness and understanding about the seriousness of gender-based violence. It also encourages the community to 'stand up', 'speak out' and 'take action' to prevent violence against women and children.

NSW Police attached to Manning Great Lakes Police District have worked closely with local schools and the National Rugby League to coordinate the program across the command to ensure these important messages are reaching the vulnerable members of the community, where domestic violence is a significant focus for local police and community groups.

The NRL Voice Against Violence program was coordinated by Senior Constable Cheryl Hofmann attached to Youth Command, Police District Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer Sara-Jain Brown and Donna Lumantas-Hooke from Taree PCYC.

The National Rugby League in partnership with Manning Great Lakes Police District delivered the NRL Voice Against Violence program to school students at Forster Public School, MidCoast Christian School, Manning Gardens Public School, Manning Valley Anglican School, Chatham Public School, Tuncurry Public School (pictured top right), Gloucester High School and Bulahdelah Central School over a period of three days from 20 to 22 August 2024. The program was presented to over 1250 school students from year 4 through to year 12.

In a first across New South Wales, the NRL Voice Against Violence program was conducted across the Manning Great Lakes Police District in conjunction with Operation AMAROK VII. Operation AMAROK VII was a NSW Police state-wide offender centric operation designed to focus on identified domestic and family violence offenders where their intent, capability and access to victims is at an elevated level of threat.

The NRL Voice Against Violence program was delivered by Alan Tongue, who was a hard-working tough forward who played 230 NRL games with the Canberra Raiders from 2000 to 2011 and Joseph Paulo. Joseph Paulo played 231 games for several NRL clubs including, Penrith Panthers, Parramatta Eels, Cronulla Sharks, St Helens in the English Super League and Toulouse Olympique in France. These days Alan leads the NRL's Voice Against Violence program where he speaks to school students about ways of preventing domestic violence.

On Monday 26 August, the Midcoast Youth Awards 2024 were held at the Manning Entertainment Centre in Taree.

Great Lakes College Forster Campus student Nakyha Smith was nominated by the Student Support Officer Nette Whiting for a 'Resilience and Wellbeing Award' (sponsored by Grow a Star Youth Scholarship Program) for her commitment and dedication to the Girls to the Front program - which is run jointly with NSW Police.

Nakyha was announced as the winner of the award on the night! (See photo above.) Well done Nakyha and all involved - such an amazing achievement. We are all super proud of you!

Please remember to be kind to each other and don't forget to say "G'day!" to your local police! Chief Inspector Timothy Bayly - OIC Forster Police Station

The Forster Fortnightly will be publicising activities for the Spring School Holidays on 18 September.
All relevant submissions due 11 September.



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What's the hold up for Forster Surf Club?



Above: MP Dr Gillespie and representatives from the Forster Surf Life Saving Club.

"We also require a lease for the club approved by Crown Lands and MCC and duly signed by our club."

"Essential Energy approved a low voltage electrical supply in 2022 but subsequently advised in 2024 that we would require high voltage and associated substation. We can't proceed any further with the high voltage until Essential Energy advise the details of the substation required and the survey is adopted."

"We are awaiting details of a generator to alleviate some of the electricity supply in the interim. We have solar panels and the low voltage supply from the previous club."

"Naturally, resolving the issues outlined are at a significant cost to the club, hence our continuing fundraising."

Although not yet open to the wider community, Federal Member for Lyne, Dr David Gillespie, was afforded a private viewing of the club on Friday, 16 August 2024.

A significant part of the funding for our new clubhouse was from the Federal Governments Building Better Regions Fund grant that was secured with his assistance.

Dr Gillespie acclaimed the structure as an instant icon and a magnificent resource for the community, offering state-of-the-art facilities including training rooms, and sufficient storage areas to cater for the vital current and future surf lifesaving rescue equipment to be used for many years to come.

Work in progress during the viewing was the laying of artificial turf on the forecourt of the clubhouse by club members under the direction of Facilities Supervisor and life member, Dave Keating. This included motorised brushing of an overlay of silica sand into the pile of turf which stands the fibre up, gives it a more natural feel and helps anchor the turf.

By Annie Evans.

With the completion of the exterior shell of the new Forster Surf Club (FSLSC) building and with finishing touches being made to landscaping, members of the FSLSC are being inundated with questions regarding opening the edifice for general public viewing.

In response, club President, John Quinn, has released a statement as to the issues which at present are preventing this.

Mr Quinn said, "Our builders A W Edwards and various contractors have done a great job in providing a club that all the community will hopefully be proud of for many years to come."

"We have several issues outside of our control to overcome before moving in and using the facilities."

"We require NSW Crown Lands and MidCoast Council (MCC) to sign off the survey where the club is situated on - the survey at the cost of Forster SLSC."

"The ground floor café will be leased; however, we cannot go to public tender until the issues mentioned above are resolved."

"Once a number of these issues are resolved, it should allow the issuing of an occupation certificate which will hopefully occur prior to the commencement of the patrol season in 3 weeks."

"This should also see us welcoming the public to view the clubhouse."



HOW TO VOTE Labor

MIDCOAST COUNCIL

CLAIRE PONTIN

VOTE 1 - GROUP D (above the line)

GROUP D
1
LABOR

- PONTIN, Claire LABOR
- WILSON, Digby LABOR
- GREEN, Nicolle LABOR
- COSTA, Phillip LABOR
- BURGESS, Michael LABOR
- VANSTONE, Mark LABOR

DO NOT number any box under the line.

GETTING THINGS DONE

Authorised by Phil Cooks, Australian Labor Party (Forster/Tuncurry Branch), 34 Amber Park Road, Murrumbidgee, NSW, 2312.

MidCoast Labor
Midcoastlabor@gmail.com



<p>Nicolle Green Hallidays Point</p> <p>Educated in our community, raising her family and teaching the next generation, Nicolle is passionate about giving back and having a positive impact on the community improving the lifestyle for all.</p>	<p>Digby Wilson Taree</p> <p>Saint Vincent DePaul welfare volunteer, Former General Manger of large technical teams across regional and metropolitan NSW and Vic. 31 years in telco. Committed to making a positive difference to people's lives & public policy.</p>	<p>Claire Pontin Red Head</p> <p>MidCoast Mayor since 2022, Former Deputy Mayor, General Manager, Ecologist, Economist, 30 years in Government. Claire is very experienced and through teamwork, get things done on Council.</p>	<p>Michael Burgess Taree</p> <p>50 years living in MidCoast, Board member & President of a large local Community Welfare NFP, Former Health Laboratory Scientist, Chairman of Parish Pastoral Council. A skilled professional & leader. 18 Years as Taree Apex member.</p>	<p>Phillip Costa Minimbah</p> <p>Former NSW Minister, Mayor, Councillor, School Principal. Board Member of Manning Support Services, RFS Firefighter and farmer. Active community member in Minimbah, Nablac and on the Mid Coast.</p>	<p>Mark Vanstone Forster</p> <p>Supervisor in Aged Care, registered nurse & midwife. 20 years on Mid Coast, 40 years in healthcare. Mark has experienced working in remote, small and large communities across Australia.</p>
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A POSITIVE PLAN FOR MIDCOAST

- AN ACCOUNTABLE COUNCIL**
Continued improvement in budget management, consultation, engagement, transparency and responsiveness.
- OUR TRANSPORT NETWORK**
More cycleways and footpaths. A bigger investment in road maintenance. Strong advocacy to increase government funding of country roads.
- OUR UNIQUE ENVIRONMENT**
Protection our environment and managing development. Encouraging tree plantings. More use of renewable. Continued climate Actions.
- A VIBRANT MIDCOAST**
Improved community facilities and open spaces. Attracting and supporting new business. Supporting diversity and culturally rich communities.

A CARING TEAM TO MAKE OUR COUNCIL BETTER

OPEN DAY

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Saturday 7th September - 10am - 2pm

More Than You Ever Expected

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18-30 Bruce Street, Forster (150m from Wallis Lake Cafes)
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You're invited to Get Ready Day at Rainbow Flat

Rainbow Flat Rural Fire Brigade will be holding its annual Get Ready Day on Saturday September 21, from 10am to 2pm, at the fire station on Bonvale Close. Come along, meet local volunteer bush firefighters and have a chat. There will be a free sausage sizzle and soft drink/tea/coffee. Children and new residents are especially welcome.



This year we particularly want you to ASK US QUESTIONS: questions about portable pumps; garden design; should you stay or go if a big fire threatens; what to do about pets and stock; what to teach your children about fire safety; what you can expect in a big emergency, is it true that the power fails and water pressure drops; and what you can do to help us help you.

At Get Ready Day 2024 we will be having regular demonstrations including:

- Setting up, operating and maintaining portable pumps

- How to assess your fire safety, looking at asset protection zones and fire prone vegetation
- Fire safety for children: stop, drop, cover and roll; plus get down low and go, go, go.

For further information on Rainbow Flat Brigade's Get Ready Day 2024 please contact Robyn King, Rainbow Flat Brigade's Community Engagement Officer on 04900 13182.

Other useful contacts include Mid Coast Fire Control 1300 Mid Coast (1300 643 262), the Bush Fire Information Line 1800 NSW RFS (1800 679737) and the Hazards Near Me app.

See p 27 for Rainbow Flat RFS since 2019 fires.



Above: The Rainbow Flat RFS volunteer crew.

Permits required on 1st September

The Bush Fire Danger Period commenced in the Mid Coast District on 1st September. This means that in order to light some fires in the open, residents will need to obtain a permit.

Permits are free of charge and can be issued by your local Brigade Fire Permit Officer.

You can now apply for a permit online via the NSW RFS website at: www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/

MidCoast Assist disability service transition completed



MidCoast Council has now formally transitioned the disability services delivered by MidCoast Assist to Ability Options.

This transition has provided continuity of services to MidCoast Assist's disability participants and also for many MidCoast Assist staff who have elected to take up employment with the new provider.

Council entered into talks with Ability Options following a request for proposal process from interested providers, which was a result of a decision in February to transition out of the delivery of ageing and disability services.

Council's Director of Liveable Communities, Paul De Szell, confirmed that participants who wished to transfer to Ability Options had now done so and there were no longer any disability services being delivered by MidCoast Assist.

Mr De Szell said, "Ability Options have a long history of delivering disability services and I am pleased that we are able to transition our participants to such a high-quality service."

Mr De Szell said planning for the transition of aged care services to Kirinari Community Services was well underway, with completion expected in early October.

"As was the case for the transfer of disability services, there will be no change to ageing services until clients are directly notified by MidCoast Assist of how the transition will work."

MidCoast Council made the decision to transition out of the delivery of ageing and disability services in February 2024.

Mr De Szell paid tribute to the staff of MidCoast Assist, saying they have delivered a fantastic and valued service for our community over the course of its operation.

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MidCoast Youth Award winners



MidCoast Youth Awards winners were acknowledged at an Award Ceremony held in the Manning Entertainment Centre (MEC) during August.

Nominations were open for young people aged 12 to 24 years old, living, working or studying in the MidCoast local government area. Each award winner received a certificate, a \$250 gift card, and recognition that can help underpin future career ambitions. The team award received a \$500 gift card as the prize.

Award winners

- Leadership Winner 12-17yrs: Lily Souter
- Leadership Winner 18-24yrs: Winner, Charli Payton

- Leadership Highly Commended 12-17yrs: Zaney Luciani
- Arts Winner 12-17yrs: Hannah Baillie-Angeles
- Arts Highly Commended 12-17yrs: Tahzrae Sheather
- Entrepreneur Winner 18-24yrs: Chelsea Harvey
- Community Service Winner 12-17yrs: Harley Bunyan
- Community Service Winner 18-24yrs: Tara Copp
- Community Service Highly Commended 12-17yrs: Jorja Wallace
- Sport Winner 12-17yrs: Joel Flemming

- Sport Winner 18-24yrs: Laia Pasini
 - Wellbeing and Resilience Winner 12-17yrs: Nakyha Smith
 - Wellbeing and Resilience Winner 18-24yrs: Ruby-Scarlet Wilson
 - Team Winners: Gloucester Gymnastic Club - Emma Bignell, Abbey Seale, Taleah Higgins, Elana Pope
 - Team Highly Commended: Buladelah Central School Year 12 Vertical Curriculum Drama Class - Caily Aberhart, Simone Miller, Hannah Baillie-Angeles, Jaymii Rae, Lorelei Genner
- The MidCoast Youth Awards are a partnership between PCYC Taree, MidCoast Council, LJ Hooker Taree and Grow A Star.

Last HSC Study Nights for 2024



Exclusive after-hours library access for HSC students. Free wi-fi, photocopying, printing and we will keep you fuelled with refreshments, snacks and pizza. Sponsored by Domino's.

Just turn up whenever it works 9am - 5pm Monday to Friday or until 8pm on the dates below!

- Forster Library - Forster Civic Centre, 4 Lake St
Tuesdays 24 September, 1 & 8 October from 9am - 8pm
- Taree Universities Campus - 2 Pulteney St Taree, Main Entrance
Thursdays 26 September, 3 & 10 October from 9am - 5pm

The HSC written exams start 15 October 2024.

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Even Dolphins & Seals HOW TO HELP ENTANGLED WHALES

- KEEP A LOOKOUT FOR WHALES MIGRATING AND LOOK FOR ANY ROPES/OBJECTS TRAILING BEHIND/MOVING WITH A WHALE
- TAKE PHOTOS/VIDEO INCLUSIVE OF ANY ROPES/FLOATS/BUOYS/OBJECTS
- OBTAIN A GPS LOCATION OF THE WHALE AND RECORD IT
- CALL THE ORRCA RESCUE HOTLINE (02) 9415 3333 **DO NOT ATTEMPT ANY DISENTANGLEMENT**
- KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE WHALE AND RECORD ANY CHANGES IN DIRECTION OF TRAVEL

After an unfortunate outcome for a baby dolphin at the Tuncurry Rockpool on 19 August, ORRCA (Organisation for the Rescue & Research of Cetaceans in Australia) rescuer Adam Clarke (from Forster Dive Centre) is reminding people to call the Orca hotline on (02) 9415 3333 straight away when they see any marine animals needing assistance.

Adam said, "A member of the public made a great effort to save a baby dolphin at the Tuncurry Rockpool last week. The lady rang ORRCA and then stayed at the scene to show us (Adam's partner Amelie Chipeaux, ORRCA rescuer) where the dolphin was caught in the net."

"Orca put out a global text so we were able to arrive within minutes, put our gear on and get in the water. Unfortunately, the baby female dolphin was already deceased. Its nose and pectoral fin (on its side) were caught in the

Call ORRCA straight away!



Above: Channel 7 interviewing Adam Clarke and Amelie Chipeaux at the Tuncurry Rockpool.

Adam said a lot of people were upset by the incident, including his partner Amelie who slept next to their young son that night in an emotional response to releasing the deceased baby dolphin.

After the incident, that was reported by 7 News, people posted for the removal of the net. Adam said it is a common misconception that the net at the Tuncurry Rockpool is a shark net. He explained it is a public safety net as there can be dangerous currents in that area and on occasions people need to be rescued. Without the net people would be at risk. He also said locals know the dolphins come in and out of the rockpool without being caught. This was a hard incident to deal with and something Adam doesn't want to repeat.

Adam would like to see a permanent sign with information for the public on who to contact if people see distressed marine animals.

Local member Tanya Thompson has stated she would follow up the need for signage and had received a formal response from the MidCoast General Manager acknowledging the request and advising it is currently being considered.

By Mary Yule.
Images supplied.

net. We could only free it and collect data. The lady told us the mother had hung around in distress before the pod moved on."

Portfolio Divestment for Mid Coast

Colliers was the real estate company assigned to sell assets for Midcoast Council, and stated: "We have concluded the sale of a portfolio divestment for Mid Coast Council which consisted of four assets ranging from residentially zoned development sites to the former Council Chambers on Breese Parade in the heart of Forster. The divestment of the assets formed the core funding strategy for the relocation of the Council offices to the former Masters site in Taree, and the Forster Civic Centre Development.

The sales of these properties has unlocked much needed new amenity and private and government investment for the Mid Coast region including, medium density residential opportunities, the brand-new Forster Ambulance Station and more.

Council's assets were located at 40-80 Chapmans Road, Tuncurry, 16 & Lot 1, 18 Breese Parade and 4-12 Breese Parade, Forster.

"The selling of these assets demonstrates the depth of market for quality, well located properties across key growth corridors of NSW

such as the Mid North Coast region."

Luke Rutledge - Colliers.



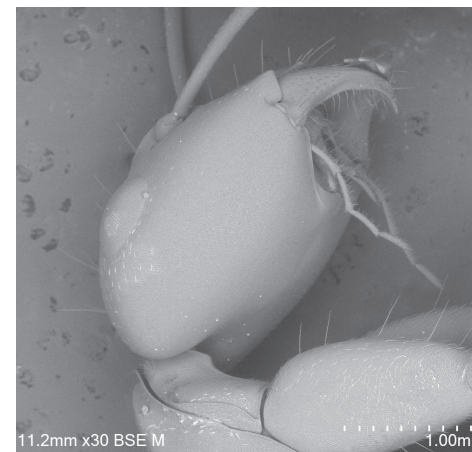
Right: The old MidCoast Chamber building on Breese Parade, Forster.

Celebrating Science Week at Great Lakes College



Above: April MacKay addressing students with Simon Patterson.

Teachers from the Senior campus and Tuncurry campus attended training in the use and operation of the microscope prior to it being delivered. A scanning electron microscope uses a focused beam of electrons to scan the surface of a specimen and generate images at a much greater resolution compared to optical microscopy. The microscopes that are used in the school laboratories can magnify an image up to 400 x, the scanning electron microscope is able to view specimens up to 100,000 x magnification.



Left: Ant head 30 x magnification.

It is only in the last 5 to 6 years that this technology has been accessible to high school students. Our science staff have been amazed at having access to a piece of equipment that not many of us were even able to use while studying at universities.

On Tuesday the 13th of August, Great Lakes College Senior Campus hosted a Science Careers day for local primary school students. Students from Forster, Nabic, Pacific Palms, Tuncurry and Bungwahl attended the Senior Campus for a day exploring the many avenues a career in Science can lead you.

From the 12th of August to the 23rd of August, Great Lakes College Senior Campus has been fortunate to have a Scanning Electron Microscope on site. This very advanced and expensive piece of equipment has enabled students from across the whole Great Lakes Learning Community to engage with the microscopic world in great detail.

We were lucky to have April McKay, an environmental scientist from Mid Coast

Council attend and talk to the students about what a day in her life at work as a marine scientist might look like. April spoke about the importance of maintain the health of our marine ecosystems and some of the environmental monitoring surveys she regularly conducts, even while SCUBA diving. April also brought in some samples that she had collected while scoop netting, and we were able to then image these under the microscope.

The students then attended two workshops, one on the classification of insects using the

scanning electron microscope and one in our senior laboratory on human pathology and disease diagnosis.

The students were accompanied by Yr 9 science students from both the Tuncurry and Forster campuses of Great Lakes College. The newly appointed leadership team of the Senior campus cooked all the students a BBQ lunch and spent lunchtime in a hotly contested game of handball.

Towards the end of the day, the microscope was used to show the students what a human hair looks like under a scanning electron microscope at 300 x magnification and then at 800 x magnification.

The staff from the Senior campus would like to thank all of the students who participated on the day for their exemplary behaviour.

By Simon Patterson - Science Teacher, Great Lakes College.

Feedback from 2 visiting schools: "Our students really enjoyed playing handball and interacting on the senior campus side at lunch with Year 11, years 8/9 (great role models) and students from other primary schools."

"Viewing the magnification in the theatre when student samples were used. This is what the kids were chatting about on the way home."

Monday Monday Pasta \$15	Tuesday Happy Hour 3pm to 5pm Members Swipe Draw at 5:30pm Bingo From 10:30am Pizza's L \$20 / S \$15 \$15 Seniors Lunch Deal	Wednesday Raffles from 6pm Club Super Draw from 6pm 220gr Porterhouse w/Chips & Salad \$20	Thursday Mufti Bowls & Raffle from 12:30pm Happy Hour 3pm to 5pm Mexican \$15	Friday Raffles from 6pm Super 100 Draw after Raffles Lunch Burger 'n' Beer \$20 Live Music Every Friday 8pm
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There's always something happening at the Palms!

Saturday Fishing Club Raffle starts at 3pm & 4pm Happy Hour 3pm to 5pm Lunch & Dinner Kids Meals \$5 (16y)	Sunday Chook Run Bowls from 10:30am Raffles from 1pm Lunch & Dinner Kids Meals \$5 (16y)	Open 7 Days 11:00 till Late Lunch 12pm & Dinner 5:30pm Courtesy Bus from 4pm 8 Paradise Drive, Smiths Lake Ph: 6554 4333 www.pacificpalmsbowlingclub.com.au Follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.	 Mitch Bayliss Fri 6 Sep	 Matt Zarb Fri 13 Sep
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Pacific Palms Bowling Club
Your local Bowling Club

AGED SERVICES EXPO

Thursday 19 September 10am to 2pm
Forster Civic Centre

Come along for free tea, coffee and sound advice from a range of services including:

- home care providers
- dementia information and support
- carer support
- aged care services
- legal services
- My Aged Care support
- mobility equipment
- social and support groups
- financial information and more

Manning Regional Art Gallery will be running art activities during the day at the event.

For more information, please contact Jane O'Dwyer 7955 7679 or 0418 769 494

MIDCOAST council
This event is being hosted by the Mid Coast Dementia Friendly Alliance

INDEPENDENT VOTE 1 -Group A Above the Line!

 Peter Howard Business Owner	 Fabian Clancy Business Owner	 Rebecca Cross Home Renovation Consultant
 Scott Paterson Local Accountant	 Roddy Donegan Business Owner	 Emmerson Hollis Community Services

The experience Mid-Coast needs in people you know
-Conservative values-

Authorised by P Howard, 108 Manning Street, Tuncurry 2428. Printed by Easy Signs Smeaton Grange

Nurses rally for fair wage



Above: Nurses rally outside Forster Community Health Centre on 29 August 2024.

Nurses rallied outside the Forster Community Health Centre on 29 August 2024, in support of nurses and midwives across NSW who

campaigned during the week of 29 August for a fair and equitable wage rise.

Deborah Noakes, Branch Secretary of the Forster-Tuncurry Community Health Nurses (NSW Nurses and Midwives Association) and Michael Sutton (NSWNMA) want the community to be aware of the campaign that states:

"The NSW public health system remains in a staffing crisis. NSW nurses and midwives are the lowest paid in Australia. Experienced nurses and midwives are leaving due to poor pay and conditions, and the sector is failing to attract the new recruits needed."

"Nurses and midwives are burnt out and exhausted. We are asking the NSW government to fix our pay so we can afford to stay in the professions we love."

Right: You can support this campaign by sending an email (ready to go) via this site/QR code.



nswnma.info/supportus



Above: Nurses and Midwives also held a rally outside Manning Base Hospital 30 August 2024.

Photo by Scott Grant - Secretary Manning Hospital Branch NSWNMA.

Health Committee visits Manning Base Hospital

Recently, I had the pleasure of hosting the Select Committee of Rural Regional and Remote Health in the Myall Lakes Electorate. Part of this trip included a visit to the Manning Base Hospital. This visit was not just a formality but a deep dive into the heart of our healthcare challenges and aspirations.

Our frontline heroes, the nurses, doctors, and support staff, shared their daily experiences and insights. They spoke passionately about what truly makes a difference in patient care. Executives and stakeholders joined the

dialogue, discussing strategies to enhance health outcomes across our region.

This visit also coincides with the revision of the Clinical Services Plan for the redevelopment of the Manning Hospital and for Forster, a pivotal step in the planning process. We're not just talking about changes; we're planning actionable, sustainable improvements. It's another step closer to the shovel in the ground.

Thank you to everyone involved for your candid discussions and commitment to health.

Tanya Thompson - MP for Myall Lakes.



Items of interest - 21 August 2024 Council meeting

Affordable housing development approved in Forster

Councillors approved a development that will provide more affordable housing for Forster. The application included the demolition of existing structures to make way for a three-storey residential flat building that will contain 10 residential units. They will be made up of eight two-bedroom units and two three-bedroom units and will be solely available to women who have been victims of domestic violence.

MidCoast Assist update

Council have successfully transferred disability operations over to Ability Options and the transition of aged care services to Kirinari Community Services is due to conclude in early October. A further report will be provided at the conclusion of the transition projects.

Nabiac local community plan

The Nabiac community have worked together over the last decade to develop and update a Local Community Plan to reflect the long-term vision for the area. The first plan was developed in 2016 and was one of the first of its kind in the MidCoast region.

The plan which is led by the Nabiac Village Futures Group has recently conducted a further review and update of the plan to deliver a vision and actions for their community for the period 2024 to 2030. This revision was noted by Councillors and will provide the Nabiac community with a platform to attract funding from State and Federal Government programs.

Draft public toilets in parks strategy

A draft document will be on public exhibition outlining Council's plans for amenities located at our parks. The strategy will provide all the

actions for these facilities for the next 11 years. (See more information on page 10.)

Yalawanyi Ganya (MidCoast Council building) - Funding Strategy now complete

With the recent sale of Council's former administration building at Breese Parade Forster, Council's Funding Strategy for the purchase and fitout of Yalawanyi Ganya, Council's Administration Centre is now complete.

Council's Funding Strategy outlined properties that were to be leased or sold with the funds going towards the purchase and fit out of Council's Administration Centre, Yalawanyi Ganya.

As part of the funding strategy for the move to Yalawanyi Ganya, a number of properties were identified to be sold with an estimated return

was \$6.57 million. The total funds realised from the sale of these properties totalled \$12.72 million, which was \$6.15 million above the initial estimates included in the funding strategy.

This has allowed for the level of loans associated with the purchase and fitout of the building to be reduced. From 30 June 2025 (when the loan can be renegotiated) the total loan will be reduced to \$6 million. This is a reasonable level of debt given the life of the building. The increased return on sales will also allow for some funds to be invested into the Council's Future Land Development Reserve, which has been established to invest in properties which can deliver a sustainable commercial return to Council. (See more information on page 7.)

For full details of all reports please see the meeting agenda at: www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/Your-Council/Council-meetings/Agendas-and-minutes

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CALCUTTA

THURSDAY 12TH SEPT

6.30 PM

GUARANTEED POOL \$6K

Forster Bowling Club
 Professionals Forster
 L & B Glass
 Barclays Oysters
 A.J. Wilson Food
 Inspirations Paint
 Allan Pearse Funeral
 Yarads Menswear Forster Taree
 Evermore Retirement Living
 Smith Electrixx
 Pacific Palms Bowling Club
 GLASS24/7
 Forster Bus Company
 Dorvik Steel
 Southern Sons Skip Bins
 Forster smash Repairs
 Great Lakes Decorative Concreting
 TJL Insurance Brokers

TUNCURRY BEACH BOWLING CLUB

Tanya's Community Update



HEALTH COMMITTEE VISITS MANNING BASE HOSPITAL

Recently, the Myall Lakes electorate hosted the Select Committee on Remote, Rural and Regional Health. Part of this trip included a visit to Manning Base Hospital, which provided a look into challenges and opportunities facing our healthcare system.

NSW VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

- MNC Young Volunteer of the Year: Evan Cooper, Pride Club
• MNC Adult Volunteer of the Year: Melinda Lightfoot, Great Lakes Suicide Prevention Network
• MNC Senior Volunteer of the Year: Ted Bickford
• MNC Volunteer Team of the Year: Forster Neighbourhood Centre Inc. Community Hub Volunteers

Congratulations to all recipients and thank you to all our volunteers for your selfless contribution to our communities. Tanya Thompson MP

John's Coomba Aquatic team set for new year

Meet Coomba Aquatic Club's Executive Committee for 2024-25

Three new faces have joined the committee, following the Annual General Meeting on 17 August, including Treasurer Sue Pynenburg, who fills the big shoes of Karen Elvins, and new members David Rayner and Peter Davidson.

Life Member Stuart Silver took the chair to announce the nominees for 2024-25 and welcomed the new committee. However, with no nominations for the position of Club Secretary, Peter Felton will again assume the interim role of Acting Secretary.

As he prepares for his third and final term as president, John thanked his team for their efforts to ensure that the events and social functions were successful and that the club remained financially stable through its various fundraising initiatives.

John also encouraged more of the Club's 210 members to step up to ensure the club's activities continue to be successful in the year ahead.

"The Aquatic Club doesn't just operate on Friday night or on sailing days," he said.

"These people not only do the jobs they were elected to do, they step up well beyond what's expected of them again and again. Thanks to their efforts the club functioned well this year, particularly as the committee was down on numbers."

The 35 members in attendance heard reports from the outgoing executive on the performance of the club over the past year.

Sailing program amongst best ever

In his report John made special mention of the Junior Sailing Program, describing it as the most successful for many years thanks to those who organise the days, and coach the local and visiting youngsters.

The Cannon family was unable to attend, but Ben wrote thanking the club for its sponsorship of Bethany and Ella, which enables them to attend the competitive events that saw the pair take their sailing skills to new levels.



Above: Coomba Aquatic President John Price (centre) with Karen Elvins & Gerard Taylor, joint Club Person of the Year.

Karen and Gerard, take a bow

TWO of the hardest working members of our Coomba Aquatic Club, Karen Elvins and Gerard Taylor were recognised for their contribution over the past year.

So outstanding were their efforts that the pair were named joint winners of the Club's Person of the Year Award for their tireless work supporting club events and activities.

Have your say on public toilets in parks

The draft MidCoast Public Toilets in Parks Strategy 2024 - 2035 is on public exhibition until Wednesday 2 October 2024.

98 out of 100 Council's public toilets are in parks making this strategy a comprehensive plan for managing these important assets.

"We want to make sure all toilets include soap dispensers, paper towels, toilet seats, and easy-to-use door latches," said MidCoast Council's Manager of Strategy and Projects, Amanda Hatton. "We are also looking at

including bicycle racks and water bubblers in key locations."

"New and upgraded facilities in highly visited locations will provide wheelchair, unisex and parenting access," said Ms Hatton.

The draft plan proposes 55 facilities that will be maintained in the future. Another 46 facilities are proposed to be replaced, upgraded, refurbished or converted. Six new facilities are proposed to be built in busy places with no current public toilets in the nearby surrounding

area. Five facilities that are not well located or have low usage are identified for removal.

"Bins for blokes' help provide for men with incontinence. People can request Council to install these bins in specific facilities as part of the strategy.

Have your say at www.haveyoursay.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/draft-public-toilets-parks-strategy before Wednesday 2 October 2024.

Subscribe for FREE at www.forsterfortnightly.com.au to receive local news alerts & community updates.

Coomba Men's Shed receives \$9,822

The Coomba Mens Shed is to receive a storage extension, thanks to funding secured from the 2023 Community Building Partnership grant program.

This grant will enable the Shed to complete the final stage of their storage extension, ensuring they have the necessary space to safely store stools and materials.

This funding will directly benefit the Coomba Men's Shed and the wider Coomba Park community.



The Coomba Mens Shed

Wallis Lake dredging

MidCoast Council is continuing to advocate for a long-term solution to the sand shoaling at the entrance to Wallis Lake, Forster.



A major sand shoal, caused by the impact of the breakwall and associated tidal currents, has rapidly pushed further into the lake. This has impacted on a number of activities in the lake, primarily oyster farming and navigation and has been an ongoing issue for the community since mid 2022.

Council is collaborating with Transport for NSW and MIDO (Maritime Infrastructure Delivery Office) on an assessment of issues to help understand and formulate future management options.

That assessment is nearing completion and Member for Myall Lakes, Tanya Thompson

has indicated she will provide updates to the community in September.

Transport for NSW is responsible for providing funding for investigating, assessing, and undertaking works which are expected to include dredging to address the issue of sand shoaling in the entrance to the lake.

Published 19.8.2024

Development remains strong across the MidCoast

MidCoast Council processed 1304 development and modification applications worth over \$440 million in the last financial year. The combined average assessment time for these applications was 84 days.

While development and building construction activity is slowing slightly (compared to previous years) builders and developers are still showing great confidence in the MidCoast region.

The NSW Government's 'Planning Council League Table' shows that MidCoast Council processed more development applications in the 2023-24 financial year, than Maitland, Cessnock, Shoalhaven Wollongong, Port Macquarie, Coffs Harbour and Port Stephens Councils.

"The approval of such a high number of applications compares very favourably with other Councils in the region," explained Director of Liveable Communities, Paul De Szell.

"We've been streamlining our systems to process DAs more efficiently, so we are very pleased with the results."

"At the core of our process improvement work is the implementation of the 53 actions outlined in the Housing Barriers Report."

Despite the good results, MidCoast Council will look for continual improvement.

"We know DA wait times can be stressful. There are some areas such as processing complex assessments and effective triage that could be better," Mr De Szell said. "Our aim is to achieve even greater efficiency over coming years."



Tanya THOMPSON MP Member for Myall Lakes. NOMINATE THE NEXT NSW WOMAN OF THE YEAR! Award categories include: Premier's NSW Woman of Excellence, NSW Aboriginal Woman of the Year, NSW Community Hero, NSW Regional Woman of the Year, NSW Young Woman of the Year, The Ones to Watch. NOMINATIONS CLOSE SUNDAY 15 SEPTEMBER. Includes QR code and contact information.

Pacific Cape Lodge Now open Kularoo Drive Forster. GLAICA Ltd is excited to announce that Pacific Cape Lodge is now open and taking new admissions! We now have openings for experienced Registered Nurses who can make best use of their skills and knowledge in a new and exciting environment where you can help shape and establish the future of our care services.

Mid Coast Council Election VOTE 1 Above the line Group E Alan Tickle Group Safe Roads Safe and Vibrant Communities Sustainable & Responsible Development. Alan Tickle: 16 years experience in Local Government and current Deputy Mayor heads the group which includes: Nicole Turnbull, Carley Burke, Dr Philip Walkom, Michael Kent, Kylie Turner. Includes photo of the group.

Get to know your candidates

Group H 1. Paul Sandilands

1. What is your name, political affiliation, occupation and town that you live in?

My name is Paul Sandilands. I have lived in Forster and much of the council area most of my life. I have no political affiliation whatsoever.

2. Why should people vote for you?

I am a person that cares about my community. I've spent most of my life caring for the people in it and this is an extension of that. I would



like to see that as residents we all get those services that we should and to help make our community a better place.

3. What are three main issues in the MidCoast Council Local Government Area that you wish to address and how would you go about this?

Three main issues in our community are as follows:

- Maintaining our assets. In order to achieve this we need greater levels of state and federal funding. This can only be achieved by having a strong and cohesive council.
- Trying to address the housing issues in our area like all of the entire country. We would

need to work with organisations outside Council, such as churches. For example, in Taree there are large buildings being used minimally that are church owned.

• Maintaining our financial stability as a council. Lots of councils in NSW have been impacted by cost shifting from state government to local councils. Also, political promises which never happen. This means making council a trim and well-functioning business and trying to develop alternative income streams and also lobby government to increase funding.

Group I - The Greens 1. Dheera Smith

1. What is your name, political affiliation, occupation and town that you live in?

Dheera Smith, Manning-Great Lakes Greens, current Mid-Coast councillor, high school English/Drama teacher now working casual, live in Mondrook, NSW and holiday home resident at Tirraki Street, Old Bar.

2. Why should people vote for you?

After my first term, I am prepared to continue working on environmental and social justice

issues. The Lakes Way drive is onerous for workers and visitors. Electric public transport and more affordable housing for skilled workers is needed urgently. Active transport upgrades for bike riders is a must.

3. What are three main issues in the MidCoast Council Local Government Area that you wish to address and how would you go about this?

- Transform our transport to provide a better future alternative for residents and visitors. I would seek community support for an integrated transport network funded by state government. Bringing down transport costs and pollution would help us enjoy a greener future.
- Activate the construction of affordable housing in the Forster/Tuncurry hub. Retirees and holiday makers cannot enjoy a visit to a place short on skilled workers. Council can take the lead on housing instead of waiting for State input. Existing land assets and investment funds can be used to develop and build affordable housing. State funds can be added to our own equitable housing alternatives.
- Climate change development must be the top of Council's priority ladder. Seas rising and weather changing cannot be ignored. All new businesses and existing council infrastructure must head towards zero emissions earlier than 2050.



Group I - The Greens 2. Janece Irving

1. What is your name, political affiliation, occupation and town that you live in?

Janece Irving, Manning-Great Lakes Greens, small business owner, Hospitality entrepreneur. I live in Tinonee and I am a part time Coomba and Tallwood resident with my daughters and grandchildren.

2. Why should people vote for you?

A longtime MidCoast resident, environmentalist and healthy cakes maker, I am a barrista at each

Pacific Palms Market. I know the roads and existing and new housing developments. Riding my electric bike in Forster/Tuncurry beach areas is a treat but some transport sections need upgrading. I have been self-employed for many years and understand the difficulties of young families trying to reduce rising cost of living pressure. I also understand the issues of the aged and helped my mother and father in their later years.

3. What are three main issues in the MidCoast Council Local Government Area that you wish to address and how would you go about this?

- Reducing landfill waste and being innovative with exciting waste creations such as glass



and plastic tiles, rugs made from recycled clothing and earlier funding for sewerage/waste infrastructure such as methane gas removal and food and organic waste compost facilities FOGO.

• Embrace active transport pathways and realise they should not be optional or part of Open Space delayed construction. State government funds public and active transport and we need them to fund our region, especially along Forster and Lakes Way.

• Domestic Violence against women is a rising threat in our whole LGA. I support the Great Lakes Womens Shelter and look forward to bringing council attention to opening a new women's shelter in Taree and other parts of our LGA.

Ungrouped - Independent Elizabeth McEntyre

1. What is your name, political affiliation, occupation and town that you live in?

My name is Elizabeth McEntyre. No political affiliation. I am a Doctor of Social Work and Criminology. Tea Gardens and Hawks Nest is my home - living with Worimi Country.

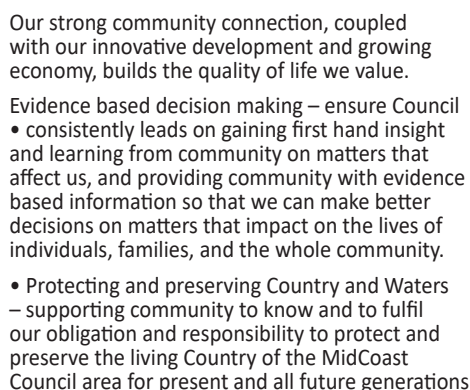
2. Why should people vote for you?

Communities connecting and belonging can improve the wellbeing of all. I will make the vision of the community work, not just by turning

strategic intent into actions, but on how these actions must be delivered. Two-way learning, respect, collaboration, and adapting with the community are critical for shaping the future of our LGA.

3. What are three main issues in the MidCoast Council Local Government Area that you wish to address and how would you go about this?

- Two-way communication - continue to strengthen Council's responsive, transparent, and friendly communication strategies with community to ensure there is proper engagement, consultation, and collaboration to make the vision of the community work for all: MidCoast is a place of unique environmental and cultural significance.



to sporting and social groups. We currently run a working beef cattle farm. I have business experience as well as many other practical skills to offer as a candidate in this election.

3. What are three main issues in the MidCoast Council Local Government Area that you wish to address and how would you go about this?

The main issues I would like to address are what I believe to be the basics for any Local Council. Roads, Rates and Rubbish.

- I would like to see the roads in our area receive more realistic funding for upgrading,

particularly in the outlying areas of the Council area.

• The issue of rates is a complex one. Unfortunately, we need to pay rates if we are to achieve the improvements we all desire and deserve. I would be seeking an even application of rate generated income across the whole area.

• As for rubbish, I would be seeking to lower costs to tip rubbish at Council Waste Management sites in an effort to reduce the amount of rubbish currently dumped at roadsides throughout the MCC LGA.

Ungrouped John Sahyoun

1. What is your name, political affiliation, occupation and town that you live in?

My name is John Sahyoun and I live in Bulahdelah. I was a former primary teacher although I have been involved with business and community for the past 24 years.

2. Why should people vote for you?

The whole of the LGA is important and needs a fair, transparent and at times reactive voice for the community. The reason I am running

for council is because I have the necessary skills and experience to bring about positive outcomes for the whole of the LGA

3. What are three main issues in the MidCoast Council Local Government Area that you wish to address and how would you go about this?

- Affordable housing and improved health services - Currently in our LGA there are significant concerns in this area. We have people unable to afford even rentals which means less people available for even basic services and with a lack of medical facilities and the oldest demographic in the state.

• Reduction in red tape and support for businesses - Anyone who is in business knows we live in tough times and any initiatives that would improve things for them would be welcome.

• Promotion of our tourism and natural assets - We live in the best place on the planet and visitation is important to our local economy.

Each decision will be made with thoughtful judgement on its merits with consultation where necessary. I intend to fulfill my duties of the office of Councillor in the best interests of the whole of the MidCoast community and tackle each issue as it arises.



Puzzles Page

The Grin Bin

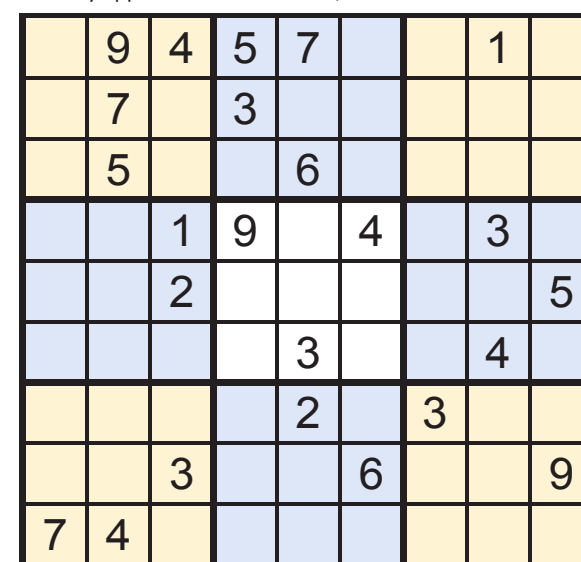


Doodley Squat



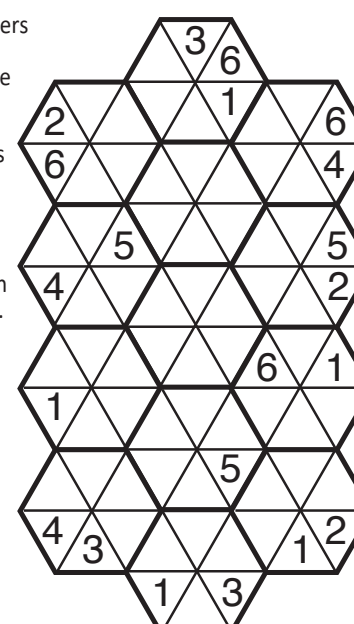
Sudoku

Fill in the blank cells using numbers from 1 to 9. Each number can only appear once in each row, column and 3x3 block.

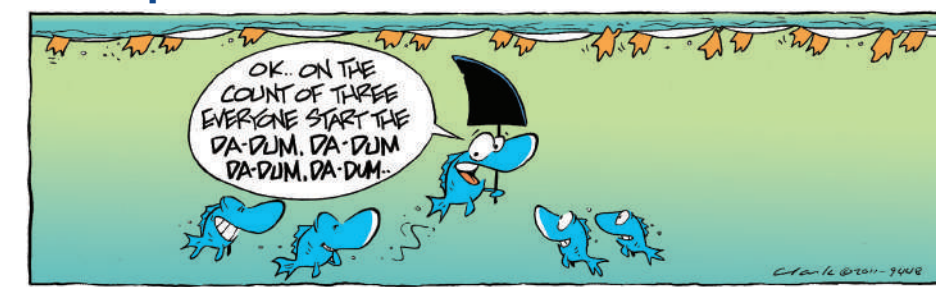


Quick Workout

Fit the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 into the hexagons so that where the hexagons touch, the numbers will be the same. No number is repeated in any hexagon.



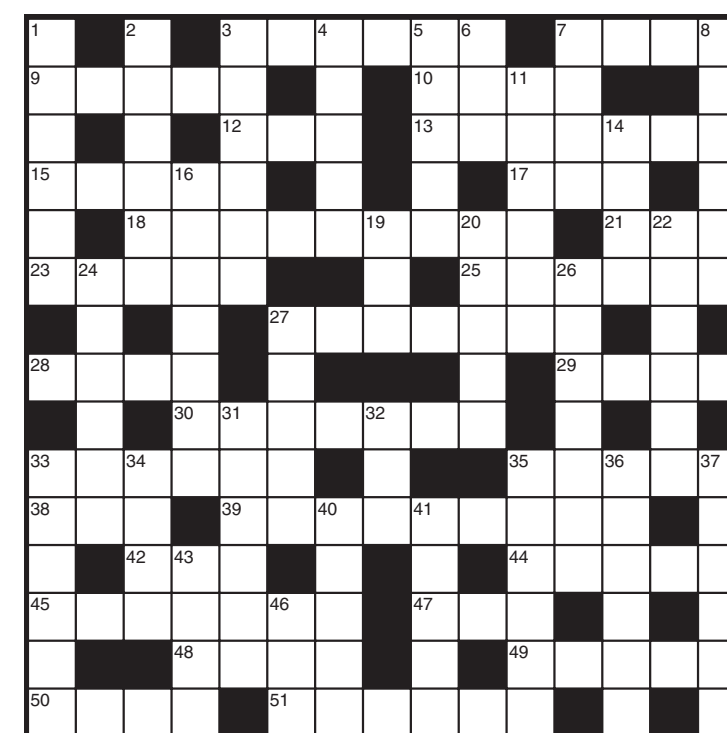
Swamp



Bushy Tales



Crossword

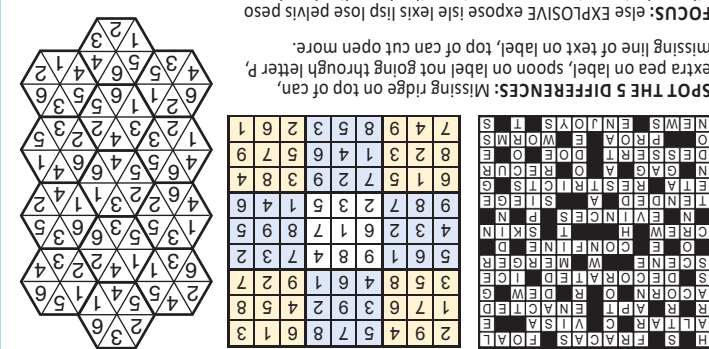


ACROSS

- 3 Uproar
- 7 Young horse
- 9 Sacrificial table
- 10 Passport endorsement
- 12 Quick to learn
- 13 Ordained
- 15 Fruit of the oak
- 17 Early freshness
- 18 Embellished
- 21 Frozen formation
- 23 View
- 25 Business absorption
- 27 Keep in
- 28 Ship's company
- 29 Outer covering
- 30 Shows clearly
- 33 Looked after
- 35 Besieging of fortified place
- 38 Greek letter
- 39 Keeps within limits
- 42 Joke
- 44 Happen again
- 45 Final course
- 47 Female deer
- 48 Malay sailing boat
- 49 Soft-bodied invertebrates
- 50 Tidings
- 51 Relishes
- 14 Slender shoot
- 16 Replenished
- 19 Beard of barley
- 20 Sends out
- 22 Yielding
- 24 Wind instrument
- 26 Reprieve
- 27 Find fault
- 31 Church official
- 32 Domestic animal
- 33 Sinew
- 34 Inferior horses
- 35 Fasteners
- 36 Accompany
- 37 Departure
- 40 Devil
- 41 Western entertainment
- 43 Serpents
- 46 Fish eggs
- 11 Make sorrowful

Solutions

Puzzles and pagination supplied by Auspac Media



September 4-10

Table with columns for ABC TV, SBS, SEVEN, NBN, TEN, and WEDNESDAY-THURSDAY-FRIDAY-SATURDAY-SUNDAY-MONDAY-TUESDAY. Each cell contains program listings for that channel and day.

September 11-17

Table with columns for ABC TV, SBS, SEVEN, NBN, TEN, and WEDNESDAY-THURSDAY-FRIDAY-SATURDAY-SUNDAY-MONDAY-TUESDAY. Each cell contains program listings for that channel and day.

Advertisement for Great Lakes FUNERALS. Includes logo, phone number 6519 4713, address 85 The Lakes Way, Forster, website greatlakesfunerals.com.au, and a QR code.

Advertisement for Sunrise Home Care. Features the text 'Let us take care of you', 'Award winning Home Care provider...', and a call to action 'CALL US NOW (02) 5528 5990'.

Local Calendar

Your 'Local Calendar' lists free events. Max 4 lines. It is the responsibility of the organisation to update their information.

September

Open until 8 Sept - Abstract Art Exhibition
Forster Gallery, 34 Lake St, Forster.
Open Saturday & Sunday 10am - 2pm (or when flags are flying).

Sun 8 Sept - Forster Town Market
8am to 1pm, Town Park, Oyster Pde Forster.
Search Forster Town Park Market on Facebook.



Sun 8 Sept - Tallwoods Village Market
9am - 1pm at 61 The Blvd, Tallwoods Village
Opposite the Tallwoods Golf Club
Contact Calleen 0488 508 846

Sat 14 Sept - Local Council Election Day
9am to 6pm at various polling booths. See page 12 for details.

Sat 14 Sept - Forster Farmers Market
8am to 12pm Forster Info Centre, Little St.
Enquiries: Linda 0421 347 273



Sun 16 Sept - Great Lakes Museum Car Boot Sale, 9am to 1pm at Great Lakes Museum, 1 Capel St Tuncurry. Enquiries: 6554 6275

Sat 21 Sept - Tuncurry Market
8am to 1pm at John Wright Park, Tuncurry.
Enquiries: Anne 0417 400 994

Sun 29 August - Pacific Palms Market
9am to 1pm Pacific Palms Community Centre.
Community Library Stall open in hall.
Enquiries: Jennifer Doyle 0401 968 516

October

Sun 1 Oct - Hallidays Point Car Boot Sale
7am to 12pm Hallidays Point Shopping Village
Enquiries: 0403 042 088

Sun 1 Oct - Black Head Bazaar Market
8am to 1pm Wylie Breckenridge Park, Black Head Rd. Check website for ground closures.
www.facebook.com/blackheadbazaar



Sat 5 & Sun 6 Oct - Great Lakes Orchid Society 43rd Annual Spring Show
Sat 9am to 3pm & Sun 10am to 2pm, Forster Public School Hall, Head St, Forster

What's on around town & beyond!

LBGTQIA+ Community News

A group of local Forster-Tuncurry community members have successfully secured a Diversity Days 2024 – 2025 Grant from ACON. Forster Rainbow Pride was formed to begin organising socially engaging activities to help reduce isolation, foster a sense of community, build supportive community spaces and expand friendship circles.

Jeni Monks, one of the local community organisers, said 'We are excited that we now have funding to assist the local LBGTQIA+SB community to collaborate, connect, and thrive together. Many of our activities will be child friendly, wheelchair friendly and supporter friendly. The social activities we have planned from now until June 2025 aim to build a strong, inclusive and diverse community. Our events will coincide with and celebrate various Diversity Days - the next one is 'Bi Visibility Day' on Monday, 23 September 2024.'

Social activities and planned meet ups include - pizza night, online discussions, cafes, and picnics. Additionally, in 2025, creative workshops are planned to brainstorm, prepare and create costumes/props for the Mid North Coast float in next years Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras.

Rainbow Picnic in the Park

Our first event, supported by ACON, is on Sunday, 15th September 2024 in Forster. Join us for a Rainbow Picnic in the Park. We would love to meet you and welcome you into this community. This get together is a relaxed fun



way to make new friends and expand your network. We are celebrating with pride the annual Bisexual Awareness Week which this year runs from 16th to 23rd September 2024.

Bring picnic food and blanket or chairs. Enjoy the art table, games and meet like-minded people at the sausage sizzle. All ages are welcome. This is an inclusive event welcoming all LBGTQIA+SB identities and supporters, and is wheelchair friendly and child friendly.

Contact us by email forsterrainbowpride@gmail.com for details about this picnic or to stay informed about future activities by subscribing to our mailing list.

Join our Facebook group @Forster Rainbow Pride NSW 2428.

Call Jeni 0414 296 859.

CWA Cake Stall - 5th September

The Forster Branch will be holding a cake stall at Bunnings on Thursday 5 September.

This coincides with the Country Women's Association (CWA) Annual Awareness week which runs annually for the first week of September. This year it runs from 1-7 September

CWA of NSW Awareness Week will run from September 1 to 7, this year highlighting the continuing crisis around gender-based violence – including domestic and family violence, and also including violence against women by men who are not their intimate partners.

It's the second time in five years the association has focused its attention for Awareness Week on violence against women, with domestic and family violence chosen as the theme for the 2020 campaign.

The Forster Branch represent 8000 women across NSW and the ACT, and we believe it's important to keep applying pressure to policy-makers around improved support and protections for victims of gender-based violence

During this year's Awareness Week, the CWA of NSW is calling for:

- Further changes to bail laws to better protect victims, particularly in rural and regional areas;
- Prioritisation of sustainable funding models for frontline victim support services – and services that target perpetrator risk factors;
- The expediting of the establishment of a real-time system to record, track, and share



information on perpetrators across systems and jurisdictions;

- Additional resources for women facing violence in rural and regional communities

Left: Come along and support this not-for-profit organisation and help raise funds for CWA causes. Lots of nice goodies and cakes will be available.

where isolation and lack of services can make it even harder for those looking for support and assistance.

The association is also keen to involve men in this year's campaign, to reinforce the message that everyone must contribute to shifting and changing the aspects of our society and culture that lead to these incidents of violence.

Any further information please contact: Sue Hutchison, Secretary, on 0407 417 007 or Susan.Hutchison@bigpond.com at the Forster Branch of the Country Women's Association.

(See advertisement below left.)

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What's on around town & beyond!

Forster-Tuncurry Spring Festival - 14th September

Get ready for the Spring Festival on Saturday 14th September! A day of celebrating all things local so join us for a day filled with fun, excitement, and community spirit. This isn't just an event, it's a celebration of what makes our community truly special.

Where: Wharf Street, Forster

When: 10am to 8pm, Saturday 14 September.

What's in store:

- Live Music, Performances & Art Displays by our talented local artists
- Delicious Food & Drinks from your favourite local vendors
- Fun Activities for kids and families
- Local Businesses showcasing their incredible products and services

Whether you're coming to support, shop, eat, or simply enjoy the day, we'd love to see you there. Bring your family, friends, and neighbours - this is a day you won't want to miss!



Spring Festival Forster is a joint initiative by the Forster Tuncurry Business Chamber and Mid Coast Council. Mid Coast Mains and The Open Streets Program is proudly supported by Transport for NSW and NSW State Government.



Above: Wharf Street in Forster. Photo by Mary Yule.

Wedding Open Day at Palmyra House - 8th September

For the first time in nearly 50 years – Palmyra House is opening its gates to the public by hosting the Forster Wedding Collective's Open Day.

Come along to experience 100+ vendors in a mystical spring garden destination to immerse yourself in all things weddings and events for one day only.

When you come through the front gates there is the delightful opportunity to meander through the grounds at your own pace. There

will be food, drink and desserts available to purchase on the day from the best local businesses. We have created 5 destinations to experience and enjoy where you can see, speak, touch and discuss with vendors for all 35 parts of weddings and events spread across 20 acres.

Maybe you're looking for something for your upcoming wedding or maybe you just want to see 100+ local vendors all in one place for a beautiful Sunday outing - we welcome you!

- Bring a picnic rug.
- Purchase a lunch or cocktail on the day.
- Listen to the live acoustic performers under the trees.
- Taste the delicious desserts or food truck offerings.
- Bring your phone to content create too!

Don't miss out on this exciting opportunity to connect with local wedding professionals and get inspired for your special day. We look forward to seeing you there!



Forster Tuncurry Uniting Church Spring Fair

Cnr Bent and South St Tuncurry
Saturday 7th September 2024
9am to 1pm

Cakes, Sweets, Clothing, Plants, Books & White Elephant



FORSTER Weddings COLLECTIVE

OPEN DAY 10am - 4pm on 8th Sept
Palmyra B&B - 1773 The Lakes Way, Rainbow flat

Register for FREE

www.forsterweddings.au

Mixed bag and Feedback

Letters to the Editor

'Letter to the Editor' is the place for our community to share their thoughts and feedback. Maximum 250 words unless prior arrangement. Material that is offensive, defamatory or overtly political will not be published. This newspaper intends to provide an opportunity of reply for any person/organisation involved before publication. The author's name and town are required, unless specifically requested otherwise. Send your letters to info@forsterfortnightly.com.au

Baby dolphin stuck in net

A baby dolphin died on 19 August when it got stuck in the net at Tuncurry pool.

How devastating to hear this news. Can you imagine how distressed the poor baby was, not being able to breathe and the poor mother watching on not being able to do anything.

How would a human being feel if this happened to them?

It not only affects our dolphins but our sea turtles too.

Please get rid of all nets everywhere and save our wonderful marine life.

Carol M - Mid North Coast (verified submission)

The Footy Fan

Here's to the dedicated footy fan, He follows his team wherever he can.

It may be in Queensland where the weather is hot, Or maybe in Melbourne where it certainly is not.

Whether it's raining or whether it's hot, Whether they're winning or whether they're not

He goes with his pals to boo or to cheer, And sits on the hill with his pie and his beer.

And when the games all over he says with a tear, Don't worry mate there's always next year.

By Dot King - Tuncurry.



www.moir.com.au

A single question about sexuality will be included in the 2026 Census after Prime Minister Anthony Albanese reversed the original decision on the matter on 23 August. LGBTQ+ advocacy groups have welcomed the concession, but say the survey must also include trans and gender-diverse Australians. www.sbs.com.au

Book Review

The Ship That Never Was

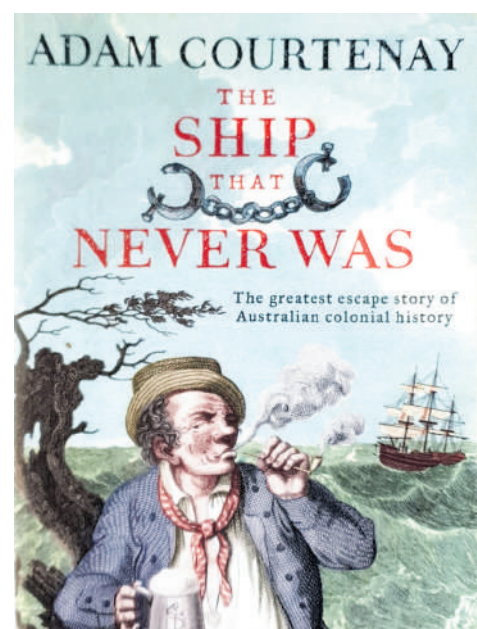
Have you ever been to Strahan and Macquarie Harbour on the west coast of Tasmania? If so, you may have been cooped onto the stage to recreate the ship for one of the longest-running productions in Australia. The Ship That Never Was by Adam Courtenay provides a remarkable story of convict history, villains with honour, and a legal system that showed justice, a sense of propriety, even a sense of humour.

After a brief prologue, the book starts in the slums of London and James Porter's early life of crime from age 10 and in his teens sent to sea by his uncle to control him. He joins a notorious freebooter, Lord Cochrane, a cashiered RN Captain running arms for South American rebels. Back in London, he gets caught stealing a great quantity of silks and furs. His death sentence is commuted to transportation for life - to Van Diemen's Land.

The book provides a shocking account of life in Hobart under Lieutenant Governor Arthur, a tyrant of the most extreme type. Porter starts as a convict first class with privileges but after four years of keeping his privilege, succumbs to his old habits and ultimately to being a convict, seventh class; there is an eight class, a superfluous classification since it means death by hanging. In 1830, he is sent to Macquarie Harbour, the most extreme punishment for unreformable recalcitrants where Governor Arthur's edict meant floggings for even minor infractions, working in leg-irons, gruel for food and as much degradation as possible.

Yet, master shipbuilder, Hoy, starts building ships in 1828 and other useful items such as window frames on a commercial footing. He totally ignored Governor Arthur's edicts. He taught the convicts trades useful in ship-building and turned a blind eye to other products that they produced and traded for such items as tobacco (which Arthur had totally banned). Far from a hell on earth, Hoy transformed the place to such an extent that the men were heard singing as they worked. He was ahead of his time in looking not only to his men now but to their future. They worked as a team.

When Arthur realised what was happening, he decided to end the boat-building penal colony on the island in Macquarie Harbour and transfer the convicts to Port Arthur where everyone could be under his direct control so that his edicts, floggings etc, would continue. James Porter and others decided they were not going to Port Arthur. Taking control of the last vessel built in Macquarie Harbour and



setting ashore Hoy and other free men, they sailed for Peru. They survived, barely, the stormy southern seas - the boat was designed for coastal not high seas work. While some of the crew managed to get back to England, the Peruvian government sent Porter to England. Thence again to Hobart where at least Governor Arthur had gone - as judge, jury, executioner and legislator, his cronyism and self-enrichment had become too much for the free settlers. Porter, etc, were fortunate that the new man was Governor Franklin. They were charged with mutiny and piracy before a court.

Chief Justice Pedder had empathy. Hoy supported his men. In his judgement, Pedder concluded it was neither mutiny nor piracy as the boat wasn't at sea, had never been registered, and the convicts were not seamen. Theft maybe but they hadn't been charged with theft. Courtenay believes that Pedder is the unsung hero of the story - two years later Franklin gave a conditional pardon. Norfolk Island and Sydney were to follow for Porter.

By John King - Librarian

Pacific Palms Community Library
Tuesday to Saturday 10am to noon and Pacific Palms Market Sundays (last Sunday of month) 9am to 1pm.

Government Promises to Offset Huge NT Solar Farm With More Fossil Fuel Projects



POLITICAL SATIRE: The Federal Government will allow the \$30 billion SunCable solar farm in the Northern Territory to proceed, but has reassured voters that 100% of the project will be offset by new gas and coal mine approvals.

The project - backed by tech billionaire Mike Cannon-Brookes - will provide enough renewable energy to power three million homes. But Environment Minister Tanya Plibersek said Australians had no need to worry.

"If you are concerned that we are pivoting to a clean energy future, then let me reassure you that we are still very much committed to propping up the fossil fuel industry," Plibersek said.

"For every project like this, there are a dozen new gas fields and coalmines in the pipeline that we will waive through, to ensure that our fossil fuel emissions do not fall too quickly".

www.theshovel.com.au

Screen Reviews

Movie review by Harriet Kelly.

1. Young Women And The Sea (Disney +)

So exciting to find a 'hidden gem' and this Disney + movie is such a find!

The story follows the intriguing story of young Trudy Ederie who overcame incredible odds to become the first woman to successfully cross the English Channel in 1926. Inflicted with childhood measles and driven by her mothers' desire to ensure her girls could learn to swim - Trudy rises above all level of resistance to eventually complete in the 1924 Paris Olympics (wow, there's a time travel moment) and successfully swim the English Channel.

Some have criticised the films overtly feminist and historical embellished plots, but this really does not take from such a well-constructed film which manages to hold and intrigue throughout.

You won't be disappointed and the best bit is that it is one of those great movies the whole family will enjoy!



2. American Murder: Laci Peterson (Netflix)

A compelling three-part documentary on the 2002 disappearance of Laci Peterson (then 8 months pregnant) and the investigation and conviction of her husband for her murder and that of her unborn child.

The Director, Skye Borgman has done a masterful job by focusing on family relationships and loyalties to maintain 'Laci the person' at its centre. Interviews with Laci's mother depict a woman who has endured so much but manages to give a dignified narrative from beginning to end while maintaining a stoic and balanced view of the world. She is the voice of reason by simply asking 'Why?'

The killer's girlfriend, Amber Frey, is another intriguing and brave woman who is willing to be 'wired' for investigators as she collects vital evidence which would prove invaluable to the killer's conviction.

The audience is left perplexed with how to respond to the killer's family who remain defiant to this day that authorities have convicted an innocent man.

A brilliantly crafted series which sadly has even more relevance today.



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'Out and About'



The first Father's Day 'Car & Bike Show & Shine', hosted by Cars Under the Stars Forster, was held at the Lakeside Tavern on 1 September.

Money raised supported the Forster Christian Life Centre's fundraising efforts for Samaritan's Purse.

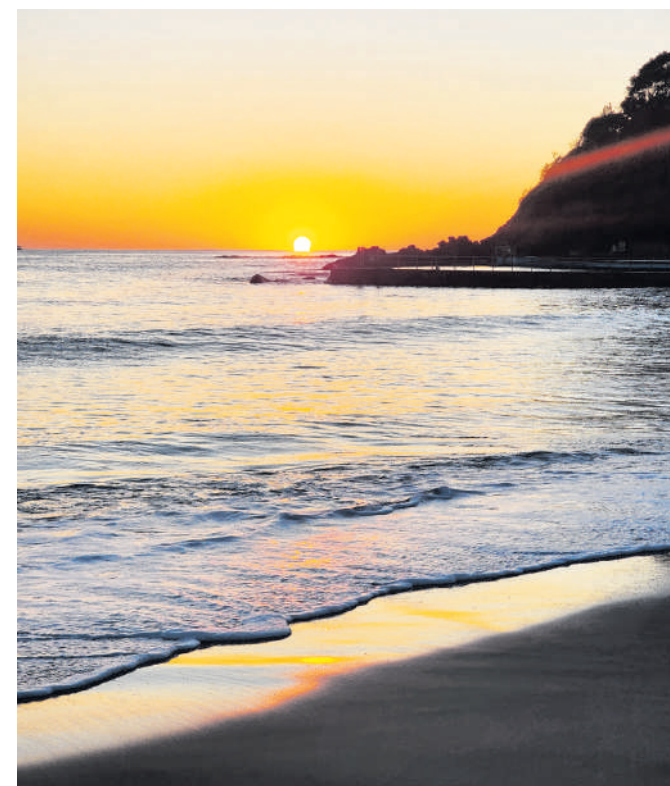
Photos by Geordie Yule.



The Cold Nips Australia Tour reached Forster's Main Beach at 6:15am on Thursday 27 August.

The tour consists of 100 sunrise dips in 100 days to raise money for mental health.

Photos by Patricia Macvean.



Connections - Sophie & Brodie

By Vanda Gooley.

Sophie Curtis (36 yrs) currently works for Woolworths Group in their inclusion team. Brodie (29 yrs) is Account Manager at 'realestate.com.au'. Both are building their lives together in Forster. They share the same values, love adventures and being active, being in the water, at the beach, a morning walk and coffee or going camping and spending quality time together.

Sophie: Previously Sophie worked at Macquarie University before leading the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging team. Now working for the Woolworths Group, she loves being part of a team with a chance to make huge impacts at scale. She loves working for the Woolworths Group. Both Sophie and Brodie expressed how lucky they feel to work remotely full time, allowing them to live in Forster and be closer to Sophie's family.

Sophie and Brodie met over 4 years ago when they were both living in Sydney. Sophie and a few friends joined a new gym and Brodie was the very first person to come up to us and say hello. Sophie remembers Brodie's warmth, "she was so welcoming and kind. There was also something about her I found really intriguing, I absolutely was curious about her from the very first time she spoke to me." Sophie only saw her once more over the coming months and kept wondering where she had gone!! Lucky for Sophie, Brodie reemerged and 3.5 years later here they are.

When reflecting on what they admire about each other, Brodie's ability to stay centred and grounded when life throws its unpredictable nature at her was the standout for Sophie. Also, Brodie's positive and resilient approach to life. "She so calmly and confidently knows how to weather life's storms." Sophie loves how Brodie is so consistently herself. "She is unwavering in her kindness and love for people in her life. She's absolutely stunning and so intelligent, I love how observant she is and how her mind works, we are like ying and yang in a lot of ways but we are also so connected and fit together so well." Sophie calls Brodie the baby and animal whisperer. "Every baby or toddler that meets Brodie falls in love with her."

Since Sophie and Brodie have been together, they have been through quite a lot! Not long into their relationship Sophie had wrist surgery. Post op, Brodie became Sophie's full-time carer and helped her through a very long and challenging 6 months of rehab and recovery. Not long after this Sophie had a major accident at the snow and busted her shoulder, requiring another surgery and more round the clock care! Brodie was there for every step of the rehab. Both Brodie and Sophie have bought or built their first homes each, moved to Forster and started their fur family together! Sophie has had some huge work changes since she met Brodie, and Brodie supported her through one of the most important roles Sophie has ever had, working for Sydney World Pride and delivering the festival of a lifetime! "Brodie is always there for my personal achievements and is the core of the ones we celebrate together."

Sophie said they have many similarities - the same values which serve as a foundation for

both of their lives. They both have close families as well as nurturing and enjoying their friendships. Both love adventures, being active, being in the water, at the beach, a morning walk and coffee or going camping and spending quality time together. They are both very loyal people and are dependable for their friends and family. They both love a beautiful meal out just as much as snuggling up on the couch together with their cat and pup.

They do however have their differences. Sophie is more extroverted and likes to keep to schedule. Sophie is the timekeeper of their relationship which is a stressful job at times as she hates being late and Brodie is never quite ready on time. Sophie is hyper organised and likes routine, whereas Brodie is more comfortable going with the flow. Sophie likes to plan their trips and logistics and know every detail to the minute, and then she puts that in a spreadsheet for Brodie! Sophie feels as though Brodie has all the qualities Sophie sometimes lacks, which is why they work so well together. Sophie said Brodie is calm and reassuring when Sophie feels like things are falling apart, "she's present and detail orientated when I just want something done quickly."

Sophie said Brodie has an innate ability to observe and understand people and group dynamics before diving in. She's respectful and kind and has the ability to connect with anyone. "She knows how to be present with people, and never wavers in her ability to support me or others. She is a natural born problem solver; she can ALWAYS find a solution to something that is hands on. Asked if Brodie has any weaknesses, Sophie said, "Never met someone who can hit the Snooze button as well as her!"



Above: Brodie Mayer and Sophie Curtis call Forster their home.

Both love to travel, to see new places and explore together. They want to build a life together and have a family and take their family travelling on adventures with them. Sophie's aim is to always find work that creates space for them to be their best selves, have time together.

More than anything Sophie values 'Time'; time together and time with their families and friends. Sophie also deeply values the respect they share for one another, the honesty in their relationship and their ability to talk through any situation. It's not always easy, but we always find a way back to our centre together.

Sports and activities keep each of them connected. "Our honesty and communication and our willingness to always tackle problems head on keeps us connected. We share the same vision for our future, and most of all we are very much madly in love with each other!"

Sophie loves our local area, "It's paradise, particularly the water. I love that I can surf at One Mile in the morning, swim at the Tanks

at lunchtime and jump in the lake for an afternoon cool off." She loves that Forster has little hustle and bustle and that her family is here. She loves how Forster makes her feel. "I feel light, warmth and connected to all the parts of myself here. "I am blessed to have been born here on Worimi country and feel a deep appreciation to be back here now sharing this beautiful place with Brodie and my two little nieces."

Brodie: Is an Account Manager at realestate.com.au. Brodie met Sophie around Jan/ Feb 2021 when Soph' joined Brodie's gym in Sydney. She introduced herself at Sophie's first session before the workout started. Brodie's first impressions were that Sophie had such a big, warm smile that was so inviting and infectious.

Brodie said their joint greatest achievement together is becoming self-taught landscapers, smashing their way through the red and white clay for hours and hours on end. "I loved creating something with Soph' and spending the time together. Don't ask us to pick up a mattock (like a pickaxe) ever again though."

Brodie said she and Sophie are very similar yet totally different. They are both very competitive and active. Both care for their families and loved ones. "Naturally, we ended up sharing wardrobes, so we also dress quite similarly!" Soph' loves to cook and Brodie loves to eat what she's cooked. Both have a big dream to do a lap of Australia and explore everywhere they can with their fur babies, Tully and Teddy.

Brodie said Sophie has many strengths. She admires Sophie for her resilience. "When life throws bowling ball sized curve balls at her, it never stops her." Also, Sophie has an incredibly innate ability to care for, support and help others and is so generous with her time. Her presence alone makes people feel safe and warm, always looking out for others before herself. Sophie is understanding, patient, kind and unimaginably thoughtful. On the contrary "she has no ability to close cupboards or doors after opening them." Sophie has a big heart. "The way she loves and cares for others is like I've never seen before. Her love for her family is second to none and she is always thinking of and finding ways to make sure they're safe and happy."

Brodie said Sophie is her safe place and biggest adventure. She is gentle with Brodie's heart and her mind, especially when they are not gentle with themselves. "Our love is like nothing I've experienced before, and I didn't know life could be this good, until I met Soph'."

Laughter keeps them connected today. From the beginning they've always been in sync with each other and always match the other's energy - "We are each other's back up dancers and cheerleaders through life."

Brodie's move to Forster has been very positive. She said "You often hear the best beaches are further south on the east coast. Those who say that have never been to One Mile, Burgess or The Tanks." Their favourite time of the year here is Autumn, where the water is warm and crystal clear, and the dolphins are playing in the waves daily. "It's picturesque every day. I feel so lucky to live here."

Photo supplied.

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Your work in progress

Prison Farm between Tuncurry & Nabiac



Left: The Prison Camp Warden and his wife (on their buggy) where pines trees were cultivated by prison labour, now the site of the Tuncurry Recycling Depot.

Historical Talk Part 3: Prison Camp - Anne Masters & Helen Duggan from the Great Lakes Museum.

Leaving Tuncurry and on our way to Fairford we pass an area that was once a Prison Camp. Between 1913 and 1938, this prison camp, known as Tuncurry Afforestation Camp, operated on the outskirts of Tuncurry in an area which became known as 'The Pines', named after the pine trees cultivated by prison labour there, and now the site of the Tuncurry Recycling Depot. The camp was the first of its kind and led to a number of others being opened in other parts of the country.

Accommodation was, at first, in tents some three and a half miles from Tuncurry. Building of huts was completed by the end of October, 1913. The prisoners were allowed to go surfing or 'sea bathing' as it was called daily after work and also on Saturdays and Sundays.

By early November, 20 prisoners and 4 officers were in residence. The prisoners sent to the camp were carefully selected and only first

offenders were eligible and they had to be fit, both physically and mentally, to take up the work. Each prisoner had his own hut where he took his meals. After the evening meal, he could associate, with other prisoners, under supervision, in the recreation room until 8.45 pm.

In a 1914 report it was stated that the prisoners were so good in their behaviour that no punishment was ever given and apart from a slight touch of sunstroke, no illness had been reported.

By 1919, 120 acres of land had been cleared and planted with young hoop pines. The camp garden had supplied 4,674 pounds in weight of green vegetables and potatoes and the camp's pig industry had 48 pounds worth of pigs on site.

Around 1930 there were 40 prisoners at the camp and the number of warders had increased, perhaps because 3 prisoners had escaped by then. All were re-captured.

During the 25 years the camp was in operation, the prisoners, apart from the plantation, work built a gravel road about 4 miles long through



Above: The Overseer's cottage at 'The Pines' prison site in Tuncurry.

the scrub from near Blackhead, where they made a quarry in the hills, back to the camp. A lookout tower, 75 feet in height, used for the purpose of locating bushfires, was also erected by prison labour.

When hoop pines started to lose popularity, slash pine was tried with better results but finally after several disastrous fires, the plantation closed down on 1st April, 1938. Arrangements were made for the men of the type previously sent to Tuncurry to be



Left: Prison camp cabins.

accommodated at one of 4 other afforestation camps in NSW.

After the camp closed, the land and buildings were put up for lease. Mr. Bert "Pop" Dent and his wife took out a 99 year lease on the property and bought the buildings in 1939, settling on the site and calling it "The Pines". It was then developed into a tourist camp.

The Dents continued at "The Pines" for 11 years after which they sold to Gordon Bowman who moved some of the cabins to his property in North Street, Tuncurry. The cabins were later demolished to make way for a block of units called "Four Winds". 3 other cabins were moved to a property owned by Bill Skelsley, later to become a caravan park called "Pine and Cabin Caravan Park".

(We would like it to be noted that this Reafforestation Camp was not ever a Prisoner of War Camp. It started in 1913 and closed down in 1938. It then became a Tourist Camp operated by Pop Dent and his wife. Also, there was no P.O.W. Camp in Forster.)

Subscribe for FREE at www.forsterfortnightly.com.au to receive local news alerts & community updates.

Reviews from 'Music Inspired by Poetry'

'Music Inspired by Poetry' was performed by Company of Voices on Sunday 18th August 2024 as a fundraiser for the Great Lakes Women's Shelter. Photos by Ian Yule.

'Last Sunday I attended the most beautiful choral concert at Tuncurry WW1 Memorial Hall. It was one of those 'soul uplifting' experiences. The Company of Voices chamber choir led by musical director Leigh Vaughan, entertained a full house of appreciative music lovers for two hours. As an experienced chorister, choral director and singing teacher, this had to be one of the best choral concerts I have ever attended. The joyful expressions on the singers' faces were infectious throughout the audience.

The MC was local councillor Jeremy Miller, who interspersed the singing, with recitations of poems which had inspired the composers of each work.

The repertoire was suitably balanced for all musical palates, with genres ranging from classical and contemporary choral works to gospel, Australian songs and a couple of humorous ditties.

The singers were complemented with well-balanced accompaniments, by a string ensemble comprising local musicians from the Mid North Coast community orchestra Sinfonia, as well as Vincent Jensen the choir's regular piano accompanist.

Tenor soloist Barry Patterson with pianist Steven Gill completely captured the Romantic German Lieder style with extracts from Schuman's Poet's Life

Brad Germon gave a spirited interpretation of Lior's generously donated arrangement of This Old Love.

And just when the audience was almost on a divine music overload, we were treated to Liszt's Piano Sonetto 104, performed by Steven Gill on the digital grand piano, which he so generously donated to the hall a couple of years ago.



The choir was brilliantly trained by Leigh. All the boxes of musical critique were ticked - diction, articulation, tempo, pitch, expression, dynamics, attention paid to the conductor, and very important each chorister's appearance was lovely - they each had their tasteful signature touches of red amongst their formal black attire. It was very difficult to choose my favourite piece because they were all so wonderful.

However, I must say that the heartfelt rendition of Towards Infinity to a poem by Phil Voysey and music by young Australian Paul Jarman, about the lone kayaker who disappeared several years ago off the coast of New Zealand, and their fellow musicians gave a musical gift of love, which was treasured by all who were there.'

Deidre Sutherland - experienced chorister, choral director and singing teacher.

'After more than two decades singing and performing in the Great Lakes and region, Company of Voices has matured into a musical group of quality. Bouquets to director, Leigh Vaughan for her vision and organising behind the scenes in preparation for this concert, and for leading and developing the group of local singers into a choir of such a high standard.'

Additional review by Cellist Cheryl Meyer - participant in the concert.

"It was a privilege to be part of it. Bravo!" Carmel Brown - first violinist and Leader of Sinfonia.

"What a triumph! Absolute homage to you, the choir and musicians. We laughed, we cried, we wallowed delightfully in the material and the performance. Take a bow!"

Julie Brady - immediate past President of the Women's Shelter.

MidCoast Ageing Strategy check-in

Are you an older person living on the MidCoast or a carer? We want your feedback about how you feel about living on the MidCoast as an older person.

This feedback will help us to check in on how we are achieving the outcomes in the MidCoast Ageing Strategy 2022-2026. The MidCoast Ageing Strategy was developed as a comprehensive plan to guide Council, other agencies and the community to support our older residents' needs across five priority areas including health and wellbeing, working and retiring, housing choices, getting around and inclusive communities.

"With one of the oldest populations in Australia, it is really important to make sure our region is great place where we can live and age well", said Alex Mills, MidCoast Council's Manager of Libraries Community and Cultural Services.

The MidCoast Ageing Strategy check-in consultation is open from Monday 2 September to Sunday 20 October.

Complete the online survey to go in the draw for your chance to win one of two \$25 MidCoast Shop vouchers.

Or come and see us at a pop-up to have a chat about your experience and needs on:

Monday 16 September from 10.30am to 12.30pm at Halliday's Point Library

Tuesday 17 September from 10.30am to 12.30pm at Taree Library

Thursday 19 September from 10am to 2pm at the Aged Services Expo at Forster Civic Centre

Monday 23 September from 10.30am to 12.30pm at Old Bar Library

For more information or to complete the survey, head to www.haveyoursay.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/ageing-strategy-check-in.

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Authorised by Dr David Gillespie MP, National Party of Australia, 144 Victoria Street, Taree NSW 2430.

Our Local Wildlife



Superb Fairywren

With Spring upon us, one of the most endearing and beautiful of our small garden birds, the Superb Fairywren (*Malurus cyaneus*) has adorned their stunning courtship colours. The male is the true beauty with breeding plumage of iridescent electric blue interspersed with glossy black on their heads, dark blue and grey tails, grey-brown wings and white chests and bellies and black beaks. By comparison the female is a drab brown-grey but with an orange wash around the eye and beak.

Males are slightly larger than the females at 14cms long compared to 12 to 13cms. Both sexes have pert upright tails of around 5.9cm length. In the non-breeding months, males lose their brilliant colouring and then resemble females.

The breeding season for fairywrens is Spring through to late Summer. Courtship behaviours involve males fluffing up their bright blue feathers, hopping energetically from branch to branch, exaggerated flights, and serenades of melodious singing. The male will also give the female presents of yellow flowers or petals which contrast strikingly with his brilliant blue and black. If successful, the male will form a life-long partnership or pair-bond with his chosen female.

However, all is not as it seems. Although superb Fairy Wrens are socially monogamous, both male and female in the pair-bond are sexually promiscuous. That is, both the male and female of the bonded pair will regularly mate with other neighbouring birds. As such, the chicks of any particular family group may be fathered by males outside of the pair bond and Fairy Wrens are known to have some of the most complex social behaviours of the bird world.

Only the female builds the nest, made of loosely woven grasses and spider webs, domed shaped and with a side entrance. Nests are

built in dense foliage up to a metre from the ground. Three to four white spotted eggs are laid and only the female broods the eggs, whilst her male partner stands guard singing his territorial song nearby. He will also escort her on her foraging 'breaks'.

Fairy wrens are usually seen in small family groups that include the previous young and all family members contribute to feeding and caring for the chicks once the eggs are hatched after 14 days. Fledging happens after 40 days and the chicks are then able to feed themselves but will stay in the family group for a year or sometimes more.

Whilst foraging together all members of the family group stay in contact with repeated sharp short 'tstt' calls. Young females are driven out first by the dominant female but young males may stay longer.

Two to three and sometimes four broods will be raised in any given season. Despite this, only about half of the young survive to breeding age.

There are many threats to Fairy Wrens and sadly their numbers appear to be disappearing from our more urban environments.

As insectivores they are dependent on plentiful insect life which in turn is dependent on multi-story plant layering. Fairy Wrens also need to seek shelter in dense prickly undergrowth to escape predatory birds and animals that are the champion survivors of our towns and cities such as magpies, butcherbirds, kookaburras, currawongs, crows and cats and rats.

Creating habitat for Fairy Wrens in our gardens as well as our other small bird species is very possible and rewarding. It involves having 'messier' native gardens that include multi-storied dense shrubbery and a minimum use of insecticides.

By Kym Kilpatrick - FAWNA Hallidays Point.

Photo by Brian Champion.

Erosion control at Pipers Bay



Above: John Marshall from Dads Army/Navy and Steve Howard from Mid Coast Council planting rushes along the banks at Elizabeth Reserve to help prevent erosion. Photos supplied.

Planting rushes along the banks at Elizabeth Reserve in another way to stave off erosion at Pipers Bay, due to wake from craft and speed boats at this popular part of Forster Keys.

Our Forster Keys Dads Army/Navy are a group of volunteers who meet weekly and maintain 26 hectares of parkland within Forster Keys by

mowing and doing repairs and maintenance. We also patrol the Canal network removing rubbish and flotsam using our vessel. Our group has around 20 members.

By Brian Adair - Forster Keys Progress & Rate Payers Assoc. (FKPARPA)

Give koalas a fair go during breeding season

Over coming months koalas will be more active, with MidCoast residents encouraged to be extra careful on the road.

"Koala breeding season is usually from August to February, but mating started as early as July this year," said MidCoast Council's Acting Manager Natural Systems, Prue Tucker.

"Koalas are more likely to cross roads and other open areas as they search for a mate or new territory.

"Koalas can be found across the MidCoast, so please slow down on tree-lined roads, especially in low-light conditions, including dusk, dawn and at night."

Some known vehicle strike "hot spots" include The Bucketts Way between Taree and Krumbach, Tinonee Road between Tinonee and Wingham, Bootawa Road, Bootawa Dam Road, and Old Bar Road.

Community members are also encouraged to report all koala sightings on the MidCoast Council Website at www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/koalasafespaces. This data is vital for good decision making by government agencies. It helps ecologists know more about koala

locations and movements, and where to prioritise vehicle strike prevention strategies.

If your vehicle hits and injures a koala, or if you see a road-injured koala, please call your local experts, Koalas in Care 0439 406 770 or Wildlife in Need of Care 1300 946 295.

With koalas more often on the ground, dog attacks and livestock trampling also escalate during koala breeding season.

"We can all help by reporting stray dogs and keeping pet dogs secured at night and under effective control," explained Ms Tucker.

"Those with livestock can also consider planting more koala feed trees in paddocks. Trees not only provide shade and wind breaks, but can also serve as refuge sites for koalas."

Photo by Peter Goonan



Rainbow Flat rural recovery after the fires



Left: Smoke filled air at Rainbow Flat during the November fires of 2019.

Right: Fire fighting water support from the air. Photos supplied.

It was a major relief to all of us, including firefighters, when the planes and helicopters finally ceased circling and the sky began to clear. For months these two things, the noise and the haze, had been part of life; not only from the especially destructive Hillville fire which went through Rainbow Flat, but also from the other fires close by such as those at Minimbah, Darawank, Tuncurry and Failford.

Since the fire, many homes have been rebuilt, although some residents have chosen to leave. There are still many vacant blocks, either for sale or awaiting new homes. The bushland is showing strong signs of recovery aided by the cooler wetter conditions since that dreadful summer, with the burn marks on the trunks as a reminder.

It was heartwarming and humbling to see how our local disaster touched so many people; donations of money and goods flooded in from all over Australia and beyond.



Left: Rainbow Flat RFS Station destroyed by fire.

Right: The new Rainbow Flat RFS Station opened in February 2021.

For the Rainbow Flat Rural Fire Brigade the five years since 2019 have seen many changes. We now have a new, much bigger station, opened in February 2021. We have also acquired a new (well,

reconditioned preloved) Category 1 tanker, carrying more than 4000 litres of water and ideally suited for responding to motor vehicle accidents on the highway and The Lakes Way.

Since the big fires, brigade equipment has been updated and improved: a new computerised dispatch system; better smoke masks; additional uniforms; better ways of communicating with each other, with other brigades, with headquarters staff and with residents.



The brigade's membership grew significantly in the months following the fires. Unfortunately, most of these new members have since left and the number of active firefighters is roughly what it was before the fire. This means that new members are more welcome than ever.

The broader Rainbow Flat community has benefited from the donation by Lions Taree of a Community Fire Trailer which is available for residents to borrow. It has a pump, suction hoses for draughting water from a dam, tank or swimming pool, fire hoses and nozzles and a water tank holding 1000 litres. It can be booked for use by phoning Mark on 0414 887 512. Note: the trailer is a community resource, not owned or managed by the fire brigade.

The fire highlighted the lack of a suitable central meeting place in Rainbow Flat and a grant was obtained to build a community hall. Unfortunately a suitable location has not been found for the hall and it is almost certain that building will not go ahead.

For further information, please contact Rainbow Flat Brigade Community Engagement Officer Robyn King (04900 13182). Other useful contacts include Mid Coast Fire Control 1300 Mid Coast (1300 643 262), www.rfs.nsw.gov.au, the Bush Fire Information Line 1800 NSW RFS (1800 679737) and the Hazards Near Me app.



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Tri season has started!

The Forster triathlon season has officially started with a Duathlon (run, ride, run) on Sunday 25th of August at Forster Keys. There is another Duathlon to look forward to on 15 September.

With the Running Festival now behind us, it's a great opportunity to experience some competition or just keep fit and motivated. The club is looking forward to everyone having the opportunity to participate in its monthly events with 1-2 races put on per month which include triathlons, duathlons and aquathons.

The first triathlon is in October when the water has warmed up a bit then the season continues

with a monthly triathlon and aquathon. The season will also include a 'Girls Only' club race in November, a kid's triathlon also in November and towards the end of the season next year, the annual 'Keith' handicap race.

We welcome everyone from 'Come and have a Tri' participants to seasoned competitors. Everyone is welcome to come try a race for a one off \$20 insurance fee or sign up with Triathlon Australia if you plan on doing multiple races!

By Aaron Eichner – Forster Tri Club.
www.facebook.com/forstertriclub



The Club was packed

Everyone knew it would be a great Ladies Open Championship game between bowlers Sarah Boddington and Joan Thomas on 25 August. The Forster Bowling Club green was packed.

After the eighth end, Sarah was leading 10 to 4. However, Joan was playing well, and Sarah was only achieving one point per end. Joan fought back but could only achieve one point per end as well. Sarah went on to win the Forster Ladies Open Championship 25-9.

By Allan Hughes - FBC.



Above: Sarah Boddington wins Forster Ladies Open.

Dolphins fall at the final hurdle



Above: Dolphin's player Callum Crawford-Walker (with the ball) scored two tries in the Grand Final and was annointed as the highest try scorer for the zone. Photo by Katrina Simon.

The fairytale that the Dolphins were writing wasn't to be, after suffering an agonising defeat to the Wallamba Bulls 31 – 17 in the Grand Final. The heavy track only got heavier after rainfall overnight saturated Aub Ferris oval, making the pitch and surrounds a boggy quagmire, nullifying some of the speed and the

scrum of the Dolphins.

The match started at a frenetic pace, with Wallamba drawing the first blood, scoring a converted try. The Dolphins started to find holes in the Bulls defence, with Callum Crawford-Walker crossing twice before Ryan Pike also found the white stripe to make it

17 – 7 heading into the break. The penalty count was already a concern, with the Dolphins suffering a yellow card during the last 5 minutes of the half due to repeated infringements.

The second half started much like the first. Forster gave away piggyback penalties to allow Wallamba to march up the field with ease, seizing the opportunity to score an early try, the start of their fightback with all the energy coming from the Bulls. A red card for high contact reduced the Dolphins to 14 for the remaining twenty minutes and seemingly zapping the energy of the Dolphins. The Bulls came again and again, eventually scoring before adding a penalty to go ahead by 7. The Dolphins finally gained some momentum but the great defence of Wallamba repelled phase after phase, shutting down any half breaks with fantastic cover defence.

On the stroke of full time, Chris Tout, the worthy player of the match, scored the final nail in the coffin, taking the score out to 31-17 as the final whistle was blown. In what was a bitter-sweet moment, first timer, Callum Crawford-Walker was annointed as the highest try scorer for the zone. Hopefully next season, the Dolphins can build stock with new players needed if they are to take that final step and get their hands on the trophy.

By Chris Simon.

Over 65 Singles Championship

It was going to be a great battle between Steve Pell and Dave Ireland for the over 65 Singles Age Championship at the Forster Bowling Club (FBC) on 25 August.

At the seventh end, Steve was in front 8 - 3 but by the twelfth end, it was Steve 10 and Dave 9. This continued right up to the twenty sixth end when it was equal at 22 each. Steve eventually won 25 – 13. What a Game!

By Allan Hughes - FBC



Above: Steve Pell won the Over 65 Singles Championship.

The Tuncurry Olympic Games



Sunrise Supported Living had their own Olympics over a 2-week period in August with the residents and staff all taking part and competing against each other. The opening Ceremony was awesome, with a chance to meet all the different staff and residents' teams. Discus was the first event and it proved to be harder than you think. Up next was Shot putt. Equestrian proved to be a favourite for the staff. Other events included was volleyball, basketball, archery, target shooting and Synchronized Swimming.

The event that the residents have requested to do again is badminton. The cheerleaders did an awesome job cheering on all teams. They deserved extra points for the lengths that they were willing to go.

Winners of the competition was announced that the closing ceremony with Stage 3 taking out the win, closely followed by Stage 1 and The A team (Operations Admin), Running the numbers (Finance), Red Devils (Home Care) and Ram rods (Maintenance), with Stage 2 taking out the wooden spoon.

Although it was 2 weeks of high-pressure showing off all our athletic skills, we have all



taken a well-deserved rest. Ready to start training for the next big event at Sunrise because we have learnt that we will need a lot more training over the next 4 years to be bigger and stronger for the next time.

The Sunrise Horses are currently getting some rest and training hard, ready for their next big event. The Melbourne Cup



The Forster Race Week is a mini-series within the Australian Ocean Racing Series (AORS). The AORS is a national ocean racing series attracting competitors across a number of ocean racing disciplines including ocean skis, surf skis, stand up paddleboards, prone paddleboards and outrigger canoes.

Surf Rescue of the Year Award

At the 2023-2024 Surf Life Saving (SLS) NSW Awards of Excellence (AoE) Presentation evening at Sofitel Sydney Wentworth on Saturday 24 August 2024, the most outstanding performances by SLS NSW members were recognised.

There were 21 awards on offer at this year's celebrations with finalists from across the state recognised for their commitment, passion, and hard work in categories including beach patrolling, administration, education, surf sports and emergency callouts.

One category was the SLS NSW Rescue of the Year Award.

The successful nomination for this AoE award by the Lower North Coast SLS Branch resulted from a rescue at Forster on Wednesday, 13 March, when a group of friends were jumping off rocks at the southern headland of One Mile Beach at around 6pm. A 17-year-old boy became unable to get back out of the water and emergency services were called.

Following a 7.15pm emergency callout, Nathan De Rooy and Reece Dodds launched an inflatable rescue boat (IRB) from Cape Hawke SLS. Operating in low light, the crew got to the boy just after 7.30pm, where Reece Dodds left the IRB, took two rescue tubes and swam to the boy.

Due to the worsening surf conditions and increasing darkness, it was not possible to return to the IRB. The two clambered onto a rocky outcrop and a rescue helicopter was then tasked with assisting. This was not effectively completed until 9pm.

Reporting on this Rescue of the Year Award, the outgoing Lower North Coast (LNC) SLS Branch President, Ross Blowers, announced to branch members, "With great pride, I wish to inform you that Reece Dodds and Nathan de Rooy, representing the Lower North Coast Duty Officers/Cape Hawke Surf Life Saving Club Emergency Callout Team were acknowledged for their courage and commitment to preserving life, following a remarkable rescue of a young man washed into dangerous waters south of Cape Hawke.

"Their combined actions ensured a young man went home to his family safe and unhurt. We, as a branch, commend their actions and their commitment to preserving life. Both men are a testament to the extraordinary actions of surf lifesavers within our branch, and throughout Australia."

A presentation to both Reece and Nathan will take place at the AFAC (National Council for Fire & Emergency Services) Conference being held in Sydney from 3-6 September 2024.



Cape Hawke Surf Live Saviing Club Emergency Callout Team members, Reece Dodds (above) and Nathan de Rooy (below), have been awarded the SLS NSW Rescue of the Year Award. Photos supplied.



As winners of the SLS NSW award, the rescue by Reece and Nathan will now be an entry in Surf Life Saving Australia's 2024 night of nights, the National Awards of Excellence, on Saturday 9 November, 2024. The ceremony will be held at Doltone House Hyde Park, Sydney.

By Annie Evans.

Bluewater Fishing Club

With the Club Forster Bluewater Fishing Club's normally scheduled Saturday fishing outing rained out, the decision was made to reschedule to the following Thursday. 6 boats and 9 fishermen signed in to wet their lines.

The results were a bit patchy, but Joe Bujalski won the day with 15 fish and the best teraglin weighing in at 1.16 kilos. Martyn Barry wasn't far behind and claimed best snapper for the day at 4.5 kilos. Martyn and Joe also shared the

prize for best other species, with each angler weighing in a leatherjacket at exactly 1.22 kilos. Tuan Dao got runner up snapper with a very solid 3.04 kilo fish, and the best flathead of the day went to President Alan Bowden with a healthy offshore lizard of 1.12 kilos.

Weather and conditions offshore were excellent making for a comfortable and enjoyable day for all.



Above: Joe Bujalski won the day with 15 fish.

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Help get Cliff from Tuncurry to World Para Surf Champs in California

"My very determined husband, Cliff Gralton, has just taken out the Title in the Prone 2 Class of the Australian Para Surfing Titles at North Haven (8 August), earning him a spot on the Australian Irukandjis Para Surfing Team at the World Championships in California in November 2024!" – states Jess Gralton on Cliff's Go Fund Me page. www.gofund.me/4c53f65c

"How amazing it is for our kids to see their Dad overcome many obstacles to become an Australian Champion! We'd love to give Cliff the chance to "have a crack" at a World Title too."

Cliff Gralton said, "I've fallen in love with surfing again. The last couple of years have been amazing. I'm 42 now and it is never too late to start!"

Cliff has lived in Tuncurry for nearly 40 years, growing up around the family's oyster farms and leaning to surf when he was just 8 years old. He didn't want to work on the oyster farm so he became a local marine mechanic until a motorbike accident in 2006 changed everything for him and his family.

"We've battled through every obstacle on our own since Cliff woke up in hospital in 2006 with a broken neck, and it's been bloody hard. Every day is exhausting and frustrating and excruciating, but we have pushed through," stated Jess.

After the accident, Cliff put his efforts into his photography career and didn't think it was possible to surf again. Through his photography he met Seth Hamon from Fresh TRACS (Therapy Recreation Activities Community Support). In February 2023, Cliff heard of a para surfing competition in Bonny Hills and after procrastinating for several months he reached out to Seth to have a go.

Cliff said, "Seth and the team suggested a bit of training would help and I quickly realised this was a great idea as it was terrifying at first and I felt really helpless. I could basically drown in ankle deep water without support as I'm very weak and tight below the neck (Cliff broke his neck and squashed his spinal cord in the



Above: The Team (L - R) Brett Burcher, Cliff Gralton and Nick Coghlan, after Cliff won the Title (Prone 2 Class) of the Australian Para Surfing Titles at North Haven.

motorbike accident). I need physio once a week to keep me moving and every 3 months I go to Queensland for 2 weeks of intensive physio."

Cliff's team is made up of Seth, Nick Coghlan (pusher) and Brett Burcher (catcher).

Cliff explained, "In a Prone Assist division you have a pusher and a catcher. The pusher pushes you onto a wave and a catcher is there if you fall off or when the wave is finished. It's hard work and they're fit boys. We practise mostly on the beaches at Pacific Palms and Forster. My adaptive surfboard has handles at the front and side so I can jam myself on top."

"It is funny to see people's faces when we come out of the water. It always looks like my team have rescued me from drowning."

"We have done well in the last couple of comps so we're hoping to do well at Worlds in California. Para surfing is a relatively new sport and has only been around for 5 to 6 years."

Cliff said unfortunately the trip to California is very expensive as he needs his team of two support workers to provide 24/7 care as well as support during the competition.

"If any local businesses would like to support us – that would be great. There is plenty of room on my surfboard for stickers if you want to sponsor us."

By Mary Yule.

Message from JR Richards & Sons on Cliff's Go Fund Me page:

"We're Proud to Support Cliff Gralton's Journey to the World Para Surfing Championships! We are thrilled to announce our support for Cliff, an inspiring adaptive surfer and determined athlete, as he prepares to compete in the World Para Surfing Championships in California this November. Cliff's incredible story of resilience and passion for surfing is nothing short of extraordinary."

"To help Cliff reach his goal, we have pledged \$5,000 towards his travel and support costs. Let's come together to back Cliff as he aims for the top and showcases the power of determination and the spirit of adaptive sports!"

Below: The Gralton family (L - R) Blake, Cliff, Jess and Alex Gralton. Photos supplied.




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