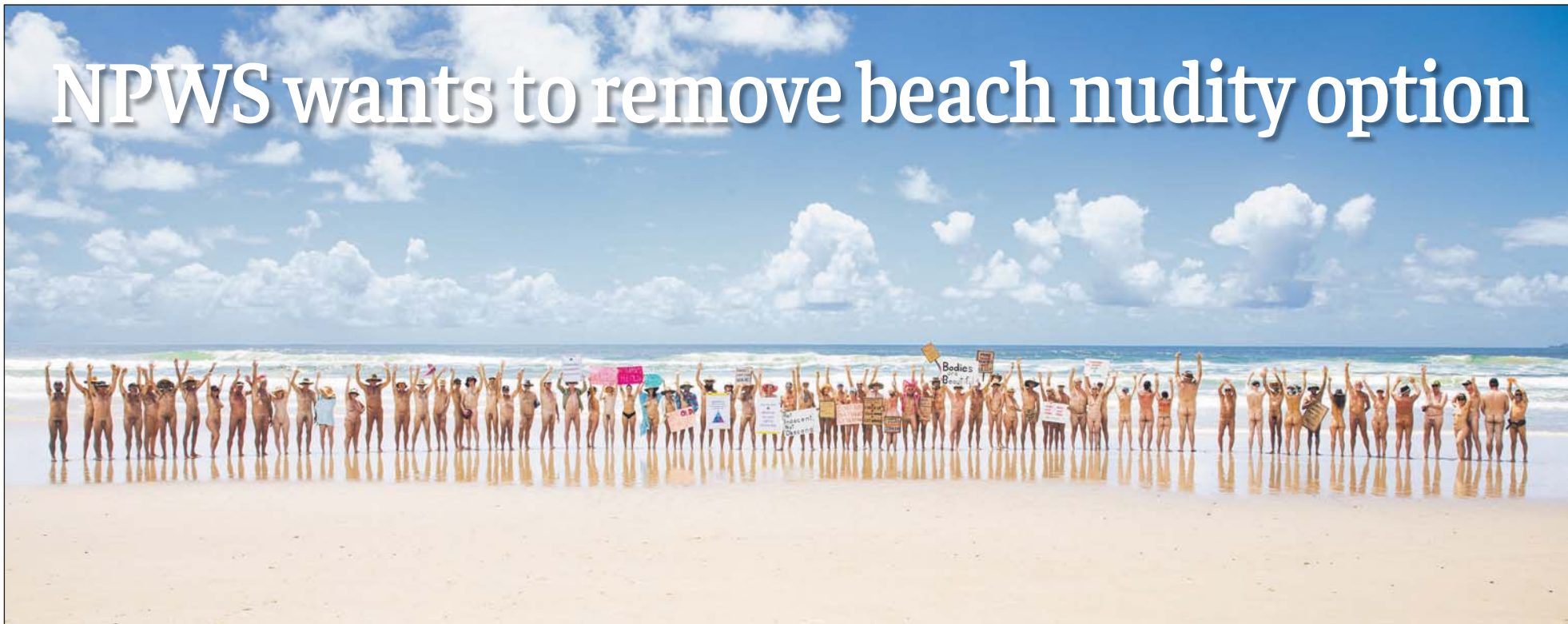




NPWS wants to remove beach nudity option



Naturists gathered on Sunday to oppose plans by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) to revoke the clothing-optional status of Tyagarah Beach. Photo Eve Jeffery

Staff reporters

For 26 years, Tyagarah Beach has been an oasis for the region's naturist community – a space where bodies of all shapes and sizes could roam free without threat of fines or reprimands.

But with the flick of a bureaucrat's pen, the famous stretch is set to have its clothing-optional designation stripped away like a soggy cozzie on a hot summer's day.

The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) has determined that having the beach as a clothing-optional area is 'not consistent with their values', and demanded that the designation be revoked.

But the local naturists community isn't giving up without a fight.

On Sunday, around 150 proudly-naked members gathered at the beach to protest against a decision that they described as

'exceptionally unfair'.

More than 3,000 people have also signed a petition on change.org demanding that NPWS immediately reverse its decision.

3,000 signatures

'Anyone who has spent time on a nudist beach knows the indescribable magic of the experience,' one member of the group said.

'You know what it is to be alive, to be truly free. Once governing bodies take away our freedoms, it is almost impossible to ever get them back.'

The naturists are also upset by the manner in which the decision occurred.

In the past, it has been Byron Council and not the NPWS that has made decisions in relation to the beach, including the original decision to designate the beach clothing-optional.

However, in May 2023 NPWS conducted a land mapping survey which found that a large section of the clothing-optional area was actually part of the Tyagarah Nature Reserve and therefore under its jurisdiction.

It is effectively using this newly-discovered power to put an end to Tyagarah as a nudist beach.

In a letter to Byron Council, NPWS's Acting Executive Director, Deon Van Rensburg, said that maintaining a clothing-optional area in the nature reserve was 'not consistent with the values the reserve is managed under'.

'For example, people are accessing not only the beach but also the dune and hind-dune which is creating environmental issues,' the letter states.

'The continuation of a clothing-optional area in Tyagarah Nature

► Continued on page 3

Small breweries feeling the pinch

Hans Lovejoy

Like many small businesses doing it tough, local independent breweries are no exception.

The number of small to medium-sized independent craft breweries falling into administration is growing, according to industry media publication www.craftypint.com.

Wandana, based in Mullum's industrial estate, contacted *The Echo* to highlight that inflation, along with government regulations, are making it tough to do business.

Owners Rupert and Chrissy said, 'Everyone is doing it tough financially at the moment, but the craft beer sector is being particularly hard hit'.

'A common misconception is that breweries are "cash cows". In reality,

local independent breweries are friends-and-family-run businesses that operate on very slim margins. Many local small breweries have not fully recovered from the effects of Covid, floods and associated debts incurred to stay in business, and now the economic downturn is pushing it over the edge.'

Inflation

They say the costs of production have gone up on average 20 to 25 per cent in the last 12 months. This includes raw ingredients, packaging consumables, wages and fuel.

'Small producers like us have only passed on five to ten per cent of those costs, so we don't price ourselves out of the market. Multi-national competitors on the other

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Lorikeets on the mend as paralysis season eases ► p4

Coastal hazard assessment study released ► p5

Breaking bad promises is good, right? ► p8

Check in on your health and wellbeing ► p13

The spirited little town of Brunswick Heads ► p17



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Local small breweries feeling the pinch

► Continued from page 1
hand, have much larger profit margins to play with.

'And every six months, the government excise on alcohol is going up at a rate that is simply breaking small to medium producers'.

The Independent Brewers Association (IBA), who represent the industry, confirmed with *The Echo* that there have been 'massive increases in costs'.

The IBA's Kelly Falconer told *The Echo*, 'For example the cost of CO₂ (used to carbonate the beer) is up by as much as 51 per cent, raw material costs up by 37 per cent, and the cost of living has impacted on consumer buying behaviour, drastically reducing expenditure on independent craft beer, as it is a "premium product"'

Large brewery dominance

Another major factor is competition with the larger breweries – Rupert and Chrissy from Wandana say that wholesale has become increasingly difficult owing to multinationals contracting 90 to 100 per cent of beer taps at pubs and clubs, and they offer very lucrative rebates and upgrades in return.

The IBA's Kelly Falconer agrees: 'Large breweries such as CUB and Lion have been able to use their market power to instigate tap contracts (including rebates and cash incentives) to lock at least 85 per cent of beer taps in the country, limiting distribution channels available to independent brewers and consumer choice'.

'They have also reduced competition by acquiring any

independent breweries that are in a significant growth phase'.

Founding Drongo/head brewer from Murwillumbah-based brewery, Spangled Drongo, Brian Kiss Von Soly, told *The Echo* that because the industry is geared towards the bigger players, many smaller brewers set themselves up with the intention to flip the business when it gets big enough to buy.

And big is not necessarily better – Brian says that cheaper beer made by some multinationals may have additives that are not listed on the label.

Brian says, 'They are called "processing aids", which are technically not ingredients, additives or preservatives, so they are not required to be on the label. While these pass as food-grade, it's questionable as to whether they are healthy or not.'

'It's a loophole in the industry', he says. 'Processing aids increase efficiencies of production, for example. One is an anti-foam (dimethylpolysiloxane), which looks like PVA glue. It is food-grade plastic silicone and is added to increase profits.'

'It's also added to every McDonald's fryer.'

'We don't add such things to our beers because these add to your hangover.'

Also known as E900, The US National Institute of Health say the consensus on its use as a food additive 'is that it is safe; however, studies should continue to confirm this safety and degree of safety with certainty'.

As for Australia's beer sales, Brian says Asahi controls the majority, along with Lion Nathan/Kirin. Coopers is



Rupert and Chrissy from Mullum's Wandana Brewery. Photo Eve Jeffery

our largest Australian-owned brewery, with around four per cent of total beer sales, while independents account for around four to six per cent of Australia's total beer sales.

Reforms needed

The IBA are calling on the federal government to freeze indexation of alcohol excise for two years, and index in line with inflation the excise remission cap of \$350,000 (introduced in 2021). They also want to extend the terms for repayment of excise debts that were deferred during the Covid years.

IBA CEO, Kylie Lethbridge, told *The Echo*, 'Every time excise rates go up, my first thought is how many of our independent breweries are going to survive this round, and who will close next. Over the past three years, small independent breweries in communities all over Australia have done whatever they can to be

successful businesses and to beat adversity'.

Structural, economic issues

'The biggest issues are structural and economic, and only the federal government can address them.'

'The federal government needs to act now if it wants the sector to survive – and to show Australians they do care about local small businesses.'

'We are simply asking for common-sense reforms that go some way to creating equity for small breweries in a market stacked against them.'

'With one of the largest mid-strength beer markets in the world, beer has been a leading the way in low and non-alcoholic offerings. And yet, we face an unequal taxation regime that increasingly has beer being taxed at a higher rate than wine.'

If excise is supposed to be a tool for harm minimisation then the federal government really needs to take a look at its own data and create an equal playing field that meets its own policy objectives.'

Richard Watkins, Chair of the IBA, added, 'It is a very unhealthy situation for our industry at the moment.'

'Beer tax has jumped by nearly eight per cent in the past three to five years, and local brewers can't match the prices of overseas-owned producers.'

'We're worried the cost of craft beer from a local Australian brewery that has employees in Australia, pays tax in Australia, will start to be out of reach for many Australian consumers'.

Rupert and Chrissy add, 'Local breweries are an integral part of our community, and are constantly involved in supporting/raising money for community issues and or

protecting local fauna/ habitats/ emergency relief, etc'.

'Local breweries need the community in exchange to get behind us and help us, because if they don't there is a real risk that they may not all be around for much longer.'

Simple support

'The support can come in simple ways; next time you are in the bottle shop, reach for a locally-produced product, or when in the pub ask them why they don't offer any or more locally-produced beers.'

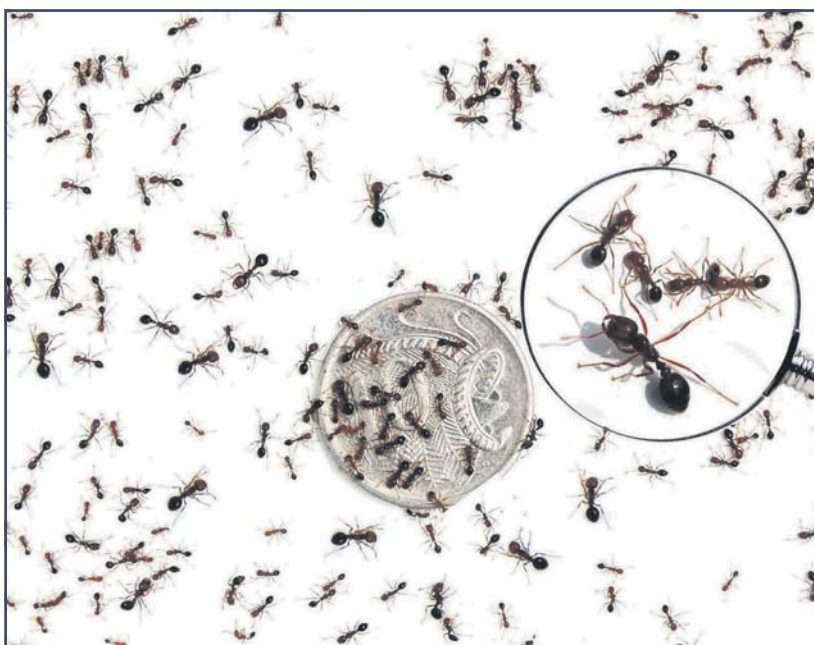
'A vital revenue stream for these breweries is their tap-room sales, so coming down to your local brewery and having a beer, while enjoying some food and listening to a local DJ is very helpful, not to mention enjoyable.'

'Everyone loves to say that they support local, but when it comes time to do something about it, they often shy away.'

'We understand everyone is doing it tough, but a small gesture can go a long way.'

'Please get on board and support your local family-run businesses such as Common People (Bangalow), Spangled Drongo (Murwillumbah), Ventura Brewing (Murwillumbah), Earth Brewing Co. (Cudgen), Seven Mile (Ballina), Two Mates (Lismore) and Wandana Brewing Co.' (Mullum).

■ *The Echo* supports small local businesses – If you represent a sector which would like to highlight how to overcome regulation that is making it hard to business, then contact us at editor@echo.net.au.



LOOK OUT FOR FIRE ANTS IN NSW

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- Ensure fire ant carrier materials are compliant with the Emergency Order
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NSW
GOVERNMENT

Wallum update: protectors at the ready

Paul Bibby

The fight to save the Wallum heathland in Brunswick Heads has gone into overdrive, with dozens of locals staunchly holding the line on-site, while thousands more lobby state and federal politicians in pursuit of permanent protection.

With the developer Clarence Property seemingly resolute in its determination to turn the site into a 124-lot housing development, the Save Wallum community has established a 24-hour bush camp at the site to ensure that the bulldozers and slashers don't roll in unnoticed.

Should the developer move in, text messages declaring a 'red alert' will immediately be sent to hundreds of people across the region who have indicated they are ready to participate in non-violent direct action to preserve the site.

Those on the frontline, including a number in tree sits, are supported by dozens more providing food, supplies, moral support and updates.

'The real focus right now is the boots on the ground,' said James Barrie, one of the leaders of the Save Wallum community.

'That is the very thing that will allow us to



Photo www.savewallum.com

continue working in other areas to obtain permanent protection.'

'They could bring machinery in at any time, which would be a breach of the *Environmental Protection, Biodiversity and Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC)* protection process which is still underway. So the Wallum protectors are there to make sure they can't start slashing which would be an illegal action.'

As those residing at or visiting the bush camp take part in art projects, guided nature walks and musical performances, a group of security guards hired by the developer sit less than 200m away on the other side of the fence.

The firm chosen is the same as that currently providing security for the pod village at Bayside.

'They're walking up and down, preventing people from entering the fenced area,' Mr Barrie said.

Mixed response from security

'There's a mixed response from security so far. Some have been allowing supplies to get in, some haven't.'

Meanwhile, thousands of people across the region are demanding action at the state and federal level to protect the site.

More than 1,000 emails have been sent to NSW

Planning Minister Paul Scully and Federal Environment Minister Tanya Plibersek demanding action.

In particular, they are calling for the development to be 'called in' under the Commonwealth's EPBC, and for it to be the subject of an Interim Heritage Order on the grounds of cultural and environmental significance.

'Those 1,000 emails were the outcome of a campaign led by [NSW Upper House MP] Sue Higginson - our group hasn't even put a call out on that one yet,' Mr Barrie said.

A Change.org petition calling for state and federal involvement has also been launched, with around 6,000 having signed at the time of writing.

Growing base

The campaign's financial base is also growing, with nearly \$16,000 raised via GoFundMe as of Monday afternoon, toward a target of \$50,000. The growing war chest is part of a recognition that the fight to save Wallum is likely to be a marathon rather than a sprint.

'This is a campaign to Save Wallum, but it's also a fight to raise awareness about zombie DAs and to set a precedent so that this kind of thing doesn't happen somewhere else,' Mr Barrie said.

NPWS nudist beach closure plan sparks protest

► Continued from page 1 Reserve is not supported by NPWS.'

Bradley Benham, president of the Byron Naturists, told *The Echo*, 'We are very disappointed that a process to close the beach has been underway for many months, but there has been no engagement with beach users.'

No notice given

'Closing the beach on such short notice and without public consultation or the offer of an alternate location is exceptionally unfair.'

A key moment in the fight to save the nudist beach will come at this Thursday's Byron Council meeting.

Staff have recommended that, in light of the NPWS decision, councillors vote to remove the clothing-optional designation as of April 8.

Unlike the NPWS, a key part of the staff's argument is the issue of antisocial behaviour, including a number of sexual assaults

that have occurred, at and around the beach, over the past 26 years.

'While Council's designation was not intended to promote or enable the antisocial activity, the designation created a "honeypot" attracting individuals seeking out sexual activity,' council staff said in their report on the matter.

'These activities permeated through the nature reserve into culturally and ecologically sensitive areas.'

But the naturists say serious antisocial behaviour has not been an issue at Tyagarah since 2018, when Council tightened up its management of the beach.

'There is no community clamour to close the nude beach,' said David Dixon, another member of the local naturist community.

'Issues with antisocial behaviour are historical and they should not be a motivator for the decision.'

'We're asking councillors

to defer so that there's adequate time for a better way forward with this.'

'We believe that a compromise is possible, that a management solution can be found that doesn't involve closing down the nude beach.'

Police neutral

Detective Chief Inspector Matt Kehoe told *The Echo*, 'Ultimately this is a NPWS matter. Police have a neutral view. Yes, we continue to get reports of lewd and antisocial behaviour around the area. This may lead to a perception around safety. I'm not aware of any reports of violence or sexual assault in recent times.'

The Arakwal Corporation, who are consulted around such things, could not be contacted as its CEO, Brent Emmons, was unavailable.

Local Bundjalung woman, Delta Kay, who is not part of Arakwal Corporation, said in a social media post, 'Yes our bodies are beautiful, and

growing up along our Shire beaches has been a family affair of fishing, getting pips and swimming with lots of cultural stories handed down to us.'

Care for Country

'With that, comes the responsibility of our cultural duty to care and look after Country. As a kid, I was never scared when we went to Tyagarah, but I am now.'

'Our family-friendly clothes-optional beach has changed. Feeling uneasy, scared on a public beach is not okay. I believe our free-spirited and relaxed community is not at risk, and I'm happy to engage in community consultation with stakeholders.'

She said, 'Our dunes are trampled owing to beachgoers using the shade and committing inappropriate behaviour. As a Bundjalung woman, I support removing the clothes-optional status for safety and to protect our fragile dune system.'

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- Bertrand Russell (1872-1970)

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Lorikeets on the mend as paralysis season eases

Hans Lovejoy

A poorly-understood phenomenon where lorikeets in the region becoming paralysed and unable to fly is thankfully coming to an end for 2024, says WIRES wildlife vet, Dr Tania Bishop.

Dr Bishop is part of the University of Sydney's Lorikeet Paralysis Syndrome (LPS) Project, which is described as a 'citizen scientist research project exploring why Lorikeet Paralysis Syndrome occurs in the southern Queensland and northern NSW regions of Australia.'

While no cause has been formally identified, the latest theory, says Dr Bishop, is that it could be a result of ingestion of a fungus growing on fruit.

'Fruit has been blasted off the top of the trees by recent heavy rain events', she says, 'So lorikeets are feeding down lower on the trees. There is also increased humidity which could contribute.'

She says the condition has been known since 1970s, but only became severe recently, since around 2021. 'There has been no specific



Rescued lorikeets at the local WIRES drop-off and triage centre. Photo supplied

disease or virus found'.

'Flying foxes are affected too. It's a concern as they are long distance pollinators'.

Dr Bishop says she was surprised how fast you have to act with the birds, as they can deteriorate fast.

'It starts from legs, and then gets to their airwaves. We try and flush out their system, and nurse them back to health.'

'We give them an electrolyte solution with glucose, and then gradually

If you come across a paralysed lorikeet

Don't feed them, as they can bite. Water can also get into their lungs. To reduce stress, put them into a small, dark box, and get them to WIRES. Visit www.wires.org.au or call 1300 094 737.

get them back to fitness.

Local WIRES spokesperson, John Grant, told *The Echo*, 'This LPS challenge has been, and is being, met thanks to an outstanding collaborative effort involving wildlife volunteers from WIRES and other local wildlife rescue organisations, the local community, and of course the many vet clinics that are tirelessly assessing and treating affected lorikeets.'

'The good news is that the number of sick birds is declining and the WIRES LPS drop-off centre closed Friday last week.'

'The public is urged to please still report any LPS-affected birds and/or take them to their nearest vet clinic for assessment and treatment'.

Tree planting in Mullum Feb 24

Want to help locally to care for our environment and plant trees for our wildlife?

Byron Shire Chemical Free Landcare's next working bee will be on Saturday, February 24, from 8 am until 12:30pm.

Co-organiser, Nadia de Souza Pietramale, says, 'We will be planting 200 trees at a new site, 40 Azalea Street, Mullumbimby. Park on the road and walk down the long concrete driveway and

you can't miss us. The task is to dig holes and plant 200 tree tube stocks. The site is already mulched, the soil is soft, and tools and a first aid kit will be on site.'

'Please wear a long-sleeved shirt and pants for sun protection. Bring a hat, gloves and bring water and some morning tea for a picnic at 10:30am.'

For more info visit www.organiclandcareinc.org.

SAE Creative Media Institute now a University College

Creative media educator, SAE, says it has been reclassified from institute to a University College.

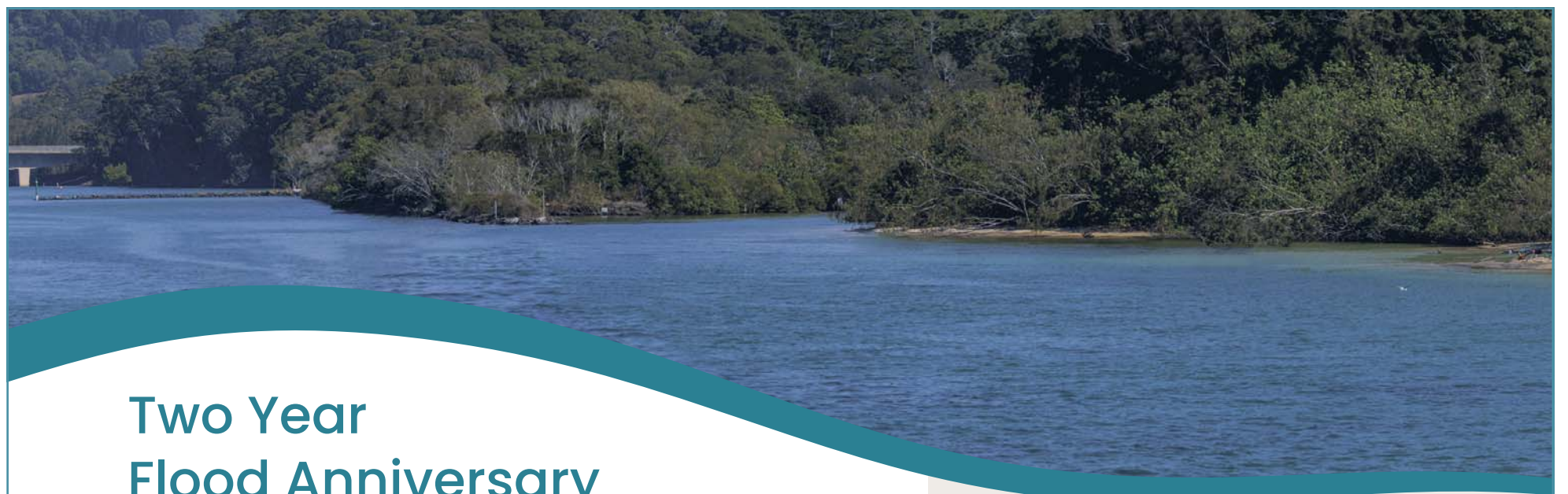
According to SAE CEO, Joseph Anthonysz, 'the University College category was introduced by the Australian government in 2021 to recognise superior self-accrediting higher education providers. SAE recently joined an elite group of just six other University Colleges across the country - and is the only one delivering creative media nationally.'

'Since it was founded in 1976, SAE has had an unblemished regulatory history, including 20 years as

an Australian Higher Education Provider,' he said. 'It has grown to be one of Australia's largest independent providers, and, as a University College, is now recognised as one of the best.'

'As recognised leaders in creative media education, SAE looks forward to building on these foundations and sharing our teaching and learning practices to help shape the future of the higher education sector and industry at large.'

SAE has six campuses across five Australian states, including Byron Bay, and one transnational campus in Dubai in the UAE.



Two Year Flood Anniversary

Wednesday 28 February, 3pm to 6pm
Brunswick Heads Sound Shell,
Brunswick Terrace, Brunswick Heads

It has been two years since our community was impacted by the 2022 floods, join us to reflect, share and connect.

- Create a symbolic art piece from natural materials.
- Hear from inspiring guest speakers.
- Enjoy some live music and light refreshments.

Support services available on the day.

This event is sponsored by New South Wales and Australian Governments.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.byron.nsw.gov.au/flood-anniversary-events>



BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

Mullum2Bruns Paddle returns May 26

Exciting news for the 1,000 or so enthusiastic paddlers who come for competition, the dress-up fun, a family outing or showcasing their individual craft – the Mullum2Bruns Paddle returns on May 26!

The annual 10km event is held on the Brunswick River, starting at Heritage Park in Mullumbimby and ending at Banner Park in Brunswick Heads.

Sponsors are currently being sought, so if you wish to support the event, contact Cherie Heale at events@brunswickheads.org.au.

Cherie says, 'All monies raised by the Paddle go to Marine Rescue, Surf Life Saving Club and the Brunswick Heads Visitor Centre'.

'They are all great volunteer organisations working



Penguins on parade, from a past paddle. Photo supplied

to help make Bruns a better and safer place.

'You can register through the website www.mullum2brunspaddle.com.au. You can also donate to these worthy causes and purchase merchandise.

'Take advantage of our

early bird specials and register from February 21 until close on April 15.

'Join as on the day for fun on the water, music and entertainment, kids' activities, SUP lessons and delicious food from our three food outlets in Banner Park'.

Coastal hazard assessment study released

The way in which coastlines are managed is moving forward, with a consultant report – *Byron Shire Coastal Hazard Assessment (CHA)* – being released by Council.

It is part of stage two of Council's Coastal Management Programs (CMPs), which according to www.environment.nsw.gov.au, 'sets the long-term strategy for the coordinated management of the coast, with a focus on achieving the objects and objectives of the *Coastal Management Act 2016*.'

Council has, for decades,

struggled to finalise a CMP with the state government.

The latest study by Blue-coast Consulting Engineers is 439 pages and contains technical information on existing protection works in Byron and Bruns, as well as data analysis for beaches as far north as South Golden, and as south as Seven Mile Beach near Broken Head.

Tidal inundation studies also project future levels over a 2040, 2070 and 2120 time frame. These levels indicate increased tidal areas near creeks and estuaries.

Staff say in their report in the upcoming February 22 agenda, 'A significant part of Stage 2 CMP preparation is a detailed technical assessment of coastal hazards for the entire Byron Shire coastline'.

While Council staff recommend adoption of the study at the February 22 meeting, they say that 'Stage 2 of the CMP process is not a decision-making stage, and management actions will be considered at the next stage (Stage 3) of CMP development'.



Cape Byron Rudolf Steiner School

K6 LEARNING SUPPORT COORDINATOR

Permanent Part/ Time FTE 0.90

(Monday to Thursday and ½ day Friday) - Commencing April 2024

Cape Byron Steiner School is a vibrant and progressive K-12 school dedicated to the educational principles inspired by Rudolf Steiner.

The K6 Learning Support Coordinator has responsibility, in collaboration with the Head of School, for the development and continuous improvement of learning support in K6 collaborating with Class Teachers and the Director of Primary to monitor and assess the progress of students requiring learning and wellbeing support. Previous experience in Steiner Education would be desirable as are Learning Support qualifications.

Applicants will be registered or eligible to register with the NSW Institute of Teachers and hold a current NSW Working with Children Check.

Applications close COB Monday 11th March. Position Description and application process available www.capebyronsteiner.nsw.edu.au

Housing density study to be undertaken

Hans Lovejoy

Byron Shire Council have been allocated \$239,239 by the NSW Labor government to undertake an 'urban design-based housing density study, that will examine the residential areas surrounding the Byron Bay town centre and support the delivery of 700 new homes'.

In a press release last week by Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, Paul Scully, he said the funds, which have also been allocated to other councils, will help 'speed up housing delivery'.

Accelerate housing

'Councils will use the funds to accelerate new housing strategies, prepare infrastructure and servicing plans, and amend local environmental plans to bring forward delivery of more diverse and affordable housing supply', he said.

Clarence Valley Council will also receive \$147,000 to update its Clarence Structure Plan and Development Control Plan to support the 'delivery of up to 1,400 new homes'.

Scully says the studies will 'identify potential changes to current land use planning to optimise delivery of diverse and affordable housing and provide a framework to inform the preparation of future planning proposals to facilitate development'.

The *Echo* asked Council's media spokesperson whether they were aware of the announcement, and they replied they were not.

Unanswered questions

Echo questions put to the minister's office were acknowledged, yet no reply was provided by deadline.

They were: 'Was this a

request of Council, or is this directive being pushed upon residents from the state government?; can Minister Scully please affirm the government's pre-election promise that developments will not be approved on known floodplains?; recent amendments to the housing SEPP (affordable housing) were roundly criticised by the peak body representing councils, Local Government NSW (LGNSW). Does the minister support a parliamentary inquiry into the housing SEPP to establish how affordable housing outcomes can be measured and improved?; the media release talks of "diverse and affordable housing". Will this "diverse" housing include social and public housing?; and lastly – is the NSW government planning to expand public housing, which has seen significant declines over decades?'

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News from across the North Coast online
www.echo.net.au

Ballina boaters lucky to be alive

Two boaters are lucky to be alive after their vessel capsized in challenging conditions off the Ballina coast early on Sunday morning, 11 February.

Conciliation fails over 742-lot DA on North Lismore Plateau

Tuesday's Land and Environment Court (L&EC) conciliation meeting on the 742-residential-lot subdivision on Sleeping Lizard - Banyam Biagham (the North Lismore Plateau) 'was terminated' according to Marlie Caban, Director of Local Government & Planning.

Man assaulted on M1

Witnesses of an assault on the Pacific Highway over the weekend are being asked to contact police as they investigate the alleged crime near the Kennedy Drive on-ramp in the Tweed Shire shortly before 4pm Sunday.

Man charged after dramatic hinterland police chase

A dramatic police chase from highway to hinterland bush in the early hours of 19 February led to the expected court appearance of a 26-year-old man.

Appointments for free BreastScreen van in Mur'bah next month

Around 90 per cent of women diagnosed with breast cancer have no family history of the disease. Free breast screening is to be available in the BreastScreen van.

New Wollongbar preschool

Tamara Smith MP, Member for Ballina and NSW Greens Early Learning Spokesperson, has welcomed an announcement from the NSW government to build a new public preschool adjacent to Wollongbar public school.

www.echo.net.au

Northern Rivers disaster survivor groups form alliance

Mia Armitage

Sixty people came to a community-led disaster recovery forum and workshop in Ballina last week, organisers said, nearly two years on from the floods and landslides of 2022.

The event was co-hosted by two community groups from the Northern Rivers, Reclaim Our Recovery in Lismore and the Byron Flood Emergency Action Group (BFEAG).

The partnership is an example of a regional trend of smaller groups joining forces to share resources and advocate since the disasters.

Many of the groups have, as BFEAG says of itself, 'evolved from a support network for flood-affected residents'.

Organisers said numerous community groups, political representatives, and flood recovery bureaucrats gathered at the Ballina RSL for the forum.

The event generated 'a resolute demand for a fully-funded flood recovery in the Northern Rivers region, specifically addressing the critical \$700 million shortfall in the Resilient Homes Program,' organisers said, referring to the first promises made by the NSW government in the aftermath of the floods.

Funding so far appears to have prioritised people in the Lismore floodplain, something Greens Member for Ballina Tamara Smith has said made sense, while calling for more transparency around criteria applied.

Organisers of Monday's forum said only eight per cent of flood-affected



Many of those impacted by the 2022 floods, who are still waiting for the promised government assistance, attended the event. Photo Eve Jeffery

homes in the Byron Shire had been deemed eligible for a buyback, retrofit or raise.

The figure was in reference to the response Ms Smith received in budget estimates last year as to how only four homes out of 977 applications in the shire were approved as of 29 September.

Applications were 'prioritised based on the greatest risk to life in most future floods,' according to the official response.

'The majority of the Byron Shire is outside the highest risk area,' department officials said.

Organisers of Monday's forum quoted from a Mullumbimby-based participant who said the floods were 'deeply traumatic' yet she was 'coming up on two years of being kept in limbo'.

'My house was flooded so badly that I have not been able to return, but I've been told multiple times that I'm

not eligible for house raising,' Noelle Maxwell said.

'So even if I did fix my house it would be devastated in the next inevitable flood,' she said.

Parliament convoy

Six key projects/focuses for the alliance, which organisers said was being 'loosely' termed the 'Northern Rivers Flood Advocacy Network' have been announced as arising from discussions in the popular assembly. They include a convoy to Sydney to get flood-impacted people in front of politicians and make noise 'otherwise they ignore us,' the statement from participants read.

To find out more email: reclaimourrecovery@protonmail.com for meeting links.

■ Read full story in *The Echo* online at: www.echo.net.au.

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Bangalow rezoning proposal includes first affordable housing lot for Council

Paul Bibby

A scheme created by Byron Council in a bid to generate more affordable housing in the shire looks set to get its first workout when a housing project comes before this week's Council meeting.

Coming into force as of last January, Affordable Housing Contribution Scheme (AHCS) requires developers who want their land rezoned to facilitate housing, to contribute land, money or dwellings to Council which would then use it to create affordable housing.

It only applies in Mullumbimby, Bangalow and Byron Bay.

This week, councillors will consider the first rezoning proposal – also known as

a planning proposal – that requires such a contribution.

Landowner, Maxwell Campbell, via his company Instant Steel Pty Ltd, is seeking to rezone the lion's share of a four-hectare site at 68 Rankin Drive, Bangalow.

Located on the northern edge of the Bangalow residential area, the developer is applying to rezone the existing RU2 Rural Landscape and the RU1 Primary Production zones, to a mix of R2 Low Density Residential and R3 Medium Density Residential.

According to planning documents coming before this week's Council meeting, the rezoning would facilitate the construction of more than 40 new residential dwellings.

In their report, staff say the land is 'largely cleared

and does not contain environmentally sensitive areas'.

One lot 'affordable'

The developer's contribution under the affordable housing contribution scheme would be one medium-density lot.

This would be dedicated to Council as part of any future subdivision approval of the land.

Council staff have recommended that councillors vote to give the proposal a preliminary green light, paving the way for it to proceed to the state government for Gateway determination, a process that applies to all rezoning proposals.

If determination is granted, the whole project will then go on public exhibition.

Seniors Festival returns March 11

The Byron Seniors Festival is back, and will be held from March 11 to 15 at the Byron Community Centre.

The theme is 'Reach Beyond', and organisers promise 'enriching activities, captivating performances and interactive workshops'.

Festival coordinator, Izzy Durbin, said, 'I'm thrilled to be organising the Byron Seniors Festival, driven by the belief that our older generation is an essential part of the Byron Bay community. In a world that's constantly evolving, championing the support and nurturing of seniors has never been more crucial'.

'Seniors will be treated to diverse experiences

designed to inspire, connect and entertain. Whether it's art, drumming, Afro dance, drama or computer club, there's something for everyone at this vibrant festival. An inspiring art exhibition will be on display throughout the week in the foyers of the community centre.

'On March 13, the Byron Seniors Festival Luncheon with Carers NSW will offer delicious cuisine and a chance to connect, followed by a film screening of *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel* at Byron Theatre. A special seniors showcase on March 14 will feature a variety performance by our talented seniors.

'This festival is about creating moments of connection, new experiences and, most importantly, having fun together,' adds Izzy.

'All of the festival workshops and events will be held at the Byron Community Centre and Theatre, at 69 Jonson Street in Byron Bay.

'The Byron Seniors Festival is a celebration of life, creativity and community, inviting seniors to embrace new experiences and foster connections. Don't miss out on this extraordinary opportunity to Reach Beyond and make cherished memories'.

For more information and to register, visit www.byronseniorsfestival.com.

Byron adds to 1 billion voices



Over 200 women gathered at Main Beach in Byron Bay on Wednesday, February 14 to greet the dawn, to greet each other, and to add their numbers to 1,000,000,000 women rising for the annual V-Day celebrations. The event aims to highlight and end violence against women and children – so far this year, eight women have died at the hands of an intimate partner in Australia. Photo Eve Jeffery

NSW govt tightens rules on fire ants

As the spread of fire ants into the north of the state becomes more apparent, the NSW government has made amendments to the *Biosecurity (Fire Ants) Emergency Order* in an attempt to stem fire ant migration.

These amendments will strengthen the requirements

for Queensland turf suppliers and installers, as part of its 'hard line' approach to stop fire ants from entering the state. Turf from southeast Qld remains a high-risk carrier material of fire ants and has been linked to the fire ant nest found in Murwillumbah in late November 2023.

According to the online map of fire ant infested areas, they have nearly reached Caboolture, and are as far west as Gatton and as far south as Murwillumbah and Wardell.

For more information visit www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/dpi/bfs/insect-pests/rifa.

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The Byron Shire Echo
Volume 38 #37 • February 21, 2024

Prosecuting publishers

WikiLeaks founder and Australian citizen, Julian Assange, will soon face possibly his final court hearing in the UK High Court of Justice over whether he should be extradited to the US to face spying charges.

For those new to the world of whistleblowing, it's proven to instigate positive change.

It's protection from tyranny. Assange published US military secrets in 2010, provided by US army whistleblower, Chelsea Manning. The leaks revealed war crimes, torture, assassinations, and the list of prisoners at Guantanamo Bay.

There is no evidence that this published information led to any deaths or compromised the US.

It was just embarrassing for the US government and horrifying for everyone else.

As the most powerful war/death machine on the planet – by far – US govcorp are not used to being exposed, or their hypocrisy pointed out. For his sins, Assange spent seven years in self-exile inside Ecuador's UK embassy, and now it's coming up to five years in Belmarsh maximum security prison, all without charge.

So far, the federal Labor government have shown a lack of negotiation skills to free this poor tortured soul. Perhaps they are just too scared of the US? There have been plenty of bargaining chips of late, like the dreadful AUKUS deal.

The NSW Council for Civil Liberties (CCL) say, 'If extradited to the US, Assange faces a staggering possible prison sentence of 175 years. This is the first time in US history that a publisher has been prosecuted for obtaining or publishing (as opposed to leaking) US state secrets.'

CCL president Lydia Shelly said, 'Chelsea Manning was pardoned by Obama and released after seven years in prison.'

'The Obama administration decided not to proceed with charges against Assange, but they were revived under President Trump.'

The CCL adds, 'Assange would go on trial in the Eastern District of Virginia court where the jury pool relies heavily on employees or family members of employees of the CIA, the NSA, the Pentagon and other national security institutions.'

And this legal case is of enormous significance for free speech and journalism across the globe.

CCL say: 'The US government is attempting to use its 1917 Espionage Act against a journalist and publisher for the very first time. Assange is not a US citizen, and his publications occurred in the UK.'

Extending judicial reach

'If the US is successful, it will have redefined investigative journalism as "espionage". It will have extended its judicial reach internationally, and applied it to a non-US citizen without a corresponding extension of First Amendment rights, which prosecutors maintain does not apply to Mr Assange as a non-US citizen publishing from the UK.'

'This will pose an existential threat to the free press as other countries will be able to argue that they too should be allowed to extradite journalists and publishers from the UK for breaking their censorship or secrecy laws.'

Unfortunately in an increasingly globalised world, persecuting whistleblowers, by those committing the crimes, is being normalised. Russia and China regularly kill their dissidents and opposition leaders.

It was always assumed western countries treated their critics better and valued free speech. Do they?

Hans Lovejoy, editor

Breaking bad promises

Softly, softly, catchee monkey', as the saying goes.

It's so hard to introduce urgently-needed reforms in today's fevered media climate that governments tiptoe around problems and hardly dare to act.

Inequality is at an all-time high, and people are desperately struggling to pay rent and buy food. Very many are also homeless. So much needs to be done.

When a government does try to introduce changes, they are shouted down by the opposition trying to score political points with full support from the conservative media and their commentators.

No wonder Anthony Albanese soft-pedalled during his first 20 months in government.

Finally, at the beginning of the year, he decided he had to act.

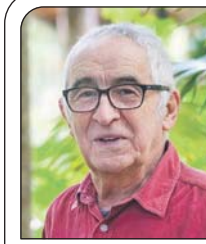
He recalled his colleagues early to propose the unthinkable – to break his oft-repeated promise to leave the stage three tax cuts alone.

Naturally, the opposition criticised him for wasting taxpayers' money on MPs' air fares but, when Albo and his colleagues announced they were rejigging the tax cuts, Dutton bellowed they needed to take them to an election, and Sussan Ley announced they would reverse them if reelected. Murdoch media as usual had a field day.

Albo pointed out helpfully that it wouldn't be possible to have a joint half-Senate and lower house election until the latter half of the year, unless a double dissolution trigger were available, which it wasn't.

Then something strange happened. Shadow Treasurer, Angus Taylor, dusted off his abacus and discovered to his horror that the majority of LNP voters would be better off. The Dutton team was in a real quandary. If they voted against the revisions they would disadvantage their own supporters. If they voted for them, they would seem like hypocrites supporting the 'broken promise'. It was a classic wedge. They caved in and diffused the issue at the same time.

It's possible the Albanese government had its eye on the Dunkley



'A three per cent wealth tax on the richest 250 Australians would generate \$15 billion a year.'

– Richard Jones

by-election being held on March 2. Governments often lose mid-term by-elections.

If so, will it work?

An Australia Institute poll held two weeks ago shows Labor leading the Liberal Party 52 per cent to 48 per cent in Dunkley, after preferences are notionally distributed. Two-thirds of voters support the changes. More than a quarter of Liberal voters also support them.

Broken promises

Most governments are obliged to break promises and suffer the opprobrium for doing so.

Look how John Howard broke his promise to not introduce a Goods and Services Tax (GST) in 2000. It replaced the cumbersome wholesale sales tax and various state and territory government taxes. He got away with that, and stayed on until December 2007.

On the eve of the 2013 election, Tony Abbott promised: 'no cuts to education, no cuts to health, no change to pensions, no change to the GST and no cuts to the ABC or SBS.' He massively broke those promises in the 2014 budget. He paid a personal price, but the LNP stayed in power for another eight years.

Will Albo and Treasurer Jim Chalmers now have the courage to introduce more urgent reforms to pay for health, education, housing and climate action?

Changes to negative gearing may be a bridge too far, but surely reforming capital gains tax is possible? John Howard gutted capital gains tax, and that has led to much greater inequality in this country.

How about a wealth tax, as requested by millionaires attending the World Economic Forum in Davos? A three per cent wealth

tax on the richest 250 Australians would generate \$15 billion a year. Think how many homeless could be accommodated with that.

It's only a question of the Albanese government having the courage to do it. The 'softly, softly' approach simply wasn't working. They were obliged to make a difficult choice and did so successfully.

We expect our elected representatives at every level of government to represent the interests of the people who put them there, and have the courage to make difficult decisions. If they don't listen and act, they will pay the price at the ballot box.

Here in Byron Shire, we have a classic case of local government believing they had to allow a controversial development.

Wallum in Brunswick Heads is a 30-hectare area sacred to local people and home to koalas, black cockatoos, gliders and the vulnerable wallum froglet. There's no way this area should be cleared for housing when there are many other cleared acreages in the Shire that could be used instead.

Houses built there will not be for the homeless, they are strictly for millionaires. It's very likely there will be significant protests at Wallum and people may well get arrested.

People are getting desperate at inaction of governments on important issues, and laws against protesting have been tightened. Governments under pressure from the people do act, as the Albanese government did on the tax reforms. We all need to come together as a community to ramp up pressure at every level of government.

People lead, governments follow.

■ Richard Jones is a former NSW MLC and is now a ceramicist.



The Byron Shire Echo
Volume 38 #37 February 21, 2024
Established 1986 • 24,500 copies every week

www.echo.net.au

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Nicholas Shand
1948–1996
Founding Editor

The Echo acknowledges the people of the Bundjalung nation as the traditional custodians of this land and extends respect to elders past, present and future.

Disclaimer: The Echo is committed to providing a voice for our whole community. The views of advertisers, letter writers, and opinion writers are not necessarily those of the owners or staff of this publication.

'The job of a newspaper is to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable.'

– Finley Peter Dunne 1867–1936

byron healing

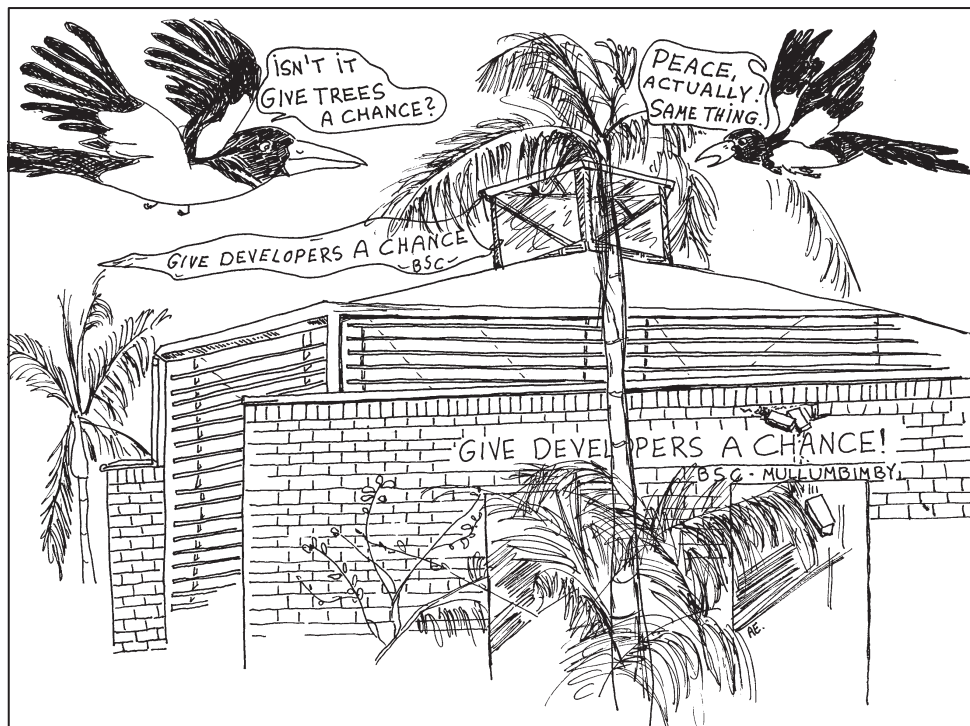
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Cartoon by Antoinette Ensbey

Byron: flats and highrises?

Where are the residents of Byron Bay who are concerned about where we live and the changes afoot? At the Council information sessions for the Housing Options Paper (HOP), only eight residents turned up in Byron Bay.

I spotted a differently shaded area of Byron Bay in the map displayed and attached to the HOP. It encompasses a huge swathe of residential area stretching south from the CBD to St Finbarr's School, east to the boundary of Arakwal NP and west to the railway line.

According to Council staff this 'Area for Review of Development Standards' has been targeted for rezoning from R2 Low Density to R3 Medium Density Residential. Yes, there's going to be a shire-wide reduction in lot sizes to 600m², but only for this section of the shire will there be rezoning to allow increased height limits and increased floor/space ratios for residential buildings.

The impacts on the national park from a much higher density of dwellings adjacent to it will be massive. However, if you already live here and bought on the basis that it was low-density living, think about your neighbour's block being sold, if the single or dual dwelling is demolished and eight units are being squeezed onto it, or maybe a boarding house? There goes your sunlight, privacy and peace. Cars will mushroom all over the streets. The currently dangerous right turn into

Bangalow Road will become a nightmare.

The majority of Councillors voted last December for the HOP to go ahead with all mapped lands and dwelling yields as recommended by staff. It informs the final 2024 Residential Strategy, that will be approved by Council mid-March, then this goes to the state government to endorse. Next a Council study will be done on rezoning the 'Review Area' in Byron Bay, dependant on grant funding from the state – almost assured, considering their demand for higher housing.

At this point community consultation will take place, a tick-the-box exercise? It may well be too late to do anything once the study is underway. If you want to preserve what we have now, get in fast and lobby councillors against including this area for rezoning in the updated Residential Strategy, before the March meeting.

Kathryn McConnochie
Byron Bay

Green Convoy

Michael Trevaskis (Letters, 8 February) might have enjoyed the extra three years of the miserable and mean Morrison government that his hallowed Brown-led 'Green Convoy' to central Queensland helped deliver. A lot of us didn't and are still in recovery mode.

So the next time the convoy heads north, why don't they turn right at Rockhampton and just keep driving... they could build their own bloody reef.

Paul Taylor
Murwillumbah

4,000 failed

I attended the flood forum held at the Ballina RSL last Monday and was aghast to hear some of the facts presented. 4,000 people have still not received funding that was promised to them and that is one of the reasons why this forum was called.

Another mind-blowing fact is that the 400 new homes to be built in Mullumbimby are to be built on flood-prone land! Could Byron Councillors please consult and listen to Councillor Duncan Dey, a civil engineer who has specialised in hydrology, and find more suitable land for these new houses.

Ruth Winton Brown
Possum Creek

Housing parasites

Trying to fix the housing crisis in the Byron Shire by building more houses is like trying to put out a fire with kerosene. More houses does not mean more affordability. However, it will help ruin the beauty of the landscape and the natural habitats that need more nature and less buildings.

More houses means the rich will simply buy them up, as they currently do. Realtors get daily phone calls asking: 'I've got six mill, what can I get for that?'

If we overdevelop the area, as seems to be on the government agenda, we are just creating more fodder for rich parasites to gobble up. Some will rent these homes back to us for over \$1,000 a week (which no mere local can afford), and some will find a way to continue to holiday let them because that's what rich people do

– they find loopholes to get richer. Some will have them empty and be benefiting from negative gearing.

The only way to genuinely relax this critical housing situation is to set some boundaries around home ownership. There should be limits as to how many homes one person can own. There should be no benefits such as negative gearing, because this only serves the investor.

You have people buying up homes and businesses in small coastal towns, which then sit empty so as to provide their owners with financial benefits. This ruins towns, and adds huge pressure to the housing crisis. It also makes it terrible for a holiday as there are no local workers to serve the area.

Shelter is a basic human need. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs places shelter in the basic and most important level of needs for survival, along with food, water, breathing and sleep.

Somehow our government has decided that building more homes in this popular rural area is going to help people find more accessible shelter.

However, we have seen even the dodgiest of dwellings here are quite unaffordable for a person on a basic worker's income. Already there are not enough locals to work in the jobs required to service the area. Been to Woolies or a cafe lately? Always understaffed, or closed.

Radical changes need to happen in governments, and we the people need to push back on the pointless and damaging agenda that wants to overdevelop this area.

It is not going to serve the local community. Come on

▶ Continued on page 11

Letters to the Editor and cartoons

Send to Letters Editor Aslan Shand, fax: 6684 1719 email: editor@echo.net.au Deadline: Noon, Friday. **Letters longer than 200 words may be cut.** Letters already published in other papers will not be considered. Please include your full name, address and phone number for verification purposes.

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Wallum: councillors failed to listen to the community

Michele Grant

Thank you, Councillors Lyon, Pugh and Coorey for explaining what went wrong with the Wallum development application (DA) process on Facebook. The community f*cked up because they failed to object to Clarence's revised DA when it was advertised in *The Echo* in June 2021 during Covid isolation. It's the community's job to remain ever vigilant.

According to Mayor Lyon: 'We never had a reason as councillors to be proactive regarding the site as we were not the consent authority, nor was there any serious effort or campaign to stop the development at the time there needed to be, despite it being very much on the public record'. The Bayside development was a very live issue as Codlea's subdivision (DA 10:2020.24.1) was on exhibition just after the bushfires

in February 2020, the month before Covid kicked in.

You didn't listen

The Foreshore Protection Group sent a ten-page submission to Byron Councillors as did the Brunswick Heads Progress Association (BHPA) covering bulk earthworks (up to 2m of fill required), drainage (running into Simpsons Creek and efficacy of bioretention ponds especially during flooding), road works (only one access road), fire protection (50m buffer zones were recommended by RFA), and the Vegetation Management Plan (we supported the extensive submissions supplied by environmental experts).

We concluded by recommending: 'Council refuse the DA and request the site and land to the south be acquired as state compensatory wildlife habitat and added to the adjoining Tyagarah Nature Reserve'.

In November 2020 the Foreshore Protection Group put out a community alert about three new DAs on exhibition in Brunswick Heads including the 39-room boarding house in Torakina Road, Bayside adjacent to Codlea's site, which the community also loudly and vehemently opposed to no avail. Council endorsed the projects in 2020/21.

Mayor Lyon now claims: 'if councillors had been lobbied, and had the values of the site been brought to our attention at this time, we could have addressed the planning panel, helped others to do so and attempted to prevent the development in line with community expectations'.

Byron Shire Council (BSC) didn't reject Codlea's project in 2020, just sought conditions to protect the frogs and improve the drainage. Rehabilitating the site was never recommended in staff reports. It remains uncertain whether Council made any submissions to Northern Regional Planning Panel (NRPP) or was aware of Clarence's revised DA prior to consent.

Council dedicated parts of the Wallum site for conservation and public reserves in February 2023 and the mayor quotes Cr Dey who supported the staff recommendation saying, 'it's mostly cleared land... and the bushland surrounding the site... will add to the joy of living there'.



Top: Activists were quick to take action when a tractor was spotted slashing at the Wallum Estate. They asked the developers to wait until the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* (EPBC) determination has been completed before commencing work. Photo Aslan Shand. Left: A resident glossy black cockatoo at Wallum. Photo supplied Right: Flowers on the Wallum heathland. Photo Nola Mancy

The NRPP approved Clarence's new plan in May 2023 so it's a done deal. Council's only official role is to ensure the developers comply with the consent conditions which they signed off on, after four hours of debate at the last Council meeting.

Simon Richardson out to lunch?

Ex-mayor, Simon Richardson is a member of NRPP and is well aware of the community's passion and energy and determined efforts to save and protect this high value, irreplaceable ecosystem. He didn't notice the lack of response to the Bayside proposal? He didn't give the community, the old comrades, the heads up?

Councillor Pugh claims Council has no power to change, improve or reject the consent conditions but had deferred the decision in December to give objectors time to lodge an expensive appeal in the Land and Environment Court which they failed to do. Mayor Lyon agrees the 'real reason (for the deferral) was to give objectors time to lodge an appeal'.

Cr Balson sat on the fence, declaring she had a conflict of interest because she was friends with the objectors! Cr Sarah Ndiaye

was commended for her strong defence of Wallum. Any 'ad hominen attack on Mayor Lyon was unreasonable', claims Cr Coorey, though the mayor broke the four-all deadlock with his casting vote.

Councillors failed in their role

At every level the system, the process, has failed the community. Consultation and transparency fell off BSC's agenda over the last decade and we're left in the dark. Councillors don't respond to letters or submissions and don't appear to read them. Documents provided in 2020 are not recalled in 2021. A major development can slip through and be approved before anyone notices – and Council meekly whines that they can't do anything, saying it's your fault for not telling us!

The backlash has been impressive with a factual, convincing ongoing campaign by the Save Wallum crew. Appeals to state and federal environment and planning ministers or the court are the last recourse. Cr Pugh's motion for Council (and ministers) to negotiate a better outcome from the developer to save the ecosystem is the preferred

and most likely outcome. A rich benefactor could buy up the site.

We can look forward to more tears and mayhem with the bulldozers at the gates. Maybe we need to tie those yellow ribbons around the squiggly gums, the koala and black cockatoo food trees, and all those precious plants we want to save.

I ended my alert in 2020 with: 'Council's decision to not advertise DAs in *The Echo* is a travesty. No longer are we informed about what's happening in the neighbourhood, we have to find out for ourselves'. The BSC DA-tracker is a poor substitute. Only a DA number is provided, without the address or a basic description, it is incredibly difficult and time-consuming to find or view plans when you have to open each document individually. DAs need to be accessible and properly advertised in our local paper and available at Council's office so the plans get the required scrutiny.

Community consultation has been reduced to a box-ticking exercise and back-room deals remain dodgy. It's not cutting red tape, it's destroying our environment.

■ Michele Grant is a member of the Foreshore Protection Group.



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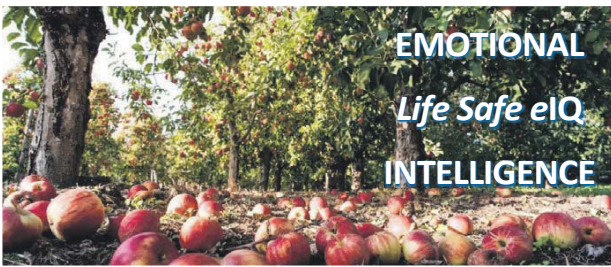
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I heard this *adage* from a younger fella, 1 of my regular contacts in the Agri sector, while chatting about Farm children who so often grow up 2B Farmers themselves. A forward thinking, passionate operator; his quietly spoken words betray a very high Agri-IQ, but can camouflage his wonderful, natural and outstanding Male-eIQ!

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Here's another eIQ GEM from genius of *Tim *Winton who "Encourages Australia 2 re-define what it means to be a Good Bloke!" Scan QR 4 BBC HARDtalk with Steven Sacker, 2018.
Men are beneficiaries of Patriarchy. No Question. But even though they profit from it, their lives ultimately are poorer.
*Women have made enormous strides in my lifetime. And that's something to celebrate. They're reaching for what's their due. Demanding justice, changes of behaviour, changes of legislation and changes of outlook. And that's a terrific thing.
But men haven't made equivalent strides to change themselves.*
Share the Dream
WemayB26Million, but we R
☺ *ONE! ☺
*Emergency 000, *Any Doctor, *Lifeline 13 11 14
Written by sheep farmer Tim Barritt. Barossa Valley, S.A.

► Continued from page 9 Council! Push back at the government and tell them that the people will not tolerate it any longer. Don't just save Wallum, save all of Mullum and surrounds.

Sheri Buob
Pottsville

Lighthouse Road

The section from the bus stop on Lighthouse Road to the divide of the road to Byron Bay, is totally unacceptable. It's putrid for prams, for walkers, for tourists, for runners, for everyone.

I don't need a perfect footpath or lights or anything fancy. I just need 200 metres of bitumen laid for walkers on what is one of Byron's biggest attractions. How can it be so bad for so long?

My family have resided in the Northern Rivers region for over 40 years and I know I am a no-one in this world but I witnessed a lady pushing a pram trip over on the rocks then almost get collected by a car today. It would have caused a certain fatality if contact was made.

That 200m strip is in an unacceptable state and needs some bitumen laid.

Walk it yourself and tell me I'm wrong.

Andrew Lee
Byron Bay

Punishment

There is a justice problem in criminal assault cases if a person who claims to have been assaulted makes a formal complaint, such that criminal charges are laid, and then the evidence is found, by a jury, to not support a guilty verdict.

I refer to the accusations recently aired in the Kurtley Beale case.

The name of the accuser is protected from publication but the details of the case, and the identity of the accused, appearing in open court, can give rise to a news media frenzy. It seems that the more well-known the accused person, the more constant, detailed, and salacious the reporting. Meanwhile the accused, Mr Beale, and his immediate family and friends, suffer the indignities of the daily disclosures.

There are good grounds for the ban on publication of names of victims of alleged sexual assaults. But what of the person accused of the assaults? They have an unforgiving spotlight on them on a daily basis. What if the accused is found 'not guilty' on any of the charges laid, as in the Beale case?

Does taking action in defamation provide a means

to alleviate the accused's pain? As we have recently seen, these cases can be very drawn out and may not succeed. Indeed, the main deterrent against such actions is that the whole daily drama in full media glare is re-lived. To what end? A payout, vindication, restored reputation. Is it worth the pain?

Frank Lynch
Mullumbimby

Pain

I am about to undergo knee replacement surgery and have been advised by Tweed Hospital that as this is a very painful procedure I should call early for pain relief.

This made me think of Gaza where pain relief is not available for everyone. Children and pregnant women needing C-sections often have to endure extreme pain without anaesthesia. Save the Children claim that each day ten children have lost one or both legs and, according to UNICEF, more than 1,000 children in Gaza have had one or both legs amputated since October 7, 2023. Read the story of Ghazal who had a leg amputated without painkillers [https://www.unicef.org/sop/stories/facing-life-gaza-strip-new-disability]. Israel's current conduct, which to me

is clearly barbarity, in killing and maiming thousands, 70 per cent of whom are women and children, and then blocking medical supplies, should have us all screaming from our rooftops to get Australia to urgently join South Africa and others in a petition to the ICJ to order Israel to stop its vivisection!

Gareth W R Smith
Byron Bay

Knock down Byron's forests

And another FU to the community, from the dominantly pro-development Council. Submissions due by 23 February on the proposed further housing development of the forest on the old Club Med/Becton site at Belongil.

'Changes to Development Controls for land at North Belongil Beach, The current DCP 2014 Chapter E5 does not contain requirements for residential development for this area. A new "Precinct 3" Environmental Living proposes new controls for future dwellings.'

Council is progressing consent for further development for housing, on this site that the staff report states is 'golf course', but in getting the maps, is actually dominantly over the site's forest

► Continued on page 12

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► **Continued from page 11** (that is part of the site's forest connected to the adjacent nature reserve). Council alleges the Becton consent was not commenced, but Becton completed the DA's roads, fencing, etc. and complied with the Becton DA consent condition to demolish the former Bayside building (Becton then sold the site to the present owner – DA consents and conditions stay with the land in transfer of ownership).

Court precedents identify that just removing weeds is a DA commencement. The Becton DA consent limited further site development to approximately 160 tourist units (there are more than 200 now), and required that 57 hectares of the site's forest be handed to 'an agency', as compensation for increased development – likely to be included in the adjacent nature reserve.

This same forest is now subject to this recent development proposal. I question whether Council has lawful powers to ignore the Becton consent, and I question whether this current development proposal, and Council's previous consent for dune-front housing, are invalid and are in excess of Council's powers.

Several councillors, on the staff motion to progress this development, stated they opposed this increasing development of this site. Support those councillors with a submission for all development of this site to be referred to the NSW Planning Minister, for clarification on whether the dune-front housing and this ongoing development is lawful, as it appears to ignore, and be in breach of, the state government's 'Planning Minister Becton Consent'.

Note the staff report states 'Strategic considerations – support the visions and aspirations of local communities through place-based planning and management'. Can someone remind the staff of the community's efforts to protect this site from over-development, with major opposition, including a court case, against the Club Med proposal, and again major community opposition and a Council rejection, to even the increased development in the Becton proposals?

John Lazarus
Byron Bay

Save Wallum

I listened to the Byron Shire Council (BSC) meeting to hear the fate of the Wallum site. Congrats to the Save



Kailani and Jala protesting against the Wallum Estate at Brunswick Heads outside Byron Shire Council.
Photo Tree Faerie

Wallum community and councillors Westheimer, Coorey, Ndaiye and Dey for their attempts to protect.

The scale of destruction and the so-called offsets are appalling, delivering only 148 seedlings to replace trees that may be hundreds of years old and provide food and habitat for endangered species.

The applicant's information was flawed and should've been deferred again due to mistakes, inconsistencies and failures to meet consent conditions. But the usual developer tactic applied, a court date had been set. Some councillors complained of the poor approval imposed on them by the state, seemingly

ignorant that BSC staff wrote the consent conditions.

In relation to the state secret process I previously wrote about, the GIPA application has revealed that the applicants lodged under legal privilege, which means we don't get to see the information they provided to the government. Also, a misunderstanding about how these old Part 3A zombie approvals are managed by consent authorities will be taken up by Greens state MPs, Tamara Smith and Sue Higginson.

Stay strong everyone, it's not over yet!

Jan Barham
Broken Head

MIA: Balson on Wallum

Dear Cr Balson,

I understand that you attended the Byron Council meeting last Thursday very briefly, but absented yourself from the discussion and vote on the future of Wallum due to the declaration of a 'significant non-pecuniary interest.'

Can you please explain to me, as well as others not abreast with meeting minutiae, how personal relationships and friendships with those opposed to the development, along with residential issues, impacted on your decision?

Did you seek advice from more experienced Byron councillors? If so, whom? How about legal advice, given that your interests were not financial? Did you realise the potential impact your absence might have had on the day's outcome? It has been extremely heavy.

Your vote could have swung the fate of Wallum by buying us more time to pursue other options with state and federal ministers before the developer commences the subdivision. On the other hand, my least concern frankly, it could have extricated the mayor from the complete contempt of the community by saving him from using his casting vote.

Other councillors have friendships with those opposed to the Wallum development proceeding, as they have on a myriad of other issues in this shire. That is inevitable in a community this size, with people crossing paths on many fronts. Personal relationships have not impacted on these councillors' abilities and responsibilities, in performing their duties, which are quite separate, particularly where fiscal interests are not at play.

I need hardly remind you that the decision on Wallum is one of the most significant issues this Council has faced, if not the most significant issue. Hundreds of letters were sent to each Byron councillor, possibly over 1,000, from all over the shire, and across the political spectrum. Some have never penned a letter to Council before, such was their anguish over the destruction of this land.

You were elected by constituents to represent our interests. Please explain.

Lynne Richardson
Suffolk Park

Wallum: lies built on foundation of truth

I am 51 and have been homeless for eight years. I live in a van in a paddock. In my younger years I never imagined I would find myself in this situation. Life is full of surprises.

There's always a complex web of circumstances preceding homelessness.

As the numbers grow exponentially, the stereotypical image of a homeless person (living on the street) is being challenged. With people from all demographics suddenly finding themselves unable to afford housing, the image of a homeless person is becoming more expansive.

I have been in the Northern Rivers region of NSW off and on for the past five years. Several years ago I discovered Wallum, a magnificently diverse and fragile coastal heathland teeming with life, just south of Brunswick Heads. It is a place where I walk and meditate, fill my lungs with fresh air and where my soul finds peace. Any day now this precious ecosystem could be bulldozed into oblivion all in the name of 'progress'. The idea of houses built on Wallum fills me with despair, not hope.

Nature is what helps me the most through difficult times; it's where I find solace. It's where I go when the weight of the world feels too

heavy to carry. Spending time in nature helps me to feel stronger, more connected, more at peace and more appreciative of the little things. Mother nature is a powerful healer. Only a fool refuses to protect and nurture her in return for all that she gives.

The housing crisis is 'diabolical', as Byron Shire Mayor Michael Lyon expressed in a recent ABC article by Stephanie Smail and Hannah Ross. I would be the first to agree. But it appears that this crisis is what both the mayor and the Clarence Property Group are using to propel this Wallum development application (DA) forward. It's the poignant truth upon which lies are being built.

The reality is that the people in the most urgent need of housing will not benefit from this estate. This estate will destroy 13 hectares of fragile and rare heathland, including 24 endangered species. Housing solutions for this crisis need to be sustainable and affordable. Wallum Estate is and cannot be either of these things. It will only help to further widen the divide between the rich and poor.

Save Wallum are a group of people passionately lobbying to protect this area and they have substantiating evidence affirming that a development would inflict irreparable ecological damage. If that wasn't enough weight for the government ministers to seriously investigate this DA then they may want to take a look at some considerations from a construction perspective.

Two important facts: Firstly Wallum is a wetland, and for those who may need a more detailed explanation of a wetland, it's land that can flood. Secondly, the soil is a highly acidic peat that is unstable and unsuitable for building foundations.

When all these factors are taken into consideration, one could be forgiven for thinking that this development is being driven purely by greed and self-interest. Housing in the region is unquestionably needed, but not on Wallum.

If this development goes ahead, aside from the destruction of a rare, fragile and pristine ecosystem, there's a very real possibility that after a few years the foundations of these houses will shift and crack due to rising water tables and unstable ground.

Maybe then it will become clear to everyone who was telling the lies.

Kate Eagle
No Fixed Address

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Club of Byron Bay



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Booking contact: <https://mailchi.mp/54a61ef09ca6/discoverexplore>

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Date: Fri 15-Sun 17 March (3-day course)
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Self Help For Anxiety

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Face Yoga

Date: Weds 28 Feb (4 sessions/weeks)
Time: 10am-12pm
Address: Byron College, Mullum Campus
Booking contact: byroncollege.org.au/course-category/health-and-wellbeing

Nada Yoga with Sanskrit Mantras

Date: Sat 2-Sun 3 March (weekend workshop)
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Hypnosis Training Certification Course

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Booking: academyofsoundhealing.com/events-sound-healing-byron-bay-australia

Qigong Health Retreat

Held by: Shirsha Marie
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Time: Daily Qigong Programme
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Good Taste

Eateries Guide

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Matcha muffin recipe

courtesy of Ayumu Kishimoto of Matcha Byron

- *Plain flour: 400g
- *Baking powder: 12g
- *Matcha powder: 20g
- Butter: 240g
- Brown sugar: 240g
- Eggs: 4
- Milk: 160g
- White chocolate: 150g
- Pecan nuts: 120g

Preparation: Sift together the ingredients marked with an asterisk (*). Bring butter to room temperature. Warm the milk.

Instructions: In a bowl, cream the butter until softened. Gradually add

sugar while mixing with a whisk until it becomes white and fluffy. Add beaten eggs gradually to the bowl with butter and sugar, mixing continuously. Gradually mix the bowl of dry ingredients (flour, baking powder, matcha powder) with the bowl containing butter, sugar, and eggs. Add milk slowly while stirring with a rubber spatula. Add the pre-crushed pecan nuts and white chocolate to the batter. Pour the batter into muffin cups and bake at 180 degrees Celsius for 25 minutes.
Enjoy your delicious matcha muffins!

The Good Life

Matcha Byron

Victoria Cosford

The cornerstone of traditional Japanese tea ceremonies for centuries, matcha is enjoying a burst of popularity for its health benefits. It's finely ground green tea – its vibrant colour is due to the leaves' high chlorophyll levels, and it's supercharged with antioxidants.

At the Mullumbimby farmers' markets you can now find Ayumu Kishimoto, smiling from behind his Matcha Byron stall. After some six years in the Byron region, Ayumu started his business in late 2022. 'I initially arrived in the Gold Coast,' he tells me, 'but couldn't forget this place after visiting once. So I came back.'

Ayumu sources his matcha from Uji, a region on the south-east border of Kyoto which is renowned for its tea and is the birthplace of the Japanese tea ceremony. Its matcha powder is considered the highest grade in Japan, prepared using the youngest leaves.

It's typically whisked into either water or milk and offered as a beverage, and at Ayumu's stall there's a variety of ways you can enjoy it: matcha latte (the most popular, according to Ayumu), roasted green tea, toasted green tea latte, iced latte and bubble (or boba) tea – with tapioca pearls. You can select what type of milk you prefer – cow, almond, oat or soy – the sweetness level, and the topping, be it whipped cream or boba. 'It's truly enchanting,' Ayumu tells me, 'to have the people in Byron Bay, whom I love, appreciate and enjoy the matcha from Kyoto that I also love.' He says that the response so far has been positive, with most people coming back each week, 'drawn by the rich aroma and deep flavour of matcha, appreciating



Ayumu Kishimoto of Matcha Byron sells the finest-grade matcha, a healthy, ground Japanese green tea, harvested from the youngest leaves in a premium region south-east of Kyoto.

Matcha muffins pictured right. For recipe, see facing page.



the unique balance of bitterness and sweetness.' In addition, he has customers who come 'specifically for the potential health benefits of matcha, and they report experiencing positive effects after consuming it.'

Ayumu's past experience as a chef in Japan means there'll also often be his beautiful green muffins on offer, examples being the bush matcha ones, studded with white chocolate and pecans, or the vegan ones with adzuki beans, gluten- and sugar-free. Once it cools down there'll

be soba noodle soup with matcha incorporated.

I have to ask Ayumu if he himself consumes matcha, in some form, regularly. His reply? 'To be honest, I've fallen in love with coffee ever since I came to Australia, and since I drink coffee every morning I only drink about one matcha latte a week. Haha!'

Matcha Byron is at Mullumbimby Farmers Market every Friday from 7 to 11am.

Non-alcohol options

Simon Haslam

Whether you're going alcohol-free for a period, or just managing your consumption, the better your non-alcoholic drink tastes, the more likely you are to stick to your strategy. While I'm not a big beer drinker, at my local pub I'll always grab a beer, and the other night I found the Hiatus Non-Alcoholic Pacific Ale, with its classic tropical aromas, but a little bitterness, perfect for the warm summer evening.



Brookie's Byron Bay distillery has also just released: a non-alcoholic G&T premix with Pink Grapefruit, inspired by their classic dry gin and tonic; and a non-alcoholic Blood Orange Spritz, which they say has a hint of bitterness like an Italian aperitivo, with low calories and of course no stevia. As someone whose favourite alcoholic drinks are the negroni and the G&T, I'm glad they started with these two options!

The name of this Brookie's range, 'Free Spirited', alludes to 'normalising mindful drinking, leading a balanced lifestyle, and elevating the non-alcoholic drinks category' without, as CEO Eddie Brook says, 'getting too Byron Bay yogi-centric on you' it's about 'keeping your vibes high and your sprit free'.

Another local mixer I've been enjoying, simply on ice or with tonic and lemon, for example, is the concentrated Etota Bittersweet Aperitivo, which is also distilled in Byron.

These are just a few of the welcome range of quality options becoming available locally – for those avoiding alcohol, the more the better!

Friday arvo beers

Stone & Wood's Byron HQ has a 31-tank brewery, so locals and visitors can have both their Stone & Wood favourites as well as exclusive pilot batches, and good food. Each Friday there are cold beers and live music in their leafy beer garden from 3:30pm to 6:30pm in the warmer months.

They also have a great menu of meals and snacks presented by Byron Bay food legends 100 Mile Table. It's a great chance to catch up with your friends and the local community – even the doggos are welcome!

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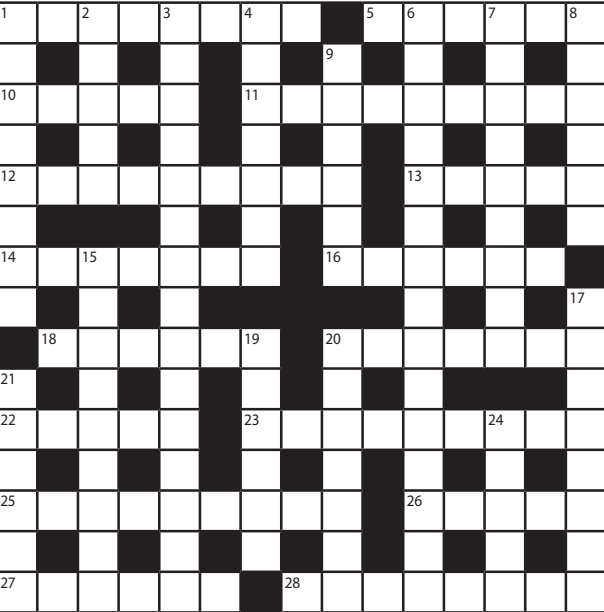
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MANDY NOLAN'S SOAPBOX

Growing Mould Together



Cryptic Clues

- ACROSS**
- Rush around to rebound – came back again and again! (8)
 - American container for waste material, like hydrogen, calcium and nitrogen (3,3)
 - Sawyer takes in territory with Eastern tribal badge (5)
 - A godson we adopted – replaced perfectly! (4,2,3)
 - Rent guide, suggested Spooner for one helping with hearing problems (3,6)
 - Drunkard to go under (5)
 - No restraint, Spooner ordered for chorus (7)
 - Andrews, you said, to live by the big river (6)
 - Marks produced by red gas (6)
 - Pay heed to strange spectre (7)
 - All together, pharaoh returns it (5)
 - About shonky grade – call around (9)
 - Ban sable table (9)
 - Gentle and Australian cuddly animal (5)
 - Fairy folk capture English cricket team (6)
 - Ranks sit examination for Eastern language (8)
- DOWN**
- Poisonous snakes found right among babies' toys (8)
 - English-Australian place over gorge (3,2)
 - Bad actor on remand, confused invalid line with English symbols of communism (6,3,6)
 - Urged, begged one to stick to the centre (5,2)
 - Little marauding rats and abusive priests, revered in the United States (5,3,7)
 - Policeman's trick, well balanced (9)
 - Gingrich working for Isaac (6)
 - Flew over the weapon, they say (6)
 - R, top class (5,4)
 - Gnats swarm over another insect – but no change (8)
 - Rupture right in the land of Castile (6)
 - Boat race becomes a target (7)
 - In 7, drop prisoner – shed! (6)
 - Tavern with queen – more confined? (5)

Quick Clues

- ACROSS**
- Reverberated (8)
 - Receptacle for hot embers (3,3)
 - Emblem; revered symbol (5)
 - Restored to original condition (4,2,3)
 - She understands by watching the speaker's mouth (3,6)
 - Beneath (5)
 - Hold back (7)
 - European river (6)
 - Assessments (6)
 - Admire (7)
 - Little Richard song ... Frutti (5)
 - Observing (9)
 - Exclude; boycott (9)
 - Chinese bear (5)
 - XI (6)
 - Classical language of Hinduism (8)
- DOWN**
- Noisy old trains (8)
 - Chow down! (3,2)
 - Tools of the proletariat (6,3,6)
 - Encouraged (5,2)
 - Old Glory (5,3,7)
 - English landscape painter (9)
 - Unit of force (6)
 - Ascended swiftly (6)
 - Excellent (5,4)
 - Inactive (8)
 - Wrench (6)
 - Event involving competing yachts (7)
 - Equine accommodation (6)
 - Interior (5)

Last week's solution #530

R	E	D	B	R	E	A	S	T	F	U	M	E	D
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G	A	M	E	L	A	T	E	C	O	M	E	R	
T	U	P	M	A	E	O	K						
R	E	P	U	L	S	E	N	A	T	U	R	A	L
A	A	N	I	A	Y								
D	E	M	O	N	S	T	R	A	T	I	O	N	S
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D	R	E	A	M	C	O	N	S	T	A	N	C	Y

I love the smell of mould in the morning. Actually I don't. It drives me nuts. Some days I'm obsessed that it's all I can smell. It's the smell of living in the Northern Rivers. The humidity and rain of our summer has created the perfect conditions for mould. Mould on shoes. Mould in my bread bin. Mould in the dark of my cupboards. Mould in the cracks in my bathroom. Mould behind the sink. Mould in me.

Moulds are fungi. They are microbes, like viruses or bacteria. And most, apparently, are harmless. Except the ones that aren't. I don't know if anyone feels good about breathing in bio-toxins. And no one wants to put a baby or a little kid in a mouldy room. Some people don't have a choice.

I can't really see the mould. But I've lived in this region long enough to know that it generally goes away. Or it's hiding until the next wet summer. Like a creepy fungal stalker. I buy natural room spray. I burn candles. And incense. There is no scientific evidence to show this has any effect, but I can pretend I no longer have mould. If I can't smell it then it's gone. I tell myself this is not the bad mould. The toxic mould: *Stachybotrys chartarum*. It's just a regular mould. But I'm not a mycologist. That's someone who studies mould.

I have never met a mycologist. What child when asked: 'what do you want to do when you grow up?', answers: 'be a mycologist'? Possibly a child with asthma who grew up in a flood-impacted house in Lismore and spent a childhood in respiratory distress. I am sure mould has its place in nature, but that's where I prefer it. In nature. Not in my home.

I don't know why, but smelling mould makes me feel a bit depressed. Apparently, that is a mould-related response. People with mould in their houses can experience more severe anxiety and depression. But that could also be because people experiencing



Our flood-impacted houses are most at risk of mould. Especially black mould. It's toxic for people with compromised immune systems.

mould issues tend to live in poor housing, poverty and general ill health. And that's depressing too. And of course, people in rental properties experience mould at higher rates. Generally because it goes untreated. Tenants move in. No visible mould. Mould returns. Tenants move out. Landlord cleans and paints over mould. New tenants move in. No visible mould. Mould returns. Tenants move out. And so on. Mould is the greatest predictor of length of tenancy. And painting over it doesn't stop it. In my daughter's last Melbourne share house, she had such a bad mould problem in the bathroom they used to hold their breath in the shower because breathing gave them headaches and made them feel weird. That makes hair washing impossible. I was

relieved when they moved. I bought her shampoo to celebrate. Like many rentals it was impossible to remove the mould because it was all that was holding the building together. Our flood-impacted houses are most at risk of mould. Especially black mould. It's toxic for people with compromised immune systems. For little kids and babies. It can cause sick building syndrome. It's not just respiratory symptoms. It makes you tired. Really tired. That's the mycotoxins. It can affect how your brain works too. It can stop you thinking clearly. Give you a sense of detachment. Even psychosis. Prolonged exposure can give joint pain, make your hair fall out. And on rare occasions it can kill you. It pretty well sounds like being poisoned. Because it is. In a housing crisis where thousands of homes were flooded and thousands still haven't got the help they need, many don't have much choice but to live with the mould. Those dehumidifiers have been running double time. Forget the heavy chemicals, they don't really work. And they make you sick too. Good news is that over 80% of mould can be removed with white vinegar and baking soda. Ventilation. And incense. Not the stuff you burn. The stuff you feel when you are forced to live in unsafe conditions: incensed.

STARS BY LILITH

As the Sun and Mercury swish into the sensitive sign of the Fish, Mars and Venus in unconventional Aquarius make this a peak week for exploring artistic activities...

PISCES THE FISH

ARIES: This week's dynamic hook-up of Venus and Mars heightens your natural charisma and magnetises others towards you, deepening current connections and forging new bonds. This boundary-pushing combo could see your ongoing role as agent of positive change enter a new level of engagement.

TAURUS: While Venus and Mars in forward-thinking, community-minded mode support practical planning and group activities, this week also speaks to your inner artist. Subconscious urges are likely to be active, especially at night, so pay attention to dreams: they may contain important messages for you.

GEMINI: Quicksilver planet Mercury sinking into its most intuitive, psychic placement during the last week of the month is your cue to rest, give your brain a break and listen to instinct rather than reason. If you feel a little moodier than usual, then talk it through: let those emotions flow.

CANCER: While this month had its share of friendly pleasures, it hasn't been the most sensitive or sympathetic transit. But you'll find this week's influx of oceanic energies much more comfortable and conducive to trusting your hunches and sharing your feelings with close connections.

LEO: Your majesties don't usually hold back from expressing the way you're feeling, but be advised this week's delicate sensitivities could be easily bruised. So tread gently, and you'll find interactions likely to blossom with the application of thoughtfulness and a personal touch.

VIRGO: With your mentor planet Mercury relaxing into imaginative recuperation this week, it's time to prioritise self-care and personal wellbeing. Annual full moon in Virgo on 24 February is your prime time for allowing others to acknowledge and return the care and nurturing you shower on those around you.

LIBRA: Your prima planet Venus in her most quirky and eccentric setting aligned with Mars in a similarly outrageous vein, is a wonderful cycle to explore, experiment, and reimagine. If you get the feeling you're outgrowing who you've been, up till now, then go right ahead: you're on the right track.

SCORPIO: After the recent mental-as-anything season of the geek, this week's Scorpio-friendly water sign energy declares time to detach from devices, algorithms and AI and restore some body-soul balance. Note to self: stay open to the unexpected, because that's likely to be where the magic is.

SAGITTARIUS: As communicator Mercury takes a dive into its most visionary and right-brained placement, it's time to let your inner voice take the mic. Pay attention to nonverbal cues and body language, because what this week's people aren't saying could communicate a lot more than their words.

CAPRICORN: Heading towards autumn and into the final sign of the zodiac's season of replenishment, it's time to take a breath, Capricorns. To stop overthinking, to balance reason and logic with creativity and imagination. Time for spiritually nourishing routines, meaningful connections and honouring your instincts.

AQUARIUS: Enterprising Mars and collaborative Venus in your sign offer an astral flashpoint for making relationship choices, while Pluto's long-term entry into Aquarius roll out its scientific discoveries, technological advances, social changes and progressive ideas as the background to your personal evolution.

PISCES: The celestial shuffleboard ushering Mercury and the sun into your empathetic orbit for this year's birthday circuit open a clear, invitational space for writing the latest chapter in the Life Of Pisces. And if you're not seeing that space, then it's important that you make one, even for just a half hour.



THE SPIRIT OF Brunswick Heads

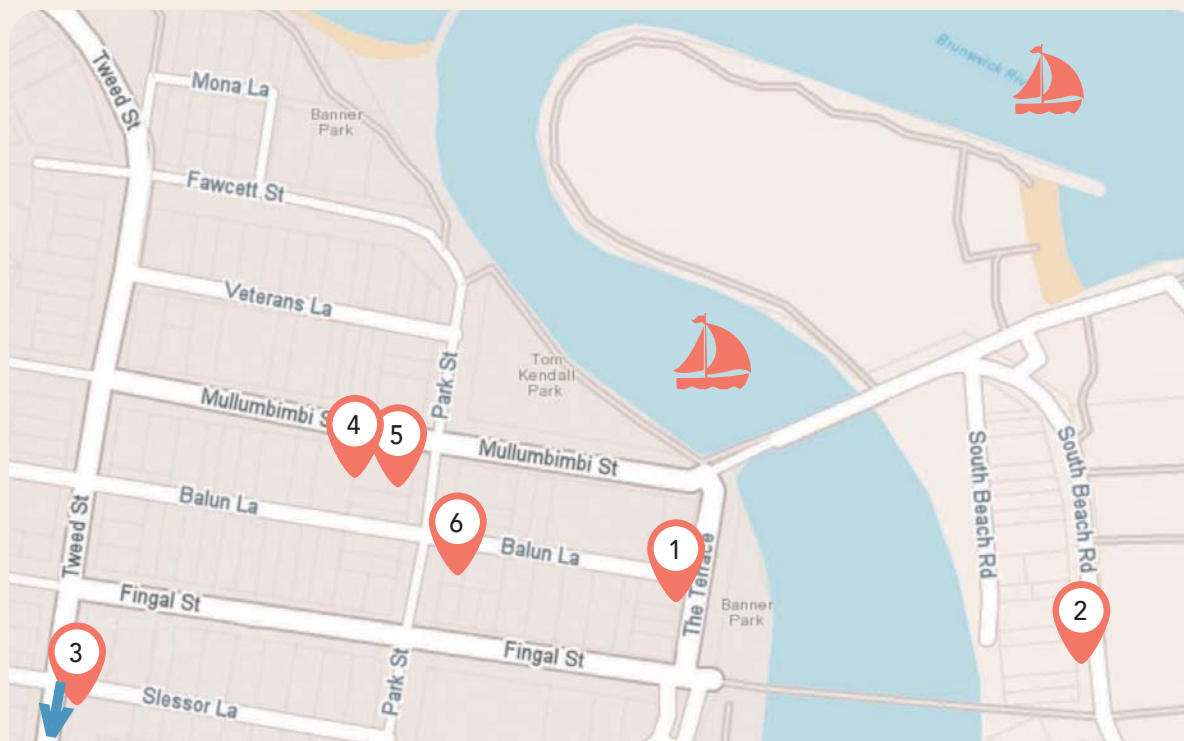
A word from the Brunswick Heads Chamber of Commerce

It's lovely to welcome our temporary locals, McGregors Carnival and Woodchop during the holidays, but it's nice once again to enjoy the peaceful months in between. Head into Bruns to enjoy our beautiful river and beach, and relax and enjoy a cuppa at one of our friendly cafes. Our retail shops have amazing sales on and if it's a delicious meal you're after, there are Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday lunch and dinner specials at the Hotel Brunswick, especially for locals. Great live music too!

Registrations are now open for the local fundraiser Mullum2Bruns Paddle, 26 May, 2024.

See you in Bruns!

www.brunswickheads.org.au



1. Brunswick Surf Shop 1/12 The Terrace | 2. Rosefina's Place 38 Southbeach Rd

3. Brunswick Heads Bowling Club 107 Tweed St | 4. Ozone Beauty & Medi Spa 3/32 Mullumbimbi St

5. Brunswick Heads Osteopathy 2/32 Mullumbimbi St | 6. Brunswick Heads Visitor Centre 7 Park Street

3. BRUNSWICK HEADS BOWLING CLUB

Bring the family down to the club for great food and drinks. Barefoot bowls available at any time, trivia on Tuesday night and raffles Friday and Sunday.

Open 10am-10pm, 7 days
brunswickbowlingclub.com
02 6685 1003



4. OZONE BEAUTY & MEDI SPA

Holistic HIFU non-surgical face & body sculpting.
HIFU facelift from just \$550.
50% off HIFU body sculpting, ideal for volume & cellulite reduction on thighs, bum, stomach & arms.

02 6685 1145
ozonebeautymedispa.com.au



5. BRUNSWICK HEADS OSTEOPATHY

Treatment of back, neck, shoulder and hip pain, headaches, joint and muscle pain. Osteopathy and remedial massage. Experienced local practitioners. Online bookings. Open six days.

Monday to Friday 9am-6pm, Saturday 9am-4pm.
02 6685 1126
brunsosteo.com.au



6. BRUNSWICK HEADS VISITOR CENTRE

Proudly supporting local artists. This time with Laura Luke designed prints, cards and tiles.

Monday to Friday 9.30am-4.30pm.
Saturday and Sunday 10am-2pm.
02 6685 1002
info@brunswickheads.org.au



1. BRUNSWICK SURF SHOP

Summer's underway and it's a hot one! Drop in to Brunswick Surf, your local surf shop, for all your summer needs. If they don't have it, they can get it!

@ brunswicksurf
02 6685 1283
brunswicksurf.com.au



2. ROSEFINA'S PLACE

River. Beach. Pandanus. Caravan. Coffee. Outdoors. Friends. Brush Turkeys. Lillies. Oasis. Rocks. Food. Red. Sunshine. Mornings. Music. Musings. Retreat. Garden. Nature. Secret. Treasure.

@ rosefinas_place

GREAT SOUTHERN NIGHTS IN ASSOCIATION WITH PRESSPLAY PRESENTS

LYDIA LUNCH



TALES OF LUST & MADNESS

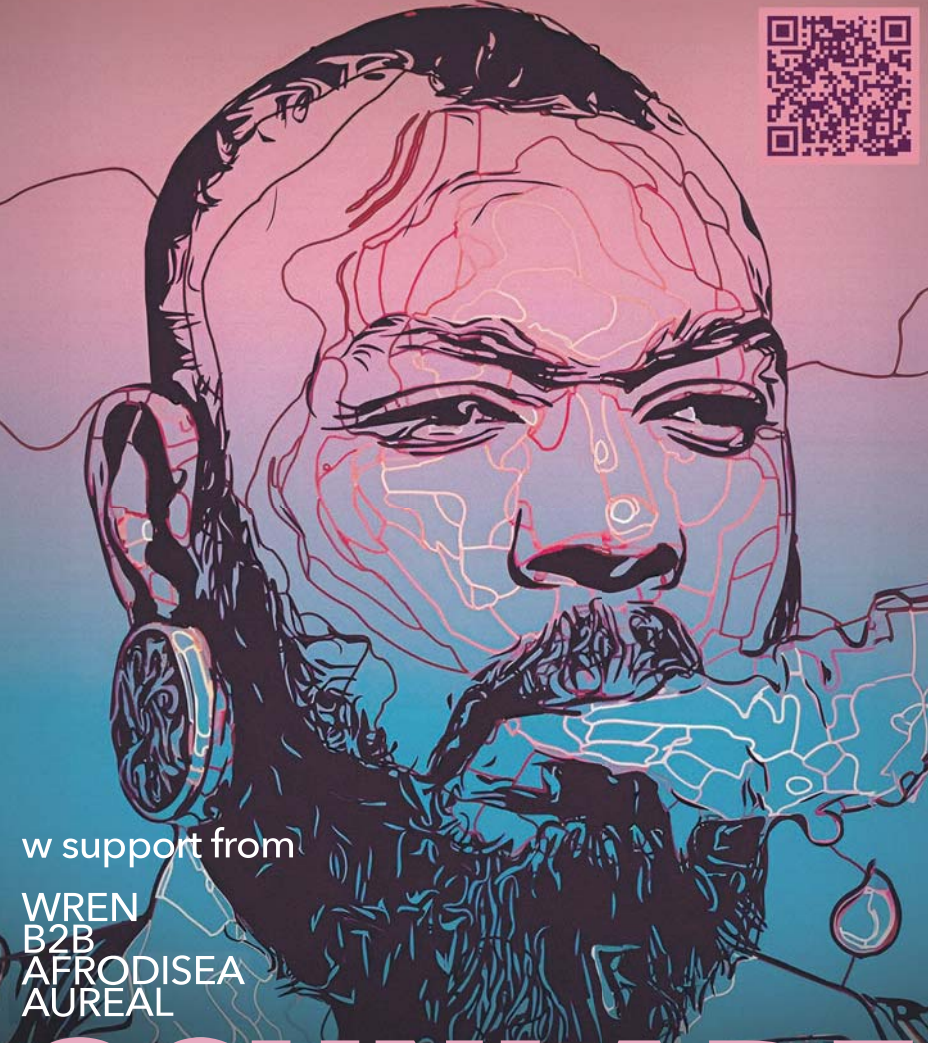
JOSEPH KECKLER

SAT 9TH MARCH
BYRON THEATRE
BYRON BAY

TWO OF NEW YORK'S MOST NOTORIOUS PERFORMERS TOGETHER TO CREATE AN INTIMATE EVENING OF PROVOCATIVE MUSICAL POETRY.

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09TH MARCH // THE NORTHERN, BYRON BAY

seven

entertainment

THE LIGHT OF LOVING KINDNESS

'May the light of the sun and moon of loving kindness and compassion permeate the entire world forever more, dispelling the darkness of the suffering of beings, and filling space with peace and happiness' – Khentrul Lodrö T'hayé Rinpoche.

Khentrul Lodrö T'hayé Rinpoche, Tibetan Buddhist teacher, scholar, and author of *The Power of Mind*, is returning to the Byron Shire for two events, the first being a public talk on **Wednesday, February 28, from 6-8pm** at the **Mullumbimby Civic Memorial Hall**, where he will speak on 'The Four Immeasurables'.

What are the four immeasurables? Well, last time he spoke in Mullumbimby in 2018, he spoke on the five poisons of the mind, and these are the antidotes – joy, equanimity, loving kindness, and compassion, all qualities that can be developed infinitely. In that way they are 'immeasurable'.

In his Wednesday public talk he will speak about how we can cultivate these qualities for ourselves – attendees are in for a treat. Admission is free and all are welcome. Following his public talk, Khentrul Rinpoche will present a weekend teaching on *'Transforming Suffering and Happiness'*.

Khentrul Rinpoche was born in Tibet during the Cultural Revolution and was raised with hunger and scarcity. He witnessed for himself how some of the great practitioners of his day navigated the loss of family and friends, not without sorrow, but with an underlying imperturbable peace.

In his weekend teaching, he will reveal some of the methods used by these great



practitioners to keep that peace, that inner joy, no matter the difficulties they faced. These are remarkable and little-known tools for transforming adversity that ultimately confer great wellbeing.

Khentrul Rinpoche says: 'Peace and happiness can be attained, but not by searching for something in the outside world. They start within ourselves, then extend out to the entire globe'.

Khentrul Lodrö T'hayé Rinpoche is a Tibetan Buddhist monk with three khenpo degrees – the equivalent to three PhDs – in Buddhist philosophy. He studied with the last generation of great masters, including H.H. Jigme Phuntsok Rinpoche, H.H. Penor Rinpoche, and H.H. Katog Moksa. He directs the Buddhist organisation Katog Choling – katog.org.

Saturday and Sunday, March 2 and 3, from 10am to 12pm and 2pm to 5pm – both days, at the Ocean Shores Community Centre. Admission is free but organisers are asking for preregistration at katog.org/events for this weekend teaching so that they can have adequate printed materials on hand.

LIMBOLAND

A JOURNEY FROM CRISIS TO HOPE



Real Stories. Local Heroes.

A new theatre show portraying the impacts of natural disasters and the power of community when times get hard.

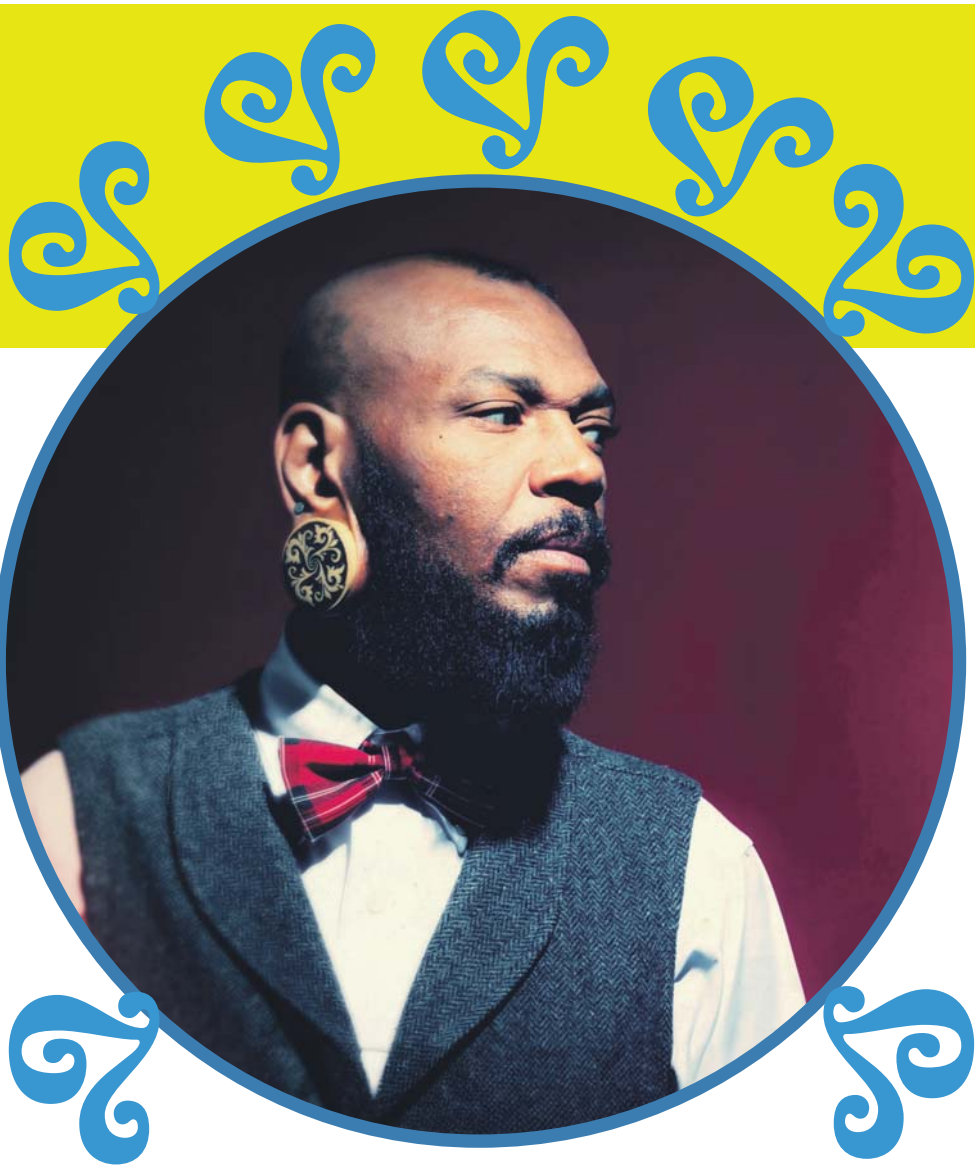
THEATRE SHOW
STAR COURT THEATRE, LISMORE
FRI 23 FEB | 1PM | 7.30PM
 FREE WELCOME DRINK & NIBBLES
 (7.30 SHOW ONLY | FIRST 50 TIX)
\$5 TICKETS

FREE WORKSHOP
YOUTH THEATRE WORKSHOPS
SUN 25 FEB | 9.30AM - 5.30PM
 LISMORE WORKERS SPORTS CLUB

13-25 YEAR OLDS | CATERED LUNCH
 CREATE SCENES AND CHARACTERS
 PERFORM FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS

FREE TICKETS FOR ORGANISATIONS, SERVICES AND ANYONE IN NEED
 Supported by the National Recovery and Resilience Agency

WWW.FULLON.BIZ



A TRUE PIONEER IN DEEP HOUSE

Embark on a musical journey with **Osunlade**, a true pioneer in deep house and nu-jazz, as he graces the stage at **The Northern Hotel in Byron Bay on March 9** for a three-hour extended set.

With over 30 years of shaping the genre, Osunlade's influence extends far and wide, making this opportunity to witness his profound musical journey an extraordinary experience. Bridging the realms of house, soul, and folklore, Osunlade's legacy, marked by collaborations with legends like Roy Ayers and Salif Keita, culminated in the founding of Yoruba Records in New York.

This event at the Great Northern Hotel is a rare chance to immerse yourself in the soulful beats of a living legend before he heads back to the US. Don't miss the opportunity to be part of this special musical odyssey.

Osunlade will be supported by **Aureal**, one of Flow Music's epic resident DJs, and **Wren** and **Afrodisea** playing back-to-back; two of Australia's most engaging up-and-coming female DJs.

Aureal has been an unwavering force for nearly three decades, captivating global audiences at events like Burning

Man, Tribal Massive, and Fusion Festival. Recognized as a nu-skool breaks pioneer since '96, Tony seamlessly transitioned into afro latin house in the early 2000s, showcasing his versatility. His live performances stand as a testament to his unique ability to blend music and multimedia artistry, leaving an indelible mark on the electronic music scene.

Wren, the dynamic DJ and budding producer is based on Bundjalung country. Like the diverse species of wrens, she offers a unique sonic experience that ranges from dreamy spoken word pieces to dynamic world electronic music. With a sexy blend of afro and latin sounds, deep bass lines, tribal rhythms, and melodic undertones fused with live recordings

from nature, Wren creates a dance floor journey like no other. Having graced events such as Pranafest, Burning Seed, and Elements Festival, she invites you to dance with her at her next adventure.

Afrodisea, world, tribal, and roots music purveyor – Afrodesia, tethers together ethnically woven beats, portal opening rhythms, booty erupting bass plus exquisitely selected and scented house and techno grooves. Alongside an array of both consciously-aligned and high-energy performances – Afrodesia's skillset as a selecta crystallises towards a more ambient and textured contour; orbiting around an axis of latin, downbeat and various soulful sonic flavours.

Embark on a sonic journey at The Northern Hotel's Backroom, boasting an epic sound system and mesmerising visuals by Shuffle Studio. The magic begins at 8.30pm, extending until 3am, allowing you to experience Osunlade's legendary 3.5-hour set. Don't miss the early beats – arrive on time and immerse yourself in the enchanting atmosphere.

Osunlade awaits to guide you through an unforgettable night of deep house magic at The Northern Hotel, Saturday the 9th of March with support from Wren B2B with Afrodisia and Aureal. Doors open at 8.30 pm. Tickets available on Humanity.

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and BAFTA
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**Everyone's
Invited!**

flickerfest.com.au

33rd International Short Film Festival

Flickerfest

Mullumbimby Civic Hall | Thur 29 Feb - Sat 2 Mar

**& BYRON
ALL SHORTS
FILM COMP**

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram icons

flickerfest

Screen Australia, Screen NSW, Screen Queensland, Screen Victoria, Screen Western Australia, Screen Tasmania, Screen ACT, Screen NT icons

EUROPEAN UNION, BRISBANE, #flickerfest2024

Flickerfest is back in the Northern Rivers for its 27th year screening a smorgasbord of the best short films from the Byron Region, Australia and the world across one cinematic weekend. All films are handpicked from a record 3,400 entries promising local Northern Rivers audiences an entertaining journey through the most remarkable short films in the world today, including much loved festival award winners and exciting local talent.

2024 PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

**THURSDAY
29th FEBRUARY**

7pm: OPENING NIGHT PARTY
Includes a complimentary drink and snacks on arrival.

8pm: BEST OF INTERNATIONAL SHORTS
Flickerfest is thrilled to present a selection of nine stunning film gems from our Oscar and BAFTA qualifying competition in Bondi. Take a journey from the Himalaya's to Ireland, Spain, Sweden and more. Highlights include the heart warming *My Week With Maisy* starring the legendary Joanna Lumley and the intriguing Spanish short *The Masterpiece*.

**FRIDAY
1st MARCH**

8pm: BEST OF AUSTRALIAN SHORTS
Celebrate a diverse range of Australian stories that honour our unique identity and culture. Highlights include: the stunning *Yeah The Boys* scored by the Avalanches, winner of Best Australian Short Film at Flickerfest 2024; fun comedy *Favourites* where a father makes a surprising choice with hilarious consequences; *Coldwater* set in 70's St Kilda featuring a standout performance by the legendary Bruce Spence; and the moving local first nations short *Djalbuyan Nahra* by young award winning Bundjalung-Bama filmmaker Jahvis Loveday.

**SATURDAY
2nd MARCH**

4pm: BYRON ALL SHORTS COMPETITION
Returning for the 19th year and presenting the Best Of Northern Rivers Shorts; Experience amazing local talent and our own stories on the big screen. 13 incredible local short films will shine. Meet their creators before and after the session and see who takes home this year's awards.

8pm: SHORT LAUGHS COMEDY
Enjoy an evening of clever comedy from Australia and across the world with the Short Laughs Comedy programme including the hilarious Irish short *Cantata* and the laughout loud NZ guide to a happy life *Good Luck*.

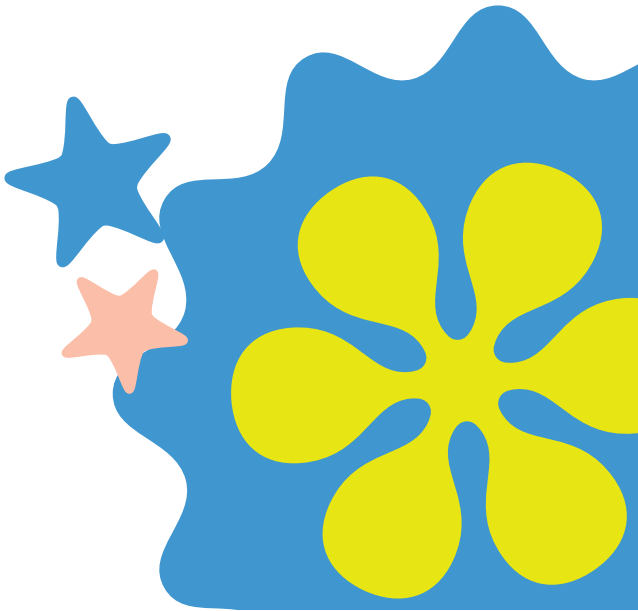
Info & tickets:
Tickets and programme: www.iq.org.au
*(Booking is recommended.
Tix at the door subject to availability)*

The iQ Licenced Bar & Cafe
The iQ Cafe opens 1 hour before sessions serving delicious treats and drinks – cashless transactions for tickets at door and cafe preferred

Programme Times & Prices:
Thur 29th Feb: 7pm: Opening drinks
8pm: Best of International Shorts, \$30/\$25 (+bf)
Fri 1st Mar: 8pm: Best of Australian Shorts, \$18/16 (+bf)

Sat 2nd Mar:
4pm: Byron All Shorts finalist screening.
8pm: Shorts Laughs Comedy, \$18/16 (+bf)
Season Pass: \$65/55 (+bf)

Flickerfest festival director Bronwyn Kidd says: I'm always excited to be bringing Flickerfest home to Mullumbimby where I live. Our Mullumbimby Flickerfest and Byron All Shorts weekend is for people of all ages who love great stories and want to celebrate them in a fun and welcoming film festival environment.

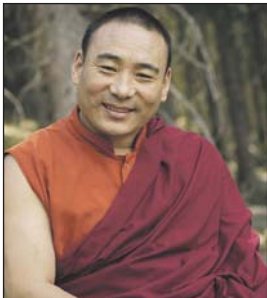


Khentrul Lodrö T'hayé Rinpoche returns to Byron Shire!

PUBLIC TALK The Four Immeasurables

Learn more about how to develop for yourself immeasurable equanimity, loving kindness, compassion, and joy.

Wednesday February 28, 6-8pm.
Mullumbimby Civic Memorial Hall,
55 Dalley St, Mullumbimby.
Free admission.



WEEKEND TEACHING Transforming Happiness and Suffering

Saturday & Sunday, March 2 and 3,
10am-noon, 2-5pm both days. Free admission.
Ocean Shores Community Centre,
55 Rajah Road, Ocean Shores.

Khentrul Rinpoche will reveal how we can enjoy much greater wellbeing in our lives by sharing some remarkable and little known tools for transforming adversity.

For weekend teaching, please pre-register @ katog.org/events
Info: Julia 0421 022 428; australia@katogcholing.com



A GRACEFUL POST-FLOOD RECOVERY

Hayley Grace's response to post-flood PTSD, was to look at life and healing in a different way, then come through the other side writing about it – her new single 'Mary Jane' is the result.

Hayley and The Bay Collective, a raucous seven-piece big band – featuring a full horn section, guitar, bass, keys and percussion – will launch the song this week and play some shows to get it out there.

Seven spoke to Hayley on the weekend to get her POV on The Bay Collective and recovery.

So call me an old hippy, but is the song 'Mary Jane' about pot?

Kind of – it's about plant medicine. I used the 'Mary Jane' reference, because I guess it's something I have experience with. And when I wrote the song, it just came out like that. I wrote the song during the time I had PTSD from the floods. I was being offered pharmaceutical medications, but I went on a bit of a plant medicine journey to try to improve my mental health. And it worked. I felt amazing. It really helped me. I'm definitely out the other side.

So I guess if we are going to start a conversation with this song, it's meant to be a sophisticated conversation. It's not meant to be about abusing drugs and

getting stoned. It's meant to be that – okay, so maybe there are some ailments that we as humans suffer from, that if we look to natural resources and what the planet provides for us, potentially, there's a better way to treat these things

I definitely don't want to condone the abuse of drugs, or anything like that. I just would like to potentially start a conversation that's based on my personal experience. This is what I suffered from, and I got some help with that.

Do you feel that as an entertainer you have a responsibility to talk about the sorts of issues that are important to you?

Absolutely. But all I can do is speak from my personal experience. And, for me, this subject is so taboo, you know, and there's a lot of judgment around the use of plant medicines in the mental health arena. So if I can start a conversation about it, and it helps someone, it reaches someone where they are – that's great.

Is 'Mary Jane' a precursor to an EP or an album?

Yeah, we're going to release a bunch of singles this year.

And going on tour?

Yes – in March we're hitting four venues and we've got a few more to be

announced as well. We're just trying to get out there and get in front of some new people. Obviously, having that three-year break, we're really only just starting to gain some momentum again. It's just about meeting as many people as we can, and sharing our pure joy of music.

Tell me about The Bay Collective?

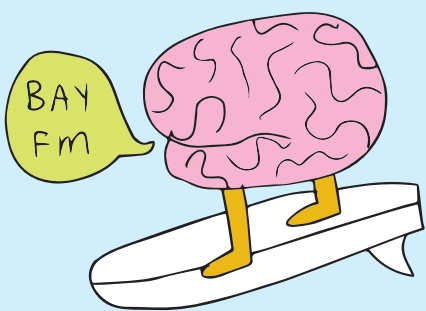
The Bay Collective is a seven-piece lineup – Hayley Grace, MsEleneous, Felicity Lawless, Chelsea Skyeater, Daneel Cram, Niko Martin and Beck Flatt. Most of the performers are solo, headline performers in their own right, so they have their own bands, their own projects. All of us together have created a huge pool of original music to be inspired by and pull from.

The show features my original music and then most of the members of the band will play one of their original songs as well.

'Mary Jane' comes out today. Hayley Grace and The Bay Collective play the Ballina RSL on Saturday, March 23 from 8pm as part of the Great Southern Nights event.

Admission is free.

www.thebaycollectivemusic.com for more info.



THOUGHT PROVOKING STUFF

Every weekday BayFM has shows to fire your synapses, including Make a Change, Eco Futures, Wirritjin, Belly, In the Driver's Seat, Roadtrip, Bohemian Beat and Arts Canvass. Check our online Program Guide for details.



More at bayfm.org

BYRON THEATRE

FEBRUARY

- 1-2 SOWETO GOSPEL CHOIR
- 7 DEAR ENGLAND | 13 PSYCHEDELIC ASSISTED THERAPY
- 15 BUENA VISTA CONCERT
- 16-17 HONEY SLIDERS PLAY
- THE BEATLES | 18 DAVID HELFGOTT | 20 LENNOX: LEGEND IN MY LIVING ROOM
- 29 ROAD TO PATAGONIA

BYRON THEATRE .COM

PINK ZINC ENTERTAINMENT - MARLOO MUSIC - BALLINA RSL - GREAT SOUTHERN NIGHTS PRESENTS

HAYLEY GRACE & The Bay Collective

MARY JANE

SINGLE LAUNCH TOUR 2024
SATURDAY 23RD MARCH

SUPPORT BY FELICITY LAWLESS

FREE EVENT - DOORS 7.30PM

BALLINA RSL GREAT SOUTHERN NIGHTS



GIG GUIDE

It's free to list your gigs in the gig guide.
 e: gigs@echo.net.au
 w: echo.net.au/gig-guide
 DEADLINE 5PM ON FRIDAYS



CINEMA



POOR THINGS

With so many shades of *Frankenstein*, and featuring **Emma Stone, Mark Ruffalo, Willem Dafoe** and **Ramy Youssef**, *Poor Things* is set in Victorian London. Medical student Max McCandles (Youssef) becomes an assistant to the eccentric surgeon Dr Godwin 'God' Baxter (Dafoe) and falls in love with Godwin's ward, Bella (Stone), a childlike young woman...

Max learns that a pregnant woman named Victoria (also Stone) killed herself by leaping off a bridge, and Godwin replaced her brain with that of her unborn fetus, giving the infant Bella an adult's body.

With Godwin's encouragement, Max asks for Bella's hand in marriage. Bella accepts, but as her intelligence rapidly develops, she becomes curious about the outside world and runs off with a debauched lawyer, Duncan Wedderburn (Ruffalo). Deciding to let her go, Godwin starts a new experiment with a young woman, Felicity, who matures much more slowly than Bella.

Add to this: a cruise ship journey to Paris via Lisbon, Alexandria, and Marseille; prostitution; socialism; and a creepy ex-husband – what could possibly go wrong?

From the bizarre mind of the three-time Academy Award-nominated **Yorgos Lanthimos** (*The Favourite*, *The Lobster*), *Poor Things* is an unhinged dark comedy that expresses an insatiable lust for life with lush visuals and exhilarating performances. Co-producer and star Emma Stone is perfection in her richest portrayal yet alongside equally entertaining turns from Ruffalo, Dafoe, and Ramy Youssef.

Poor Things is screening at Ballina and Palace Cinemas – palacecinemas.com.au.

WEDNESDAY 21

- RAILWAY HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 8PM **KRAPPYKEE WITH JESS**
- BEACH HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 6PM **MATT ARMATAGE**
- BANGALOW BOWLO 7.30PM **BANGALOW BRACKETS OPEN MIC**

THURSDAY 22

- RAILWAY HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 8PM **DAN HANNAFORD**
- BEACH HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 7PM **BEN WALSH**
- THE ROCKS, BYRON BAY, 6PM **WILL HENDERSON**
- HOTEL BRUNSWICK 6PM **CALLUM CREELMAN**
- THE NORTHERN, BYRON BAY, 8PM **THE PORKERS**
- LENNOX HOTEL HOTEL STAGE 8PM **THURSDAY JAM NIGHT**
- THE LEVEE, LISMORE, 5PM **STEVEN MULLER**
- MURWILLUMBAH SERVICES CLUB 8PM **INVINCIBLE – MICHAEL JACKSON TRIBUTE**

FRIDAY 23

- RAILWAY HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 8PM **JB'S BLUES BREAKERS**
- BEACH HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 5PM **TIM STOKES**, 8PM **MIRROR MIRROR** 9PM **BUTTERED** 10PM **DJ TAI DANIELS**
- NORTH BYRON HOTEL 5.30PM **DJ YAZMIN**
- THE NORTHERN, BYRON BAY, 8PM **MEXICO CITY**
- HOTEL BRUNSWICK 6PM **MOOD SWING AND CHEVY BASS**
- BRUNSWICK HEADS PICTURE HOUSE 7PM **DANIEL CHAMPAGNE**
- WANDANA BREWING CO., MULLUMBIMBY, 4PM **DJ OREN SELECTA**

- MIDDLE PUB, MULLUMBIMBY, 8PM **KRAPPYKEE WITH JESS**
- MULLUMBIMBY EX-SERVICES CLUB 8PM **BARNES STORM ULTIMATE JIMMY BARNES & COLD CHISEL SHOW**
- TINTENBAR HALL 7.30PM **DEAN HAITANI**
- CLUB LENNOX 7PM **NATHAN KAYE**
- LENNOX HOTEL 9PM **GLITTERATI RIOT**
- KELP BAR, BALLINA, 6PM **JAY & LYNDEY**
- CHERRY STREET SPORTS CLUB, BALLINA, 7PM **ADAM GARDINER**
- BALLINA RSL LEVEL ONE 7.30PM **THE SYDNEY HOTSHOTS**
- STAR COURT THEATRE, LISMORE, 1PM & 7.30PM **LIMBOLAND**
- METROPOLE, LISMORE, 6.30PM **KARAOKE + DJ THE WHO'S WHO**
- THE LEVEE, LISMORE, 7.30PM **DJ NAT WHITE**
- MURWILLUMBAH SERVICES CLUB 8PM **INVINCIBLE – MICHAEL JACKSON TRIBUTE**

SATURDAY 24

- SALTBAR, KINGSCLIFF, 6PM **TIN PARLOUR**
- KINGSCLIFF BEACH BOWLS 6PM **GREER SULLIVAN**
- RAILWAY HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 7PM **PINK ZINC**
- BEACH HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 7PM **CHRIS SHEEHY DUO**
- NORTH BYRON HOTEL 1.30PM **TIAGO FREITAS**, 5PM **DJ KAI NOON**
- BYRON TWILIGHT MARKET 4PM **ARI LEVY**
- COORABELL HALL 6PM **BERLIN MEETS BYRON FEATURING MIKE SHANNON**

- HOTEL BRUNSWICK 4.30PM **DISCO DISCIPLES + OLE FALCOR**
- BANGALOW HOTEL **STEVE GILBERT**
- CLUB LENNOX 7PM **JABIRU**
- BALLINA RSL BOARDWALK 6PM **BEN WHITING**
- CHERRY STREET SPORTS CLUB, BALLINA, 8PM **GLENN MASSEY & THE THREAD**
- METROPOLE, LISMORE, 7.30PM **SHYBABY + DJ BOZ**
- MURWILLUMBAH SERVICES CLUB 6PM **LEIGH JAMES**
- KINGSCLIFF BEACH BOWLS 6PM **STEVE SAVAGE**
- KINGSCLIFF BEACH HOTEL 6PM **THE AUSTRALIAN EAGLES SHOW**
- TWIN TOWNS, TWEED HEADS, THE SHOWROOM 8PM **THE JOE COCKER EXPERIENCE**

SUNDAY 25

- RAILWAY HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 8PM **DOJO RISE**
- BEACH HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 3PM **ANIMAL VENTURA** 6PM **SUB-TRIBE + THE 4'20" SOUND + DJ QUENDO**
- KARKALLA, BYRON BAY, 10AM **MARTA KALANI**
- NORTH BYRON HOTEL 12.30PM **INO PIO**, 4PM **DJ JR.DYNAMITE**
- BANGALOW HOTEL 4PM **DAVE POWER**
- HOTEL BRUNSWICK 4PM **DEV'U BAND + GABRIELLE LAMB**
- OCEAN SHORES COUNTRY CLUB 3PM **OPEN MIC**
- MIDDLE PUB, MULLUMBIMBY, 3PM **OPEN-MIC WITH THE SWAMP CATS**
- WANDANA BREWING CO., MULLUMBIMBY, 4PM **DJ MATTY P**
- SHAW'S BAY HOTEL, BALLINA,

SUNDAY SESSIONS FT. THE WET FISH

- BALLINA RSL BOARDWALK 2.30PM **SUNDAY BLUES CLUB SESSIONS FBI**
- ELTHAM HOTEL 2PM **WAY OUT WEST**
- THE LEVEE, LISMORE, 4PM **NEIL MCCANN**
- SALTBAR, KINGSCLIFF, 1PM **JASON DELPHIN**
- KINGSCLIFF BEACH HOTEL 3PM **PRESTON**
- TWIN TOWNS, TWEED HEADS, THE SHOWROOM 7PM **THE ANIMALS**

MONDAY 26

- RAILWAY HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 8PM **CHRIS ARONSTEN**
- BEACH HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 7PM **BEN WHITING**

TUESDAY 27

- RAILWAY HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 8PM **NATHAN KAYE**
- BEACH HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 7PM **LUKE YEAMAN**
- TWIN TOWNS, TWEED HEADS, THE SHOWROOM 11AM **THE GREAT BRITISH SONGBOOK**

WEDNESDAY 28

- RAILWAY HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 8PM **ISAAC FRANKHAM**
- BEACH HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 7PM **MEGAN CORE**
- BANGALOW BOWLO 7.30PM **BANGALOW BRACKETS OPEN MIC**
- MULLUMBIMBY CIVIC HALL 6PM **KHENTRUL LODRO 'T'HAYÉ RINPOCHE – 'THE FOUR IMMEASURABLES'**
- LISMORE CITY BOWLO 7PM **AUSTRALIAN SONGWRITERS ASSOCIATION**
- KINGSCLIFF BEACH BOWLS 6.30PM **KINGY COMEDY – FEAT ANDY SAUNDERS**

Session Times

Thurs, February 22 – Wed, February 28 108 Jonson St, Byron Bay

SPECIAL SCREENINGS	ANATOMY OF A FALL (MA15+)	FALLEN LEAVES (M)
DUNE & DUNE: PART TWO DOUBLE FEATURE (M) Wed: 6:00PM	Daily except Sun: 11:00AM, 4:30PM, 7:30PM. Sun: 11:00AM, 4:30PM	Daily: 11:20AM, 4:15PM, 6:15PM
FOUR DAUGHTERS (M) Sat, Sun: 3:00PM	ANYONE BUT YOU (MA15+) Daily except Sun, Wed: 2:00PM, 8:20PM. Sun, Wed: 2:00PM	FORCE OF NATURE: THE DRY 2 (M) Daily except Sun: 11:15AM, 3:30PM, 6:00PM, 8:00PM. Sun: 11:15AM, 3:30PM, 6:00PM
FAMILY FILMS	ARGYLLE (M) Daily except Sun: 1:20PM, 6:45PM. Sun: 11:10AM, 1:20PM	KILLERS OF THE FLOWER MOON (M) Daily: 1:40PM
MIGRATION (G)	BAGHEAD (M) Daily except Sun: 4:15PM, 8:20PM. Sun: 4:15PM, 7:30PM	MADAME WEB (M) Daily except Sat, Sun: 2:00PM, 4:30PM, 7:00PM. Sat, Sun: 4:30PM, 7:00PM
PIXAR FILM FEST: SOUL (PG)	BOB MARLEY: ONE LOVE (M) Daily except Wed: 11:00AM, 2:00PM, 4:20PM, 6:10PM. Wed: 11:00AM, 2:00PM, 4:20PM, 8:15PM	POOR THINGS (MA15+) Daily except Sun: 11:10AM, 1:40PM, 5:30PM
WONKA (PG)	DEMON SLAYER: TO THE HASHIRA TRAINING (IC13) Daily except Sun: 5:20PM, 8:20PM. Sun: 5:20PM, 8:15PM	PRISCILLA (M) Daily: 11:30AM
ALL FILMS		THE ZONE OF INTEREST (M) Daily: 11:20AM, 1:30PM, 3:45PM, 6:00PM, 7:30PM
ALL OF US STRANGERS (MA15+)		
Daily except Sun, Wed: 1:10PM, 8:15PM. Sun, Wed: 1:10PM		

Please check online for ALL films screening. Mercato Complex 3hrs FREE parking Validation for all Palace Cinemas customers. Session times subject to change - check web for most up to date sessions. *NFT = No Free Tickets. Book Online at palacecinemas.com.au

Session Times Ballina Fair Cinema

Thurs, February 22 - Wed, February 28 47/84 Kerr St, Ballina

ANYONE BUT YOU (MA15+) Thurs, Sat, Sun: 5:20PM. Fri, Mon, Tues, Wed: 10:30AM, 5:20PM	MADAME WEB (M) Daily: 1:00PM, 5:30PM	To receive the absolute lowest ticket price and special offers, be sure to join our Free Movie Club!
ARGYLLE (M) Thurs: 7:30PM. Fri, Mon, Tues, Wed: 12:30PM, 7:30PM. Sat, Sun: 12:15PM, 7:30PM	MIGRATION (G) NO SCREENING THURS Fri, Mon, Tues, Wed: 10:40AM. Sat, Sun: 10:20AM	
BOB MARLEY: ONE LOVE (M) Daily except Thurs: 10:40AM, 3:20PM, 5:40PM. Thurs: 12:50PM, 3:20PM, 5:40PM	PIXAR FILM FEST: SOUL (PG) WEEKEND ONLY Sat, Sun: 10:30AM	SCAN TO JOIN FOR FREE
FORCE OF NATURE: THE DRY 2 (M) Daily: 12:40PM, 3:00PM, 7:50PM	THE BEEKEEPER (MA15+) Daily except Sat, Sun: 3:15PM, 7:50PM. Sat, Sun: 7:50PM	
	WONKA (PG) Sat, Sun: 3:00PM	

Ballina Fair Shopping Centre FREE parking Book Online at palacecinemas.com.au *NFT = No Free Tickets

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62 PARROT TREE PLACE, BANGALOW



Price guide: \$1,450,000 - \$1,550,000
Open: Sat 24 Feb 9:15-9:45am

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4 BANGALAY COURT, BANGALOW



Auction: Sat 24 Feb 11:00am on site
Open: Wed 21 Feb 12:30-1:00pm, Sat 24 Feb 10:30-11:00am

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77 BEECH DRIVE, SUFFOLK PARK



Stylishly Renovated Home in Popular Suffolk Park

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711M²

- Generous floorplan with two living areas, perfect for families
- Established, landscaped gardens with veggie patches and chicken pen
- Main bedroom includes a walk-in-robe and ensuite
- Ideal location, close proximity to beaches, shops and schools

PRICE | \$1.695M - \$1.85M
OPEN | Sat 24th February 9.30 - 10am



Su Reynolds
0428 888 660



Renee Schofield
0400 028 594

75 BUTLER STREET, BYRON BAY



Renovated Character Home and Extra Accommodation in Central Byron

3 2 3 2 2
613M²

- Character beach-house and granny flat
- Short walk to town, Main Beach and Farmer's Market
- Ducted air-conditioning and fans throughout
- Attached, self-contained one-bed second dwelling with full-sized kitchen, modern bathroom, deck and separate access

PRICE | \$2.25M - \$2.35M
OPEN | Thurs 22nd February 1 - 1.30pm



Su Reynolds
0428 888 660



Renee Schofield
0400 028 594

1 SETTLEMENT ROAD, MAIN ARM



Unique Elevated Lot with Swimming Hole and Amazing Potential

2 1 1 1 5
1.52HA

- Opportunity to build your dream home on a large, elevated site
- Located just minutes from Mullumbimby and Main Arm
- Abundance of space for horses, pets, fruit trees and veggie gardens, plus access to swimming holes
- Existing home is a renovation rescue project

PRICE | \$1.35M - \$1.485M
OPEN | Fri 23rd February 5 - 5:30pm
Sat 24th February 9 - 9:30am



Paul Prior
0418 324 297

3/140 JONSON STREET, BYRON BAY



A Unique Blend of Historical Charm and Modern Luxury

3 1 2 2 2

- Open-plan kitchen, dining and living with north facing balcony
- The main bedroom located on the third level includes an ensuite, office and private balcony
- Resort style amenities including a lap pool
- Centrally located, moments from restaurants, shops and beaches

PRICE | Contact Agent
OPEN | Sat 24th February 11:30am - 12pm



Luke Elwin
0421 375 635

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AUCTION

Rustic Village Hideaway

- Room to move on elevated leafy lot
- High set Queenslander oozing charm
- Enjoy privacy and atmosphere from established tropical grounds
- Easy walk to vibrant village amenities
- Scenic drive to Byron beaches

Auction
Saturday 23 March

View
Saturday 11.30am - 12pm
8 Coachwood Court, Federal

Greg Price
0412 871 500
greg.price@raywhite.com

3 1 1

WHY WAIT?
Ray White Rural Bangalow | 02 6687 2479

raywhiteruralbangalow.com.au



RayWhite



AUCTION

Delightful Queenslander Charm

- Character and atmosphere abound
- Lush privacy on oversized level block
- Wrap around verandahs, high ceilings, timber floors and french doors
- Easy stroll to village amenities - your own little gem

Auction
Saturday 23rd March

View
Saturday 10 - 10.30am
2 Leopard Wood Crescent,
Bangalow

Greg Price
0412 871 500
greg.price@raywhite.com

4 1

WHY WAIT?
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raywhiteruralbangalow.com.au



RayWhite



AUCTION

Hobby Farm Heaven

- Over 4 acres of rich elevated country
- Character homestead, cathedral ceilings & wide verandahs offer mountain vistas
- Self contained studio offers extra accommodation
- Huge new shed plus room to graze and grow your own

Auction
Saturday 2nd March

View
Saturday 1-1.30pm
461 Repentance Creek Rd,
Goonengerry

Greg Price
0412 871 500
greg.price@raywhite.com

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Introducing Evolve Retreat, a stunning, natural oasis with significant landholding located in the pristine foothills of Mount Warning between Byron Bay and Coolangatta.

This is a rare chance to invest in a property with an excellent cashflow

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Tania Sheppard
0438 446 578



Elizabeth Hickey
0474 908 555



EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

5 -7 ARALUEN PLACE CRYSTAL CREEK



Closing February 24th at 4pm.

42 Acres (17.31ha) of private, elevated country living, with stunning views. 5 Araluen Place is set in an elevated, north facing position, looking across farmland and the Springbrook and Numinbah ranges.

Comfortable 3 /4 bedroom, 2 bathroom brick home with lots of storage. Fully covered verandahs and a level backyard with rainforest trees, open lawn and a rustic garden shed.

The property is fully fenced and is suitable for cattle or horses. The creek provides clean and reliable water for home and livestock.

A large farm shed with power is easily accessible.

Inspection by appointment only

Agents disclose interest in this property

Mark Zwemer: 0428 717 034 | mark.z@profking.com.au

Wayne Yeo: 0468 920 130 | wayne.yeo@atrealty.com.au

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- Well elevated with superb views across the hinterland to the ocean
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- Appealing long, bitumen sealed, tree lined driveway
- Ideal one level brick home, ready to move in and enjoy
- Four-bedrooms with two bathrooms and double garage
- Functional modern Kitchen with gas cooking and dishwasher
- Polished floorboards throughout and open fireplace
- Great for families with two separate living areas
- In-ground 6 m x 3 m salt chlorinated pool, covered shade

- Extra-large shed providing loads of vehicle/equipment storage/home business plus woodshed/carport and livestock shelter
- 10 Kilowatt solar powers the home
- 358 macadamia trees, income producing
- Ample water storage with 1 x 5000-gal tank and 1 x 10,000-gal tank, plus a bore
- Groomed fenced paddocks
- Lovely mature gardens with fruit trees, mango, bananas, and citrus
- Close to local schools and shops and medical centre
- 15 mins to Lennox Head beach and only 15 mins to Ballina/Byron Gateway Airport
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- Exciting opportunities to create your dream lifestyle property

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Echo
PROPERTY

Bilambil Creek – Site 8

Park/Village Name: Bilambil Creek Residential Village

🏠 2 🚗 1 🚗 1

\$330,000



Modern contemporary two-bedroom home located on the village perimeter in a small tranquil rural community. Rarely available nestled in this peaceful location is a delightful home with an inviting front verandah overlooking the picturesque surroundings.

- A generous sized open plan lounge dining area.
- The adjoining kitchen offers ample storage cabinets with good bench space and is complemented with a Blanco fan forced oven and Westinghouse ceramic cooktop.
- Located towards the rear of the home, are two good size bedrooms, both have built in wardrobes & ceiling fans.
- Fabulous generous size bathroom that includes a full-size bath, separate large shower, toilet, and a modern vanity.
- The home has a gas hot water service and an internal laundry.
- Adjoining carport is suitable for one vehicle.

Situated in the heart of the beautiful Tweed Valley on the banks of the Bilambil Creek and nestled between the rolling hills of the Pacific Ocean to the east and the sub-tropical rainforests to the west. Situated 15 minutes from Coolangatta/ Tweed shopping complexes, restaurants and clubs.

Retirement living at its best without the associated costs of exit fees and NO stamp duty.

Inspect: By appointment

Contact: Kelvin Price 0423 028 468 / Heike Wilson 0403 713 658
Mr Property Services

Open for inspection

www.echo.net.au/offi

Century 21 Plateau Lifestyle Real Estate

- 341 Ellis Road, Alstonville. Sat 9am–9.30am
- 232 Pearces Creek Road, Alstonville. Sat 10am–10.30am

First National Byron Bay

- 160 Reardons Lane, Swan Bay. Thurs 11–11.45am
- 13/11-19 Cooper Street, Byron Bay. Thurs 12–12.30pm
- 75 Butler Street, Byron Bay. Thurs 1–1.30pm
- 98 Wallace Road, The Channon. Thurs 2–2.30pm
- 11 Citriadora Drive, Ewingsdale. Thurs 3.30–4pm
- 8 Pecan Court, Suffolk Park. Thurs 4–4.30pm
- 103 Goonengerry Mill Road, Goonengerry. Fri 11–11.30am
- 41 Bottlebrush Crescent, Suffolk Park. Fri 3–3.30pm
- 1 Settlement Road, Main Arm. Fri 5–5.30pm
- 1 Settlement Road, Main Arm. Sat 9–9.30am
- 3/78 Broken Head Road, Suffolk Park. Sat 9–9.30am
- 17 Kamala Court, Coopers Shoot. Sat 9–9.30am
- 29 Pinegroves Road, Myocum. Sat 9–9.30am
- 31 Tristania Street, Bangalow. Sat 9.30–10am
- 77 Beech Drive, Suffolk Park. Sat 9.30–10am
- 1 Gumtree Place, Bangalow. Sat 10–10.30am
- 2 Seastar Court, Byron Bay. Sat 10.30–11am
- 35 Gordon Street, Byron Bay. Sat 10.30–11am
- 2B/107 Paterson Street, Byron Bay. Sat 10.30–11am
- 154 Waltons Road, Federal. Sat 10.30–11am
- 59 Taylors Road, Eureka. Sat 11–11.30am
- 8/2 Langi Place, Ocean Shores. Sat 11–11.30am
- 3/140 Jonson Street, Byron Bay. Sat 11.30am–12pm
- 128 Alcorn Street, Suffolk Park. Sat 11.30am–12pm
- 34 Helen Street, South Golden Beach. Sat 12–12.30pm
- 27 Redgum Place, Suffolk Park. Sat 12.30–1pm
- 4 Electra Close, Byron Bay. Sat 12.30–1pm
- 2 Electra Close, Byron Bay. Sat 12.30–1pm

McGrath Byron Bay

- 88 St Helena Road, McLeods Shoot. Sat 10–10.30am
- 56 Charlotte Street, Bangalow. Sat 10–10.30am
- 12 Cudgerie Court, Mullumbimby. Sat 10.30–11am
- 15 Childe Street, Byron Bay. Sat 11–11.30am
- 21 Scott Street, Byron Bay. Sat 11–11.30am

North Coast Lifestyle Properties

- 50 Tristran Parade, Mullumbimby. Sat 9.30–10.15am
- 48 Stuart Street, Mullumbimby. Sat 11–11.45am
- Lot 4/46 Durrumbul Road, Mullumbimby. Sat 12.30–1.15pm
- 6149 Tweed Valley Way, Burringbar. Sat 10–10.30am
- 20 Fawcett Street, Brunswick Heads. Sat 10–10.30am
- 3 Kooringa Court, Ocean Shores. Sat 10–10.45am
- 2-6 Pandanus Parade, Cabarita Beach. Sat 11–11.30am
- 20 Robin Street, South Golden Beach. Sat 11–11.30am
- 185 Kielys Road, Mooball. Sat 12–12.30pm

Ray White Byron Bay

- 10B Coopers Lane South, Main Arm. Wed 2–2.30pm
- 23 & 23A Parrot Tree Place, Bangalow. Thurs 2–2.30pm
- 109-111 Broken Head Road, Suffolk Park. Sat 9–9.30am
- 23 & 23A Parrot Tree Place, Bangalow. Sat 9–9.30am
- 10B Coopers Lane South, Main Arm. Sat 10–10.30am
- 31 Beachcomber Drive, Byron Bay. Sat 10–10.30 am
- 2/19 Marattia Place, Suffolk Park. Sat 10.30–11am
- 21 Carlyle Street, Byron Bay. Sat 11–11.30am
- 3 Lofts Road, Coorabell. Sat 11–11.30am
- 1/2-6 Cemetery Road, Byron Bay. Sat 11.30am–12pm
- 19 Kiah Close, Ocean Shores. Sat 12–12.30pm
- 62 Corkwood Crescent, Suffolk Park. Sat 12.30–1pm

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- 2 Leopard Wood Crescent, Bangalow. Sat 10–10.30am
- 8 Coachwood Court, Federal. Sat 11.30am–12pm
- 461 Repentance Creek Road, Goonengerry. Sat 1–1.30pm

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- 35-37 Edwards Lane, Kynnumboon. Sat 4.30pm–5pm

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- 5 Majors Lane, Fernleigh. Sat 10-10:30am

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- 62 Parrot Tree Place, Bangalow. Sat 9.15–9.45am
- 4 Bangalay Court, Bangalow. Sat 10.30–11am
- 648 Bangalow Road, Talofa. Sat 12.45–1.15pm
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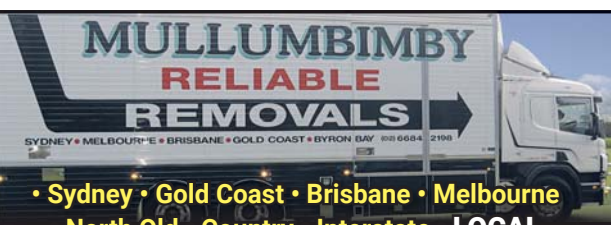
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PUBLIC NOTICES

SEEKING WITNESSES

to a sideswipe collision involving two white vans on Coolamon Scenic Drive, Mullumbimby side of Crystal Castle turnoff, going down hill around 9.50am on Sunday 18 February. Any information greatly appreciated. Contact Stewart at rednorton75@gmail.com

CLASSIFIED AD BOOKINGS

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Ads may be taken by phone on 6684 1777

AT THE ECHO HEAD OFFICE

Ads can be lodged in person at the Mullum Echo office:

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Ad bookings only taken during business hours: Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm. Ads can't be taken on the weekend. Account enquiries phone 6684 1777.

DEADLINE TUES 12PM

Publication day is Wednesday, booking deadlines are the day before publication.

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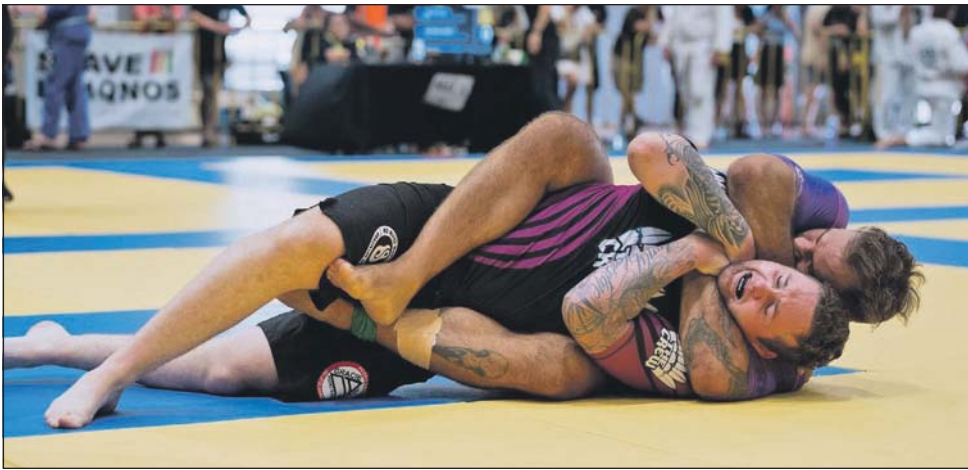
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1,000 people attend BJJ tournament



Submission was a constant threat at the BJJAO last weekend. Photo BJJAO League

Over 1,000 people flocked to Byron Bay on the weekend to either compete or spectate at one of Australia's top BJJ events, the BJJ National Australian Open (BJJAO).

'It was a great day for Brazilian jiu jitsu and a great day for Byron Bay,' tournament director Raz Harel said.

'We were hosting the BJJAO League's National

Australian Open at the Cavanbah Centre on Sunday.'

The majority of competitors were Australian, but 22 countries were represented overall.

Local school, The Academy, took the first place in 'Best Academy', with 24 competitors. Southside BJJ (Qld) took second place with

22 competitors and Galeb Brothers (Qld) took third with 21.

A total of \$9,000 in prize money was available to men and women across various disciplines and skill levels.

'The next BJJAO event in Byron Bay will be held on 19 May and we're looking forward to a great local presence,' Raz said.

Tweed BMX freestyler wins national gold

Tweed-based BMX freestyler Will Spedding has backed up a state championship with a national title and is now set to head to South Africa to compete against other elite riders.

The 17-year-old got the year off to a good start when he won the AusCycling (NSW/ACT) BMX Freestyle Amateur (15+) State Championship on Sunday, 21 January in Tuggeranong.

He then won the gold medal at the Rampfest Australian National Amateur Championships, earlier this month.

According to AusCycling: 'In a field of 12 finalists,



After tackling Australia, Will is ready to take on more international BMX freestyle competitors. Photo supplied

Spedding stood out as the rider most capable of joining the elite ranks in 2025,

putting together a strong run to win the gold medal from Brodie Quick and last year's U/15 national champion Koby Carrol.'

'This is an amazing result for Will, having just returned from surgery on a Bennett's fracture in January,' Donna Spedding (mum) said.

Will has been riding BMX freestyle since he was 12 years old and has travelled to China, Europe and South Africa to compete. He is one of seven AusCycling 'developing and emerging' riders across

Australia, which allows him to train at the National Training Centre on the Gold Coast.

New programs and plenty of tennis have flowed from tennis court upgrades in Suffolk Park

Suffolk Park Tennis is in full swing after court enhancements and the introduction of a full program since then.

The courts at Linda Vidler Park are managed by the Byron Bay Community Tennis Association, and the committee and coaches have implemented a number of programs and events for the local area's tennis players, since refurbishments last year.

Other enhancements have followed court resurfacing in August 2023 including: new nets, fence repair, activated lighting and drainage upgrades.

Multi-sports

To start the year Suffolk Park Tennis helped to host a multi-sports kids summer sports clinic during the January school holidays.



Anyone for social tennis? Right: The importance of a good serve featured at this ladies social clinic. Photos supplied

This saw 50 local primary school aged children enjoying a range of outdoor activities at Linda Vidler Park.

Tennis and soccer were the core sports while cricket,

basketball, table tennis and various catching games were also an option.

Each day concluded with a tug-o-war. Suffolk Park FC and Byron

Shire Council were also contributors.

New players

'An increase in participation has seen Suffolk Park

Tennis introduce a new booking system, as well,' coach Timm Lanyon said, 'We are also focused on keeping tennis affordable, with the public able to book

free court time on Saturdays or join a free social hitting group on Wednesday mornings.

'There are also plenty of coach-led programs, both social and for serious players, for adults and children, throughout the week.'

Team tennis

Team tennis Tuesday has been particularly popular attracting close to 70 players since last year. It involves 18 players forming six teams for the night to play singles and doubles against like-skilled opponents. A points tally decides the nights winners.

The inaugural season saw Ami Shoesmith come out on top, while local Talofa artist Geoff Murray is the reigning champion from season two.

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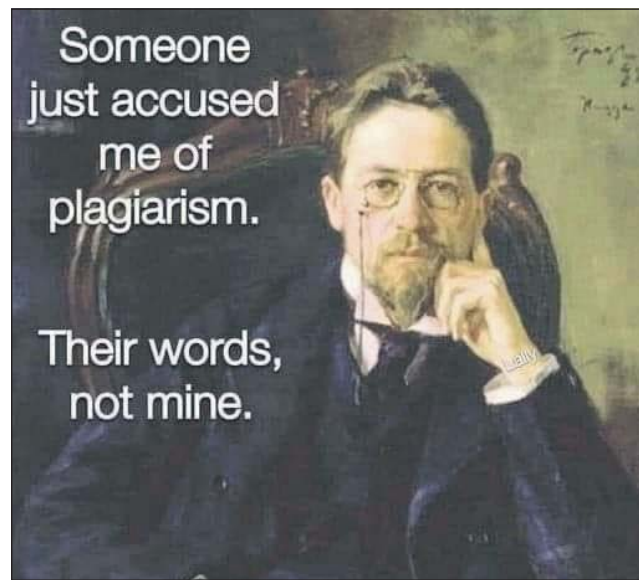
Those affected by the 2022 floods and wanting to join with others fighting for what the government promised for recovery can email byronflo-odemergencyactiongroup@gmail.com.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■
The NSW government is calling on the IT industry to 'submit AI technology solutions to help reduce manual development application (DA) workloads for councils and streamline the pre-lodgement phase' according to www.governmentnews.com.au.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■
NSW Greens MP Cate Faehrmann says 'regulatory persecution' led to the cancellation of the Groovin' the Moo festival. While organisers claim insufficient ticket sales, Faehrmann says the NSW government needs to support the industry by scrapping upwards of \$120,000 that NSW Police charge 'for the privilege of harassing patrons with sniffer dogs and strip searching them'.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■
News headline of the week by *Popular Mechanics*: Mutant wolves of Chernobyl have evolved to survive cancer.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■
'You are comprised of 84 minerals, 23 elements, and 30 litres of water spread across 38 trillion cells. You have been built up from nothing by the spare parts of the Earth you have consumed, according to a set of instructions hidden in a double helix and small enough to be carried by a sperm. You are recycled butterflies, plants, rocks, streams, firewood, wolf fur, and shark teeth, broken down to their smallest parts and rebuilt into our planet's



Another meme from the interwebs.

most complex living thing. You are not living on Earth. You are Earth' – Aubrey Marcus (Onnit CEO).

■ ■ ■ ■ ■
ICYMI In the same week whistle-blower Julian Assange faces a crucial hearing in the UK's High Court that could allow him another chance to appeal his extradition to the US, there were crocodile tears from Western leaders over the death/execution of Russian opposition leader, Alexei Navalny.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■
An open day for the public to see the new \$723.3 million Tweed Valley Hospital will be held Saturday, March 16 from 10am till 2pm. To register, visit www.tweedvalleyhospital.health.nsw.gov.au/get-involved/2024-community-open-day.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■
ANZ's \$4.9 billion bid to buy Suncorp's banking business has been approved by the Australian Competition Tribunal, despite the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) blocking the deal in August. Independent regional banks, Bendigo

The ABC 4 Corners investigation into Coles and Woolies is a must see, especially the interview with Woolies CEO, Brad Banducci. It was an awkward train wreck, and serves as a good model for how journalists should handle overpaid, entitled corporate vultures who lack empathy.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■
According to www.nationaltribune.com.au, an East Lismore man was fined \$11,000 and given a two-year Community Corrections Order in the Byron Bay Local Court last week for killing an eastern brown snake at a protected nature reserve in Brunswick Heads. RSPCA NSW Chief Inspector Scott Meyers said, 'In my 12 years of service as an Inspector, this is the first RSPCA NSW prosecution of this kind'.

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