

Echo

'ALL OPPRESSION CREATES A STATE OF WAR' - SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR

The Byron Shire Echo • Volume 40 #33 • January 21, 2026 • www.echo.net.au

Parkway Drive – Byron High to Bluesfest via the world

Byron Bay Bluesfest, Australia's most awarded music festival, has announced the next wave of artists joining the Bluesfest 2026 lineup, with the addition of three of the most influential, revered and culturally significant acts in modern music: Parkway Drive, Erykah Badu, and The Wailers.

Parkway Drive

Formed in Byron Bay in 2003, Parkway Drive have risen from teenage metal underdogs to global heavy music icons. In 2026, they return home for a defining moment, delivering their first hometown performance since their Byron Bay high school shows in 2014 – and their first ever Byron Bay festival performance.

While some people might question Bluesfest's choice of the local Byron band Parkway Drive, Bluesfest creator and director, Peter Noble OAM, told *The Echo* that, 'it's about getting creative and influencing different audiences to come and be exposed to different music.'



Parkway Drive at their last Byron show in the Byron High School auditorium. Photo Jeff 'Soft Core' Dawson

He said that having multi-genre artists play at the festival is part of a long-standing programming philosophy, and that Bluesfest has never been, and will never be, limited by genre.

'I've always been a major fan of the world's great festivals,' Peter said. 'Particularly the Montreux Jazz Festival under its legendary founder Claude Nobs, and the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival

under George Wein. These presenters showed the world something very important – that music is an open sky.'

Peter said his lightbulb moment was almost 30 years ago when

he was asked to come backstage and speak with Macavine Hayes, a blues musician from the Music Maker Foundation who had just performed.

'He was in his 80s. He took my hand and said, "Thank you for booking me on your festival." But he didn't let go. Then he said, "You don't understand what I'm really saying. I've been playing the blues all my life, but this is the first time I've ever been booked on a music festival alongside great artists like Jackson Browne. This is the first time that's ever happened for me. I only get booked to play blues festivals, not music festivals."

'That moment showed me the way forward. It showed me that blues needs to be part of a wider platform. Blues should never be pushed into a corner. It belongs on stages alongside other great artists. It's for everybody – the same way all music is for everybody,' he explained.

'There will always be genre-bending artists at Bluesfest.'

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Residents concerned over Mullum 'co-living' development

Paul Bibby

Residents living near the site of a proposed 50-unit residential development in Mullumbimby have expressed concern about the impact of the project on their street, the town more broadly, and the precedent it could set for future development in the Shire.

The \$8.2 million development, known as 'The Nest', would see two old cottages at 115-117 Stuart Street replaced with a nine-metre-high,

three-storey building and a 41-space carpark.

On the second and third floors of the building would be 50 tightly packed, one-room units, each with its own micro bathroom and kitchenette. These would be accompanied by communal living areas, including co-work spaces, communal laundry areas and a yoga deck, however some have questioned whether these areas are large enough to be used by more than a handful of people at any one time.

The developer behind the project, Cadre, says that the units would provide desperately-needed affordable housing aimed at key workers, including individuals, couples, young people and single parents with a child.

However, Stuart Street residents Heath Milton and Oni Blecher, say the proposed development is not appropriate for a small regional town and will have adverse impacts on traffic, parking, safety, and general amenity.

'We live directly across the road, so our concerns come from thinking about how this development would function day-to-day for both residents and the surrounding neighbourhood,' say the couple, who are part of a broader group of residents concerned about the development proposal.

'The proposal concentrates a large number of very small units on a single site in the centre of Mullumbimby, creating a level of density that feels out of step with the town.'

'There are also unresolved questions around stormwater, flooding, and servicing that are particularly important for people living nearby.'

The couple say that they understand the housing pressures facing the town and are very supportive of solutions to the housing crisis in this area, but question whether this site is appropriate for such a dense development, particularly considering that the Mullumbimby

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Seven abuzz with entertainers of all kinds ► p20

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Survival, connection, and Australia Day

Aslan Shand

What do we do for 26 January, the day Australia was invaded? For some it is a celebration of the Australian identity, for others it is a day of recognising the pain and destruction of colonisation, a day of survival, while for others it is a day of looking to connect. There are a range of events going on throughout the Byron Shire that people are invited to go to and recognise this day in a way that works for them.

Byron – Survival Day

Everyone is welcome to join the Arakwal on Country to help them celebrate the survival of Aboriginal culture in Arakwal Country at Apex Park (next to the Surf Club) in Byron Bay.

The opening ceremony will begin at 10am with a Welcome to Country followed by speeches, music, storytelling, a variety of stalls, and kids' activities where everyone can get hands-on with engaged learning about culture on Country.

The day is supported by Country as Teacher, Byron Shire Council, and the Sisters for Reconciliation (Northern Rivers). This is an alcohol-free event.

Ocean Shores – Australia Day

The Ocean Shores Community Association (OSCA) is holding its annual Australia Day Singalong and Mullet Throwing Competition at the Ocean Shores Public School, 166 Shara Boulevard, Ocean Shores from 2pm to 5pm.

In its 20th year this popular event draws people from local and even international origins. The senior women's champion five years ago was a holiday visitor from Russia.

Traditional rubber mullets are thrown, with championships for junior boys and girls, adult men and women. Last year's adult male winner threw a distance of 44.3m.

Afternoon tea and drinks and the giant Aussie Day cake are served free from the canteen.

Brunswick Heads – Connection Day

Raising the enormous Aboriginal flags on Brunswick Bridge is now a local tradition and on 26 January there will be a gathering of people on Country at Torakina Park in Brunswick Heads for a connection and cultural healing day.

'We understand that there is a lot of trauma around this day for a lot of people.

Connection Day is about bringing people back to the love of country,' Uncle Bulagun told *The Echo*.

'It doesn't matter whether you put on ochre or whether you speak language, everybody has a right to belong to Country. Everybody has a right to connect to Country and we're coming to celebrate the love of the country that we all share.'

There will be an opening ceremony at 10am followed by a range of activities including dance troupes throughout the day, open mic, art exhibition, truth-telling with Bundjalung Elders, kids activities, music and DJs. A closing ceremony will take place at 5pm before the flags are taken down at sunset.

'I feel that what we're doing is putting in a seed and hopefully, over the next 10 to 20 years it will grow and it will bring people back to *yubbrah yirrabal, yubbrah belogaman* – that means one spirit, one blood,' said Uncle Bulagun.

No official Australia Day activities

Byron Shire Council is not holding any events to mark Australia Day. They will hold two citizenship ceremonies on Thursday, 29 January.

Offices and flats proposed for Tincogan St, Mullum



Top: Artist's impression of 20 Tincogan St, Mullumbimby, Dalley St elevation. Image supplied
Bottom: Current site at 20 Tincogan St, viewed from Dalley St, Mullumbimby. Photo Jeff Dawson

Paul Bibby

Another shop-top housing development has been proposed for central Mullumbimby – the fourth such application to be submitted in the past year.

As residents continue to trawl through the plans for unit proposals on Station and Stuart streets, new plans have been submitted for a \$2.3 million development at 20 Tincogan Street.

According to the development application (DA), Prudent Superannuation Pty Ltd is proposing to replace an ageing weatherboard cottage with a two-storey 497-square-metre building.

Commercial and apartments

The building would feature commercial office space on the ground floor, with five residential apartments located above.

Four of the apartments would be single-bedroom units, while the fifth would have two bedrooms.

According to the developer's Statement of Environmental Effects (SEE), the development would have a maximum height of nine metres, which is the maximum allowable for this part of Mullumbimby.

The floor space ratio would be 0.61:1, which is well under the maximum of 0.75:1.

Flood-prone site

The flood report submitted as part of the DA indicates that the lower level of the proposed building would be flood-prone.

As such, the ground floor offices will have to be built with flood-compatible materials, and all future tenants made aware of the potential for flooding.

The SEE asserts that the development will not

increase the risk of flooding in the immediate locality.

Heritage character

It further claims that the development will 'complement' the heritage character of the town, and 'enhance the streetscape'.

'The design of the proposed building has been inspired by the heritage character of the existing brick buildings in the conservation area,' the authors of the SEE, Planners North, state.

'The proposed development is a high quality "heritage-compatible" design that provides highly livable housing in a building that integrates with the traditional design values and character of the town.'

The DA is currently on public exhibition until January 28. It can be viewed, and submissions made, via the YourSay section of the Byron Council website (www.byron.nsw.gov.au).

Bluesfest – it's all about the music

► Continued from page 1

There will always be artists who challenge you as an audience. That's what great festivals are meant to do. That's what Bluesfest does.

'Just imagine, on the same stage on the same night, it goes from Skeggs to The Dregs, to Sublime to Parkway Drive. That's a bill for the ages,' said Peter.

'What a way to kick Bluesfest off. We've got Erykah Badu, who's playing on the same stage before Earth, Wind & Fire. You know what's weird? They both played Bluesfest 2012 but on different nights, and neither have been back to Australia since.'

'Don't get stuck on labels. Get into the music. Support live music. Buy a ticket.'

Bring your children, under six they are free – but don't forget the earplugs. Music is a gift, and it should be part of everyone's life.'

Byron Bay Bluesfest 2026 takes place April 2–5, 2026 at the Byron Bluesfest site at Tyagarah. You can book a ticket at: www.bluesfest.com.au.

Read full story in *The Echo*



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Caring for the creatures that care about you

Aslan Shand

Pets in the Park, who help homeless people care for their pets, celebrated their first anniversary on Sunday at the Byron Community Cabin, checking and providing free veterinary care for homeless people's pets.

The Northern Rivers clinic runs the third Sunday of every month at Byron Community Cabin on Carlyle Street starting at 11am with the last pet check in at 2pm.

For their first anniversary clinic they had a busy day of people bringing in their pets for check-ups. They usually see between ten and 20 pets at each clinic they run.

'I have worked at every one as a vet and we are busy for the three hours that we are there,' said local specialist vet Elizabeth Settles.

'We also work with some local vets in Byron,



Vet nurse Florencia Sampognaro and dog masseuse Kate Parisi, massaging Trouble who is checking out two tiny, as yet unnamed, kittens. Photo Jeff Dawson

Bangalow, Mullumbimby and now Lismore to provide spays, neuters, dentals, etc. We also work with local pet stores in Mullum and Byron that provide donated foods, treats, and beds for our clients attending the clinics.'

New Lismore clinic

Following the success of the Byron clinic they are currently looking to start a new clinic in Lismore this year.

'We're hoping that will also run as a monthly clinic but

that will depend on getting out the word for volunteers and a place we can work,' Elizabeth told *The Echo*.

For more information or to contact Pets in the Park got to: www.petsinthepark.org.au/nsw/northern-rivers.

New flood camera installed on Mullumbimby Road

There are now four flood cameras installed around Byron Shire to assist residents and visitors to make safe and sensible decisions on driving during wet weather and flood events.

A new flood camera has been installed on Mullumbimby Road near the intersection of Gulgan Road. Other flood cameras are located on Left Bank Road, Myocum Road, and Main Arm

Road. The cameras, which can be viewed at Council's Emergency Dashboard (<https://emergency.byron.nsw.gov.au/>), provide people with an accurate picture of the impact of rain on flood-prone roads before they decide to drive.

'Mullumbimby Road is particularly affected by flooding and while improvements we have made make the area less susceptible

to flash flooding there will still be times when flooding will happen,' Acting Director Infrastructure Services, Christopher Soulsby, said.

'This camera will allow people to check the road to see if they can safely get in or out of Mullumbimby. We have had positive feedback about the cameras in other locations with our data showing people checking them often during wet weather.'

Three advanced smart flood monitors are also now operational in the Byron Shire at: Belongil Creek (Belongil), Federation Bridge (Mullumbimby), and Helen Street Bridge (South Golden Beach). The monitors use cameras and infra-red technology to allow emergency services and Council to track water levels and water flow in real time to provide early warning for flash flooding.

Community questions option 2 for Bangalow Bowlo

Aslan Shand

Four potential ways forward for the Bangalow Bowlo to reopen have been put on the table by the Save Bangalow Bowlo Steering Committee (SBBSC), from challenging the breach of the memorandum of understanding (MOU) by Norths Collective to a philanthropic support for a buyback.

Option 2 is to continue with the in-principle agreement negotiated by the Bangalow Advisory Committee (BAC) with Norths. This option has Norths hand over the assets to community ownership but would retain a \$2 million mortgage over the property for 25 years. However, if the Bowlo defaults (closes, goes insolvent, etc.), Norths can sell it.

Some community members have raised concerns around this proposal saying that, 'This deal is outside the MOU,

so there is no expression of interest (EOI) process required. Norths can go straight to open market sale upon default.'

No working capital

'The \$2m mortgage prevents the Bowlo from borrowing for improvements, refurbishment, or working capital. Lenders won't touch a club with a \$2m debt, that isn't decreasing (no repayments), and hasn't turned a profit for years.'

The Bowlo closed after Covid losses of approximately \$250k, and then in October 2025 as a result of the Norths closure.

Speaking to *The Echo* hospitality consultant Allan Strahle said, 'Typically a struggling venue needs meaningful capital to turn around. Norths promised \$3.5 million over ten years to be invested for renovations and upgrades because that's what it needs.

'It could reopen on the funds raised but that's significantly undercapitalised and staying open requires capital. A \$2 million mortgage means it's starting on the back foot with restricted borrowing capacity. If it reopens in the same condition that failed twice, without the ability to make meaningful changes, closure is just a matter of time.'

'Given this track record and the inability to borrow, default at some point within the 25 year window is highly probable,' said a community member who asked not to be named.

'When the Bowlo defaults, Norths is positioned to sell the land on the open market for at least \$5m.'

Local councillor and member of the SBBSC, Asren Pugh, responded to these concerns telling *The Echo* that, 'there is no easy way

forward in negotiating with Norths to get the Bowlo into community hands and to ensure the long term financial viability of the club for generations to come.'

'There are lots of opinions on the best options and the SBBSC is committed to hearing all opinions from the community and being as open and transparent about the possible ways forward. We have released a "Pros and Cons" summary that we encourage everyone to look at, and to fill in the community survey that is open at the moment. We want the community asset back in community hands, viable long term, and open as soon as possible.'

The 'Pros and Cons' summary is available on *The Echo* online: www.echo.net.au and the survey and further information can be found at: <https://forms.gle/PnfvbUzZg2vq55NV9>.

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4. Please direct comments to Mark Baade (Planning Consultant): mark@saqconsulting.com.au, 0417 088 000 or SAQ Consulting, P O Box 50 Clayfield QLD 4011 by **Friday 6th February 2026**

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As *The Echo* turns 40, Aslan Shand focuses on the community maintaining a strong voice

Aslan Shand

After founding *Echo* editor Nicholas Shand's death in 1996 his business partners, David Lovejoy and Jeff Dawson, along with then editor Michael McDonald kept the fires and ideas burning along with the rest of the amazing, shell-shocked, *Echo* team. Michael, lovingly known as McDuck, continued as editor, keeping the community entertained with his brilliant wit and acerbic comment. He was succeeded by Hans Lovejoy, David and Wendy Lovejoy's son, in 2010. Hans has kept the local council on their toes ever since, highlighting inconsistencies, outrages, incompetence, and victories over the years. He is now focussing on the online daily *Echo*.

For better or worse, I've stepped up to take a turn at the helm of the print edition and aim to keep the community's voice, through *The Echo*, alive and strong.

The Echo was born in June 1986 out of an era of radical change – the youth of the 1960s and '70s were breaking away from

traditional expectations, they were marching in the streets against the Vietnam War, they were creating communities in the cities and the hills around Byron Shire, they brought together the Aquarius Festival, they were asking for women's rights, gay rights, workers' rights, they were looking at ways to create a better world by creating better communities, more equal living conditions and looking to protect the environment for future generations.

With music, art, ideas, drugs, and fashion, they were turning their worlds upside down, inside out, and trying to work out how to live in peace and harmony.

Byron Bay, with its beautiful beaches and the surrounding hinterland, that had affordable land, became a mecca for people looking to create an alternative way of life. Large plots of land were being sold relatively cheaply by local farmers as the dairy industry had taken a downturn. Following the Aquarius Festival in Nimbin in 1973 the Northern Rivers became known as the 'rainbow region' – a



Aslan Shand is the editor of *The Echo* newspaper.

Photo Jeff Dawson

place of artists, musicians, alternative medical practice and wellness, acceptance, and a place to drop out and take drugs and expand your mind, or to drop in and try something different from the mainstream.

By the 1980s the hippies were starting to come out of the hills, they realised that to ensure that the local Council didn't pave the way for rampant development, that Byron Bay didn't become a bonanza of highrises, that the environment they knew was so vital to the future of humanity was protected, that Australia didn't become an open uranium mine, they needed to stand up and get involved.

The drug raids in the early 1980s were also a rallying point after police with guns were strip-searching people on the side of the roads in Main Arm. There were claims that the police were 'setting people up' with plants, and shooting up people's water tanks. The local media refused to report on the raids and it took three attempts to finally get the obudsman's department to take action, with some local police finally being held to account for their behaviour.

The Echo was born of this crucible of events, ideas, and community.

The alternatives, or hippies, were creating their own political parties like United Shire, getting active in local organisations like the local fire brigades (Main Arm RFS refers to itself proudly as being made up of hillbillies and hippies!), starting up the Mullumbimby Neighbourhood Centre (thanks mum) and the Byron Community Centre (thanks Jan Dawkins). For *Echo* founding editor Nicholas Shand (my father) it was a matter of persuading David and Wendy Lovejoy to become partners, and

then pounding the streets of the Shire for advertisers and stories to produce the first edition of the *Brunswick Valley Echo*, now the *Byron Shire Echo*, that came out on 11 June, 1986.

For the last 40 years *The Echo* has been the place where the community could debate ideas, a place they could campaign for appropriate development, a place for art, music, culture, and ideas to be shared. The pages of *The Echo*, both printed and online – it was one of the first newspapers to have an online presence – helped shape the Byron Shire and broader rainbow region into a place where people come to connect, to create community.

The Echo has been key to supporting reform when it came to important societal changes in relation to the environment, supporting the call to save Byron's precious Paterson Hill, giving voice to the Bentley gas-free campaign, and fighting to stop logging state forests and turn them into national parks. *The Echo* has supported local organisations who have worked so hard

to combat violence against women and homelessness – that has always been a key part of *The Echo's* approach to community.

The Echo has always been a keen voice for drug reform and (more recently) challenging unthinking political tribalism, magnified by social media. Alternative energy, sustainability, countering harmful right-wing political extremist views, and fighting for equality are core issues historically for *The Echo* and in these areas it continues to raise its voice.

As Nicky once said to me, 'If you can help the person with the least, you are helping lift everyone up'. We live in turbulent times and strong voices for the least privileged, for equality, for the environment, for drug reform, for peace are now vital. *The Echo*, with the community, will call for justice and peace, and for all communities to come together to create the world as a better place for the future as we celebrate 40 years of achievements and look to what we want to achieve as a community locally and globally in the next 40!

MCM HOUSE

Byron Bay



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Coorabell Hall Multikulcha Festival



Some of the participating artists: Dylan Bolt, Nigel Stewart, Isolde Kopping, Judy Shelley, Made Siki Astawa, Made Danti Coblyn, Jannisse Phillis, Rudiger Wasser and Helene Safajou represent many cultures. Photo Jeff Dawson

From hula to Bollywood and visual art of many cultures the Multikulcha Festival and Art Exhibition will open on Friday, 23 January with all the richness that multicultural arts can bring.

The three-day mini-festival celebrates unity and diversity which has become a national priority in light of recent events. Byron Shire has been fortunate to have a team of local volunteers dedicated to multicultural celebrations for the last 20 years with annual festivals, radio shows, and other events.

'The Multikulcha Art Exhibition opening night will feature Latin dance band Las Comadres, First Nations music and Art by Nigel Stewart, and will be opened by our own amazing MP, Tamara Smith to celebrate the first ever Multikulcha Art Exhibition in Byron,' said organiser Judith Shelley.

'This will be followed by two days of art viewing and cultural activities on Saturday, 24 and Sunday 25 January from 10am to 4pm. It will include artist demonstrations and drawing

circle plus music jam featuring African musician Kobya Panguana!

'A very special feast of activities are planned for Sunday afternoon with artist talks, workshops, performances, Brazilian dance, the Bollywood Shiva Shimmer Squad, and the Byron Bay Hula/Mana Aloha Hula which is great for kids!

Refreshments are by the Red Heart Project for African Women plus BayFM will live broadcast on BayFm 99.9 from 2-4pm and live stream on www.bayfm.org.'

Oden-Jenkins faces DV murder charge

Mia Armitage & Aslan Shand

The man accused of murdering 23-year-old Ashleigh Grice in Mullumbimby nearly four months ago is to have his case mentioned in court again next month.

Police arrested 29-year-old Jai Oden-Jenkins on 20 September, 2025, and charged him with Ms Grice's domestic violence (DV) murder.

Officers said the two had been intimate partners.

Oden-Jenkins was refused bail and remained behind bars after first

appearing by video link in the Lismore Local Court on 26 November, 2025.

Bail conditions

A bail undertaking was entered into by Oden-Jenkins on 23 December, 2025 and remains in place.

Oden-Jenkins is required to live in Victoria and can not 'enter Byron Bay or go within 100 kilometres of that area (except for attending court or upon a legal representative for a pre-arranged legal appointment or conference),' according to court documents.

Oden-Jenkins was released to a person with the initials MO and is required 'Not to be absent from these premises between the hours of 9pm and 7am unless in the company of MO.'

Oden-Jenkins was not required to appear when the matter was mentioned in the same court again on Wednesday, 14 January, 2026.

The court heard police were still examining a post-mortem report received late last year.

The case is due for its first mention in the Lismore District Court on 11 February.

Get your gloves on for clean up Australia Day

Registrations are now open for the nation's largest environmental movement, Clean Up Australia Day, which returns on Sunday, 1 March 2026.

Individuals, families, schools, and community groups across the country are being encouraged to register to get in on the action.

Organisers say, 'Since its inception, over 23 million volunteers have joined the clean up effort.'

'In 2025, over 800,000 people volunteered across 8,000 events nationally during the Clean Up Australia Day campaign period.

'The FY24 Clean Up Australia Litter Report, which provides an annual snapshot of litter collected by volunteers in a calendar year, highlighted that plastics continued to be the number one litter type found in our national parks, bushlands and waterways,

representing almost 81 per cent of all counted litter. E-waste made its way into the top ten, with vapes and batteries making up most of the reported e-waste found in the environment.'

Register now at www.cleanup.org.au for Clean Up Australia Day on Sunday, March 1 2026. Business Clean Up Day on Tuesday, February 24 2026 and Schools Clean Up Day on Friday, February 27 2026.

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RICHARDSON MURRAY

Win a World Surfing League twin fin

Surf fans have the chance to win one of five twin-fin surfboards and support the purchase of a custom-fitted trailer essential for transporting specialised surf equipment and adapted wheelchairs.

Stone & Wood are working with the Disabled Surfers Association (DSA) Far North Coast branch (FNC) to raise money for the custom trailer by creating the Win a Twin Fin raffle which gives participants a chance to win one of five iconic twin-fin surfboards. Each board has been hand-shaped by renowned Australian shapers and ridden by professional surfers at recent World Surf League (WSL) events, making them a true piece of surfing history.

Stone & Wood has been announced as the official beer partner for all major WSL events in Australia and with that deep connection to surf culture and a shared commitment to community,



DSA FNC volunteers and participants at a Lennox Head event in 2024. Photo supplied

the Stone & Wood team were inspired to find a way to support the DSA.

‘When we learned about the DSA’s need for a custom trailer, we knew we had to help,’ said Paul Tansley, Stone & Wood Head of Strategy & Creative.

‘The Win a Twin Fin raffle is a great way to bring surf fans along on the journey and turn our shared passion into real, tangible support.’

Dylan Chisholm, President of the DSA FNC branch, said the support would have a lasting impact on the

organisation and the people it serves.

‘This trailer will be a game-changer for our branch,’ said Dylan.

‘It allows us to safely transport our specialised equipment and continue creating inclusive surf experiences for people with disability across the Far North Coast.’

Grab your tickets today for a chance to win a legendary surf board and give the gift of an unforgettable wave! www.raffletix.com.au/winatwinfin2025.

Concerned about type 2 diabetes and heart disease?

Do you have concerns about the prevention and management of type 2 diabetes and heart disease for ages 65+?

Local dietitian Lisa Strauss will be giving a series of FREE health talks at the Ocean Shores Country Club from 29 January to 19 February on Thursdays at 1.30pm to 3.30pm and Ballina Indoor Sports Centre from 26 February to 19 March on Thursdays at 1.30pm to 3.30pm so

people can learn how good nutrition choices can support healthy ageing.

‘The idea is to hold a space for people to discuss ways to incorporate healthy eating choices, share recipes, be given expert advice, and to share a free afternoon,’ Lisa told *The Echo*.

‘The aim is to increase awareness in the prevention and management of chronic disease and increase social

connectivity.’

During the session you can learn about how to prevent and manage type 2 diabetes and heart disease, get practical food and cooking tips to help manage your health, and have your questions answered by an expert.

For bookings or more information call 0491 771 159 or visit: www.lisastrausshealth.com.au/health-talks.

Is high-density development the right way?

► Continued from page 1
Hospital site has had zoning changes to specifically allow medium to high density.

‘As it stands, the scale and intensity of the proposal raise serious concerns for us in terms of parking, safety and day-to-day amenity,’ they say.

‘We are taking part in the planning process so these issues can be properly considered, but if the development were to proceed in its current form, we believe the impacts would be unacceptable.’

A key feature of the development proposal is its use of the co-living housing provisions within the state government’s State Environmental Housing Policy (2021).

This policy makes it easier for so-called co-living housing projects – i.e. developments featuring small private rooms alongside shared facilities – to be built, by streamlining the planning approval process.

But Ms Blecher and Mr Milton say that The Nest development appears to function more like a high-density apartment building.

‘Each unit has its own kitchenette and bathroom, and there are limited shared living spaces, which doesn’t reflect how co-living is usually understood,’ they say.

‘We’re conscious that this is the first proposal of its kind in the Shire.’

‘If this approach is accepted, it could shape how similar developments are assessed in the future, with lasting implications for Mullumbimby and other local centres.’

Meanwhile, the Mullumbimby Chamber of Commerce said it was surprised by the statements

Public meeting on The Nest

A public meeting regarding the proposed residential development at 115-117 Stuart Street, Mullumbimby will be held at the Byron School of Arts, Mullumbimby, on 2 February, at 5.30pm.

from the developer suggesting that the Chamber supported the development.

A spokesperson told *The Echo* that while the Chamber supported affordable housing in the town, it had not seen the development application (DA) for The Nest nor made any statement in relation to it, supportive or otherwise.

The Mullumbimby Residents Association (MRA), which was also named in the developer’s Community Consultation report as being supportive of the project, also said this did not fully reflect its position.

‘We’re fully aware of the need for more housing and we support appropriate affordable housing projects,’ MRA spokesperson, Dale Emerson said.

‘But we do have some concerns including the impact on traffic and stormwater, and the way the co-living State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) is being used and any precedent that might be set.’

‘We’d just like to see a really transparent process in relation to the determination of this DA.’

Developer responds

The developer, Cadre, provided a detailed statement to *The Echo* responding to the residents’ concerns.

In response to concerns about the size and scale of the proposal and its impact on local traffic and amenity, Cadre’s Founder

and Creative Director Christopher Tyas said that the development was a far less intensive use of the site than was permitted under the present zoning and that it complied with all height and floorspace controls.

He said that containing the recreational areas inside the first floor meant noise could not spread to nearby residences, and that experts had determined the development would be low impact in terms of traffic.

In response to the argument that the development would be more appropriately located elsewhere, Mr Tyas said that he was not aware of any other available locations in Mullumbimby where this type of accommodation could be delivered, and even if there were another location this would not be reasonable grounds for objection.

Mr Tyas also responded to the argument that the development could not reasonably be described as a co-living residence as it was more akin to a high-density apartment building. He said that the proposal provided for communal floor space of 142m² and open communal area of 601m². This provision is well in excess of the standards prescribed for co-living.

The development application for this project is currently on public exhibition and submissions can be made via the YourSay section of Council’s website (www.byron.nsw.gov.au).



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Wategos mega mansion gets green light

Paul Bibby

An ongoing legal stoush over one of the most prized locations at Wategos Beach has been settled, paving the way for a \$12 million dual occupancy to be built on the site.

Fifteen months ago, Byron Council granted Mambrooke Pty Ltd permission to build a five-level mega mansion and accompanying studio at 19 Marine Parade – an address that practically kisses the waves at high tide.

But the project hit a snag when, prior to construction, the developer sought to modify their application on the grounds that changes were needed to make the development more accessible for those of advanced years.

The revised plans involved the expansion of the basement level garage to include a new wheelchair-accessible parking space, a lift, ramp, and new storage areas for bikes and surfboards.



Artist's impression of Wategos mansion.

While the modifications did not involve changing the overall visual impact of the mansion, they did require significant additional excavation into the famous Wategos hillside.

This put them at odds with the Development Control Plan (DCP) for the location which states that garage and basements should be designed to minimise the amount of site excavation required.

The DCP also requires that basements and subterranean car parks are to have a maximum

footprint of 50 square metres.

Byron Council has been reluctant to approve excavation works that exceed development controls in Wategos in recent years, having witnessed multiple owners dig deeper and deeper into the iconic hillside.

While Council staff were mulling over the proposed changes, Mambrooke Pty Ltd took the Council to court, asserting that this prevarication amounted to a 'deemed refusal' of their application.

They argued that future-proofing their home was a

reasonable reason not to adhere to the planning rules.

They further argued that they should not be required to adhere to the DCP control, because others have not done so.

'It is evident from a review of existing development within the locality that this prescriptive development control has not been adhered to on multiple other projects,' the developer said.

Late last year during a court-ordered conciliation conference, the two parties reached an agreement which allowed Mambrooke to move ahead with their modified plans with a few small amendments.

The agreement was formalised by a judgment by LEC Commissioner Susan O'Neill, handed down on 23 December, 2025.

This paves the way for Mambrooke to commence construction of its dual occupancy in the coming weeks.

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Bruns sports fields upgrades underway

Byron Shire Council staff say they are beginning repairs of the public toilets and the clubhouse at Stan Thompson Oval in Brunswick Heads this month.

Malcolm Robertson, Manager Open Spaces and Facilities, said that the 'current facilities are not meeting the needs of players and supporters, and we know these upgrades will be welcomed'.

'We have begun work and hope to complete the first stage of the project by the end of April. The first stage includes: repair and reconfiguration of all public toilets; structural repairs and replacement of the ground floor and walls of the amenities block; a new access ramp and landings to all public toilets to increase accessibility; a new

accessible concrete path connecting the playground to the clubhouse and accessible car space; new outdoor stairs for access to the upper level of the clubhouse onto the deck.

'The second stage of the project will include improvements to changing rooms and showers including an accessible bathroom, and an internal staircase and

accessible lift. Temporary toilets are in place while works are underway.'

Echo crosswords – passing the baton

Ziggi Browning

The Echo would like to heartily thank the talented wordsmith, Stephen Clarke, for so generously offering his crosswords for us to publish over the last couple of years. We wish him all the best enjoying his freedom from the relentless task of feeding us a new puzzle every week.

Though we have lost our current crossword supplier, we won't be leaving crosswords without satisfaction. Fortunately we have a large cache of treasures left to us by another distinguished local littérateur, Mungo MacCallum.

Mungo from the Bardo

Mungo MacCallum may have left this mortal coil in December 2020, however we at The Echo still feel his influence and hold his memory

dear. Mungo's talents are somewhat legendary around here. During his long tenure as an Echo columnist he not only elevated our pages with his heavyweight political insights, his love of language was infectious. Generations of Echo editors, journalists and columnists owe him much for his guidance and example. In The Echo's early days, Mungo came up with rules for producing concise and elegant prose – devising a set of axioms condensed from George Orwell's writings. Yellowed and wrinkled with time, Mungo's hand-typed rules remain pinned up in the editor's office as a handy guide to this day.

Cryptic wordplay provided Mungo a creative outlet for his love of language. After going through a lean patch as a semi-retired journalist, setting crosswords became a serious vocation for Mungo.

Well known for his wit and for his political leanings, Mungo's cryptics gained a strong following in various publications including a long run with The Saturday Paper.

His generous nature and love of his local paper means that Mungo secured syndication with The Echo and even went so far as to write quick clues for the benefit of The Echo's more casual readership.

From this week we are going all the way back to the beginning, to the first of some 540 crosswords that Mungo left us. Crossworders can expect puzzles that reflect Mungo's encyclopaedic knowledge of literature, politics, cricket, a deep general knowledge, and a biting wit. When solving them it's worth bearing in mind that they were penned between 2008 and 2020. Go to page 15 to find Mungo's crossword #1.

Double demerits
 are in force this
Australia Day
 long weekend.
Fri 23 Jan – Mon 26 Jan

STOP IT...OR COP IT.

Echo

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

DV accounts for nearly two-thirds of local crime reports

Richmond Police say nearly two thirds of all offences recorded in the district last week were related to domestic violence.

Tweed Heads Croquet Club reopens

The rebuilt Tweed Heads Croquet Club, located at 39 Recreation St, was officially opened on Thursday. Founded in 1949, the clubhouse was rebuilt after the devastating 2022 floods inundated the building and weakened its structure.

Lismore names 2026 Australia Day Ambassador

Catherine De Vrye is a globally-recognised author and keynote speaker whose life story is a testament to resilience, adaptability and hope, says Lismore City Council. 'Canadian by birth but proudly Australian by choice, she has twice been voted as Australian Keynote Speaker of the Year'.

Forestry Corp cops fine for trespass in Western Dorrigo Plateau

NSW government corporation, Forestry Corporation (FC), has been fined \$15,000 for entering a Western Dorrigo Plateau property without first consulting the landowner. FC says they 'will take time to consider the notice and reasons for issuing it'.

Lifeline shop opens in Murwillumbah

A new op-shop has opened on Murwillumbah's main street at 28 Murwillumbah Street.

Swimmer reported missing makes it back to shore

A swimmer reported missing on Saturday afternoon from the Ballina coastline managed to make it back to shore without help from emergency services, who were at the ready.

\$9.5m post-landslip repairs to Bruxner

Road repairs are happening to part of the Bruxner Highway west of Casino where a landslip caused significant damage. Two downslips were reportedly damaged in the landslip between Willock Street and Bulmers Road at Mallanganee, about 40km west of Casino.

www.echo.net.au

ReForest Now calls for support of Sumatra

Local regeneration organisation, ReForest Now, is calling for public support for Sumatran villages as they recover from recent mudslides.

Their aim is to plant more than 100,000 trees, adding to what has already been planted.

Organisers say, 'The land split open. Homes disappeared. So we acted immediately. Communities stepped forward'.

Trees prevent erosion

'Between December 2025 and January 2026, over 107,000 native rainforest trees were planted - these are safe inside the Gunung Leuser National Park'.

'Where forests remain, damage stops.

'In nearby national parks, there were no landslides, no flood damage, no polluted rivers. Rainforests have protected land and life for



ReForest Now's Maximo Bottaro on the ground in disaster-hit Sumatra. Image from ReForest Now

millions of years when they are not cut down.

'If forests stand, communities survive. Your support today helps keep Sumatra standing.

'Flood rains will return. Without forests, Sumatra's most vulnerable communities will be hit again.

'With continued support, we can begin planting another 100,000 trees immediately in January and February 2026.

'Direct bank transfers are

welcomed for donations over \$500. Please email kallen@reforestnow.org.au to request a receipt'.

ReForest Now Public Fund
BSB: 032-573
Account: 354 136.

Critical habitat

According to www.reforestnow.org.au, 'Sumatra's rainforests are a vital ecosystem, teeming with irreplaceable biodiversity. However, deforestation has taken a devastating toll, with half of

the original forests lost'.

'Thankfully, protected areas like Gunung Leuser National Park offer a refuge for wildlife.

'Here, the last remaining populations of Sumatran tigers, elephants, orangutans, and rhinos co-exist.

'Yet, the threats persist. Illegal logging, poaching, and the illegal wildlife trade endanger these magnificent animals.

'Wealthy collectors fuel this demand, driving species like the Sumatran tiger closer to extinction.

'The human cost is real too. Local communities, facing poverty, are sometimes lured into participating in these destructive activities.

'There is hope. We are working with local partners like the Kelompok Tani Hutan Konservasi (Farmers Group for Forest Conservation), a group of war refugees that were granted rights to live in

the Gunung Leuser National Park in 2001, to combat these threats.

'We have run several anti-poaching patrols in Sumatra. Of critical focus have been the loss of two tiger cubs to poachers recently and a grieving mother to keep safe.

'Human animal conflict has already occurred in the area with a bull elephant and encroachers, though the details of what caused this conflict need to be investigated further.

'Action against illegal logging must continue.

'We have stopped tens of hectares from being cut down in the past few years, in several locations along the edge of the Gunung Leuser National Park.

'This needs to be done consistently to keep ahead of forest loss. A complete patrol unit is very sustainable at around AU\$1,800 per month'.

Fishing trio rescued from Ballina after boat flips

Three fishermen returning from Byron Bay to Ballina were rescued on Sunday, when their boat capsized trying to cross the Ballina bar into the Richmond River, emergency services said.

The incident reportedly happened within sight of the Marine Rescue NSW unit base at Ballina near Lighthouse Beach shortly after midday Sunday.

A rostered volunteer was able to raise an official alert, triggering a multi-agency rescue operation involving Surf Life Saving, police,

paramedics and marine authorities.

Volunteers said seas were estimated at two to three metres high.

Sunday's rain and wind combined with an outgoing tide at the time of the rescue made for conditions that were 'not the best,' Marine Rescue NSW Mid-North Coast Inspector, Courtney Greenslade, said on Monday morning.

Inspector Greenslade said the best time for crossing the bar was generally at the half-way point in time between

low and high tides as the tide was due to come in.

The inspector said the fishers were likely in the water for between ten and 15 minutes before being rescued at Lighthouse Beach.

Surfers to the rescue

A nearby surfer rescued one, she said, while local surf life savers rescued the other two.

Volunteers on social media credited SLS volunteer Al Noble with the latter rescue, carried out using an inflatable rescue boat.

It was about an hour before the boat, estimated by Inspector Greenslade to be about 67 metres long, washed to shore at Shelly Beach without sinking.

Boat recovered

Inspector Greenslade said the boat's owner was able to recover the vessel and take it away.

Volunteers said the incident ended without anyone suffering serious injury thank to 'the vigilance, training, and cooperation of all involved'.

Marine Rescue NSW

understands the fishers were experiencing mechanical issues aboard the boat immediately prior to some sudden wave action upon crossing the Ballina bar.

Volunteers referred to a problem with the vessel's throttle, said to have failed to deliver sufficient power for the tidal ebb crossing.

Inspector Greenslade said it was a good time to remind boaters to always log on with Marine Rescue NSW before heading out to sea, and of the importance of wearing life jackets.

Make leaving dogs in hot cars a crime, says NSW govt

The NSW Labor government says it will introduce changes in the first half of this year to the state's *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979* in parliament.

The government says a review of the act including more than 7,000 submissions shows the need for 'modern legislation to align with community expectations'.

'Extensive stakeholder consultation, animal welfare data and scientific evidence' have informed Labor's proposed changes, the government said in the announcement.

The proposal includes the introduction of offences for leaving dogs in hot vehicles, banning the use of what the

government says are 'painful prong collars,' and 'tougher animal fighting laws'.

Animal welfare groups welcome proposed changes. RSPCA NSW data reportedly identifies more than 500 reports from the public of dogs being 'locked in cars' in the six years to 2024/25.

Closing loopholes

The government said proposed changes include identifying potential loopholes in laws against animal fighting and supporting NSW police in addressing their links to organised crime.

Government inspectors would also be allowed to 'administer pain relief to animals where necessary,'

under the bill, and 'appropriately train Local Land Services personnel to euthanise animals in emergencies,' the government said.

Animal Welfare League NSW chief executive officer Stephen Albin was quoted in the media

release accompanying the announcement, saying the group's inspectors on the front line were often called out to animals in distress.

Pain relief

'It is important that they can provide pain relief,' Mr

Albin said, adding that the new laws provided 'much-needed new powers to deal with the worst cases and offenders'.

The government said it expected to present a bill to NSW Parliament in the first half of 2026.

Regional median rents hit new high

Median advertised rents in regional NSW hit a new high in December 2025, according to the latest data from REA Group.

Their report found that regional NSW rents in December were up 5.3 per cent compared to a year ago, pushing the median weekly

rent to a new high of \$600.

Key findings from the report include, 'Regional NSW recorded a 1.7 per cent lift in rent prices over the December quarter to sit 5.3 per cent higher than a year ago; of the regional areas, NSW remains the most expensive to rent in; regional

NSW recorded faster rent price growth than Sydney, which lifted 4.1 per cent year-on-year to December. While house rent growth in regional NSW outpaced that of units over the December quarter, units (+6.0 per cent) recorded stronger annual growth (+5.0 per cent) than houses'.

Labor's hate speech laws and the end of open discourse

Chaïy Donati

Bondi still haunts us. In the wake of such horror, the instinct to act, swiftly, decisively, legislatively, is irresistible.

Prime Minister Albanese's move to recall parliament and rush through new hate speech laws is understandable.

Yet in that haste, Labor risks undermining the very freedoms that have made Australia a beacon of pluralism and open discourse.

One wonders, with a quiet apprehension, whether the law can ever distinguish between true threat and the mere discomfort of speech.

The proposed Combatting Antisemitism, Hate and Extremism Bill 2026 is ambitious in scope.

It criminalises conduct that promotes hatred against individuals or groups based on race, ethnicity, or national origin, punishable by up to five years in prison. It allows for the formal proscription of organisations deemed 'hate groups,' with leaders facing up to 15 years' imprisonment.

At first glance, this legislation seems protective, even

humane, aiming to shield marginalised communities from harassment, intimidation, and fear. Yet beneath its surface lies a troubling expansiveness: its language is imprecise, its reach profound.

Conduct definition

'Conduct' is not limited to speech. Gestures, symbols, clothing, flags, and emblems are all included.

Whether the target belongs to the specified group is 'immaterial.' Liability rests on whether a 'reasonable member' of that group could feel intimidated, insulted, or humiliated. Courts are empowered to interpret criticism of ideas, ideologies, or even state policies as inherently hostile toward an ethnic or religious community.

Reasonable criticism of Israeli foreign policy could be construed as anti-Jewish sentiment; analysis of radical interpretations of Islam could be deemed advocacy of hatred toward Muslims.

Religious texts, meanwhile, remain beyond judicial scrutiny. Passages in the *Quran* or *Hadith* invoked by extremists, including those responsible for the Bondi attack, are



Photo: The Constitution Education Fund (www.cefa.org.au).

untouched by the law. Most Muslims are never moved to violence by these texts, yet extremists are. And still, the law shields these sources of radical ideology while ordinary citizens risk prosecution simply for questioning, debating, or criticising them.

Robust laws in place

Australia already has robust laws punishing the incitement of violence.

Criminalising 'hatred' itself is perilously vague, an invitation to overreach, a law too easily twisted to punish thought rather than action.

Hatred cannot be legislated away. If we are to remain a truly progressive society, we must retain the courage to confront

dangerous ideas openly.

Only in the fearless exchange of thought, in the trial of ideas against reason and debate, do our convictions prove their worth.

The draft legislation places enormous discretionary power in the hands of courts, creating a landscape where ordinary political, social, or religious commentary could be deemed criminal.

Bondi was a tragedy, but it was not a failure of statutory imagination; individuals capable of extreme violence will not be restrained simply by broader definitions of hate speech.

Freedom of speech was long the clarion call of progressive movements. Labour organisers, suffragists,

anti-war protestors, and civil libertarians defended the right to speak, even for ideas they found abhorrent, recognising that democracy is forged in the clash of perspectives.

Speech, no matter how offensive, is never a legitimate ground for imprisonment. This is not a partisan principle, it is the architecture of liberal society itself. To abandon it in pursuit of social cohesion is to betray both pluralism and justice.

UK warning

The United Kingdom offers a stark warning.

Every year, thousands are arrested for 'offensive' online posts, a reminder that the law can be wielded against ordinary citizens as easily as against extremists.

Attempts to control discourse often inflame the very resentment they aim to suppress.

Populists step into the breach. Nigel Farage in the UK. Pauline Hanson in Australia. Once marginal, they have surged by channelling public frustration, fuelled by perceptions, socially destabilising mass immigration, and

overreach of government censorship and control.

Hatred and bigotry are best confronted where they can be exposed, reasoned, and challenged, alongside an immigration policy attentive to the values newcomers bring.

Successful multiculturalism and liberty are inseparable. A society as diverse as ours can only flourish when its beliefs, practices, and traditions are open to examination and challenge.

Albanese should pause and listen.

A free Australia meets hatred with words, not chains; with conscience and conversation, not coercion.

Bondi whispers a harder truth: it is courage, shown by ordinary people on that tragic day, that alone preserved the soul of our nation, not statutes, not speeches, and certainly not politicians who would try to police thought itself.

■ Chaïy Donati holds degrees in law and political science from the University of Queensland. He is President of the Mullumbimby Brunswick Valley ALP Branch.

ECHO SHORT STORY COMP



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The Echo is joining forces with Creative Mullum to re-launch the Echo Short Story Competition. Select stories will be published in *The Byron Shire Echo* and *The Echo Online* at www.echo.net.au.

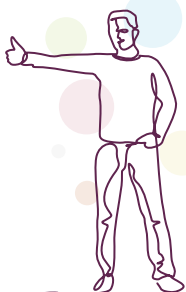
Budding writers, old timers and first-time flyers are invited to submit a story of 500–1,500 words using the hook 'The Hitchhiker'. The hook can be buried in a sentence, far off in the distance, it could be the name of a band playing at a pub, or it could be the centrepiece of your story!

Stories will be judged by local writers and industry experts. Submissions are open to anyone in the Northern Rivers. Selected finalists will be invited to present stories in a live story-telling performance at the very first 'Mullum Moth' hosted by Mandy Nolan and Creative Mullum, on 1 April 2026.

The sooner you get your story in, the sooner we can start selecting stories that will be published in *The Echo* in print and online at www.echo.net.au. Each writer is able to submit up to, but no more than two entries.

ENTER YOUR SHORT STORY HERE:

Story submission and questions at:
www.creativemullum.org.au/short-story-comp



Calling all Byron Shire business and industry professionals!

Council is establishing an Economic Activation Group (EAG) and we're looking for five passionate local representatives to help shape the future of the Byron Shire economy.

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The Byron Shire Echo
Volume 40 #33 • January 21, 2026

Being the spark of positive change

A few days ago one of my kids asked me how long I thought it would be before the next world war broke out. I was a bit stunned, but really I shouldn't have been. The reality is I can't open a newspaper or visit a comedy site these days without thinking I've taken crazy pills.

The insane march towards militarisation and war is happening; it should be something we are smart enough to avoid. I mean, what is the point of 'Lest We Forget' if it isn't to remind us of the devastation that war inflicts? Yet we seem unable to learn fast enough or to vocalise effectively enough, to slow and reverse the march of the crazies; the Trumps, the Putins and their ilk, and those who, astoundingly, support them.

So instead, I thought I'd share some ways we can remember the important things that we can change. Some people I know take an early morning walk on the beach or in a park, or a nature area that is special to them – maybe they remember to pick up the rubbish as they go. It's simple and effective. Of course, you can always take this a step further and sign up for Clean Up Australia Day or join Positive Change for Marine Life.

Others take action in the community – there are lots of places to volunteer your time (and money if you have it to spare!). From local community centres, to SHIFT which helps women at risk of homelessness, or Liberation Larder that provides food for the homeless, there are plenty of ways

to get involved and help others.

As climate change continues to increase the risks of fires, floods, and landslides, places like the Rural Fire Brigade and SES (State Emergency Services) don't just connect you into your local community – I've found they've also given me an understanding of the challenges we face and how to move forward with more confidence.

The reality is that governments can't always pay for everything (or choose to spend their money elsewhere – AUKUS?), and as they keep telling us we need to create 'community resilience'.

According to the 2025 BBC Radio 4 (<https://www.bbc.co.uk>) Reith lecturer, historian and author Rutger Bregman, a small dedicated group can 'spark positive change'.

So find something you feel positive about. If it's animals, join the various organisations that support pets, or wildlife – see page 3. If it's the environment, take photos, draw, paint, or sing about your favourite places – tell your friends, tell the world. Or get involved in Greenpeace, or your local environment groups, or be a radical and learn how to climb trees and take non-violent action. Or go a bit crazy and buy yourself a kayak like I did!

Take some action, small or large – let's make the world a better and saner place together.

Aslan Shand, editor
News tips are welcome:
editor@echo.net.au

Creating a pathway to peace

We are witnessing the decline of the American empire in real time. Stupidity now sits on a gilded throne in Washington and obedience is being enforced with terrifying brutality upon its people and institutions with the rest of us in the firing line of the regime's impulsive and criminal acts.

Within a year under the second Trump administration, America looks like a wounded gunslinger slumped against a swinging door at the O.K. Corral, indiscriminately shooting at women and whisky bottles as democracy bleeds out.

The Century Foundation's *Democracy Meter*, which measures the health of democracy across a 100-point scale, found democracy in the USA collapsed from 79 to 57/100 in 2025. The only thing left standing between democracy and full-blown authoritarianism is free and fair elections, which are looking very shaky at this point.

How the mighty fall under the weight of hubris, denial, and grasping, as the entropy of collapse gathers momentum and turns inwards to cannibalise itself. The rest of the world is left scrambling to unplug and reboot in safe mode, hoping to quarantine at least some of the fallout and avoid a world war.

These are dangerous times, and we are not immune. As a nation we are tied to this flailing beast, feeding it money in the hope it continues to assure our security. We need to wake up fast. Australia is poised to hand over \$368 billion dollars for the AUKUS deal to a bunch of mobsters very high on their own supply.

According to a YouGov poll commissioned by The Australia Institute in November 2025, only eight per cent of Australians are genuinely convinced Australia 'shares values' with Trump's America. Fewer than half of Australians think the AUKUS deal is in our best interests or makes us safer.

The chorus of voices calling for an urgent rethink of our old alliance with America is also growing louder. Elbows up Albo.



'If ever there were a time to "imagine all the people living life in peace", genuine peace, it is now. The time for complacency is over.'

– Jo Immig

Canada just brokered a 'strategic partnership' with China since its best friend and neighbour went rogue. Canada's Prime Minister Mark Carney pragmatically said, 'We take the world as it is, not as we wish it to be'.

On our shores, the initial coming together in the wake of the horrific Bondi massacre has sadly given way to polarised debate on the government's proposed hate speech and gun law reform package in response. This was a moment for national unity and bipartisanship that went badly off track. Let's hope something can be salvaged from it.

Still, it's naive to think you can just legislate hate and racism away. Without addressing underlying causes, like rampant inequality, it's always simmering away, at risk of spilling over.

The Royal Commission on Antisemitism and Social Cohesion is also facing criticism by those who feel the terms of reference are too narrow and should address fraying social cohesion across the whole community.

Let's face it, major threats to social cohesion are not lurking in universities or writers' festivals; they're being broadcast at us 24/7 via a parasitic media that foment hatred, division, and misinformation in the battle for our nervous systems.

In welcome contrast are nineteen Buddhist monks, accompanied by Aloka the peace dog, who have awakened the hearts of millions by their Walk for Peace across America from Texas to Washington DC for 'national healing, unity, and compassion'. They set off in October 2025 and are due to arrive in mid-February after walking some 3,700 kilometres.

When asked why they walk, the monks said, 'Our walking itself cannot create peace. But when someone encounters us – whether by the roadside, online or through a friend – when our message touches something deep within them, when it awakens the peace that has always lived quietly in their own heart – something sacred begins to unfold.'

Compare the monk's act of authentic peace to the bizarre ceremony where the winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, Venezuelan opposition leader Maria Corina Machado, handed over her peace medal to Donald Trump. He thinks himself to be a more worthy winner. The Nobel's organisers have categorically stated the prize 'cannot be revoked, shared or transferred'.

In gifting Trump her medal, Machado told journalists it was in 'recognition for his unique commitment to our freedom'. Perhaps she made a strategic sacrifice to soothe the beast's ego for five minutes?

This year has all the hallmarks of a major turning point in the trajectory of the world, and perhaps humanity itself. If ever there were a time to 'imagine all the people living life in peace', genuine peace, it is now. The time for complacency is over.

Let us use the weapons of the Tibetan Buddhist prophecy of the Shambala warriors – compassion and insight – to dismantle the destructive forces from the inside out and finally heal the world.

■ Jo Immig is a former advisor to the NSW Legislative Council and coordinator of the National Toxics Network. She's currently a freelance writer and researcher.



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Nicholas Shand
1948–1996
Founding Editor



David Lovejoy
1944–2024
Co-founder

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

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Mullum's future

Joni Mitchell wrote some prophetic lyrics some years ago concerning a taxi.

We have already 'paved paradise and put up a parking lot', but what we don't need is 'a pink hotel, a boutique and a swinging hot spot' in Station Street, Mullumbimby.

The carpark should stay as-is and another site found for the accommodation building. The hospital site perhaps.

The other decision to be made is the one concerning 'The Nest', at 115-119 Stuart Street. This proposal will change the whole dynamic of our much-valued Heritage Conservation Area of Mullumbimby. It is too big, too cramped, and one wonders who it is actually being built for. It is a backpackers design, or student accommodation type of building?

It just does not fit aesthetically in that part of town. Although there is parking on site, there will not be enough for the people who live there. I would not like to see the old, small, white house on the corner of Stuart Street and Whian Street demolished. It is a valuable piece of built history of this town. The Brunswick Valley Historical Society will be lodging an objection to this proposal.

Chris Cooney
Mullumbimby

Elderly made homeless

On Thursday, I bought a bookcase from a lovely old gentleman in Brunswick Heads.

He couldn't have been

more helpful. A young friend had posted it on marketplace for him. I went to his tiny flat, met his sweet old cat, and asked where he was moving to. He told me he couldn't afford the increasing rent anymore, and would be living in his car.

I discovered that after 30 years in this humble little home, among his neighbourly community, he was being forced onto the streets.

I wanted to take him home with me, however I'm also marginalised by the effects of predatory capitalism, living on land owned by a community-minded friend. It's impossible not to notice the growing numbers of homeless people in Byron Shire. Getting harder to turn a blind eye. There, but for the grace of God.

Linda Grace
Wilsons Creek



Even though he had won the prestigious, 'International Inventors Award' with 'THE WORLDS MOST EFFICIENT CAN OPENER', Eric just could not compete.

Cartoon by Raoul

Grammar police

Dear editor – Do you edit? I ask because of the glaring grammatical error in David Heilpern's article re NSW police and protesting.

The mistake is there in bold font under the headline. He writes, 'because it might be disrespectful and uncourteous'. Clang! The word is discourteous – there is no such word as 'uncourteous' and this bloke is a professor? Slack editor, great paper.

Polly Guthrie
Ballina

■ 'Uncourteous' is a word in the Collins Dictionary, and according to the Oxford English Dictionary, was first used in 1303. It means 'not courteous', but not as rude as 'discourteous', e.g. lacking manners owing to ignorance. – Ed

In defence of Mandy

Well said Mandy Nolan! And so true (*Echo*, Jan 14).

Mandy, ignore those bigoted crackpots who will never see the light, what is wrong and what is right. Sadly, tunnel-visionistas are in epidemic numbers in our 'enlightened' Shire.

Hugo Wehner
Uki

Mandy rant, part II

Thanks Jeff Rake for your reply to my letter.

I don't personally know Mandy, but I know she has been writing for the *Echo* a long time and I used to always get a giggle from her articles and witty commentary.

I thought this time though she was coming down pretty hard on tourism and harping on the old narrative of 'Byron has changed. For the worst.'

I am kinda tired of that one too. I was born here in 1985 (not really sure if that even makes me local since I've also lived in Melbourne half my life) and thanks to the community that we have here, we have achieved a pretty cool place. Very little development – thank God!

We kept big corporations like McDonald's out. We value the free-loving hippy spirit, world peace vibes.

This place is pretty awesome, and thanks to some amazing nature activists and people who really care about environmental causes, this beautiful home of ours stays at the very top of many people's holiday destination list.

Some tourists who come here are super-respectful and stay on to fight the good fight of living in hope of

peace and doing everything to protect this special place.

Back in my dad's day, he was born in Mullumbimby, a house in Lismore cost more than in Byron. Sure, some things have changed.

But hasn't the whole world? I think as a town, and as a community we're doing pretty good.

We have pretty amazing people here who love and understand each other and keep Byron peaceful, fun, magical, and nature-wise the most beautiful place on Earth.

Hope to see you at the top park at sunset soon, Jeff. We can share a wine, although I have to be honest – mine will probably be a \$20 organic, not a \$10 cask. We can have a yarn about the good old days.

Sarah Brinkhege
Suffolk Park

Mandy rant, part III

To Sarah [letters last week] – You say you love Byron for its beach parties and \$10 casks, and you tell Mandy Nolan to 'chill out... and go to the gym'.

I find that deeply dismissive of a woman who has given so much to this community. Mandy has volunteered tirelessly, and consistently used her voice to speak for people in this town who no longer have one. It makes me wonder what you yourself have contributed to this community.

Secondly, this town does not rely entirely on tourism. There are many successful local businesses that genuinely drive our economy. We are certainly not dependent on tourists who stay in Airbnbs, shop only at Woolworths and the bottle shop, and contribute little beyond a free beach party. Too often, they take far more from this town than they give.

Finally, as a medical professional of several decades, I am genuinely disturbed by the idea of 'bootylicious

babes with butt cheeks hanging out' standing next to fresh produce in shops, or sitting on a chair in a coffee place. My concern is not prudishness but hygiene and health. I think of E. coli contamination straight away, and I feel sorry for those young women whose skin is being exposed to intense sun, increasing the likelihood of melanoma far earlier than it should ever occur.

Perhaps it is time for a little more respect for those who want more for this town than \$10 cask beach parties.

Sabine Muschter
Byron Bay

Mandy rant, part IV

I don't always agree with the expressed opinions of Mandy Nolan and I'm sure she would feel similarly, vice versa. But I do agree with what she wrote in *The Echo* recently about contemporary Byron Bay.

I think it's inappropriate to dismiss her opinion as a 'rant', as a couple of letter writers have done in last week's *Echo* [Jan 14]. That we live in a ferment of conflicting opinions and beliefs seems axiomatic.

I am not a 'local', but I have witnessed several decades of change here. I am hard-pressed to think of any for the better.

Byron Bay has been sold off to the highest bidders, and the ugly consequences are what we are face now.

I have noticed in wretched social media posts – where the 'evil' bots have twigged to my links with, and affection for, certain parts of Britain – St Ives, Cornwall, and the Cotswolds, to name two – the greed behind the constant 'chocolate box' views and saccharine sentiments posted on social media.

Many posts are not about intrinsic beauty or the 'spirit of place' – they are about selling real estate and doing business there; the quest

► **Continued on page 12**

Letters to the Editor

■ Send your letters to the Editor: 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. Letters edited for length will be able to be read in full (if a reasonable length) online at: www.echo.net.au/letters.

Expressions of Interest now open for the management of Tyagarah Hall.

This is an opportunity for community groups or individuals looking for space to meet, socialise or something else entirely.

The closing date for EOIs is Monday 9 February at 2pm.

More information

- www.byron.nsw.gov.au/EOI/Tyagarah-hall
- mrobertson@byron.nsw.gov.au
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► **Continued from page 11** for more visitors and tourist stays.

I have argued before that if it were not for the business interests involved, something might even be done to regulate and control the reckless and careless riding of e-bikes on the footpaths here (or any bicycles).

In a sonnet about the so-called Dark Lady, Shakespeare, in a maritime pun (on ships riding at anchor) of salacious innuendo, describes his mistress as the 'bay where all men ride'. Byron Bay has become that.

Even if one were concerned with the business of tourism, one ought to realise that over-tourism and development degrades it. Who wants to be the Costa del Sol of the South Pacific?

Some may be keen on the idea, I suppose.

As Noel Coward once said of Monaco: 'A sunny place for shady people.'

David Morris
Byron Bay

Road management

I can't help but wonder about Council's road management team.

Their announcement that the Mullumbimby Road upgrade would take four months, when it only took two, was an avoidable PR disaster that unnecessarily exacerbated community concern about the plan.

The completion of the upgrade is certainly a welcome improvement, but it lacks several important features, such as a merging lane for traffic turning right out of McAuleys Lane and heading uphill toward Uncle Tom's.

There's no longer a turning lane for traffic turning left toward Bruns at the Uncle Tom's intersection, so as soon as a couple of cars are waiting to turn right, which happens often, traffic is blocked and backs up along Mullumbimby Road.

And there is still no roundabout at the Uncle Tom's intersection, where it is sorely needed. Seems to me these are fairly obvious shortcomings of the upgrade plan that should have been

readily recognised and rectified by Council's road management team.

John Scrivener
Main Arm

■ Council's roundabout grant application was unsuccessful. – letters ed

Roundup on creeks

My property in Mullum backs onto the river and there is a stretch of Crown land before the river bank.

Over the years I have walked down there, and on a number of occasions, I have found the entire place blanket stained with that menacing green dye that is added to the 'mix' to show where Roundup has been sprayed.

My family and my neighbours have been totally horrified, and traumatised, over the years to think that this deadly chemical is in use only metres from our house and metres from where tiny children play daily, and there is nothing seemingly we can do about it.

In the past, I have written to Council and telephoned them to let them know how it is affecting my health. Attempting to make a change to this insane practice, even if only near where we live, but they readily pass the buck and claim: 'We hire outside contractors to do this work, so we don't know what it is they use.'

I mean, what a good excuse and way to wash their hands of it. I knew someone a decade back who claimed that Council hired him to spray Roundup at night.

Join me in petitioning Byron Shire Council to lead the way to an organic Australia.

Ask that they stop poisoning us for one and for all!

Sally Law
Mullumbimby

Royal commission

So, finally we have the Royal Commission on Antisemitism and Social Cohesion!

Finally, Prime Minister Albanese crumbled under the pressure. The pressure of the Jewish lobby?

Unfortunately, Albanese also did not parry the attack

of Israel's Prime Minister Netanyahu, who accused him of being responsible for the Bondi attack.

This internationally-wanted suspected war criminal, how dare he – it's a case of 'Stop the thief!', cried the murderer! And now, what is this royal commission supposed to do?

Find out why antisemitism is on the rise?

Don't we already know one very significant factor? Have we not seen for more than two years the pictures from Gaza?

Was it all fake? The starving kids, the attacks on civilians, on hospitals, schools, help workers/organisations, journalists... the list goes on and on.

Not an eye for an eye, but 100 eyes for one eye!

And this is only Gaza, there is so much more. This will never stop, unless a two-state solution is accepted and Israel withdraws from the Occupied Territories.

If you want to see how the current state of Israel, and some Israelis, treat(s) Palestinians, watch *The Settlers* on ABC iView, but be careful, the ABC is to some known as an extreme left-wing TV station.

Anyway, I doubt that anybody will dare mention the above at the royal commission.

I hope I am wrong. Are these, my thoughts, antisemitic or is it even hate speech?

Well, I better finish here.
Burkhard Waltrup
Crabbes Creek

■ Holding all Jews responsible for Israeli government action is antisemitism. – letters ed

Greenland

Some bastard in the US reckons 'Green'land should be called 'Red White and Blue'land.

Does that mean Australia, the UK, France, New Zealand and about a quarter of the world's countries that have a flag of the same colours can share in the spoils?

Larry Hoofs
The Pocket

Eye of the beholder

'Beauty is in the eye of the beholder' was first said a long time ago.

What's up with my gov? Are they seeing hate speech these days, is it being written in their new laws, so everyone can read it? They certainly don't love the people of Australia, their words say it all.

Hidden in plain sight is their legislation, that gives control of Australia to the United Nations, made legal by my government?

Someone called it democratic. Billions of dollars are being spent on weapons and support for a war machine. This implies, support is being given to cause harm to other human beings.

What also comes with the new laws to stop hate speech? They are just stopping people in Australia, who might criticise their legislated laws, and ask about the intention of them?

A history is repeating, that we are being made to live with. If the government loved us, the billions of dollars would be used to help people and reduce the inflated costs we now struggle to live with – that their legislation has caused?

Robert Podhajsky
Ocean Shores

No free speech for Abdel-Fattah

[Palestinian author] Randa Abdel-Fattah was rightly removed from the Adelaide Writers Week for the following reasons: publicly stated that 'Zionists have no claim or right to cultural safety'; posted statements expressing a desire for the end of Israel as a state, framing its abolition as morally justified; shared or endorsed social media imagery immediately following the 7 October attacks that were widely interpreted as celebrating or legitimising violent 'resistance'; repeatedly used language that frames violence against Israelis as justified or virtuous resistance, without distinction between civilians and combatants; dismissed or undermined research into antisemitism, portraying it as

politically motivated rather than a legitimate response to rising hatred; consistently referred to 'Zionists' as a collective moral category, attributing guilt, harm, or illegitimacy to the group as a whole; denied or minimised Jewish vulnerability and fear, particularly in periods of heightened antisemitic violence; and, engaged in this conduct across multiple platforms and over an extended period.

These views have no place in a democratic society.

Vivi Royston
New Brighton

Abdel-Fattah and free speech

I don't support cancelling writers at writers' festivals. But Randa Abdel-Fattah, cancelled by the Adelaide Writers Festival, does.

In February 2024, Abdel-Fattah urged the board of the same Adelaide Writers Festival to cancel an invitation to Jewish *New York Times* columnist Thomas L. Friedman, and he was subsequently cancelled.

In 2023, she also circulated a doxing list that incited 'cancel culture' against 600 Australian Jewish writers and artists.

Her general 'cancel culture' posts include, 'it is the duty... to ensure that every space that Zionists enter is culturally unsafe for them' and, 'if you are a Zionist, you have no right to cultural safety'.

And she is suing the South Australian premier for his 'free speech' opinion on her likely festival impact a short time after the Bondi massacre.

And she's stated there was an agenda to use the Bondi massacre to manipulate people against Palestinians.

But I'm sure that she would advocate that free speech is upheld at the next writers' festival with, say, the inclusion of Salman Rushdie, or perhaps a release of a new Australian *Charlie Hebdo* English version.

And to broaden the issues we have with free speech, perhaps she might push to include a festival talk by, say,

Sydney's controversial Assyrian Christian bishop Mar Mari Emmanuel who experienced a livestreamed attempt on his life for comments perceived to insult Mohammad.

Abdel-Fattah beats her chest for free speech for her, but not for other festival writers, or Jews, or others whose opinions she opposes. She has also denied that Hamas raped girls in their October 7, 2023 attack.

According to the *SMH* on October 8, 2023 'she updated her social media profile picture to that of a paraglider (one of the ways Hamas escaped the Israeli enclosure around the enclave). The parachute was in the colours of a Palestinian flag.'

It is good to know where people stand, including that, apparently from Mandy's Soapbox, Abdel-Fattah is 'elect me' Mandy's new pin-up girl.

John Lazarus
Byron Bay

■ Regarding Randa Abdel-Fattah's comment that Zionists had no right to cultural safety, she told *The Guardian* she makes the distinction between Zionism as a political ideology and the culture of Jewish people. She said, 'You can be a Zionist and not be Jewish; you can be a Jewish person and be anti-Zionist.' She said Zionism is a 'settler colonialism' ideology which originated in Europe and argued for, and replaced, the majority Indigenous population in Palestine. 'You cannot use Zionism as an excuse to shield you from critique – it is a political ideology that should be subjected to the same critiques that we subject any political ideology to. [It's a] political ideology carrying out a genocide in real time,' she said. – letters ed

Unclaimed \$50

The hitchhiker's \$50 has not been claimed.

So I'm opening the opportunity to all *Echo* readers to write a letter to the editor saying in 50 words or less what I should do with the \$50.

Sapoty Brook
Main Arm

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Pursuing true independence through localisation

Hans Lovejoy

Last week, local activist and author, Helena Norberg-Hodge, celebrated a milestone – her 80th birthday!

For those unaware of Helena's work, here is just one of many birthday tributes she received from her friends and colleagues: 'As you know, I have long admired your insights and commitment to creating resilient communities. We don't define ourselves by victories or failures, but by the fact that we try. Thank you for your tireless efforts to change society's direction. May you live many more years' – David Suzuki, author and broadcaster.

Over her 50 years of grass-roots activism, Helena has been involved, not just with international projects such as Local Futures, but has been a force locally.

She was instrumental in setting up all the four local farmers' markets for example, and has organised countless events with international leaders from the localisation and circular economy sector.

For decades, she has informed and inspired locals to look more closely



Helena Norberg-Hodge. Photo Jeff Dawson

at predatory capitalism and solutions that move us away from the old paradigms of enslavement and extraction.

Helena is the author of several books, including the international best-seller *Ancient Futures*, a moving portrait of tradition and change in Ladakh. Its culture and history are closely related to Tibet.

That experience – being the first westerner to learn the Ladakh language – helped shape her worldview.

'My work, until I die, is raising awareness about the importance of strengthening local communities and economies', says Helena.

'This means not only financial independence and food security, but health

care, education and land management', she says.

System enriches the super-wealthy

'Most people realise that the system doesn't work for most of us, and that it is actually tuned to enrich the super-wealthy. But until now there has been too little focus on the structural side – on how both left and right governments have created a sort of "empire" of interlinked banks and multinational monopolies.

'This has happened primarily through a process of trade treaties in which countries sign clauses called ISDS (investor state dispute settlements) saying in black

and white that they won't be doing anything that could threaten foreign corporations' anticipated profits. In effect, they agree that they can be taken to court if they ban toxic chemicals, try to raise the minimum wage, or protect their natural resources!

'The end result of this handover of power and wealth to global corporations and elites is that virtually everyone has to work harder and harder just to put food on the table and a roof over their head. At the same time as energy consumption and pollution are skyrocketing', she told *The Echo*.

Small is beautiful

Helena also highlighted how corporate food monoculture and chemicals are impacting younger generations, which results in a shorter life expectancy through obesity and cancer.

'Monoculture-farmed land can be reversed to almost organic after three to five years', she says.

'And smaller farms are more easily adapted to climate change. A biodiverse crop can withstand intense storms and dry weather. And they can move to being organic much easier', she says.

Circular economy report released – what's inside?

Hans Lovejoy

On Friday last week, the Productivity Commission's (PC) final report on the circular economy was released, which outlines Australia's 'opportunities to lift materials productivity and reduce waste'.

Circular economies are those based on the reuse and regeneration of materials or products, especially as a means of continuing production in a sustainable or environmentally-friendly way.

The report will be tabled in federal parliament shortly, says the PC.

Yet the official media release was unfortunately lacking in any real content or meaningful reform.

It spoke of priorities and opportunities, and gave vague advice 'on how best to measure progress and address key barriers'.

It's a well-known fact that China rejected imported Australian waste in 2018, and after eight years, Australia still has limited recycling capacity.

While the authors say 'overall progress has been slow', on a positive note, it reads, 'all levels of

government have recently increased focus on policies that foster circular practices and reduce materials use'.

For example, actions already underway include reducing regulatory barriers to prefabricated housing, recognising the carbon benefits of biomethane in Australia's carbon reporting system, and increasing transparency in business sustainability through mandatory climate-related financial disclosures'.

Yet localisation expert, Helena Norberg-Hodge (see above article), raised this as a red flag, saying it 'favours large-scale industrial production and will help to destroy smaller local businesses that are using healthier materials, adapting designs to place, etc'.

Recommendations

The report identifies three areas for improving the circular economy: 1) streamlining and harmonising regulations to encourage businesses to adopt innovative technologies and practices, while protecting the environment and human health; 2) strengthening obligations for businesses that supply products with high-risk or high-value waste

streams, such as small electronics or small-scale solar photovoltaic systems, through product stewardship promoting circular activities; and 3) 'innovation through programs and services that facilitate coordination, collaboration and capacity building'.

Is this the language of an agency that has a clear idea of improving outcomes, or is it just paying lip service to the existing paradigm?

To be fair, on page 105, there is a 'strategic reform approach' which relates to the sectors of built environment, food, mining, electronics and textiles. This relates 'more generally to rights to repair, packaging and plastics, and infrastructure investment evaluation'.

Yet when it comes to specifics, the PC report seems to fall short. The authors speak of undefined 'outcomes frameworks' and 'economic, social and environmental goals'.

A big clue into why very little is happening in the circular economy space was highlighted on page 107: 'The Australian, state and territory governments should implement the full suite of

recommendations from the PC's *Right to Repair* inquiry. The Australian government should publish a formal response to that inquiry that indicates a time line and work plan for implementing these reforms'.

The report also touches on packaging regulation, managing emerging chemicals of concern, and undertaking infrastructure investment evaluation.

See more at www.pc.gov.au/inquiries-and-research/circular-economy/report.

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Dates set for this year's Australian Pro Adaptive Surfing Championships

Ross Kendall

Byron Bay will once again welcome the world's leading para-surfers, with the Bright Sky Australian Pro Adaptive Surfing Championships confirmed to return 22-29 March 2026.

The nationally-sanctioned event – now one of the most anticipated dates on the adaptive surfing calendar – will bring athletes, families, and supporters from across Australia and around the world to Byron's iconic coastline.

Record participation

Over nine competitive divisions, the championships will showcase skill, courage and high-performance surfing from some of the sports most inspiring athletes.

Registrations officially opened on 1 December 2025, with strong interest expected following record participation and audience growth in recent years.

'Registrations take time to flow through as entrants organise visas and other things, but we already know from accommodation providers that people are booking accommodation,' event organiser Mark 'Mono' Stewart said.



Mark 'Mono', in action at Oceanside in California. Photo supplied

'Everything is on track for a great event and we look to be on budget,' he said.

Come and have a go

An extra this year will be two 'come and try days' open to any new athletes plus there will be the same opportunity on every day during

the contest week from 10am till 2pm, in case people who want to try the sport, can't make the either of the 'come and try days'.

'To help make this happen the Hawaiian water safety team will be at the event to train and support the volunteer water safety team, who normally help the event,' Mark said.

Another way this year's event will help to increase participation is by running a 'non-classified' prone division, for people who are new to the sport or who don't quite fit any of the other established divisions.

'It is all about helping as many new athletes into the sport as possible,' Mark said.

Mark and his wife Debbie run a charity, Adaptive 360, that is all about raising money to help new adaptive athletes get into the sport by helping to organise equipment, travel, and other requirements.

Classification course

This year's event will also include Dr Mo Johnson, adaptive surfing's top classifier. The doctor will be running a classification course in Australia, that will culminate with face-to-face training at the championships.

'The Adaptive Surfing Pro is built on community, collaboration and long-term support,' Mark told *The Echo*.

'Thank you to our partners, sponsors and service providers who help create a safe, inclusive and world-class event for adaptive athletes'.

Further event details, heat schedules, and community activities will be released in early 2026.

Byron cyclist wins three gold medals at National Championships in Perth

Byron Bay Cycle Club (BBCC) is celebrating a remarkable achievement after club president Rachel Pearson claimed three gold medals at the 2026 AusCycling Road National Championships held in Perth last week.

Competing in her age category, Pearson dominated across all events she participated in: the Road Teams Time Trial (with the BBCC Team), Team Criterium and Grand Fondo, securing a clean sweep of national titles.

These achievements made history, marking it as the BBCC's most successful national championships.

Rachel won the Road Teams Time Trial with fellow BBCC members Anne Elliot and Katie Menzies.

'The opening event was a road teams time trial, which is my pet event, and



Just one of Rachel's podium appearances at the National Championships. She won with clubmates Anne (L) and Katie (R). Photo supplied

something that I competed in for Australia a long time ago, the 1994 Commonwealth Games, and we don't get the opportunity to race that event very often,' Rachel said speaking after the win.

'So BBCC had a team. We had a team of only three women in a four person team (event), and we won, we won convincingly. So I

think we had the fastest time on the day. We weren't the youngest team, and we were only a team of three rather than four. So that was a very sweet victory.

'But I think an individual title always has a little bit more glory than perhaps a team. So (the Grand Fondo) was a significant win for me, but more so because

our wave was 65 riders, 65 women from the ages of 19 up. So the overall podium for me was probably more significant because I came third.

'I was beaten only by two young women, which then obviously gave me the gold in my age division,' she said.

Under Pearson's presidency, the BBCC has seen a surge in membership and community engagement, with growing interest in women's cycling and racing.

The club will celebrate Rachel's achievements on March 7, at the gala night of the 'Lumini Vintage Vélo Classic'. The event will be a two-day classic cycling experience incorporating viewing the Giro D'Italia, showcasing vintage Italian design and a ride through the beautiful Byron Bay hinterland.

Byron cricketers remain on top

Byron Bay second-grade cricketers are still on the top of the table despite losing their fixture against fourth-placed Bangalow, last weekend at the Cavanbah Centre oval.

After winning the toss Byron elected to bat, but despite some solid starts the innings never really gained strong momentum with just four batters making it to double figures; Tom McGeorge was best with 41.

The honours went to Bangalow's Sam Arbutnot who took 6/37 off his eight overs.

Arlo Wooldridge picked up the openers with 2/36.

In reply Bangalow's captain Conor Bensley made the difference with a standout innings of 65 off 50 balls, allowing his side to chase down the total inside 33 overs. Sabastian Campbell was the pick of the Byron bowlers picking up 3/27.

Byron Bay remain on top of the Far North Coast second grade (north) table, ahead of Murwillumbah Panthers, Terranora Lakes, Bangalow, and Mullumbimby Brunswick.

Sports sign on sign up!

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Get in touch with *The Echo* sales team to be part of our editorial feature all about

what sports are on offer throughout the Northern Rivers in 2026.

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I Love Australia

I love Australia, but I don't love Australia Day on 26th Jan. I don't love that it is about a flag with a Union Jack on it. I don't love that it is a day where people drink heaps of booze and proclaim a kind of racist patriotism that calls this an incredible place because we have cultural traditions like lamington eating or thong throwing.

We live in a country where cultural traditions go back 60,000 years. Not 238. I don't love that we, the descendants of IMMIGRANT colonials won't do something as simple as change the date. When we have been asked over and over again.

I don't love that we are a settler country of white immigrants who now believe that the economic problems are because of immigrants. The ones who care for our elderly and our young. The immigrants who happen to be brown.

I don't love that we don't acknowledge that we took something that wasn't ours to take, and every year since they unified the date, in 1994, we call that 32 years of tradition, but won't acknowledge the tens of thousands of years of First Nation culture.

We said they weren't here. I don't love that we celebrate the day we lied.

That we celebrate the day we stole. I don't love the day we started a narrative that made the first people of so-called Australia less than others. That made them primitive and wrong. That diminished the world's oldest continuous culture. That took their land, and then took their children. That locked them up.

I don't love celebrating the English, a conquering nation that colonised as a hobby.

I don't love that we have a party on the very day this all started. The day of the beginning of genocide.

I don't love this, because this is not the Australia I love.

The Australia I love is a vast and diverse place.

I love the glorious red of the desert and the deep wet mossy green of rainforest.

I love that 80% of our plants, mammals, reptiles and frogs are unique to Australia and are found nowhere else in the world.

I love our wild and glorious coastline.

I love our capacity for self-sufficiency, in food, in resources, in renewable energy.

I love the expansiveness of our



I love this Australia. Vast. Ancient. Unique. A place of healing and growth. A country that acknowledges how it came to be.

landscape. When the canopy of stars stretches across the sky like a sparkling dome, and it feels like I am the only being on the planet.

I love that at 19, Evonne Goolagong Cawley won the French Open, the Australian Open and Wimbledon in the same year. She decolonised tennis and she wasn't even 20.

I love that in 1983 the High Court found that UNESCO World Heritage status of the Franklin River gave the Australian government the constitutional power to stop the construction of the Franklin Dam. I love that this outcome was because of people like Bob Brown and a grassroots movement for the environment. It showed people could change politics from the ground up.

I love that we legalised same-sex marriage on December 9, 2017.

I love that I was there when Julian Assange, founder of WikiLeaks, returned to Australia on June 26, 2024 after a 14-year legal battle. A truth teller who would not be compromised.

I love that on the September 25, 2000, the whole country came together to witness Cathy Freeman win the 400m gold medal at the Sydney Olympics.

I love that on February 13, 2008 Australia said sorry to the Stolen Generations through a formal apology by the PM to parliament and that from May 26, 1998 every year we commemorate the ongoing efforts towards reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

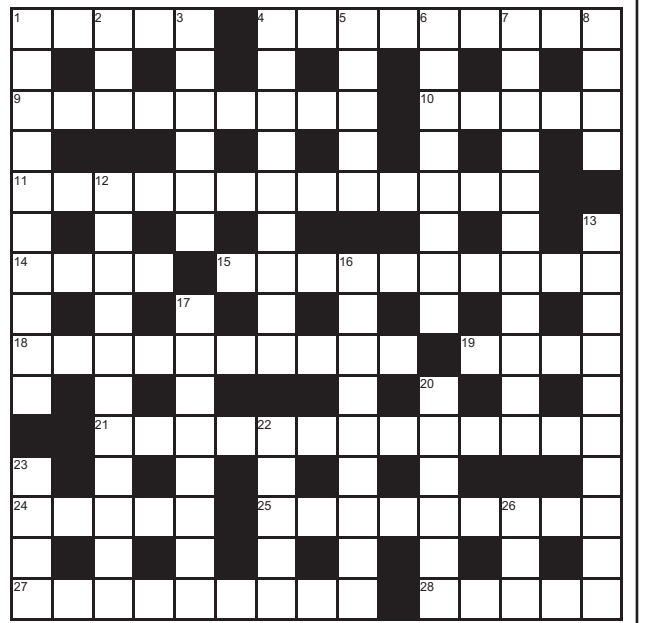
I love this Australia. Vast. Ancient. Unique. A place of healing and growth. A country that acknowledges how it came to be. That recognises the harm it has caused. But also the opportunity of working together for a better future. The Australia I love is sorry. The Australia I love is fair. The Australia I love is kind and compassionate.

The Australia I love wasn't created on January 26, 1788.

Let's pick another date. One that celebrates and acknowledges an Australia we all love.

■ *The Echo's* coverage of political issues will remain as comprehensive and fair as it has ever been, outside this opinion column which, as always, contains Mandy's personal opinions only.

Mungo MacCallum's Crossword #1



Cryptic Clues

ACROSS

- Two notes sounded as possible solution to 11 and 21 (5)
- Litmus exam? (4,5)
- Pauline Hanson definitely wasn't, but would still need an explanation (10)
- Small bulge, big drop (5)
- Worried law blog gathering weapons for 21 (6,7)
- Help ... nothing, it'll do (2-2)
- Free roofing? (2,3,5)
- Mean types cover exam, end up as preachers (10)
- Raymond is an irritation (4)
- Tim and Alec combine for major international challenge (7,6)
- Clothing is crap ... about right (5)
- Disaster for course - eighty! (9)
- Shelter for start gives protection (9)
- Puzzle about the vehicle (5)

DOWN

- Crooked aims after bonking time, eight weeks before Easter (10)
- Large measure for Evans (3)
- Frequent ABC show about combustible vegetable matter (6)
- Dog curls to make you go faster (4,5)
- Bullock guide (5)
- Nipple shield around the church? What a jumble! (8)
- Gail, with a pang, takes three turns to become a post impressionist (4,7)
- Andrew Denton has enough (4)
- Peep back at way over row; it's a serious offence in Rugby League (11)
- River with trees - ideal for dogs (10)
- Short bike, one of five: a colourful performer (9)
- Roundabout, like a 1 across orbit (8)
- Hunter, engraver, satirist (6)
- Song asks him 'What's it all about?' Get a life! (5)
- Spy organisation comes without frills (1,1,1,1)
- Round or black? (3)

Quick Clues

ACROSS

- Pertaining to the sun (5)
- Part of an exam perhaps (4,5)
- Lover of the exotic (9)
- Fall, decline (5)
- Problem of increasing temperature on our planet (6,7)
- Only average (2-2)
- Free, especially of drinks (1,4,5)
- Those who make pious judgements on others' behaviour (10)
- Prickly seed (4)
- Mutation of weather patterns, like 11 across (7,6)
- Male garment (5)
- Eighty (9)
- Protection from sunburn (9)
- Puzzle using patterns of letters and/or numbers (5)

DOWN

- Sunday eight weeks before Easter (10)
- First name of former English cricketer Hutton (3)
- Say again (6)
- Following airflows (4,5)
- Direct (5)
- Art composed of a mixture of borrowings from others (8)
- French impressionist noted for his paintings in the Pacific (4,7)
- Heavy string (4)
- Obstacle, hindrance (11)
- Breeds of hunting dogs (10)
- Colourfully dressed clown of commedia dell'arte (9)
- Indirect; elongated circular shape (8)
- One who pursues (6)
- Former Bronco ... Langer (5)
- Australia's foreign spy force (1,1,1,1)
- Sphere (3)

Last week's solution S Clarke #90



■ Crossword circa 2008

STARS BY LILITH

Collective energy gets a cosmic boost this week with the sun, Mercury, Mars and Venus all quantum-leaping into the freedom-loving, future-oriented sign of Aquarius...

AQUARIUS THE WATER POURER

ARIES: When Mars puts a lot on your plate, it's easy to overthink things. This week's exciting in spite of, often because of, its surprises, so don't second-guess yourself, just dive in and experiment. As you translate ideas into action you'll inspire others to come along for the ride.

TAURUS: This week's mood lightens significantly when Venus jets into her most unconventional address, inviting you to try something new and different. With the love planet in her most experimental placement, take a well-earned pleasure break and do something you've never done before. Surprise yourself!

GEMINI: With five planets, including your mentor Mercury, in another communication sign, get ready for creative conversations and thinking outside the box. But you'll need to get specific. Rather than spread yourself thin trying to accomplish a dozen things, select just a couple of goals and map out a master plan.

CANCER: If this paradoxical week pulls you in different directions requiring choices between practical considerations, emotional security and worldly ambitions, there's no need to lock into a power struggle. Lateral thinking is your personal Cancerian go-to skill, so talk issues through rather than letting assumptions build walls.

LEO: The current quintet of planets in Leo's partnership department fires up your drive to connect, collaborate and create positive systemic change. You're likely to thrive this week in group settings where ideas fly and people synch their unique contributions to build something beyond personal preference towards collective progress.

VIRGO: Your ruling planet Mercury in its most free-thinking, humanitarian and socially-engaged sign excels at seeing alternative perspectives and finding unorthodox solutions. While these may change over time, there's still much to learn from engaging in the process. Ask yourself how can your efforts contribute to the greater good.

LIBRA: With Venus moving into the zodiac's most team-centric sign, group projects pick up steam. So rather than going it alone, tap into the power of the collective. This week asks how can you use your social contacts, communication skills and networking media to make the world better place?

SCORPIO: As synergy sparks, group chats or brainstorming could lead to flashes of collective brilliance. That said, not every voice will harmonise, which may spotlight who isn't in synch. This week's celestial energetics are supportive if they, or you, want to make a graceful exit for something that's a better fit.

SAGITTARIUS: Current planetary energetics support collaboration and community, solo missions not so much. Whether you're teaming up on a project, workshopping ideas or talking up a cause, look for synergy and shared purpose. Expect shifts in your social sphere drawing you toward groups that reflect your evolving ideals.

CAPRICORN: With planetary emphasis in the sign of collaboration, of course you'll employ Capricornian discernment before teaming up. Which may have more interesting results than first impressions indicate: as in someone you mightn't previously have considered could harbour secret VIP credentials. This week rewards keeping an open mind.

AQUARIUS: Happy birthday season waterpourers, as this week's celestial quintet of sun, Mercury, Mars, Venus and Pluto, in your uniquely individual sign invites you to get together with your favourite friends, group or collective for some wildly Aquarian socialising, celebrating and sharing your latest inspirations, convictions and epiphanies.

PISCES: This quixotic week suggests that beneficiaries of your kindness may not reciprocate until you start making unapologetic requests for support, which Saturn's two-and-a-half years in your sign has strengthened you to do. And if something feels tired or uninspiring, replace it with something that makes your heart sing.

health & healing



Dr Sam Gartland

Dr Sam Gartland is a UK-trained doctor, whose practice of medicine has been profoundly influenced by his own recovery from multiple sclerosis (MS). His area of interest is Lifestyle Medicine, a lifestyle approach centering on plant-based nutrition. Sam's new practice, Life Medical Mullumbimby, offers Lifestyle Medicine consultations that address the causes of disease alongside GP services, skin-checks and natural therapies.

Sam also holds a Masters in Sports Medicine. He has worked with Premier League and 'A' League football clubs and has been published in Sports Medicine literature. He has been a retreat facilitator for Overcoming MS and is a co-author of the *Overcoming MS Handbook*. Sam is committed to empowering others with the skills and knowledge to optimise their health.

Life Medical Mullumbimby
02 6680 2486
113 Stuart St, Mullumbimby
www.lifemedicalmullumbimby.com.au



Billinudgel Psychology: Deep Healing with EMDR

Billinudgel Psychology is an established Northern Rivers practice offering trauma-informed psychological care grounded in both science and compassion. What sets the practice apart is its extensive training and experience in EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing), with all clinicians fully-trained in this powerful, evidence-based approach. The practice also offers EMDR Intensives; extended, immersive therapy experiences designed to support healing and integration over a shorter period of time. EMDR is particularly suited to individuals working through trauma, complex childhood experiences, anxiety and long-standing emotional or behavioural patterns. Set within a calm and supportive environment, they support clients to move beyond survival, reconnect with inner resources, and create meaningful, lasting change. Following a recent expansion, they are currently accepting new clients.

0493 579 052
hello@billipsychology.com
www.billipsychology.com

Health and Healing at Byron Community College



Byron Community College is offering a range of upcoming Health and Healing courses designed to nurture wellbeing, creativity, and personal growth. Students can explore Introduction to Swedish Massage to learn techniques that promote relaxation and reduce stress, or join Yoga for Over 60s to improve flexibility, balance, and overall vitality. Those looking to develop musical skills can attend Piano Keyboard for Beginners, supporting mental stimulation and focus, while Art Therapy encourages self-expression and emotional wellbeing. Growing Cut Flowers offers hands-on gardening that connects students with nature, reduces stress, and fosters mindfulness. Golf enthusiasts can take part in Golf for Beginners, combining gentle physical activity with social connection and stress relief.

For more information and enrolments, contact Byron Community College on 02 6685 6800 or visit www.byroncollege.org

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If you're feeling called to slow down, realign and reconnect, Lin Bell offers a gentle healing sanctuary in Suffolk Park.

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Learn easy, effective self-care techniques over five Tuesday afternoons - fantastic to use on yourself and your kids to release stress, anxiety and pressure-cooker emotions; calming, improving sleep, balancing, energising and more. This can be done anywhere, any time. In the shower, in bed, in the car, at school, at the office, at the beach!

Contact Kate or see her website for details
Places are limited, bookings essential
0413 003 301
kate@crystalsanddreaming.com.au
www.katemessengerkinesiology.com.au



Upcoming byron healing client events

Introduction to Swedish Massage

Held by: Byron College
Date: Tuesdays, 3 – 24 February (4 sessions)
Time: 9am – 4pm
Address: Mullum Campus (6/8 Burringbar St, Mullumbimby)
Booking contact: (02) 6684 3374
 customercare@byroncollege.org.au
 www.byroncollege.org.au

Piano/Keyboard for Beginners

Held by: Byron College
Date: Mondays, 9 February – 30 March (8 sessions)
Time: 4.30pm – 6pm
Address: Mullum Campus (6/8 Burringbar St, Mullumbimby)
Booking contact: (02) 6684 3374
 customercare@byroncollege.org.au
 www.byroncollege.org.au

Yoga for Over 60s

Held by: Byron College
Date: Mondays, 9 February 30 March (weekly)
Time: 9:30am – 11am
Address: Mullum Campus (6/8 Burringbar St, Mullumbimby)
Booking contact: (02) 6684 3374
 customercare@byroncollege.org.au
 www.byroncollege.org.au

Art Therapy as a Self-Help Tool

Held by: Byron College
Date: Thursdays, 12 February – 2 April (8 sessions)
Time: 10am – 12:30pm
Address: Mullum Campus (6/8 Burringbar St, Mullumbimby)
Booking contact: (02) 6684 3374
 customercare@byroncollege.org.au
 www.byroncollege.org.au

Growing Cut Flowers

Held by: Byron College
Date: Saturday, 14 and Saturday, 21 February
Time: 9am – 3pm
Address: Mullum Campus (6/8 Burringbar St, Mullumbimby)
Booking contact: (02) 6684 3374
 customercare@byroncollege.org.au
 www.byroncollege.org.au

Golf for Beginners (Ocean Shores)

Held by: Byron College
Date: Tuesdays, 10 February – 10 March (weekly)
Time: See website for session times
Address: Ocean Shores Golf Club
 Booking contact: (02) 6684 3374
 customercare@byroncollege.org.au
 www.byroncollege.org.au

Professional Certificate in Health (Integrative Clinical Hypnosis)

Held by: Southern Cross University
Date: Starting March 2026
Address: Online delivery
Booking contact: <https://www.scu.edu.au/study/courses/professional-certificate-in-health-9501002/>

Family Connection Camp

Held by: The Returning
Date: 13 – 17 April
Time: 3pm
Address: Midginbil Eco Resort; 252 Midginbil Road, Midginbil
Booking contact: <https://www.thereturning.com.au/culture-camp#culture-camp-tickets-scroll>



Articles



Addiction to gaming is on the rise

David Lowe

Gaming addiction, more formally referred to as gaming disorder, is an emerging public health concern in Australia, particularly as digital gaming becomes increasingly immersive, accessible and socially normalised.

While gaming can offer entertainment, social connection and even cognitive benefits, excessive and compulsive gaming can interfere with daily functioning, relationships, education, employment and mental health.

The World Health Organisation recognised gaming disorder in 2019, defining it as a pattern of gaming behaviour characterised by impaired control, increasing priority given to gaming over other activities, and continuation despite negative consequences.

Compulsion

In Australia, concerns have grown alongside the rapid expansion of online multiplayer games, mobile gaming, e-sports, and in-game monetisation systems such as loot boxes.

These features are designed to

maximise engagement and can blur the line between healthy play and compulsive use.

Children, adolescents and young adults are particularly vulnerable.

Long gaming sessions, disrupted sleep patterns, reduced physical activity, declining academic performance and social withdrawal are commonly reported warning signs.

For some individuals, gaming becomes a coping mechanism for stress, anxiety, loneliness or depression. During periods such as the COVID-19 lockdowns, gaming time increased significantly across Australia, highlighting how environmental and social factors can intensify problematic use.

Impacts

The impacts of gaming addiction extend beyond the individual.

Families often report conflict, communication breakdowns and concern for a loved one's wellbeing. Schools and universities may observe reduced engagement,



Photo Adobe Stock

while workplaces can experience decreased productivity and absenteeism.

Financial harm can also occur through excessive spending on in-game purchases, particularly where chance-based rewards resemble gambling behaviours.

Addressing gaming addiction in Australia requires a multi-layered approach that balances personal responsibility, community support and policy action.

At an individual level, awareness is crucial.

Recognising early warning signs and setting healthy boundaries around screen time can prevent escalation.

Strategies

Practical strategies for addressing gaming addiction include establishing tech-free times, prioritising sleep and physical activity, and encouraging a diverse range of hobbies and social interactions.

For those already experiencing harm, professional support can be effective. Australian

psychologists, counsellors and GPs increasingly recognise gaming disorder and can provide evidence-based treatments such as cognitive behavioural therapy.

Services like Headspace, Lifeline, and state-based youth mental health programs offer accessible support, particularly for young people and families.

Parents and carers play a key role by modelling balanced technology use, maintaining open communication, and using parental controls where appropriate.

Schools can also contribute through digital literacy education, helping students understand persuasive game design and

develop healthy online habits.

Law and education

At a broader level, Australian policymakers have begun examining the regulation of loot boxes and other addictive game mechanics, particularly where they overlap with gambling laws.

Continued research, public education campaigns and collaboration between health professionals, educators and the gaming industry are essential.

All in all, gaming addiction in Australia is a complex issue shaped by technology, psychology and social context.

Big money is being spent to ensure more and more people are playing for longer, and regulation and research is often being left behind.

With early intervention, informed support and better awareness of the long-term addiction risks behind the transitory excitement, gaming can hopefully remain a positive part of life without compromising the mental health and wellbeing of gamers.

■ First published by *Byron Healing*.
www.byronhealing.com.au

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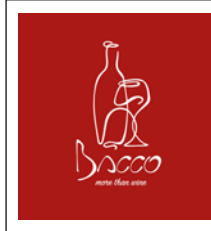


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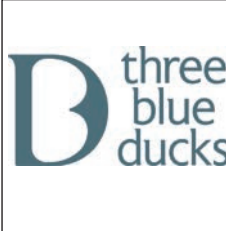
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Forest Byron Bay

Open 7 days
Breakfast: 7.30 to 10.30am
Lunch on Verandah from 12 to 3pm
Dinner: 5.30 to 9pm
crystalbrookcollection.com/byron/forest

Rainforest views, farm-to-table dining, and a menu showcasing the best of Northern Rivers produce.
Forest Byron Bay offers fresh, seasonal dishes and crafted cocktails. Join the Crystalbrook Crowd (it's free) and save 10% on all food and drinks. From Tuesday to Saturday, indulge in Golden Hour from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm.



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The Good Life

Thoroughly, Bloody Good Food at Byron Farmers Market



Mike and Jodie, a bloody good catering couple serving up bloody good food with bloody good locally-sourced ingredients.

Mike and Jodie Vidler have been pumping out burgers at Byron Farmers Market for 14 years, but not just any burgers – bloody good burgers! This is not surprising given this catering couple's experience.

Aussie Mike met English Jodie while working in the UK back in 1994. Together they have more than 70 years of experience in the food and hospitality industry, covering everything from running high-end restaurants, and catering to London's rich and famous, to touring with bands in America, and working on super yachts in the Mediterranean and Caribbean.

'We both went into the catering and events industry at a young age and never left,' Jodie says. 'Food and events is what we know and love, so when Mike wanted to return home to Australia in 2011, we decided to set up our own food business, but this time focusing on small-scale production using local and home-grown produce. Hence: The Bloody Good Food Company was born.'

The couple are based in Repentance Creek where they live and run their business completely off-grid. As well as cooking local produce – including their infamous burgers – to order at Byron Farmers Market every Thursday morning, they also produce a range of different food products, from pickled goods and relishes, which they grow and make themselves, as well as frozen meals and grazing boxes.

'For us as a company we are all about the amazing local produce that is available in our region,' Jodie says. 'When you start with

a fantastic product, you don't have to do much to it to make it taste amazing. All of our ingredients are sourced locally, mostly from our friends at the farmers' market, as well as other local producers we have gotten to know over the years. Our beef products come exclusively from Hayters Hill Farm, our bacon is from Byron Bay Pork and our bread comes from the oldest bakery in Byron.'

Jodie says coming to the Byron region opened the couple's eyes to the importance of food provenance.

'Food provenance, and its importance, is something that neither of us were really aware of prior to moving to Byron. Having lived and worked in big cities around the world, food was always readily available, however we never knew where it came from or how it had been produced.'

'Only after moving here did we begin to comprehend the importance of understanding where our food comes from and, most importantly, how that food was produced – especially in regards to chemical use and animal welfare.'

You can find the Bloody Good Food crew, and their range of bacon and egg rolls, BLTs, burgers and hot dogs at Byron Farmers Market.

■ Byron Farmers Market is held every Thursday from 7am to 11am at Butler St Reserve, and Bangalow Farmers Market is every Saturday from 7am to 11am in Piccabeen Park.

'Simple yet special' Japanese food from Ebiya in Byron



Ebiya Japanese Eatery is built on the idea of bringing the everyday flavours of Japan to the Byron community. Japanese food culture values balance, lightness, and nourishment – dishes that are comforting yet never heavy, simple yet deeply satisfying. This is the essence that Yuko Ebihara and the Ebiya crew aim to share through their menu each day.

'Our story began at the Byron Farmers Market, where we continue to trade every Thursday, says Yuko. 'The market became our first home – a place to connect with locals, introduce fresh Japanese flavours, and become part of the weekly rhythm of Byron. After four years operating our shop in Ballina, opening our space in the Byron Arts & Industry Estate in 2025 felt like a natural extension of that connection.'

'At Ebiya, we take inspiration from Japan's "shokudo" – casual neighbourhood eateries serving honest, everyday meals. These are places where people stop by for a comforting lunch, grab something nourishing for later, or enjoy food that feels both simple and special. We hope to offer that same feeling here; a place that fits naturally into people's routines, approachable and reliable.'

'Our menu reflects the food people in Japan enjoy day-to-day: Karaage Chicken Bowl, Gyudon (Wagyu Beef Bowl), Miso Eggplant, fresh daily sushi rolls, colourful



Ebi and Yuko Ebihara from Ebiya in Byron's A&I Estate, take inspiration from Japan's shokudo – casual neighbourhood eateries with food that's simple and special.

deli salads, and our daily special dishes. These meals are prepared with real, honest ingredients and a focus on balance – flavourful without being heavy, and satisfying without overwhelming the body. They are the kinds of dishes you can return to again and again.

'What we hear most from customers is that Ebiya offers a welcome pause in the day: somewhere to enjoy something wholesome, grounding, and consistently tasty. This inspires us to

keep focusing on seasonality, careful preparation, and the beauty of simplicity.

'Through Ebiya, we hope to share the warmth and calm found in Japanese everyday cooking – meals that bring comfort, reset the body, and become part of daily life.'

'We look forward to welcoming you and sharing these flavours with you soon,' says Yuko.

Ebiya Japanese Eatery
0478 724 317, Shop 1 / 6
Tasman Way, Byron Bay.

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Volume 40 #33
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Seven days of
 entertainment



The Tiger Lillies

Buzz, buzz, buzzzzzzzz!

As always, Bruns is abuzz in January and the **Brunswick Picture House** is in knee-deep with their biggest program yet! It just wouldn't be summer in Bruns without their **Cheeky Cabaret** which returns for a three-week run from this Thursday. Their signature show has genuinely become the talk of the Shire with plenty of WTF! moments, and it's back with an all new cast. Don't miss out!

Discounted tickets available for preview night.

As the official home of comedy in the Shire, the Picture House hosts some megastars of Australian comedy. Coming up in January and February, be prepared to experience stomach pains as **Geraldine Hickey (Jan 22-23)**, **Lloyd Langford (Jan 24-25)**, **Josh Thomas (Jan 28-31)** and **Danny Bhoy (Feb 27-28)** all descend into Bruns with brand

new material. You'll be the first in Australia to hear these jokes, before they take their shows on the road.

Be part of the national launch of the new animated film **Imagine on Monday at 4pm**. For one day only, theatres across Australia will screen **Imagine**, a groundbreaking animated, family-friendly film blending Indigenous knowledge with innovative storytelling and technology.

It sells out every year, so don't sleep on the 11th edition of **Zenith Virago's Vagina Conversations** – funny, sad, challenging and celebratory – from **February 12 to 15**.

February will see three absolutely unmissable concerts on the Picture House stage: award-winning, platinum-selling **Meg Washington (Feb 21)**, hilarious **Barry Morgan's Travelling Organ Tour**

(**Feb 20**), and cult post-punk cabaret superstars **The Tiger Lillies (Feb 26)**.

2026 marks 'Ten Years Bold' for the Picture House – it's been ten years of laughs, gasps, standing ovations and magic. So grab your mates, grab your tickets, and help them blow out the candles.

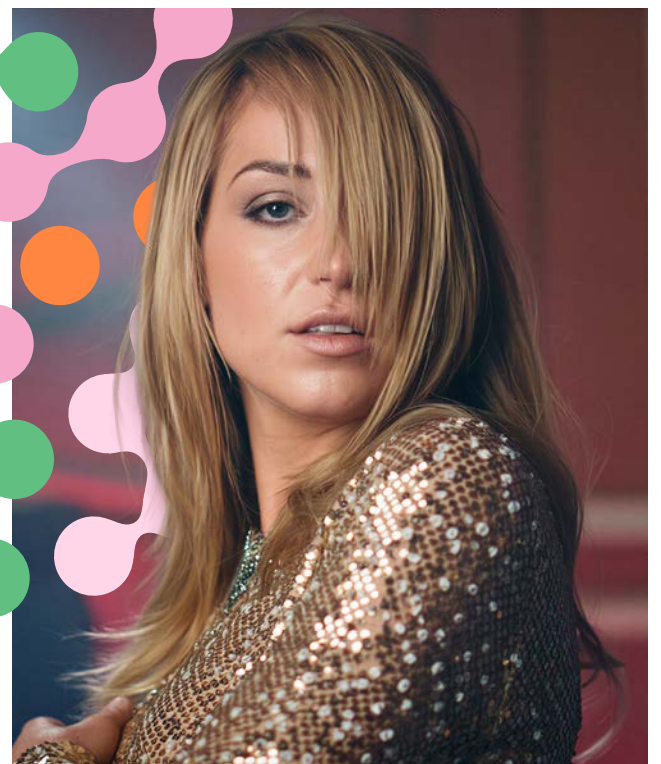
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THUR 22 JAN	Front Bar: Harry Nichols 6pm DJ Quendo 9pm Duelling Piano Bar 8pm
FRI 23 JAN	Front Bar: Erin Shay Duo 7pm + DJ Renee Simone 10pm Duelling Piano Bar 8pm BACKROOM: DEEPDOWN
SAT 24 JAN	Front Bar: JB's Blues Breakers 7pm + DJ Jamie Lowe 10pm Duelling Piano Bar 8pm BACKROOM: BYRON DNB 3RD BIRTHDAY
SUN 25 JAN	Front Bar: Cinnamon Sun 6pm + Vinyl Sundays, ft Mutrespo 9pm \$15 MARGIS & SPRITZERS ALL DAY Duelling Piano Bar 6pm
MON 26 JAN	BACKPACKER MONDAYS Front Bar: Jerome Williams 6pm + DJ Renee Simone 9pm Duelling Piano Bar 8pm
TUES 27 JAN	Front Bar: Marshall OKell 6pm Katie White 9pm Duelling Piano Bar 8pm
WED 28 JAN	Front Bar: Ino Pio 6pm DJ Quendo 9pm Duelling Piano Bar 8pm



They're masterpieces

The **Northern Rivers Conservatorium**, in partnership with Musica Viva Australia, is pleased to present **Lyrical Masterpieces: An Afternoon of Chamber Music at the Conservatorium**, on **Sunday, February 15**, an intimate afternoon of chamber music featuring violinist **Doretta Balkizas** and pianist **Brieley Cutting**.

Originally scheduled for 2025, and postponed, this much-anticipated concert now takes its place in the Conservatorium's ongoing Visiting Artist program, continuing a valued partnership with Musica Viva that brings exceptional musicians to the Northern Rivers. Set in the Conservatorium's beautiful heritage concert room in the heart of the Lismore CBD, the performance promises glowing sound, expressive depth and radiant melody.

The program features works by Debussy, Brahms, Messiaen, Lili Boulanger and Australian composer Margaret Sutherland, tracing a rich musical journey from shimmering French impressionism to lyrical

German romanticism. These works invite deep listening, offering audiences music that nourishes both the heart and the imagination.

The Conservatorium's collaboration with Musica Viva Australia plays a vital role in making performances of this calibre accessible to regional audiences. Through the Musica Viva program, internationally-recognised artists are able to share their artistry with local communities, enriching the cultural life of the Northern Rivers while inspiring students and teachers alike.

As Executive Director **Anita Bellman** says, the Con's Visiting Artist program is about connection. 'It connects our students with professional musicians, our audiences with extraordinary performances, and our region with the national and international music community.'

Education remains at the heart of the Northern Rivers Conservatorium. Each week, more than 1,000 students, of all ages, participate in programs ranging from early

childhood music to advanced instrumental tuition, alongside school outreach, community workshops and youth ensembles. Hosting visiting artists extends this learning beyond the classroom, giving students insight into professional musical pathways and reminding audiences of the joy and power of live performance.

For violinist Doretta Balkizas, recently returned from a decade performing with leading European orchestras, and pianist Brieley Cutting, a Northern Rivers local with a national reputation for artistry and innovation, **Lyrical Masterpieces** is a chance to share their passion for chamber music with local audiences.

It promises to be a thoughtful, uplifting and memorable afternoon of music.

Sunday, February 15, at 5pm in the NRC Concert Room, 152 Keen Street, Lismore. Tickets: \$40 / \$28 concession / \$18 under 18 available from nrcac.edu.au/events

A no-BS policy

In a world obsessed with filters, followers and faux-friends, Melbourne singer-songwriter **Erin Shay** is a breath of fresh air. For her, pop music is way more than just background noise and money-grabbing nonsense – it's a canvas for genuine artistic expression. With her quirky onstage antics, thoughtful lyricism, and strict no-BS policy, Erin's spin on the genre is as meaningful as it is danceable.

Erin's style is a sparkly, glitter-covered mixture of the old and the new. Her bouncy, high-tempo instrumentals fuse elements of modern electronic music with old-school analogue synths; socially-conscious lyrics marry a range of vocals from breathy, to powerful, to all-out rebellion that lay atop guitars and pianos straight out of the '80s. The result is an anthemic pop sound that feels right at home in the current musical landscape.

On stage, there's nothing Erin loves more than having fun with her audience; she cracks jokes, tells stories, and interacts with her listeners for the entire show. Her background in dance shines through in her stage presence, and her infectious charisma has the power to light up a room.

With an overactive imagination and no off-switch, Erin found her outlet in music; a haven to channel her thoughts and feelings into a single cohesive space. She taught herself to play the piano and guitar in her early teens, and since then she's never looked back.

This is a free show, on Friday from 7pm at The Northern, Byron Bay

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Boundary-pushing experiences

Byron Theatre kicks off 2026 with two boundary-pushing live music experiences – international electronic innovator **Rival Consoles**, and improvisational masters **The Necks** headline January.

Byron Bay's home of bold performance, Byron Theatre, is set to launch the new year with two internationally-acclaimed acts who sit at the forefront of experimental and contemporary music.

In January, audiences will be invited to experience immersive, genre-defying performances from Rival Consoles, and Australian cult favourites The Necks, reaffirming Byron Theatre's commitment to presenting adventurous and world-class live music.

On **Friday**, UK producer Rival Consoles brings his live electronic show to Byron Bay. His work draws on

elements of electronic, ambient and modern classical music, with performances that place equal emphasis on structure, tone and atmosphere. His live shows are widely presented in theatres and concert halls internationally.

On **Saturday, January 31**, Australian trio The Necks return to Byron Theatre.

Known for performances built entirely in the moment, the group creates long-form improvised pieces that unfold gradually over the course of the evening. No two performances are the same, and the focus is on listening rather than spectacle.

Jon Howell, Theatre Manager says that together, these two performances reflect Byron Theatre's ongoing mission to champion artists who challenge convention and expand what live music can be. 'We are offering audiences rare opportunities to experience innovative work rarely heard outside of capital cities.'

Rival Consoles – Friday, January 23
The Necks – Saturday, January 31
Byron Theatre – tickets on sale now. For full event details and bookings, visit byrontheatre.com

Flow Music presents HOVR (DE) + Yeti + Cakkou at Haven

Flow Music returns to Haven on **Sunday, 25 January** for an open-air terrace event running from **4pm to 10pm**, bringing together music, art and community in a relaxed daytime-to-evening format.

The afternoon features DJ sets from **HOVR (DE)**, **Yeti**, and **Cakkou** (Fem Cartel), with music unfolding across Haven's outdoor terrace as the sun sets. Inside, the Haven Gallery remains open until 8pm, with all event tickets including full gallery access.

The experience extends beyond the music, with dancers by **Unveiled** moving through the space, visual styling and decor by **Rain Mage**, and market stalls curated by **Trash** and others. Guests can expect dumplings on offer, a full bar throughout the event, and drink specials available between 4pm and 6pm.

The event is designed to be inclusive and accessible, welcoming families, children and pets. A dedicated kids art and craft table will be hosted by **Oceana Piccone**, offering a creative space for younger guests while the wider community gathers across the terrace and gallery.

HOVR's performance anchors the day, delivering an extended open-air set designed for the terrace rather than a peak-hour club environment. This approach favours immersion over immediacy, allowing the music to unfold gradually and respond to the space and crowd. Alongside Yeti and Cakkou, the event is curated as a cohesive musical journey, moving steadily from late afternoon into evening.

Tickets are available online from events.humanitix.com/flow-music-presents-hovr-yeti, and capacity is limited
Haven, 102 Jonson Street, Byron Bay
Sunday, 25 January from 4pm–10pm

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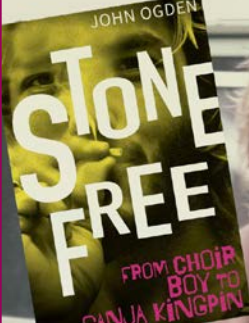
HOVR

YETI • CAKKOU

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 Crawford Gallery,
 Byron Bay
 Fri 30 Jan, 6pm



The **Multikulcha Art Exhibition** is the first ever to celebrate multiculturalism, and highlight the work of multicultural artists and multicultural families. This exhibition is a vibrant expression of cultural diversity, bringing to the forefront the creative work of exciting, new and emerging artists.

Friday 5.30pm, and Saturday and Sunday from 10am at Coorabell Hall. Free entry.



Formed in Perth in the early 2000s, **Birds of Tokyo** have grown from independent roots to become one of Australia's most popular contemporary rock bands – their broad appeal and anthemic slew of songs-everybody-knows have made them a favourite all over Australia.

Friday from 6pm at the Hotel Brunswick, Brunswick Heads. Tix \$75.85 from moshtix.com.au.



Gather your coven for irreverent, feminist punk cabaret: **Mutton – dressed as Mutton!** Honing 60+ years of global stage-trotting, spun through a funnel of bass, drums, adult puppetry and risqué anti-patriarchy tales, **Mutton** bring you a sizzling hot, hot flush.

Shows are 18+ on Friday 7.30pm (Auslan interpreted), and Saturday 4pm and 7.30pm at the Rochdale Theatre, Goonellabah. Tickets: \$30 / \$25 from muttonthetduo.com.



Join **The Bredda Brothers Trio** for a session packed with energy, eclectic sounds, and a whole lot of fun – they'll mash up classics from the '60s, '70s, '80s, '90s, and 2000s with dance bangers,

drum & bass, and their own original tracks, all delivered with their signature twist – reworking the songs you love into something completely fresh.

Saturday at The Rails, Byron Bay. Free show.



In 2026, **Lloyd Langford** will have been a professional stand-up comedian for 20 years, and this weekend there's a brand-new stand-up comedy show from the man that sounds like a YouTube video played at half speed. Come along and hear about Lloyd's problems with every other single person on earth. May contain jokes about giraffes, clouds and salt.

Saturday 6pm and Sunday 5pm at the Brunswick Picture House, Brunswick Heads. Tickets from \$36 from brunswickpicturehouse.com.



From the comedian who brought you *Teardrops on My Dildo*, **Vanessa Larry Mitchell** is back with her all-new, side-splitting comedy hour – *Teardrops on My Dildo: Fully Charged!* Expect the same unfiltered chaos, jaw-dropping confessions and outrageous storytelling that made her internationally-toured debut a cult hit.

Saturday, 8pm at the Mullumbimby Ex-Services Club. Tickets \$40 on the door.



All over Australia the name **Marshall and the Fro** has become synonymous with good feelings, late nights, and frothing festival tents. Favouring stomp over swamp, country over western, and rhythm over blues, Marshall and The Fro is a winning combination of birthright talent, seasoned musicianship, and the result of good old-fashioned hard work.

Sunday from 3pm at the Shaws Bay Hotel. Free show.

Eclectic Selection WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK



A hundred epic voices dreaming

The latest epic concert by the 100-voice, **Big Voice Choir**, was 'Dream On – Where Imagination Meets Possibility', and featured Bundjalung singer Benja Roberts – it wasn't just a choir performance; it was a full-scale sensory experience.

The concert invited the full house to consider how we might find the courage and audacity, to envision a more creative, compassionate world for ourselves and others. Over 20 weeks, the choirs rehearsed several songs that explored the theme of dreaming and visioning.

Supported by a top-shelf band of local musicians, and powered by the exhilarating sound of 100 voices, the evening also raised funds for the Byron Youth Activity Centre.

Based in Byron Bay, Brunswick Heads, Kingscliff and Murwillumbah, Big Voice choristers are celebrated for their 'wild wholesomeness': they sing big, they sing boldly, and they sing with a contagious, unapologetic joy working towards two performances a year, with all choirs joining together for a feast of song.

Musical director **Janet Swain** says she is interested in how we create culture from the ground up. 'Choirs are perfect for this – they are the epitome of community and cooperation, and they are fun, challenging, and sometimes deeply spiritual experiences.'

Big Voice Choirs start in February across four different venues and times. The choirs rehearse over two 20-week semesters, each culminating in epic, cutting-edge choir performances.

This year they are also planning a choir trip to Fiji in August.

For more information go to www.janetswainmusic.com

Northern Rivers Conservatorium
presents

Lyrical Masterpieces

Escape into a world of glowing sound & radiant melodies.

15 February

5pm
NRC Concert Room
152 Keen St, Lismore
\$40 / \$28 / \$18 (under 18)

Showcasing violinist Doretta Balkizas and pianist Brieley Cutting in a stunning program of French and German classics.

Debussy • Boulangier • Messiaen • Sutherland • Brahms



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Seven days of entertainment



Screamin' Eagles - LIVE!

One of Melbourne's biggest and most dynamic party bands, the **Screamin' Eagles** deliver a high-performance rock show built on power, precision, and pure energy. Inspired by their Harley-Davidson high-performance namesake, this Australian rock powerhouse brings that same attitude to the stage – loud, polished, and relentlessly entertaining.

Based in Melbourne, the Screamin' Eagles are renowned for their massive live sound, driven by an impressive musical lineup that sets them apart. Featuring multiple guitars, bass, drums, keys, saxophone, and up to six vocalists, the band delivers soaring harmonies and a wall of sound that fills any venue. The result is a big, bold rock experience that gets crowds moving from the very first song.

The band is made up of true veterans of the Australian music scene, with members having performed alongside major national acts and built long, respected careers in live music. The lineup includes **Steve 'Dundo' Dundon** and **Matt Powell** on vocals and guitar, **John 'JD' Dallimore** on guitar and vocals, **Norm Falvo** on keys and vocals, **Kevin Murphy** on drums and vocals, **Neil 'Ozzie' Osborne** on keys and sax, and **Brett Hapi** on bass guitar.

While their name nods to the legendary Eagles, the Screamin' Eagles are anything but a one-note tribute band. Their versatile setlist spans classic Eagles hits alongside iconic rock anthems from bands such as AC/DC, Metallica, Foo Fighters, and more. This wide-ranging repertoire ensures every show appeals to rock fans of all ages and musical tastes.

Regular fixtures at major Harley-Davidson rallies and live music venues across Australia, the Screamin' Eagles are known for their high-energy performances that bring people together and keep dancefloors packed. Their passion for these timeless songs shines through in every performance, creating a fun, inclusive atmosphere wherever they play.

Expect big songs, big harmonies, and a big night out, plus a surfboard giveaway and \$9 schooners of Stone & Wood all day.

Catch the Screamin' Eagles live at the Beach Hotel on Sunday, February 1 from 4.30pm for an unforgettable afternoon of high-octane rock and good times.

This is a free show!

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



WEDNESDAY 21

- RAILWAY HOTEL, BYRON BAY, **THE LONESOME BOATMAN**
- BRUNSWICK HEADS PICTURE HOUSE 6PM **CELIA PACQUOLA**
- THE NORTHERN, BYRON BAY, 6PM **STEPHEN LOVELIGHT**, 8PM **DUELLING PIANOS**
- THE ROADHOUSE, BYRON BAY, 6.30PM **THE NEIGHBOURS FROM HELL**
- THE PADDOCK PROJECT, MULLUMBIMBY, 4PM **CURRY JAM**

THURSDAY 22

- RAILWAY HOTEL, BYRON BAY, **OLE FALCOR**
- BEACH HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 6PM **SUNNY LUWE DUO**
- THE NORTHERN, BYRON BAY, 6PM **HARRY NICHOLS + DJ QUENDO**, 8PM **DUELLING PIANOS**
- BYRON BAY GOLF CLUB 6PM **HEEL HOOK**
- HOTEL BRUNSWICK 6PM **WILL CLIFT**
- BRUNSWICK HEADS PICTURE HOUSE 6PM **GERALDINE HICKEY**
- SAINT MARIES, BRUNSWICK HEADS, 6PM **MONDO HUM**
- LENNOX HOTEL 8PM **THURSDAY JAM NIGHT**
- KELP, BALLINA, 6PM **LUKE YEAMAN**
- LISMORE CITY BOWLO 7PM **THE SUPPER CLUB SOUL BAND**
- MO'S DESERT CLUBHOUSE, GOLD COAST, 7PM **SATELLITE MILE**

FRIDAY 23

- RAILWAY HOTEL, BYRON BAY, **FELICITY LAWLESS BAND**
- BEACH HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 5PM **LUKE PAULEY + ODD MOB**, **CALEB JACKSON, KIRA SUNDAY**
- BYRON THEATRE 8PM **RIVAL CONSOLES**
- HAVEN, BYRON BAY, **PHIL SMART**
- NORTH BYRON HOTEL 5PM **DJ NAT WHITE**
- ELEMENTS OF BYRON 5PM **LUKE BENNETT**
- THE NORTHERN, BYRON BAY, 7PM **ERIN SHAY DUO + DJ RENEE SIMONE**, 8PM **DUELLING PIANOS**
- COORABELL HALL 5.30PM **MULTIKULCHA ART EXHIBITION FEAT LAS COMADRES BAND**
- HOTEL BRUNSWICK 6PM **BIRDS OF TOKYO**

- BRUNSWICK HEADS PICTURE HOUSE 6PM **GERALDINE HICKEY**
- OCEAN SHORES TAVERN 5.30PM **OPEN MIC NIGHT**
- MIDDLE PUB, MULLUMBIMBY, 8PM **KRAPPYOKEE WITH JESS**
- BILLINUDGEL HOTEL 1PM **JASON DELPHIN**
- NATURAL WINE SHOP & BAR, BARRINGBAR, 6PM **PREFAB HAPPY DJ**
- CLUB LENNOX 7PM **GUY AND NICCI**
- LENNOX HOTEL 4PM **JB'S BLUES BREAKERS + THE DRUNKEN MIDNIGHT CHOIR**
- SHAW'S BAY HOTEL, BALLINA, 6PM **SNEAKY SOUND SYSTEM**
- BALLINA RSL BOARDWALK 6PM **ALLY PALMER**
- CHERRY STREET SPORTS CLUB, BALLINA, 7PM **FAT ALBERT DUO**
- HOTEL LISMORE 5.30PM **LUKE VASELLA + DJ SPEX**
- SALTBAR, KINGSCLIFF, 5PM **RONAN MACLEAN**
- KINGSCLIFF BEACH BOWLS 5PM **RICK BARRON**
- CLUB TWEED 7.30PM **SOUL'D**
- MO'S DESERT CLUBHOUSE, GOLD COAST, 7PM **FAITH NO MORE & RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE TRIBUTE**

SATURDAY 24

- RAILWAY HOTEL, BYRON BAY, **THE BREDDA BROTHERS**
- BEACH HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 3PM **IZZY DAY + JEROME WILLIAMS DUO + 2HOT2PLAY**
- BYRON THEATRE 6.30PM **THE ROAD TO PATAGONIA**
- HAVEN, BYRON BAY, **JEX OPOLIS + ALDONNA + ANATOLE SERRET + DJ MACARONNI**
- NORTH BYRON HOTEL 1.30PM **DJ AFRODISEA + JR DYNAMITE**
- THE NORTHERN, BYRON BAY, 7PM **JB BLUES BREAKERS**, 8PM **DUELLING PIANOS**, 10PM **DJ JAMIE LOWE**,
- COORABELL HALL 10AM **MULTIKULCHA ART EXHIBITION FEAT BOLLYWOOD SHIVA SHIMMER SQUAD + MANA ALOHA HULA, KOBYA PANGUANA**
- BRUNSWICK HEADS PICTURE HOUSE 6PM **LLOYD LANGFORD**
- MULLUMBIMBY EX-SERVICES CLUB 8PM **VANESSA LARRY MITCHELL - TEARDROPS ON MY DILDO - FULLY CHARGED**
- BILLINUDGEL HOTEL 7PM **FLUKES OF SEDINGTON**

- CLUB LENNOX 7PM **LEMON CHICKEN**
- LENNOX HOTEL 8PM **FUNKY FREQUENCIES VOL 4 FT DJ LONGTIME**
- CHERRY STREET SPORTS CLUB, BALLINA, 8PM **SUPERCHEEZE**
- BLAH BAR, LISMORE, 7PM **LUCY'S HOUSE + NAZARE + ZAM**
- HOTEL LISMORE 9.30PM **TUBED RADIO**
- HILLTOP HOTEL, GOONELLABA, 9PM **JON J BRADLEY**
- SALTBAR, KINGSCLIFF, 5PM **TRILLA**
- KINGSCLIFF BEACH BOWLS 5PM **THE COMPLAINERS**
- SALT & STONE, FINGAL HEAD, 8PM **RAW ORDIO**
- TWIN TOWNS, TWEED HEADS, THE SHOWROOM 8PM **MEATLOAF THE CONCERT**
- MO'S DESERT CLUBHOUSE, GOLD COAST, 2PM **DOUBLE BAKED**
- CROWN HOTEL, URBENVILLE, 7PM **NICKY CONVINE**
- CHINDERAH TAVERN 8PM **THE TYLER DIRDENS**

SUNDAY 25

- RAILWAY HOTEL, BYRON BAY, **JESSE WHITNEY DUO**
- BEACH HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 4.30PM **THE DUSTY TRAIL TROUBADOURS**
- HAVEN, BYRON BAY, **HOVR, YETI + CAKKOU**
- THE NORTHERN, BYRON BAY, 6PM **DUELLING PIANOS**, 9PM **CINNAMON SUN + DJ VINYL SUNDAYS FT MUTCRESP**
- BYRON BAY GOLF CLUB 7PM **BARRY MCLAY BAND**
- HOTEL BRUNSWICK 4PM **MOOD SWING & CHEVY BASS W/ ANDY V**
- BRUNSWICK HEADS PICTURE HOUSE 5PM **LLOYD LANGFORD**
- OCEAN SHORES COUNTRY CLUB 3PM **OPEN MIC**
- BILLINUDGEL HOTEL 1PM **SAM BUCKLEY**
- LENNOX HOTEL 4PM **EPIC**
- BALLINA RSL BOARDWALK 2.30PM **BALLINA BLUES CLUB FEAT FEDERAL BLUES INC**
- SHAW'S BAY HOTEL, BALLINA, 3PM **MARSHALL & THE FRO**
- ELTHAM HOTEL 4PM **MANDY HAWKES**
- KINGSCLIFF BEACH BOWLS 1PM **BILL JACOBI**
- SALTBAR, KINGSCLIFF, 2PM **SUPERCHEEZE**

MONDAY 26

- RAILWAY HOTEL, BYRON BAY, **ALEX TILLEY**
- BEACH HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 1PM **DJ LONGTIME + BROOKE SUPPLE**
- THE NORTHERN, BYRON BAY, 6PM **JEROME WILLIAMS**, 8PM **DUELLING PIANOS**, 9PM **DJ RENEE SIMONE**,
- HOTEL BRUNSWICK 2PM **BEN WHITING**
- HOTEL LISMORE 6.30PM **CATH SIMES BAND**
- CABARITA BEACH SPORTS CLUB 3PM **JON J BRADLEY**
- CHINDERAH TAVERN 2.30PM **FAT ALBERT**

TUESDAY 27

- RAILWAY HOTEL, BYRON BAY, **STEPHEN LOVELIGHT**
- BEACH HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 6PM **HAYLEY GRACE**
- THE NORTHERN, BYRON BAY, 6PM **MARSHALL OKELL**, 8PM **DUELLING PIANOS**, 9PM **KATIE WHITE**
- TWIN TOWNS, TWEED HEADS, THE SHOWROOM 11AM **KEITH POTGER**

WEDNESDAY 28

- RAILWAY HOTEL, BYRON BAY, **ANDY JANS-BROWN**
- BEACH HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 6PM **TIM STOKES**
- THE NORTHERN, BYRON BAY, 6PM **INO PIO**, 8PM **DUELLING PIANOS**, 9PM **DJ QUENDO**
- BRUNSWICK HEADS PICTURE HOUSE 6PM **JOSH THOMAS**
- THE PADDOCK PROJECT, MULLUMBIMBY, 4PM **CURRY JAM**
- KINGSCLIFF BEACH BOWLS 6.30PM **KINGY COMEDY - FEAT KIRSTY WEBECK**
- LENNOX HOTEL 7PM **STONE FREE BOOK LAUNCH**

PALACE CINEMAS
BYRON BAY - BALLINA FAIR

SESSION TIMES
THURSDAY JANUARY 22
TO WEDNESDAY JANUARY 28

IS THIS THING ON?
SNEAK PREVIEWS
Fri, Sat, Sun, Mon: 3:15PM

FAMILY FILMS

GRAND PRIX OF EUROPE (G)
Daily: 10:15AM

THE POUT-POUT FISH (G)
Daily: 10:15AM

THE SPONGEBOB MOVIE: SEARCH FOR SQUAREPANTS (PG)
Daily: 10:40AM, 12:20PM

ZOOTOPIA 2 (PG)
Daily: 10:20AM, 1:10PM

PALACE BYRON BAY

SPECIAL SCREENINGS

IS THIS THING ON? (M)
Fri, Sat, Sun, Mon: 3:15PM

FAMILY FILMS

GRAND PRIX OF EUROPE (G)
Daily: 10:15AM

THE POUT-POUT FISH (G)
Daily: 10:15AM

THE SPONGEBOB MOVIE: SEARCH FOR SQUAREPANTS (PG)
Daily: 10:40AM, 12:20PM

ZOOTOPIA 2 (PG)
Daily: 10:20AM, 1:10PM

ALL FILMS

28 YEARS LATER: THE BONE TEMPLE (MA15+)
Daily: 2:40PM, 8:20PM

ANACONDA (M)
Daily: 12:15PM, 4:20PM

AVATAR: FIRE AND ASH (2D) (M)
Daily: 12:45PM, 7:30PM

HAMNET (M)
Daily: 10:20AM, 12:40PM, 4:30PM, 7:10PM

MARTY SUPREME (MA15+ NFI)
Daily: 10:30AM, 1:30PM, 3:30PM, 4:30PM, 6:30PM, 7:30PM

MERCY (M) NFI
Daily: 12:30PM, 2:15PM, 6:20PM

NO OTHER CHOICE (M)
Daily: 8:20PM

PRIMATE (MA15+ NFI)
Daily: 3:15PM, 5:30PM, 8:30PM

RENTAL FAMILY (M)
Daily: 10:15AM

SENTIMENTAL VALUE (M)
Thurs, Wed: 10:15AM

SOMEBODY TO LOVE (M) NFI
Daily: 11:00AM, 1:00PM, 4:00PM, 6:15PM

SONG SUNG BLUE (M)
Thurs, Tues, Wed: 3:10PM, 5:50PM
Fri, Sat, Sun, Mon: 10:15AM, 5:50PM

THE HOUSEMAID (MA15+)
Daily: 1:15PM, 5:00PM, 8:30PM

THE SECRET AGENT (MA15+ NFI)
Daily: 2:20PM, 5:15PM, 7:45PM

BALLINA FAIR CINEMAS

ANACONDA (M)
Daily: 9:40AM

AVATAR: FIRE AND ASH (2D) (M)
Daily: 4:00PM

MARTY SUPREME (MA15+ NFI)
Daily: 11:30AM, 2:30PM, 7:30PM

MERCY (M) NFI
Daily: 2:30PM, 7:45PM

PRIMATE (MA15+ NFI)
Daily: 2:00PM, 5:30PM

SONG SUNG BLUE (M)
Daily: 11:45AM, 7:20PM

THE HOUSEMAID (MA15+)
Daily: 4:40PM

THE SPONGEBOB MOVIE: SEARCH FOR SQUAREPANTS (PG)
Daily: 9:30AM

ZOOTOPIA 2 (PG)
Daily: 9:30AM, 11:45AM

SCAN TO BOOK ONLINE FOR BOOKINGS AND SESSION TIMES PALACECINEMAS.COM.AU

6686 9600 BALLINA FAIR • 6680 8555 BYRON BAY

It's Free! to post your gig in the Echo Gig Guide

It will appear in the paper, the online gig guide and on Bay FM
 email gigs@echo.net.au with the details

ECHO CLASSIFIEDS – 6684 1777

CLASSIFIED AD BOOKINGS

PHONE ADS

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:

Village Way, Stuart St, Mullumbimby

EMAIL ADS

Display (box ads) and line classifieds, email:

classifieds@echo.net.au

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.

RATES & PAYMENT

LINE ADS:

\$17.00 for the first two lines
\$5.00 for each extra line

\$17 for two lines is the minimum charge.

DISPLAY ADS (with a border): \$14 per column centimetre

These prices include GST.

Cash, cheque, Mastercard or Visa

Prepayment is required for all ads.

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www.echo.net.au/classified-ads

VOLUNTEERS WANTED



"WE SERVE"

Volunteer at the many Bangalow Lions Club community events!
A fun, busy Not-For-Profit Club with all funds raised going to worthy causes.

All welcome!

Contact President John Singh 0418 662781 or punjab@byronbaypork.com.au



Australian Red Cross

Make a real difference in the Northern Rivers.

If you'd like to become an Emergency Services volunteer, come to one of our 8 free training days!

Contact Hannah to find out more or RSVP.

0404 095 127 or email hillywhite@redcross.org.au.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

Notice of Praeceptum
For the record Fiona Elizabeth Kaminski © of Ocean Shores, New South Wales is permanently domiciled on the Land and Soil of Terra Australis. I am not a voluntary transactor in commerce, and the paramount security interest holder of all estates, property, assets and collateral, both registered and unregistered, and all associated copyright protected trade names, FIONA ELIZABETH KAMINSKI, FIONA KAMINSKI, FIONA E. KAMINSKI, F.E. KAMINSKI, FIONA ELIZABETH MCNAUGHT, FIONA E. MCNAUGHT, F.E. MCNAUGHT. My lawful reconveyance to the Land and Soil jurisdiction of Terra Australis, was recorded with Public Record Number RPP44 63900 05100 39045 98602 on Proclamation Date 12 December 2025. All usufruct subjugation ties have been severed with the occupying corporate government of Australia. The corporate Australian kakistocracy and its affiliates are instructed to immediately cease and desist misaddressing Fiona Kaminski© in fraudulent debased Dog-Latin, GLOSSA and to cease and desist infringing on my estate, property, assets, collateral and copyright protected trade names.

WHERE TO GET THE ECHO
If you live in Newrybar, Lennox Head or Ballina, but outside our current home delivery area, you can pick up an Echo from many locations, including: Newrybar Provider Newrybar; Richies IGA Ballina, Ballina RSL, One Stop Shop Ballina, Ballina Golf Club East Ballina, Brighton St Takeaway near the Shawsy, Seagrass Lennox, Lennox pub drive-through, Station St Grocer Lennox

LOCALS SPECIAL!

BRUNSWICK HEADS CHRISTMAS CARNIVAL BANNER PARK

Any Sunday until 25th Jan 2026 from 6.30pm

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BUY 1 RIDE GET 1 FREE
BUY 1 RIDE GET 1 FREE



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BUSINESS CLOSURE.

Farm setup for sale and land for rent.
We are closing our business and offering a complete farm setup, on a peaceful 2-acre farming plot (land for rent) at just \$220pw. Setup for sale: \$10,000 which includes: medium-sized coolroom (built in 2019 with new cooling unit); 200 established fruiting lime trees; farming tools. Located near Brunswick-Mullumbimby. This is a great opportunity for someone looking to step into small-scale farming with an already-established setup on affordable leased land.
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PRODUCTIVE home-based ethical micro business: local produce, frozen confectionery, wholesale distributor, stable overheads, established clients, potential for growth \$40K - 0431284741

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The Centre for Mind Body Wellness is welcoming new therapists to join our collective in the heart of Mullumbimby. To apply visit our website: centreformindbodywellness.com.au/join

WORK WANTED

1 or 2 MEN + UTE

Furniture and rubbish removals
Over 15 years exp. Jarrod 0415 139 308

POSITIONS VACANT

DISABILITY SUPPORT WORKERS, Must have minimum Cert 3 in Disability, Aged or Home Care, first aid and WWCC. Licence and reliable car essential. Must be available weekday mornings. Send resume to info@byronbaycare.com.au

LADIES WANTED, MUST BE 18+ Work available in busy adult parlour. Travellers welcome. 66816038 for details.

TAXI DRIVERS WANTED
Flexible work hours - perfect 2nd income
Email operations@byronbaytaxi.com



Shearwater, the Mullumbimby Steiner School has the following exciting opportunity:

Maintenance Worker
L1 General Hand or L2 Qualified Trade

Part Time (4 days per week)

Applications will be considered as received.

For the Position Description and details on how to apply, visit our website

shearwater.nsw.edu.au/work-at-shearwater/

SUN, MOON & TIDES - TIMES FOR NEXT 3 WEEKS

DATE (Jan/Feb)	DAY/MOON PHASE	SUN RISE/SET	MOON RISE/SET	HIGH TIDES, height (m)	LOW TIDES, height (m)
21	W	6:07 19:46	8:02 21:24	11:05.176 23:13.126	04:07.025 17:29.032
22	TH	6:08 19:46	9:02 21:54	11:40.172 23:56.129	04:47.028 18:02.031
23	F	6:08 19:46	10:01 22:24	12:15.166	05:31.034 18:38.031
24	SA	6:09 19:45	11:01 22:55	00:42.131 12:51.155	06:19.043 19:15.033
25	SU	6:10 19:45	12:02 23:28	01:33.134 13:31.142	07:15.053 19:58.035
26	M	6:11 19:45	13:07 23:58	02:35.137 14:23.128	08:27.062 20:47.037
27	TU	6:12 19:44	14:15 0:05	03:47.143 15:31.115	09:58.066 21:49.039
28	W	6:13 19:44	15:24 0:49	05:05.152 16:56.107	11:38.063 22:58.038
29	TH	6:14 19:43	16:33 1:41	06:17.163 18:23.107	13:02.053
30	F	6:14 19:43	17:38 2:41	07:20.175 19:32.112	00:06.033 14:04.042
31	SA	6:15 19:42	18:35 3:49	08:15.185 20:28.118	01:08.027 14:53.033
1	SU	6:16 19:42	19:23 5:00	09:04.191 21:16.125	02:02.020 15:36.028
2	M	6:17 19:41	20:03 6:09	09:48.192 22:00.130	02:52.017 16:15.025
3	TU	6:18 19:41	20:38 7:16	10:30.189 22:43.134	03:38.017 16:51.025
4	W	6:19 19:40	21:09 8:18	11:06.180 23:23.136	04:21.022 17:25.028
5	TH	6:19 19:39	21:39 9:18	11:40.169	05:03.030 17:56.031
6	F	6:20 19:39	22:07 10:15	00:02.136 12:11.155	05:46.042 18:26.035
7	SA	6:21 19:38	22:37 11:11	00:44.135 12:41.141	06:30.054 18:55.040
8	SU	6:22 19:37	23:08 12:07	01:28.133 13:13.127	07:22.065 19:28.045
9	M	6:23 19:37	23:42 13:03	02:21.132 13:52.114	08:28.074 20:08.051
10	TU	6:23 19:36	24:00 14:00	03:30.131 14:51.102	10:00.078 21:03.056
11	W	6:24 19:35	0:21 14:56	04:47.135 16:20.096	11:39.075 22:15.058

Data sourced from Bureau of Meteorology. Times adjusted for Daylight Savings when applicable.

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Regular As Clockwork

DEADLINE NOON FRIDAY

Please note that, owing to space restrictions, not all entries may be included each week. Email copy marked 'Regular As Clockwork' to editor@echo.net.au.



Brunswick Heads Women's Social Tennis

Starts February 16, Mondays 7.30-8.30am. All levels welcome. Just rock up - no need to book \$5 members, \$7 non. Cash only. Email brunstennis@gmail.com.

we're always keen for more volunteers to join our happy team! More info: www.pbbmedia.org/outreachhub. Contact: hello@pbbmedia.org.

Brunswick Heads Social Tennis

Mon, Wed, Fri and Sundays from 5pm till 7.30pm. Basic skills required. No booking required. \$5 members, \$7 non. Cash only. Email brunstennis@gmail.com.

Mullumbimby & District Neighbourhood Centre

Mullumbimby & District Neighbourhood Centre is open Monday-Friday 9am-4pm (closed 12.30-1.30pm for lunch). We offer a variety of services. Everyone is welcome. Call reception on 6684 1286. Some of our services include:

Flood recovery support service: personalised, long-term support for those impacted by the floods.
Community support: food parcels, meals, showers, assistance with electricity bills. Work Development Orders.
Listening Space: free counselling.
More Than A Meal: free community lunch Tuesday-Thursday 12.30-1.30pm.
Financial counselling
Staying Home, Leaving Violence program: Information, referral, and advocacy.
Gulgani affordable pantry shop: located at 3 Bridgeland Lane.
Orange Sky: free laundry service Mon morning & Wed afternoon.

To enquire about accessing any of these services call reception 6684 1286, check our website www.mdnc.org.au, or follow us on Facebook or Instagram. @mullumbimbyneighbourhoodcentre.

Brunswick Heads Backgammon

The Brunswick Backgammon Club meets on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month at the CWA Hall in Brunswick Heads, from 5.30pm till 7pm. It's a relaxed, social evening open to all skill levels - newcomers are always welcome!

Sing and play along

Free weekly sing along sessions for over 70s in Mullumbimby, on Wednesdays from 10.30 to 11.30am. Feel free to bring your ukulele and/or guitar and enjoy singing the songs of your youth. Limited spaces. Contact Magenta on 0447 844 215.

Free baby clothes

Free baby clothes are available each Friday morning (during school terms) from 10-12am at Mullumbimby CWA Hall, corner of Tincogan and Gordon streets. And if you like hanging out with mums and bubs and have a penchant for folding tiny clothes,

Byron Community

The Byron Community Centre provides community services and programs including meals, advocacy and counselling for locals in need. **Fletcher Street Cottage:** A welcoming, safe and respectful space where people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness can come to enjoy practical relief opportunities, find connections and access broader support.

Fletcher Street Cottage services are open Tuesday-Friday; breakfast 7am-9am; showers and laundry 7am-12pm; office support 9am-12pm. Individual support appointments with community workers and specialist services available please book on (02) 6685 7830. Fletcher Street Cottage, 18 Fletcher St, Byron Bay. More info: www.fletcherstreetcottage.com.au. **Byron Seniors Club:** www.byronseniors.com.au. More info on **Community Services:** www.byroncentre.com.au Phone: (02) 6685 6807.

Low-cost or free food

Food Box Thursdays 9.30-11.30am at Uniting Church, Mullumbimby. You may purchase cheap food, obtain free veges, and enjoy a cuppa. We will be closed from December 18 and re-open on February 5, 2026. For all enquiries please phone Gill 0428 846 328.

The Hub Baptist Church in Ocean Shores has food relief available for anyone doing it tough, please contact us on 0434 677747 if you find yourself doing it tough. No ID or Concession Card required. NILS referral service also available. Check Facebook page The Hub Baptist Ocean Shores for details. **Liberation Larder** Takeaway lunches and groceries Monday and Thursday 12 till 1pm. Fletcher Street end of the Byron Community Centre.

Respite Service

Byron Shire Respite Service delivers high-quality respite care to a broad range of clients throughout the Byron, Ballina and Lismore shires. Donations welcome: Ph 6685 1921, email fundraiser@byronrespite.com.au, website: www.byronrespite.com.au.

Brunswick Heads U3A

U3A is a group for retired folk offering lifelong learning and activities. On 11 November, the forum talker is Mel Williams on Mullum and District Neighbourhood Centre. Interest groups are garden group, foodies, movie/lunch, men's shed, French revisited, Scottish folk dance, mahjong, walkers and talkers, shabashi, table tennis, chess, debating group and ukelele. For more info email info@brus3a.org or call Denise 0423 778 573.

Alateen meeting

Alateen meeting every Thursday at 5-6pm. Do you have a parent, close friend or relative with a drinking problem? Alateen can help. For 8-16-year-olds meet St Cuthbert's Anglican Church Hall, 13 Powell Street, corner of Florence Street Tweed Heads. Al-Anon family groups for older members at the same time and place. 1300 ALANON 1300 252 666 www.al-anon.org.au.

Drug support groups

Call **Alcoholics Anonymous** 1800 423 431 or 0401 945 671 - 30 meetings a week in the Shire - www.aa.org.au. Are you experiencing difficulties and challenges because of the alcohol or drug use of someone close to you? Learn coping skills and gain support from others.

Narcotics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem. We are recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other stay clean. For information and meetings call 1300 652 820 or text your postcode to 0488 811 247. www.na.org.au. Are you concerned about somebody else's drinking? **Al-Anon Family Groups** meetings held Fridays at 2pm by Zoom. 1300 252666 www.al-anon.org.au.

Support after suicide

StandBy provides support to people who have lost someone to suicide. They provide free face-to-face and telephone support and are accessible 24/7. Follow-up contact is available for up to one year. Find out more at: www.standbysupport.com.au or call 13 11 14. If you, or someone you are with, are in need of immediate support please call an ambulance or police on 000.

Volunteer call out

Support for New Mums Inc. a Northern NSW community program are recruiting volunteers in the Byron Shire. We offer a free of charge, home visiting program for mothers with babies. For more information email Deb: newmums8@gmail.com.

Rainbow Dragons

Rainbow Dragons Abreast (RDA) welcomes breast cancer survivors for a paddle at Lake Ainsworth, Lennox Head (and sometimes at Ballina) on Sundays 7.30am for 8am start. Contact Marian 6688 4058, mazzerati2010@gmail.com.

Co-dependents Anonymous (CoDA) 2025 convention.

Codependents anonymous is a 12-step fellowship whose common purpose is to develop healthy and loving relationships with others and ourselves. We warmly welcome anyone, whether you have experience in the program, or are a newcomer, to attend our 2025 convention on October 18, 9am-3.30pm, at Marvell Hall Byron Bay. Tickets can be purchased on the day or via the link on our website www.codependentsanonymous.org.au. There is also a Zoom only ticket option. This will be a wonderful opportunity to connect with people who are dedicated to recovery from self-neglect, abuse and abandonment. Whatever you may think about the word codependency, be prepared to rethink it! 'To thine own self be true'.

Older adult exercise

Chair-based older adults exercise classes run by a qualified instructor, that feel more like fun than exercise, are held every Thursday at 10.15am in the Brunswick Memorial Hall. Cost \$10. All welcome. Just show up or if you have any questions please contact Di on 0427 026 935.

\$5 pilates classes

Pilates for the price of a coffee! Come and join us for \$5 Pilates classes every Thursday at 8.45am in the Memorial Hall, 22 Fingal Street, Brunswick Heads and Monday at 8.45am in Mullumbimby. It doesn't matter what level you are, as beginner to advanced options are shown. Just bring a mat and water. My goal is to keep the Shire active and feeling great one person at a time. No need to book just show up. For more information contact Di on 0427 026 935.

On The Horizon

DEADLINE NOON FRIDAY

Email copy marked 'On The Horizon' to editor@echo.net.au.

Lismore U3A event

Lismore University of the Third Age (U3A) are holding an open day on Wednesday, 21 January from 10am to 12pm at the Lismore Workers Sports Club, 202 Oliver Ave, Goonellabah. Organisers say more than 30 courses

are available each week across four terms, which are 'designed to keep both your mind and body active and engaged'. For more information, visit www.u3alismore.com.au or contact Pat McLaren-Smith on 0490 483 049.



JOY
If ever there was a girl who lived up to her name, it is this cutie. Joy is a small, compact bundle of love & affection, a real life black beauty. She's so irresistible you won't be able to leave without her! Guaranteed!!

To meet Joy & our other cats & kittens, please visit the Cat Adoption Centre at 124 Dalley Street, Mullumbimby.

OPEN: Tues 2.30-4.30pm
Thurs 3-5pm | Sat 10am-12 noon
Call AWL on 0436 845 542

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AWL NSW Rehoming Organisation
Number: R251000222



CHAI
Chai is a 5 1/2-year-old domestic short hair with a striking blue, white and grey coat and a gentle, soulful nature. Affectionate and calm, he adores human company, enjoying pats, cuddles and quiet time with his people. Chai loves being close, offering soothing companionship and steady purrs. He would make a wonderful best friend for someone seeking a loving, devoted cat.

Rehoming #R251 00 00 60



T: 6681 1860 E: shelter@nras.org.au
W: www.nras.org.au

Byron Dog Rescue (CAWI)



BOO
Boo, a 1.5-year-old Staffy x Bull Arab (male, desexed), is a loving, calm boy looking for his forever home. Join our CAWI Op Shop volunteer team in Brunswick Heads (3 hours) - every bit of help supports rescues like Boo!

M/C: 978142000104798
Call Julia on 0458 461 935 or apply via byrongrescue.org



GANACHE
Ganache is a super-sweet, short-haired tortoiseshell girl, 18 months old, and is desperate for a loving home. She does not have a bad bone in her body, great to handle, brush, and just adores company and affection. She's so kind, and really deserves a lot of love and affection back. Desexed, vaccinated, microchip 991993992552824.

Call us to meet Ganache and all our other rescue cats. Check our FB for more!

To make an appointment
0403 533 589 • Billinudgel
petsforlifeanimalshelter.net

The Echo's Market Guide

Find it online: www.echo.net.au/market-guide

MONTHLY MARKETS:

- 1st SAT: **Brunswick Heads Markets** - 8am-2pm
- 1st SUN: **Byron Community Market** - 8am-3pm
Pottsville Beach Markets - 7am-1pm
- 2nd SUN: **The Channon Craft Market** - 9am-3pm
Chillingham Markets - 8am-1pm
Coolangatta Arts & Craft Markets - 8am-2pm
Tabulam Community Market - 9am-1pm
- 3rd SAT: **Mullumbimby Community Market** - 8am-2pm
Murwillumbah Makers & Finders Market - 9am-2pm
Salt Beach Markets, South Kingscliff/Casuarina - 8am-1pm
- 3rd SUN: **Federal Village Market** - 8am-2pm
Uki Buttery Bazaar Market - 8am-2pm
Pottsville Beach Markets - 7am-1pm
Lismore City Bowlo Markets - 9am-1pm
- 3rd SUN (Dec & Jan): **Byron Community Market** - 8am-3pm
- 4th SAT: **Kyogle Bazaar** - 9am-2pm
- Last SAT: **Evans Head Rotary Market** - 8am-1pm
- 4th SUN: **Bangalow Market** - 8am-2.30pm
Nimbin Markets - 9am-3pm
Murwillumbah Showground Market - 8am-1pm
- 4th SUN (in a 5-Sunday month): **Coolangatta Arts & Crafts** - 8am-2pm
- 5th SUN: **Nimbin Markets** - 8.30am-3pm

Seasonal: **Byron Beachside Market** - four times a year: Wed 7th Jan 2026, Easter, July and Sept

FARMERS/WEEKLY MARKETS:

- Each TUE: **New Brighton Farmers Market** - 8am-11am
Lismore Organic Market - 7.30am-10.30am
- Each WED: **Murwillumbah Farmers Market** - 7am-11am
Nimbin Farmers Market - 3pm-6pm
Newrybar Hall Twilight Market - 3pm-7.30pm
- Each THU: **Byron Bay Farmers Market** - 7am-11am
Lismore Produce Market - 3pm-6pm
- Each FRI: **Mullumbimby Farmers Market** - 7am-11am
Evans Head Farmers Market - 2.30pm-6.30pm
- Each SAT: **Bangalow Farmers Market** - 7am-11am
Duranbah Road Farmers Market (Tropical Fruit World) 8am-11am
Uki Farmers Market - 8am-1pm
Lismore Farmers Market - 7.30am-11.30am
Byron Twilight Market (October to April) 4pm-9pm
- Each SUN: **Ballina Farmers & Producers Market** - 7am-11am

The Echo updates this guide regularly, however sometimes markets change their routine without letting us know. Please get in touch if you want to advise us of a change.



EMERGENCY NUMBERS

AMBULANCE, FIRE, POLICE	000
AMBULANCE Mullumbimby & Byron Bay	131 233
POLICE Brunswick Heads	6629 7510
Mullumbimby	6629 7570
Byron Bay	6685 9499
Bangalow	6629 7500
STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE Storm & tempest damage, flooding...132 500	
BRUNSWICK VALLEY RESCUE Primary rescue.....	6685 1999
BRUNSWICK MARINE RADIO TOWER.....	6685 0148
BYRON CENTRAL HOSPITAL.....	6639 9400
BYRON COUNCIL: EMERGENCY AFTER HOURS.....	6622 7022
NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE (Mullumbimby)	6684 1286
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE 24 hour crisis line.....	1800 656 463
LIFELINE	131 114
MENSLINE.....	1300 789 978
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS 24 hours	1800 423 431
AL-ANON Help for family and friends of alcoholics	1300 252 666
NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS Meets daily	6680 7280
NORTHERN RIVERS GAMBLING SERVICE.....	6687 2520
HIV/AIDS - ACON Confidential testing & information	6622 1555
ANIMAL RESCUE (DOGS & CATS).....	6622 1881
NORTHERN RIVERS WILDLIFE CARERS.....	6628 1866
KOALA HOTLINE	6622 1233
WIRES - NSW Wildlife Information & Rescue Service... 6628 1898	

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 New ads will be placed at end of section.
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Byron Bay, 15 minutes from Wategos Beach and seamless access to Ballina Airport. The charming hinterland villages of Newrybar and Bangalow are also within easy reach, offering cafes, restaurants and local shopping.

Spanning over 34 acres (13.9ha) of

breathhtaking subtropical rainforest, this spectacular private estate sits directly opposite the protected NPWS Broken Head Nature Reserve. Perched above Brays Beach, the two residences – The Greenhouse and The Echidna – share sweeping ocean and forest views and are among

the very few properties within walking distance to Whites, Kings and Brays beaches. The property features two separate houses with individual entrances, along with an additional self-contained cabin/studio and a treehouse, offering multiple-occupancy flexibility and future scope.

This is a true conservationist and nature-lover's sanctuary, protected by a biodiversity covenant that ensures the surrounding landscape will never be built out. The estate is home to resident wallabies, echidnas, visiting koalas, abundant birdlife and rare Richmond birdwing

butterflies, with the seasonal soundtrack of cicadas in summer, and whale calls in winter. Beloved by the current owners, the property offers a profound sense of peace, privacy and healing – allowing you to enjoy Byron Bay's lifestyle while retreating home to complete tranquillity within minutes.

Just 10 minutes from Byron Bay, this is a rare opportunity to reside in your own forest and beachfront sanctuary. Listen to birdsong at dawn, watch whales breaching offshore, and walk to secluded beaches where the rainforest meets the sea. Offering what money often can't buy – even in locations like Wategos – this property delivers absolute privacy, environmental integrity and an unrivalled connection to nature.

■ Agent: Brad Rogan
0420 529 112

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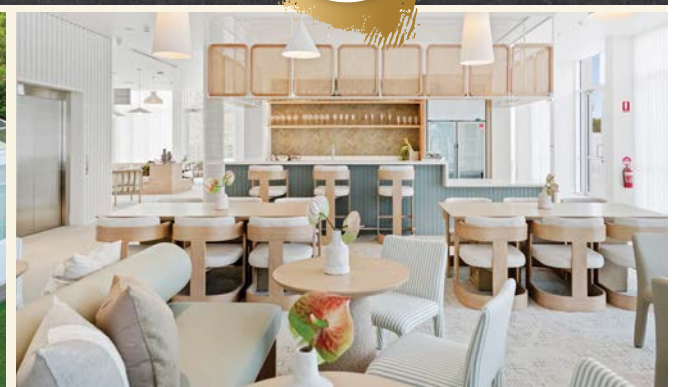
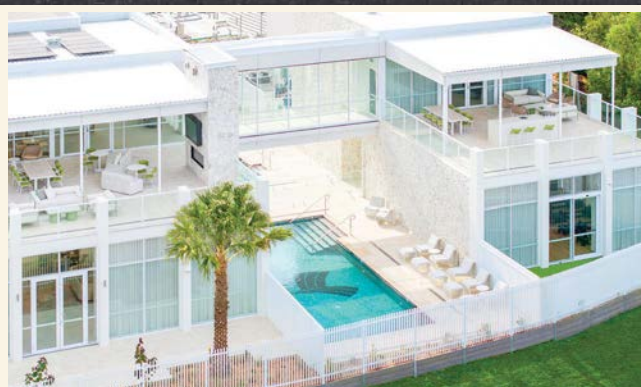
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GUIDE | \$1.95M - \$2.1M
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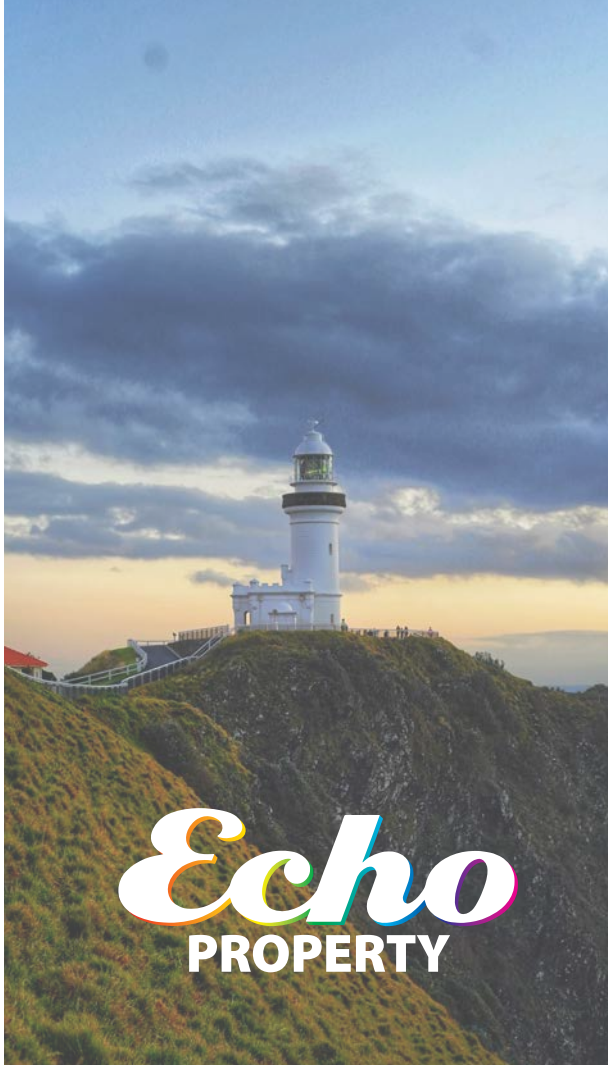
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- 9/277 Golden Four Dr, Bilinga. Sat 9.45-10.15am QLD Time
- 1091/14-22 Stuart St, Tweed Heads. Sat 11-11.30am
- 33 Inlet Dr, Tweed Heads West. Sat 11.45am-12.15pm
- 1444/6-8 Stuart St, Tweed Heads. Sat 12-12.30pm
- 7/20 Dutton St, Coolangatta. Sat 12-12.30pm
- 42 Karingal Ave, Bilambil Heights. Sat 12.45-1.15pm
- 5/5-10 Quayside Ct, Tweed Heads. Sat 12.45-1.15pm

First National

- 22 Burns Street, Byron Bay. Wed 1-1.30pm
- 2/6 Keats Street, Byron Bay. Thurs 11-11.30am
- 2 Palm Place, Byron Bay. Thurs 12-12.30pm
- 35 Shelley Drive, Byron Bay. Thurs 1-1.30pm
- 7 Hayter Street, Suffolk Park. Thurs 1.30-2pm
- 142 Phoenix Drive, Tintenbar. Thurs 3-3.30pm
- 8 Banksia Place, Mullumbimby. Fri 10-10.30am
- 5 Botanic Court, Mullumbimby. Fri 10.45-11.15am
- 103 Paterson Street, Byron Bay. Fri 12-12.30pm
- 134 Dalley Street, Mullumbimby. Fri 3-3.30pm
- 2/122 Lighthouse Road, Byron Bay. Sat 9-9.30am
- 142 Phoenix Drive, Tintenbar. Sat 9-9.30am
- 2 Palm Place, Byron Bay. Sat 9-9.30am
- 234A Bangalow Road, Byron Bay. Sat 10-10.30am
- 4 Ryces Drive, Clunes. Sat 10-10.30am
- 39 Balemo Drive, Ocean Shores. Sat 10-10.30am

- 8 Banksia Place, Mullumbimby. Sat 10-10.30am
- 7/37 Childe Street, Byron Bay. Sat 10-10.30am
- 35 Shelley Drive, Byron Bay. Sat 10-10.30am
- 465 Uralba Road, Lynwood. Sat 10-10.30am
- 7 Hayter Street, Suffolk Park. Sat 10.30-11am
- 47 Bulgoon Crescent, Ocean Shores. Sat 11-11.30am
- 93 Paterson Street, Byron Bay. Sat 11-11.30am
- 4 Wright Place, Bangalow. Sat 11-11.30am
- 22 Burns Street, Byron Bay. Sat 11-11.30am
- 2/6 Keats Street, Byron Bay. Sat 11-11.30am
- 5 Botanic Court, Mullumbimby. Sat 11-11.30am
- 114 Orana Road, Ocean Shores. Sat 11.30am-12pm
- 134 Dalley Street, Mullumbimby. Sat 12-12.30pm
- 2/113 Paterson Street, Byron Bay. Sat 12-12.30pm
- 93 Station Street, Mullumbimby. Sat 12-12.30pm
- 1452 Kyogle Road, Uki. Sat 12.30-1pm
- 43 Lychee Drive, Rosebank. Sat 1-1.30pm
- 56 Ruskin Lane, Byron Bay. Sat 1-1.30pm
- 103 Federal Drive, Eureka. Sat 2-2.30pm

Harcourts Northern Rivers

- 3/20 The Terrace, East Ballina. Sat 9.30-10am
- 2 Fitzroy Street, Wardell. Sat 10-10.30am
- 35 Webster Street, South Lismore. Sat 10-10.30am
- 275 Signata Road, Pimlico. Sat 10.30-11am
- 412 Bagotville Road, Meerschaum Vale. Sat 11.15-11.45am
- 428 Old Bagotville Road, Bagotville. Sat 12-12.30pm

Mana Re

- 1/21A Balemo Drive, Ocean Shores. Tues 12-12.30pm
- 237 Tweed Valley Way, Murwillumbah. Wed 9-9.30am
- 32 Gloria Street, South Golden Beach. Wed 4-4.30pm
- 4/19 Oceanside Place, Suffolk Park. Thurs 10-10.30am
- 33 Robin Street, South Golden Beach. Sat 9-9.30am
- 1/21A Balemo Drive, Ocean Shores. Sat 10-10.30am
- 16 Berrimbillah Court, Ocean Shores. Sat 10-10.30am
- 32 Gloria Street, South Golden Beach. Sat 11-11.30am
- 14 Mitchell Street, Uki. Sat 11.30am-12pm
- 25 Flinders Way, Ocean Shores. Sat 12-12.30pm

Real Estate of Distinction

- 98 Greenvale Court, Burringbar. Sat 9.30-10.15am
- 21 Mcleish Road, Kinvara. Sat 11-11.45am
- 876 Tamarind Drive, Tintenbar. Sat 12-12.30pm
- 11 Bian Court, Ocean Shores. Sat 1.30-2pm

New listings

- 1300 Main Arm Road, Upper Main Arm
- 2 Palm Place, Byron Bay
- 5 Botanic Court, Mullumbimby
- 178 Tyagarah Road, Myocum
- 142 Phoenix Drive, Tintenbar
- 10 Kendall Street, Byron Bay

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I thought it must be a really good joke – that there will be a Trump Tower built on the Gold Coast! According to the *Gold Coast Bulletin* a city source said: ‘we have seen plans with renders. And they have a gold Donald Trump on it. Every Trump hotel has a big gold Donald Trump on it, and this one will be the same. It’s nothing new, it’s not the first time this property has had Trump interest. It’s the same developer. It’s the Trump Tower.’ Backlash is still recovering from whiplash over this one!

■■■■■
The NSW Forestry Corporation has been issued two new fines, totalling \$60,000, by the NSW Environment Protection Authority, for failing to fix water pollution in Mogo State Forest. The two charges were related to not constructing creek crossings in compliance with best practice and because an ongoing risk to downstream water quality is being caused by the corporation’s failure to conduct remediation works. When will the NSW state government take action to decommission this organisation that posts multimillion dollar annual losses and continues to breach the state’s laws with the repercussions of these fines once again being borne by taxpayers?

■■■■■
‘Rage Against The Machine never specified what type of machine they were furious with but I reckon it was a printer’ – John Moynes.

■■■■■
The Epstein files must really be bad for Trump. Venezuela one week, Greenland the next. It appears anything will be done to keep the attention away from associating with a well-connected



Brad Turner was one of the many muscle men and women who showed off their ability to demolish logs in a matter of seconds at last week’s ever-popular Brunswick Heads Woodchop Carnival. Photo ‘Spitting Chips’ Dawson

convicted sex trafficker who ‘committed suicide’ in jail.

■■■■■
Grok, the AI chatbot anchoring Elon Musk’s X social media platform, has become the internet’s leading maker of nonconsensual sexualised imagery, especially of young girls.

■■■■■
The NSW Forestry Corporation has already started logging in Glenbog State Forest despite not yet finding 98 of the 102 recorded den, habitat trees in the planned logging areas.

■■■■■
Needing a bit of light relief? Make sure you get to Byron Writers Festival’s evening with the queen of wit and fearless feminist Kathy Lette on Friday, 6 March at the A&I Hall Bangalow. Tickets at <https://events.humanitix.com>.

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