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Community news for Ballina and The Plateau

Issue 39 | January 2025



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BALLINA LISMORE BYRON BAY



Welcome to the new year: an exciting time full of summer fun and not too much else, as we all (hopefully) take a moment to enjoy the finer things in life. It is also a great opportunity to reflect and set new intentions for the next 12 months. Maybe you've been wanting to prioritise your health, friendships or family. For others, 2025 may be focussed upon functional things like finances or career. Whatever it may be, the universal advice seems to be - keep it real and ensure those goals are achievable and enjoyable. For some tips and tricks on making your resolutions stick, head to page 40.

If you are one of the fortunate individuals who has been able to wrangle some personal time this month, be sure to dive into our lists of favourite things - books to enjoy (page 34), podcasts to listen to (page 35) and design trends to inspire (page 36).

Finally, a special shout out to one of our January profiles - the fabulous Graeme Eggins, an individual who has been entertaining and informing readers of *The Ballina Wave* from Issue #1. Discover more about the man behind the words on page 27.

Until next month,  
Kate Parry, Managing Editor.

### Contact us

Got a story? Get in touch.  
Phone: 0424 610 732  
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*The Ballina Wave* acknowledges that we are here on the land of the Bundjalung people. The Bundjalung are the traditional owners of this land and are part of the oldest surviving continuous culture in the world.



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# Justine Elliot MP

Assistant Minister for Social Services  
Assistant Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence  
Your Federal Member for Richmond

Here for you in the Albanese Labor Government

Authorised J Elliot, ALP, Tweed Heads South





**What:** Ballina New Years Open  
**When:** Friday 3 - Monday 6 January  
**Where:** Ballina Tennis Club, 69 Burnett Street

Watch high-quality tennis up close, as players from across Australia and overseas compete on the court. Viewing is free. For more information, visit: [play.tennis.com.au/ballinatennisclub](http://play.tennis.com.au/ballinatennisclub)



**What:** LJ Hooker Ballina U13 Cricket Carnival  
**When:** Monday 6 - Friday 10 January  
**Where:** Ballina

Celebrating its 30th anniversary, this annual event will once again welcome teams from all over NSW and QLD for a week of competitive cricket and fun.

For more information visit:  
Facebook / BallinaU13CricketCarnival



**What:** Arj Barker Live at Lennox Head  
**When:** Thursday 9 January, 8pm  
**Where:** Lennox Head Cultural Centre

Be sure to catch Arj Barker Live on his Australian tour, *The Mind Field*. You'll laugh, learn (possibly too much) and never look at things the same again.

For more info visit: [alist.com.au/artists/arj-barker/](http://alist.com.au/artists/arj-barker/)



**What:** *Finding Nemo Jr*  
**When:** Friday 10 - Sunday 19 January  
**Where:** Ballina Players

This year's youth musical by Ballina Players is an adaptation of *Finding Nemo*, with new music by award-winning songwriting team Kristen Anderson-Lopez and Robert Lopez. Tickets at: [ballinaplayers.com.au](http://ballinaplayers.com.au)



**What:** Youth Colour Fun Run  
**When:** Thursday 16 January, 9.30am  
**Where:** Saunders Oval, Ballina

Grab your friends and get ready to be doused in vibrant colours as you run and make memories. Hosted by Bullinah Aboriginal Health Services, this free event is a celebration of fun, community, and culture.



**What:** Ballina Cup  
**When:** Friday 17 January, 12pm  
**Where:** Ballina Jockey Club

Racegoers will experience music, food, fashion, fun and thoroughbreds with all the colour and excitement of a great local and historical community event. For more information or to book tickets visit: [localtickets.com.au](http://localtickets.com.au)

## Monthly Markets

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

## Weekly Farmers Markets

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

For more information visit [discoverballina.com.au](http://discoverballina.com.au)



## Hot Meal Centre funded for another year



The NSW Government will donate \$25,000 in funding support for the Ballina Hot Meal Centre from the Premier's Discretionary Fund.

For over 27 years, the Ballina Hot Meal Centre has been serving hot meals to people who are sleeping rough and other vulnerable people across the Ballina Shire. Over this time, the Centre has only seen an increase in demand for its sit-down, take-away, and meals-on-wheels service, with 300 meals prepared by a purely volunteer-staffed service across the two days per week it is open.

*Pictured: General Manager of Ballina Hot Meal Centre, Dawn Sword.*

General Manager of Ballina Hot Meal Centre, Dawn Sword said, 'The Ballina Hot Meal Centre is operated and run entirely by volunteers, some who have been here since its inception, and all of whom help provide a warm and welcoming environment where they feed those in need, not just with food but with kindness and hope.'

'Without this funding, it would have been a struggle to keep our doors and kitchen open to continue servicing the community at a time when it is most needed.'

## Arts hit by Uni decision

On 30 October 2024, Southern Cross University (SCU) Vice Chancellor Professor Tyrone Carlin announced the discontinuation of the university's creative arts programs, including the Bachelor of Art and Design (BAD). This decision has sparked widespread debate across the community.

Following the announcement, Ballina Shire Council unanimously passed a motion to:

- note the critical role that music and creative arts play in the vibrancy, diversity, and resilience of the Northern Rivers, including during recovery from disasters and pandemics
- call on SCU to reconsider its recent decision to discontinue its undergraduate programs in art and design, contemporary music and digital media from 2025
- write to the relevant Federal Ministers urging them to restore equity to the cost of Arts Degrees to ensure that young people can pursue in a career in music and the creative arts without undue financial burden
- write to relevant State Ministers to take urgent action to increase funding and other support for regional arts and music events, noting the negative impact that the cancellation of large music events such as Bluesfest and Splendour in the Grass will have on Ballina's local economy.

Ballina Shire Councillor, Kiri Dicker, who tabled the motion, commented, 'Local Councils play an important role in advocating for the needs of our communities, so I was happy to see my motion calling on SCU to reconsider its decision to cut its Arts Degrees from 2025, unanimously supported. I appreciate the enormous pressure universities are under to remain sustainable, but this needs to be balanced with the critical role that the creative arts play in the story of the Northern Rivers.'

## Bus Interchange opens



The Tamar Street Bus Interchange upgrade is now complete and officially open for passengers. The interchange, located in Ballina's CBD has been upgraded to improve traffic flow and increase passenger accessibility and comfort.

The \$1.7 million project involved the demolition of the aging bus shelter in June 2024 to make way for a modern, functional facility designed to meet the needs of the growing community. Key features of the upgrade include:

- new bus shelter and covered walkway
- two-bay bus zone for efficient pick-up and drop-off with improved bus access
- separate taxi zone for enhanced traffic management
- improved landscaping throughout Interchange and adjacent carpark
- improved stormwater drainage to mitigate minor flooding during high tides
- widened walkways for safer, more accessible pedestrian travel.



# Cumbalum Residents Association

by Kay Oxley



Pictured: CRA members (L to R) - Greg Unwin, Anthony Gooley, Marshall Chang, Henrietta Chang, Garry Oxley, Leiki Hartel, Yvette Mansfield, Ray Constable and Jo McIntyre.

The Cumbalum Residents Association (CRA) wishes everyone a happy new year. On reflection, 2024 was a busy one.

The **Cumbalum Shopping Village** is progressing and we are confident that it will commence construction this year, in conjunction with a designated bus lane and shelters to improve safety for the community. We now have a full-size basketball court at the Cumbalum Sports Field and our Association is working with Council to increase other recreational facilities for our area.

In addition, the trigger points for IntraPac (the developer) have been lowered by Council which has resulted in the first stage of the District Park (**Banyan Hill**) approved for development.

We welcome and congratulate Damian Loone, Phil Meehan and Erin Karsten on being elected as our **A Ward Councillors**, together with Sharon Cadwallader in returning as Ballina Shire Mayor. At November's A Ward Council meeting, new Councillors were busy handling queries from interested organisations who were vying for their attention on various concerns and projects the wider community has planned. The CRA plans to continue working steadily to shift the focus on providing more infrastructure for local ratepayers and the supporting workforce, of which many reside in Cumbalum.

Our **Community Day** was rescheduled from December 2024 to February 2025 to present an opportunity for Councillors to meet with our community, as well as offer a space to view the various projects in which CRA is involved. Thank you to those members who have already had a head start organising the activities, raffles and prizes, as well as food and a BBQ for the day. Please look out for the exact date TBA and mark it in your calendar, as it is bound to be a fun afternoon. If there are any interested local entities that would like to be involved, please contact the CRA via email: [Cumbalumresidentsassociation@gmail.com](mailto:Cumbalumresidentsassociation@gmail.com)

At November's Ordinary Meeting, the CRA resolved to allow **Associate Members**, officially known as Supporting Members, to join. If you are interested in receiving up-to-date information or wish to help with some of our activities but are not necessarily interested in attending meetings, please join

us for a small fee of \$10 per year (note the \$5 one-off joining fee). We are planning some fundraising activities this year and will be looking for support in running the events. Contact us for further details.

The proposed **Saltwood/Kinvara development** exhibition was also discussed at the last CRA meeting. It is a three-stage development with a range of housing options, recreational, shopping and education facilities. Access will be via Ross Lane for the 20-year timeframe development. It is proposed that it will eventually connect with Banyan Hill and will include bike pathways.

**BALLINA Players** Look what's coming... **2025**

**FINDING NEMO JR.**  
JAN 10-19  
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**BEYOND REASONABLE DOUBT**  
MAY 10-19  
Directed by Peter & Karen Harding

**CHICAGO**  
JUNE 6-29  
Directed by Iesha Williams

**SPAMALOT**  
AUG 22 - SEP 7  
Directed by Pippin Goodsell

**GEORGY GIRL**  
NOV 7-30  
Directed by Paul Belsham & Leanne Broadley

**CHRISTMAS CONFESSIONS**  
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# Be safe in the surf this summer

By Eoin Johnston



*Pictured: Eoin (far right) competing at the North Steyne Surf Carnival (1963) with the South Narrabeen Rescue and Resuscitation team. Source: Supplied.*

As an active surf lifesaver since the summer of 1960/61, I've witnessed many changes in this vital voluntary organisation. Recently, I joined fellow Ballina Surf Lifesaving Club Life Member, Darcy Morrow, in receiving the Australian Surf Lifesaving 60-Year Patrol Service Award. Reflecting on those decades, it's clear how much has evolved: from inflatable rescue craft and rescue tubes to drones and modernised resuscitation techniques. Importantly, the overdue inclusion

of women in patrols and competitions - now 44% of NSW lifesavers - has transformed surf lifesaving into a more inclusive community.

Yet, despite advances and constant warnings, tragic drownings occur every summer. Last season, 61 coastal and ocean drowning deaths were recorded along the NSW coastline - all outside patrolled areas. This stark statistic underscores the importance of swimming between the red and yellow flags. Professional lifeguards and volunteer lifesavers collectively made nearly 4,500 rescues and undertook over 235,000 preventative actions last year.

Australia's beaches are treasures, but they hold dangers for those unfamiliar with surf dynamics. This summer, I urge everyone - locals, visitors, and newcomers alike - to choose patrolled locations. Avoid the temptation of isolated 'private' spots. By heeding safety advice from Surf Lifesaving Australia and swimming between the flags, you ensure a safer, more enjoyable beach experience.

Your life, and the lives of those around you, may depend on it.

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## Your future, your voice: help shape Ballina Shire



Ballina Shire Council (BSC) is listening to its community and inviting residents, businesses, and groups to share their vision for the future.

With five new Councillors joining the elected Council, adding fresh energy to the enthusiasm and experience of the existing five, and supported by the dedicated employees of Ballina Shire Council, BSC is eager to chart a course guided by what matters most to you.

The Community Strategic Plan (CSP) is your opportunity to shape the

next decade. It's a blueprint that outlines how Council will act as a service provider, collaborator, and advocate to deliver the infrastructure, programs, and services reflecting the community's priorities.

'What kind of future do you want for Ballina Shire?' asks Mayor Sharon Cadwallader. 'This is your chance to tell us what matters. Should Council prioritise infrastructure, green space or community services? We want to hear from you.'

Council's CSP engagement process is already underway. A random survey of 500 residents has provided initial insights into community priorities, and Council has partnered with the Advocate for Children and Young People to deliver tailored engagement with youth. Now, the broader

community is invited to participate by completing the online surveys.

'The CSP isn't just about what Council delivers, it's about what our community wants,' the Mayor added.

'Your input will help us prioritise what's most important and ensure we're delivering on the needs and aspirations of the people we serve.'

To complete the survey, share your ideas, and register for updates on the CSP process, visit:

[yoursayballina.com.au/csp2035](https://yoursayballina.com.au/csp2035)

Survey closes Monday 3 February.

The community feedback and other engagement activities Council undertakes will inform the new CSP. A draft CSP will be further exhibited for public comment in April/May 2025

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## Annual Kids Fishing Competition returns



Get ready to cast off at the Ballina RSL Kids Fishing Competition on Monday 27 January. This much loved annual community event invites young anglers and their families to enjoy a day by the riverside, with over \$10,000 in prizes up for grabs, thanks to the support of top fishing sponsors like Hooked on Brewing Bait & BBQ, Shimano, Frogley's Offshore, Rapala, and others. The day is organised by dedicated volunteers from the Ballina RSL Fishing Club.

Set along Ballina's picturesque riverside, registration opens at 8am on the Ballina RSL terrace at the boardwalk's western end, where families will check-in before finding their favourite fishing spots. With safety as a priority, rock fishing is prohibited.

Following a morning of fishing, the fun continues in the Ballina RSL Auditorium with a free sausage sizzle, a popper for kids and an awards ceremony to celebrate young anglers' skills. Age-group winners will take home high-quality fishing gear and gift vouchers.

For more information, visit: [ballinarsl.com.au](http://ballinarsl.com.au)





# U3A (University of the Third Age) Enrolment Day

by Julie Stephan



*Pictured: U3A's tai chi group. Source: Supplied.*

Recently retired, new to Ballina, or simply looking to try a new hobby and meet new friends? Ballina U3A might be just the thing for you. As one member recently said, 'I realised that as much as I love spending time in my garden, it wasn't quite enough. That's when I joined U3A. I had missed the interaction and the joy of learning, and U3A provided the perfect solution. They talk about lifelong learning, and that is exactly what the university offers. I've learned to play mahjong, enjoyed the benefits of weights for wellbeing and even discovered a love for croquet, which I play as often as I can'.

Here in Ballina, we have a very active U3A, which holds over 30 different classes/groups in diverse interests such as mahjong, crafts, exercise, yoga, walking, art, languages, music, dancing and cryptic crosswords - to name just a few. Volunteer tutors run classes which operate mainly out of the clubhouse at Fripp Oval. We currently have over 500 members participating in classes.

2025 Enrolment Day for new members (and current members who wish to enrol in additional classes) will be held at the Fripp Oval Clubhouse, Canal Road, on Wednesday 22 January between 9am and 11am. Why not come along to find out more about what U3A has to offer? Membership costs just \$50 per year, plus a \$5 joining fee.

We operate on school terms, so classes will commence week beginning Monday 3 February. We also accept ongoing enrolments at our office which is open 10am-12pm during each term. You can find the timetable of classes for 2025 at: [ballinabyron.u3anet.org.au](http://ballinabyron.u3anet.org.au)

For further information, email: [u3abalbyr@gmail.com](mailto:u3abalbyr@gmail.com) or call ph: 0473 520 184.



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## Walk to make a difference



Set to return on Saturday 3 May, the Byron Coastal Charity Walk is an exciting and meaningful way to give back to the community while enjoying one of Australia's most iconic coastal landscapes.

This annual event, held in support of the Westpac Rescue

Helicopter Service, invites participants to walk 12, 24, or 36 kilometres along the stunning Byron coastline. More than just a walk, the event is an opportunity to push your limits, enjoy spectacular coastal scenery, and support a life-saving service that is there when it matters most. The walk caters to all fitness levels, but if you're up for a true test of endurance, the 36km route from Byron Bay to Ballina provides a real challenge.

As a social, non-competitive walk, participants can walk or run at any pace and choose to enter individually or in teams.

Participants will also enjoy on-track entertainment, ensuring the walk is as fun as it is inspiring. A full support crew will be there every step of the way, providing hydration, medical assistance, and encouragement, ensuring a safe and enjoyable experience for all.

Whether you're walking for fitness, for friends, or for a cause that matters, your participation will help support the Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service's life-saving work across the region.

Join up, challenge yourself, and walk for those who need our help most. Register now: [rescuehelicopter.com.au/events](https://rescuehelicopter.com.au/events)

**Ballina Shire**  
**AUSTRALIA DAY CEREMONY**  
SUNDAY 26 JANUARY 2025  
Lennox Head Cultural Centre

**YOU ARE INVITED**

The Ballina Shire Australia Day Ceremony will be held on Sunday 26 January at Lennox Head Cultural Centre

Join us for this special event, providing a **warm welcome to our new Australians in the Citizenship Ceremony** and thanking and congratulating the **2025 Ballina Shire Australia Day Award nominees**.

Following announcement of the the Award category winners, the **2025 Ballina Shire Citizen of the Year** will be revealed.

For event details visit [ballina.nsw.gov.au/2025awards](https://ballina.nsw.gov.au/2025awards)

 **Australia Day**  
Reflect. Respect. Celebrate.

**ballina** shire council



## Marine Rescue Ballina, always rescue-ready



Pictured, left: Ballina 30 and Ballina 21 are two of Marine Rescue Ballina's three rescue vessels. Pictured, right: Marine Rescue NSW Commissioner, Alex Barrell.

Boaters around Ballina can take to the water this summer, reassured that more than 100 highly skilled and dedicated volunteers from Marine Rescue Ballina are rescue-ready 24/7.

The Ballina unit is consistently one of the busiest Marine Rescue NSW groups in the Northern Rivers region. In 2024, volunteer crews at Marine Rescue Ballina completed over 55 search and rescue missions, safely returning more than 100 people to shore.

Marine Rescue NSW Commissioner Alex Barrell said the Ballina boating community is supported by three Marine Rescue NSW vessels, including the former *Ballina Jet Boat*, now part

of the Marine Rescue NSW fleet and known as *Ballina 21*.

'The jet boat has been servicing the local community for more than 50 years, and it is wonderful that it continues to save lives on the water with Marine Rescue NSW,' he said. '*Ballina 21* is a versatile and manoeuvrable vessel that can rapidly respond to incidents, particularly on the Ballina Bar, which is a dangerous waterway.'

Commissioner Barrell advised boaters wanting to cross the bar to do so with caution. 'Boaters should always check the weather and conditions, and cross the bar at the right time, not during a run-out tide. Before crossing, skippers

should stop and observe the sets (of waves) before proceeding, to avoid a dangerous situation or capsized,' he said.

Capsized vessels can lead to life-threatening emergencies, and Commissioner Barrell urged boaters to always wear a lifejacket. 'A lifejacket can't help you if you're not wearing it. If your boat overturns, please stay with the vessel until help arrives – it is much easier to spot an upturned vessel than a person in the water,' he said.

Commissioner Barrell also emphasised the importance of boaters maintaining their vessels and safety equipment, and carrying enough fuel to ensure a safe and enjoyable day on the water.

'We encourage all boaters to log on and off with Marine Rescue NSW, using the free Marine Rescue NSW app or VHF Channel 16. Logging on provides peace of mind for boaters and their families. If a boater does not return from a voyage as planned, we will initiate a search.

'Logging on saves precious time in an emergency – it only takes a minute (logging on) to protect a lifetime,' Commissioner Barrell concluded.

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Our local experienced care managers guide you through the services available and create a flexible, individualised plan that helps you live life to the full.

If you're aged 65 years and over, or Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander aged 55 years and over, why not enquire about how home support services could assist you.

Please note, the first step to accessing Government-funded Home Care services is to apply for an assessment. Call My Aged Care on 1800 200 422 or apply online at [www.myagedcare.gov.au](http://www.myagedcare.gov.au). If you are eligible, you will then receive a referral code which will allow you to progress services with us.

## Our home care services include:

- Meal Assistance
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- Wellbeing
- Allied Health Support
- Assistive Technology
- Aids & Equipment
- Home Maintenance & Modifications
- Respite for Carers
- Personal Care
- Nursing Care





## Keep your cool at the Library this summer

by Jo Chaffey, Alstonville Library Branch Technician



Pictured: Sand Art. Source: Supplied.

When the sun becomes too hot, and you're looking for a cool place to hangout, why not head to the local Library for all your entertainment needs? Whether it is curling up with a delightful book, watching a captivating DVD or testing your skills of discovery - Ballina Shire Libraries have got you covered.

Opening hours across our three Libraries are 9am-5pm during the week and 9am-12pm on Saturdays. Ballina also has a late opening night of 7pm on Wednesdays and 1pm-4pm on Sundays. Alstonville closes for their lunch break between 12.30pm-1.30pm weekdays. This will give you plenty of time to come in and have fun with our Scavenger Hunts or the *Reading is Magic* activity booklet.

Some of the school holiday activities which can be found in our Libraries include sand art, tie dye and do-it-yourself craft activities. Ballina will also be holding a movie night on Wednesday 29 January. Remember, it's always a good idea to book in for the activity you would like to attend as some have limited numbers and fill up very quickly.

- Alstonville Library, ph: 6628 5527
- Ballina Library, ph: 6686 2831
- Lennox Head Library, ph: 6687 6398.

If you are part of our Summer Reading Club you will also have the party to look forward to at the end of January. Whatever you decide to do, remember to stay safe and keep reading.

## Trivia and teamwork to support refugees



Pictured: The Sea Spirit Singers at BRRAWN's recent trivia night. L-R: Pauline Fingleton, Gini Witt, Robyn Kestle, Diana Mason, Jan Lavis and Helen O'Loughlin. Source: Supplied.

Which dog used to fantasise about shooting down the Red Baron in an air battle? Snoopy, of course. And do you know the meaning of the word 'flivver'? Could it be a new flavour of ice cream made with honeyed liver? Those were two of the many questions that caused consternation and laughter at a recent trivia night held by one of our newest Community Supporter Groups (CSG), Ballina Refugee Resettlement and Welcome Network (BRRAWN).

Over 100 people attended the event at Ballina RSL Club, with 13 teams competing for first place. Ballina RSL donated the use of the room and sound equipment, and many other local businesses provided raffle prizes. \$2,800 was raised towards supporting the settlement of a Kurdish Syrian family who is arriving in mid-January.

The family - a couple and their four young boys - have been assessed as refugees by the UNHCR and are immigrating under the Community Refugee Integration and Settlement Pilot (CRISP) - a Federal Government-funded scheme. They will be the 10th family in the last two years to settle in the Northern Rivers region under the CRISP program, and will be supported by BRRAWN - a group of seven retired women who are dedicating their time to the family for at least 12 months. The group also has eight other keen helpers who will be rostered to assist with

driving the family to English lessons, driving lessons, swimming lessons and other activities.

BRRAWN Coordinator, Linda Munro, says she's excited about meeting the family and hopes the group will be able to provide them with a soft landing and the foundations of a happy, stable life.

'In the meantime,' she said, 'we're gathering and storing furniture and other household goods for them. If there are any strong young people who would like to contribute actual brawn to the cause, we'd love some help moving furniture into their new home in January.'

Any interested individuals are encouraged to call Linda on ph: 0423 982 217.



# Capture coastal change with CoastSnap

CoastSnap is empowering coastal communities worldwide to contribute to critical scientific research with their smartphones. This global citizen science project invites anyone with an interest in the coast to document coastal changes through simple snapshots taken on their mobile phones, helping track the impact of storms, sea-level rise, and human activities on coastlines over time.

Now, Ballina Shire residents and visitors can participate, with the region's first CoastSnap location recently installed at Sharpes Beach headland and another coming soon to Lighthouse Beach lookout.

Here's how it works: each CoastSnap station features a sturdy phone cradle that overlooks the beach, along with instructions for participants.

Simply place your phone in the cradle, snap a picture, and upload it using the CoastSnap app or by scanning a QR code at the site. Each image is added to a central database, where coastal scientists use photogrammetry to analyse and create time-lapse videos, revealing precise changes in coastline positions over time.

CoastSnap is a fun and impactful way to be involved in coastal conservation.

By joining in, you'll be helping scientists forecast future changes and better understand coastal dynamics.

For more information, visit: [coastsnap.com](http://coastsnap.com)

*Pictured, top: example of a CoastSnap station.*

*Pictured, bottom: a recent image from Ballina's first CoastSnap location.*

*Source: [coastsnap.com](http://coastsnap.com)*



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# Free flare disposal



Flares typically last about three years, and keeping them up-to-date is essential for safety (and to avoid penalties).

Ballina boaters are being invited to take advantage of an easy, safe and free disposal program, thanks to Transport NSW. You can drop off your old flares at Fishery Creek Boat Ramp (Johnson Drive, off River Street) on the following dates:

- Thursday 9 January, 10.30am - 12.30pm
- Thursday 17 April, 12.30pm - 2pm

For details, visit: [nsw.gov.au/driving-boating-and-transport/waterways-safety-and-rules/lifejackets-and-safety-equipment](http://nsw.gov.au/driving-boating-and-transport/waterways-safety-and-rules/lifejackets-and-safety-equipment)





# Become an owner of *The Waves*

Northern Rivers Media has become one of Australia's most successful community media publishers.

After purchasing the much loved 18-year-old *The Lennox Wave* in 2021, the company has expanded its unique community focused model into The Ballina Shire with *The Ballina Wave*, The Byron Shire with *The Byron Wave*, and has recently begun its expansion into the Gold Coast with *The Burleigh Wave*.

Many regional towns and suburbs were left without their local community newspapers and magazines when NewsCorp either closed or moved online over 100 publications.

While we believe that of course online is now an accepted part of our lives, over the past few years with fake news, AI, scammers and just too much online 'noise' there has been a strong move back to reliable print

publications, particularly those that are deeply connected and supportive of their local communities.

In March 2025, Northern Rivers Media will be instigating a CSF (Crowd Source Funding) campaign through ASIC licensed intermediary OnMarket.

Our aim is to raise funds to continue the expansion of our community magazines by issuing shares that will allow investors and members of our communities to share in our ownership.

An Expression Of Interest (EOI) campaign will commence in February 2025 followed by the CSF in the following month.

If you would like to be advised and presented with further details, please email us so that we may contact you with appropriate documentation in early 2025 for your consideration.

Please register your interest in receiving further information  
by emailing: [community@northernriversmedia.com.au](mailto:community@northernriversmedia.com.au)



# Community in brief

## Alstonville Probus

Members were saddened to learn of the sudden passing of Stephanie Gay Gooding in mid-November. Stephanie was the wife of Grahame, proud mother of their children, subsequent grandchildren and great-grandchild. Many attendees from local towns gathered for Stephanie's funeral - testament to the love shared for her. She will be truly missed.



Pictured: Dave Paulsen from Orange Sky, with Alstonville Probus Club member June Hoffman.

At the last official general meeting for 2024, the group was joined by guest speaker, Dave Paulsen, who spoke about Orange Sky. This wonderful movement of volunteers gives selflessly of themselves, providing showers and

laundry facilities to individuals experiencing homelessness, thus restoring dignity to those in need. Dave sees to the availability of the Orange Sky van in Mullumbimby, Lismore, Brunswick Heads, Wardell Core Hub and Beacon Laundry. For those who are unaware of the origins of Orange Sky, two young men, Nic Marchesi and Lucas Patchett, aged 20 in 2014 and living in Brisbane, saw a huge need to assist the homeless and needy in our communities. The idea of providing a vehicle that could house showers and laundry facilities eventuated, also creating the opportunity for those using the service to communicate one-on-one with non-judgemental conversation as the washing machines and dryers did their job. Nic and Lucas were voted Young Australians of the Year in 2016.

It has become a tradition for the Club to invite three members to be guest speakers at the January meeting. This provides an insight into the lives, past and present, of those within their midst. John Fowler, Sue Jones and Peter Reed will share the lectern and microphone upon this occasion.

Possible events for early 2025 include lunch at the Alstonville Sports and Bowling Club, a dress-up occasion in the Australian colours of green and gold on a date TBC, and a

## What's On... JANUARY

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<b>1</b> Ticketed Shows Bingo & Raffles Family Shows Free Kids' Activities Free Entertainment	<b>2</b> NYE 9AM Bingo 5.30PM Kids Cove 6PM Turtle Boy Duo 9PM DJ Scradley & \$500 Cash Giveaway	<b>3</b> NYD 9AM Bingo (Cash Housie suspended for holidays) 6PM Jock Barnes	<b>4</b> 9AM Bingo 10.45AM Kids Disco 11.30AM Kids Cove 6PM Poker	<b>5</b> 9AM Bingo 5.30PM Kids Cove 6PM Raffles 6PM Nathan Kaye 8PM Dreams	<b>6</b> 11.30AM Kids Cove 5.30PM Kids Cove 5PM Raffles 6PM Adam Gardiner	<b>7</b> 11AM Raffles 11.30AM Kids Cove 2.30PM Blues Club 5PM Raffles
<b>6</b> 9AM Wildcard Any day is a good day for a cocktail	<b>7</b> 9AM Bingo 8PM The Screaming Jets	<b>8</b> 9AM Bingo Members \$10 Coffee & Cake	<b>9</b> 9AM Bingo 1PM Kids Craft 4PM Pop Squad 6PM Poker	<b>10</b> 9AM Bingo 5.30PM Kids Cove 6PM Raffles 6PM Adam Harpaz	<b>11</b> 9AM Lego Expo 11.30AM Kids Cove 5.30PM Kids Cove 5PM Raffles 6PM Poly & Co Trio	<b>12</b> 9AM Lego Expo 11AM Raffles 11.30AM Kids Cove 2.30PM Blues Club 5PM Raffles
<b>13</b> 9AM Wildcard	<b>14</b> 9AM Bingo Holiday \$5 Kids Meal & Ice Cream	<b>15</b> 9AM Bingo	<b>16</b> 10AM Bingo 10AM Kids Bingo 11.30AM Kids Cove 6PM Poker 6PM Ballina Cup Calcutta	<b>17</b> 9AM Bingo 12PM Ballina Cup 5.30PM Kids Cove 6PM Raffles 6PM Hayley Grace 8PM Jimeoin	<b>18</b> 11.30AM Kids Cove 3PM Humphrey Bear 5PM Raffles 5.30PM Kids Cove 6PM Simon Bolt	<b>19</b> 11AM Raffles 11.30AM Kids Cove 2.30PM Blues Club 5PM Raffles
<b>20</b> 9AM Wildcard Snitty it today!	<b>21</b> 9AM Bingo 1PM Kids Craft 4PM Tay Tay - Taylor Swift Tribute Show 5.30PM Kids Cove	<b>22</b> 9AM Bingo L1 Fish Burger & a Beer \$20	<b>23</b> 9AM Bingo 10.30AM Wildlife Twins Trivia 11.30AM Kids Cove 6PM Poker	<b>24</b> 9AM Bingo 10AM Issi Dye 5.30PM Kids Cove 6PM Raffles 6PM Dan Hannaford	<b>25</b> 11.30AM Kids Cove 5.30PM Kids Cove 5PM Raffles 6PM Turtle Boy Duo	<b>26</b> 11AM Raffles 11.30AM Kids Cove 2.30PM Blues Club 5PM Raffles
<b>27</b> Public Holiday 8AM Kids Free Fishing Competition 9AM (No Wildcard)	<b>28</b> 9AM Bingo Download App get \$10 F/B Credit.	<b>29</b> 9AM Bingo	<b>30</b> 9AM Bingo 6PM Poker 5.30PM Kids Cove 7PM The Big Gig Free Comedy	<b>31</b> 9AM Bingo 5.30PM Kids Cove 6PM Raffles 6PM Ino Pio	<b>DINING SPECIALS</b> \$15 Seniors Lunch \$20 Member Meals	

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## Community in brief - continued

Valentines Day happening at Volare Restaurant in Alstonville.

### Alstonville RSL sub-Branch

Small RSL sub-Branches (not Clubs) are the lifeblood of military Veterans in many Australian towns, offering camaraderie and support to those who have served in the Australian Defence Forces (ADF). A new chapter is now starting at the Alstonville sub-Branch, with a category of membership opening for those who may have served in another capacity, such as emergency services. This means that the sub-Branch is offering a greater chance for connection. Please contact the Secretary, John Gordon, to enquire, ph: 0437 509 790.

Gatherings are held in the sub-Branch at 13 Bugden Avenue, a veritable cavern of treasures of Alstonville's military past and present. If computers are your thing go and explore the website at: [alstonvillerslsubbranch.org.au](http://alstonvillerslsubbranch.org.au) or find the group on Facebook/Alstonville RSL Sub Branch.

### Australian Independent Retirees

2024 flew by, finishing off with a fun festive season which hopefully all enjoyed. This year the Australian Independent Retirees will be holding their first meeting of the year on Friday 7 February, at the usual place in the Ballina RSL Club, 9.30am for a 10am start. This is a very friendly group who welcomes any retiree who may be looking to make new contacts and renew friendships from time gone by.

A \$5 meeting fee is charged, which includes morning tea. Guest speakers usually give very interesting talks on various subjects, which are received with great interest and enjoyment.

After the meeting a table is booked in the Boardwalk restaurant so everyone can continue socialising whilst enjoying lunch, at their own expense. Meals are very varied and not expensive, so it finishes off a very happy morning. All enquiries to President Jill Huxley, ph: 6686 8958.

### Ballina CWA

The group would like to thank everybody for their ongoing support, especially those who had items gift wrapped at their Bunnings stall over the Christmas period.

Handicraft/Friendship Mornings will commence for 2025 on Wednesday 15 January, with meetings starting on Monday 20 January. All welcome. See page 21 for details.

### Ballina Lions Club



Recently, around 350 excited young, mainly special needs, children from Ballina and Northern Rivers region were gifted a magical experience they will never forget. They were entertained at the *Ballina Lions' 23rd Magic Show*,

performed at the Lennox Head Cultural Centre, by the award-winning magician and illusionist Jonus Jost and world class juggler Kenny Cheung. This would not have been possible but for the 150 supporters who, through their generosity, sponsored each child and family or carer to come along and enjoy the show.

If you are looking for a way to help others and belong to a friendly, supportive team, call Mary (Secretary) on ph: 0417 412 533.

### Wollongbar Probus

On 21 November the Club had its final meeting for the year which was followed by Christmas lunch at the Ballina Jockey Club. A nice variety of food was enjoyed as part of a buffet style feast. Between main course and dessert, guests were told the story of holly and how it came to be used as a symbol at Christmas. A member who has the plant growing at home, supplied a small sprig for all the ladies to keep. Following dessert, lucky door prizes were drawn before a surprise appearance by Santa who arrived to the tune of *Jingle Bells*.

If you are interested in joining the group, consider heading along to a meeting to see if it is something you would like to belong to. There is no fundraising, it is a social Club which includes some interesting speakers and a day outing each month - the idea being to have friendship along with fun, and fellowship. Details on page 21.



# BISC

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BALLINA RSL CLUB**

**Thursday 16th January  
from 6pm**



# community meetings

Many community groups take a break over the new year period. If you're interested in visiting a meeting, please be sure to contact the group ahead of time to confirm their summer schedule.

## **Alstonville Plateau Historical Society**

When: 2pm, third Sunday of each month  
Where: Crawford House Museum, 10 Wardell Road, Alstonville  
Contact: aphs2477@yahoo.co.au

## **Alstonville Probus Club**

When: 10am, last Thursday each month  
Where: Alstonville Plateau Sports and Bowls Club  
Contact: Margaret Paddon, President, ph: 0422647762

## **Alstonville Quota Club**

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

## **Alstonville RSL Day Club**

When: 10am - 2pm, every Wednesday  
Where: Rous Mill Hall, Rous Mill Road, Rous Mill (bus available)  
Contact: Murette Davison, ph: 0421 272 643

## **Australians in Retirement, Far North Coast Branch**

When: 10am, first Friday of each month  
Where: Ballina RSL Club  
Contact: Jill Huxley, ph: 6686 8958

## **Ballina CWA**

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

## **Ballina Evening VIEW Club**

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

## **Ballina Hospital Auxiliary**

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

## **Ballina Ladies Probus**

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

## **Ballina Lighthouse RSL Day Club**

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

## **Ballina Lions Club**

When: 6:30pm second and fourth Tuesday of each month  
Where: 2nd Tuesday: Richmond Room 5 Regatta Ave, Ballina  
4th Tuesday: Slipway Hotel, 56 River Street, Ballina  
Contact: Mary Smith 0417 412 533

## **Ballina Waters Probus Club**

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

## **Crowley Care Auxiliary**

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

## **East Ballina Lions**

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

## **Inner Wheel Club of Alstonville**

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

## **Inner Wheel Club of Ballina**

When: 1130am, first Wednesday of each month  
Where: Boardwalk, Ballina RSL Club  
Contact: Joan Hetherington, President, ph: 0402 885 091

## **Rotary Club of Alstonville**

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

## **Rotary Club of Ballina-On-Richmond**

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

## **Richmond-Tweed Family History Society Inc**

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

## **Scope Club of Ballina**

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

## **Wardell Red Cross**

When: 10am, first Wednesday of each month  
Where: Wardell & District Memorial Hall, 49 Richmond Street  
Contact: Jeannee, ph: 6686 3172

## **Wollongbar Community Action Network (CAN)**

When: 6pm, fourth Thursday each month.  
Where: Wollongbar Community Hall (off Simpson Ave)  
Contact: Josh, President, ph 0403 820 584

## **Wollongbar Probus**

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



## The power of community: what makes The Waves

*The Ballina Wave, The Byron Wave, The Lennox Wave and The Burleigh Wave*, are much-loved monthly titles covering community news and events across the Northern Rivers and Southern Gold Coast. For many, the magazines are a 'must read' each month. As *The Wave* magazine group prepares to launch an Equity Crowdfunding opportunity in early 2025, Publisher, Milt Barlow, shares what he believes makes the magazines such a vibrant part of our local communities, and his thoughts on future expansion. Here he is, in conversation with the group's Managing Editor, Kate Parry.

*You purchased The Lennox Wave from Helen Fry in early 2021, however publishing was not your background. What was the attraction?*

I spent over 30 years in the movie distribution business and was previously the CEO of Village Roadshow Entertainment for a decade. Following this, I became heavily involved in the early days of the internet via a youth portal called *Tribe*. Jeff Kennett was our Chairman and the platform had sites for every Australian capital city, in addition to Los Angeles and London. After this, I became the leading distributor of Chinese language movies for Chinese diasporas in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and USA. In 2021 COVID hit, which meant no movies were being produced and movie theatres weren't open, so my business ended overnight. My wife and I had relocated to the

Northern Rivers in 2015 and in early 2021 I was having a coffee with Helen Fry when she took me somewhat by surprise with the comment: 'I want to retire - I don't suppose you would be interested in purchasing *The Lennox Wave*?'. Whilst I was somewhat skeptical if print publications had a future in the digital world, the magazine had, at that stage, been 'home' for the Lennox Head community for 18 years. It was loved and supported by the community, its readers and advertisers. I was one of those residents who looked forward to it each month.

It was the DNA of *The Lennox Wave* that really caught my attention: embracing the local community and being a voice for its residents, not engaging in politics, Council bashing or letters to the Editor. It simply gave a safe and vibrant home to the community, in beautiful high gloss colour each month. This was the absolute attraction for me. Also, there were not too many community publications in Australia still going after 18 years. We are now 21 years young.

*You have a strong track record of success in scaling businesses. You have previously mentioned you built Village Roadshow Entertainment from \$35 million to \$250 million a year turnover, so I guess it came as no surprise that you were not just going to sit with one magazine - The Lennox Wave?*

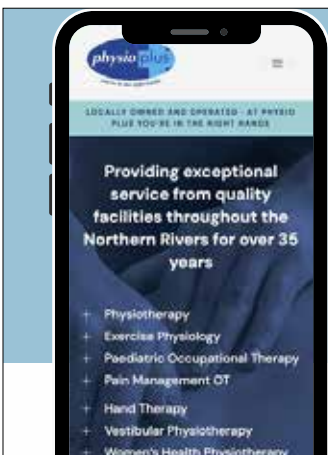
I have always liked to be involved in businesses that I thought had much more to achieve or had the opportunity

to expand into areas that were under resourced. So 2021, whilst being challenging with COVID, also opened a new door when NewsCorp either closed down or moved online over 100 community and suburban newspapers across Australia.

Overnight, communities were left without their trusted and much-loved local publications. Ballina was a classic example with the closure of *The Advocate* print version and its move online. This presented us with an opportunity, so we launched *The Ballina Wave* in November 2021, with you of course Kate as our Editor, and then followed with *The Byron Wave* in December 2022. In 2024, we expanded to the Gold Coast with *The Burleigh Wave* launching in July.

*Would it have been easier just to do one magazine - The Northern Rivers Wave - instead of four different magazines?*

Here is the thing that I learnt from Helen and *The Lennox Wave* and which is a critical and immovable part of our DNA. When you go 'wide' and try to cover many communities, you don't have the same engagement from individual communities and advertisers. We have seen many newspapers come and go in the Northern Rivers over the last few years because they tried to be all things to all people. Sure, it might have been cheaper to produce just one publication, but I believe you run the risk of losing your identity. 90-95% of our magazines have content that is unique to the community we serve



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and is not replicated in our other magazines. *The Lennox Wave*, through our wonderful Editor, Natalie Grono, is fiercely focused on the Lennox Head community; *The Ballina Wave*, led by you Kate, has a 100% focus on Ballina and the Plateau; *The Byron Wave* - led by Editor Charla Rallings - supports and gives a home to the communities within the Byron Shire; and our first Gold Coast magazine, *The Burleigh Wave*, is totally focused on Burleigh Heads and its immediate surrounds of Miami, Palm Beach, Varsity Lakes and Elanora, and championed by our Editor, Emma Watson.

*What sets us apart from other publications in the region?*

Again, our 100% focus is to provide a 'home' for the communities within our localities. I just did a quick count of our December issues and across the four *Waves* we did over 170 individual community stories. That's huge. Community has never looked stronger. It makes us all very proud and the feedback is very humbling. Whilst some months are harder than others, it is this support that keeps us all going and pushes us to want to achieve more. I think the other thing that is 'baked' into our DNA is that we don't do politics, nor do we push a political agenda. Simply put, we just want to provide an outlet for the groups within our community to tell their story to others. It works well.

*You are looking to raise additional funding in 2025 through a Crowd Source Funding Campaign. Why do that, and how will those funds be used?*

Around Australia, I see some wonderful opportunities in many communities and suburbs that are devoid of great local publications like *The Waves*. We would like to continue our expansion on the Gold Coast with another two magazines - one in the north and one in the south to compliment *The Burleigh Wave*. We think there are some additional opportunities perhaps in the Northern Rivers and definitely along the NSW coast, and indeed in Sydney where many suburbs and communities no longer have their own publication. The rate and timing of our expansion will be entirely dependent on the amount of funds raised.

*Finally, do you think there is a danger that print publications like *The Waves* will be made redundant by online offerings?*

Not all. In fact there is a definite resurgence in high quality print, just as there was resurgence and shift away from CDs to vinyl records. We are seeing major high quality print fashion magazines returning to Australia after many years of absence, so I think the future is bright and getting stronger for print. This is set against a backdrop of 'internet overload' - fake news, AI, scams and just being bombarded with non-stop online noise. It's exhausting and I was recently reading where there has been an increase of people opting out of Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok et al. It has become overload to the extreme. There is something nice and comforting in sitting down and reading a high quality publication or good book. I think this is where we excel and will continue to grow.



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# Credit repair for easier mortgage approval

by Mark Nancarrow, Nectar Mortgage



Have you ever wondered why some people get approved for loans with competitive rates while others struggle? The secret often comes down to a few crucial digits: your credit score.

## What's a credit score?

From the moment you take out a credit card, personal loan, car finance, or home loan, you start building your credit score. This is a number lenders use to evaluate your credit-worthiness, based on your credit report.

Your credit report is a detailed record of your borrowing and repayment history at any given time.

Put simply, paying your debts on time - regardless of the amount - will boost your credit score. A strong score not only improves your chances of getting the loan you want but can also unlock lower interest rates, saving you money in the long run.

On the flip side, poor debt management and missed payments can lower your score, reducing your approval chances and leading to higher interest rates when you do get approved.

## Can I improve my credit score?

Yes. We frequently advise clients to improve their credit scores before applying for a mortgage. Improving your credit score demonstrates that you're a reliable borrower. Here are some practical steps to help boost your score.

- Pay your bills on time. Late payments can seriously harm your credit rating. Set up automatic payments or reminders to ensure you never miss a due date.
- Reduce your credit card limits. Even if you're not maxing out your credit cards, lenders look at your total available credit. Lowering your credit limits - or closing unused accounts - can help raise your score.
- Limit new credit applications. Every application can temporarily affect your score, so apply for new credit only when necessary.

- Check your credit report for errors. Mistakes on your credit report can drag down your score. You're entitled to a free copy of your credit report every three months from Equifax, Experian, or Illion. Review it regularly to make sure the information is accurate.

## Credit repair services

Credit repair companies specialise in helping borrowers remove these negative marks from their credit files. They offer full-service solutions to clean up your report, with a 100% refund guarantee for all completed work. Plus, they don't charge per listing, which keeps costs down even if you have multiple errors.

## Bad credit doesn't always mean no options

A less-than-perfect credit score can complicate your mortgage application, but it doesn't have to stand in your way. Whether you've had recent financial setbacks or are still dealing with older issues, there are solutions to help you move forward.

**BALLINA GOLF & SPORTS CLUB**

# KARAOKE NIGHT

**EVERY SECOND SATURDAY OF THE MONTH**

**FROM 7PM** **FREE ENTRY**

## Northern Sounds Karaoke

**HOSTED BY MARY-ANN DE HOON**





## Alstonville Fire Brigade

by John Sim, Ian Kirkland and Cathy Cohen, Alstonville Plateau Historical Society



Pictured (L-R): Alstonville Fire Brigade's first fire engine, the Garford; The fire station built in 1930. Source: Supplied.

Over the years there have been many fires in Alstonville. One of the first destroyed Alstonville Public School on 2 June 1895. Then on 10 June 1905, the Ocean View Hotel burnt down and on 4 May 1916, six timber shops were destroyed, including Cotterell's hairdressing and tobacconist shop, Nuttall's fruit and newsagent shop, Terry's tailor's shop and Blanch's saddlery. On 4 May 1926, a fire on Main Street destroyed Maroney's refreshment rooms and boarding house, Smith's dental surgery, Gibson and Sons' plumbing and tinsmithing shop and the Alstonville & Rous Record printing works.

It was obvious that attempts to save timber buildings with buckets of water were inadequate and that it would take too long for fire engines to come from Lismore or Ballina, so on 7 May 1926 a public meeting was held to establish a local fire brigade. On 17 December 1926 a public firefighting demonstration was held and staff were appointed to the Brigade, with Sidney Howard as the first Captain. During the next year a fire station was built on Main Street, opposite the Methodist Church, and a 10,000-gallon concrete tank was built on the grounds of the public school, with water being pumped from Maguires Creek, near the Butter Factory.

The first piece of firefighting equipment was a horse-drawn Garford turbine fire engine, which arrived in December 1926 after being brought to Lismore by boat - by this time many Sydney stations were being re-equipped with Dennis engines, but country stations were provided with the older Garfords.

On 27 August 1928 the Brigade saved the Amusu Theatre on Main Street from being destroyed. However, in the same year the landmark Pioneer Hotel on the Lismore-Ballina Road wasn't so lucky, and on 18 May 1929 fire destroyed the fire station itself. Luckily, the fire engine was saved. A new building was constructed on the same site and was ready for occupation on 26 September 1930. It remained the hub for the Brigade for the next 50 years.

In December 1931 the Brigade's turbine engine (one of the State's last) was removed from service and replaced by a No. 43 Garford-Wynne motor engine, which stayed in use

until 1969. Since then, there have been many engines in service, including a Dennis Morris, a Bedford Thames, a Ford International and an Isuzu Urban Pumper. The old engine has been used in many street parades in the area, such as the Alstonville Tibouchina Festival, the Lismore Centenary, and Casino Beef Week.

During World War Two, the Brigade was given duties as a Scorched Earth Support Squad, and on 14 December 1941, a week after the bombing of Pearl Harbour, it brought under control a fire in The Avenue that had been set off by an incendiary bomb.

After the war, the Alstonville area greatly expanded with the opening of new housing estates, causing a dilemma about whether to attend fires outside the gazetted fire district boundaries. These pressures led to the extension of the fire district in 1979 and the construction at 1 Mellis Circuit of a new, two-bay fire station, which opened on 28 June 1980. The staff had now increased to 11 firemen plus Captain Artie Dee, who served for 22 years.

The extra room at the new station has allowed for social activities such as barbecues for families, and a place for firefighters to debrief and relax after the drama, and occasional trauma, from the fires (as well as other incidents such as motor vehicle accidents) that they attend. Although fire-fighting equipment, building materials, vehicles and roads have improved over the last century, dangers continue to be very real.

You can read more about the Alstonville Fire Brigade in *From Buckets to Brigade* by John Sim and *Tibouchina Town* by Ian Kirkland, available at Crawford House Museum.

### Crawford House Museum

Visit Crawford House Museum, an original farmhouse where you can see many interesting household objects which reflect family life from the beginning of the 20th century to the 1960s. The museum is at 10 Wardell Road, Alstonville, and is open Fridays 10am-4pm and Sundays 1pm-4pm or at other times by appointment for groups. Enquiries ph: 6628 1829, email: [info@aphsmuseum.org.au](mailto:info@aphsmuseum.org.au) or visit: [aphsmuseum.org.au](http://aphsmuseum.org.au)



# Meet the farmer: Warren Wiggins

by Kylie McGregor, Ballina Farmers & Producers Market



### How did you get into farming?

I've been involved in mixed farming for over 40 years as I worked alongside my father before buying my own property. I love farming as it provides the chance to give back to this incredible land, not only in working hard to improve it but to ensure it's still able to offer a great product for years to come.

### Where are you based and what do you farm?

Our 80-acre farm is located at Bexhill where we have been breeding Dorper sheep for 12 years. These sheep are meat sheep as they don't grow a fleece so they put all their effort into producing great quality meat. They are a very hardy breed and are able to adapt to any environmental conditions that are thrown at them. We have been improving our pastures since commencing operation in 2012, using regenerative farming practices to ensure soil quality is at a premium level and reintroducing live microbes into the soil via a fermented probiotic seaweed fertiliser. We also feed this probiotic fertiliser to our sheep through their water supply to help improve their gut health and reduce worm burden. We use rotational grazing practices, feeding our paddocks off, firstly with our cattle herd, and then bringing our sheep in over the top. Cattle eat longer grasses and the sheep eat

shorter grasses so this practice brings a real balance for both animals and ensures they are all getting the best quality nutrients possible from each paddock.

### What is your connection to the Northern Rivers?

We moved from western NSW in 2011, as the lure for better education and future possibilities for our three daughters was a priority. As farming has always been in our blood, it was vital for our family to settle in a regional area that still could offer us the country lifestyle. We found heaven on earth with our farm at Bexhill.

### What do you love about this area?

The access and availability to fresh locally produced products directly supplied by farmers - out west most farming is mass produced and sent away with no direct contact with consumers. The people in the community here are friendly and very welcoming. It's also great to have the ability to enjoy country living with easy access to beaches too.

### Are other members of your family involved in the farm?

My wife and three daughters have been involved with the farm throughout the years. My wife makes our lamb tallow cooking oil and our Bella G lamb tallow moisturising body and face cream. She also works alongside me on the farm with our animals and attends local markets.

### Do you have any tips on how to store/keep fresh lamb?

Meat products need to be stored in a fridge below four degrees. The cyrovac packaging allows the product to remain fresh for at least 14 days.

### Do you have a favourite cut of lamb? And any secrets on the best way to cook it?

Lamb cutlets are my favourite. Cook them on the BBQ for four to five minutes each side.

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



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## Graeme Eggins: a life shaped by words



*Pictured: First year cadet at the Sydney Daily Telegraph, when phones had cords.*



*Pictured: Graeme 'in the slot' at the New York bureau of AAP. Stop the World, I Want to Get Off was playing on Broadway.*



*Pictured: Graeme and wife Bev worked together in their Sydney publishing company.*

Graeme Eggins, one of the first contributors to *The Ballina Wave* with his column *The Golden Years*, has two passions – words and people.

Graeme grew up in the Sydney western suburb of Ashfield with his sister Helen. His father abandoned the family soon after Graeme's birth, leaving his mother as the family's provider. This experience taught him self-reliance.

A favourite memory from his teenage years was writing and performing short radio scripts with his best friend, Max Rowley. They recorded the sessions on a reel-to-reel tape recorder and felt 'very professional'. Max went on to become a successful radio and TV announcer in Sydney.

At high school, Graeme excelled at history and english, but the best mark he ever received for maths was 33%. A careers advisor suggested he become a journalist. He did, winning a cadetship at Sydney's *Daily Telegraph*.

Three days after his 21st birthday he sailed for England, hoping to find a job in Fleet Street. However, he arrived a week after one of the major British papers had closed, leaving more than 200 UK journalists also looking for jobs. A chance meeting with Kerry Packer's brother Clive, then heir to an Australian media empire, led to a two-week trial with Reuters news agency.

The two weeks turned into seven years

as a correspondent in London and later New York with AAP (Australian Associated Press) news agency. Graeme covered many major news stories, including the assassination of President Kennedy, the rise of the American civil rights movement and the controversial death of Marilyn Monroe.

Back in Australia, after a stint in corporate public relations, he joined a friend in establishing a publishing company specialising in business magazines, ranging from civil engineering to gift and tableware retailing.

At the age of 49 Graeme sold his publishing interests and moved to the Northern Rivers - he and his wife Bev were looking for a more rural, less stressful life.

'We thought we might become geese farmers, something about which we knew nothing but which seemed full of potential,' he said. 'Luckily, after further investigation, we gave up that crazy idea to consider becoming commercial herb growers, about which we also knew very little. We gave that idea up too and instead renovated several old houses in Ballina.'

'A friend predicted that I would always go back to journalism, and he was right,' Graeme said. 'I established a newsletter for north coast herb growers and later, when I studied organic growing at Wollongbar

TAFE, another newsletter for organic farmers. These days I scratch the creative itch by writing for the *Wave*.'

Graeme says the best advice he ever read was stamped on an envelope – PEOPLE MAKE THINGS HAPPEN.

'Experience proves that often nothing will happen unless you make it so,' he said. 'Take the initiative - don't just hang about hoping for the best.'

As a retiree, Graeme is able to devote more time to community service which he finds very rewarding. 'Exploring new ideas and concepts with others keeps me mentally fit,' he says.

He is one of the two life members of the non-profit Northern Rivers University of the Third Age (U3A), which he helped found 30 years ago. Today the Ballina and Lismore-based U3As have more than 500 members.

He runs several hour-long weekly Zoom sessions exploring new technology. He is also a member of a three-state consultative panel suggesting ways which artificial intelligence can be used to improve the lives of retired people.

When asked for his favourite memory, Graeme recalls: 'One enchanted evening in London, glancing across a crowded room, I saw a young woman I knew slightly and suddenly realised that, without doubt, I wanted to spend the rest of my life with her. I did.'



# Shark mitigation strategies across Ballina

by Kate Parry



## A balance between safety and conservation

Whilst the thought of sharks can invoke feelings of uncertainty for many, these ocean dwelling creatures are integral to the health of oceanic and estuarine ecosystems. When we enter open waters, we are stepping into their domain.

While the name 'shark' encompasses a wide variety of species, only a few pose a threat to humans. In fact, most shark bites in coastal waters are attributed to just three species: White Sharks (also known as Great Whites), Bull Sharks, and Tiger Sharks.

Recognising the need for safety while preserving the ecological role of sharks, the New South Wales (NSW) Government has implemented the largest and most comprehensive Shark Management Program in the world. The 2024/25 program includes a variety of strategies, ranging from technological innovations to community education, to ensure that beach-goers can enjoy the ocean with greater peace of mind.

## NSW Shark Management Program

The NSW Shark Management Program is an extensive initiative covering 19 coastal local government areas (LGAs) from Tweed to Bega. Key elements include the following:

- **SMART Drumlines:** 305 Shark-Management-Alert-In-Real-Time (SMART) drumlines are deployed across NSW, including 20 in Ballina Shire.
- **Shark Nets:** installed at 51 beaches from Newcastle to Wollongong.
- **Drone Patrols:** operated by Surf Life Saving NSW at 50 beaches, with Ballina Shire benefiting from four surveillance drones.
- **Tagged shark listening stations:** 37 stations across NSW, including four in Ballina, which provide real-time alerts via the SharkSmart app.
- **Community education:** through the SharkSmart app and other campaigns, the program aims to increase public awareness and understanding of shark behavior.

## Local measures across Ballina Shire

### SMART Drumlines

SMART drumlines are a key part of the shark mitigation strategy in Ballina Shire. Unlike traditional drumlines, which can be harmful to marine life, SMART drumlines are designed to be a non-lethal solution. They are deployed each morning and retrieved in the evening. When a shark is caught, an alert is sent to the Department of Primary Industries and local contractors, who then tag and release the shark approximately 1km offshore. This allows for tracking and studying shark movements while keeping beach-goers safer.

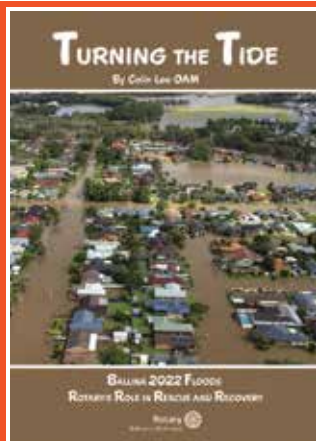
Preliminary results from trials indicate that SMART drumlines are effective at catching and relocating target sharks (White, Bull, and Tiger sharks), which tend to move offshore after release. This reduces the likelihood of encounters between sharks and humans.

### Tagged Shark Listening Stations

Ballina Shire is equipped with four tagged shark listening stations at Seven Mile Beach, Lennox Point, Sharpes Beach, and Lighthouse Beach. These detect tagged sharks within 500m

## TURNING THE TIDE

details the Rotary Club of Ballina-on-Richmond's flood recovery efforts after the 2022 disaster, highlighting the challenges faced by Rotarians, tradies, and volunteers who selflessly offered their skills during this critical time.



Ballina-on-Richmond

Copies available for \$20 in Ballina Shire at:

- Wallace & Co
- Commonwealth Bank
- 101.9 Paradise FM
- Ballina Maritime Museum
- Leanne Crawford Hairdressing
- Wardell Core
- Col Lee 0417 862 602



and send alerts to the public through the SharkSmart app and social media platforms. This real-time information allows beachgoers to make informed decisions about water safety.

### Surf Life Saving Drone Surveillance

Drone surveillance, operated by Surf Life Saving NSW, has become an essential tool in shark mitigation. In Ballina Shire, drones patrol beaches seasonally, with the capability to spot potentially dangerous sharks and alert beachgoers. This program has been extended beyond the traditional summer months to provide year-round protection, particularly during the migration of juvenile White Sharks along the NSW coastline.

While the NSW Government is committed to keeping our beaches safe, it's important to remember that the ocean is a wild and unpredictable environment. By increasing awareness and understanding of shark behaviour, everyone can enjoy the beach more safely. The SharkSmart app and community education initiatives are invaluable tools in this effort.

To minimise the risk of a shark encounter, always swim between the red and yellow flags at patrolled beaches, follow the advice of lifeguards, and stay informed through the SharkSmart app. By respecting the ocean and its inhabitants, we can coexist safely with these magnificent creatures.

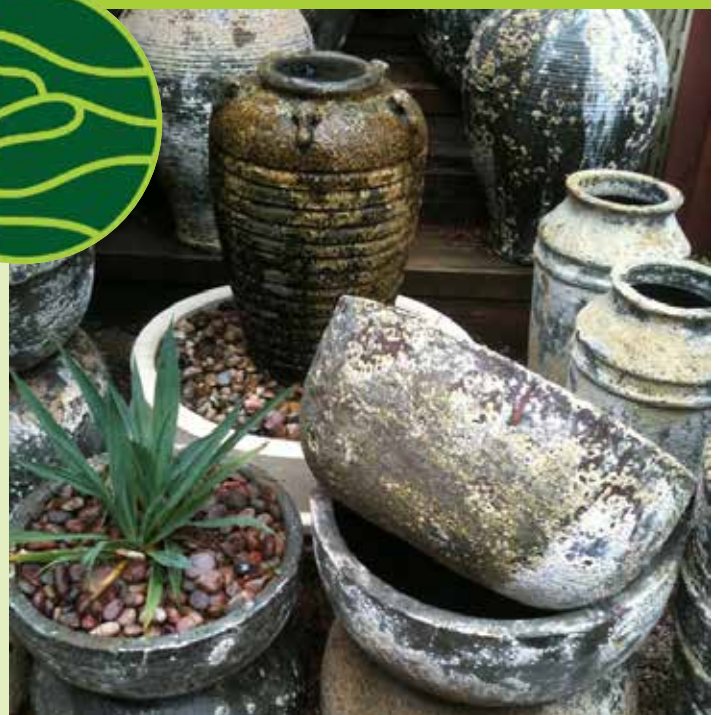
For more information visit: [sharksmart.nsw.gov.au](http://sharksmart.nsw.gov.au)



Pictured, opposite: A Bull Shark. Source: Berthold Grünhagen/Pexels.

Pictured, right: Map of shark mitigation measures in Ballina Shire LGA. Source: NSW Government, NSW Department of Primary Industries.

# Giant pot sale continues until 31 Jan



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## Discover your family history



### Step 1 - Getting started

The golden rule to discovering your family history is to start with what you know. Beginning with yourself, write down everything you can - when and where you were born; the names of your parents, siblings, spouse, children; where you live or have lived; your education, jobs, interests and hobbies. Then do the same for your parents and grandparents. If you do this for each person in your immediate family, you will be surprised at how much information you have already accumulated.

Every home has loads of official documents, often in boxes in the back of a cupboard. Search through these documents - birth, marriage or death certificates; funeral accounts, memorial cards, obituary or newspaper articles - and write down the details and dates of family members' life events.

For those who had ancestors who immigrated to Australia, you may also find shipping records, or citizenship records. Don't neglect these rich sources of information.

And don't forget to write it down. Note-taking is a most important aspect of family history. Information that can't be substantiated is only legend. There are specific forms available to record all this information and which are available from the Richmond-Tweed Family History Society's Marie Hart Library at 6 Regatta Avenue, Ballina (behind the Naval and Maritime Museum).

Next month: Step 2 - Birth certificates.

### About the Richmond-Tweed Family History Society

The Society's research centre provides guidance and assistance in all family history matters for a \$5 contribution, or yearly membership is \$40 single and \$50 joint/family. Family history websites such as *Ancestry*, *Find My Past* and *Family Search Affiliate* are available to use, along with many other resources. The library is open Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday from 10am-4pm.

The Society meets from February to November at 2pm on the first Saturday of each month at the Ballina Players Theatre, 24 Swift Street. Visitors are welcome. Attendance is free. The topic for the group's next meeting, Saturday 1 February, is History of European Settlement in Ballina - the first 100 years, presented by Patricia Wilson.

For any enquiries, please call ph: 0490 903 066.

## Wheels of the month



Residents of Ballina Shire have no doubt spotted this eye catching 2010 Chevrolet SS Camaro Transformer Edition limousine cruising the streets.

With a vibrant yellow theme, owners, Sharon and Greg Sinclair have nicknamed the ride Bumblebee, but this unique ride isn't just eye candy - it's a head-turning marvel. Custom-built with jet rear doors and scissor fronts, it's one of only two stretched Camaros in all of Australia, designed to blend muscle car power with limousine luxury.

'We wanted something that stands out,' Greg explains. And stand out it does, appearing at everything from weddings to promotional events for local businesses and even movie premieres, adding a bit of glam to Ballina.



### DAILY SUNRISE BALLOON FLIGHTS

Includes breakfast at Three Blue Ducks restaurant - The Farm  
www.balloonaloft.com | 1300 723 279 | @balloonaloftbyronbay



# The golden years

by Graeme Eggins



## Be kind to yourself this year

January is the month when many of us make new year resolutions. February is the month where most of us break them. Instead, why not make just one resolution - 'This year I will be kinder to myself.'

We older people can be super critical of what we say and do, expecting ourselves to meet quite unreasonable expectations. How many times recently have you said yourself, 'What a fool I am. Fancy doing that.'

So this year try to be gentle with yourself. You will be happier and in a better position to cope with life. Here are a few tips.

- Move as much as you can. Find creative ways to adapt instead of focusing on what you can no longer do. When we move we release endorphins that make us feel healthier and happier. Gentle exercises like chair yoga, water aerobics, or tai chi can help maintain strength and balance. And stay hydrated. Australians do not drink enough water and - breaking news - the world is getting hotter.
- Enjoy nutritious meals. Make an effort to create an attractive dining atmosphere at home that enhances enjoyment of your food and drinks. If you like background sounds, play your choice of relaxing music.
- Establish a regular sleep schedule for proper rest. Go to bed about the same time, avoiding stimulant drinks at night and marathon TV sessions.
- Immerse yourself in nature whenever you can. Even just sitting under a tree in your backyard or next to potted plants on a balcony is healing. Consciously enjoy the look and sounds of nature. If possible, visit Ballina's wonderful beaches and riverfront, losing yourself in the salty tang of the sea and the sun dancing across the water.
- You will face challenges in 2025. Maybe you love reading but are struggling to see well? Today podcasts or audiobooks from Ballina Library and other providers offer absorbing alternatives. Seek them out.
- Worried by the cost of living? Reportedly about three million households qualify for energy concessions but 60% never claim the money they are entitled to back on energy bills. Explore senior discounts and benefits you might have overlooked. For example, the NSW Seniors Card offers all sorts of retail discounts, including supermarket gift cards

that offer a 5% off on their in-store value.

- This year don't let situations and people drain you mentally. For example, those acquaintances who constantly download their stories of woe onto you. They feel better afterwards; you feel wrung out.
- We know that social relationships are very important as we age. We will lose friends to illness so nurture those who remain and actively seek others.
- When physical limitations prevent in-person visits, use technology instead. Video calls, social media, and online games provide ways to connect with others and combat feelings of isolation.
- Hobbies are a fulfilling outlet for us focus our energy and talents - try to always have a project on the go. Volunteering has been shown to increase feelings of happiness and reduce symptoms of depression by reinforcing a sense of community.

Final word goes to a family counsellor: 'Look at just how much you have achieved in the past year. After all, we are 'human beings' not 'human doings'.'



## My battery can cause a fire

Bins and batteries don't mix!



### Dead battery? Don't bin it!

These products contain an embedded battery and require special disposal when the battery can no longer be used.

It's FREE to drop these at:

**Lismore Community Recycling Centre**

313 Wyrallah Road, East Lismore  
Mon-Fri 7:30am-3:30pm, Sat & Sun 9am-4pm

Visit [epa.nsw.gov.au/embedded-batteries](http://epa.nsw.gov.au/embedded-batteries)  
for more info and accepted items



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Meal Service





# Cooking with CWA

## Banana Raspberry and Macadamia Bread



### Ingredients

- 1 cup mashed banana (2-3 ripe bananas)
- 3/4 cup caster sugar
- 1/4 cup buttermilk
- 2 eggs lightly beaten
- 1/4 cup light olive oil
- 1 1/3 cups self raising flour
- 1/3 cup macadamias, toasted and chopped
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 125g fresh raspberries
- 1 tbsp icing sugar to dust

### Method

1. Set oven to 180°C. Grease 12x21cm loaf tin. Line the base and

- two sides with baking paper leaving an overlap of 6cm on the sides.
  2. In a large bowl combine bananas, egg and olive oil. Add flour, macadamias and cinnamon. Stir until combined.
  3. Gently fold in raspberries.
  4. Spoon into prepared tin and smooth the top.
  5. Bake for one hour until skewer inserted into the middle of the loaf comes out clean. Stand in the tin for five minutes before turning out on to wire rack to cool completely.
  6. Dust with icing sugar.
- Wrap slices in cling film and freeze in an airtight container for up to three months.

# January Tide Times, Ballina

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
		Time m <b>1</b> 0314 0.27 1020 1.75 WE 1657 0.29 2233 1.08	<b>2</b> 0358 0.26 1102 1.76 TH 1737 0.28 2319 1.11	<b>3</b> 0444 0.29 1144 1.74 FR 1820 0.28	<b>4</b> 0008 1.13 0532 0.34 SA 1227 1.69 1904 0.29	<b>5</b> 0100 1.16 0627 0.42 SU 1311 1.60 1949 0.31
<b>6</b> 0158 1.21 0729 0.51 MO 1359 1.48 2036 0.34	<b>7</b> 0300 1.28 0843 0.59 TU 1453 1.35 ☉ 2126 0.35	<b>8</b> 0408 1.37 1008 0.62 WE 1556 1.22 2219 0.36	<b>9</b> 0515 1.48 1138 0.60 TH 1708 1.11 2315 0.36	<b>10</b> 0619 1.58 1258 0.52 FR 1823 1.05	<b>11</b> 0012 0.35 0717 1.68 SA 1402 0.43 1932 1.03	<b>12</b> 0106 0.32 0811 1.75 SU 1456 0.35 2030 1.04
<b>13</b> 0157 0.29 0859 1.79 MO 1541 0.30 2117 1.06	<b>14</b> 0244 0.27 0943 1.80 TU 1622 0.28 ☉ 2200 1.09	<b>15</b> 0328 0.26 1023 1.77 WE 1659 0.29 2240 1.11	<b>16</b> 0408 0.29 1100 1.71 TH 1733 0.31 2318 1.12	<b>17</b> 0447 0.33 1133 1.63 FR 1805 0.35 2355 1.13	<b>18</b> 0527 0.41 1205 1.54 SA 1835 0.38	<b>19</b> 0034 1.15 0608 0.49 SU 1237 1.43 1905 0.41
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<b>27</b> 0048 0.41 0759 1.59 MO 1442 0.42 2008 1.03	<b>28</b> 0136 0.34 0841 1.68 TU 1518 0.34 2052 1.09	<b>29</b> 0220 0.27 0922 1.76 WE 1555 0.27 ☉ 2135 1.15	<b>30</b> 0304 0.22 1002 1.81 TH 1631 0.22 2218 1.22	<b>31</b> 0350 0.20 1043 1.82 FR 1709 0.20 2302 1.28		

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# Start your New Year's reading resolutions

by Belinda Curby, Ballina Library



Summer is the perfect time for reading. Whether you want to catch up on the books you missed last year or start your New Year's reading resolutions right, Ballina Area Libraries have the books for you.

In 2024, thrillers, mystery, and Australian rural fiction were once again amongst the most popular genres across Ballina's libraries, with many new releases appearing from some of our most loved authors.

Recent ones for mystery fiction lovers include:

- *The Dark Wives* by Ann Cleeves
- *The Valley* by Chris Hammer
- *The Waiting* by Michael Connelly
- *We Solve Murders* by Richard Osman (cosy mystery).

Australian rural fiction lovers may like to try:

- *Out in Nowhere* by Fleur McDonald
- *Twist of Fate* by Karly Lane
- *Silverton Shores* by Mandy Magro.

For lovers of contemporary romance, there are some great Australian titles recently released. Try these titles:

- *The Wedding Forecast* by Nina Kenwood
- *Love From Scratch* by Amy Hutton.

Popular international contemporary romance titles include:

- *Funny Story* by Emily Henry
- *Enemies to Lovers* by Laura Jane Williams
- *Daydream* by Hannah Grace.

In case you missed them, other recent releases to put on your summer reading list include:

- *Here One Moment* by Liane Moriarty (general fiction)
- *The Life Impossible* by Matt Haig (literary fiction)
- *Juice* by Tim Winton (literary fiction)
- *Intermezzo* by Sally Rooney (literary fiction)
- *Three Wild Dogs and the Truth* by Markus Zusak (memoir).

For younger readers, we have a wide range of picture books, junior fiction, and youth fiction also available for loan. These include the ever-popular Anh Do, whose recent titles include:

- *Ninja Buddies!* (Ninja Kid 14)
- *Funny Weird* (WeirDo 23)
- *Forest Secrets* (Pow Pow Pig 6).

Now is the also perfect time to discover, or rediscover, a new series with many magical middle grade series having recently released their next instalments. These include:

- *Skandar and the Skeleton Curse* by A. F. Steadman (Book 4 - *Skandar and the Unicorn Thief* series)
- *Amari and the Despicable Wonders* by BB Alston (Book 3 - *Supernatural Investigations* series)
- *The Island Heist* by JJ Arcanjo (Book 3 - *Crookhaven* series)
- *Seawitch* by Skye McKenna (Book 3 - *Hedgewitch* series).

For teens, we have a great range of recent youth fiction reads including home-grown titles such as:

- *The Skin I'm In* by Steph Tisdell (contemporary youth fiction)
- *Return to Sender* by Lauren Draper (contemporary youth fiction)
- *A Sea of Wolves* by Sarah Street (fantasy youth fiction).

These titles and more are available for loan from your Ballina Area Libraries. Be sure to call in and grab your next summer read today. See you in the Library.



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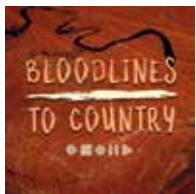
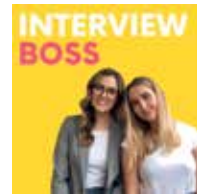
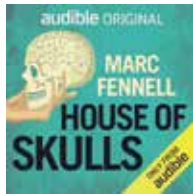


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# Podcasts to switch on this summer



As the silly season wraps up and the pace slows down, January is the perfect time to dive into some podcasts. Recently, the 2024 Australian Podcast Awards celebrated a selection of the year's most captivating voices across 31 categories. Here's a guide to some of the winners, worth adding to your playlist.

### For thought-provoking conversations

*Ladies, We Need To Talk* (Best Podcast): From ABC Listen, this award-winning podcast tackles the unspoken topics affecting women today with honesty and humor.

*Uncomfortable Conversations with Josh Szepe* (Interview): Josh Szepe dives into raw, challenging discussions, making it a great choice for those who love candid interviews.

### For a dose of culture and history

*House of Skulls with Marc Fennell* (History): This Audible Original delves into the fascinating world of skull collectors, combining history and intrigue.

*Pitch Bleak* (Arts and Culture): Chris Kennett and Hayden Bevis explore darkly funny takes on creative concepts.

### For true crime and mystery enthusiasts

*I Catch Killers Presents: Breaking Badness* (Documentary): True Crime Australia presents gripping stories of crime and redemption.

*Grave Matters* (Factual): Produced by SBS, this series unearths fascinating and often eerie tales from cemeteries around the world.

### For parenting and wellbeing

*Touched Out!* (Parenting): This mental health podcast for parents validates the often-overwhelming experience of raising children.

*Young Blood - Men's Mental Health* (Wellbeing): Cal MacPherson's podcast shines a light on the mental health struggles faced by men, creating space for honest conversations.

### For business and career growth

*Interview Boss* (Business): Whether you're job hunting or leveling up in your career, this podcast offers invaluable advice.

### For climate and sustainability

*Everything We Need* (Climate): SBS tackles the solutions for a more sustainable future in this thought-provoking series.

### For entertainment and fun

*The Pool Room with Tony Armstrong* (Entertainment): Tony Armstrong delivers captivating stories that will leave you entertained and inspired.

### For the storyteller at heart

*Bloodlines To Country* (Indigenous Podcast): Karina Hogan and Jenae Tien honour Indigenous voices and stories in this powerful series.

*The Remains* (Fiction): Wade Duffin's audio drama captivates listeners with its hauntingly beautiful narrative.

### For the news junkie

*7am - The Fight for a Voice* (News and Current Affairs): Schwartz Media's insightful podcast explores the pivotal issues shaping Australia's future.

*Full Story* (Daily): The Guardian provides essential context on breaking news, perfect for staying informed.

### For learners and creatives

*The Masterclass* (Education): Louisa Lim invites listeners to learn from leading experts in their fields, sparking curiosity and creativity.

### For laughs

*The Beautiful Nightmare* (Comedy): Tamara Linke and Shanelle Franklin find humour in life's chaos, offering a lighthearted escape.

This summer, let these award-winning podcasts inspire, entertain, and inform your downtime.



# 2025 interior design trends

by SJS Interior Design

## It's all about curves, mood lighting, and wellness spaces

As we enter 2025, the interior design landscape is all about creating spaces that feel calming, inviting, and personal. Whether you are planning a major project or just refreshing your home here in the Northern Rivers, these three key trends can help transform your space.

### 1. Design with curves



Curves have been popular for a while, but in 2025, they will be even more prominent. Designers are using organic shapes to soften spaces and bring a sense of flow and warmth. Curves create a welcoming, spacious feel - perfect for tight rooms like bedrooms or dining areas. Start small by adding a round coffee table or an arched doorway or choose furniture with softer edges. These simple touches add playfulness and elegance while promoting a sense of calm.



### 2. Statement mood lighting



Lighting plays a huge role in setting the mood. In 2025, we are moving away from harsh, overused downlights and embracing warm, layered lighting. Think statement pendants paired with wall sconces or floor lamps to create a more personalised, human atmosphere. Dimmable lights are a must for controlling ambience. By mixing natural materials like aged brass with glass or timber, you can achieve a cohesive, stylish look. Minimising bright LED downlights and focusing on softer lighting will make your space feel more luxurious and liveable. Think of lighting in layers like task, mood, and a mixture of both. All are as important as each other.

### 3. Sensory wellness spaces



With busy lives, having a dedicated space for wellness is essential. In 2025, these sensory wellness spaces will be more important than ever. You do not need a large area to create your own sensory wellness space. Start with a quiet corner or outdoor area in your garden or deck and focus on incorporating natural materials, and soft textures.

- A timber chair with a linen cushion, paired with some indoor plants, can instantly create a calm and restorative vibe.
- Soft lighting, whether from a pendant or candles, sets the mood for relaxation.
- If you have the space, consider an ice bath or sauna to complete your wellness haven.

This wellness zone can be a sanctuary for you, but also a space to invite others for yoga, meditation, or simply some peaceful moments with a loved one.



### Tips for Northern Rivers homes

- For those in smaller spaces, focus on small but impactful updates. Adding an arched mirror or curved decor piece can make a big difference.
- Layer lighting to highlight your home's natural beauty. Look for one statement light to feature over a dining area or kitchen island.
- Embrace the region's connection to nature when designing wellness spaces - natural sensory materials and less-is-more approach with furniture will enhance the calming effect.

With these trends, you can create spaces that are stylish and serene, perfectly suited for Northern Rivers' laid-back lifestyle.

*All images: SJS Interior Design. Photographer: Tom Ferguson.*



# Byron Bay Oyster Bar & Seafood Restaurant

reviewed by Milt Barlow

I was a big fan of Bonito in Byron Bay's Hotel Marvell, so was delighted to learn management has lifted the local restaurant bar once again with the addition of its Byron Bay Oyster Bar & Seafood Restaurant.

A nod to the oyster bars of New England and New York, this modern reimagining is the place to be if you're a lover of the best seafood on offer. If seafood is not your thing, then they also have eye fillet and Bangalow Pork Chop on the menu.

As you'd expect, the star of this show is undoubtedly the oysters. Whilst sourced from across Australia and New Zealand, the oysters are also matured and grown to plumpness and freshness in a huge land-based tank that can hold up to 6,000 oysters and uses local ocean water to cleanse and regenerate them.

The standout menu item is the 20 plate oyster selection - a great tasting plate, beautifully presented, with hot and cold oysters featuring natural, kilpatrick, mornay, baked miso, rockefeller, garlic buttercrumb, ginger and soy, bloody mary, and verjus and pomegranate. If you're an oyster lover, you will think you died and went to heaven with this lot.

Following this oyster feast, it's onto the Raw Bar and seafood selection. From the Raw Bar we treated ourselves to Black Caviar from Georgia served with a Potato Confit Yolk and Crème Fraiche, and some sensational Tuna Carpaccio that I swear must have been caught off the coast that morning - delicious.

Grazing continues with small and large plate selections that include Bay Lobster Rolls, Half Shell Scallops, Spanner Crab, Pork and Fennel Stuffed Squid and BBQ Mooloolaba Prawns.

We went for the stuffed squid which was tender and lip smacking, along with the spanner crab which we thought was the only low point of the menu and a bit ordinary.

Large dishes include Freemantle Octopus, Confit King Salmon, Whole Market Fish, Lobster Mornay or you can go over the top with a Seafood Tower. We shared the fresh fish of the day - snapper. It was superb and lip smacking, perfectly cooked and presented.

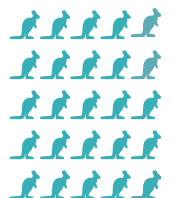
As you would expect, there are local vegetable and side dishes on offer. We went for the Grilled Asparagus which was served with Cured Yolk and Black Caviar Beurre Blanc. It was a perfect complement to the fresh fish. And for those wanting a little more, there is a cheese platter and desserts available too.

The décor of the room is good and cosy as ever, with great flatware and presentation. The staff were all incredibly attentive and helpful.

The Byron Bay Oyster Bar & Seafood Restaurant is top shelf and a welcome addition to Byron's ever expanding culinary scene.

To book or discover more, visit: [byronbayoysterbar.com.au](http://byronbayoysterbar.com.au)

**FOOD**  
**STAFF**  
**VALUE FOR \$**  
**WOULD I RETURN**  
**OVERALL**



*Author was a guest of the venue.*



# Nurturing a bright blue future at BCHS

by Belinda Parkes, Ballina Coast High School (BCHS)



As our families enjoy the summer break and take advantage of our beautiful coastal waterways, it is a good reminder of the importance of looking after our natural environment.

Last year BCHS hosted the wonderful Bright Blue Future Showcase event organised by Ballina's Ocean Voices Youth Collective. The event brought together 30 students from schools stretching across the Northern Rivers to talk with industry experts, discover new careers related to the blue economy,



and join important discussions about the future of our oceans.

This gathering aimed to give young people a voice on important environmental issues, while educating and inspiring them with some of the cutting-edge research and innovations taking place in the ocean sector.

Visitors were welcomed by our Aboriginal dancers, treated to a tour of our Aquaculture Centre which is teeming with more than 300 fish, crayfish, fresh-water turtles and



served up delicious food prepared by our hospitality students.

We look forward to seeing our students back at school on 6 February when all students from Yrs 7-12 will start their year. Orientation Week will be jam-packed with fun activities and excursions as we focus on building strong relationships among students and staff while providing students with skills and information to set them up for learning success in 2025. It's going to be another fantastic year at BCHS.



## ENROL FOR 2025

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north coast pathway

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6628 5426



## Holiday fun

If you're looking for some new and novel ways to entertain the kids these holidays, here's a few ideas to get you started.

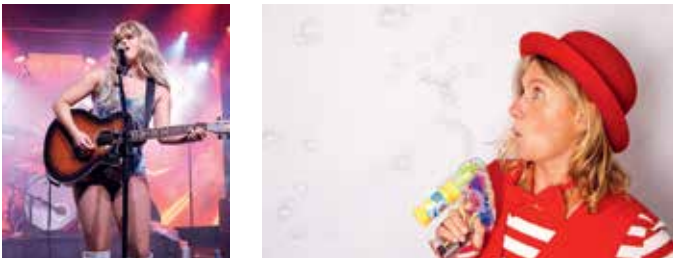
### Nature Playground at BBWS



Stage One of the Nature Playground Development at Byron Bay Wildlife Sanctuary (BBWS) has opened, and it is already being met with excitement from families and wildlife enthusiasts alike.

This first phase of a three-stage project integrates the existing mini-golf area with a playground that engages children in creative and messy play. Features like an outdoor play kitchen, a charming hardwood cubby and natural plantings create a vibrant and immersive environment where kids can explore and connect with nature. The playground's design emphasises imaginative play, fostering a love for the outdoors to align with BBWS's mission of wildlife conservation and education, providing a space where children can learn about nature, whilst in nature.

### Good times at Ballina RSL



**What:** *The Pop Squad:* Katy Perry, Taylor Swift and Dua Lipa

**When:** Thursday 9 January. Doors: 4pm/Show: 4.30pm

**What:** *Lego Fan Expo: Ballina Brick Event*

**When:** Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 January, 9am – 3pm

**What:** *Shorty Brown Bingo* \*Free event

**When:** Thursday 16 January, 10am

**What:** *Humphrey's Nature Adventure Show*

**When:** Saturday 18 January. Doors: 2.30pm/Show: 3pm

**What:** *The Tay Tay Tribute Show: Shake It Off*

**When:** Tuesday 21 January. Doors: 4pm/Show: 4.30pm

**What:** *Wildlife Twins Trivia* \*Free event

**When:** Thursday 23 January, 10:30am

Tickets and more info at: [ballinarsl.com.au/school-holidays-2](http://ballinarsl.com.au/school-holidays-2)

## Kids corner

Q. What does a pig say on a hot summer day?  
A. I am bacon.

Q. Why do bananas use sunscreen?  
A. Because they peel.

Q. What sits on the seabed and has anxiety?  
A. A nervous wreck.

Q. Why did the beach get angry?  
A. Because it noticed the sea weed.

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

Sia. *Sia who?*

Sia at the beach.

## Spot the difference

Can you find 5 differences between these pictures?



Can you find me in the pages of this magazine?





## Tired of failing your New Year's resolutions?

by Alexis Zahner, Founder, Human Leaders

### Five neuroscience-based tips for making your New Year's resolutions stick

Tired of the New Year-New You routine that seems to last through January only to fall flat come February? Well, you might not be making your new habits 'sticky' enough.

Here's the thing: change is uncomfortable. Whether you're trying to lose weight, ditch the booze, or dedicate yourself to writing more poems, our brains are designed to conserve energy by doing what they already know - which is why change can feel really tough to maintain.

But with the spark of excitement the new year brings, and armed with my five neuroscience-backed tips, be bold and set those goals. These five suggestions are designed to make your new habits 'sticky', helping you to push beyond the initial friction phase to truly integrate change into your life.

1. *Embed change into your identity.* Don't just imagine the change happening, become the change. When a behaviour becomes part of our identity, we're more likely to stick with it. Instead of framing your resolution as something you 'want' to do, frame it as part of who you are. For instance, instead of saying, 'I want to run regularly,' say, 'I am a runner.' This engages the brain's neural pathways for identity, making it easier to maintain consistent behaviours since they align with how you see yourself.
2. *Habit stack to build momentum.* Habit stacking involves linking new behaviours to existing ones, which helps your brain adapt more quickly. Neuroscience tells us that when habits are tied to familiar routines, the brain recognises the patterns and reinforces them. So if you already drink coffee every morning, you could stack a new habit, like journaling for five minutes, right after your coffee ritual. The brain naturally associates the new behaviour with the existing habit, making it easier to maintain.
3. *Focus on pull motivators, rather than push.* The motivation behind your resolutions greatly influences

your success. Pull motivators, such as self-love and positive reinforcement, create lasting change because they work with your brain's reward system. In contrast, push motivators like fear, guilt, or self-criticism activate stress responses, which are often unsustainable and can leave us exhausted. Focus on how your resolution supports a better version of yourself: instead of exercising out of fear of gaining weight, focus on exercising because it makes you feel strong, healthy, and empowered.

4. *Use commitment devices to stay accountable.* Commitment devices are strategies that make it harder to back out of your goals. By putting obstacles in place ahead of time, you reduce the cognitive load on your prefrontal cortex, which manages self-control and helps combat instant gratification. What does this all mean exactly? As an example, if you want to spend less time on social media, you could install an app that limits usage or removes distracting apps altogether. This simple step helps you stick to your resolution by reducing temptations in advance.
5. *Build in flexibility.* Rigid goals can overwhelm the brain, and don't allow space for when life inevitably happens. Building flexibility into your resolutions helps prevent frustration and allows room for adjustments and setbacks without feeling like you've failed. For instance, if working out more often is your goal, set a realistic expectation which allows you space to reschedule if you miss a workout. Flexible goals are more sustainable because they keep you engaged without triggering stress responses that could derail your progress. Remember, don't throw the baby out with the bathwater - if you misstep, pick yourself up and do better tomorrow.

By embedding change in your identity, stacking habits, using pull motivators, employing commitment devices, and allowing flexibility, you can leverage the brain's natural processes to make your New Year's resolutions 'stickier' for the long haul.



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## Move your training to the great outdoors

by Jane Jackson, Training Ground Outdoor Fitness



When it comes to embarking on a fitness lifestyle change, it can be a minefield out there. Our social feeds are flooded by the latest fitness trends or online programs promising to transform our bodies in the space of four weeks. We have the ever-evolving fitness machines and gadgets, and conflicting advice regarding the best workout for our bodies. It's safe to say with so much choice and information, the fitness journey can sometimes end up in the too-hard basket.

As it turns out, we had it right in the first place when we exercised daily through hunting and gathering. Research suggests outdoor exercise tends to burn more calories, with less stress on our bodies. Plus, an increase in fresh oxygen, negative ions, and vitamin D all work together to improve health, well-being, mental

clarity, and overall performance - a timely message for the beginning of a new year and a reminder to embrace our gorgeous coastal summer months through health and fitness.

'The key to success is about making a permanent lifestyle change,' explains Rikki-Lee Petrie, local trainer and founder of The Training Ground Outdoor Fitness. 'Over the years I've seen many people use exercise to become the best version of themselves by moving their body in the great outdoors every day. Exercise should be a non-negotiable daily routine, like drinking water, eating healthy food, brushing your teeth, and taking a shower. We should be exercising because we love our bodies.'

Rikki suggests six simple actions to help make your fitness time non-negotiable.

1. Schedule it. Note your daily workout session in your calendar as you would other important appointments. And yes, it has to be at least six days a week - exercising just three days a week will not create a new habit.
2. Get moving at sunrise. Lay your training gear out the night before, and go to bed early. When you wake in the morning, let your feet hit the floor with intention. The post-workout endorphins will make you feel great and set your day up for success.
3. Set achievable and measurable goals. This is one of the keys to

success. Think about the 'why' in your goal setting - this is the reason for setting a goal and is related to your personal purpose. Write your goals down, stick them up in your personal space, and reference them every day. This will make you accountable to yourself, motivate you, give you a sense of accomplishment, and raise your self-confidence.

4. Start with 30 minutes. You don't need to exercise for hours to see and feel results. Just 30 minutes will fire up your metabolism; for example, incorporating a 30-minute brisk walk, 15 minutes in one direction, and 15 minutes back. As this habit becomes established, gradually increase the length of your workout by five minutes each time.
5. Be accountable. Instead of catching up with a friend or a family member over coffee, arrange to catch up for a walk or a run. Group fitness classes are brilliant for accountability - by training with others you will be less likely to hit the snooze button, knowing that someone is expecting you to be there.
6. Positive visualisation. Every night, visualise returning from your workout or achieving your goals and tap into how this will make you feel. Put as much detail as possible into this, as it will significantly help you manifest your health and fitness goals into reality.

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## Olley portrait campaign



*Pictured, left: Ben Quilty (b.1973), Margaret Olley 2011, oil on linen © The artist. Pictured, right: Ben Quilty and Margaret Olley in front of Quilty's winning Archibald Prize work at the 2011 Archibald Prize Announcement, Image © Art Gallery of NSW.*

The Tweed Regional Gallery Foundation Ltd. has launched a fundraising campaign to acquire Ben Quilty's iconic Archibald prize-winning portrait of Margaret Olley. In 1948, Margaret Olley was the subject of an Archibald Prize-winning portrait by artist William Dobell. Herself a fledgling artist, at the age of 25, Olley was not prepared for the media frenzy that ensued after Dobell was announced the winner of the prize. The shy, young Olley was fortuitously about to leave for Europe and therefore able to, for the most part, escape the attention of the media who had a field day critiquing the nature of the portrait and sitter.

When Quilty asked Olley to sit for a portrait 63 years later, the senior artist at first declined. 'She dismissed me in her typical, resilient, forceful way,' said Quilty. 'But I didn't give in easily.'

The portrait went on to win the 2011 Archibald Prize just months before Olley's death on 26 July 2011. Quilty had captured his friend, mentor and fellow artist at the close of her extraordinary life and her enduring career that was bookended by these two Archibald Prize-winning portraits.

To help secure this significant painting for the Tweed Regional Gallery collection donate at: [brnw.ch/21wP3C2](http://brnw.ch/21wP3C2)

## Artist spotlight



### Susanne Fraser

Known for her evocative clay sculptures and vessels, Susanne draws deeply on her life's outdoor adventures and professional experiences in Southeast Asia. Her creative journey has also taken her to self-funded and invitation-only residencies in China, South Korea, Japan, North China, and Yunnan, each journey enriching her artistic practice and perspective.

Susanne's studio, nestled on her family's expansive acreage of Big Scrub remnant rainforest in the hills behind Ballina, is where her art comes to life. Here, in her secluded sanctuary, she explores the stories and symbols that fuel her passion for clay. Her work reflects a keen interest in the cultural exchange and evolution of ceramics through the ages, as well as themes of horses, women, and the historical use of ceramics as symbols of power and control.

'My work is an ongoing investigation into making, observing, and developing ideas in clay,' says Susanne. 'Using hand-building techniques, various clay bodies, found materials, and my own developed glazes, I create pieces that engage with the transformation of clay by heat, creating meaningful art.'

Through her use of personal and culturally appropriated symbols, Susanne creates layered stories that invite viewers to explore the intricate relationships between humanity, nature, and history. Each piece bears her distinct hand and the silent echo of the ancient cultural exchanges that continue to inspire her.

*Susanne is a member of Ballina Arts & Crafts Centre Inc (BACCI). For more information, visit: [bacci.com.au](http://bacci.com.au)*



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# What's on at NRCG



Image: Lesley Ryan, *Run Off*, 2024.



Image: Col Mac, *stopping place*, 2024.



Image: Shanti Des Fours, *Dark Matter*, 2022.



Image: Holly Ahern and Eden Crawford-Harriman, *Princess of the Night* (video still), 2024.

Northern Rivers Community Gallery (NRCG) is rolling out the next round of exhibitions, showcasing local creative exploration and opportunity. The following will be on display from Thursday 9 January to Sunday 2 March.

### ***The Meteorologist's Daughter - Watching the Skies* | Lesley Ryan**

Lesley Ryan is the daughter of a meteorologist and has had a fascination with the sky since she was a child: its ever-changing moods, its ability to frighten or calm, and the impact it has on everyone. The paintings in this exhibition are influenced by a love of Japanese woodblocks, simple lines, and the reduction of landscape to basic forms. Lesley creates ambiguous landscapes that invite the viewer to imagine the setting of their place and time.

### ***passing place* | Col Mac**

*passing place* is a series of paintings and sculptures made in response to the artist's connection to the Ballina region. Taking its title from the point in a single-track road where travellers briefly converge before moving in the opposite direction, *passing place* explores the ways in which boundaries of time, place, biography and history can poetically overlap creating a brief plurality of cultural memory.

### ***The Black Lake* | Shanti Des Fours**

The exhibition comprises a collection of monotypes conceived in response to the lingering visual and emotional resonance from visits to a lake near where the artist once lived. Some images stem from long-lost memories of people and moments, while others are derived from documentation made during recent revisits. The work serves as symbols of the grief that comes after life has transitioned and chapters have concluded.

### ***Princess of the Night* | Holly Ahern and Eden Crawford-Harriman**

Drawing from Australian and Sri Lankan perspectives, *Princess of the Night* explores existential narratives, cultural spirituality, and the ephemeral beauty of nocturnal blooms. This installation is an immersive, technology-driven enquiry of the *Epiphyllum oxypetalum*.

Northern Rivers Community Gallery is located at 44 Cherry Street, Ballina.

Opening hours: Wednesday to Friday, 9am - 3pm, and Saturday and Sunday 9.30am - 1pm.

For more information, visit: [nrcgballina.com.au/v1/](http://nrcgballina.com.au/v1/)



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# Personal tech support for bamboozled bipeds



# Sword-like swallowing skills of a seagull

by Steve Whalan, General Manager, Australian Seabird & Turtle Rescue (ASTR)



*Pictured: Sally the seagull with a bamboo skewer protruding from her neck.  
Source: Supplied.*

We rescue all manner of seabirds, and it's fair to say most of them have found mischief with fishing gear - hooks and lures in beaks, eyes, wings and, more problematic, ingested fishing line. At ASTR we thought we had seen it all, then we came across quite a confronting case concerning a seagull.

A call came through the ASTR hotline for this bird with a 10cm bamboo skewer protruding from its neck. The seagull was quite active and mobile, but the skewer presented a significant challenge in how the bird had to manoeuvre its head. Given the injury we knew a quick rescue and veterinary treatment was paramount. The seagull was a tough bird to rescue, avoiding all the tricks we use to entice birds into rescue nets/nooses. We tried catching it for over a week before two of our most experienced rescuers, Katrina and Jacqui, eventually caught the bird which was lured to a leg noose with French fries. We named the seagull Sally.

Sally was transported to our friends at Byron Bay Wildlife Hospital (BBWH) for treatment which required surgery to remove the skewer. It turns out it had a flat blade at one end which was lodged in the bird's oesophagus. The opposite end, with a sharp point, protruded through the throat and sat visibly out of the neck. There were many opinions

on how the item ended up in the gull's neck, however we concluded that Sally had probably swallowed the skewer which then lodged in the oesophagus, with the sharp, pointy-end, eventually working its way back out through the neck. It remains a mystery, but it would have been painful. All of us here at ASTR were thankful to hear of her eventual rescue.

Following surgery we took Sally into what we thought would be a long period of rehabilitation. Sadly, Sally did not make it through her rehabilitation and passed soon after taking her into care. Whilst we were unable to release her back to the shores of the Richmond River we are thankful we were able to catch her, remove the tortuous skewer from her neck and provide a second chance at life.

Humans have a remarkable and tangible link to our natural surrounds. What we do often impacts the wildlife we share nature with. In this case the skewer was undoubtedly discarded trash but the graphic picture of where it ended up is a sobering reminder to all of us to properly dispose of trash so it doesn't inadvertently end up impacting our wildlife.

If you see impacted sea birds or sea turtles we can help - call our ASTR rescue hotline on ph: 0428 862 852.



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## Pet of the month



**Name:** Odie  
**Age:** Eight years  
**Breed:** King Charles Cavalier  
**Favourite toy:** Stuffed teddy  
**Favourite food:** Anything - except chicken which he loves, but is allergic  
**Favourite thing to do:** It's hard to admit, but humping his toys! Also going for daily walks in the park or a drive in the car.

Odie was surrendered by his owner to the NRAS Rescue Shelter and needed a foster carer 'for a week or so'.

Volunteering in the NRAS office, Marion happened to be there the day Odie came into the Shelter so offered to take him home and be his carer.

'Well, of course all my friends said I couldn't possibly send him back so, here we are four years later, and I stand alongside many an NRAS foster fail,' jokes Marion.

Prior to adopting Odie, he had a full vet check where it was discovered he had major dental issues and required 11 teeth to be extracted. This cost was met by NRAS as part of the foster arrangement and the outcome obviously made Odie a much happier and healthier pooch.

'Fostering Odie gave us the opportunity to get to know each other and work out if we would be a fit,' continues Marion.

And these two are definitely 'a fit' - besides accompanying Marion to her weekly shift in the Shelter Office, Odie has also become a regular in NRAS' Pet Therapy program run at Bupa and Crowley Village.

Once a month this dashing 'young man' heads in to catch up with residents and staff at both locations and, whilst his visits bring smiles to the residents' faces, Odie too enjoys all the added attention he receives.

'It's very rewarding to sit with the residents and hear them reminisce about the pets they've had and also to know that Odie and I are sharing this special time, making others happy.'

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## Keep your garden cool over summer

by Jennie Goeldner, Wollongbar Garden Club



Summer is usually a scorching time of year. The soil dries out quickly and vital organisms in the soil slow down and eventually die if we don't keep them cool and damp.

To achieve this we need to shade the soil from above with tall plants, leaving no bare soil to parch in the sun. Cover with mulch of your choice.

Don't scalp your lawn. Set your mower higher so the thicker grass can shade the more delicate shoots and help retain moisture.

As your garden becomes established, with taller plants to shade the new tender additions, the aspect of your garden will change, from full sun to partial and perhaps eventually full shade. Your choice of plants will evolve as the conditions change.

Tender seedlings need extra protection. There are many frames, covered with shade cloth, available commercially. Just erect them over

the plants you want to protect. They work very well but can be reasonably expensive. A simple solution is to place a frond of bracken over each new seedling. Bush bracken is quite strong and will shield the seedlings so they can harden off without perishing in the relentless sun. The bracken will die and rot down to add to the health of your soil.

Summers in the Northern Rivers are often quite wet so maintaining this moisture in your soil will help carry your garden through the hottest days.

### Join a meeting

Wollongbar Garden Club does not have a January meeting. The next gathering will be 11 February, 9.45am to 12pm at Rous Mill Hall, Rous Mill.

## Machines that get your job done quickly



Whether you are revitalising a small backyard space or undertaking a large commercial project, landscaping machines are key to efficiency. There are some great options that will save you time and reduce physical effort and help you to get the job done safely.

'They say, don't blame your tools but we disagree,' says Sam Kirkby owner of Plateau Landscape Supplies and Greenstar Hire. 'When it comes to landscaping, the right equipment really does make all the difference, especially if it's hot or you are working on a steep or slippery block. Many people do not want or need to invest in owning this type of machinery which is why hiring is a great option,' adds Sam.

We asked Sam to tell us about some of his favourite machines.

### Powered wheelbarrows

These little gems are absolute game changers. This wheelbarrow on tracks is lightweight and agile and is equally useful on construction sites, landscaping and in farm settings. They are great for getting soil and garden matter in and out of inaccessible job sites efficiently and safely and will spare you hours of labour.

### Kanga mini loaders

The Kanga is a compact and popular machine - perfect for tight spaces in and around the home and landscape. With a selection of auger attachments and a front-end loader, spreader bar and forks, this little machine can do big things.

### Mini excavators

Mini excavators are perfect for small and medium jobs. They are easy to operate and will make light work out of your next project. They come with their own trailer and have a range of different bucket attachments including a tilt mud bucket.

When choosing a hire company, it's worth shopping around. Some also offer a delivery service. There's nothing more satisfying than a productive day or weekend transforming the garden. These machines will get your job done with precision and efficiency.



# Scarab beetles in my garden

by Francoise Sauvere, Ballina Community Garden



Recently, while spreading homemade compost onto my community garden patch, I found some huge grubs and started researching whether they were good or bad for my garden. I found lots of fascinating information which I'd like to share with you - I hope you will learn something too.

Scarabaeiform larvae are commonly called curl grubs. These larvae will usually be curved or C-shaped, and sometimes hairy, with a well-developed head capsule. They bear thoracic legs but lack abdominal prolegs. Grubs tend to be slow or sluggish. The ones in my garden were 6cm long and as thick as an adult's finger.

These beetles' larval stages can be as long as several years in the ground. The larvae feed on rotten wood and the adults feed on nectar, fruit sap and fruit. First, the larvae hatch from eggs and later develop into pupae before they reach adulthood. When the body of the grub is predominantly black it indicates that the beetle is preparing to pupate.

Beetle population densities are not one of the major pest insects, and they typically prefer trees which are already sick or dying from some other cause. Some species' larvae, however, will attack healthy trees or even root vegetables, and when they occur in large numbers, can cause economically significant damage. The fungus *Metarhizium majus* is a proven biocontrol agent for beetle infestation in crops.

Entomologist Séverin Tchiboza suggests the larvae contain much more protein (40%) than chicken (20%) and beef (approximately 18%), and they could become a protein source for a large human population.

Seeing suspiciously plump curl grubs amongst the roots of prized garden plants can be alarming, but please don't automatically reach for insecticides. The chemicals used to control curl grubs will harm all scarab larvae, regardless of whether or not they are pests. Many of the most common treatments for curl grubs contain chemicals called anthranilic

diamides, which are also toxic to butterflies, moths and aquatic invertebrates. And by disrupting soil ecosystems, using insecticides might do more harm than good and could kill harmless native beetle larvae.

So what to do instead?

Larvae found in decaying wood or mulch are wood feeders and are useful composters; they will not harm your plants and should be left where they are.

Larvae found in compost bins are helping to break down wastes and should also be left alone.

If you find larvae in your garden soil, use your plant's health as a guide. If your plants appear healthy, consider simply leaving curl grubs where they are. If you need to move them, you can put them into a deep container filled with half decayed wood mulch and put it in a shady spot at the back of the garden where they can continue their life cycle. Scarab larvae are part of the soil ecosystem and are unlikely to do damage if they are not present in high numbers.



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# Safe disposal of embedded battery items

by NE Waste



*Pictured: Any product containing an embedded battery can be dropped off for free at the Lismore Recycle and Recovery Centre. Source: Supplied.*

Products with embedded batteries are becoming increasingly prevalent in our everyday lives. They are problematic to dispose of or recycle due to the different components and materials they are made of and, as the batteries can't safely be removed, extra care is required when disposing of these products.

### What to do with an item that has an embedded battery?

A new two year trial funded by the NSW government has been established to accept products with embedded batteries - and it's free. There are 21 drop-off locations across NSW, including one location in the Northern Rivers at the Lismore Recycling and

Recovery Centre, 313 Wyrallah Rd, East Lismore. They are open 7.30am to 3.30pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 4pm, Saturday and Sunday.

### What's accepted?

- Bluetooth speakers and headphones
- electric toothbrushes
- e-scooters, e-bikes and hover boards
- flashing/light up toys - particularly wands or other hard plastic products
- personal care devices (eg. shavers)
- powerpacks and portable charging devices
- remote controlled and ride-on toys
- vacuum cleaners (cordless hand-held and robotic)
- vapes

- wearable devices such as smart watches, trackers and medical aids.

For more information on the trial, head to the NSW EPA's Embedded batteries website.

### What to do with other batteries?

If the batteries can easily be removed from a product, you can take the loose batteries to your local Community Recycling Centre: [newaste.org.au/crc](http://newaste.org.au/crc) or to any Coles, Woolworths, ALDI or Bunnings drop-off location: [bcycle.com.au/drop-off](http://bcycle.com.au/drop-off)

Remember all types of batteries, particularly lithium-ion batteries, are a potential fire risk and should never be disposed of in your kerbside red, yellow or green bins.



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# Ask a waste expert

with Justine Rowe, Ballina Council

It's 2025 and there's no time to waste. Ballina, I hope you all had a safe and joyous holiday period. I also hope we are ready to wake up to the triple planetary crises we're facing: climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.

Each year, Australians waste 7.6 million tonnes of food and 860 kilotonnes of textiles. We landfill over one billion coffee cups, 1,450 kilotonnes of timber and so much more. Each year we use the natural resources of 4.5 earths. Individuals alone did not cause the crisis we're in, but we can have a role in the solution by mitigating one thing firmly in our control - our rampant (over)consumerism and consumption. Let's leave the throwaway mindset and culture of overconsumption in 2024.

Luckily, consuming less and consuming mindfully doesn't have to be hard and it will save you money too. Here's some simple ideas to incorporate into the year ahead.

- Borrow or swap, don't shop. If you must shop, go for second hand or locally made.
- Keep the coffee, ditch the cup. Make 2025 the year you refuse single-use. Not only are takeaway coffee cups an environmental

disaster, but the plastic lining and plastic lid each contain harmful chemicals that none of us should be consuming.

- Save food, save money. Reducing our food waste is a simple, impactful, and tasty action. Check out *Saveful*, an app that helps you get the most out of your grocery shop, learn to use up wilted greens and stale bread in delicious ways, and finally understand best before and use by dates. Love Food Hate Waste NSW has more great resources.
- Repair and repurpose. Time to move beyond our disposable mindset and learn to value each item we own, as well as the resources used to make them (and ultimately dispose of or recycle them). There are loads of crafty Facebook groups with infinite ideas on how to repurpose or upcycle, and we have our very own Northern Rivers Reuse and Repair Trail which can be used to find local menders or repair shops - visit: [reusetrail.com.au](http://reusetrail.com.au)

I hope you'll join me in making this simple resolution to consciously consume, doing our bit for this earth that we share with our neighbours near and far, with all animal and plant species and with all future generations.

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# Cherry Street Croquet

by Gregory Porter



Pictured: Helen McKay (Byron Bay) and Norma Watts (Cherry Street) placed 2nd in the Samoa Golf Croquet Doubles Classic Championships.

Northern Rivers Area Croquet Club members have been busy on the tournament circuit, finishing the year on a high.

## Urunga Golf Croquet Singles

Twelve members attended the Urunga Golf Croquet Singles Tournament, with all enjoying four days of croquet and a short holiday.

### Results

The following all finished with top honours in their allotted divisions, being the best of our locals.

- Werner Borkhardt 1st
- Dennise Simmons 2nd / Denis Cummings 2nd
- Penny Scott 3rd
- Wendy Gilmore 4th.

## Samoa Golf Croquet

Some members travelled to the Samoa Islands for a relaxing end of year trip. As part of the Golf Croquet holiday, a few social games were played, amongst some short tours and island food. A wonderful time was had by all.

### Results

Samoa Golf Croquet Doubles Classic No 1

- Norma Watts and Helen McKay 2nd
- Joan Doust and Janet Fuller 3rd

Classic No 2

- Debbie Jones and John Tew finished 2nd and were the outstanding locals at Samoa.

## Queensland Association Croquet Open Doubles

Mike Gidding and Chris Borlase took out the doubles from Dave Luxmoore and Troy McCallum.

## NSW Handicap Association Croquet Singles

Phyllis Waters played exceptionally well to finish in 5th position against some seasoned opponents.

## NSW Ricochet Handicap Singles

Ray Chapman and David Scott competed in the event with both players performing well. David finished runner-up in the Championships going down in a close final to Ken Green. It was an outstanding performance by all these dedicated players.

## Cherry Street Club Champions 2024

Robbie Allen, Joan Doust, Robyn Poynting, Phyllis Waters, Barbara Wellings, Maurie Russell, James Bate, Neville Poynting, David Scott, Dave Taylor and Greg Porter.

Congratulations all players.



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## Walking Football: 2024 Home Tournament



*Pictured: Teams assembled at Ballina Hockey Club for the Invitational Tournament.*

Ballina Coast Walking Football recently hosted its annual invitational tournament to wrap up the 2024 East Coast WF Tournament calendar. Teams from the Sunshine Coast, Brisbane, Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie and

Central Coast, along with Ballina Coast teams, assembled at Ballina Hockey Club's synthetic turf fields to compete in mixed gender matches across two age divisions aptly named Gen X and Baby Boomers. The matches were competitive and played in good spirit with the Gen X division top places

going to Ballina Coast Plovers (1st) and Brisbane's Oxley (2nd) while the Baby Boomers division resulted in first place for the Central Coast side closely follow by Ballina Flatties in second place. To cap off the proceedings, winners of both divisions played off in a final match with Ballina Plovers winning the intergenerational game 3-2 after extra time.

Ballina Coast WF had another stellar year in 2024 with strong performances by players in domestic and international tournaments. Most importantly, player numbers continue to grow as players enjoy the social and physical benefits of this sport. New members are always welcome, enquiries to John at: [john\\_galletly57@hotmail.com](mailto:john_galletly57@hotmail.com)

## Hiatus for One Dayer



Lennox Longboarders Inc have announced that the Rip Curl Lennox Longboard One Dayer will go into hiatus for 2025, mainly due to changes within the Club for the coming season.

The event was originally devised as a reintroduction of an open east coast competition, after the COVID lockdown, to replace the Lennox Longboard Classic, that had previously been a two day event held for over 17 years. The Club decided to ease back into an open event format but in a simplified way and it ran very successfully for three years with great support from competitors and sponsors alike.

It is hoped the Club will be able to revisit an open surfing event in the future.

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# Did you know?

by Ashleigh McCabe



- Did you know, giraffes are 30 times more likely to get hit by lightning than people? There are only five well-documented fatal lightning strikes on giraffes between 1996 and 2010. But due to the population of the species being just 140,000 during this time, it makes for about 0.003 lightning deaths per 1,000 giraffes each year, 30 times the equivalent fatality rate for humans.



- Did you know, comets smell like rotten eggs? A comet smells like rotten eggs, urine, burning matches and almonds. Traces of hydrogen sulphide, ammonia, sulphur dioxide and hydrogen cyanide were all found in the makeup of the comet 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko. Promotional postcards were even commissioned in 2016 carrying the pungent scent of a comet.



- Did you know that lemons float while their citrus cousin, the lime, sinks. Lemons have tiny pockets in their peel that trap air once submerged, helping them to float. They also have less density than limes. But, if you peel them the lime still sinks, while the lemon only loses some of its buoyancy, remaining close to the surface. Ultimately the phenomenon comes down to the density of each fruit, limes having far more than lemons.



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# Classic movies to rewatch these holidays

with Milt Barlow

The holidays are a great time to hit the couch and rediscover some all-time classic movies. Every summer in our house, it's always a bit of an argument as to which movie to select, and I normally get outvoted by my adult kids. Despite this, here are some favourites that I think are worthy of a revisit and most importantly, stand the test of time.

- *All The President's Men* (1976)
- *Anchorman: The Legend Of Ron Burgundy* (2004)
- *Animal Kingdom* (2011)
- *Back To the Future* (1985)
- *Barbie* (2023)
- *Beetlejuice* (1988)
- *Blackberry* (2023)
- *Blade Runner* (1982)
- *Breaker Morant* (1980)
- *Chinatown* (1974)
- *Crocodile Dundee* (1986)
- *Dead Calm* (1989)
- *Donnie Brasco* (1977)
- *Don's Party* (1976)
- *E.T.* (1982)
- *Forest Gump* (1994)
- *Gallipoli* (1981)
- *Goodfellas* (1990)
- *Goodwill Hunting* (1997)
- *Groundhog Day* (1993)
- *In Bruges* (2008)
- *Mad Max* (1979)
- *Monty Python's Life Of Bryan* (1979)
- *Mulholland Drive* (2001)
- *Muriel's Wedding* (1994)
- *Parasite* (2019)
- *Priscilla, Queen Of the Desert* (1994)
- *Pulp Fiction* (1994)
- *Samson & Delilah* (2009)
- *Scarface* (1993)
- *Schindler's List* (1993)
- *Selma* (2014)
- *The Big Lebowski* (1988)
- *The Castle* (1997)
- *The Color Purple* (2023)
- *Thelma & Louise* (1991)
- *The Shawshank Redemption* (1994)
- *The Social Network* (2010)
- *The Sting* (1973)
- *Tootsie* (1982)

Each of these films is easy to access and can be found on various streaming platforms. I use a great app called Just Watch - simply type in the movie name and it will tell you the streaming platform it can be found on. Enjoy.

## Your Ballina your future share your voice

Ballina Shire Council is drafting a new 10-year Community Strategic Plan (CSP) to guide decisions on the services, infrastructure and projects that matter most to the community.

Share your voice by completing the Youth or Community **online survey** at [yoursayballina.com.au/CSP2035](https://yoursayballina.com.au/CSP2035)

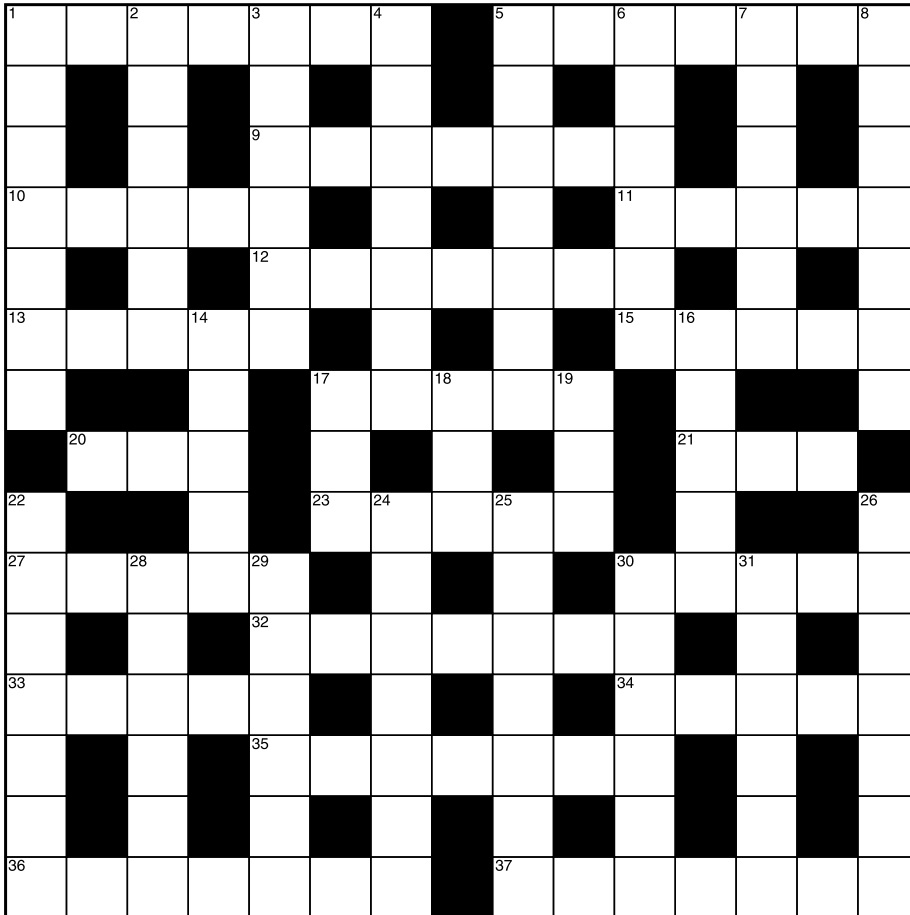
Survey closes: Monday 3 February 2025





# January crossword

© Lovatts Puzzles



### Across

- 1. Enviously resentful
- 5. Ironworks
- 9. Baby's disposables
- 10. Scallywag
- 11. Underground stem
- 12. Come to understand
- 13. Beach hills
- 15. Kitchen cooker
- 17. Wet
- 20. Metal pen-point
- 21. Mark, polka ...
- 23. Coated (with mud)
- 27. Rectangular courtyards
- 30. English racecourse
- 32. Mesmerised states
- 33. Poet, ... Allan Poe
- 34. Mantra
- 35. Vienna is there
- 36. Passed (of time)
- 37. Slim

### Down

- 1. Stolen-car trip
- 2. Pellet rifle (3,3)
- 3. Possessors
- 4. High singing voice
- 5. Pixies
- 6. Irish province
- 7. S African city
- 8. Deeply desired
- 14. Receded
- 16. Tot up (3,2)
- 17. Hamburger, Big ...
- 18. Squid fluid
- 19. Actor, ... Danson
- 22. Compress
- 24. Accumulated
- 25. Repeat performances
- 26. Nonprofessional
- 28. Actress, ... Lansbury
- 29. Belts
- 30. Jailbreak
- 31. Moved to & fro

## December solution





## January horoscopes

by Patsy Bennett - [patsybennett.com](https://patsybennett.com)

### **Aries**

Get set to break some records and turn some corners this year. First though, there is likely to be a retrospective flavour in January, as you may need to review or reconnect with the past. The new moon on the 29th will illuminate exactly where your life will benefit from most focus for now.

### **Taurus**

Venus will bring a sociable phase your way in January. You'll enjoy an uptick in your love life especially towards the 23rd, 26th and 30th. Beforehand, surprises mid-month will demand your attention. You'll do well to service debt and to avoid overspending by devising a long-term budget.

### **Gemini**

Finances will dictate what must be done or even where you must be. Career-wise you will gain the opportunity to look at various options and new ways to work or even new ways to use different skillsets. A domestic matter will merit careful consideration especially at the end of the month.

### **Cancer**

There will be much focus on relationships and communications this month. The 8th to the 27th will be a particularly chatty and outgoing time even if January does require you to pay more attention to your energy levels. Be sure to avoid heated arguments as these are likely to escalate.

### **Leo**

This is an excellent time to boost your health, as the stars will support your efforts. It's an adventurous time in all areas of your life, especially in your love life and financially, so be sure to organise ventures that make the most of positive options to gain fresh levels of success in 2025.

### **Virgo**

Venus will put the focus on your work and health earlier in the month and on your love life later in January. The full moon on the 14th will spotlight particular friendships and organisations, some of which you may be ready to leave behind. Romance could thrive, especially towards the 31st.

### **Libra**

January is excellent for consciously devoting extra time to your own happiness. It's important to direct attention to your health and happiness, as otherwise these could come last on your to-do list. You'll appreciate the chance to explore new options in your career and general direction too.

### **Scorpio**

Mars retrograde may lead you to feel a little less active than usual in January, but you will enjoy focusing on your relationships and reorganising areas you share such as duties and finances. Be prepared to consider fresh ways to care for yourself and those you love throughout 2025.

### **Sagittarius**

Your sign's ruler Jupiter is retrograde in January, and may bring a slower pace in some of your personal and business relationships. This will provide the chance to deepen relationships but if you realise you are often at cross-purposes, you'll gain the chance to finally let some alliances go.

### **Capricorn**

You'll welcome a fresh approach to yourself and to others. How can you be more supportive of yourself and them? The full moon on the 14th spotlights how to bring a nurturing aspect into all your interactions and, if you find this is impossible, to search for interactions that do support you.

### **Aquarius**

January will be ideal for formulating a fresh approach to your self-expression and to your feelings for others. The new moon on the 29th will be decisive for January Aquarians in your personal life; and at work or in your health for February Aquarians, so consider your priorities carefully.

### **Pisces**

Venus in your sign from the 3rd will put the focus on love and money in January. You may find this one of the most romantic months of the year, especially on the 3rd and 19th. However as the focus will also be squarely on finances, it is important that you devise a sound budget.



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