

Third Year Anniversary
for Tuncurry
Community Brunch! p6

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Forster Fortnightly

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Thursday 31 October 2024

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Circulation 7,000 No.108



'State of the art facility!'

Above: Dr David Gillespie MP and Bruce Parsons, Chairperson of GLAICA, raised the flag at the official opening of the Pacific Cape Aged Care Facility (second stage) on Kularoo Drive Forster.



Stage two of the Pacific Cape Age Care development officially opened on 26 October, 2024. Dr David Gillespie described the new facility as "State of the art."

Bruce Parsons said it took two and a half years to build, a year longer than expected.

"A few days after we signed the building contract, NSW went into Covid lockdown. We also had a shortage of materials, added costs and wet weather. This is what really happened. Everything was turned upside down with the virus."

"The completion of this stage is a good outcome for us and the town. It basically belongs to the people of Forster-Tuncurry."

Bruce said there are 88 new self-contained suites, all designed for everyone to have an aspect. There is plenty to do and people can go to the many community areas for activities and entertainment.

GLAICA Ltd (Great Lakes Aged & Invalid Care Association) is a not-for-profit organisation that provides care and accommodation for the aged at four locations in Forster Tuncurry including Glaica House, Glaica Gardens, Lions Village and Pacific Cape.

By Mary Yule. Photos by Matilda and Ian Yule.



1000 trees poisoned will not stop young passionate group

My name is Shiloh Herzberg Nicholls, and I am fourteen years old. When I was eleven, three friends and I, all of similar age, started the ForestHeart Coastcare group, the first

children-run Coastcare group in New South Wales. With the support of our parents and my nanna, Helen Hannah, we decided to put our collective passion and care for the environment

into a serious project. We decided to plant trees.

On the first of August, 2021, we hosted a community event in Redhead, Hallidays Point and planted over two hundred trees. At the outset of the event, we made sure to go around to the doors of each of the houses in the street beside our site and ensure that everyone was comfortable with our plans. Since then, we've gone back every month for the past three years to care for the trees and plant new ones. All

in all, we've planted around fifteen hundred! Our group grew from three families to five, then seven. Our trees grew alongside us as we turned twelve, then thirteen, and fourteen this year, starting high school. All the while learning about tree care, ecosystems, littoral rainforest, and the different tree species we were planting. We dreamed of coming back to our site in ten years, in twenty years - impossible time frames for us - and marvelling at the grown-up trees,

Continued on page 10.



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Photo by Patricia Macvean.

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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.

MidCoast Council - Mayoral column

As a re-elected Mayor I am looking forward to working collaboratively with the newly elected Councillors and the returning Councillors.

Some of the new Councillors have a wealth of government and corporate experience, and they all bring different skills to the table and with fresh faces come new perspectives. This is a good thing.

Some of our up-coming priorities to focus on include reviewing our budget. We need to free up some funds to divert directly into our road networks and conduct reviews of all our services to identify where we can make beneficial savings.

Advocacy will be an important part of the process, keeping Ministers regularly updated on the issues we face with our roads and our limited financial capacity. I will also continue to advocate for the community on improved health care and we will continue our commitment to actively engage with our Aboriginal community.

Something I noticed during the election campaign process was the majority of residents don't understand the complexities of Council and how it operates.

The MidCoast is a large area that includes 195 towns and villages, stretching over 10,000 square kilometres. To give you an idea of size, that's roughly the size of the entire country of Jamaica! Despite its large area, the population here is relatively small compared to other councils in New South Wales.

MidCoast Council manages around \$5 billion worth of assets. This includes 3,600 kilometres of roads (about the distance from Sydney to Brisbane), as well as 669 bridges, 76 playgrounds, and 26 sports complexes, 11 Libraries, 34 cemeteries and 9 in-ground pools. This is challenging, and we often rely on funding from State and Federal programs

to help us – when this is available.

There's a common misconception that when money is spent on a specific project, it could be better used for something else, like road repairs. However, most of the time, that money comes from specific purpose grants. We can't just move this money around.

We need your help to keep on top of some issues. Use our "Report and Request" section on our website to report issues like vandalism, road problems, or stray animals. You'll get a request number to follow up on your report and see updates. Sometimes, our response will be we can't schedule that work this year. Staff are continually seeking to improve how this system works.

There are also often opportunities for our community to share their thoughts on various projects and policies, so I encourage people to keep their eye out for those opportunities.

Our website is a great source of information as is the weekly News Wrap email that you can sign up for to get a weekly email newsletter.

I also encourage anyone interested in learning more about Council's decision-making process to watch one of our Council meetings from the comfort of your own home. Every meeting is livestreamed from our website. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 30 October at 2pm.

Mayor Claire Pontin.



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Past students of GLEF excel

Two past recipients of the Great Lakes Education Fund (GLEF), Gemma Pol and Brooke McCarthy, were nominated for the Country Education Fund of Australia (CEF) Alumni Awards for 2024. The awards night was part of the National CEF Conference in Canberra where Gemma Pol was announced as winner of the Young Achiever Award!



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"We are extremely fortunate that two past GLEF students have been nominated for the Country Education Fund Awards in 2024. Gemma was the winner in her category and we at GLEF are extremely proud of her," said Margaret Price.

Six awards were given on the night with forty four nominations from around the Australian network of CEF recipients. These awards included Alumnus of the Year, Community Alumni Champion, Young Achiever, Launching Star and Rising Star.

Both Gemma and Brooke received support from local organisation GLEF when they completed year 12. Every year this not-for-profit GLEF organisation offers financial support to local students who are pursuing education

or training at university, TAFE or a private provider, after their high school years. Student recipients gain financial support for their travel, accommodation and stationery as well as becoming a part of the GLEF family. GLEF is one of 45 branches with CEF which was founded in Booroowa NSW 30 years ago.

Gemma Pol

Gemma Pol graduated from Great Lakes Senior Campus in 2016 and was granted a recipient GLEF award in 2017. After completing a Bachelor of Public Relations and Communications/Bachelor of Business (International Business), she was recently appointed as CEO of Common Ground. She leads a team of eight First Nations people to build and support a network of Indigenous storytellers from across Australia.

Gemma's goals are to change systems through storytelling, amplify First Nations voices, and create valuable resources for schools.

Gemma was the keynote speaker at this year's Naidoc Assembly held at Great Lakes College on 2 July.

Brooke McCarthy

Brooke McCarthy graduated from Great Lakes Senior College in 2019 and was a GLEF recipient from 2020-2024. She undertook a Bachelor of Social Work at the University of Newcastle and then pursued a Bachelor of Business (Sports Management) online through Torrens University of Australia.

Brooke's goal is to merge social work with sports management and has demonstrated this commitment through significant interactions with NRLW teams, particularly focusing on the critical issue of post-career strategies for athletes, especially those who face premature retirement due to



Above: Brooke McCarthy.

injury. She has also engaged with elite athletes in other sports such as rowing.

Brooke has just finished her last Social Work placement in Canberra (for her Degree in Social Work) and started work on Monday (21 October) in Canberra in the public service. She is hoping to get work in the field of wellness with elite athletes as a Wellbeing and Education Coordinator for an NRL team.

Amber Turnbull

Whilst in Canberra for the conference, GLEF committee members, Steve Nicholas, Mary Browne and Helen Bryan also caught up with Amber Turnbull, GLEF recipient 2021-2023.

Amber is now working for KMPG (an international accounting business) in their ITECH team after doing a Bachelor of Applied Science in Forensic Studies at University of Canberra. Amber did her HSC at Great Lakes Senior College in 2020.

By Mary Yule with information provided by GLEF.

www.cef.org.au/foundations/great-lakes

Below: (L to R) Mary Brown (GLEF), Amber Turnbull (past student) and Helen Bryan (GLEF) at the CEF Alumni Awards night in Canberra. Photos supplied.



Scientists hope to learn from discovery of koala hot spot

Ecologists on the NSW mid-north coast were surprised and delighted to find that the land around the local water supply dam is home to over 60 wild koalas, with several joeys also spotted.

With the iconic koala declared an endangered species along much of the east coast of Australia, MidCoast Council ecologists have been mapping koala populations in the wild as part of the NSW Government funded Koala Safe Spaces program.

Thermal drone surveys revealed more than 60 koalas using the Bootawa Dam site. That equates to about one koala for every 2.5-hectares of land. While koala density in the wild varies, the koala population on the dam compound is about seven times higher than the average density found within the MidCoast and looks to be acting as a koala safe space.

"We are investigating the area to better understand why the dam holds such a large koala population and how this knowledge could be applied," said MidCoast Council Manager of Natural Systems, Gerard Tuckerman.



Above: Mum and joey by Erin Masters.

Continued on page 10

Speechie library talks



Develop your child's language and literacy at home

The presentations are a part of a national campaign by Speech Pathology Australia.

The Speechie Library Talks will be open to parents and caregivers of children aged between 0-5 years of age to help develop their language and literacy skills.

Head into one of our region's libraries throughout November and meet one of our local speech pathologists, listen to a reading of one of Speech Pathology Australia's Book of the Year 2024 winning books and find out how you can support your child's language and literacy development at home.

The talks will take place at:

- Forster Library - 26 November 10.30am
- Hallidays Point - 28 November 10.30am

For the full list of free talks and to book, please visit: www.midcoastlibraries.com.au/events.

The region's local speech pathologists will hold informative talks at MidCoast Council Libraries throughout November.

Mobile phone ban improves learning, concentration & socialisation

The State Government's decision to ban mobile phones in all NSW public schools [at the beginning of term 4 in 2023] has improved student learning, concentration, and encouraged young people to socialise more, according to a new survey by the NSW Department of Education.

One year on from the change, a survey of almost 1,000 public school principals found almost universal support for the ban, at 95%, and most say removing the unnecessary distraction has improved students' focus and reduced social isolation.

Principal of Riverstone High School Rosemary Daubney said:

"We see greater engagement in the classrooms and more positive social interactions. Students can concentrate and focus."

"In breaks, I used to see students sitting alone, looking at their screens. Now, they are playing games, touch football and basketball. They are



laughing and running around, having a good time and talking to each other."

"The statewide policy helped us win backing from parents."

www.nsw.gov.au Published 21.10.24

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Forster Fortnightly publishing dates

• Edition 109 - Thursday 14 November (deadline Thursday 7 November)

• Edition 110 - Thursday 28 November (deadline Thursday 21 November)

• Edition 111 - Thursday 12 December (deadline Thursday 5 December)

Our office will close end of Friday 12 December and reopen on Friday 27 December.

• Edition 112 - Thursday 9 January 2025 (deadline Thursday 2nd January 2025)



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106th Remembrance Day Service - 11 November 2024



Lone Pine Memorial - Tuncurry

The Forster Tuncurry RSL sub-Branch will be conducting the 107th Remembrance Day Service at the Lone Pine Memorial Park, Tuncurry commencing at 10.15 am on Monday 11th November 2024.

Members of the Public are invited to attend and if you wish to lay a tribute could you please advise the sub-Branch Secretary Janice M. Peasnell on 65916519 or email: forster-tuncurrysb@rslsw.org.au

"These plans could change at short notice due to weather conditions"

Dr David Gillespie MP to retire

On the 19 October, Federal Member for Lyne Dr David Gillespie stated: "With an election due in 7 months, I announce that I will be retiring from Parliament at the next election."

"It's been an honour and privilege to serve and represent you as the Federal Member for Lyne in the Commonwealth Parliament of Australia since 2013."

"Since that time, we have achieved a lot together. I'm particularly proud of the nine years during The Nationals term in government in which our electorate was able to secure record funding for so many projects throughout our region. It has been a lot of hard work, but also an absolute pleasure working with so many of you involved in various organisations across the community who have helped me deliver these projects."

"In Parliament, I have used this national forum as an opportunity to advocate on behalf of our community and our local industries and work with my parliamentary colleagues on all sides to improve the lives of Australians and help deliver a better country now and in the future."

Tanya Thompson, State Member for Myall Lakes, stated: "I've had the pleasure of working with David on several initiatives and projects that have made a difference in our electorates."

The Nationals have begun the preselection process for Lyne. A pre-selection meeting will be held on Saturday 7th December to determine the next candidate who will contest the electorate of Lyne for The Nationals.

Some of the major local achievements across the electorate include:

- Taree Universities Campus – Over \$10 million in capital and operational funding
- Pacific Highway Upgrade – 80% of funding for Duplication of \$820-million Oxley Highway to



Above: David and Charlotte Gillespie.

Kempsey and \$1.75-billion - M1 to Raymond Terrace projects

- Forster Civic Precinct - \$6 million jointly funded
- New Regional Radiotherapy unit and Manning-Great Lakes Cancer Centre - \$5 million
- Taree Airport Upgrade - \$2 million

Funding secured for Council projects

- \$222-million - 2013-2025 Financial Assistance Grants - MidCoast
- \$34.11 million - 2014-2025 Roads to Recovery funding- MidCoast
- \$20.26 million - Local Roads and Infrastructure Package - MidCoast
- \$23.87 million - Road Safety Program - MidCoast Council

Rescue Helicopter Charity Bowls Day



Members of GLWRHSG: Back row (L to R) David Stoker, Lorraine Stein, Mary Harder, Mike Walker & Janette Thomson. Front row (L to R) Ted Bickford, Harold Astle & Ruth Stoker.

Last year the Great Lakes Westpac Rescue Helicopter Support Group (GLWRHSG) raised over \$11,000 on their annual Charity Bowls Day. This year they hoped to beat that amount at their Bowls Day held at Sporties on 27 October.

Harold Astle, President of GLWRHSG, said, "This rescue helicopter service covers all of the Mid North Coast (MNC) up to Coffs and down to Newcastle. It is expensive to run with the cost of the medical crew, fuel and maintenance. This Charity Bowls Day is one of our biggest fundraisers of the year to support it."

"We are very appreciative of our sponsor Sporties Bowling Club and the Sporties Men's Bowling Club who organise this day every year for us."

On the day around 100 people played games of bowls in mixed teams with fun music in the background. There is at least one Men's Bowling Club member in each team with their

distinctive red tops. After a nice lunch, with speeches and music by Matt Zarb, the day ends with the notoriously entertaining auction run by Richard McGovern, MNC Westpac Rescue Helicopter Coordinator.

Harold said, "All the prizes were generously donated by business houses in Forster and Tuncurry, and were worth around \$11,000 in total."

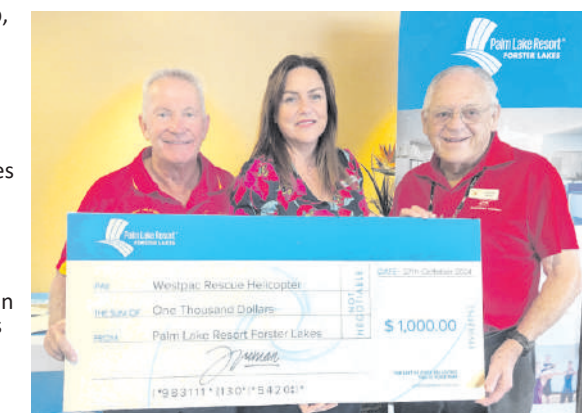
It's a big fun day for the volunteer group and Harold concluded with, "While we (GLWRHSG) are only small in numbers, we are very enthusiastic. It's wonderful."

Story and photos by Mary Yule.

If you are interested in joining these fabulous volunteers, please see Weekly Diary entry under Wednesday on p18.



Above: Photo of bowlers by Judi Wilkinson.



Above: \$1,000 was given on the day by Palms Lake Resort. (L to R) President Col Campbell - Sporties Men's Bowling Club, Jo Jessop - Palms Lake Resort and President Harold Astle - GLWRHSG.

Australia facing one of the hottest summers on record



Australia is facing one of the hottest summers on record according to the Bureau of Meteorology's (BOM) weather modelling, which tips well-above-average temperatures across the country.

The forecast for a scorching summer is largely due to ongoing high ocean temperatures surrounding Australia, a persistent feature that has plagued most of the globe since early last year.

The warm seas will not only raise air temperatures but also boost atmospheric moisture levels, swinging the odds to favour frequent storm outbreaks and above-average rain.

Our simmering oceans could also lead to the most active cyclone season in years, with the BOM expecting around 11 named storms in the Australian region, including an increased risk of severe (category three or above) systems.

By ABC meteorologist Tom Saunders. 12.10.24 www.abc.net.au

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Celebrating 3 years for Tuncurry Community Pantry



Volunteers, participants and sponsors celebrating three years for the Community Brunch. Coordinator Tamara Clarke is wearing black (at the front).

Volunteers, local sponsors and the community celebrated the third year anniversary of the Tuncurry Church of Christ 'Community Pantry' on Monday 21 October with a fully cooked brunch, coffee and two birthday cakes under several large marquees.

Coordinator Tamara Clarke said, "Life is worth celebrating with a bit of cake and a good chat."

Bret Clarke added that the morning's event was to, "celebrate people and how great this community is and being a part of life. It's just a good time for everyone this morning."

The Community Pantry operates from 9:15am every Monday morning during school terms and provides brunch, pantry items and a social place to visit at 14 Douglas Avenue, Tuncurry. All are welcome and around 80 to 100 people come along every Monday.

Tamara said the Community Pantry has kept going for 3 years by the kindness and



encourage people to bring their neighbour or mate to come and have a chat over a coffee," said Tamara.

Debbie Nicholas has been volunteering at the Community Brunch for just over a year and said she does it because, "It's a fun environment and I feel it is important to contribute to the community. It can be such a difficult time with the cost of living. The coordinators are so welcoming and thankful, and I'm learning a lot from them."

Marianne Crowther (Tamara's mum) has been a part of the Community Brunch since the beginning.

"I'm completely awed by the provision of goods to the community. I often think

generosity of local people, organisations and many people from the church.

"It does make a big difference to have that support. We've invited everyone to come today so they can celebrate with us."

Both Tamara and Bret explained it's a community space and not just emergency relief.

"People have a conversation here because community is here. People can connect with their people and meet each other on our mixed tables. The Community Brunch gets people out of isolation and out of the house. We

how does this work. It's a miracle really. One minute a box of nappies is donated, then half an hour later a young mum is here needing them. This happens all the time."

"There is even a community of volunteers here. The coordinators show good leadership and are always trying to improve things. They are constantly growing the skills and capacity of the volunteers so they can give back to the community well. I really love it here. Everyone who comes benefits, whether they are a participant or volunteer. It's about social contact – not just pantry products."



Volunteers (L to R) Josh Quiring, Aaron Wernicke, Priscilla Ravesteyn & Marianne Crowther.

"It's also positive for the environment. We often get donated goods that are 'just in date' to share rather than wasted."

Story and photos by Mary Yule.



Supporters: Julie Andrews from RK2 and Lisa Hinton from FNC.

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50 years of Probus in Australia & NZ



The Forster Shores Combined Probus Club recently celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the establishment of Probus in Australia and New Zealand.

Left: Photo of the lunch at Kennys in Club Forster by Garth Tilley.

The milestone luncheon was held in Kenny's Restaurant at Club Forster with many foundation members of the establishment of our local club being in attendance.

A few days later, members and their guests joined for our monthly meeting. In addition to our usual format and a quality speaker, two of our long term members, Joan May and Betty Cleaves were interviewed by Robert Henley our Club President on the changes in Probus over many years along with changes in society in that time. Of particular interest

were Betty's thoughts on the differences in Tennis formats from the old time amateur players to the modern professional game. Very similar were Joan's insight into cricket from exclusively test matches to The Big Bash format. Joan's favourite form of the game remains "Backyard cricket"

President Robert congratulated both ladies and applauded them as senior role models.

By Gail Henley - Forster Shores Combined Probus.

His Majesty King Charles III fuels global interest in CSIRO's bushfire research

His Majesty King Charles III visited CSIRO's National Bushfire Behaviour Research Laboratory in Canberra on 21 October, "fuelled" by his passion for the environment and interest in climate change impacts.

As the increasing impact of wildfires are being felt around the globe, The King gained insight into how Australian scientists work collaboratively to understand and predict bushfire behaviour, as well as help protect communities and fire crews during outbreaks.

During his visit to the CSIRO bushfire lab, The King witnessed two bushfire demonstrations.

The first involved The King igniting an experimental fire in the 'Pyrotron' - a 29-metre-long combustion wind tunnel that enables the study of fires in a safe and controlled environment.

The King then met with CSIRO researchers, ACT Rural Fire Service Chief, Rohan Scott, and members of the Tidbinbilla volunteer brigade, to witness a 'burnover' drill using an ACT Rural Fire Service heavy tanker.

CSIRO Senior Research Scientist, Dr Matt Plucinski, who conducted the Pyrotron demonstration, said the apparatus was used to better understand bushfire behaviour and the factors that influence bushfires, such as wind and fuel types. It is also used to improve understanding of suppression effectiveness and bushfire emissions.

"Understanding changing weather patterns due to climate change and the likelihood and behaviour of bushfire outbreaks helps to increase resilience in Australia and overseas, especially in regions that previously haven't been that prone to bushfires," Dr Plucinski said.

CSIRO helped develop the world-leading burnover protection systems for crew-cabins in fire trucks with fire agencies including the Victorian Country Fire Authority (CFA) and the New South Wales Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS).

In the 'burnover' drill, The King was shown how these systems feature spray nozzles over the cabin, heat shields for windows and fire-resistant covers for electrical components, pumps and air hoses.

The effectiveness of these crew protection systems was first put to the test in a major way during the 2009 Black Saturday fires in Victoria. Eight fire trucks were impacted by fire and all their crews emerged safely with no loss of life.

These protection systems continued to provide crews with increased safety in subsequent fires including the more recent Black Summer 2019-2020 bushfires.

CSIRO Bushfire Adaptation Research Leader, Justin Leonard, said the burnover protection system has now been rolled out in nearly every state and territory in Australia and his team is now



Above: His Majesty King Charles III visited CSIRO's National Bushfire Behaviour Research Laboratory in Canberra.

sharing their knowledge with fire agencies in France and America. www.csiro.au

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Tanya's Community Update



Tanya Thompson's Christmas Card Competition!

I'm excited to invite primary school students in the Myall Lakes electorate to enter my 2024 Christmas Card Design Competition!

This year's theme is "Merry Myall Lakes," celebrating how each of us enjoys Christmas in our region. Whether it's a beach breakfast, a game of backyard cricket, or a family tradition, I'm excited to see how students capture these festive moments.

DETAILS OF COMPETITION

Eligibility: Primary school students in Myall Lakes.

Prizes: The winning design will appear on my Christmas card, plus a framed copy, a certificate, and a \$200 VISA gift card. Second and third places win \$100 and \$50 gift cards, respectively.

How to Enter: Pick up entry forms from my Tuncurry office or download them at: www.tanyathompson.com.au/christmas-card-competition/

Submit entries by 5 PM, November 15, 2024, in person or by post. Judging will focus on creativity, theme relevance, and artistic quality. Winners will be announced December 2, 2024.

I look forward to seeing the talent from our local schools.

For more information visit: www.tanyathompson.com.au/christmas-card-competition/ or scan the QR code below.

Tanya Thompson MP

If you have any questions or concerns, please get in touch: 6555 4099 myalllakes@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Manning - Great Lakes Police District Update

Dear Readers, In this article I will draw your attention to some great community activities by local police and a few of the many examples of the tremendous results arising from police endeavors to prevent, disrupt and respond to crime.

• Pedalling for a purpose and a wheely good cause! Between 12pm Sunday 20/10 and 12pm Monday 21/10, teams across the state - including 21 officers at Manning Great Lakes Police District - participated in the 3rd annual 'Legs for Police Legacy', a 24-hour spin bike challenge raising money for NSW Police Legacy. NSW Police Legacy provides care and ongoing support to the families of police officers who have suffered a loss. A big thank you to Forster's Constable Kylie Horner for all her hard work in getting the local challenge up and running, and to local businesses - Black Head Tavern, Bakers Delight, Raw Sugar Coffee Shop, No Bull Gourmet Meats and Great Lakes Packaging and Party Supplies - for their donations and support.

• On 23/10, the Manning Great Lakes Police District's "Girls to the Front" program started the term by giving back to the community at Sweet Pea Animal Rescue. The girls had a wonderful experience bonding and playing with the dogs and cats at the shelter. They also had the privilege of hearing an informative talk from Sarah "Ree" Tooley, General Manager of Sweet Pea Animal Rescue. Sarah is a retired Airforce Corporal who served as a Military Police officer and dog handler in the Australian Defence Force. Special thanks go out to founder

and Director Sam Blake and the dedicated volunteers who assisted the program. One of the girls expressed her excitement by saying, "This has been the best experience of my life." Inspired by the visit, she is now planning to volunteer after school. Thank you to Senior Constables Durham and Hoffman, Annette Whitting from Forster Campus and Kitana from the Forster Neighbourhood Centre for making this incredible opportunity possible for the future leaders in our community.

• On 18/10, following a spike in property theft from holiday accommodation in Forster-Tuncurry, local police attached to the Manning Great Lakes Proactive Crime Team, attended an address in Forster where they arrested a 37 year old year old man. Inside the address Police located and seized suspected stolen property, including an e-bike, five bicycles, an e-scooter, ten stolen fishing rods, a fishing reel and an array of fishing gear. The man was taken to Forster Police Station and charged with three counts of Larceny, one count of Resist police, one count of Carry cutting weapon upon apprehension, one count of Goods suspected stolen in/on premises, one count of Goods in personal custody suspected of being stolen and five counts of Dishonestly obtain property by deception - the latter charges relating to the alleged unauthorised use of a credit card. The man was refused bail by police.

• On the early morning of 20/10, police conducting covert patrols of holiday accommodation in Forster-Tuncurry, located a 21-year-old man within the bounds of a local caravan park. The man had his face covered and was wearing gloves. Police engaged the man and discovered he had no business at the location. The man was subsequently arrested at an address in Tuncurry on 24/10 and was charged with one count of Face blackened/disguised with intent to commit indictable offence regarding the aforesaid incident, and with Aggravated break and enter dwelling etc. in company and steal - relating to an offence committed at a local caravan park on 22/10. The man was bail refused by police.

Please remember to be kind to each other and don't forget to say "G'day!" to your local police!

Regards, Chief Inspector Timothy Bayly - OIC Forster Police Station.



Above & right: 'Girls to the Front' program at Sweet Pea Animal Rescue.



and Director Sam Blake and the dedicated volunteers who assisted the program. One of the girls expressed her excitement by saying, "This has been the best experience of my life." Inspired by the visit, she is now planning to volunteer after school. Thank you to Senior Constables Durham and Hoffman, Annette Whitting from Forster Campus and Kitana from the Forster Neighbourhood Centre for making this incredible opportunity possible for the future leaders in our community.



Forster's Constable Kylie Horner and Inspector Tim Bayly during the 'Legs for Police Legacy.'

Funds open for regional newspapers

The state government says it is continuing work to safeguard the production of local stories across the state with \$3 million in grants to be made available to regional and rural newspapers.

Minister for Regional NSW Tara Moriarty announced the delivery of the Government's top up of \$3 million to make the Regional Media Fund a \$6 million commitment since its election, at the 2024 Country Press NSW Conference and Awards of Excellence in Dubbo, 18 October.

The state government says regional media plays a vital role in keeping their communities informed and reporting on matters of importance, as well as informing, celebrating and connecting people.

The first round of the Regional Media Fund, which closed in April 2023, delivered grants to 47 regional outlets to support diversification and expansion into digital content.

Following consultation with regional media stakeholders, including the Country Press NSW and Australian Community Media, the second round of this program will be improved to better reflect industry needs and ease accessibility for support.

This new funding will be made available to help support media organisations to meet the production, operational and content gathering costs associated with running a regional and rural media outlet.

Grant applications will open before the end of the year.

"The Minns Labor Government understands the importance of local papers and local stories particularly in regional communities," Minister Moriarty said. "It is regional and rural papers



Above: (L to R) Country Press NSW President Lucie Peart, Minister for Regional NSW Tara Moriarty and Country Press Australia's Peter Kennedy. Photo by Johnathon Griggs.

that help get local issues on the agenda that would otherwise fall through the cracks."

"We understand complex barriers face these outlets, including the rise of technology. This funding is about providing responsible support which will ease the pressure facing regional media."

"We are pleased that the Minister has announced the Regional Media Fund Round Two," Country Press NSW President Lucie Peart said.

"This second round was a key piece of the government's election commitment."

"We are grateful that this round will provide further support to regional publishers. Since the first round of the fund, the landscape for regional news businesses has changed; we are challenged by digital platforms and a further decline in newsrooms across the state."

Editor's note: The Forster Fortnightly is on the Council of Country Press NSW and a member of Country Press Australia.

Great Lakes Mini Field 2024

Great Lakes Breast Cancer Support Group 'Breast Friends' held their annual Mini Field on 28 October 2024 at Tuncurry Beach Bowling Club.

Chairperson Lorraine Milward said to the audience, "Today is an opportunity for us all, through the placing of the pink and blue figures to reflect on those who have been affected by Breast Cancer and with the placing of the white and grey figures for those who have lost their battle."

During the service many names were read out and people came up to place the different coloured figures within a large heart shape on the floor.

Lorraine said the group is 100% run by donations and thanked the many community groups represented at the gathering.

"Your on-going generous donations allows our group to continue the support of many people dealing with Breast cancer in the Great Lakes area."

Every year volunteer members from the Great Lakes Breast Cancer Support Group provide 100 post surgery care packs to people who have had a lumpectomy or mastectomy at the Mayo, Forster Private and Manning Base Hospital. They also provide approximately 80 chemo care packs a year to ANYONE having chemotherapy at Manning Base and Forster Private.

Lorraine thanked the Tuncurry Beach Bowling Club for their support of the group all year with a meeting place and the function room for the Mini Field service.



Above: (L to R) Michelle Cheers, Councillor Dheera Smith, Lorraine Millward, Anna Pratten, Maryvonne Campbell, Local Member Tanya Thompson, Jillian Brown and Judy Smith.

"We would like to remind everyone to know their breasts and have ANY changes investigated," concluded Lorraine.

Story and photos by Mary Yule. See p16 under 'Wednesday' for meeting times.



Theme MERRY MYALL LAKES

Tanya THOMPSON'S Christmas Card DESIGN COMPETITION 2024

ENTRIES CLOSE
15th November 2024

For more information or to download the entry form visit:
www.tanyathompson.com.au

Tanya THOMPSON MP

Member for Myall Lakes

1-9 Manning Street, Tuncurry

02 6555 4099

tanyathompson.com.au

myalllakes@parliament.nsw.gov.au

TanyaThompsonForMyallLakes

Authorised by Tanya Thompson MP, 1-9 Manning Street, Tuncurry NSW 2428, advertisement funded using Parliamentary Entitlements November 2024.

HOPE SKIN CANCER & GP CLINIC

Hope Skin Cancer & GP Clinic is delighted to welcome Dr Ropheka Ballesteros to the practice.

Ropheka is a Board-certified Family and Community physician from the Philippines with 10 years of experience

She has experience in hospice and palliative care, aged care, and chronic disease management as well as experience in mental health and addiction medicine in primary care.

She is dedicated to providing patient-centred, family-focused and community-oriented care, focusing on empathy and collaborative decision-making.

Ropheka has relocated from the Philippines and has chosen our beautiful area to provide comprehensive health care while achieving a balance of opportunities and outdoor lifestyle. Ropheka enjoys bushwalking, beaches, and adventure.

Ropheka is available for appointments Monday to Friday 8.30am - 5.30pm.
New Patients Welcome!

WORRIED ABOUT

Skin Cancer ?

get it checked.

(02) 6555 0116

TRADING MONDAY TO FRIDAY
8.30AM TILL 5.30PM

17 MANNING STREET, TUNCURRY

RECEPTION@HOPECLINICTUNCURRY.COM

Proud to be a
QPA Accredited Practice

1000 trees poisoned will not stop young passionate group

Continued from page 1.

this living, breathing ecosystem that we had created. Even three years on, we went back and were in awe at how some of the trees had grown to above our heights - and, as the shortest in the group, twice my height. We and our families were so very proud of the work we had been achieving, the community we were growing, the ecosystem we were building.

On the twenty-seventh of October this year, on a day like any other, we went to the site with our usual intention; to plant trees. We had a new species of tree called beach bird's eye, and we were excited to put it out into the land to see how it did.

When I arrived, a few people were already present; my nanna, Helen Hannah, and some members from one of our newer families. I was greeted with serious faces and shown the plants we'd put into the ground during our previous working bee; leaves all brown, a circle of dead grass around each one. Walking deeper through our site, peering into every tree cover, I couldn't believe what I was seeing; every single planted tree was dead. The big tall ones, which we'd planted on that very first day, were all brown and flaking, casuarina pines and our lone eucalypt, our hope for koala habitat regeneration - I went further still, noting the dead grass all around, and tears came to my eyes, an ache to my chest. With no unusual weather events since the last planting day, there was no way for this to have been natural.

One of our group members was able to identify that the plants had been killed using glyphosate, a common weed-control poison, which meant that this event had been intentional and malicious. Someone had walked through our site, spraying every tree up and down and around the roots with poison. Someone had deliberately reversed our years of hard work, destroying future koala habitat and vital littoral rainforest expansion. Someone had put in the time to go into council owned property with special weed-spraying equipment, and with painstaking thoroughness, destroy every living thing in sight.



Above: Shiloh beneath one of the poisoned trees. Photos by Kym Kilpatrick.

Someone had murdered all of our trees.

The police informed us that this is classified as vandalism and malicious damage of public property and is therefore a criminal offence. Although we've always welcomed wider community engagement in our work, this is clearly another thing altogether.

An estimated thousand trees drooped, dead or dying, in their tree covers, dropping barely-developed leaves to the ground, surrounded by circles of dry, brown grass. A thriving forest

turned into a graveyard, each tree cover the announcement of another death.

As I write this, I still can't fully take in the extent of all the damage. My head is spinning with the malicious purpose behind it, trying to grasp the thoughts behind a person who would do this. I can't quite accept that this has happened - all our work, all our hope, all these years of one steady, constant Sunday in every month where we came together to help our local environment.

But ForestHeart, as a group, is already determined to bounce back from this. We're going to keep planting, replanting, and persisting in our efforts to build a thriving ecosystem, expand koala habitat in our local area, and support other species living in and around our site. As my Nanna told me, there

will always be those who push back against change, but we will continue to do the good work we've been doing for the past three years, hopefully for many more years to come.

We're not going to give up on our Earth, because she's never going to give up on us.



Scientists hope to learn from discovery of koala hot spot

Continued from page 2.

"We know there's a lot more work to do so that koalas can thrive in the area. In particular, we are working with local landholders to create corridors so that koalas can move safely between habitats. But the existence of a safe space at Bootawa is a very encouraging start."

The Bootawa dam is within an area known as the Kiwarrak Area of Regional Koala Significance. There were already a number of trees on the property that are favoured by koalas, including tallowwood, grey gum, forest red gum, and grey box. Council has been enhancing the land for koalas by weed removal and selective tree planting as well as progressively replacing some former hardwood plantation areas with diverse native forest dominated by koala feed trees.

"This recent data find will allow us to track changes in the population over time and measure the success of our conservation

actions as well as the impacts of major events such as drought or fire," explained Mr Tuckerman.

"People in the area have a strong affinity with koalas, especially the traditional owners of the land, the Biripi people. The projects we are undertaking have built on and supported work that was being done in the area by community members."

Landholders with dams are especially encouraged to consider planting and or protecting koala food trees. Planting appropriate trees in suitable locations can support koalas and benefit landholders.

MidCoast Council can assist local landholders in koala habitat areas to access support for on-the-ground work such as appropriate tree planting, control of environmental weeds, and stock fencing. For more information, visit: www.haveyoursay.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/koala-safe-spaces-program

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

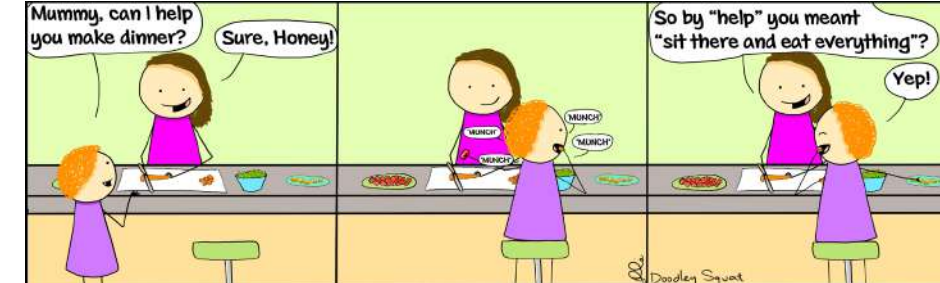
The Grin Bin



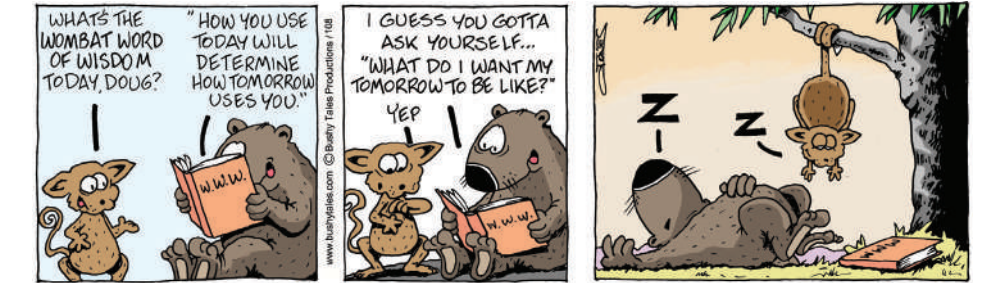
Swamp



Doodley Squat



Bushy Tales



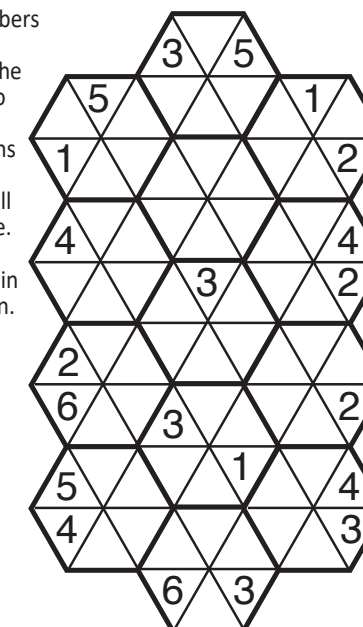
Sudoku

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

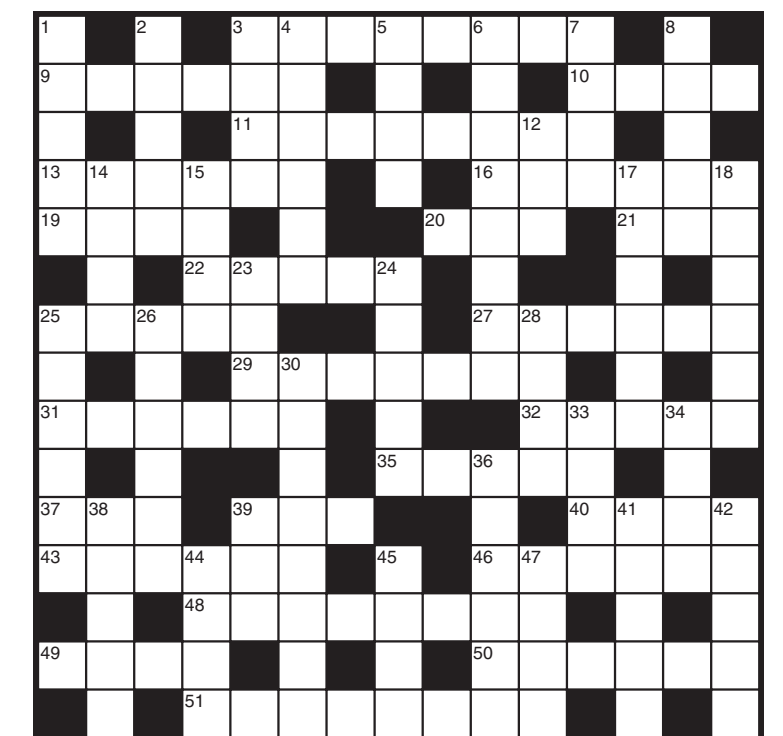
1		8	7					2
3	6			9				
5								
	1	8						5
7			1	3	9			
							6	
6				5		7		4
			3		4	8		
	4			8				

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.



Crossword



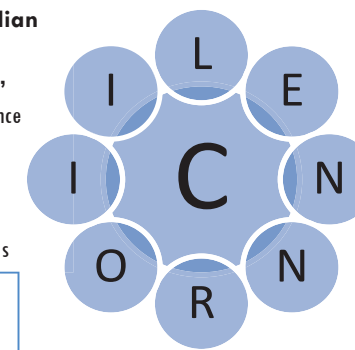
- ACROSS**
- 3 Condemns
 - 9 Bulging and curved
 - 10 Greedy
 - 11 Harming
 - 13 Coating on teeth
 - 16 Required
 - 19 Sovereign prince
 - 20 Lyric poem
 - 21 Metal-bearing rock
 - 22 Advantage
 - 25 Unaccompanied
 - 27 Festive season
 - 29 Volcanoes' mouths
 - 31 Whirl
 - 32 Money bag
 - 35 Have being
 - 37 Printers' measures
 - 39 Edge
 - 40 First man (Bib)
 - 43 Country
- DOWN**
- 1 Performed
 - 2 Act furiously
 - 3 Yield
 - 4 Praises
 - 5 Fly upwards
 - 6 Caribou
 - 7 Wise man
 - 8 Adder
 - 12 Born
 - 14 Of no effect
 - 15 Miserly
 - 17 Physician
 - 18 Temperature unit
- 46** Stick
48 Tend to meet in a point
49 Capital of Peru
50 Tempt
51 Unnecessary
- 23** Cult
24 Tenth part
25 Fisher
26 Wicked female giant
28 Serpents
30 Trust
33 American state
34 Cicatrice
36 Likenesses
38 Melody
39 Brazilian city (abb)
41 Material for overalls
42 Confused fight
44 Scrutinise
45 Actual
47 Lairs

Focus

An All Australian Word Game

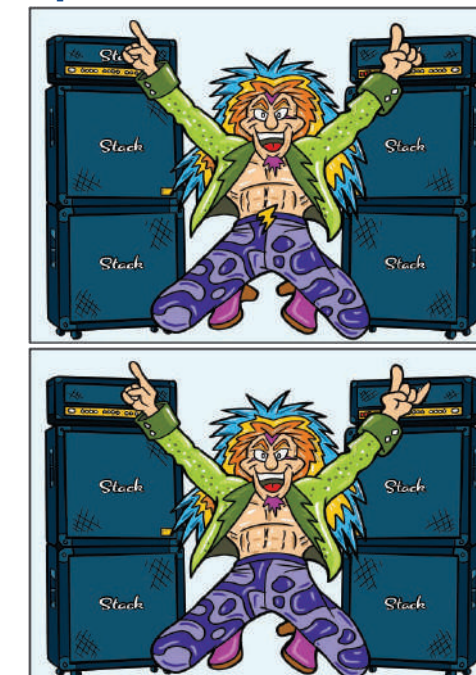
- * Each word must contain the centre 'Focus' letter and each letter may be used only once
- * Each word must be four letters or more
- * Find at least one nine letter word
- * No swear words
- * No verb forms or plurals ending in 's'
- * No proper nouns and no hyphenated words

TODAY'S Good: 11 words
FOCUS Very good: 16 words
Excellent: 34 words

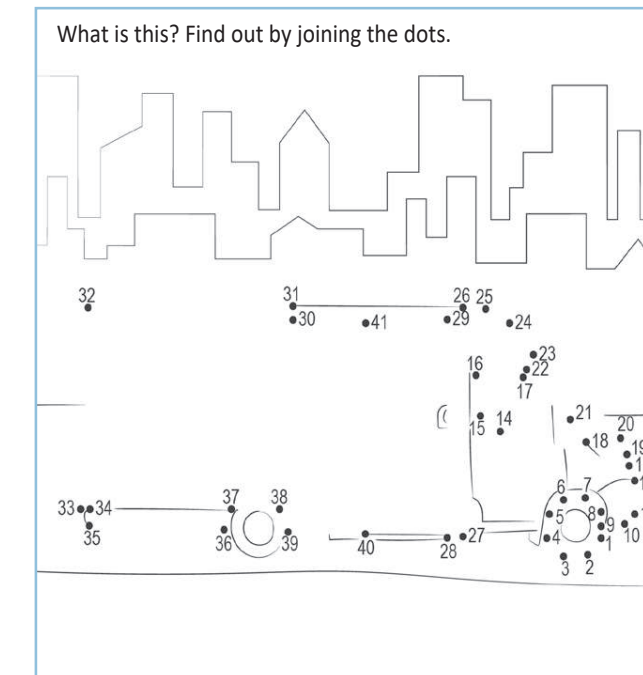


Reference: Macquarie Concise Dictionary
Focus No. 3942

Spot the 5 Differences

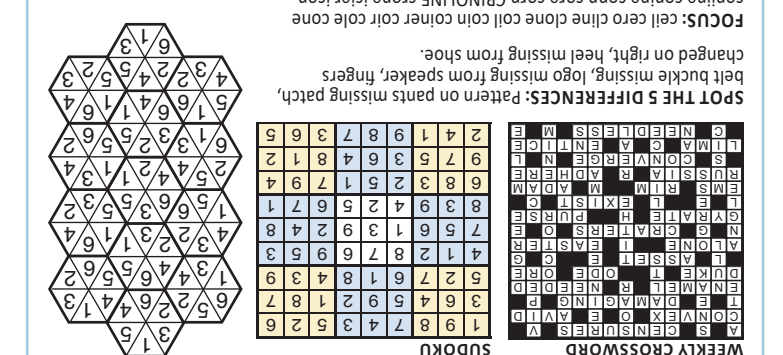


Join the Dots



Solutions

Puzzles and pagination supplied by Auspac Media



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This project is a NSW EPA Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy initiative, funded from the waste levy.

Clear Out & Cash In!

Join over 400,000 Australians and host a garage sale this November

With free registration, how-to guides, sale tips and promotional materials provided, it's garage sales made easy.

No garage? No worries. Join a group sale near you, host from a car boot, a local school or make it a pop-up street party.

Register for free garagesaletrail.com.au/midcoast

YOUR FORTNIGHTLY TV GUIDE October 31 - November 6

Table with columns for days (Thursday-Friday) and channels (ABCTV, SBS, SEVEN, NBN, TEN). Each cell contains program listings with start times and titles.

November 7 - 13

Table with columns for days (Thursday-Friday) and channels (ABCTV, SBS, SEVEN, NBN, TEN). Each cell contains program listings with start times and titles.

Advertisement for Great Lakes Funerals. Includes logo, contact information (6519 4713, 85 The Lakes Way, Forster), website (greatlakesfunerals.com.au), and QR code. Text: 'Personalised Burial, Cremation and Memorial Services'.

Advertisement for Sunrise Home Care. Includes image of a caregiver with an elderly person, contact information (CALL US NOW (02) 5528 5990), and slogan 'Let us take care of you'. Text: 'Award winning Home Care provider encouraging and supporting you to live as independently as possible, for as long as possible, in the comfort of your own home.'.

Local Calendar

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

November

Sun 3 Nov - Hallidays Point Car Boot Sale 7am to 12pm Hallidays Point Shopping Village Enquiries: 0403 042 088

BLACK HEAD BAZAAR

Sun 3 Nov - Black Head Bazaar Market 8am to 1pm Wylie Breckenridge Park, Black Head Rd. Check website for ground closures. www.facebook.com/blackheadbazaar

Sun 10 Nov - Forster Town Market 8am to 1pm, Town Park, Oyster Pde Forster. Search Forster Town Park Market on Facebook.

Sun 10 Nov - Tallwoods Village Market 9am - 1pm at 61 The Blvd, Tallwoods Village Opposite the Tallwoods Golf Club Contact Caileen 0488 508 846

Sat 16 Nov - Forster Farmers Market 8am to 12pm Forster Info Centre, Little St. Enquiries: Linda 0421 347 273

Sun 17 Nov - Great Lakes Museum Car Boot Sale, 9am to 1pm at Great Lakes Museum, 1 Capel St Tuncurry. Enquiries: 6554 6275

Sat 23 Nov - Tuncurry Market 8am to 1pm at John Wright Park, Tuncurry. Enquiries: Anne 0417 400 994

Sun 24 Nov - Pacific Palms Market 9am to 1pm Pacific Palms Community Centre. Community Library Stall open in hall. Enquiries: Jennifer Doyle 0401 968 516

What's on around town & beyond!

In Conversation - Author's talk

As great admirers of each other's writing, Julie and Susan together discuss their works. Hear them, compare and contrast story backgrounds, research, content, techniques, experiences writing, and the writing industry.

Julie Bennett

Julie Bennett fell in love with words as a child and soon after leaving school began a career in libraries. In her late twenties she decided to follow her dream to write for a living and, after graduating from university, eventually became a journalist. In 2004 she launched a public relations company, which she still manages today.

Julie lives with her wonderful husband, Bruce and their gorgeous kelpie cross cattle dog, Riley, within walking distance of the Sydney Opera House where she performed as a child extra back in 1973, the year it opened. The Lost Letters of Rose Carey is Julie's second novel. Her debut The Understudy was published by Simon & Schuster in 2022.

Susan Mackie

A voracious reader, Susan dreamed of becoming a writer from the age of eight. Career advisors told her it wasn't a real thing and suggested journalism. So, she became a journalist, then took a zig-zag path to publish her first book, Charlie's Will, in 2020, via a varied career in publishing, marketing, tourism and small business.

Susan is an independent (Indie) Publisher of small-town romance and women's fiction. She released book number eight - The Barrington



Julie Bennett & Susan Mackie "in conversation"

Thursday 21 November 11:00am Forster Library

Saturday 23 November 11:00am Sips at Moby's, Boomerang Beach



Book Club - in June 2024. This one tells the story of several small-town characters over the course of twelve months, punctuated by twelve book club meetings. The characters read and discuss twelve real books by Australian authors - including both of Julie Bennett's books - The Understudy and The Lost Letters of Rose Carey. Readers have loved this feature, with many checking out the reading list in the back of the book.

Book your free spot

To book at Forster Library, please visit: www.eventbrite.com/cc/nourish-to-flourish-3628199

To book at Moby's, please visit: www.seawardz.com/event-details/inconversation-authors-talk

Celebrating women artists at Manning Regional Art Gallery



Manning Regional Art Gallery is presenting three new exhibitions, featuring the work of women artists over the last 50 years. The exhibitions are currently open to the public until 16 November at 12 Macquarie St, Taree.

Curators of 'Femme-Maison: Imagined Boundaries, Women Artists from the Collection and Beyond' have delved into Macquarie University's collection to unearth a rich visual narrative of women's creative spaces, including works by Tracey Moffatt, Wendy Sharpe, Janet Laurence, and Kerry Lester.

'Obsession' explores the intriguing practice of printmaking in all its forms.

In 'Aligned', local artists Corinne Miller and Clare Wallace explore the juxtaposition of beauty and fragility which characterises our planet.

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

What's on around town & beyond!

They are Celebrating at Forster Gallery

Earlier this year Tanya Thompson MP presented Forster Gallery with a NSW Government Development Grant for us to undertake a major project of renovations, maintenance and enhancements.

One of our members, Bettina Digby, wrote a powerful Grant Application that secured us money to renovate our 25-year-old building; you know ... leaky windows, too much light, not enough hanging space etc. And at the same time our Designer and Architect, Brett Newbold, challenged us to think about a 'facelift' and a new façade that confirms we are a modern, professional and welcoming Art Gallery.

Brett says "we contracted with local businesses, to build, gyprock, paint, provide the glass, create the signs and enhance security and the electrics. And we cannot speak more highly of their competence and customer service".



Above: Painting the new Forster Gallery facade.



Above: Forster Gallery before renovations. Photos supplied.



Above: Creating more hanging space inside the gallery.

Hopefully, our new look will make us much easier to see from the road and invite locals and visitors to visit regularly to enjoy the talent of our local artists.

Our members have been motivated to develop artworks that talk to the theme of Celebration. So, expect colour and variety when you visit the Celebration Exhibition between 30 October and 8 December, and don't forget to make your pick for the People's Choice Prize.

By Christine Rands - President Forster Gallery.

For details of all our exhibitions visit our website: www.forstergallery.org

CELEBRATION EXHIBITION Forster Gallery Wed 30 October - Sun 8 December 2024 34 Lake Street - Open 10am - 4pm Saturday - Sunday and days when the 'flags are flying' www.forstergallery.org

"DAN AYKROYD AND JUDITH BELUSHI" PROUDLY PRESENT THE OFFICIAL BLUES BROTHERS Revue SUNDAY 17 NOVEMBER Doors open 4pm for an 4.30pm show Tickets \$44 per person

the Crowdie's show A TRIBUTE TO CROWDED HOUSE & SPLIT ENZ SATURDAY 30 NOVEMBER FREE in the Main Lounge From 8pm

Tropo Jack's FISH & CHIPS FISH & CHIP VAN LOCATED IN TROPPO JACK'S OUTDOOR AREA! TRADING HOURS CLOSED MONDAY TO THURSDAY

Monday Monday Pasta \$15 Tuesday Happy Hour 3pm to 5pm Wednesday Raffles from 6pm Thursday Multi Bowls & Raffle from 12:30pm Friday Raffles from 6pm There's always something happening at the Palms! Pacific Palms Bowling Club Open 7 Days 11:00 till Late Lunch 12pm & Dinner 5:30pm

TUNCURRY BEACH BOWLING CLUB 21 Parkes Street, Tuncurry NSW 2428 Ph 02 6554 6477 | www.tuncurrybeachbowling.com.au

Melbourne Cup AT CLUB FORSTER ~ A DAY AT THE RACES ~ Tuesday, 5th November 2024 COMPLIMENTARY bubbles with a Springtime Buffet and Everything Old is new again Come dressed in your vintage best to win! club forster 19 Strand Street, Forster NSW 2428

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

Hard Times

It was the day before pay day
And I went to the fridge.
But nothing was in there,
Not even a smidge.
So I went to the pantry,
There's usually oodles,
But all that was in there
Was baked beans and noodles.

Then I went to the freezer
To get out some bread,
But ice blocks and ice cream,
I found there instead.
So what did I settle for?
What did I eat?
Why baked bean and ice cream.
Oh! What a treat.
By Dot King - Forster.

Below: This photo in Forster from 1967 was taken next door to the post office by the owner of the amusement centre shop which was about three shops down. I remember the amusement centre had a very large slot car track and I raced a black Cortina GT which was very fast for its time.

The boys in the photos are (L to R) Lamrie Robertson, David Rowler, Ian McSpedden and David Cross, all from Wingham. The two girls were from Forster. Photo supplied by David Cross.



New Hotline to help television networks addicted to gambling revenue

POLITICAL SATIRE: Television networks who struggle to get through the day without showing hundreds of gambling commercials will now have access to a confidential support hotline.

Gambling welfare advocate Josie Richards said many television networks in Australia were totally dependent on gambling revenue and needed help to quit.

"It's incredibly addictive. I've talked to television executives who say they start the day telling themselves they are just going to show one Sportsbet ad during a Friday night football broadcast, but then they get caught up in the excitement and end up showing two hundred. That's how quickly things can escalate".

IS THE FINANCIAL VIABILITY OF YOUR ORGANISATION TOTALLY RELIANT ON GAMBLING ADVERTISING?

For free and confidential support, call 1800 I AM ADDICTED or visit gamblinghelpfortvnetworks.com.au

The hotline will be promoted using a variety of different messages, including: "Is the financial viability of your organisation totally reliant on gambling advertising?", "How many lives are you destroying by showing these relentless f**king ads?" And "Really? Another gambling ad? You literally just showed one".

www.theshovel.com.au

Book Review

Punishing Putin

Stephanie Baker's book Punishing Putin is an account of the economic sanctions levied on Russia starting, weakly, after Russian takeover of the Crimea in 2014, and ramped up after its further invasion of the Ukraine in 2022.

Baker is a Russian speaking investigative journalist with Bloomberg. This follows her experience starting in Moscow in the mid 1990's covering Russia's economic transition to a market economy after the fall of the Soviet Union. It was a time when US and European companies, believing that Russia was becoming a western-style economy, flocked to invest there. Investments ranged from McDonalds eateries to stakes in Russia's oil and gas industry. With sanctions, however, these assets finished up in Putin's or oligarch's hands.

The book is in five parts. The first part deals with the backroom manoeuvring to coordinate the West's response to the 2022 invasion. The second part covers the rise of Putin and the oligarchs. Then the third details the attempts to curtail Russia's access to technology. It includes divestment of western investments in Russia - with multi-billion-dollar losses to western companies and windfalls to Russian oligarchs. The fourth part deals with trying to limit Russia's lucrative oil exports since these are fundamental to Putin's funding the war. Finally, Baker investigates the diplomatic efforts to freeze Russia's \$300 billion of overseas assets with the aim of directing them to Ukraine's immediate rebuilding of infrastructure that Russia is intent on destroying, and then post-war recovery.

The book details Russia's work-arounds of Western sanctions, including becoming a client of China, and even North Korea! Minimising the impact of sanctions on western economies, including European reliance on Russian oil and gas, reveals how disparate western interests have weakened and delayed decisive action.

How successful have these sanctions been? Baker has a clear-eyed view as to their

effectiveness: clearly, they have not stopped the tanks - but, she says, what freedom would Russia have had to pursue its aims had there been no limiting factors?

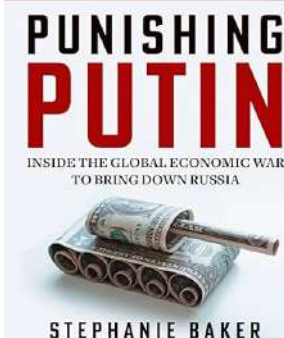
She sees the war as a tipping point for a long time to come. No longer can there be the optimism of an integrated Europe and Russia. The invasion of Ukraine has created a barrier between Russia and the West at the same time creating a Chinese/Russian axis. Sweden and Finland have now abandoned their neutrality and joined a reinvigorated NATO. India and China now benefit from cheap Russian oil reinforcing links there. In trying to isolate the West, Russia is drawing Middle Eastern and African countries into its orbit. It imports Iranian and North Korean missiles and drones, and gets African women to work in its factories.

Is Stephanie Baker's titling her book Punishing Putin intended as an irony? Or, does she have in mind Putin's ignominy, as a fitness fanatic and looking to restore Russia's greatness, when he has to deal himself with North Korea's Kim Jong Un for weapons?

If the \$300 billion of Russia's money held overseas is redirected to rebuilding Ukraine, that would be an entirely just and proper outcome.

By John King - Librarian

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



Screen Reviews

Movie review by Harriet Kelly.

Apollo 13: Survival (Netflix)

Narrated largely by the Commanding Astronaut Jim Lovell and his wife, Marilyn, this documentary relies entirely on historical footage of this space expedition (which almost ended with the loss of the entire crew). The eventual safe return of Apollo 13 to earth in 1970 is a well-known - largely thanks to the Ron Howard movie 'Apollo 13'. But this documentary remains as suspenseful as ever - taking the audience behind the scenes of the crew as they prepare to fly to space (knowing they had only a 50% chance they would return alive).

A major rocket malfunction on day two was followed by four gruelling days of suspense until they successfully (and incredibly) returned to earth.

Little was known about the extent of their physical suffering in the four days they spent in a small space capsule at a temperature of just over 3 degrees. With little food and water - every effort was spent conserving all forms of power and resources to aid their return. Unbelievably, (with almost a complete failure of the workings of the lunar module) Jim Lovell used his own wristwatch to time a 14 second

'burn' to shift the capsules return trajectory by 2.5%. With minimal working implements remaining, he literally lined up the earth through the capsule window and timed this life saving manoeuvre. As they entered the earth's atmosphere (a communication black out zone), the world held its breath for the over 3 minutes to see if the capsule could return them safely.

The use of old landline phones and clanking Olivetti Typewriters reminds viewers that this remarkably took place 50 years ago - just an extraordinary story of man's engineering and technical capacity. This documentary should be compulsory viewing!



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FORSTER LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL (FLALC)
NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEMBERS MEETING
Notice is hereby given of the Annual General Meeting of the Forster LALC
DATE: 19th November 2024
TIME: 9:30 am
VENUE: FLALC Building, 10 Breckenridge St, Forster

AGENDA
1. WELCOME
2. APOLOGIES
3. PREVIOUS MINUTES
4. 2023/2024 ANNUAL REPORT
5. RECEIPT OF 2023/2024 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS & MANAGEMENT LETTER
6. GENERAL BUSINESS
7. MEETING CLOSE
Authorised: Natalie Ridgeway, Chairperson Forster LALC
All enquiries about this meeting should be directed to the Forster LALC Office during business hours.

Weekly Diary

The 'Weekly Diary' is FREE to promote community group information. Max 4 lines. It is the responsibility of the organisation to keep their information current.

Mondays

Great Lakes Ladies Probuc Club
4th Monday of the Month
10am Forster Bowling Club
Contact Sandra 0478 609 258

Forster Hospital Pink Ladies
Meetings held the 2nd Monday of each month Forster Palms Motel at 1.30 pm. Afternoon tea afterwards. Contact Cathy Cook 0429 265 656.

Boomerang Bags Forster Tuncurry
9:30am -12:30pm every second Monday
Tuncurry Memorial Hall
Ring Leonie Dowell 0430 623 332

Forster Tuncurry Seniors
Breeze Parade Forster
Carpet Bowls 12.45 – 3:45pm
Contact 6505 2686

The Man Walk - walk, talk and support
Meet 7am Mondays at the Rock Pool,
Tuncurry. BBQ/soup once a month.
Contact Steve Rogers 0407 200 615

Great Lakes Evening VIEW Club
Meetings held 4th Monday of the month with
6:30pm dinner at Sporties.
Phone Pat 6554 5466

Club Forster Travel Club
Meetings held the 3rd Monday of each month
2pm Wallis Lake room, Club Forster
Contact Mal Prewett 0455 157 785

Manning Great Lakes Parkinson's Support Group, Last Monday of the month
1.30pm Club Forster.
Contact Ken, 0427 021 877, Phil 0439 418 478

Quota Club of Forster Tuncurry
Meets 1st and 3rd Monday each month
Club Forster. Lunch 12.30pm
Meeting 1.30pm, Enquiries 6555 7219

Al-Anon Family Groups
Does someone you love drink too much?
7.30pm Salvation Army Hall, South St, Tuncurry.
Contact: 1300 252 666

Alcoholics Anonymous
12pm Women's Meeting, Daily Reflections
Uniting Church Hall - Cnr Macintosh & Lake St,
Forster 1300 222 222

Forster Tuncurry Lions Club
Meetings held 3rd Monday each month.
Club Forster 6:30 for 7pm Dinner.
Contact President Sue Newton 0418 607 292

Tennis Forster
Every Monday 8.30am - 11.30am Mixed
Organised Social Forster Tennis Club, Lake
Street. Enquiries: Jaime 6554 9120

Great Lakes Vietnam Veterans Association Sub-Branch meet at Unit 3/80 Kularoo Drive,
Forster, between 10am to 1pm
Email: vvagforster@gmail.com

1st Forster Tuncurry Scout Group Cub Section
Scout Hall Cnr Lake & McIntosh Sts Forster,
Mondays 5 - 6.30pm for 8 - 11 years. Enquiries:
leanne.richardson@nsw.scouts.com.au

Mixed Social Tennis
Monday 9 - 11am at Tuncurry Sporties courts,
Beach St. Contact Danny 0409 549 799

Coomba Fitness Group
9am - 10am, in the Coomba Aquatic Club
Gazebo. All levels of fitness welcome. Contact
Lindy on 0415 392 554

Tuesdays

Forster Shores Combined Probuc Meeting
Held 3rd Tuesday of the month, 2pm Sporties
Club, Tuncurry. To attend contact Peter Dreise
on 0407 842 905

Great Lakes Prostate Cancer Support Group.
Fourth Tuesday of every month
7pm Club Forster.
Email: jipatchwood@gmail.com

Pacific Palms Probuc Club
Meets second Tuesday each month at Pacific
Palms Recreation Club, 9.30 for 10.00am start,
Feb to Nov. Ring Jim on 0418 201 167

Rotary Club of Lower Midcoast
Meet 6pm on first and third Tuesday of each
month at Sporties, Tuncurry.
Call Lance Fletcher 0409 850 671.

Wallis Lake Dining Group
We dine out on the 1st Tuesday of the Month
at various restaurants.
Please call Jim Peters on 0418 201 167

Hallidays Point Combined Probuc Meeting
1st Tuesday of the month
10.00am at Black Head Surf Life Saving Club
To attend contact Ian Campbell 0417 928 791

Wallis Lake Tourers Travel Club Inc.
Meet 10am 2nd Tuesday of the month
Tuncurry Memorial Hall on Point Rd
Enquiries Kayleen 0416 184 684.

The Coomba Mens Shed
Open Every Tuesday 8.30am - 12pm
86 Moorooaba Rd, Coomba Park.
Contact Warren Arnold 0407 721 604

Alcoholics Anonymous
8pm I.D. Meeting at Community Centre Hall,
behind Reccy car park, 3957 The Lakes Way,
Pacific Palms 1300 222 222

Pickleball Tuncurry
9:30am at tennis courts behind Sporties.
Enquiries: Sonia 0427 309 032.

Club Forster Social Dance Club
Every Tuesday we have Learn to Dance 6 - 7pm
then Social Dance 7 - 9pm.
Enquiries: Kay 0412 314 449

Great Lakes Speakers Club
Meet every FIRST & THIRD Tuesdays each
month Feb to early Dec, Club Forster 6.50pm
for 7pm start. Contact Graham 0424 426 280

Hallidays Point Surfing Mums
Meet every Tuesday 10:30am at Black Head
Beach near surf club.
Enquiries: Vanessa on 0452 247 440

1st Forster Tuncurry Scout Group Venturer Section, Cnr Lake & McIntosh Sts Forster,
Tues 6.30 - 8.30pm for 14 to 18 yrs. Enquiries:
leanne.richardson@nsw.scouts.com.au

Forster Tuncurry Radio Sailing Club
Tuncurry Racecourse Lake – 1pm
Contact Bruce 0466 153 616

Coomba Park Tennis Club
Every Tuesday 4 - 6pm Mixed Social Tennis
Enquiries: Text Melissa 0403 309 807

Wednesdays

Green Bikes Community Workshop
Open 12 - 3pm. Supplying parts & free help
with bike problems. Tuncurry transfer station.
Budding mechanics welcome. 0458 809 975

Great Lakes Breast Cancer Support Group
First Wednesday of every month.
4pm Tuncurry Beach Bowling Club.
Contact Lorraine 0410588736.

Seaside Heritage Quilters - all abilities
Meet 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month
10:30 - 3pm Forster Masonic Hall, Lake Street.
Contact Diane De Wright 0491 150 910

Club Forster Table Tennis
Each week new players welcomed.
6 - 9pm. Contact Harold 5591 7133 or Bruce
0414 532 496

Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service
Forster Tuncurry Group
First Wednesday of the month, 3pm Sporties
Tuncurry. Enquiries: Ruth 0434 234 511

Forster Tuncurry Evening View Club
Meet Second Wednesday of each month
6.00pm for 6.30pm Club Forster
Contact Lorraine Tilley 0408 055 109

Great Lakes Knit and Spin
Every Wednesday 10am – 12pm,
Forster Civic Centre, Wallambah room.
Enquiries Kayleen 0416 184 684.

Great Lakes Suicide Prevention Network
Meet third Wednesday of every month at 6pm
Tuncurry Beach Bowling Club & on zoom. Email
greatlakesspn2428@gmail.com for details.

Forster Digital Photographic Club (FDPC)
Meets third Wednesday each month, 7pm in
the Wallis Lake Room at Club Forster, Strand
Street, Forster. Enquiries: Keith 0468 351 107

Alcoholics Anonymous
9am, As Bill Sees It Meeting
Girl Guides Hall - Opp Council Playing Fields
Lake St, Forster 1300 222 222

Alcoholics Anonymous
8pm, I.D. Meeting at Salvation Army Hall
7 South Street, Tuncurry
1300 222 222

One Mile Beach Dunecare
Every Wednesday, 8:30am Carpark at
Collendina Park, Beach end of Strand Street
Contact Mark Linton 0402 045 718

Hallidays Point Men's Shed
Meet 9am to 2pm in premises behind
Community Church, 27 Diamond Beach Rd.
Enquiries: Stephen Cox 0418 146 067

Dementia Infomation drop in at Forster Library
1st Wed. of the month 9.30 - 11.30am. Speak
with local Dementia Alliance representative on
local services. Contact Christine 0408 548 698

Coomba Fitness Group
9am - 10am, in the Coomba Aquatic Club
Gazebo. All levels of fitness welcome. Contact
Lindy on 0415 392 554

Twin Towns Tennis Club
8am Mixed Social and 7pm Night Comp every
Wednesday. Capel St Tuncurry.
Contact Ellise 0411 476 063.

Great Lakes Historic Automobile Club Inc.
Meets first Wednesday every month at
7pm Tuncurry Beach Bowling Club
Visitors are welcome. Laurie 0402 315 215

Thursdays

Coomba Mens Shed
Open every Thursday 8.30am-12pm.
86 Moorooaba Rd, Coomba Park.
Contact Warren Arnold 0407 721 604

Codependents Anonymous
Difficulty maintaining relationships?
5.30 - 7pm Uniting Church, Tuncurry.
www.codependentsanonymous.org.au

Great Lakes & Manning Stroke Recovery Club
We meet every 2nd & 4th Thursday of month.
New members and visitors are most welcome.
Contact can be made by ringing 1300 650 594.

Al-Anon Family Groups
Does someone you love drink too much? Help
is available! 12.30pm Uniting Church, Cnr South
& Bent St, Tuncurry. Contact: 1300 252 666

Forster District Combined Probuc Club
9.45am First Thursday of every month (except
January) Club Forster. Contact Secretary
Christine Armstrong 6557 5627

Knit and Knatter
1st Thursday of the month 1-3pm, Tuncurry
Community of Christ, 4 Manning Street
Tuncurry. Contact Wendy Ballard 0411 036 171

Forster Keys Progress Association
Dad's Army/Navvy volunteer clean-up
Every Thursday 7am - 9am, Community Hall
36A Elizabeth Pde. Contact: Brian 6555 5076

Lodge Forster Great Lakes United
Meets third Thursday of the month
7pm at the Lodge Hall, 27 Lake Street
Enquiries: Bob Mackinnon on 0437 854 466

Tennis Forster
Every Thursday 12.30pm – 4pm Men's
Organised Social Forster Tennis Club, Lake
Street. Enquiries: Jaime 6554 9120

Great Lakes Vietnam Veterans Association Sub-Branch meet at Unit 3/80 Kularoo Drive,
Forster, between 10am to 1pm
Email: vvagforster@gmail.com

1st Forster Tuncurry Scout Group Joey Section
Scout Hall Cnr Lake & McIntosh Sts Forster,
Thursdays 5 - 6 pm for 5 to 8 years. Enquiries:
leanne.richardson@nsw.scouts.com.au

1st Forster Tuncurry Scout Group Scout Section
Scout Hall Cnr Lake & McIntosh Sts Forster,
Thursdays 6.30 - 8.30pm for 11 - 14 years.
Contact: leanne.richardson@nsw.scouts.com.au

Mens Social Tennis
Thursday 9 - 11am at Tuncurry Sporties courts,
Beach St. Contact Danny 0409 549 799

Great Lakes Concert Band
Rehearses Thursdays 5-7pm at Club Forster in
Cape Hawke Room. New players very welcome.
Enquiries: Lynne 0488 146 915

Twin Towns Tennis Club
8am Mixed Social every Thursday, Capel St
Tuncurry. Contact Ellise 0411 476 063.

Fridays

Forster Country Women's Association (CWA)
3rd Friday of the Month, 9:30am to 11:30am
Coolongolook Room at Forster Civic Centre,
Lake Street. Contact: Annette 0411 028 857

Wallis Lake History Group
1st Friday of the Month, 1.30pm Great Lakes
Room, Club Forster, Strand St. World History by
Members. Call Jim Peters on 0418 201 167

Forster Tuncurry Seniors
Breeze Parade Forster
Carpet Bowls 9:15 - 12pm & Games 1pm - 4pm
Contact 6505 2686

Forster Tuncurry Red Cross
1st Friday of the month at 9:30am.
Please contact Judy on 0403 400 875 to find out
new venue.

Alcoholics Anonymous
1pm, I.D. Meeting at Masonic Lodge Hall - 27
Lake Street, Forster 1300 222 222

Pickleball Tuncurry
9:30am at tennis courts behind Sporties.
Enquiries: Sonia Rockley 0427 309 032

Tuncurry Beach Dunecare
Every Friday, 8:30am Barry Stonham Park,
Rockpool Road, adjacent to new playground
Contact Mark Linton 0402 045 718

Ladies Social Tennis
Fridays 9 -11am at Sporties Tennis Club,
Beach St Tuncurry.
Enquiries: Yvonne on 0418 422 392

Coomba Fitness Group
9am - 10am, in the Coomba Aquatic Club
Gazebo. All levels of fitness welcome. Contact
Lindy on 0415 392 554

Twin Towns Tennis Club
8.30am Mixed Social every Friday, Capel St
Tuncurry. Contact Ellise 0411 476 063.

Saturdays

Forster parkrun community 5km run/walk
Pebble Beach Playground off Head St
7:45am for 8am start every Saturday
facebook.com/Forsterparkrun

Club Forster Table Tennis
Each week new players welcomed.
12:45 - 3pm. Contact Harold 5591 7133 or
Bruce 0414 532 496

Forster Country Women's Association
CWA are serving Devonshire teas, 3rd Saturday
of month 9 - 11.30am, Coolongolook Rm,
Forster Civic Centre. Enquiries: 0411 028 857

Great Lakes Rural Australians for Refugees
2pm at St Albans Church Hall, Forster.
Regular monthly meeting on the last Saturday
of the month. Enquiries: 0418 650 694

Great Lakes Orchid Society Meeting
Meets second Saturday of the month
2pm Forster Public School, Head Street.
Enquiries: John 0408 034 633

Dragon Boating
Come paddle with us on Wallis Lake
7.15am for 7.30am start
Contact Janis 0420 235 987

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

Community Meals & Pantry



Above: Bob and Sue Parry at the Tuncurry Community Brunch.

Tuncurry Community Brunch

All are welcome to our sit-down Community 'Brunch' Mondays 9:15 - 9:45am.

Pantry doors are open 9:45 - 11am with pantry essentials, fresh produce and cleaning & hygiene items.

Open during school terms at FORSTER TUNCURRY CHURCH OF CHRIST, 14 Douglas Ave Tuncurry. Donations welcome.

"Bring what you can – take what you need."
Enquiries: Tamara Clarke 0412 962 144 or Bret Clarke 0407 483 070 or see our Facebook.

Tuncurry Community Morning Tea & Lunch

Every Friday the TUNCURRY SALVATION CHURCH at 7 South Street is serving Community Morning Tea & Lunch.

10:30am - Doors open for cake & coffee, place names for produce market.

11am - Produce Market, \$5 bag of staples & meal ingredients are available.

11:30am to 1pm - Lunch served
Enquiries: Pastors Nicole & Tony Bezzina on 6554 6101. www.facebook.com/Forstersalvos/

Forster Community Lunches

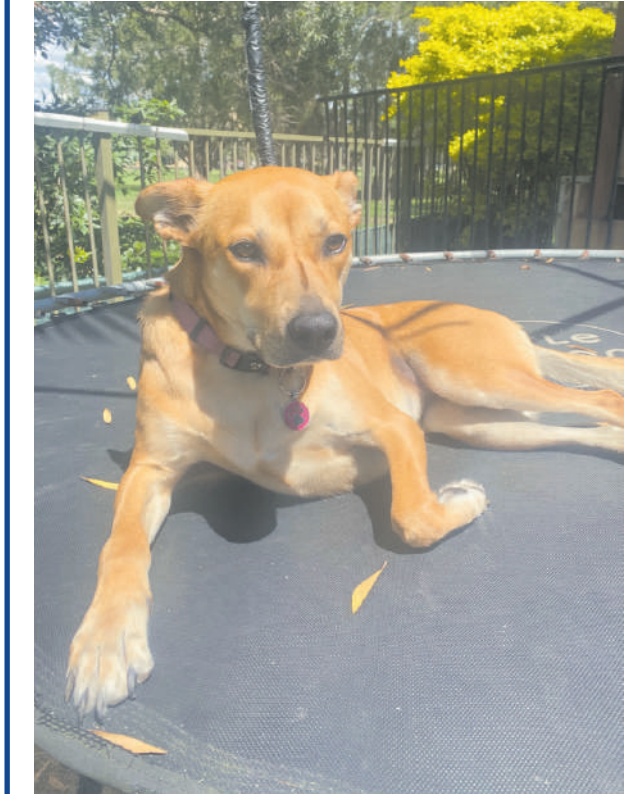
The Forster Community Kitchen is serving lunches to the community Monday to Thursday 12 - 1pm.

All are welcome. Lunches are served in the CATHOLIC CHURCH HALL located behind the Catholic Parish at 33 Lake Street, Forster.

People can also bring a bag and choose which food items they would like to take home from the produce tables.

Enquiries: Volunteer Coordinator Meg Loring on 0409 840 054 or the CatholicCare Office on 6539 5900.

Star Pet



Name: Lunar

Breed: Kelpie x Shepherd

Age: 2 years old.

Likes: Taking over our trampoline, pats, toys, walks and loves playing with other dogs

Dislikes: Water and baths.

Claim to Fame: Cannot take her for a walk without being stopped and asked if she is a dingo!

Photo and answers emailed to us by Lunar's family's 9 year old daughter.

If you would like to see your beloved pet featured in Star Pet please submit a HIGH RESOLUTION PHOTO & answers to info@forsterfortnightly.com.au

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Forster Library Free programs

• **Family History Advisory Group** - provides support with family history research. Volunteers will be available Tuesday & Thursday 10am - 12 pm, Monday, Wednesday & Friday 2pm - 4pm in the Family History room on Level One of the Library. Or email familyhistory@gmail.com

• **The Better Reading Better Communities program** - Volunteer Literacy Tutors are available to support members of the community (children & adults) with improving reading, writing and learning English as a second language. Contact Meredith Campbell on 7955 7421 for more information.

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Our Local Wildlife



Eastern Koel

An unmistakable and for some people irritating sign that Spring has arrived is the loud repetitive calls of the Eastern Koel (Eudynamis orientalis). Also known as 'rainbirds', 'stormbirds', or sometimes 'cooee-birds', Eastern Koels migrate into our area from as far north as New Guinea and Eastern Indonesia.

Males and females are dimorphous, meaning distinctly different in appearance. Both are between 39 and 46 centimetres in length, but the male is glossy blue-green black while the female is much plainer, primarily brown, and heavily spotted with white except for her head which is similarly glossy black. Her tail and flight feathers are crossed with white bars and her neck throat and belly are pale buff to cinnamon with fine black bars. Both have red eyes, creamy-grey bills and grey feet and legs. Their average weight is 190 grams.

It is the males who are the noisy ones, often calling from dawn, throughout the day and into the night to attract mates whilst the females are more shy and retiring (there are several recordings on the internet, including the Wild Ambience site). Both are hard to see as they keep to the bushy canopies of trees and shrubs. Their favourite habitats are forests, particularly rainforests or wet forested areas although they also seemingly do well in urban forested areas.

Eastern Koels are members of the cuckoo family and are known as 'brood parasites'. This means that they do not make nests themselves or care for their young, rather they lay a single egg in an unwilling host's nest. Favourite targets are Red Wattlebirds, Friarbirds, Figbirds and Peewees or Magpie Larks. They appear to choose nests where the existing eggs are similar to those of their own which are buff coloured with dull purplish speckles and wavy streaks.

Eggs hatch after about 13 to 14 days and although they do not kill their fellow nestlings like other cuckoos, their enormous demanding appetite usually means that their nestmates starve. After thirty-five days and once fledged the chick leaves the nest but roosts in the outer branches, cheeping incessantly whilst its much smaller foster parents search desperately for food. Sometimes the foster-parent birds will successively raise three Eastern Koels in one breeding season.

In March, Eastern Koels begin the migration north although this season's hatchlings will usually depart later than the adults. It is not known how they instinctively manage to navigate but come next year's spring they return. All going well, they will live to between 12 and 15 years.

Eastern Koels are not considered an endangered or threatened species and indeed it appears that they are thriving due to changing vegetation including the introduction of weed-species such as Cotonaster, Sweet Pittosporum, Privet and Bluebell Creeper. Their range of migration also appears to be extending even further south, possibly because of increased climate warming. If you want to deter Eastern Koels and provide some protection for some of the smaller birds of our area, planting dense, prickly understoreys and eliminating introduced and weedy berry producing plants is a good start.

By Kym Kilpatrick – FAWNA, Hallidays Point.
Photo by Brian Champion.

Successful Charity Golf Day

Supporters of the annual Ronald McDonald Charity Golf Day, have dug deep this year, raising a record breaking \$74,400.00, giving 124 families a week's free holiday at the Ronald McDonald Family Retreat.

Being in its 8th year, Event Partner, TJL Business Advisors and Accountants were pleased for the event to be such a success.

TJL founder and Managing Director, Tony Lumtin, has been involved since the very first golf day. "Every year we want to do what we can to make a difference to as many families as possible, so to know over 120 families will have a chance to take a free holiday is amazing."

The Ronald McDonald Family Retreat is a sanctuary for families with a seriously ill or injured child. Located in the heart of Forster on the shores of Wallis Lake, the four cabins are the perfect place to enjoy a relaxing getaway. Many describe it as some of their happiest memories and something they wouldn't have been able to afford without Ronald McDonald House Charities support.

Community Engagement Coordinator, Sarah Wilkinson said "We are truly grateful for TJL and all our Golf Day sponsors unwavering support. Most sponsors join us, year in, year out and their generosity on the day is incredible."

It wasn't just golfers on the green though, 6-year-old Kit and his family came along to share their own experience staying at the Ronald McDonald Family Retreat.

Right: Tony and TJL Team. Photos supplied.



Above: Kit enjoying her holiday visit in Forster.

Kit was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukaemia in the winter of 2022. For the past two years, Kit has undergone countless tests, biopsies and toxic treatments. Thankfully his body responded well and he has been in remission for some time, however, it has taken a significant toll on his immune system and caused much stress and anxiety for the whole family.

Kit took his last dose of chemo, just before packing their bags, to Forster to enjoy a holiday at the Family Retreat and support the Golf Day. Kit's Dad, also Ben doesn't mind a round of Golf himself, so joined one of the teams on the day for a round.

Reflecting on their stay at the Family Retreat, Kit's Mum Hannah said "It was time to reconnect, be outdoors (outside of the hospital) and just let the kids be kids again. I loved that the yard was fully enclosed and we could just sit on the veranda and know that the kids were safe playing. The location is perfect and we loved being able to walk into the main street of Forster and to the beach. I hadn't felt that relaxed in a really long time"

The family loved their time in Forster and were blown away by the generosity and support from the business community.

Anyone who would like to learn more about how you can help to support families with a sick or injured child can contact Sarah on 0497 497.



Local Identity – Lobsang Jenpa

Interview by Vanda Gooley.

Gongbo Dhandub, 47, is originally from Tibet. He is better known in Forster Tuncurry as Lobsang Jenpa (his name when he was a monk). Once he became an Australian Citizen, he legally changed his name back to his birth name - Gongbo Dhandub but people still know him as Lobsang.

Lobsang was born in Tibet in a small farming village called Yaksang in Eastern Tibet near Thewo in the Amdo province. Tibet is mainly Buddhist, and an autonomous region of China. It is a country known as the 'Roof of the World' for its towering peaks. It shares Mount Everest with Nepal.

Both Lobsang's parents are deceased. His father died in 2011 and his mother in 2012. He is one of 8 children in the family, 3 girls and 5 boys. All are adults now with children and grandchildren. Six of Lobsang's siblings live in Tibet working their farms. However, his youngest brother, Nayduk, lives in America.

Life as a child in Tibet was spent taking care of the daily chores on the farm and looking after the animals - pigs and cows and Yaks. When the cows are mated with Yaks their offspring is called Dzomo. These half cow half Yak animals are known to produce very good milk, cheese and butter. Sometimes, tending to the animals meant spending the night with them on the mountain in the freezing cold. In Tibet, temperatures range between 12-15 degrees during the day and drop as low as minus 5 degrees or below at night.

It was Lobsang's mission to have an education, however education in Tibet was not free and his family could not afford to pay the Chinese school fees. He decided at 13 years of age to join a monastery. This way, he would learn the Buddhist teachings and receive a Buddhist education at the same time. Lobsang became a monk when he was 15 and remained at the Tag Thong monastery until he was 23.

He was required to perform many duties and he also had the responsibility to care for his elderly teacher who was the Abbott, his name was Gyal Tsen Rinpoche. His teacher was a very respected wise man, as he was such a good teacher many visitors came to meet him and receive his teachings. It was Lobsang's responsibility to meet and greet these people, serve tea and take care of their personal needs. The years passed and his teacher became very sick and died at the age of 76, 'the monks were all extremely sad when he passed away.'

Unfortunately, the strain of all Lobsang's duties and taking care of his teacher took its toll on his health and he became very sick, needing time in hospital. He decided that if he survived his sickness he would try to escape to India.

When China occupied Tibet in 1950 in order to 'liberate' Tibet from its 'economic backwardness' of feudal and religious traditions, the effects were devastating. Many Tibetans were dispatched to labour camps, monks and nuns were imprisoned or executed, thousands of monasteries and temples were destroyed, and communist propaganda was forced upon the Tibetan people. Tens of thousands fled over the Himalayas to seek



Above: (L to R) Aiden, Lhamo (in red), Namgyal, Lobsang, Rinchen and Jule.

refuge in India, where Tibet's spiritual leader by incarnation, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, had been granted asylum and allowed to form a government-in-exile after fleeing in 1959.

When Lobsang's health improved, he let his hair grow and made plans to get to India. During September 2000 he met up with a group of 33 other Tibetans and they set off to make their arduous journey over the Himalayan mountains in the Winter months. This was the best time as it was too cold for the Chinese guards to chase after them. It was a long and difficult trek taking 44 days, "I only had the clothes on my back, one blanket and a pair of shoes with holes in them." He suffered snow blindness and severe frost bite. When he arrived in Nepal, he was sent to hospital for 2 weeks to recover.

Lobsang had no ID or paperwork and nothing to let people know he was a monk. When he was discharged from hospital, he was taken to the Tibetan office of the Dalai Lama in Nepal to receive documents to assist him on his way to India.

Lobsang travelled to Delhi on a 15-hour journey by bus. After a short time in Delhi, Lobsang and some of the group he had crossed the Himalayas with, were bussed to Dharamsalha, a 12-hour journey - 'it was so strange being in a different country. India is very different to Tibet.' The climate in India, for most of the year, is extremely hot and Tibetans have a hard time coping with the heat. Lobsang found the cities incredibly crowded and busy, so unlike his farming community. Fortunately, the Indian government allowed Tibetans to go to the higher cooler areas. Dharamsalha is surrounded by cedar forests on the edge of the Himalayas. It is famous for its Buddhist monasteries and is the home of the Dalai Lama.

On his arrival in Dharamsalha, Lobsang was given monk robes and sent to his accommodation. 'I came into contact with some friends who had made the journey over the mountains earlier than me, it was nice to see some familiar faces.'

The day came to meet the Dalai Lama, 'this was an amazing gift for me, I had tears rolling down my face and felt very blessed.'

"When meeting the Dalai Lama, I couldn't understand him. In Tibet there are different languages depending on which province you come from. The Dalai Lama speaks Lhasa, I

Left: Lobsang with his son Rinchen.

come from Amdo, I could understand very little of what he said. However, the feeling of compassion, love and warmth he expresses is amazing. After a short time in India, I learnt to speak Lhasa, so now I can understand every word the Dalai Lama says."

Lobsang remained at Kirti Monastery in Dharamsalha for 3 years then moved into private accommodation for 2 years.

Lobsang met an Australian family who were visiting India. He asked them if they could help teach him English and thankfully, they said yes. This was the start of an incredible friendship and Lobsang and the family continued to stay in contact by email. Jule and Aiden Wood became like Lobsang's second family.

Lobsang wanted to make the journey to Australia, 'so I spoke to my new Australian family about my wishes and then the long process began.'

Lobsang was granted a tourist Visa and when Jule and he arrived in Australia on the 5th October 2005, the rest of the family met them at the Airport. They travelled to Forster after a few sightseeing days in Sydney. 'Such a beautiful city and no guards or police. I was amazed at the freedom people have and remember thinking what a special place to live and perhaps I could stay here.'

The Tourist Visa was only for 3 months so they had to find the best way to apply for political asylum. After months of dealing with immigration and many applications, Lobsang was eventually granted Australian citizenship, 'I was so happy.'

Lobsang and the Wood family set up a Dharmameditation Centre in Tuncurry which was very well supported by the community and they had many Lamas and Monks come from afar to do blessings and bring the Dharma teachings.

Lobsang went to TAFE to study English and other subjects which was very difficult as he had never experienced formal schooling. He was taught to swim by a friend.

After a few years Lobsang decided, if possible, he would like to return to Tibet to visit his family. He was refused a visa many times but was eventually granted one so in 2011, he returned to Tibet with his Australian family. "It was wonderful to be re-united with my family. Words cannot describe the joy I felt in my

heart. My family were so happy to see me and we had a wonderful time together. For many years they thought I was dead. We all had a great time together".

Lobsang remained a monk for quite a few years after he arrived in Australia. However, being a monk and not living in a monastery was hard and he decided to disrobe. He continued to study at TAFE and completed a certificate 3 in Aged Care. He worked as a cook at the Sporties Tuncurry for a couple of years, then decided to work with people with disabilities.

Once again, in 2012, Lobsang returned to Tibet with family and friends. This time he met his now wife Namgyal Tso. "The trials and tribulations we had to go through to bring Namgyal Tso to Australia were many, however Namgyal arrived in Australia in August 2013."

"I now have 2 beautiful children, Lhamo 10 years and Rinchen 8 yrs. After living with my Australian family for many years, we recently moved into our own new home in Tuncurry."

Namgyal and Lobsang both work with people with disabilities and aged care. Their children go to Tuncurry school and are involved in many sports; swimming, soccer, dancing and nippers. They love their little caboodle dog called Tashi.

"We do love living in this area but we are the only Tibetans here so we sometimes miss being close to other Tibetans." Newcastle has a Tibetan community so they often make the journey there.

"I am extremely grateful to be living and working in Australia. The children, Namgyal and myself have many friends in this area and an extended Australian family. We are all very close."

Unfortunately, neither Lobsang or Namgyal are able to obtain Australian passports so are unable to return to visit their families in Tibet at any foreseeable future.

Lobsang's Motto for life is:

"If you cannot help someone then please don't harm them."



Above: Lobsang (on far right) as a young monk.

Leanne Kemp knows Lobsang as a support worker...

"I have had the pleasure of knowing Lobsang for many years on a professional level as a support worker for our two boys with special needs.

Over this period of time, we have found Lobsang to be a fantastic support worker. He is very professional, caring and nurturing. His calming mannerism is very fitting for our two boys who love having him as a support worker.

Lobsang constantly recognises our challenges and needs, and often shuffles his busy life to help and support our family while still having time for his own family.

Over the years we have had the pleasure of becoming friends with Lobsang and his family and have found them to be very caring and thoughtful people.

We feel blessed to have Lobsang in our lives. His struggles and determination to make Australia his home show the strength of his character and dedication."

Fernleigh 15 - A running race for everyone

On Sunday 20th of October the popular annual event known as Fernleigh 15 took place. Nearly 1300 runners and walkers started their run from Adamstown and not a single person lost their way.

Background

Fernleigh is a high-quality trail on the coastal fringe of Newcastle with significant bushland and wetlands despite its proximity to major population centres. The track follows the now disused rail line between Adamstown and Belmont. Eventually it will connect to Blacksmiths and Swansea. The railway opened in the late 1880's to transport coal from mines in the Lake Macquarie area to the Port of Newcastle. The last passenger train ran in 1971.

The Race

Due to the narrowness of the trail the enthusiastic entrants were released in waves based on speed and age. The first third of the race is on a gradual rise and traverses through a 180 metre curved brick lined tunnel. It seemed most runners were wearing the latest carbon plated shoes which have a "clip clomp" sound to them, and they echoed significantly inside the tunnel. There were not many Dunlop Volley wearers on this day.

The mid part of the 15km is flattish and drink stations were a welcome sight after completing the initial slightly uphill section. The last part of the race was slightly downhill (hardly noticeable) and after 49 minutes the first runner (Anthony Morgan) crossed the

finish line. The first female (Rose Davies) wasn't far behind (51 minutes) having recently returned from the Paris Olympics.

Local running group Forster Runners featured significantly in the results. Lindy McDonnell earned a third placing in her age group (50-59) in a time of 1h 13 m. Mark Fletcher managed 10th in the 40-49 age group in a time of 59m and Mitch Teller (who always deceivingly looks like he's going for a Sunday walk) ran a brilliant 62 minutes for 15th for his age group (30-39). Other noticeable finishers included Dave Isbel 18th, Andy McDonnell 24th, Ged Tuckerman 27th and Deb Tuckerman 43rd (50-59). Mick Doyle finished 26th, James Quiring 40th and Rob Freijs 41st (60-69).

Once again H Events put on a very classy event and presented all finishers with a medal.



Above: (L to R) Ged Tuckerman, Nady McDonnell, Dave Hughes (in front), Mitch Teller, Dave Isbel, Mark Fletcher, Lindy MacDonell and Sonia Kennedy.

Zane Fletcher - take a bow

On 23 October, the state athletics in Sydney took place and Forster Runner, Zane Fletcher did some extraordinary quality efforts.

First event was the 1500m and he managed an 8th position out of 40 runners. The first four finishers broke the state record so that indicates a very top-class strong field. Zane's time was 4m 53 (3:14 minutes per km)



Left: 11 year old Zane Fletcher performed well at the State Athletics. Photos supplied.

Zane's second event was the 800 metres and he finished a creditable 10th out of 40 runners in a PB time of 2m 23s (2:59 minutes per km). He missed competing in the final of the 800 by less than one second.

On behalf of Forster Runners we are very proud of you Zane.

By Dave Hughie.

Busy Bullring at Forster

Australia-wide, there are 62,000 children undertaking the surf life saving junior activities program: Nippers.

Locally, the Forster Ocean Baths, more commonly known as the 'Bullring', has seen hundreds of these Nippers, aged Under 8 to Under 14, undergo their annual proficiency test.

These budding young life savers were from the three southern clubs in the Lower North Coast Surf Life Saving Club (SLSL) Branch - Forster SLSL, Cape Hawke SLSL and Pacific Palms SLSL.

It is vital for surf life saving clubs to ensure that their enrolled Nippers, who will spend time in deep water, are proficient in both pool and surf scenarios so that they are: SURF COMPETENT, SURF CONFIDENT, SURF SAFE.

It is also vital that families acknowledge that the Nippers' junior activities program is not a 'learn-to-swim' program and children are expected to already have an age-appropriate level of competency in the water prior to enrolment.

The youngest Nippers, Under 6 and Under 7,



Above: Pacific Palms SLSL Nippers with Jerrad Allen (Club President), Wendy Elliott and Jeanette Allen (Age Managers).

only access water of wading depths and are evaluated for competency in regard to their on-land and in-water wading skills as part of their in-on-going program.

The whole Nipper program is focused on participation and enjoyment and, for those interested, there are opportunities for surf sport competitions. The goal is to increase the



Above: Forster SLSL with Water Safety Officers in orange and Age Managers in dark blue.

confidence and skill base of the Nippers in the water and on the sand.

Within each club, the Junior Activities Chairperson (JAC) coordinates Age Managers, Assistant Managers, Water Safety Officers and other support volunteers while working hand-in-hand with the duty beach patrol captain in delivering the programs.

Pacific Palms SLSL JAC, Wendy Elliott, Cape Hawke SLSL JAC, Ben Forrester, and Forster SLSL JAC, Nova Grosvenor, were all excited with the recommencement of Nippers and especially in the recovery of enrolment numbers following

a decline due to the cessation of activities associated with Covid-19 lockdowns. Also excited were the families of participants who watched their children undertaking proficiency assessment. The biggest cheers came from fellow Nippers with calls of encouragement to those still in the water and yet to be deemed competent.

With a break in activities during the Christmas-New Year holiday period, Nippers will run through the early months of 2025 with each club deciding when the programs cease.

Story and photos by Annie Evans.

Second Placing out of this world!



Above: Mixed 20s 200m - nearing the finish line. Northern Region are in yellow.

Great Lakes Pearl Dragons' representative dragon boat paddlers participated at the Region versus Region championship as part of the successful Northern Region dragon boat team. This event was held at the spectacular Sydney International Regatta Centre, Penrith, on Saturday 12th October.

Despite the event involving serious and competitive racing, it was noted "how friendly the paddlers were within the team and how relaxed everyone was with each other." A special camaraderie had developed within the team, which is perhaps why they were so successful. There was no doubt that when the team was on the water, the paddlers were fierce in their determination to perform their best.

Who were the competitors:

Paddlers for the Northern Region came from clubs along the north coast of NSW. Their rival regions were from Western NSW, Southern NSW, Metropolitan Sydney, Bank Street (Sydney) and Hawkesbury-Hunter. Great Lakes Pearl Dragons had six members as part of the regional team - five of whom were competing in this for their first time!

How much training did they have to do:

Training seemed endless as the original event was scheduled for March and had to be cancelled due to flooding at the venue. Most competitors had already travelled to Sydney the day before as they were also competing in the State Titles. The cancellation came as a surprise to the group who had loaded up their gear from their cars and were on the way to the grandstand when this was announced.

Right: Northern Regional Leadership team with the second place trophy: (L to R) Lorraine Fitzgerald, Ken Fitzgerald & Janice Hoffman.

The on-water training as a regional team was held at Wauchope on numerous occasions with on-land additional fitness and strength training set by the coach to be completed between these sessions. Paddlers attended their own club training on the dragon boat as part of their regular regime 2-3 times a week minimum.

How did the Northern region team get selected:

Selection for the team took place at the beginning of the year by way of fitness tests and videos of paddlers' techniques. The change of competition date resulted in many people being unavailable in October. The original representation was to have been two teams, while the final group was one full team only.

Coach Ken Fitzgerald, Assistant Coach Janice Hoffman and Team Manager Lorraine Fitzgerald were modest about the team's accomplishments, putting all the credit back on the determined paddlers.



What was the event structure:

The championship involved racing over three different distances with either 10 or 20 paddlers in a crew.

The morning racing consisted of 500m races for Mixed 20s crews, Open 10s and Women 10s. These were followed by races over a shorter distance of 200m for each of the same crew categories.

The final was a 1km pursuit event where the team's open crew (mainly men) and women's crew raced each other with the goal of urging each other to go faster to cross the finish line together with a good time measured by the last boat across the line. The race consisted of two regions on the water at one time. This was a highlight of the competition as the Northern Region took first place. Marika Koroi, one of the Pearl's men, said this was the most fun, being in the Men's Open 10s crew and trying to catch our Women's 10s crew before the finish line!

Results:

Each event was held over two separate rounds of heats. At the end of the day when results for each event were announced, the Northern Region realised their rewards for the lengthy training when they received a place in every event.

They were then announced as overall second place winners with first place going to Sydney Bank St team.



Above: Our Five Pearl's representatives after the Region vs Region event: (L to R) Back row - Perry James and Marika Koroi. Front row - Cathy James, Michelle Richardson and Wendy Burdekin.

Highlights for individuals:

Great Lakes Pearl Dragons President and Northern Region team member Michelle Richardson said, "Being stroke (person who sets the race pace) for two of the races was something I never dreamed of after such a short time paddling. Hearing the Northern NSW being called in every race with a place, topped by overall second place... still seems unreal."

"I just wanted to be stronger, to put in more when the sweep called for power or asked us to empty our tanks," reported Wendy Burdekin.

Coming Up

The Great Lakes Pearl Dragons are in the final stages of planning for their own regatta to be held over the weekend of 16th & 17th November at Elizabeth reserve, Forster Keys. Teams visit from all along our coast - Northern, Central and Sydney. Come and watch the events on both days to see what dragon boating is all about.

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MNCCC Golf Croquet District Championships



Above: Participants in MNCCC Championships Sunday 13th October Members from Taree, Gloucester, Port Macquarie and Forster Clubs. Photo supplied.

Forster Croquet Club hosted the Mid North Coast Croquet Council (MNCCC) Golf Croquet District Championships on Sunday 13th October. 30 players attended from Gloucester, Taree, Port Macquarie and Forster.

MNCCC hold club events during the year between these teams and Club Champions are then eligible to play in the District Championships. There are 3 divisions in all Championships. This is a keenly fought

competition with all clubs hoping to be champions.

Forster were successful in winning the Division 1 and Division 2 events and came second behind Port Macquarie in Division 3.

It was a lovely friendly but competitive day and well catered for by our members who baked lovely cakes and slices for the enjoyment of all.

By Helen Cooper - Golf Croquet Captain.



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Your work in progress



PBM 6hr Mountain Bike Race at Tinonee

On Sunday 20 October, 105 Mountain bike enthusiasts from the Mid North Coast and beyond descended on the Kirrawak State Forest near Tinonee (or 'the tip' as it's affectionately known to mountain bikers) for the annual PBM Hardrock 6-hour Mountain Bike Race. Individuals and teams ride as many laps as they can over 6 hours to have a chance of winning in 14 different categories offered.

This mountain bike park near Taree is one of the best riding facilities you'll find in NSW and is maintained by a crew of volunteers - the Trail Fairies. This year's track was no let down offering an exhilarating ride for cross country mountain bikers.



Above: Forster locals who took to 'the tip' on Sunday (L to R) Simon Ballard, Aaron Eichner, Darcy Every, Rod Every, Bruce Pain, Dave Harris, Sam Hoey, Charlie Kennet and George Costello.

Forster-Tuncurry was well represented at this PMB Hardrock 6-hour event. Taking on the solo events was Robyn Geelan, who in her first enduro finished 9 laps to finish 3rd in the open female category and Simon Ballard who completed 14 laps on his own (more than most of the teams managed) to also come 3rd in the male 18+ category. Forster Tuncurry Medical Centres team FTMC finished in 3rd position in the mixed team, while Bruce Pain and Charlie

Left: Simon Ballard on his way to a 3rd overall finish. Photos supplied.

Kennet also featured on the podiums in the e-bike and male 45 + team categories.

Thanks to Charlie Kennett from Pacific Blue Metal as major sponsor and CollinsWCollins, Manning Valley Free Range Eggs and Regional Financial Solutions as partner sponsors. Thank you also to Dave and Lisa Harris as commissar and timing, and Bruce Pain. Without these wonderful volunteers, and many others from our community, none of these events would go ahead.

By Aaron Eichner.

Inter Resort Golf Event

On Monday 14 October 27 golfers from Palm Lake Resorts - Forster Lakes and Tea Gardens played their latest event at the Forster Golf Course. The players enjoyed ideal weather for their golf were an indication of this.



Above: Warren Arnold (Forster Lakes) on left with winner Garth Van Nierop (Forster Lakes). Photos supplied.

Forster Lakes were the winners of the event on the day by a very slim margin.



Above: With 2nd place Ross Clissold (Tea Garden).

The individual winner was Garth Van Nierop from Forster Lakes with 2nd going to Ross Clissold from Tea Gardens and 3rd place to Craig Stewart from Forster Lakes.

Another enjoyable day was had by everyone and we look forward to the next event.

By Warren Arnold.



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