

THE ILLAWARRA *flame*

October 2022



Keeping community news alive

Gardening for good

A chat with
Clarence Slockee

+

Electrify 2515 needs you!

The volunteers
powering change



Meet Our Contributors



Caroline Baum is a journalist, author and the ambassador for the Older Womens' Network (OWN) in NSW. She lives in the Northern Illawarra.



Ben Wollen is the director of Wollen Architecture, a studio with a focus on sustainable design. "Only build what you need to" is one of his driving mantras. When he's not working, Ben's enjoying the natural wonders of the Illawarra escarpment with his wife and kids.



Anne Howell is a former *Sydney Morning Herald*, *Illawarra Mercury* and *Advertiser* journalist, living in Coledale. She has a PhD in Creative Writing from the University of Wollongong and works as a freelance copyeditor.



Brian Kelly first stepped into the *Illawarra Mercury* office as the new kid from Thirroul nearly 40 years ago and is still managing (just) to hold on tight to a career he is grateful has dragged him to the UK (10 years), then Perth and Melbourne before a return to the district in 2008. He deems it a pleasure to get back into the grassroots stories of the northern suburbs.



Caitlin Marshall is a social worker, mental health educator and co-founder of MakeShift, a support and education agency that connects creativity and mental health, for social change.



Stephen Young retired from software development and farming in Canberra, moving to Thirroul in 2015. Since then he plays tennis, table tennis, bushwalks, and volunteers with Wollongong Council Bushcare, SCARF, and the Illawarra Greens. Stephen is also passionate about achieving a safe climate for his grandchildren.



Rebecca Jeffery studied nursing at UoW and began her career in Emergency Nursing. She later worked a private health insurance company. Since 2016 she has worked at Bulli Medical Practice as the Clinical Services Manager. When Rebecca isn't working, she enjoys spending time with family, running and walking her dogs.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: The publishers acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and their cultural and spiritual connection to this land. Their stories are written in the land and hold great significance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, from the mountains to the sea.

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COVER Clarence Slockee of the ABC's *Gardening Australia*. Photo: Anthony Warry

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Electrify 2515 needs you

Meet the volunteers powering the bid to become the world's first fully electrified community. And if you haven't filled in their survey, now is the time! Kristen McDonald reports

Energy expert Saul Griffith and his team at Rewiring Australia had the brainwave (supported by extensive research!) that they wanted to electrify a whole community. Yet it was a group of local volunteers who embraced the concept and have been working hard to advocate for a pilot electrification project to take place here in our backyard. If it goes ahead, it would be a world-first program and would not only be of huge benefit to our community and for individual households, it would provide a blueprint for other communities to follow suit across Australia and put us on the path to a net zero emissions future.

The core team got together at a pub three months ago to see what we could do about the climate crisis in our own community. Since then we've been meeting fortnightly – with children in tow – after we clock off from our day jobs to try to progress the campaign. Once we launched Electrify 2515, about 20 wonderful community members also put their hand up to help get the word out and contribute. If you've seen a flyer, poster or t-shirt, it is thanks to them!

So who are the volunteers behind the Electrify 2515 team?

Trent Jansen

"I live in Thirroul on beautiful Dharawal Country on the edge of the escarpment with my partner Amy and our daughter Arie, who is my main motivation for working on climate

change projects. I'm so excited to be working with Electrify 2515 and am truly heartened by the overwhelmingly positive response from our community. This is a project that can make practical, lasting changes to carbon emissions through a simple and manageable transition that we can all understand and participate in. I am electrified to see our community be one of the first to take on this transition, to break new ground for the global movement that must follow."

Jessie Mawson and Francis Vierboom

The couple live in Thirroul with their two kids, Bill and Eddie. Jessie works for a global refugee charity and Francis founded a software company that helps construction projects, but he's currently taking time off to be a stay-at-home dad.

"We love that we've got the chance to work on the Electrify project. We think we owe it to our kids to minimise climate change as much as we can. We also want our kids to graduate school into a strong economy with interesting local jobs, and that means getting on with the energy transition now. We're up in the escarpment with lots of trees so we can't always make much use of our solar panels, which is why a home battery and/or EV would really maximise our solar production."



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Jeremy Park

"Having worked for political change on various local, state and federal election campaigns it's been a great relief to finally see some leadership around climate action and integrity. But

for me it's Saul Griffith's non-political blueprint for tackling the climate crisis from a household level that's been most inspiring. I love the pragmatic and financial argument that everyone in our community can benefit from. My family is well on the way to electrifying our lives and see the upfront cost as a smart down payment for our future."

Laura Scalafioti

"I felt truly electrified when I read the Big Switch. All the doom and gloom from various IPCC reports, and years of inaction turned into optimism and excitement for a project that feels tangible, and well within our reach. I love that it could also pave the way for sustainable, local jobs. Bonus points for forming deeper ties with our brilliant community!"



Ali and Tim Pavy-Lovitt

Living in Wombarra for almost four years, Tim, Ali and Emma are continually blown away by the natural beauty of the South Coast.

"When asked if we'd want to lend a hand to a project that could lead the

way for sustainable energy and preserve this beauty, it was an easy answer. Our daughter Emma has become increasingly interested in birds and animals in her everyday life, a daily reminder of our responsibility to take action on climate change. And having chosen a rental in which we were mistakenly told the solar was working, we know too well the difference that harnessing the sun alone can have!"

Tom MacLachlan

"As a filmmaker I've been making videos for climate action for 12 years and so often they were about large-scale solutions, demanding action from politicians.



The beauty of this Electrify campaign is that it's local, small-scale, and totally within our grasp. We're not waiting for epic legislation change. We're not turning the rusted screws of fossil fuel companies, trying to get them to see the light. We're just doing it ourselves."

Davin Turner

"As a local architect I am passionate about using design to create sustainable homes that minimise environmental impact. I love how this project helps all homes become more energy efficient and we think about our interconnection with our neighbours as well. Saul's mantra about 'electrifying our castles to combat climate change' is something that really resonated with me on a personal and professional level."



Kristen McDonald

"Working in the non-profit sector I'm really passionate about engaging people to try to create change. What I've loved about the Electrified community concept is there are so many benefits which can resonate with people that



it just makes sense. Cleaner air, better health, reduced power bills, community connection and infrastructure, local employment, and, yes, positively working towards addressing the gigantic climate crisis!"

What's next?

Of the 4500 homes in 2515, more than 1000 have registered their interest in being part of this electrification pilot, but the more people who complete our survey, the greater chance the pilot project will have to go ahead here. To register your interest in being part of the pilot, scan the QR code (below) or visit electrify2515.org

We're also holding a community forum on October 9.

Unfortunately, it's at capacity but we will be recording it, so if you'd like a recording, please email us at: electrify2515@gmail.com ✨



Scan the QR code or visit electrify2515.org to register your interest in being part of the pilot

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'Black filth' in local creek

Helensburgh resident James McCormack gives a first-hand account of the mine pollution he discovered in Camp Gully Creek

As a 2508 local, one of my favourite things to do is explore the southern inland reaches of the Royal National Park and its neighbour, the Garrawarra State Conservation Area. It's an amazing area, full of gorgeous rainforest, and laced with beautiful creeks studded with mossy boulders and sparkling cascades. On Tuesday, September 6, however, not far off darkness, I reached Camp Gully Creek, right near its confluence with the Hacking River. I did a double-take.

What I saw looked surreal – inky, black water flowing through a usually lovely section of the creek. And on its banks, black filth had collected, smeared over rocks and coating small, dried-up pools.

I knew immediately the source of this filthy water. Upstream lies the Metropolitan Mine, Australia's oldest working coal mine. Being late in the day, there was no time to investigate further. But the next day, I punched upstream further; what I saw horrified me. It was even worse than downstream. The water was blacker, full of even more coal sediment. Greasy slicks were apparent on the water. And not only were the creek banks coated in muck, in sections a thick, black, custard-like substance floated on the water, sometimes collecting in deposits 15cm high. All this was flowing down Camp Gully Creek and then



into the Hacking, the lifeblood waterway of the Royal National Park.

I immediately raised the alarm. The mine, despite being obligated to by law, had not notified the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA), so initially the organisation didn't know what to make of my claims. But as it happens, I'm also

the editor of *Wild Magazine*, so I could point to the mag's social media pages, where I'd posted numerous photos and details of what I'd seen.

To cut a long story short – but if you want to read the long story on the *Flame's* website, and I think you should, because what ensued was anything but straightforward – eventually the EPA kicked into gear, and the mainstream media and the NSW Minister for Environment, James Griffin, got involved. It changed the dynamic. The water from the mine stopped flowing. The EPA issued a Prevention Notice. A clean-up was ordered. And in the future, hopefully a hefty fine will be levied. This was the mine's third pollution event this year.

2508's beloved neighbours, the Royal NP and Garrawarra SCA, deserve far better than this.

The *Flame* has sought comment from Peabody. Find the full story by James McCormack at theillawarraflame.com.au ✨



Pollution in Camp Gully Creek.
Photo: James McCormack

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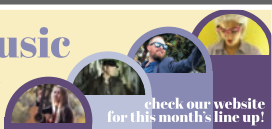
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'Jobs are going to be lost'

Bulli business owners fear that traffic improvements will ruin them, Caitlin Sloan reports



Businesses in Bulli's township have condemned Transport for NSW's proposal to extend clearway hours along Princes Highway, citing concerns for pedestrian safety and plummeting trade.

In April, the transport authority confirmed it will be progressing with the implementation of a range of traffic improvement measures outlined during a community consultation period in June and July of 2021.

As well as new clearway hours, the changes include prohibiting right turns in and out of Station Street, the addition of a right-turn arrow at the Park Road lights, and new parking spaces and carpark upgrades on Railway and Station streets.

Owner of Stokes Lane Cafe Sam Dodds says that the extension of clearway hours poses added risks to pedestrians, with the suburb's main strip already likened to an expressway with heavy traffic and freighters on weekdays.

"That truck was just going 80kph through a township – it's a freeway at the moment because of the clearway," he said.

"People are flying along here [and] someone is going to be killed."

The Fitz Cafe and Bar owner Tom Bailey agrees, arguing the clearways are an accident waiting to happen. "During clearway hours when there is no

buffer of parked cars next to the kerb, I have noticed cars flying past well over the 60kph speed limit," he said.

"[It's] a significant hazard for pedestrians, particularly young children."

A TfNSW spokesperson said: "The proposed changes are to implement the current clearway times in both directions during both the morning and afternoon peak periods on weekdays and in the middle of the day on Saturdays in the southbound direction."

The cafe owners say the new clearway times – 6.30-9.30am and 3-6pm on weekdays and 11am-1pm on Saturdays and public holidays – will wholly overlap with their peak trading hours.

"They're taking the carpark from this side of this business community and proposing carparking hundreds of metres away – it's ludicrous," Sam said.

"Have you ever walked 500 metres for a takeaway coffee?"

"It's going to affect this area, jobs are going to be lost, and people's lives are going to be changed from what's going on."

Tom said: "After the last few years local businesses have had to endure, this might be the last straw that breaks them."

Claiming that Transport for NSW's current traffic improvement plan offers remiss, short-term solutions to Bulli's congestion problem, business owners say that the answer is building the Memorial Drive extension to bypass Bulli.

"What they're proposing – to alleviate the congestion issues with clearways and no-right turns and traffic modifications – all of those things are a band-aid solution," Bulli Heritage Hotel licensee Andy Bell said.

"Given the fact that the inevitability is that our



Bulli cafe owners Tom Bailey and (top left) Sam Dodds. Photos: Lachy Starling/Silly Studios, supplied

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community is going to grow and expand, and more people are going to be in the area ... it doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that it's maybe buying a couple of years before we're right back to where we started."

During the traffic improvement consultation process last year, TfNSW received 1057 overall community suggestions. Building Bulli bypass, although considered to be out of the project's scope, came out on top, suggested by 65.2 per cent of people. The next most popular suggestion was traffic light phasing (11.4 percent).

The steep inclines and complex geology of the Illawarra escarpment have always made road building in the region a costly challenge.

Andy Bell believes TfNSW is unwilling to allocate funding to a bypass's development, despite the NSW Government earmarking a corridor between Bulli Pass and Memorial Drive for potential infrastructural expansion in the mid-70s.

"The solution has been in front of us, and it's been in planning since the 70s, they've got all the key parts of the puzzle ready to go, they just don't want to write the cheque and green-light it," Andy said.

Sam Dodds said he has not heard from Transport for NSW since last year. "All they want to do is change some signs, spend a couple of thousand dollars, wash their hands of it."

"It's a sad time to be in Bulli and have such big decisions being made by people who don't live here and don't care about our beautiful area."

When will new clearways come in?

The proposed new clearway hours are part of traffic measures planned for Bulli that Transport for NSW says will enhance safety, reliability and connectivity.

"Transport for NSW will provide a preliminary update of the proposed works in October and a more comprehensive update, including a project timeline, by mid-November 2022," a spokesperson said.

"Clearways have always been part of the proposal as presented to the community in June and July 2021 and will only be implemented once all of the parking offsets have been provided."

TfNSW's focus is on improving the existing road network. On calls for a Bulli bypass, the spokesperson said that TfNSW is "aware of community interest in an extension of Memorial Drive to connect to Bulli Pass".

More info: nswroads.work/bullithirroul

Read Ben Wollen's 'Build Bulli Bypass' opinion piece on page 44 and the interview with councillor Mithra Cox on page 43. 🌟



NIRAG thanks Max Ackerman

By NIRAG secretary Ross Dearden

Earlier this year Max Ackerman – foundation member and NIRAG Secretary from 1984 to 2002 – decided it was time to move to Queensland with his wife Mary to be closer to his family.

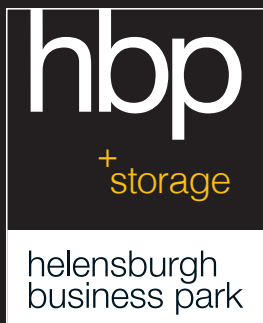
For over 20 years Max led the fight to protect the environment at Sandon Point and he became the most recognisable spokesperson for NIRAG.

Coal bins were proposed and defeated in 1984. He helped save the Sandon Point boatsheds from demolition and later worked to establish "Wilkie's Walk" as a pedestrian right of way to keep the connection from Beattie Avenue to McCauley's Beach. In the early 1990s he was a key member of the Local Environment Study (LES) community consultation team.

Max championed the value of the creeks and floodplain and knew the Aboriginal cultural significance of Sandon Point. He raised awareness of the impact of development proposals; he earned the respect of the community and the Traditional Owners. In March 2001 the development was about to start on construction at Sandon Point. Max was prepared to picket the site on his own, but due to his enthusiastic example, the Community Picket was established at the end of Hill Street, Bulli. It was staffed 24/7 for five years and was successful in gaining significantly improved environmental outcomes, and recognition of Indigenous heritage.

In 2004 Max was awarded NIRAG Life Membership; in 2012 he was named Illawarra Volunteer of the Year. His leadership and enthusiasm will be greatly missed – we wish Max and Mary well in their new home.


NIRAG is acting as Neighbourhood Forum 3 (Woonona to Austi) until a new convenor is found. Next meeting: 7pm, 2 Nov at Bulli Community Centre. All welcome. Email nirag@bigpond.com or text 0411 484 166. 🌟




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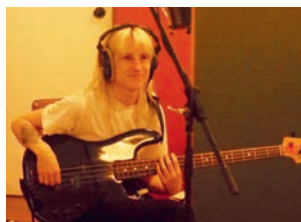
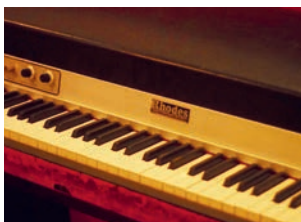
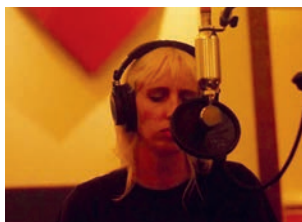
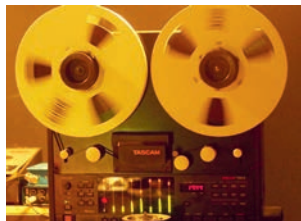


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From clothing to sound factory

By Brian Kelly



Where vestments for the masses were once stitched, sounds from guitars and drums are now deftly woven. Another example of Illawarra's historic focus turning from manufacturing to the creative arts is becoming a dream come true for two music-loving mates.

The building which used to house King Gee clothing factory – part of Bellambi's community fabric for 43 years until closing in 2009 – has nurtured new commercial life in several forms, one being Stranded Recording Studios, an acoustically sealed unit beginning to garner a following in the district's musical coteries.

Cody Munro Moore and Bowen Shakallis had been bandmates and had dabbled in recording with others, but when lockdown hit, they knew they wanted to give their own thing a go. What was a concrete slab in November 2020 is now a font of recorded music of various styles.

"Bowen and I have different strengths but we both work together," Cody, a Wombarra resident, said. "Bowen has a background in sound engineering while I come from running an independent record label for many years.

"When we work together, we encourage community through music while maintaining technical expertise for the great artists we have coming in."

As Cody swings open the former ABC studio door, an Aladdin's cave of all things musical, some of great vintage, is revealed, and every piece tells a story. There's the jarrah floor they picked up for a few hundred dollars that helped stabilise acoustics, the door itself, and the main attraction – the

30-channel Audiotronics recording desk made in Memphis 40 years ago, which was languishing in a Gold Coast container. The team needed an exemption to cross the border during lockdown to pick it up.

With Cody's builder dad keeping an occasional eye on construction, plus Bowen's sound engineering knowledge, things slowly took shape, and Stranded (named after the strandboard used in its genesis) has been running with three or four sessions a week since November 2021.

A growing reputation has lured emerging Sydney-based artists such as Caitlin Harnett (country), Flowertruck, Babitha and Bored Shorts (indie rock) into the Stranded embrace.

Cody tends to encourage ensemble playing when he is in the chair pushing the slides.

"If bands are not confident doing that, I'm happy to hear their ideas and perhaps do it a different way," he said.

"It's a really great puzzle bringing people together to record, you know ... you've got to lead the way for them but you can't get in the way," Cody says of the need to blend technical skill with creative awareness.

There's a sense the studio is a bubble away from the wider world "and that's what we're trying to create here – that feeling when you walk in, that 'Wow, we're in a studio'.

"A lot of people might be afraid to go into a studio because of past experiences, but they should be able to come in here, have a chat, we'll get on the same page and they can have a good day with us."

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Dr Rip's Science of the Surf

Tides are cosmic, writes Prof Rob Brander

A few months ago I was wandering several hundred metres offshore exploring the tidal flats at Four Mile Beach in Port Douglas, Queensland during a king low tide. You couldn't do that on our beaches, because our beaches are very different, but I started thinking about how much we take the tide for granted. The tide comes up and it goes down and all you need are some tide tables, right? Well, there's a lot more to the tide than that.

The tide is a wave with a crest (high tide) and a trough (low tide) and a period (time between waves), but unlike most waves, which are created by wind, the tide is created by the gravitational pull that both the moon and the sun (but mostly the moon) exert on the water in the oceans.

The moon orbits the earth and 'pulls' the water towards it, creating a moving bulge of water on one side of the earth and, due to the centrifugal force of the earth's rotation, another bulge on the opposite side. A small island in the middle of the ocean would therefore experience two high and two low tides each day. However, when you introduce continents and other land masses as well as offshore bathymetry, the tidal wave becomes more complicated.

NSW has a long, relatively straight open ocean coastline with a narrow and steep continental shelf.



Not much impacts the tidal wave and we therefore experience two low/high tidal cycles each day, with each high tide about 12 hours apart – a semi-diurnal tide. Other coastlines, such as south-west Australia, experience a diurnal tide, with only one low and high tide each day. In regions of northern and southern Australia, there are mixed tides with two low and high tides each day of varying heights, which makes working around tides in these locations much more problematic.

You may also notice that the timing of the tides changes each day, which is due to the time difference between how long it takes for the moon to orbit the earth (a lunar day) and a single rotation of the earth itself (a normal day). The lunar day is about 50 minutes longer so every day, the high and low tide is about 50 minutes later. It's also important to know that only massive bodies of water are impacted by the gravitational forces of the moon and sun. Even the Mediterranean Sea only has tides on the order of centimetres and the Great Lakes in North America (where I grew up) have no tides whatsoever.

So tides can be a little complex, to say the least. I'll talk more about them next month!

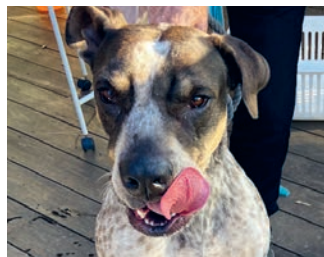
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Meet a Keeper

Amanda De George chats to Amber Harrison at Symbio



Come and say hi to Amber and her scaly friends at her reptile presentation

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Ever heard of the critically endangered, native Grassland Earless Dragon? You probably haven't, but Reptile Keeper Amber Harrison wants to change that. She's a ball of energy and information and is passionate about conservation. And she likes snakes, especially Symbio's Burmese Python 'Squeeze', who seems equally enamoured with her, slithering up to the glass as Amber peers down at her.

Amber grew up flipping over rocks looking for lizards. She was 'herping' (looking for amphibians and reptiles) long before she knew what the word meant. She'd move turtles from the road and scoop up tadpoles, raise them up to frogs before releasing them back into the wild. Like many keepers though, she soon discovered that observing animals in the wild wasn't quite enough and so she got her reptile licence and her first reptiles, two knob-tailed geckos and a jungle carpet python, at 18.

And that could have been that. While she had wanted to work with animals, Amber had found herself a little dubious about applying for such a competitive industry, saying, "I always had a little bit of self doubt and I didn't think that I'd be good enough to get into it." Instead, she went to university, studying for a business degree and almost made the leap into the corporate world – until her final exams.

While others had lined up internships and placements, Amber found that her heart just

wasn't in it. Her passion was with native animals and, it turns out, also with Symbio.

"I was sitting my final exams and I remember looking at Symbio. I had my fourth birthday here. This used to be my favourite place to come as a kid."

And so she did the scary thing, took a deep breath and applied for a volunteer role. It's one of those 'sliding doors' moments and within weeks the course of her career changed and she donned the keeper khaki and now, 18 months later, she's a full-time Reptile Keeper.

"It's so weird to think," she says, "that I used to raise up frogs and then let them go. And now I get to do that and have meaning behind it. I get to help endangered Australian species."

But more than that, she's helping to ensure the future of these species, not only by providing frogs for Chytrid Fungus trials (a fungus affecting global frog populations) with Canberra University, or assisting in breeding programs to help the endangered Green and Golden Bell and Stuttering Frogs, but by fostering passion in the next generation.

"I love seeing little kids who are so excited to learn about reptiles and I get to be that one to instil that passion into them. I can only do so much in my lifetime but if I can inspire others to do what I do, then it gets carried on for the next generation and hopefully we can save these endangered species."

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Need to know in 'Shocktober'

By Rebecca Jeffery of Bulli Medical Practice

'Shocktober' is an awareness campaign run during October to highlight the importance of using Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) to assist people in the community who experience a sudden cardiac arrest.

A cardiac arrest occurs when the heart suddenly stops beating. It is a medical emergency and, without immediate intervention, will lead to death, with an estimated 25,000 Australian lives lost every year.

An automated external defibrillator (AED) is a portable electronic device that diagnoses life-threatening abnormal heart rhythms that can cause a cardiac arrest. An AED can be used to treat abnormal heart rhythms by giving an electric shock to 'restart' the heart to its normal rhythm. This is known as defibrillation. AEDs are designed so non-medical people can use them in an emergency.

Access to early defibrillation increases the chance of survival for people experiencing sudden cardiac arrest. An estimated 50-70% will survive if defibrillation occurs within the first 5 minutes. For every minute that passes, there is a 10% less chance of survival.

AEDs are commonly placed in large public



places, including hospitals; community centres; workplaces; schools; shopping and business centres; sporting clubs and gyms; public libraries.

Only a few months ago, one of our nurses was at a Bunnings BBQ when the man on the grill collapsed with a sudden cardiac arrest. Luckily our nurse was able to perform first aid, and with the assistance of staff, used the Bunnings AED to revive him. He was taken to hospital shortly afterwards where he made a full recovery.

If you are responding to a medical emergency and an AED is nearby, please use it. You cannot do any harm by using an AED on someone who is unconscious and there are clear visual instructions and voice prompts. The AED will assess the cardiac rhythm and only give a shock if it is necessary.

Learn how to use an AED as part of First Aid training, for example, with St Johns Ambulance. Bulli Medical Practice has an AED and all our staff are trained to use it as part of performing CPR.

For advice on performing CPR, visit the [Health Direct website](#). Find details of first aid courses and AEDs at the [St John's Ambulance website](#) 🌟

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QUALITY PERSONAL HEALTHCARE AND TRAVEL MEDICINE

Hello, sparrows

By Amanda De George of Backyard Zoology

This month, I'm not focusing on a native species but for good reason (for me, anyway). The house sparrow is relatively common, not spectacularly attractive nor interesting but if I didn't almost fall over when I spotted a small flock nibbling on grass seeds a few weeks ago!

This is one of those animals that I just haven't seen since I was a little girl. We had a budgie, named Sammy, and he used to free fly around the house and was allowed to do all manner of disgusting things like sit on the edge of our glasses and have a little drink. That progressed to me opening my mouth, bird on finger, letting him, for some reason, have a nibble at my teeth. All the while Mum was there in the background screaming, "Amanda, if you sneeze, you'll bite his head off!" I tell you, the '80s were a wild time.

During the day, Sammy would be in his cage and hung just outside our front door to catch some sunshine and generally delight in not having to stick his head inside a small child's mouth. But he was far from alone. The house sparrows came to visit from near and far. Firstly, they were there to take advantage of all the seed that would rain down from his cage, spending hours hoovering up his mess.

And then, Sammy and the sparrows became friends. Genuinely. He started to speak to them in their own language and it became pretty fascinating viewing, watching our budgie chatting in 'sparrow speak' to the other birds.



Sparrows are large finches and were introduced to Australia in the 1860s, firstly to Victoria and then they spread throughout Eastern Australia. They're quite adaptable and will eat everything from insects, scraps of human food through to grass seeds. However, their numbers in Europe are in decline. Not that many people are overly upset though. The house sparrow is an agricultural pest in many places, and can be an aggressive bird that out-competes other species.

Still, any sort of population decline need to be examined for the 'why'. So, it was a very pleasant surprise to find a handful of them nibbling the grass and bathing in the dust of a carpark. They might be an unwanted pest to some but, to me, they'll always be the eaters of the discarded seed, the friends of Sammy.

Love nature news? Sign up for Wednesday newsletters via the [Get In Touch](https://theillawarraflame.com.au) page at theillawarraflame.com.au 🌟



Landcare needs you

By Marilyn House of Helensburgh and District Landcare

Do you love our local bushland? Do you like weeding your garden? Do you know that some of the plants that you see growing wild around you are not local native plants? In our 2508 area, there

are many environmental weeds. As well as the usual weeds that we pull out of our gardens, some of the weeds in our bushland were previously garden plants. A lot of these weeds are overtaking our beautiful native plants.

Helensburgh & District Landcare Group members have been working in our local area since 1993. Unfortunately, COVID and increased rainfall have provided perfect conditions for the weeds to get the upper hand. As well, our numbers have gradually reduced, so we need more members to help us. We have regular work days, usually the last Sunday of the month is spent at the Glowworm Tunnel, and Thursday mornings at various sites. We have a regular second Sunday workday each month and any extra help is greatly appreciated.

Membership is \$10 per year for an individual, or \$15 for a family.

Visit helensburghlandcare.org.au or email merilyn@helensburghlandcare.org.au 🌟



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Chasing flames

By Emma Rooksby, coordinator of the Growing Illawarra Natives website

It's nearly that time of year when Illawarra Flame Trees start putting on their stunning floral display. They generally start to flower in late spring or early summer, and in a good year can be absolutely covered with masses of red bell-shaped flowers. The next couple of months will be a chance to see them at their best – if they decide to perform!

With this species, you just never know what to expect – a few trees flower well year after year, while others are very unpredictable, and can flower brilliantly one year followed by several seasons of few or even no flowers. As a semi-deciduous species, a Flame Tree that decides to lose its leaves during a dry spring is particularly striking, but even that isn't easy to predict.

That said, I've tried to come up with a short list of places around town to see Illawarra Flame Trees in flower. Some of the best options are in city streets.

1. The corner of Lawrence Hargrave Drive and Phillip Street in Thirroul ranks at the very top of the list, with a row of trees that flower fairly reliably and are easily spotted. Growing in full sun, they are short and have a spreading canopy, so the flowers are only just above head height.

2. Closer to Wollongong, Prince Highway in Fairy Meadow also boasts a short but colourful avenue of Flame trees. Students at Wollongong High School of the Performing Arts or anyone who's used the bus stop outside of Office Works would know these ones!

3. Finally, for those a bit further south, the southbound off ramp from the M1 at Five Islands Road gives a stunning view (to passengers at least) of a grove of Flame Trees in the nearby industrial estate.

There are many other places to spot these colourful trees around the region, including throughout the Illawarra Escarpment State Conservation Area. You can even see a few of them flowering on the escarpment from town. Happy Flame Tree spotting!

[Find Emma's weekly features on our website](#)

Photos: Chris Duczynski, Leon Fuller,
Emma Rooksby 🌟



Tree of the Month

By Kieran Tapsell

Cryptocarya glaucescens (Native Laurel)

Last month, we featured Murrogun, *Cryptocarya microneura*. This is another species of *Cryptocarya*, and the untrained eye will find it difficult to tell the difference between glaucescens and microneura.

Glaucescens is commonly known as jackwood or native laurel. It is common on the upper reaches of the escarpment. Its bark is grey to blackish with alternative, elliptical leaves, with a bluish covering underneath, and the midrib is white or yellowish.

While *Cryptocarya microneura* occurs naturally in the Stanwell Avenue Reserve, and there is one large tree not far from the Child Care Centre, lantana and senna invasions restricted its spread through natural propagation. However, once the invasive weeds were removed quite a few of them have started to come up. In the interests of biodiversity, we have planted one *Cryptocarya glaucescens* to the left of the track from Stanwell Avenue to the picnic area.

The constant rain has been great for natural propagation of native species, but it has also encouraged the spread of invasive weeds. A new one that has recently appeared is fireweed, which looks a little like a dandelion, but has 13 petals. It is important to remove it before it seeds. 🌟



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Gardening *for good*

By Caroline Baum



Jiwah director, *Gardening Australia* presenter and Illawarra local Clarence Slookee.
Photo: Anthony Warry

Clarence Slockee has plenty of fans and followers locally and the northern suburbs are part of his stomping ground.

The *Gardening Australia* presenter loves nothing more than to walk the coast from Stanwell Park or along the Wodi Wodi track with his family. He recently featured a regenerated rainforest garden in Coledale on the ABC show, which first introduced him to audiences 10 years ago.

Clarence is a Cudgenburra/Bundjalung man who grew up in a farming family around the Tweed Valley. His parents and brother still grow limes and small crops on the family farm and his sister continues the tradition on her organic property nearby. Clarence moved to the Illawarra from his previous home in Maroubra 15 years ago, in search of more land at affordable prices.

After years performing with NAISDA, the dance college that reconnected him to his First Nations culture, Clarence was in his 30s when he decided that the plant world offered more secure employment prospects. He's kept music as a hobby but when a position at the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney came up, he jumped careers, before eventually starting his own business, Jiwah, which means Goanna in Bundjalung.

Its motto, "Native by Design, Nature by Necessity", expresses Clarence's commitment to encouraging clients to incorporate native and endemic species into public spaces and gardens large and small to encourage biodiversity.

Filming and the landscaping consultancy mean he is often away from home, so his own garden is a work in progress. "The front garden is a bit 'how ya goin' but it's screened with lilly pillies so people can't really see it," he laughs.

But it survived the heavy recent downpours: raised beds minimised the loss of topsoil and a filtration rain garden encouraged drainage and directed water flow. He's planted wallaby grass, correas, melaleucas and billy buttons, favouring a natural look.

"People want their gardens to be manicured, which is all about control, but nature is not like that. I even heard of someone who planted a male plum pine so they wouldn't be inconvenienced by the fruit dropping on their car," he says, rolling his eyes. He's not a big fan of too much lawn either.

Clarence is full of praise for Wollongong Botanic Garden and encouraged to see how popular its sales of native plants have become. "They cannot keep up with demand, which is great, so you have to get there early."

The recent drenching rains were a boon for his work rescuing mature native plants such as Gynea

The Rooftop Garden
at South Eveleigh.
Photo: Jiwah



lilies and temperamental *Xanthorrhoeas* to transfer them to new sites – a complex undertaking of logistics requiring leadership and co-ordinated team work. He is the first to admit that management and admin are not his favourite parts of running a small business, but it's a testimony to his grit that Covid and its aftermath of staffing havoc have not stopped him in his tracks.

"It's hard to find young people who want to do the work when they think they can just sit around and be influencers," he says, laughing at how grumpy that sounds.

Jiwah's large-scale projects include a planting at Sydney University's Faculty of Medicine, a new(ish) rooftop garden at Barangaroo visible from surrounding buildings and an edible rooftop garden at South Eveleigh, from which his friend Kylie Kwong sources several native plants for her nearby canteen-style kitchen, Lucky Kwong.

One positive outcome of Covid is that Clarence believes it has encouraged more people to garden, perhaps because of spending more time at home, looking out at their yard or needing to turn an outdoor area into a more productive and versatile space.

"I'd love to see people planting more native grasses," he says. "They are really under-utilised, because people don't realise how many species there are. So many of our bird and insect species really need those seeds."

Clarence Slockee will be speaking at Connecting Over Fair Food 2022 at UOW's Innovation Campus, 6-9pm on 18 October, tickets \$10, visit foodfairnessillawarra.org.au

Gardening Australia is on the ABC on Fridays at 7.30pm. ✨

Lions Fair is back

By Fran Peppernell of Helensburgh Lions

The Helensburgh Lions Country Fair will be held at Charles Harper Park on Saturday, 22 October, from 9am to 3pm.

There will be loads of entertainment, rides, food and craft stalls, Irish dancers, Treetop Acrobatics, to name a few. There will also be a display by the NSW Rural Fire Service.

Helensburgh Lions have recently made a donation to the Perry Cross Foundation, which does research into serious spinal injuries and is conducting an intensive rehabilitation therapy trial in which a local lad, Kurt Drysdale, is participating.

We've also made a donation of Lego to our local library so they no longer have to borrow blocks.

An important question: "What's Happened to The Coal Skips?"

Helensburgh has had a coal mine since 1883. In 1998, as part of Heritage Week, miners brought two coal skips to the surface to display in Charles Harper Park. The skips and surrounds have deteriorated, not helped by vandals setting fire to them, and were in need of drastic repair or replacement. Helensburgh Lions have been working with Wollongong Council to remove the dangerous items and have liaised with the mine to replace the skips. We'll keep you updated.

The Lions meet on the 2nd Monday of the month, 6.30pm at Helensburgh Hotel. Contact us via Facebook or info@helensburghlions.org.au

See you at the Country Fair. ✨



Josh Reid, president of the Illawarra Sub-branch of the CBCA, was the guest speaker at last month's launch of *Age of the Immortal*, by Matthew Derbridge. Readers can buy Matthew's book on Fridays at Helensburgh's Cupbearer cafe or at the Lions Country Fair, where he'll sign books and offer writing and self-publishing tips.



Get Ready!

With RFS officials

Volunteer firefighters from NSW RFS will be at this year's Helensburgh Lions Club Country Fair on Saturday, 22nd October 2022.

Representatives from Helensburgh, Otford, Darkes Forest, and Stanwell Park brigades will attend, as well as members of the RFS Community Engagement Brigade.

RFS officials said the aim of the event was to promote bush fire safety, the new Australian Fire Danger Rating System (rolled out on September 1), and discuss Bush Fire Survival Plans with residents.

Normally Get Ready Weekend is held in September, but given the number of large events happening in our region last month, these brigades have decided to collaborate and merge their Get Ready Weekend events to coincide with the Helensburgh Fair.

During the Covid pandemic, Get Ready Weekend events went digital, and now that we can do them in person again the RFS wants to maximise community preparedness so residents have the tools and knowledge to safely live in bushfire-prone areas.

Volunteer with the RFS

The RFS offers many roles within brigades, from frontline firefighting to administrative positions. The RFS is a community-based organisation so you'll gain friendships and get to know more about your local community along the way. It's also a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) so you'll gain nationally recognised qualifications as you progress through training.

If you're interested, come and have a chat with the RFS volunteers at the Fair! Or call the Illawarra Fire Control Centre on (02) 4230 8200 for more information.

For more details, visit www.rfs.nsw.gov.au ✨

Heathcote Community Update

A letter from Lee Evans – your State MP



Pensioners and other concession card holders can now pick up free rapid antigen tests (RATs) from any Service NSW Service Centre, Mobile Service Centre or Disaster Recovery Centre.

This builds upon our earlier commitment to pick up the Federal Government's Concessional Access Program,

which dropped at the end of last month. The program will run until the end of October 2022.

The NSW Government is securing a brighter future for the people of NSW by providing comprehensive cost of living relief. Service NSW's "Savings Finder" brings together more than 70 NSW Government funded rebates and savings in one location, helping individuals access various programs to relieve cost of living pressures.

I urge you to try the "Savings Finder" to explore the full range of options that are relevant to you! Using the finder you will:

1. Click through 6 simple questions,

2. See a personalised list of savings;

3. Apply.



Scan the QR code to access the online "Savings Finder"

alternatively

you can book a free personal one on one 1 hour appointment with a friendly Service NSW Savings Specialist if you'd prefer.

For more information about any of these initiatives call Service NSW on 137 788 or drop into a Service NSW Service Centre.

Lee Evans, Member for Heathcote

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Join us!

By Helen Durham, Helensburgh & District Probus Club publicity officer

Helensburgh & District Probus Club is a vibrant and active club that meets at Helensburgh Tradies on the second Thursday of each month. Friendship, fellowship and fun, while not compulsory, are our goals! At our meetings we share plans for activities over the next few months. We break for tea before meeting a guest speaker; last month it was local author Christine Sykes. Afterwards we get together for a relaxing lunch.

Regular monthly activities include bowling at Wombarra Bowlo, golf and our ever-popular "Foot and Mouth" walks. These walks have taken us on the ferry to Watsons Bay and lunch at Doyles; a walk across the Harbour Bridge, followed by lunch at The Orient at The Rocks; and a walk from Stuart Park to Belmore Basin, followed by a very interesting guided tour of the Illawarra Historical

Society Museum, in the old Post and Telegraph Office, then back to the park for a picnic lunch!

We arrange trips, both long and short. In the past (pre Covid), we've found ourselves in China, Vietnam and Canada, as well as on short cruises such as the Australia Day Cruise. Last year we even managed a week on Norfolk Island, competing with a film crew and Ray Martin for location shots! We pack in as much fun as possible, with short and long trips to suit differing physical (and financial) abilities. Next year we plan to visit Parkes in March.

Our club is for retired, semi-retired or soon-to-be-retired people from all walks of life.

For more information, please contact membership officer Lilian on 0408 668 987 or president Peter on 0493 360 382. 🌟



Raising happy free-range girls on grass

By Anne Marie Vigliante, one of the Flame Tree Food Co-op's local producers

At Taluca Park Free Range Farm in the Southern Highlands, we have been farming free-range eggs for about six years and supplying eggs to the Flame Free Food Co-op in Thirroul for four years.

Our girls are all free-range hens guarded by a team of amazing Maremma working dogs to keep them safe from predators. Maremmas have been bred in Italy for centuries to guard farm animals. We couldn't run a true free-range pasture-raised egg farm without them. Our eggs are collected daily and packed and delivered by us to various outlets throughout the Southern Highlands, Sydney and Wollongong.

We believe in rotational grazing and holistic management. We don't use any chemicals on the land. Our birds are relocated onto fresh pasture on a weekly basis, where they can scratch and peck for worms, dust bathe and roam free. We never have more than 24 chickens to an acre. Our use of biodynamic principles and looking after the land is

a huge part of what we do.

We are a family-run farm whose dedication and passion for producing amazingly healthy produce is what we love best. Our girls produce delicious eggs all year round but we do have a short supply in the winter months when the girls naturally decrease production due to the colder weather and shorter days. We hope you enjoy our delicious true free-range eggs as much as we love producing them.



Visit www.talucapark.com.au and find Thirroul's Co-op at 355 Lawrence Hargrave Drive, flametree.coop 🌟

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Time to paint change

Janice Creenaune meets Vyvian Wilson, who, after a career in arts administration in Sydney, moved to Wombarra

Vyvian Wilson has always been passionate about the world around her, politically, socially and environmentally, particularly about the implications of climate change. Oil painting has enabled her to show the viewer the power of the changes affecting our world.

Vyvian studied at Alexander Mackie College and Sydney University, but not until her move to Wombarra in 2009 was she able to focus full-time on her first love of image-making. “My husband, Peter, has been amazingly supportive, encouraging me to concentrate on my art practice.”

Vyvian’s first solo show was at Clifton School of Arts (CSA) in 2011.

“The exhibition was called *Finding Place* and that’s what I was doing. Finding my place in the beautiful Illawarra with its stunning land and sea scapes. I was excited to discover a strong arts community here. I became an active member of Illawarra Association for the Visual Arts and took on several committee roles at CSA.”



Detail of *The Sea is Red (after the deluge)*. Photos supplied

In 2013 and 2018–19, Vyvian spent time living and immersing herself in Greece. “The paintings and drawings I made were about my Greek heritage, ancient olive groves, endless dry stone walls of ancient ruins and the Mediterranean.”

The result was a solo exhibition, *Periphery*. Recently Vyvian has been selected as a finalist in the John Leslie Art Prize for landscape painting at Gippsland Regional Gallery; the Watercolour Prize at Wollongong Art Gallery; the Lake Macquarie Art Prize; and the 2022 Maritime Art Prize for her painting *The Sea is Red (after the deluge)*.

This work, she says, “depicts my reaction to our sea shore turning red and filthy through soil run-off from a significant local housing development above the rock platform. The density of the mud turned the sea abnormally red and though the ocean still had its power and beauty, it had been damaged by careless human development. I was honouring the sea by making this painting while acknowledging what was happening in our area.”

Vyvian says this painting was created slowly, with time-consuming layering of line, tone and colour. “You cannot rush an oil painting, which means I need to slow down. I have to be sure where my marks go. I never use a photo but rely on my memory and emotional and intellectual reaction to the subjects. I feel the image then takes on a life of its own. This is very important to me.”

Another subject is the 2019–20 catastrophic ‘black summer’, in particular, the Mallacoota and Lake Conjola fires. “*Fire, Fire Burning Bright (after Mallacoota)* is a response to the tension I feel between what I see as exquisite colour, movement and transformative light and my knowledge that fire can wreak absolute devastation.”

Seeing environmental change during camping trips in outback Australia inspired her desert dust series. “The spectacular dust storms causing intense sunsets are the result of soil erosion. Again, I am struck by the drama of the scene, while recognising the damage that’s happening.”

Vyvian’s next exhibition, *Resonance*, opens at the CSA on 4 November. Email vyvwilson@gmail.com

Janice Creenaune is a volunteer for PKD (Polycystic Kidney Disease) Foundation Australia. Email janicecreenaune@gmail.com ✨

2022 NINA OUTINGS FOR OCTOBER

Bookings made through the office. Please call in advance as some tickets need to be pre purchased. Limited number on buses. Pick up and drop off direct to your home.



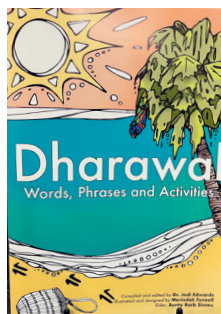
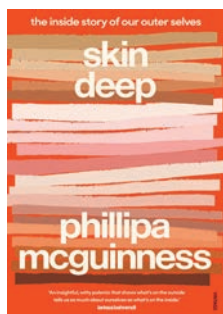
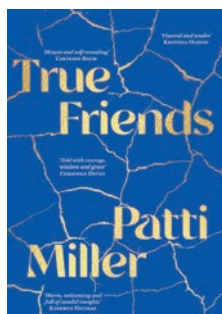
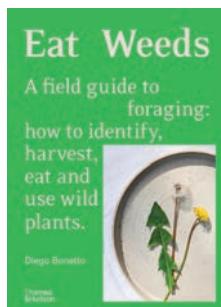
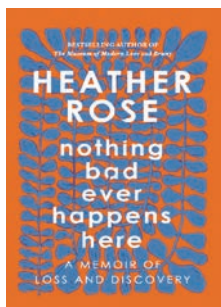
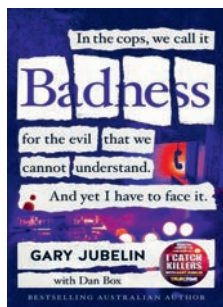
We had a successful stand at Bulli Woolworths recently and have a few new volunteers starting. We can never have too many volunteers so if you are thinking of getting involved or know someone who might be interested please get in touch. We will be holding volunteer induction training on Friday 21st October.

DATE	DESTINATION	DETAILS
Tuesday 4th Oct	Bunnings - Kirrawee	\$11
Thursday 6th Oct	Music & Tea at Wollongong Art Gallery	\$10.50
Friday 7th Oct	Figtree Shopping	\$5.50
Friday 14th Oct	Macarthur Square Shopping	\$11
Tuesday 18th Oct	Nursery – Sunrise Nursery	\$5.50
Friday 21st Oct	Engadine Shopping	\$5.50
Friday 21st Oct	Lifeline Book Fair, Illawarra Sports Stadium, Berkeley	\$16
Friday 28th Oct	Sylvania Shopping	\$11
Monday 31st Oct	Music in the Morning, Wollongong Town Hall	\$10.50 + Tickets \$28.50

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Meet true storytellers

By Sarah Nicholson, director of the South Coast Writers Centre



At a time when truth is under threat in so much of what we read, 'I'm Not Making This Up' celebrates the power of fact in storytelling, bringing together some of the brightest talents and most distinctive voices writing non-fiction today.

The festival opens on Saturday, 26 November at Coledale Community Hall with a keynote speech from the multi award-winning author of *The Winter Road*, Kate Holden.

Best-selling memoirist Patti Miller appears in conversation with Caroline Baum to discuss difficult relationships in *True Friends*.

After cider and storytelling direct from the farm with Jo Fahey from Darkes Glenbernie Orchard, join us for dinner at Earthwalker with foraging expert Diego Bonetto discussing why we should *Eat Weeds*.

On Sunday 27th, Dr Jodi Edwards introduces us to the local Dharawal language, Phillipa McGuinness goes beneath the surface to examine our largest organ in *Skin Deep*, former detective Gary Jubelin investigates criminal *Badness*. Professor Rob Brander, aka 'Dr Rip', appears in conversation with Walkley-award-winning journalist, author and surfer Malcolm Knox.

Stella Prize-winning Tasmanian novelist

Heather Rose unveils her memoir *Nothing Bad Ever Happens Here*, and we end the day with the sounds of *Lovers, Dreamers & Fighters*, as singer Lo Carmen talks about memory and her sources of inspiration with acclaimed biographer and journalist Mark Mordue.

In our hands-on Saturday workshop program, you can learn to write truthfully with Patti Miller, discover the edible local landscape at the Wild Weeds Workshop, or the whole family can uncover the secrets of the beach at the Coal Coast Discovery Workshop.

Books will be on sale at the hall, thanks to Collins Booksellers Thirroul.

'I'm Not Making This Up' is a co-production of the South Coast Writers Centre and the *Illawarra Flame*, with artistic direction by Caroline Baum. ✨



Tickets on sale October 1.
Scan the QR code or visit
southcoastwriters.org

I Am Not Making This Up

A festival of true stories coming to Coledale Community Hall

Saturday and Sunday
26 & 27 Nov 2022

PROGRAM OF EVENTS

BOOKINGS OPEN 1 OCTOBER AT SOUTHCOASTWRITERS.ORG

SATURDAY

WORKSHOPS

- 11am -1pm** **Truth-telling in Memoir**
A masterclass with award-winning author Patti Miller
- 2.30pm -4pm** **Coal Coast Discovery Workshop**
Secrets of the beach revealed, with Dr Elyssa De Carli
- 3.30pm -5pm** **Wild Weeds Workshop**
Explore the edible local landscape, with Diego Bonetto

2.15pm DOORS OPEN

- 2.30pm -3.30pm** **Keynote speech** By Kate Holden, Walkley award-winning author of *The Winter Road*
- 3.45pm -5pm** **True Friends** Memoirist Patti Miller on the power of friendship, with journalist Caroline Baum
- 5.15pm -6pm** **Darkes Cider Tasting** *Illawarra Flame* contributor Jo Fahey shares the tale of a farm's transformation, and its award-winning produce
- 6.15pm -8pm** **Dinner at Earthwalker with Diego Bonetto** *The Eat Weeds* author and foraging expert in conversation with Bulli artist Zanny Begg

SUNDAY

9.45am DOORS OPEN

- 10.15am -11.15am** **The Dharawal Language**
Indigenous advocate and educator Dr Jodi Edwards, author of two new books for children, in conversation with Clifton School of Arts president David Roach
- 11.30am -12.30pm** **Skin Deep** Writer Phillipa McGuinness shares the inside story of our outer selves with Caroline Baum

12.30-1.30pm LUNCH

- 1.30pm -2.30pm** **Badness** Former homicide detective Gary Jubelin discusses the sequel to *I Catch Killers* with crime writer Andy Muir
- 3pm -4pm** **Dr Rip's Science of the Surf** *Illawarra Flame* columnist Prof Rob Brander in conversation with *SMH* journalist Malcolm Knox
- 4.15pm -5.15pm** **Nothing Bad Ever Happens Here** Stella Prize-winning novelist Heather Rose unveils her memoir, with Caroline Baum
- 5.30pm -6.30pm** **Lovers Dreamers Fighters** Internationally acclaimed singer-songwriter Lo Carmen talks to music journalist Mark Mordue about her memoir

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Life Sentences by
CAROLINE BAUM

Music and Tea time

By Felicity Woodhill, founder of Inspire Music Australia

Congratulations to cellist Tom Caralon, who opened the second Music and Tea at the Gallery concert, *Bach and Beyond, Conversing and Connecting Through Music*. Tom has been nominated to audition for Encore – the HSC performing arts showcase at the Opera House.

Led by Ann Lehmann-Kuit, *Bach and Beyond* offered rich conversations, as the musicians and audiences brought to life music of the past to create meaning in the present.

Violinist Beatrice Colombis performed the first sonata from Bach's *Sei Solo a violinist senza basso accompagnato*. 'Sei solo' translates to "you are alone." Beatrice's ability to be alone and play with ease illuminated violinist Nicola Benedetti's idea that music may offer "a gift from the depth of one person's soul to another". The highly nuanced ensemble (conversation) between Beatrice and her mother, pianist Laura McDonald, amplified the dramatic character of the works they performed.

In the audience there were those with tears in their eyes at the conclusion; for one attendee, it was a response to their first live classical music concert.

For another, the music connected them to their youth in Vienna. For one woman, the depth of her internal delight in the music was ever present through her movement and expressions of joy.

Join us in October for *Piano Music form the Heart* – lighter works by the great composers of the classical and romantic period.

Concerts at Wollongong Art Gallery on 6 Oct, 3 Nov, 8 Dec. Free, donations appreciated. Contact inspiremusicaust@gmail.com ✨



Clothes swap for climate

By South Coast Writers Centre
director Sarah Nicholson

For Global Climate Change Week (12-18 October) the South Coast Writers Centre has teamed up with University of Wollongong's Sustainable Futures Committee to present events that are focused on finding inspiration, community, and connection.

On October 9th, young writers can take an inspiring eco-walk along Coledale Beach with local ecologist and nature writer Dr Kat Mikac. These workshops, for ages 10-13 and 14-18, include a micro-fiction writing class inspired by nature.

You can 'Swap It Like It's Hot' at SCWC's clothes and book swap event with Lady Moon Productions

on 16 October. Unburden your closets of unloved clothes and books and give your shelves and wardrobe a fully sustainable style rejuvenation.

Then, co-presented with Collins Thirroul, Tim Hollo will speak at Ryan's on 12th October about his new book, *Living Democracy: an ecological manifesto for the end of the world as we know it*, in conversation with author Claire O'Rourke.

Once school returns, our Young Writers Program reconvenes: 10- to 13-year-olds can join us on Wednesdays from 4-6pm at Coledale Hall to learn the craft of writing, exploring and sharing all kinds of writing in a fun and supportive way.

Don't forget the Coledale Film Club, which runs on the first Saturday of each month! Hosted by director Graham Thorburn, it is open to anybody interested in watching and discussing films. October's Film Club will screen *The Apartment*, a 1960 American romantic comedy-drama film directed and produced by Billy Wilder, starring Jack Lemmon and Shirley MaLaîne.

Finally, if you've always wanted to write fiction but have not known where to begin, the SCWC are hosting a foundation course 'Tools To Begin' with the support of Wollongong Library. This is a three-month course facilitated by experienced teacher Dr Rosemary Montgomery.

Visit southcoastwriters.org ✨



On in October

By the team at Collins Booksellers Thirroul

It's a month of great new releases. 2022's Booker Prize will be announced on the 17th and we've stocked up on all the short-listed titles. Our Events Program picks up again at Ryan's Hotel. On the 12th, for Global Climate Change Week, we team up with South Coast Writers and UOW to present Tim Hollo in conversation with author Claire O'Rourke (*Together We Can*) about *Living Democracy*. On the 26th, Margaret Throsby will join Jo Oliver to discuss Jo's new biography about artist Adelaide Perry. On Sunday 23rd at 3-4pm in the bookshop, Sue Whiting will entertain ages 8 to 11 with a reading and activities based on *Pearly and Pig and the Great Hairy Beast*. Bookings essential: thirroul@collinsbooks.com.au, 4267 1408, or pop into the store. 🌟

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ORIGINAL SONGS

Shalani Thomas
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Music & Tea Wollongong Art Gallery
 Thur Nov 3 at 11am
 Entry Free
 Scan to reserve a seat



Artists of the Illawarra

Painter Edith McNally introduces toy makers Sue and Jim Roach

Sue and Jim Roach have a shared passion for creating miniatures. Jim uses his amazing carpentry skills while Sue is the major decorative force. Between them they create a tiny bit of magic for many to share.

Sue has always had a love of dolls, puppets and all things miniature since her father built her a doll house with its own electric lighting.

Jim's grandfather's carpentry creativity inspired Jim to create chess sets, rocking horses and doll houses as heritage treasures that have delighted



generations in their family.

In the early 2000s, while working in the UK Midlands, Sue was fascinated to find a thriving community of miniaturists who recreated houses, scenes and villages primarily in 1:12 scale.

After retiring Sue was inspired by the Susannah Place Museum in The Rocks in Sydney and created and decorated her own 19th-century grocery store. This was the beginning of their shared journey as a highly creative and active artistic team.

They now have a home studio in Stanwell Tops where their eclectic collection of puppets, dolls and vintage toys are displayed for Christmas to raise funds for charity. Facebook @SJminiatureworld

Sue and Jim are excited to be part of the inaugural Northern Illawarra Art Trail on November 19-20, 10am-3pm. More than 20 local artists will open their studios. Find a map and artists' details online.

Visit www.niartrail.com ✨



Mystery shrine found

By Jenny Donohoe

The Helensburgh and District Historical Society President, Jim Powell, has been contacted regarding a mysterious shrine in our bushland. The shrine is dedicated to Tom O'Flaherty and comprises stones and branches. It appears that fresh flowers were placed there recently. The Historical Society records – including the electoral rolls, cemetery records etc – do not have any reference to the name of Tom O'Flaherty. The society would be pleased to hear from anyone who might know anything about this shrine. Please contact us on info@historichelensburgh.org.au ✨

View to Christmas

By publicity officer Barbara Kitson

The festive season is coming fast but we still have a few things left to accomplish before Christmas. Mary and I are taking school supplies to the Learning for Life centre at Dapto to help with the start of the 2023 school year for disadvantaged kids, Pam will organise gift cards for the children we sponsor. We also support the Smith Family in its Christmas toy and book appeal, another job for hard-working Pam (thanks Pam). This meeting we said good bye to Lyn who has moved to Newcastle. Thank you for being our treasurer, Lyn. Chris has stepped up to fill the job until we have our elections – good on you, Chris.

The ladies who went to the craft society last month had such a great day they would like to do it again, so Patty is endeavouring to organise another day before Christmas. Even if you aren't a member, if we have a spare seats on the bus you are welcome to join us. Afterwards we go across to the Catholic Club for a yummy lunch and then return to Helensburgh. The bus leaves from, and returns to, the pool bus stop. If you'd like to join the craft day call president Patty on 0407 020 668.

Bring Christmas raffle donations to our October meeting. November will be our Christmas Party, the last meeting of the year. ✨

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Meet the authors

Two local writers tell us about their new books



By biographer Jo Oliver, author of
Adelaide Perry: artist and teacher

I've been researching the life of Adelaide Perry for three years, using archives, newspaper articles and interviews. Adelaide was part of the Modernist art movement in Australia and one of the innovative women printmakers between the wars. She and Margaret Preston were taught linocut techniques by Thea Proctor.

Adelaide studied at the National Gallery School in Melbourne and won a scholarship in 1920 to study at London's Royal Academy of Art. She drew, painted and exhibited her work all her life.

This biography explores her life and work over a period when the lives of women changed radically. Her work is held in the National Gallery of Australia, National Portrait Gallery, Art Gallery of NSW and many other state and regional galleries, including Wollongong Art Gallery, which holds three of her local paintings.

Adelaide drew and painted in the Northern Illawarra from 1927. Her works were exhibited in a solo exhibition at Macquarie Galleries later that year. Adelaide continued to visit the area and painted here with her friend Grace Cossington Smith over the summer of 1930/31.

Adelaide was also a highly regarded teacher of art. The Adelaide Perry Gallery has been named in her honour and the prestigious Adelaide Perry Prize for Drawing each year continues the legacy of this remarkable Australian.

Jo will be in conversation with Margaret Throsby at 6pm on Wednesday, 26 October Upstairs at Ryan's Hotel. Bookings essential via Collins Booksellers Thirroul: 4267 1408, thirroul@collinsbooks.com.au



By Anne Howell, author of
All That I Forgot: a Memoir

Have you ever wondered if anyone really has the 'who am I, where am I?' amnesia you find in popular fiction? I explore my first-hand experience of retrograde amnesia in my memoir, *All That I Forgot*.

My encounter with amnesia began after complications from neurosurgery threw me into a three-day coma in 1991. I had been diagnosed with a defect on my outer brain, and surgery seemed my only hope. The surgery worked, but in the process I caught the deadly bug, meningitis.

I woke thinking the hospital room I lay in might be a spaceship. This had a certain logic as I felt I was about nine years old. Yet I turned out to be 31 and mother of a young child I didn't recognise on first sight. Once taken home by a man I didn't remember to raise our daughter – wishing there was a motherhood manual to help, not that that would assist as I couldn't read – I began to investigate my missing past. Many walls blocked my way, often thrown up by those closest to me, my mother in particular. People were clearly withholding salient facts, but why?

I wrote *All That I Forgot* to invite readers to join me to revisit this peculiar experience, which people say reads as 'stranger than fiction'.

Join Anne for the launch of *All That I Forgot: a Memoir* (Bad Apple Press) at 6pm on Friday, November 4 at Collins Booksellers Thirroul. Bookings essential via Collins Booksellers Thirroul: 4267 1408, thirroul@collinsbooks.com.au. There will be another launch at Sydney's Gleebooks on November 10 at 6pm. Follow annehowell.com.au 🌟



Heroines Festival Day



Sunday
6th November
11-3pm,
Coledale
Community Hall




Join us at Australia's only
 festival of women's writing
 about women. **Kathryn**
Heyman joins Heroines
 Festival Director **Sarah**
Nicolson, Michelle Cahill
 appears in conversation with
Meredith Jaffe and
Malika Reese performs
 from *Lost in the Shuffle*.
 Includes the launch of the
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www.theneoperennialpress.
com/festivalday2022





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Is this bottom of market?

Interest rates are continuing their upward
 trajectory but there are some signs that the
 pace of inflation may be on the decline. Fuel
 prices are starting to come back, supply
 chains are unblocking and China's growth
 is slowing. It's unlikely to mean interest
 rate rises will stop immediately but they're
 early signs that rates may peak earlier
 than expected. This change to the inflation
 outlook is coinciding with signs that the
 property market is close to the bottom of
 the cycle. Clearance rates in Sydney are
 now starting to stabilise and the number
 of properties coming to market is expected
 to climb as we head deeper into spring. It's
 still a buyer's market but conditions seem
 to be better than in midwinter.



Scan To Speak to Ian

Award for women's rights advocate

By Cristina Sacco of SCARF Refugee Support

Shahira Mohseni has been named NSW's Rotary Young Inspirational Woman for 2022 at the Rotary Inspirational Women's Award ceremony.

Shahira was born in Afghanistan, where education was forbidden under Taliban rule. She was educated at home by her parents and, after fleeing her home country, went on to gain a degree in literature and a Master in Business (with distinction) at the University of Wollongong.

Empowering women has long been a focus for Shahira. Inspired by her parents, she knows the value of education and equality for women in the hardest circumstances. She has given her time to many projects, including mentoring young women and girls at the Afghanistan Youth House, volunteering with the SCARF/Healthy Cities Illawarra Active Connections program and delivering SCARF cultural capacity training to help increase understanding and inclusiveness at local



Shahira (right) is pictured with friend and nominator, Sophie-May (left)

schools and businesses.

When Shahira came to Australia to study she never expected to find herself becoming a refugee. Despite facing many challenges, Shahira makes the most of every opportunity to advocate for women's rights.

As well as being an advocate, volunteer and in full-time work, Shahira has launched her own jewellery business with a social impact, 'Roz Boutique'. She hand-makes paper earrings and aims to inspire other women by

sharing her story. Shahira said the Rotary award means a lot. "No matter who I am or where I have come from and how challenging the journey has been, I learned that we all have unique powers to change things for ourselves and others."

SCARF will hold a fundraising trivia night on Friday, 21 October at Illawarra Steelers. Visit scarfsupport.org.au 🌟

Thanks from SPAT

By Bethan Farmer of Stanwell Park Arts Theatre (SPAT)

Thank you to everyone who turned out for our Deck the Hall winter festival at the CWA Hall on 21 August. The weather was perfect, and many people stopped by to check out the new deck and enjoy the markets and music in the sunshine. Danielle Ives, Kelly-Maree Michael and I worked to pull it all together, with thanks to our team of volunteers on the day.

Our Christmas Panto *Montana Smith and the Raiders of the Lost Land*, an all-action archaeological adventure, is fully cast with adults and a 20-strong kids chorus, and rehearsals are already underway. Director Kelly-Maree Michael says, "The production team were thrilled to have so many amazing actors and local young people turn out for auditions. This year's panto is going to be bigger and better than ever!"

At 7.30pm on Saturday, 8 October SPAT Film Society presents *The Dry* (MA15+), an Australian thriller based on the novel by Jane Harper and starring Eric Bana. Tickets can be bought at the CWA Hall on the night or at spat.org.au in advance. 🌟



Guides enjoy archery

By Noelle

On Sunday, 11 September, Helensburgh Girl Guides and a couple of girls from the Lugarno Girl Guides unit met to learn archery. This was at the Karingal training centre in Engadine. First, we learnt how to put the arrow onto the bow with the gold bead then to shoot it at a target.

I found it interesting because I never thought I'd get a chance to ever do it. Now I am with Girl Guides I feel lucky I got to learn just how to shoot an arrow. It was a very fun activity.

One thing that was funny was when the girls started to shoot the arrows so far you couldn't even see them anymore! Instead of aiming for the targets they thought it would be fun to see who could shoot it the furthest instead! 🌟

What's On



Sign up online to submit events at www.theillawarraflame.com.au

Congratulations

Michelle Maxwell, artistic director at AUSTI. Dance & Physical Theatre, was among those honoured at August 31's Lord Mayor's Recognition Reception. Michelle was recognised for her "commitment and contribution to the community for AUSTI. Dance & Physical Theatre".



Catch AUSTI's show *unCOILED eXposed* – an experimental theatre residency featuring fresh choreographic talent – at IPAC, 7.30pm, Oct 20-22.

Term 4 Program for Stanwell Park U3A

Meetings are on Mondays at Hillcrest House. For more information: Jenny on 0406 350 025.

10 Oct Testament Part 3. Mightier Than the Sword
Video and discussion Doug White

17 Oct Israel and Palestine – David Goss

24 Oct Patagonia – Roy Lawrie

31 Oct Scotland – Jim Powell

7 Nov Current Affairs ... Discussion

14 Nov India – Ann Brown

21 Nov The Dirty Secret Behind Electric Vehicles
– Kerrie Anne Christian

28 Nov Norfolk Polynesians, prisoners and
Pitcairners – David Christian. Xmas lunch 12pm

Term 4 program for U3A Northern Illawarra

2 talks on Wednesdays, 9.30am-noon at Thirroul
Community Centre. Call Therese on 0413 218 957.

12 Oct Speaker Julie Clifford (Librarian):

Who reads what? Terri Ayliffe: *There'd Better Be
Oxy in that Christmas Bonbon*

19 Oct Kelly Andrews: CEO Healthy Cities
Illawarra. Dr Joseph Ciarrochi (ACU): What
makes you stronger

26 Oct Ainslie Lamb: The many lives of The
Drover's Wife. Don Tate: Corrupt military history
2 Nov U3A NI AGM. Bert van den Bergh (UoW):
Islands of the small giants

9 Nov Dr Lorraine Jones: Helensburgh and
the 1919 flu epidemic. Denise Russell & David
Muscio: Q&A Socrates & Democracy.

16 Nov Dr Amy Chan (UoW): Down the
counterfactual. John Arney: Royal National Park

23 Nov Adam Bennett: Ethics in our schools.

Kerrie Christian: Forgotten Women of Illawarra

30 Nov Christmas celebration followed by brunch

Bulli Quilt and Flower Show

Oct 14 & 15 at Northern Illawarra Uniting Church,
Bulli. \$5 entry, 10am-4pm, call Lynn 0413 963 070.

AT YOUR LIBRARY

Helensburgh Library

Tues 18 Oct @ 5.30pm – Music in the Library
Mendala is an acoustic trio of singer/songwriters
Stephen Goldrick, John Nichols and Pete Thomas.

Tues 25 Oct @ 5.30pm - Lyn Hughes author talk
Lyn talks about her new book, *Mr Carver's Whale*,
a deliciously dark and moving story. Book
via Eventbrite; call the Library on 4294 2185.

Thirroul Library

Sat 1 Oct 11am Music in the Library

Thu 6 Oct 10.30am First Thursday Book Club.
Reading *The Magician* by Colm Toibin.

Thu 6 Oct 5.30pm Life Stories with Mark Domkins
Mark is involved in Forever Projects, a charity that
aims to break the cycle of poverty in Tanzania.

Thu 20 Oct @ 5.30pm Life Stories with Susie Crick
Susie is CEO of the Oceanic Research Institute and
Branch President of Surfrider Foundation. Book
via Eventbrite, call the Library on 4227 8191 🌟

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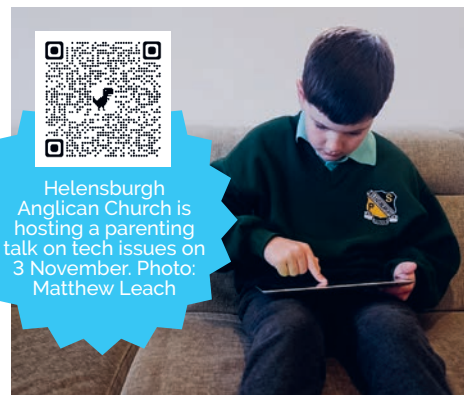
Parenting the Cyber Child

Matthew Leach, Assistant Minister of Helensburgh and Stanwell Park Anglican Church, invites parents to attend a talk

After a conversation with a friend, where we discussed the difficulties we face raising children in this technological age, I realised an opportunity to provide parents in our community with support to help us manage kids and technology was well overdue. After some research about what is available, I happened to find a couple named James and Simone Boswell who have written a book called *Cyber Parenting*.

Speaking at conferences and events since 2013, James and Simone Boswell update parents about technology and how it impacts families and also discuss parenting principles that help mums and dads teach their kids how to stand firm when the physical and digital worlds collide. James has worked in the information and communication technology industry for nearly 30 years. They are parents to six children, so I am thrilled that they are able to come for a one-night only seminar on Thursday, 3 November to Helensburgh Anglican Church and discuss tech issues with kids and how to approach them.

You may be concerned about how much your children use technology, maybe you're worried it's already an addiction. Kidshepline.com.au points out that kids can become addicted to any game – online, offline, digital or video – and they explain that the difference between healthy gaming and an addiction is the negative impact it is having on their life.



As parents, I believe it is important for us to recognise the warning signs and support our children to make a change. But what are the warning signs we should be looking for? How do we support our children to make a change when we are all so busy and time poor? How can we talk to them about our concerns without them exploding in our faces? There is no easy solution to the diverse difficulties we all face when raising kids, but if you are like me, you want to be part of the solution, not the problem.

If you are a parent struggling with children who cannot put down a device, or who are addicted to technology, or if you are trying to decide when is the right age for your son or daughter to get a phone, this is a seminar for you.

I'd love to see parents with children of all ages there, developing a better understanding of how we can parent our cyber children. See you there!

Register at 2508anglican.org/parenting or simply scan the QR code above ✨

Well done!

By teacher Gabby King



The Regional Athletics Carnival was held at the Australian Institute of Sport in Canberra on 2 Sept.

Several students from Helensburgh Public School represented North Wollongong district: Jonesy H; Bronte D; Ruby M; Eden E; Kelsey H; Harlem FK; Jayden B; Blake N; Dominick R; Cameron B; Jackson F; Ethan E; Mila B; Emily P; Archie F; and Zahlee T.

Our fantastic results included three of our four relay teams making it to state! Senior boys won; Junior boys and junior girls came in 3rd. Harlem FK (Junior boys 800m) and Blake N (11 years long jump) made it through for individual events.

We are very proud of all the students and are excited to see how they go at the State Athletics Carnival at Sydney International Athletic Centre in Olympic Park on 19 and 20 October. ✨

Meet a councillor

Journalist Brian Kelly meets Mithra Cox, a Greens councillor for Ward 1, which covers the northern part of our city



Ward 1's Mithra Cox. Photo supplied

It's only fitting that Mithra Cox arranges to meet at a beachside cafe. All things cycling prevail, from the quartet of over 65s who defy the cold and sit outside to keep an eye on their steeds to the blind group being tandemed, it's bike paradise.

Cox feels the cogs of change are definitely turning in terms of accepting the pollution-free, foot-driven wheel, even though some councillors remain somewhat hostile.

"My first motion to council was to make Wollongong a bike-friendly city and they laughed, like 'Don't be ridiculous', but the tide is definitely turning and we've come a long way," said Cox, a councillor since 2017 who rides to meetings when she can.

"But it's a drop in the ocean. Things like (bike lanes in) Smith St are great – but they need to connect to places."

Cox was raised in a politically engaged household in the verdant splendour of Kangaroo Valley, but it wasn't until the Tampa incident in 2001 that she joined the Greens.

"It was one of those things – so morally wrong that it shocks you out of complacency – you feel you can't just sit by and let that happen," says Cox, who was beginning creative arts at Wollongong University around that time.

A short dabble with studying journalism ended when, entering The Lodge to attend a barbecue hosted by John Howard, she realised it was not her path. The bus she was on had to make its way through a sea of protesters: "I knew then I wanted to do something where I could have an opinion."

A trip to Germany in 2009 opened Cox's eyes to that country's vibrant spectrum of left-wing politics and 'healthy political disagreement' and inspired her further – even to learn the language.

One of her more diversely subversive acts has been to play banjo in a band that sings about climate change. The Lurkers have been described as "subversive homespun bluegrass" and "proudly anti-authoritarian".

Support for the long-mooted thought bubble of a Bulli bypass – a rerouting of Bulli Pass to connect with Memorial Drive – does not win Cox's support.

"I know that it's popular and people want it, but I think what would be far better is looking at the transport system as a whole, and the bit we're lacking is public transport," she said.

"To shift 40 per cent of cars into public transport mode would have the same impact as widening the road or getting rid of traffic lights in that you can reduce traffic, and it's much more sustainable.

"In Wollongong, we have 95 per cent car dependency ... then you look at bike-friendly cities like Copenhagen and Amsterdam ... people say 'Oh, that's culturally different', but it's infrastructure, and things are prioritised differently – it's a matter of policy."

[Read more in a Q&A with Cr Cox online](#) 🌟

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Build Bulli Bypass

An opinion piece by architect Ben Wollen

Ahhh, the Bulli Bypass. I've been wanting to write about this one for a while now.

Two things get my goat with urban design and infrastructure – not enough dedicated bike lanes and too much space given over to cars. (I'd also like to add not enough skateparks but that's for another article!) I know this might ostracise a lot of people whose work and play requires a car, but this is not a debate on whether we need cars or not, it's about how much space (and money) that privately owned cars take up! Roads have been found to occupy between 17% to 30% of terra firma in the modern city. That's a lot of real estate that could otherwise be used as parks, affordable housing or alternative transport methods (yes, like bike lanes). Whilst taking back all this land may not yet be feasible, we need to carefully consider where new roads should be situated for maximum benefit. And that leads me to the campaign behind Build the Bulli Bypass.

Transport for NSW consulted the local communities back in June/July of 2021. Whilst the issue of the bypass wasn't on the agenda, many respondents called for the bypass. Transport for NSW advised that it was not under consideration. No doubt this was due to the extra costs involved with building a bypass over that of the intermediate measures proposed to alleviate traffic flow (currently under construction). The consultation focused primarily on improving traffic flow and parking. What I believe was an under-sight was that very little consideration was given to the heritage value and streetscape of a unique and vibrant coastal mining town.



And whilst that also goes for the likes of Coalcliff, Coledale, Austinmer and Thirroul, Bulli has been long divided by the busy end of Memorial Drive and has lost a lot of its original appeal thanks to the endless traffic that rolls through its centre. From my limited understanding of old mining towns (and perhaps with the exception of Newcastle), I don't think that there are any other places along Australia's coastline where you get such establishments like the Bulli Heritage, the Scarborough or the Imperial Hotels. I believe these unique towns and their heritage buildings require some special attention and protection.

Take a look at the photo (top of this page) and look at how much more approachable the sidewalks are in the older image with their deep awnings and wide berth. Imagine attempting to take this photo at peak hour on a weekday? You'd be risking life and limb (I know I did!). Now, let's imagine what Bulli would look like if the bypass was built. Why you might even consider a street fair by closing the street off between Station Street and Park Road. You won't get rid of all the traffic all the time, but in pushing a good portion of it away from the township, you open up the possibility of outdoor seating, street activation, trees instead of carparks. Why, you might even get the bottleshop to move its front door back to where it should be – facing the Main Street!

There is some really special heritage still left in Bulli. Wollongong City Council's Local Environmental Plan (LEP) lists 38 heritage items within its confines. That's 10 more than Thirroul

and 22 more than Austinmer! Only Wollongong central has more listed items in all of Council's gazetted area.

Driving south from the bottom of Bulli Pass we have a number of delightful heritage moments that all hold little histories. First we have the bridge that used to take coal from Bulli Colliery out to Sandon Point, then we have the old Denmark Hotel and the Miner's cottage next door, then as we pass over mailbag hollow and near the Main Street, we come upon the Former Joint Stock Bank (now Two Sisters Garage), and the crowning glory of the Bulli Heritage Hotel where once you could stand upon its upper parapets and watch the coal trains load up

the old steamers from the jetty. Bulli still has its laneways like Stokes and Veigals. And I bet that if you pulled off some of the cladding on the shop awnings along the east side of the highway, there'd be some delightful heritage fabric just waiting to be uncovered. We mustn't forget the railway station with the delightful Black Diamond Museum, the recently renovated Bulli Railway Guesthouse (now Resin Brewery), and the list goes on..

I have a dream – a dream where pedestrians, diners and street fairs may once again occupy the streets and lanes of Bulli. Let's promote pedestrian flow in Bulli's unique town centre rather than letting more traffic through more efficiently! ✨

Coming down the mountain

A brief history of travel by horse and car, by local studies librarian Jenny Mcconchie

The photograph of Bulli Pass, at right, taken around 1900, was donated to the Local Studies Section of Wollongong City Library. Written on the back are the words "Louis's House, Bulli Pass". Louis was a hermit, shown here outside his hut at Green Pinch on Bulli Pass.

Green Pinch is on the lower half of Bulli Pass and while Louis is shown living there in total isolation, by the 1960s numerous traffic accidents had led to flashing lights being installed on the road to improve safety.

Bulli Pass was opened in 1868 after local residents pushed for a better mountain road to replace Rixon's Pass and Westmacott's Pass as routes down the mountain. Rixon's Pass met the Princes Highway at Russell Vale, while part of Westmacott's Pass was used as the lower part of Bulli Pass.

Travel down these early roads was difficult, with Rixon's Pass, opened by 1859, being subject to landslides in wet weather. Thus in 1866 the government allocated 2500 pounds for the construction of Bulli Pass. Fast-forward 156 years and the government is still allocating funds to keep the road operational.

The photo of Louis's House has been added to the Wollongong City Libraries digital photographic collection, Illawarra Images, which may be searched online via the library's catalogue. ✨

From top: Louis's house (P14994); 1932 Chevrolet Roadster on Bulli Pass after a hailstorm (P01473); a passenger coach (P01471). Photos from the collections of Wollongong City Libraries and the Illawarra Historical Society



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Flex your creativity

To mark National Mental Health Month MakeShift co-founder Caitlin Marshall shares the power of playful practices in challenging times



Photos:
MakeShift

Challenging times. We keep hearing that expression, don't we? The past couple of years have brought many of us to our knees with unique and invisible moments of grief – in losing work, loved ones, or connections to things that won't be the same for a while, or loss of freedoms, or security.

The second 'pandemic' is a mental health one, with services beyond capacity, waiting lists long, and access to psychologists beleaguered by this huge strain on the system.

If anything has come out of the pandemic, it's the greater awareness that mental health, just like physical health, moves up and down a spectrum, instead of being a static state of illness or health.

But what can we do if our mental health is being challenged? We hear a lot about wellbeing, and the need to be 'well'. While that might elicit images of people cruising along happy in their life day to day

– it actually means something a little different.

Being skilled in transitioning out of states of fear, anxiety, distress and into grounded calm, regulated presence is the marker of wellbeing. We all have times when our stress response is GO – fight, flight, freeze, submit. Noticing this happening, then being able to do things to help us shift back into that calmer state is a skill we learn for LIFE!

Here is the fun part – the ways that we can transition back to our window of 'tolerance' or comfort are usually things that we do alone, they don't cost money, and they can be fun! Creative, playful, mindful practices can do this invisible job of regulating our nervous systems.

Drawing, painting, making, stitching, cooking, gardening, writing, singing, dancing – all of these practices can be so powerful. Our work here at MakeShift is all about creating the conditions for people to try out these practices. Because, for lots of folks, we were told long ago that we weren't creative, so we downed tools and never tried again!

The truth is we all have that creative muscle. It is an innate human quality that we can rely on when we feel anxious, numb, depressed, scared, angry, despairing. We just have to give ourselves permission to give it a go!

Just like going for a run to get the cardio benefit, we don't have to be 'good' at drawing, dancing or writing to get the benefit from it. So give yourself permission to try something creative and playful.

Visit www.makeshift.org.au ✨

If I had a Hammer (or a big mallet)

By Paul Blanksby of Helensburgh Men's Shed

Shedman was humming a tune last Monday. He was helping Bob finish off two beautiful timber mallets, with leather thongs and brass inserts. Bob's been a Shed member for a few years now, and enjoys making lovely items from various timbers we have secreted away. (It's worth a visit to the shed just to walk into The Wood Store and breathe in the aroma.)

But that tune! What was it? It sounded a bit like, hang on, is that Peter, Paul and Mary? That Shedman, putting a song into my head that will be there all day: "If I had a hammer, I'd hammer in the morning..."



I thought he'd know the difference between a mallet and a hammer! Really, Shedman.

But that, of course, got us thinking. About blokes feeling hammered by life. We don't have a Norse god at the Shed,

or a Marvel superhero. But we do have blokes: 36 of them at the moment – 36 stories of successful lives, despite the hammer blows. And one way they have found help is working shoulder to shoulder at the Shed.

Come and meet us at our stall at the Helensburgh Lions Club Country Fair on Saturday, 22 October!

Visit helensburghmensshed.org.au ✨



Tigers triumph at Grand Final

The Northern District Tigers AFL Women's side have won their first premiership!
Coach Tony Ryan reports.

The Northern District Tigers AFL Women's side, based in Woonona, took on the mighty Wollongong Lions in the battle of the big cats for the 2022 Division One Premiership at Thomas Dalton Park on Saturday, September 3.

The bookies had both teams equal favourites coming into the game as the two sides had played each other three times during the season for one win, one loss and a draw.

Pouring rain greeted the teams as they ran onto the rain-soaked paddock. The coach was adamant that the first seven minutes of the game was critical as the ball would be dry and players had to make the most of early opportunities.

The Tigers were revved up as the game started and won the first clearance. Smart ball-play saw Franziska 'Franzi' Klatt have the first opportunity to score and she did, with a great kick at goal.

The Tigers did not have to wait too long before Julie Langhorn won a free kick about 20m out – she steadied herself and kicked the footy right through the middle.

The Tigers were up by two goals after eight minutes – then, with just seconds left on the clock, Franzi once again came to the fore, kicking the ball, which bounced through.

This gave the Tigers a 3.1.19 lead to zero at the first break.

As the ball became slippery and heavy the game turned into a war of attrition, with players sliding through mud and puddles to win every contest.

The Lions came back as everyone knew they would and kicked 1.2.8 to zero to be behind just 11 points at the main break.

The third quarter was a slog: Charlee McPherson

and Siobhan White were mudlarks, finding themselves at the bottom of each pack, while Valentina 'Tiny Tina' Siskoska thwarted any attack the Lions could mount.

There was no score at all in the third quarter and the coach implored the players that they were 15 minutes from creating history and had to spend "every petrol ticket".

The last quarter was a battle of wills. Every time the Lions attacked, the Tigers repelled. Holly Colquhoun seemed to run with springs in her legs and sprinted 30m to tackle a Lions player who was just about to launch an attack.

Wily ol' veteran Una McKay's highlight package was full of gut-busting runs.

The Lions attacked and attacked but were not able to kick goals due to the pressure applied by the Tigers. With two minutes to go the tigers were just eight points up. The Tigers had trained for this exact scenario and with cool heads managed to soak up the pressure and the time on the clock.

One final foray by the Lions only resulted in a point.

Finally, the siren sounded and supporters streamed onto the ground to celebrate the Tigers' first AFLW silverware. Emotional scenes were all around especially as several players on the field had played in the first Tigers team five years ago.

Final score: Tigers 3:1:19. Wollongong 1:5:11

Best players: Charlee McPherson, Siobhan White, Una McKay, Valentina Siskoska, Holly Colquhoun and Taylah Gartshore

Goals: Franziska Klatt 2, Julie Langhorn 1

For more information about the club,
visit www.ndafc.com.au 🍌

Honour for Austi Scout

By Fiona Purcell, 1st Austinmer Scout Group Secretary



After 13 years in the scouting movement, a pandemic-sized hurdle and a “very muddy” adventure, Austinmer Rover Scout Laura Kierse has been awarded by the NSW Governor with the youth organisation’s highest honour.

Laura, 27, has been presented her Baden-Powell (BP) Scout Award at Government House by Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley.

Laura accomplished an enormous amount to earn the award. For starters, she sewed 100 reusable face masks for people in need and also planned, fundraised and executed a DIY refurbishment of the Rover Scout meeting room.

Laura also became the Assistant Leader for Austinmer’s Venturer Scout section, leading the group of 14- to 17-year-olds on activities like abseiling, caving, kayaking and snow-shoeing.

But Laura’s stand-out project towards her award was planning and leading a seven-day, bucket-list adventure along Victoria’s Great Ocean Walk with

five Rover Scout friends. The 100-kilometre journey from Apollo Bay to the Twelve Apostles was made more challenging by rain in the lead-up.

“It went well overall, but it was very, very muddy,” Laura said.

“There were lots of hills that were made much more difficult by slippery clay mud.

“I definitely ended up on my butt – there’s video of me sliding down at least 10 metres of the track!”

Laura said the highlight was seeing the Twelve Apostles for the first time after wanting to the sea stacks since she was a child.

“There came a point where we could just see them in the distance. We’d walk along the clifftops and then some points you’d get a clearer view – that was really cool,” she said.

“When I got the first glimpse of them it was like, ‘Ooh, finally!’”

Despite Laura completing her BP Award and finishing as a Rover Scout, she is continuing in her role as Assistant Venturer Leader at Austinmer. She urges local teens to try it out, particularly if they love adventure and are keen to make new mates.

“Scouting is what you make it. It’s what the youth want it to be,” she said.

“I’ve met some of my closest friends through Scouts.”

Austinmer Venturer Scouts meet 6.30-9pm each Monday during school term and new members and parent helpers are welcome.
[Facebook @AustiScouts](#) 🌟

Adventures in Term 4

By Bruce Crawley

As we move into term 4 and the weather is warming up our Joeys, Cubs and Scouts are looking forward to more outdoor activities.

Once the kids reach the Scouting age group, they take an active part in determining what we do each term. Just before the end of term 3 they got together and had a productive session reviewing the year so far, taking on ideas and planning out what we will be doing in term 4. We are quite pleased with what they produced!

Kicking off with a trivia night at the hall we quickly move on to Jamboree On The Air (JOTA), a weekend Scout camp, fire safety night, a Scout organised scavenger hunt, another weekend Scout camp, district rafting night, lasertag and a family picnic on the beach to round out the term. Phew,

that will keep us busy.

Our thriving cub pack is now at capacity thanks to the energy and enthusiasm of our leader and volunteers who help weekly. However, we are still keen to hear from you if there is interest in the Joeys or Scout age groups.

You don’t have to be in or near Helensburgh to get involved! Visit joinscouts.com.au to find groups near you, or if you are in Helensburgh or surrounds contact me at bruce.crawley@nsw.scouts.com.au 🌟



Our Club Commitment Award for Kirra Junior Teams comp goes to Macey Jolley for surfing with a broken arm. Photo: Ian Pepper.



Teamwork shines at Surftag

Ian Pepper reports

Scarborough Boardriders' pointscore number 8 for this year was held on Sunday, 21 August at Coledale. Conditions started clean early with a bit of a wild afternoon for the Finals.

Congrats to Tim Bilmon who was all over it in the Open Men's. Joshua Pepper in 2nd probably had the second highest wave-count and used his advantage to power through some big turns. Shaun Warren was coming second but despite throwing everything at it couldn't keep the intensity up. Rod Morgan nearly made the air of the day, while it was great to see style master and newcomer Morgan in the final too!

In the Open Women's, Kasey Hargreaves continued her 2022 year of dominance with an impressive win in challenging waves. Talina Wilson was second and Amira Rankin third.

In the 18s, Lenny Golding got the win for his bigger waves with bigger turns. Oscar Hargreaves was second, and Cooper Smoley just missed a few turns that could have put him in the lead. Special mention to Charlie Kelly who looked super sharp.

The club has been busy, sending teams to surftag and other events almost every weekend.

- 13 Aug Junior Surftag at Dee Why Beach
- 27 Aug Grommets Surftag at Queenscliff Beach
- 3 Sept Aloha Junior Teams Challenge at Manly
- 10 Sept Women's Surftag at Dee Why Beach
- 16-18 Sept Kirra Junior Teams Challenge at Gold Coast

Well done to all our teams who represented the club and our area proudly in all these events. And there are still more coming up:

- 24 Sept Masters Surftag at Curl Curl Beach
- 1 October Men's Surftag at Queenscliff Beach

Our next pointscore is on 9 October and our 2022 presentation will be held at the Beaches Hotel on 3 December. 🍀

'Taking up table tennis in my late 60s has been fun'

By Stephen Young

A couple of years ago I thought my tennis days were over because my hip was giving me grief. Then my neighbour invited me to come to U3A social table tennis as an alternative.

I had played table tennis as a teenager at boarding school, but hardly at all in the intervening half a century. I went to U3A and was hooked.

They were very welcoming and the standard not at all intimidating. Then I agreed to fill in for a player in Illawarra Table Tennis Association winter competition. (Full disclosure: I am a bit of a sports nut, and my competitive juices flow easily.) That was great fun and I discovered that I could join in practice (with coaching) every Wednesday lunch time at Beaton Park.

Now this year I have played nearly every Monday night (except when I had Covid) in the 2022 winter competition in teams of three, winning the Division 2 Grand Final on Monday, 1 August.

I love that table tennis combines social, physical, and mental aspects. I get to meet a fresh bunch of people and make new friends. I get to exercise by moving around and improve my reflexes. Keeping track of the score and working out who serves next to whom in doubles challenges my mental agility. Then there is the opportunity for self-improvement – I want to learn to return deep spinny serves and to hit the ball harder with more consistency. There are local experts and hundreds of YouTube videos offering advice. All this is very enjoyable.

Easy opportunities for playing table tennis in Wollongong (bats and balls provided) are at Woonona Bulli RSL auditorium 10am-noon Tuesdays and Thursdays (contact terrynewham@bigpond.com), Beaton Park basketball hall 12.30-2.30pm Wednesdays (illawarratt@gmail.com) and Illawarra Sports Stadium 10am-1pm Wednesdays and Fridays (4272 8651). 🍀



Beach clean filled 7 large bags

Cleaning up Sharky's took 16 volunteers and a massive effort, writes Sarah Forest, a student from Sciences Po Rennes University on a four-month internship with Surfrider South Coast

On 17 September, Surfrider South Coast hosted a World Clean Up Day event at Sharky Beach in Coledale. It's an important date on the Surfrider calendar, when the local community comes together to clean up our waterways and beaches.

Much of the waste that we collected was degraded pieces of plastic. Over time and from exposure to the sun and weather elements, these plastics have broken up into tiny microplastics. These small pieces of plastic are not always obvious and we often forget that it is these small particles that do extensive damage to marine life.

Sixteen ocean-loving volunteers turned up and together we stopped seven large bags of rubbish from entering the sea. Thanks to everyone for their massive effort, especially those who waded into the creek. As a result, Sharky Beach and the creeks that feed into it are much cleaner.

World Clean Up Day is a global event where millions of volunteers tackle the global waste problem and develop a sustainable future together. Participants from 191 countries take part.

A few easy ways to be more eco-friendly are to refuse single-use plastic, remember our reusable drink bottles and coffee cups, recycle our waste properly (don't throw everything in the red bin) and sort our waste to minimise landfill. If you do see rubbish, pick it up and put it in the bin.

My name is Sarah, I am a 20-year-old student from France who is doing an internship with Surfrider. I am mindful of the carbon footprint from my long plane trip, however, this opportunity has provided me with an extraordinary



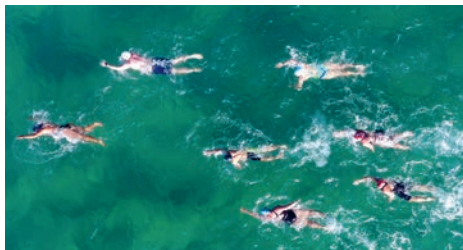
opportunity to discover Australia.

Ever since arriving in the Illawarra I have been amazed by the beauty of the landscapes and especially the beautiful flora. The best way we can protect nature is to see things with our own eyes, and by experiencing nature, we become aware of the huge challenge we are facing. I have met many wonderful people, and thanks to them, I am discovering and enjoying this beautiful part of the world. Wherever you travel, there are ecosystems that we need to protect because we are all dealing with the same issue: climate change.

The most vulnerable people are usually the first to be affected by climate change and, as a result, inequalities continue to increase. We all must do everything we can to reduce our footprint on the environment.

We invite you all to the next Surfrider event on 3 December, when we celebrate Ocean Care Day.

Follow us on Facebook at 'Surfrider Foundation - South Coast' or Instagram @surfrider_southcoast 🌟



Save Swim Dates

By Grigid Collaery

Coalcliff Ocean Swim Club, proudly sponsored by Equilibrium Healthcare, plans to swim on the following Sundays through summer: October 9, 16

& 30; November 13 & 27; December 11 & 18; January 29; February 12 & 26; March 12 & 26; April 2, 2023.

Please send EOI to events@coalcliffslsc.com.au

On-site registration day at Coalcliff is also the date of the first swim – Sunday, 9 October.

Swim club membership is only \$50 for participants, thanks to support from Equilibrium. Club members, please arrive before 11am for a start at 11.30.

A club swim cap will be provided on the day.

Coalcliff Ocean Swim Club is inclusive and we welcome everyone in the community who wants to practise their ocean swimming in a friendly environment. Please be aware that Coalcliff Beach can be challenging at times, including a fairly regular shore dump. Participants must be competent swimmers. 🌟



Left: Dave with his exercise physiologists, Lara (left) and Olivia after a good session.
Below: Rehab with a view thanks to Kye Simpson of Purpose Physiotherapy.



Healing power of community

Coalcliff SLSC Life Member Dave Winner has taught countless young people surf life saving, CPR and first aid. Now it's the community's turn to come to the rescue, with local physiotherapists offering their services pro bono to help Dave recover from an accident in the surf

The day of Dave Winner's accident was an otherwise ordinary one.

"August 5th 2021 I was going for a surf at Coalcliff about 2pm on a nice sunny winter's day, something I have done many times over the 40 years that we have lived in Coalcliff," Dave says.

"There was a moderate swell with good conditions."

Dave has little memory of what happened next, but witnesses have told him that he was caught out by a large wave. "I hit my head on some shallow rocks, this resulted in breaking my neck with fractures to my C2 and C3 vertebrae."

Dave understands he was underwater for about five minutes. "Luckily for me two young men who witnessed me getting washed into the water and not resurface came looking for me.

"Another large wave actually then came through and washed me up onto the rock shelf at their feet.

"This is where I was lucky again in that they were trained in CPR.

"I want to emphasise how important it is to know how to perform CPR because this can and did save my life and I am eternally grateful to those who worked on me."

Dave was flown to the Royal North Shore Hospital's spinal unit and stayed in hospital for six months, finally returning home on 14 January.

Then his rehabilitation continued – thanks to local professionals volunteering their services.

"A special thanks to the team at Purpose Physiotherapy at Coledale who have been instrumental in improving my strength and mobility," Dave says.

After six months of physiotherapy with Purpose physio Kye Simpson – which included hydrotherapy sessions in Coalcliff ocean pool – Dave achieved something remarkable.

Kye says: "After months of hard work, specific strengthening and strategising on how to get Dave on and off the floor safely, we submitted a video application of Dave performing CPR independently and uninterrupted for two minutes on both an adult and infant manikin.

"Dave has recently been notified that his First Aid re-certification has been renewed, which allows him to continue to teach First Aid to the community. This has been very crucial in Dave's sense of belonging and purpose in the community."

Kye says Dave is one of the most "motivated individuals" he has ever met. "Our next focus is to continue to improve Dave's mobility, in the hope that he can walk independently with his quad base walking stick in the near future."

Lara Samuelsson and the team from The Physio Pilates Movement (TPM) have also been helping Dave, providing rehabilitation and Pilates exercises.

Lara, who is a physiotherapist and an exercise physiologist, said: "I know Dave as he is a big part of our community and when I heard about his injury I offered to assist and help him get moving and gain his independence back."

Lara says Dave has made tremendous improvements. "He is so much stronger and with his dedication he will show everybody how it's done. He is already back at work teaching first aid so more people can know the life-saving skill of CPR, which was used to save Dave himself."

Dave is grateful to the surf club, the many locals who donated to a GoFundMe campaign, occupational therapist Lisa Bowker, of the Holistic Network and local tradies. "They donated their own time, enabled me to renovate my home to suit my needs as a quadriplegic and I am so grateful for the help. We really do live in a great area." 🌟

Hello Fish

Our regular snorkelling writer Duncan Leadbitter is back in the mix – and he's struck history

After an extended period out of the water due to an ear operation (to fix swimmer's ear or exostoses as the bony growths triggered by cold water are called) it was so good to get back in.

I visited the reef at East Corrimal, just to the north of the entrance to Bellambi Lagoon. I had not been on the south side of the reef before so it was an exploratory snorkel. The entry point is from the beach into a channel that runs along the edge of the reef. Despite the low swell there was a current heading out to sea due to the runout tide.

Immediately I saw what I took to be ship wreckage on the bottom along the edge of the reef. Unlike material I have seen at Bellambi and Sandon Point which is all metal, I saw what looked like wood amongst metal. The nearby rocks were clean of any seaweed and other growth, suggesting that sand had been recently removed from the area, possibly due to the big seas we have been experiencing.

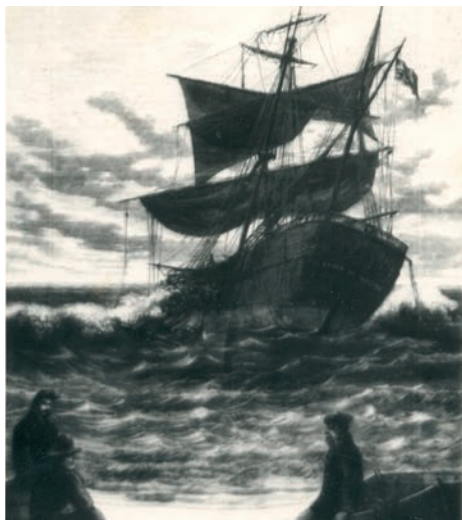
I assume that the wreckage is part of the *Queen*

of Nations, most of which lies off the entrance to Towradgi Lagoon (close by to the south) but some bits (like lots of bottles of rum and cognac) were washed north towards Bellambi. There is some great information about drunken sailors and threats with pistols to be found at this website: hemnet.com.au.

The water was cold and it's a time of year when there aren't many fish to say hello to. There was a school of luderick around one of the breaks and plenty of undersize bream in very shallow water close to shore. There were more crimson banded wrasse than I see normally and I also saw a southern eagle ray.

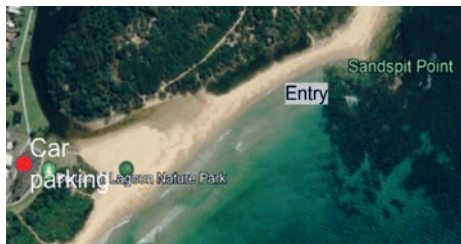
The reef is very shallow and finding deeper drop-offs required a long swim. A lot of the reef is covered in the invasive seaweed, *Caulerpa filiformis*.

It's a place I will go back to and explore as it's a short walk from the car park and an easy entry/exit if the swell is low. 🍀



Left, P09127: The *Queen of Nations* ran ashore on Corrimal Beach on 31st May, 1881 as a result of the Captain mistaking a burning slack heap for Sydney Lighthouse. Photograph from an engraving in the "Sydney Mail" 11th June, 1881. Above, P02328 - Rescue of the captain and mate of the stranded barque *Queen of Nations* on Black Rocks, Towradgi Beach, June 1881.

Photos: From the collections of the Wollongong City Libraries and the Illawarra Historical Society



Golf news

Tradies Social Golf

Barry Thompson reports

Tung Nguyen carded 38 to win the Tournament, won the B grade longest drive and also took out the 7th hole \$100 Eagles Nest! Presso Terry may have had trouble differentiating between 18 and 20, but he scored a credible 36 to record a second place.

A jet-lagged Ivan McMillan managed a 34, despite having been stripped of his 42 handicap. Dave Astill beat me 2 and 1 in Match Play and Jerry Reilly beat John Towns by the same margin.

Congratulations to both winners!

Mark Ryan took the Bradmans and I won the Helensburgh Driving Range voucher!

Gavin Sinclair presented his third card for handicap with a 37. I hope Handicapper Paul is kind to you. I think you'll be seeing a lot of our valued sponsors, Helensburgh Butchery, Gallardo's Pizzeria and Helensburgh Driving Range.

Tradie's BBQ area is now even more ideal for events with the installation of automatic rain curtains – they saved us from a soaking.

Our next outing, a Stableford, is at Boomerang on Saturday, October 15th. Tee-off at 7am. ✨

Helensburgh Sunday Social Golf Club

Robert 'Indy' Jones reports

The HSSGC tour ramped up with stableford events on August 28th and September 11th at the popular Hurstville GC.

In August, 1st place was Steve Burns (35), 2nd Rob 'Indy the Eagle' Jones (35) and 3rd Peter Gardner (34). On-course prizes shared six ways. Jose Hernandez defeated Peter Herbert 5 & 4 to reach the never-ending Match Play final.

On September 11th, The Burgh Bowl went to Indy (me), with 34, ahead of Mark Buckley (31, on a count back), and Mark O'Connor.

Jose Hernandez vs Robert Jones tied 6 & 6 after which Indy (me) secured an improbable win on the 1st extra hole to become HSSGC Match Play champion. Not forgetting, the O'Connors and Darren Arthur taking on-course winnings, last group perhaps ... no, just joking.

Our next scheduled events are on October 9th at Kareela and Campbelltown on November 20th.

Other news: the trip away has been booked for 2023, Mittagong, Bowral and Moss Vale. 2nd cards for Craig Warren and Greg Ford.

Call Tony on 0418 863 100 for club info. Please support our sponsors Christian's Premium Meats and Helensburgh Golf Range.

Indy signing off: If you hit it right, it's a slice. If you hit it left, it's a hook. If I hit it straight, it's a miracle leading to an Eagle. ✨



Club aces new website

By Helensburgh Tennis Club president and secretary Patrick Tracy

Helensburgh Tennis Club is moving into the 21st century! Soon we will have a website so people can book online and receive a one-time code to enter the courts. For years the running and maintenance of the courts was left to two dedicated people. They needed help, so now there are new committee members who voted in a new club president/secretary and vice-president/treasurer. The team is committed to expanding the club's membership. As president, I am keen to develop the club's facilities, such as building an outdoor shaded area with seating/barbecue next to the clubhouse. We would love to have a hitting wall next to the hardcourt, and also resurface the hardcourt. These things will require funding and sponsorship. With our upcoming website we hope to attract new members and sponsors. Look out for our Facebook page too. Let's play!

The website will launch mid October at play.tennis.com.au/helensburghtennisclub ✨

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October 2022

TIME	M	TIME	M	TIME	M	TIME	M
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8 0153 0.18 0759 1.45 SA 1351 0.34 2007 1.71		17 0220 1.02 0726 0.74 MO 1410 1.41 2130 0.56		26 0305 0.29 0926 1.70 WE 1549 0.25 2149 1.46			
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MOON PHASE SYMBOLS New Moon ● First Quarter ◐ Full Moon ○ Last Quarter ◑

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