

Echo

'NOTHING WILL WORK UNLESS YOU DO' – MAYA ANGELOU
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Koa, Lola, and Ziggy celebrating fun, diversity, and inclusion on the beach at Bruns. Photo Jeff 'Rainbow Unicorn' Dawson

Brunswick Surf Lifesaving Club celebrates Rainbow Beaches day

Aslan Shand

Last Sunday saw Brunswick Surf Lifesaving Club (SLSC) celebrating their diverse membership and reminding everyone that they are welcome at their club and on the local beaches.

The Rainbow Beaches day was celebrated by 170 out of 300 SLS Clubs and is a national initiative that celebrates diversity, inclusion, and connection within surf lifesaving and the wider coastal community.

'Lifesavers with Pride support everybody in the SLS community and we have all Australian states on board for this project that is designed to make everyone feel welcome at our clubs and on the beaches,' said volunteer Simon Ceglinski who has been a member of the Brunswick SLSC since 1985.

'We are an outward looking organisation and that is why we have a growing membership,' said Simon who is also a National Medal holder and a recipient of the NSW Premier's Citation for putting his life

on the line during the 2022 floods.

'The Brunswick SLSC has a full spectrum of members and, just like the ocean doesn't discriminate, we don't discriminate about who we rescue or help in the ocean – we don't discriminate against anyone joining our club and feeling that this is a safe space for them to participate in.'

Caring for community

Craig Sheppard, President of the Killcare SLSC, and Proud Ally of Lifesavers with Pride shared to the

SLS community on social media about Rainbow Beaches day, 'this is unfortunately still controversial for some... some critics might lean to child protection and I can't say strongly enough that there is no organisation in Australia who takes that more seriously than Surf Life Saving does. The facts are that there's no evidence to indicate that being LGBTQIA+ increases the risk of that person being a predator. There are however, reams of data that indicate they are more at risk of being abused, particularly

in their youth,' he said.

Speaking to the risks that young people do face Simon told *The Echo* that, 'young people are at significant risk of self harm and LGBTQIA+ young people are at an even higher risk. We want everyone to feel safe and welcome. As I often remind our Nippers, Rainbow Beaches is about the fact we accept, we respect and we love everyone so they can be who they are without judgement. It is easier to be nice and respectful to people than not to be.'

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Byron Bluesfest years in the making

In its 40th year, *The Echo* speaks with pivotal businesses and organisations that have helped shape the Northern Rivers over the past four decades. Over that time, *The Echo* has worked side by side, and witnessed these organisations build a vibrant hub for tourism, the arts, business services, and production across the Byron Shire and beyond.

Aslan Shand

Bluesfest is one of those key cultural institutions that has been part of shaping the fabric of the region, bringing an amazing range of creative artists, musicians, and people here. But it was the fact that the region was a hub for music and arts as part of the alternative counter-culture that created the right conditions for this unique award-winning festival to thrive.

'In the 1970s and '80s there were two regions that were really the arts and cultural centres outside of Sydney and Melbourne: the Byron region extending to Lismore and Nimbin; and Cairns and Kuranda,' said Bluesfest Director, Peter Noble OAM.

Mecca for art, culture, and nature

'They were the areas that seemed to be the magnets for arts, culture, and everything else you could imagine. Sydney was the springboard; people would stay there before they moved up here to get a bit of a feeling of more grounded life in nature. They were selling shares in multiple occupancies up here at the Paddington Markets where I had a stall in those days.'

Bluesfest is in its 37th year, just four years younger than *The Echo* that turns 40 this year. Both sprang from the alternative culture of the region.

'To really understand



Bluesfest Director Peter Noble OAM. Photo Jeff Dawson

where Bluesfest comes from you've got to go back to Danny Doeppel and the Nutwood Rug Band that he was in, they were draft dodgers from the US. He invested in The Piggery in Byron Bay (subsequently The Arts Factory), opened it as a venue, and began bringing bands to Byron. Then Kevin Oxford, who started Bluesfest, moved here and was working with Danny, all of a sudden, talent started coming to our area.'

The first show that Peter brought to the area was in 1979 and he put it on in the Trinity High School hall in Lismore.

'I brought Herb Ellis and Barney Kessel here, jazz guitar players, Barney's one of the Wrecking Crew. You know, from LA.

'It's late 1979 in Lismore and we do this show and

there were more people outside than inside, because we were sold out. This was more people than came to The Basement in Sydney. There was more people coming to shows per capita in Lismore than in Western Sydney.'

Counterculture thrives

Kevin Oxford started Bluesfest in 1990 with Peter soon coming on board to book additional talent. He then became a business partner for the 1994 Bluesfest before taking over from Kevin and Karen Oxford in 2004.

'*The Echo* was counter-cultural without an apology, and so was Bluesfest. I mean, you don't have to put the name in your logo to be something and stand for something. And we reflected what this community was.

'I think that on one level *The Echo* had a vision of our community, what our community is and should be. I realise your letters columns are sometimes quite controversial, but it's fun to read as well.

'Like *The Echo*, Bluesfest has always been a labour of love. In the early days Kevin and I were both great music fans, and trying to figure out how to put a music festival on, and there wasn't a successful blues festival in Australia. And that was Kevin's great passion and I went out there to present Australian Indigenous artists at Bluesfest.

'But both *The Echo* and Bluesfest couldn't have existed as easily anywhere else. The spread of diversity here, the people who came from the cities looking for a different life, those are the

'Both The Echo and Bluesfest couldn't have existed as easily anywhere else. The spread of diversity here, the people who came from the cities looking for a different life, those are the elements that made this area so special and created the strong cultural base for us to grow, shape, and be shaped by this region.'

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The challenges of Covid, having had Bluesfest cancelled the day before the festival in 2021, and the tightening economic conditions have made for a tough few years for Bluesfest with Peter announcing that 2025 would be the last year of Bluesfest if they didn't get the ticket sales.

We live because of your support

'We still need that local and regional support,' Peter said.

'Like *The Echo* relies on people taking ads out so that it can supply a free paper every week, Bluesfest relies on locals buying tickets and supporting it otherwise, it can't keep going.

'These events cost \$20 million. So when John Graham became the arts minister, he encouraged us to put in a major application to Destination NSW. The

grant would have got us through three years, but then on the day of the budget announcement for 2024 we received the email saying "you won't be part of the announcement". At the same time, I believe they gave \$12 million a year to South by Southwest, and that has just been cancelled.

'We bring a couple of hundred million dollars that are spent in our communities, that rip-ple out every year when we're getting 100,000

people, and the NSW government won't even give us one per cent of what we bring into this state, despite the fact we are the highest, most awarded event, not only in the state, but in this country. We're iconic.'

The future of Bluesfest and *The Echo* both rely on local community and business support.

'*The Echo* and Bluesfest have shaped the community. We even introduced music at a level that when I first moved back to Australia and I started trying to bring blues here, people would look at me and say, "mate, this is never gonna work"; says Peter.

'We both come from the counterculture, and we both must always be appealing for support, and I have to do that in the interviews, reminding people not to wait till the last minute to buy tickets, reminding them to bring their family - kids aged six and under are free, but bring the earplugs. Bluesfest is about talent. ►

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37 years of incredible performances

Echo photographer Jeff Dawson has attended and covered Bluesfest ever since its inception and had a rummage through his archives for a sample of the innumerable standout performances over the decades.

► And we have introduced so much talent to Australia. 'When I met the director of the Montreal Jazz Festival about 20 years ago, we were talking about how you keep music festivals relevant. He said "Well, we discovered drum and bass and introduced it on a festival level, before it was happening". They saw that as being music, musical, and where it resonated with jazz. You've got to have a vision, if you don't, you'll just end up doing what the others do and that's destined to fail.'

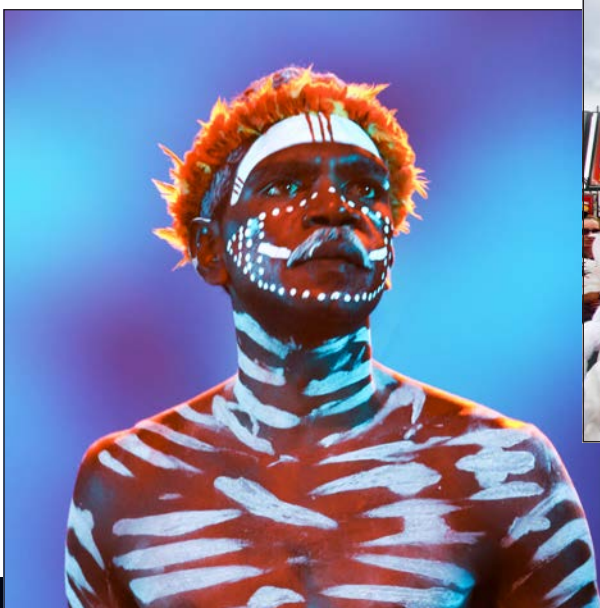


Left: As The Cat Empire exploded onto the Australian music scene, their 2005 Bluesfest performance won them a legion of local fans. The feeling was obviously mutual and these days Harry James Angus (pictured) calls the Byron Shire home.

Below: Kasey Chambers was recognised for her significant impact on the festival and Australian music, with Peter Noble presenting her with a 'Star' award in 2017.



Above: Regarded by many as the 'Godfather of Rap and Hip Hop', Gill Scott-Heron sang the 'Revolution Will Not Be Televised' on the Belongil Fields stage, at Bluesfest 1996.



Above: Hoss immersed in the blues with the 'On the Grass' YAC street theatre project circa 2006 at Red Devils Park.

Below: Derwin 'Big D' Perkins with Jon Cleary's Absolute Monster Gentlemen on the Crossroads Stage in 2015.



Above: Yothu Yindi wowed Bluesfest audiences in 2006.

Left: In 2011 she was late, she was great, extra time in the wardrobe department was so worth it. Grace Jones, one of the few singers who can make a sexy song out of a car crash, i.e. 'Warm Leatherette'.



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Campers kicked off land next to Mullum railway station

Aslan Shand

On Friday residents of Prince Street were shocked to see tall wire fences being erected around the land between the Mullumbimby Community Shedding Workshop and the Mullumbimby Railway Station.

The site had been occupied by a number of locals and travellers over the last four years with a mixture of vehicles on the site who had been given 48 hours to move on, they told *The Echo*.

'We had struck up a friendship with Eli, one of the van people who kept people on the site organised,' said Jenny Caffin and Kevin Forge who moved to Prince Street last year.

'They were never a problem, they kept the site mowed and whipper-snipped etc. and they were happy to lend a hand if we needed one.'

A Transport for NSW Spokesperson told *The Echo* that, 'the decision to fence the Mullumbimby Railway Station site was made in response to several complaints regarding illegal campers on site.'

'Concerns included the absence of appropriate sanitation facilities and noise complaints associated with an area that is not zoned or approved for residential use.'

While some residents said they felt safe with the people on the site others didn't feel quite so comfortable.

'I think it reflects a bigger problem in relation to the housing crisis. Where do people live who can't afford a home?,' said one local.

'Camp grounds are expensive with a powered site at the Mullum Showground costing \$280 per week [for two people with a maximum stay of 28 days in six months] and that's the cheapest one in town.'

No info for residents

Regardless of how safe residents felt, they all agreed that there had been no contact from the State Rail Authority or UGL who manage the site on their behalf in relation to the fencing of the site.

'They couldn't even be bothered to let us know that they were taking this action,' said Mr Forge, a sentiment echoed by other residents.

'For us there was no notice, or contact from state rail on their intentions for the site and how this would change the lovely view we had from our home of lovely people and green spaces to high fences,' said Ms Caffin.

Community space

Many residents *The Echo* spoke to said rather than imposing fences they would like to see this space used for the community, from a place to kick a footy or throw a frisbee and other outside activities, to a place where people can relax and enjoy a lovely green space in town.

'Why don't we turn it into a beautiful community garden. A big pipe on the corner from Prince and Anne Streets was really poorly done and the drains are blocked so that the water pools on that site. Why not let someone like Mullum Seed just plant it out? If they put some tea trees on that site, some natural melaleuca, that would help solve the drainage problem. Add a few pathways and many of the kids and elderly people in the area could have a play, or get there on their mobility scooters, or parents with their prams, and enjoy the space. Even if it's not the final outcome it is such a shame to see it just fenced off and the community banned from access to public land.'

Art for the love of art on display in Bruns



Above: Di Calder and her daughter Tiffany Kingston. Photo Jeff Dawson

Aslan Shand

For some people art is made for the delight in creating, and this is definitely the case for artist Di Calder who, now in her 70s, is having her first exhibition.

'My Mum (Di) has never had an exhibition of her work,' explained her daughter, who is also an artist, Tiffany Kingston.

'Her two-week solo show at Nature Co Gallery is not just about sharing her art with the community but more importantly this is my love note to my mum,' Tiffany explained.

'Over 150 artworks lay hidden away from the eyes of the world. Mum has been an artist all her life for purely the purpose of creating her own world of kindness and beauty through her love of animals and mythology. Stepping into her studio is like her version of Narnia.'

'My mum had a very

difficult childhood and her art became her sanctuary. Her mental resilience was formed through her ability to use creativity as a happy place.'

Di's exhibition runs from 11-25 February at Nature Co Gallery at 2-3 Park Street, Brunswick Heads with a special artist meet and greet at 11am on Saturday, 14 February.

Inspired by the unexpected

'Mum's art is not just painting on canvas, it is mixed media textile relief from her love of upcycling found objects and fabrics in op shops,' said Tiffany.

'Her passion for fabrics started as a child when she would receive pocket money. Instead of lollies she purchased remnant offcuts from the local fabric shops. These days her artwork can be inspired by an unexpected find in an op shop such as an



Polar bear artwork. Photo supplied

old faux fur vest which then becomes the body of a moth with sewn antique beads and lace. Her 1.5m x 1.5m polar bear artwork was an old Indian Dhurrie rug. Her 3D rabbit people and owls are made with fabric formed around milk containers and cardboard tubes.

'Her collection is endless and the artwork I will have on show is just a small portion of what I can fit into our gallery.'

The array of artworks will

include works hung on walls, 3D fabric sculptured fantasia creatures and animals, totem poles, and a collection of her art journals of collages.

'This exhibition will introduce to the community that art is beyond age and beyond the unexpected of what art truly means to our existence,' said Tiffany.

'Only a handful of artworks are for sale as my mum does not create to sell. She creates purely for the joy.'

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 Time: **5.30pm to 8.00pm**

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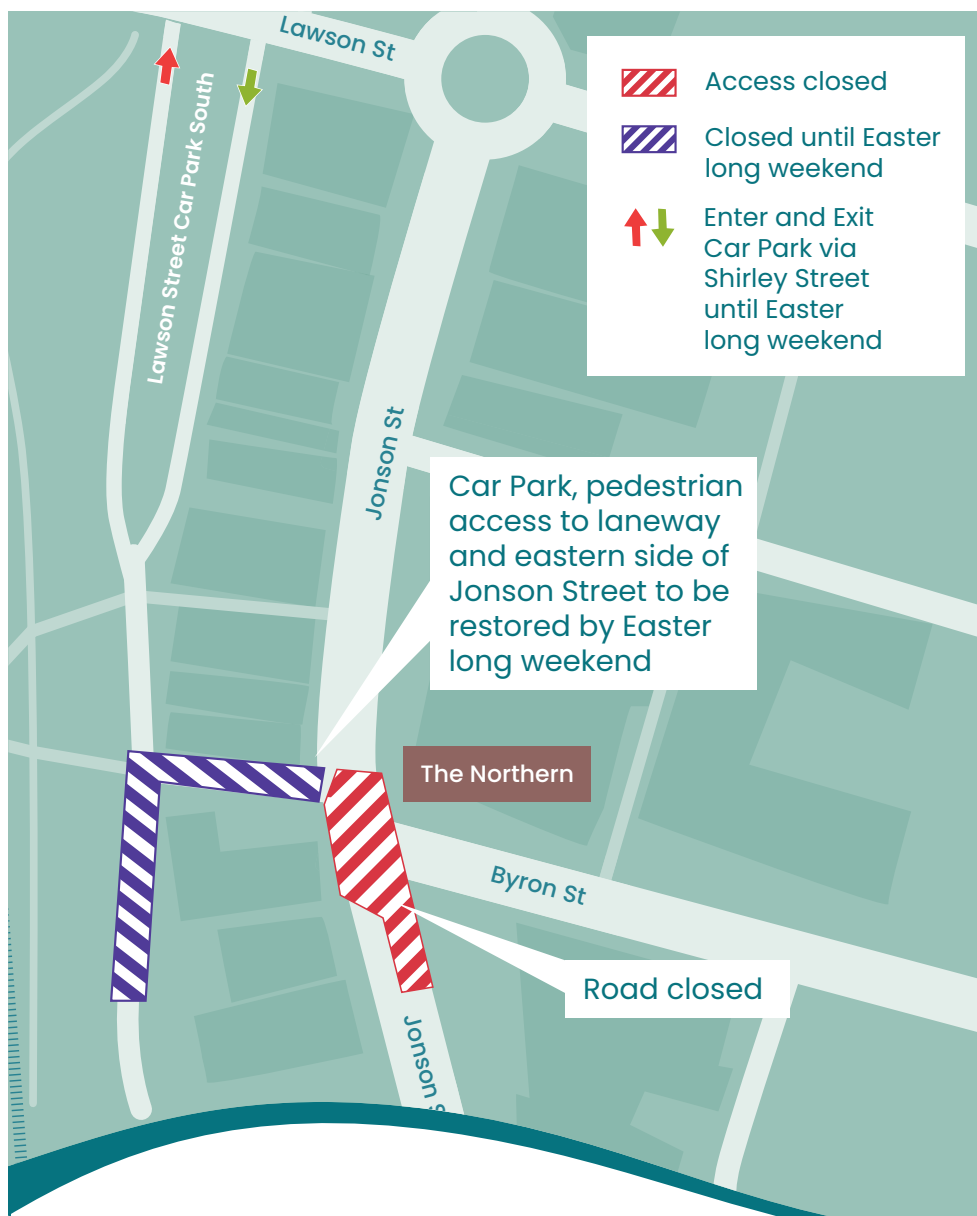


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Byron Bay Drainage Upgrade

The upgrade to Byron Bay's town centre drainage system has recommenced.

The upgraded drainage system, once complete, will reduce flooding impacts to the town centre.

What to expect during works from late February to late May:

- The intersection of Jonson Street and Byron Street will be closed. Please use detour routes where possible. U-turn bays will be in place.
- A small section of Lawson Street Car Park South including the laneway between Guzman Y Gomez and the Byron Hot Bread Kitchen is closed. Vehicles will need to enter/exit the car park from Shirley Street. Car park and pedestrian access to the laneway will be restored by the Easter long weekend.

Please support our town centre businesses, they remain open and are ready to welcome you.

- Please follow signage, traffic control and detour routes.
- Works will primarily occur Monday to Friday between 7am and 5.30pm.
- Noise/dust – At times, there will be machinery noise, including drilling and vacuum excavation, as well as dust. There will be measures in place to reduce dust and noise impacts, such as construction hoarding.

More information

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Bushfire risks identified for South Golden Beach and Lilli Pilli



Drone shot of South Golden Beach looking north towards Wooyung. Photo Jeff Dawson

Paul Bibby

South Golden Beach and Byron's Lilli Pilli have been identified as having 'unacceptable bushfire risks' in the region's new bushfire management plan, paving the way for increased prescribed burning and tree clearing in the towns.

The two locations are among seven 'Focus Areas' identified in the latest version of the *Far North Coast Bush Fire Risk Management Plan (BFRMP)*, released last week for public comment.

The BFRMP is a key strategic document that identifies community assets and values that may be at risk from bushfire and identifies coordinated multi-agency objectives and associated treatment strategies to reduce the risk over a five-year period.

Targeted action

In relation to the seven key focus areas, the plan states: 'These are areas that have been specifically identified as having an unacceptable risk and require additional, targeted treatment strategies within the five-year BFRMP.'

Being identified as a Focus Area means that South Golden Beach and Lilli Pilli are set to become the focus of strategies such as fuel reduction, ignition prevention strategies, and measures to enhance community preparedness for bush fire.

This designation could also have implications for future planning and development in the towns, as the plan will influence land use planning, development assessment, and hazard management over the next five years.

In relation to Lilli Pilli,

a small community to the southwest of the Byron Bay town centre, the draft plan points to the nesting of houses into bushland, and the proliferation of narrow back streets as sources of bushfire threat.

Tourists and narrow access issues

'Access and egress for the public and firefighting agencies in this area could be limited during a bushfire,' the plan states. The significant transient/tourist population in the area means people could be unfamiliar with their surroundings and the community is less aware and prepared for what to do during a bushfire.

'Bushfires have been recorded multiple times over many years and historically occur to the eastern aspect of the focus area in heath-type vegetation.

'Fuel loads in the east are currently lower than the western aspect where fuel loads are mapped as high to very high. The fuel types to the west include wetlands with pockets of rainforest that are typically difficult to burn under prescribed conditions, presenting increased hazards on high fire danger days.'

Under the plan bushfire fuel reduction is a key strategy, including prescribed burning in strategic fire advantage zones and mechanical clearing to create and maintain asset protection zones.

Limited access and egress options have also been identified as enhancing bushfire risk in South Golden Beach.

'There are no emergency service facilities located within the community and the nearest identified

neighbourhood safe place is the Ocean Shores Country Club to the south.

'The closest fire and rescue stations are located at Brunswick Heads and Mullumbimby, with surrounding Rural Fire Service brigade stations located at Billinudgel, Burringbar, and Mullumbimby.'

Fuel reduction and clearing to be done

The reduction of bushfire fuel loads using prescribed burning and mechanical clearing next to building infrastructure will also be a key strategy in South Golden Beach, according to the plan.

There will also be engagement with the community to raise awareness of risk and enhance resilience through community preparation.

Other areas identified as being at particular risk across the region include Wollumbin, Mt Jerusalem, Wardell, Koala Beach, and the Border Ranges.

The BFRMP is developed by the Far North Coast Bush Fire Management Committee, a group of stakeholders from the area including emergency services, land management agencies, local government, local Aboriginal land services, and local community groups.

The plan is underpinned by a risk quantification methodology based on fire behaviour modelling. The fire simulation process applies an ignition model, local historical weather, and historical fire information to determine where fires are most likely to occur in the landscape.

To view more info and/or comment on the BFRMP visit the NSW RFS website (www.rfs.nsw.gov.au).

Papershoes runners doing 80 marathons in 80 days across India

Local Byron runner Michael Boag is joining Italian runner Matteo Aglioni and Indian runner Nagaraju Vallala in a world-first environmental and endurance initiative to raise awareness about the escalating crisis of plastic waste and pollution as part of the 'Papershoes' environmental campaign.

The three will be running 80 marathons in 80 days across India from 1 October in an endurance marathon.

'Along the route, we will visit schools, universities, and community groups to engage in conversations around plastic use, environmental responsibility, and practical solutions, while also supporting clean-ups and sustainable initiatives on the ground,' Michael told *The Echo*.

'The scale and endurance of the challenge are designed to attract national and international attention, but its

heart lies in showing what's possible when purpose drives action. By transforming human endurance into a call for environmental responsibility, Papershoes aims to inspire communities to rethink plastic waste and protect the natural world that sustains us all.'

While Michael has already run the Darrell Chapman half marathon in Lismore with Matteo and has been utilising the rail trails in the

region to train, he flies out this Friday, 13 February to begin a three-month training schedule in Italy.

'As part of the lead-up to the run we'll be training for three months in Italy and three months in India. I'll be flying to Italy on Friday to begin training on the ground.'

You can find out more and donate towards the project at: <https://paper.shoes>.



Matteo Aglioni and Michael Boag at the finish line of the Darrell Chapman half marathon in Lismore. Photo supplied

Rare platypus treated by Byron Bay Wildlife Hospital



A juvenile platypus rescued near Ewingar, in the Upper Clarence region was treated at Byron Bay Wildlife Hospital on Sunday, 1 February at their Lennox Head facilities.

Photos Craig Parry

A rare juvenile platypus has been admitted to Byron Bay Wildlife Hospital, after being rescued from a river in the Upper Clarence on 1 February.

The hospital said in a statement, 'The platypus was found in the Upper Clarence region near Ewingar, by a prospector who was fossicking in a river when the animal floated downstream in front of him'.

Called WIRES

'Observing that the platypus appeared weak, the man retrieved it and took it to a local wildlife rescuer from WIRES, who contacted Byron Bay Wildlife Hospital.'

'Byron Bay Wildlife Hospital chief executive Dr Stephen Van Mil collected the animal in the hospital's recently acquired support vehicle and transported it to the facility.'

'The platypus was treated by Byron Bay Wildlife Hospital veterinarians Dr Jackie Reed and Dr Jana Schader.'

'Platypus sightings are uncommon. The platypus is one of only two monotreme species in the world and typically avoids human contact.'

Byron Bay Wildlife

Hospital's veterinarians said that encounters with people often indicate illness or distress.

Celebrate World Wetlands Day

'We are so lucky to have such unique wildlife in Australia and to treat this platypus, a species both fragile and resilient was something very special', said Dr Schader.

'On World Wetlands Day, it's a timely reminder of what is out there for us to preserve.'

'In over 11,000 patients admitted, this is the first platypus we've treated since our inception in 2020. It speaks to the skill and expertise in the unique physiology and anatomy of a diverse range of native Australian species', said Dr Van Mil.

'The platypus has been transferred to the David Fleay Wildlife Park for after care with the intention of releasing it where it was found.'

■ If you find sick, injured, and orphaned animals contact WIRES at: www.wires.org.au or call 1300 094 737 for assistance.

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Significant support and action needed to rehabilitate the Richmond River

Paul Bibby

Sitting on the banks of the Richmond River in Ballina it's easy to forget the challenges this vital waterway is facing.

Fishos hunting for a feed turn occasionally to watch small boats and jet-ski riders cruising by, and further downstream kids and dogs splash in the shallows.

But these idyllic summer-time images bely the reality – that this is a river that desperately needs our help.

This was starkly illustrated in a recent presentation to the 2025 NSW Coastal Conference, by Rous Flood Mitigation Manager Chrysy Clay.

Ms Clay looked beyond policy, projects, and timelines, and instead reflected on what it has meant to live and work on the Richmond River floodplain for more than a quarter of a century.

Her keynote address, '26 years on the Richmond River floodplain: the grief, hope and urgency of now...', was shaped by long experience and hard lessons.

It traced the deep and ongoing water quality challenges facing the Richmond River estuary – challenges tied to floodplain drainage, acid sulfate soils, and deoxygenation from blackwater, and the major fish kills that have marked the river's recent history.

'Major deoxygenation, or blackwater events, have had a significant impact on the health of the Richmond River estuary, often resulting in estuary-wide fish kills,' Ms Clay said.

'These events, combined with the ongoing cycle of poor water quality delivered from upstream and from parts of the floodplain drainage network, continue to affect the estuary's ecology and resilience.

Drained wetlands

'Blackwater and acid sulfate soil acidity are strongly associated with the artificial drainage of the lowest-lying sections of the floodplain. These were once near-permanent wetlands but were historically drained



The Richmond River wends its way across the rainbow region. Photo Dr Kristin den Exter

to support agriculture and settlement, decisions presumably made without knowledge of the unintended impact.'

Research over many years has shown that addressing these issues at scale would require changes to drainage in those low-lying areas so they can function more like wetlands again, Ms Clay said

In practice, this would mean different land uses in some areas.

However, these lands are privately owned and zoned for agriculture, and there is currently no comprehensive program that provides the financial support, incentives, or mechanisms needed to enable voluntary, landscape-scale change.



A fish kill occurred in the Richmond River at Ballina following Tropical Cyclone Alfred. Photo Ozfish

No government response

In March 2025, following a major blackwater event and fish kill, Rous County Council and Ballina Shire Council jointly proposed Operation Recovery in a letter to the NSW government.

The concept outlined a coordinated, well-resourced program designed to support landholders while improving water quality over the long term.

But so far there has been virtually no action on the part of the NSW government, though there is strong interest from the community and other key stakeholders. 'Alongside initiatives like

Operation Recovery, supporting agriculture in areas that don't produce acid from acid sulfate soils or blackwater, through sustainable practices and streamlined practical regulations around drainage, is an important part of the solution,' Ms Clay said.

'The greatest challenge in improving the health of the Richmond River estuary is how to address legacy land use decisions and enable change at the scale needed, while supporting landowners and communities. Solutions will need to combine good science, strong partnerships, and incentives that make voluntary change realistic and attractive for those farming and managing land across the floodplain.'

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Cleared paddocks full of koalas?

The North East Forest Alliance (NEFA) have called into question the NSW government's recently released koala baseline assessments having found the 'government's models of koala densities broad and inaccurate, with cleared paddocks near Kyogle claimed to have higher densities of koalas than the Great Koala National Park (GKNP), resulting in greatly inflated population estimates for NSW.'



A paddock to the north-east of Kyogle, claimed by the NSW government to be some of the best koala habitat in NSW with a koala density of 0.36/ha, higher than the best habitat in the Great Koala National Park. Photo Dailan Pugh

calling at least once in the breeding season, over two weeks at 1,179 sites, to model koala distributions and densities. This appears to have falsely inflated densities because it does not account for the fact that some males may be transients dispersing through poor quality or unsuitable habitat, therefore calls are not necessarily representative of good habitat or resident populations,' Mr Pugh explained.

The NSW government recently released the outcomes of their koala baseline assessments, intended to identify koalas' distribution and abundance across NSW, and to provide a baseline against which future population changes can be correlated. The outcome included models of koalas' distribution and densities, and a total NSW koala population estimate of around 274,000, which is over ten times higher than most other estimates.

populations across NSW as important and worthy.

'Unfortunately the outputs of the \$20 million project are too inaccurate to achieve its aims or provide a baseline to measure future population changes against.

'The modelled koala densities have not adequately accounted for cleared land, identifying very high koala numbers in farmers' paddocks, resulting in misleading mapping and grossly inflated population estimates.

'The assessment utilised drone surveys to identify actual koala densities at 384 sites across the whole of NSW, which is a very small sample.

'They primarily relied on recordings of male koalas

'Based on the model, the largest area of the highest density koala habitat in NSW is to the north-east of Kyogle, with cleared paddocks shown to have higher densities of koalas than found in the best habitat in the GKNP,' Mr Pugh said.



How should developer contributions be spent?

We're updating our Developer Contributions Plan and want your input.

Developer contributions are fees paid by developers as part of their Development Application (DA).

We're hosting community workshops across Byron Shire to explain the plan and hear which projects you think should be prioritised.

Join a community workshop to learn about the plan and share your views.

Wednesday 18 February 2026 02:30 pm to 05:00 pm
Byron Bay Workshop - Cavanbah Centre

Thursday 19 February 2026 09:30 am to 12:00 pm
Mullumbimby Workshop - Mullumbimby Civic & Memorial Hall

Thursday 19 February 2026 01:30 pm to 04:00 pm
Ocean Shores / Brunswick Heads Workshop - South Golden Beach Hall

Friday 20 February 2026 09:30 am to 12:00 pm
Bangalow Workshop - Bangalow A&I Hall

Friday 20 February 2026 01:30 pm to 04:00 pm
Rural - Federal Community Hall

There'll be more opportunities to engage in the coming weeks.

More information

yoursay.byron.nsw.gov.au/have-your-say-developer-contributions-plan

Kevin Craft

02 6626 7000

council@byron.nsw.gov.au



BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

ECHO SHORT STORY COMP



ADULTS
1ST PRIZE:
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UNDER 18S
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+ A HOST OF OTHER PRIZES!

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.

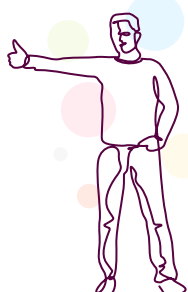
Budding writers, old timers and first-time flyers are invited to submit a story of 500-1,500 words using the hook 'The Hitchhiker'. The hook can be buried in a sentence, far off in the distance, it could be the name of a band playing at a pub, or it could be the centrepiece of your story!

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.echo.net.au/short-story-comp



The Haus of Armour needs your help

When Kate Jackson started Haus of Armour in 2022 she did it with the simple but powerful intention 'to provide an alternative pathway of healing and recovery for women in the Northern Rivers who are survivors of domestic violence (DV), and to create a safe, supportive space where empowerment can begin again'.

Haus of Armour is a fashion styling studio that works with victim survivors of DV using 'dress as a therapeutic tool to support women in rebuilding their self-worth, reclaiming their identity, and restoring their sense of self that is often lost through trauma and abuse,' explains Kate.

'For many women, choosing what to wear again is not just a style decision – it is an act of courage, ownership, and renewal. Each woman walks away with four outfits gifted to her without cost, but more importantly, she walks away with dignity, confidence, and a renewed connection to who she is. So many women have shared that this experience has significantly improved their mental health and overall wellbeing.'



Kate Jackson in action at the Haus of Armour. Photo supplied

Hero award

In December 2025 Kate received the Hunt for a Hero – Support and Caring Award from the Here For Good Foundation in Adelaide. The award recognised 'her compassion and dedication to her not-for-profit. Kate has been awarded the Support and Caring Award as although she has partners who provide clothing for the clients, she is not paid for her work'.

'When I received the email to say I was nominated and had won the award, I actually thought it was a hoax,' Kate told *The Echo*.

'I had my friend call to ensure it was legit! The award couldn't have come at a better time. I had just received

news that I had been unsuccessful with yet another grant. To be honest I was completely ready to give Haus of Armour up. The news I had won the award gave me the motivation to keep going.'

'Right now, we are reaching out to the community for support. The immediate goal is simple but urgent: to secure enough funding to cover the rent and keep the studio's doors open. Financial donations, no matter the size, will go directly toward keeping the studio operational.'

You can find out more at: www.hausofarmour.org or donate through the GoFundMe page at: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/haus-of-armour>.

Stand up for a violence-free world



Join the sunrise dance for V Day at Main Beach, Byron Bay this Saturday. Photo Jeff Dawson

This Saturday it will be 14 years that the women of the Northern Rivers have been wearing red and gathering on 14 February for the annual V Day flashmob that takes place on Main Beach at Byron Bay from 7am.

The flashmob is the local part of the global One Billion Rising – the biggest mass action to end violence against women (cisgender, transgender, and those who hold fluid identities that are subject to violence).

With one in three women experiencing partner or sexual violence in their lives this is a chance to gather and dance together to rise up and

show local communities and the world it is time to take action against the continuing levels of violence, and murders by men of women and children.

'Women, men, non-binary and children are all welcome to come and gather at 6.30am in solidarity with others around the world to protest with dance in defiance,' said organiser Zenith Virago.

'One Billion Rising is the biggest mass action to end violence in human history.'

Vagina Conversations

Over the last ten years the Vagina Conversations have raised over \$158,000

with all the proceeds going to the Women's Resource Service, Byron Escape Fund, and the Tweed DVIRC Impact Fund supporting local women escaping intimate partner and family violence. They finance women in crisis to pay for emergency needs, keeping women and children safe.

Four sessions of the Vagina Conversations will also be taking place this week from Thursday 12, to Sunday 14 February, at the Brunswick Picture House (www.brunswick-picturehouse.com).



Are you looking for construction work or to make your home more flood-resilient?

The Resilient Homes Program is calling on the local building industry to help make homes safer and more flood-resilient across the Northern Rivers.

We're seeking builders, designers, engineers, architects, project managers and house removalists who want reliable work and prompt payments.

With projects running through to March 2027, it's a chance to help support your community.

For more information on the program and how to get involved visit nsw.gov.au/rhpbuild or scan the QR code.

Homeowners and industry can also find out more about funding available by contacting the Reconstruction Authority on 1800 844 085.



The Resilient Homes Program is jointly funded under the State-Commonwealth Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.



One of Australia's first sodium-ion batteries delivered to Main Arm

Aslan Shand

Local Main Arm resident Sapoty Brook contacted *The Echo* to let them know that he has just received one of the first sodium-ion home batteries in Australia from BetterESS.

Sodium-ion batteries, which are salt-based because their sodium compounds are often drawn from common salt, continue to raise hopes for an alternative to lithium-ion batteries.

Advantages

There are numerous advantages to sodium-ion batteries over lithium-ion batteries. In particular sodium-ion batteries have higher thermal stability, lower risks of fire or explosion, and better performance across temperature extremes.

The fact that sodium is readily available and doesn't require mining of rare earth minerals makes them more environmentally friendly.



Sapoty Brook says he has one of the first home sodium-ion batteries in Australia. Photo Jeff 'Flirting With Lots Wife' Dawson

However, lithium-ion batteries are still superior for high performance on compact devices.

'The way that the sodium-ion battery is packaged reduces extra wiring and it supplies the whole system in one bundle, including the inverter and charge controller, etc,' said Sapoty who sells off-grid systems.

'I think this battery is big news because as prices for

home batteries will drop in five years to less than one-fifth the current price, the electricity grid will collapse!' he said.

'You get around 10kWh from this battery which costs about \$4,500. It's just sun power in one end, and AC power out the other.'

However, some sodium-ion batteries have a shorter lifecycle than some lithium-ion batteries at this stage.

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Echo

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

Air Force to carry out bombing ops in Evans Head from today (Wednesday)

The military industrial complex will descend onto the small quiet coastal town of Evans Head from tomorrow as the Royal Australian Air Force will conduct bombing operations at its weapons range. In a media statement, the air force say the bombings will be conducted from February 11 to 13, from 10am till 5pm.

EOIs for former Lismore greyhound race track

The Lismore City Council is calling for Expressions of Interest (EOI) for future use of the former greyhound race track site on Molesworth Street. The move comes after Greyhound Racing NSW proposed giving the site to the council and to support the council's decision on its future use.

Man survives crash near Murwillumbah

A man in his 60s is reportedly in hospital in a serious condition after a car crash west of Murwillumbah on Sunday morning.

NSW Govt threatens to have illegal e-bikes crushed

The NSW Labor Government says it's looking into the possibility of reforms allowing illegal e-bikes to be seized and crushed. The government says it wants to stop the use of high-powered and doctored bikes that perform more like motorbikes than bicycles.

Compelling story of family violence screens March 7

A film which was a finalist in the 2025 Australian Human Rights Awards will screen at the Star Court Theatre, Lismore on 7 March. *Revealed: KillJoy* offers a unique view of family violence in Australia, say organisers.

Tweed Council's first meeting for 2026 is massive

With more than 2,000 pages, Tweed Council's first meeting for 2026 will require extra effort by councillors wishing to be across the multitude of topics. The meeting will be held Thursday, 12 February from 11am at the Murwillumbah chambers.

www.echo.net.au

Regional water at risk: NSW Auditor-General

Hans Lovejoy

Water security in rural and regional NSW is in need of urgent investment of at least \$1 billion in water infrastructure, according to the latest report by the NSW Auditor-General (NSW AG).

Without naming the councils or water utilities, the 28 January report says of the 128 NSW councils, 'Fifteen councils made operating losses for the water fund for the year ended 30 June 2025'.

Rous supplies region

Rous County Council (RCC) is the local regional water utility, supplying drinking water to approximately 110,000 residents from Lismore's Rocky Creek Dam, Brooklet's Emigrant Creek Dam, and the Wilsons River.

Rous is also tasked with biosecurity and weed management. Its leadership is made up of a general manager and his team, along with councillors from the four local



Photo Rous County Council

councils it services: Ballina Shire, Byron Shire, Lismore City, and Richmond Valley.

According to Rous's audited financial reports for the year ended 30 June 2024, RCC recorded a small net operating deficit for the year ended 30 June 2024.

Its audited financial statements show a net operating result of a \$148,000 deficit, compared with a \$4.205 million surplus in 2022-23.

It says, 'Bulk water revenue provides the majority of Council's operating

revenue at \$23.8M, or 61 per cent of total revenue,' say RCC's agenda minutes. 'This increased by 4.5 per cent compared to last year'.

High reliance on govt grants

On page 26, the NSW AG's report reads, 'Approximately 1.9 million people receive water from councils or county councils'.

'Councils set water rates, though many rural councils with small populations have

a small number of customers, so annual revenue is low'.

'There is a high reliance on funding from grants to operate and fund asset acquisition and renewal for water supply businesses.

'When grants revenue was removed, 30 councils (10 regional and 20 rural) had an operating loss'.

'Water supply infrastructure requires almost \$1 billion to meet agreed service levels set by councils', it says.

'Based on council estimates, almost \$1 billion is required to ensure that water supply infrastructure continues to meet agreed service levels. This estimate has increased by 161 per cent since 2021. Many councils providing this essential service are not fully recovering operating costs. Even when they can cover operating costs it is unlikely, with a small customer base, that they will recover enough to bring infrastructure to agreed service levels. Grants are the primary source of funding for

water supply infrastructure managed by councils.

'The NSW Auditor-General's performance audit, *Support for regional town water infrastructure*, published in 2020, concluded that 'the former Department of Planning, Industry and Environment has not effectively supported or overseen town water infrastructure planning in regional NSW since at least 2014. It has also lacked a strategic, evidence-based approach to target investments in town water infrastructure.

'The NSW government has published several Regional Water Strategies that set out a long-term road map of actions to deliver and manage water for local communities'.

Representing the state's 128 councils, Local Government NSW President, Mayor Darcy Byrne, says the NSW AG's report 'sounds a warning bell about the financial sustainability of locally managed water utilities'.

Peaceful protest in Lismore against Israel's president visit



A peaceful gathering was held at Lismore's Peace Park on Tuesday to protest the federal Labor government's invitation of Israel's president, Isaac Herzog to Australia. Meanwhile, NSW Police are being criticised for use of force against protesters who attended a rally in Sydney. The Australian Federation of Islamic Councils said police officers forcibly interrupted prayer and used physical force against peaceful worshippers. Photo supplied

Richmond Police District weekly wrap

Local police say that between 29 January and 4 February, 50 people were charged with 111 offences. '59.3 per cent of the offences were domestic violence related'.

Top five offence categories were 1. Contravene prohibition/restriction in AVO (Domestic) - 14 (12.6 per cent); 2. Common assault (DV) - 11 (9.9 per cent); 3. Stalk/intimidate intend fear physical etc harm (Domestic) - 10 (9 per cent); 4. Assault

occasioning actual bodily harm (DV) - 7 (6.3 per cent); and 5. Trespass - 5 (4.5 per cent)'.

Significant arrests

Significant arrests and charges include a 25-year-old female being charged with DV offences in Lismore.

'The victim reported that during an alcohol-fuelled argument at his residence, the accused forcibly grabbed him, ripped

a necklace from his neck, and strangled him, causing difficulty breathing, before threatening to harm him'.

Meanwhile three women have been charged after an alleged Goonellabah home invasion, say police.

'Police allege the group forced entry into a bedroom where a woman was hiding before repeatedly assaulting her, including with a metal bar, causing a significant head laceration'.

North coast councils given tick from NSW AG

North Coast councils have all passed NSW Auditor-General benchmarks for 2025.

The *Local Government 2025* report outlines financial reporting, financial sustainability, internal controls and governance as well as major capital projects (timelines and budgets over \$30 million) and technology, including cyber security and emerging technologies like artificial intelligence (AI).

Those in the black are Byron Shire, Bellingen Shire, Ballina Shire, Tweed Shire, Richmond Valley, Lismore City and Clarence Valley councils.

Of the 128 NSW councils, three supplied inadequate 2024-25 financial statement audits - they are Orange City, Lachlan Shire, Glen Innes Seven councils.

The report says financial reporting quality has

improved, yet 'financial sustainability continues to be a concern for some councils'.

The report also says 'water supply infrastructure needs \$1 billion to ensure access to safe and secure water' [see story above].

AI strategy lacking

Other issues raised include, 'councils held \$5.4 billion in local infrastructure contributions (LIC), but spending was low for some; capital project guidance is outdated and inadequate; internal controls and governance processes had deficiencies', and 'most councils lack AI strategy and governance and 'significant cyber security control deficiencies exist'.

Janelle Saffin MP
MEMBER FOR LISMORE

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GETTING THINGS DONE

Contact my electorate office for help and information:
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Authorised by Janelle Saffin MP. Funded using Parliamentary entitlements

New Byron landholders invited to Coorabell event

Those new to owning land in the Byron region are invited to a Local Land Services (LLS) and Byron Shire Council event.

In a media release, LLS say, 'Looking after your land is important – good biosecurity and land management practices protect

you, your property, and your neighbours'.

'Join us at Coorabell Hall this February 12 (5.30pm to 7pm) for a free barbecue featuring local produce and listen to the story of Zentveld's Coffee.

'It's a great chance to meet your neighbours,

connect with local rural services, and learn more about caring for your land.

'Come along and be part of your local community!'

Register via <https://events.humanitix.com/welcome-neighbour-byron-event-for-new-landholders-2025>.

Clunes Master Plan vote coming up

The long-awaited Clunes Master Plan was tabled at the first Lismore City Council meeting of the year, on Tuesday, 10 February.

The staff report reads, 'In August 2025, Council supported public exhibition of the draft Clunes Master Plan, with any submissions to be reported back to Council for consideration prior to adoption. The consultation period provided valuable community feedback and has directly informed the changes made to the finalised Clunes Master Plan'.

'The adopted Clunes Master Plan will provide a

clear and coordinated framework to guide future development and decision-making in and around the village of Clunes, providing certainty while ensuring alignment with community aspirations and Council's broader strategic objectives.

107 responses

Staff say a total of 107 survey responses were received on Lismore's Your Say website, 65 written submissions, as well as the feedback captured through stakeholder meetings.

'Recurring topics were tallied to identify the most

frequently raised issues, while thematic coding grouped comments into the following key themes:

Scale and Pace of Growth; Environmental Protection and Biodiversity; Roads, Traffic and Safety; Community Infrastructure and Amenities; Sewerage Infrastructure and Costs; Village Character and Identity; Consultation Process and Transparency; Affordable and Diverse Housing; Developer Contributions and Equity; Risk, Resilience and Emergency Access.'

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

Bayshore Drive roundabout works enter final stage

The final stage of construction on a new roundabout at the entrance to Byron Bay Fair and the new Byron TAFE access road has started, with the project due to finish by the end of March.

While the project has taken considerable time to complete, staff say, 'To finish the job safely and as quickly as possible, the Bayshore Drive roundabout work site will return to one lane, northbound only traffic from

Friday, 6 February for around four weeks'.

Council's Major Projects Coordinator, Euan Rose, said the temporary traffic change will allow crews to install kerbs and gutters on the western (TAFE) side of the road and finish the roundabout.

'Access to Byron Bay Fair and Byron TAFE will remain open in the northbound direction,' Mr Rose said.

'Anyone travelling in a southbound direction from

Sunrise will need to detour via Sunrise Blvd over the next month.

'We really encourage people to keep supporting the local businesses in the shopping centre and Sunrise area while we complete this last stage,' he said.

Mr Rose said heavy vehicles would not be able to use the roundabout during this time.

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

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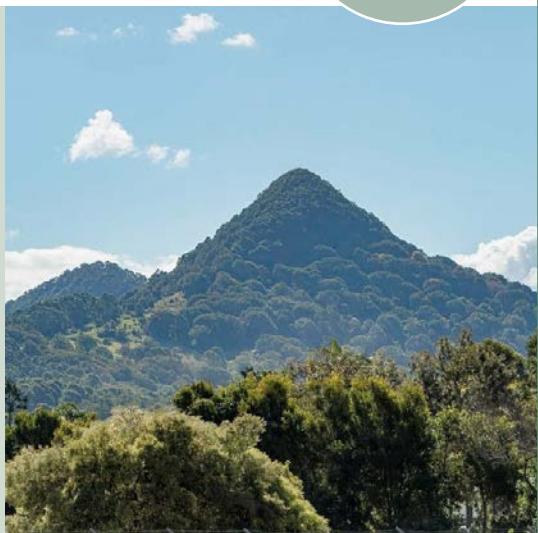
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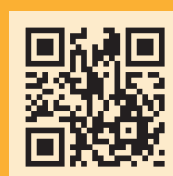
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The Byron Shire Echo
Volume 40 #36 • February 11, 2026

Why we choose to take a stand

I was surprised when one 20-year-old I know told me they were taking the day off work to go to the protest about Israeli President Isaac Herzog being asked to visit Australia.

This is not someone I had ever picked as particularly political, who was out there making their position known on any particular issues. When I asked why? They just said, 'What Israel is doing in Gaza is wrong'.

I realised that they were marching for peace. They were doing something entirely out of the ordinary for them because they believe that killing people is wrong. They feel the same about what happened in Bondi, killing people is wrong. They feel the same about what happened in Israel on 7 October, killing people is wrong. They simply want a future that isn't defined by groups vilifying one another, killing one another, and never finding the strength to seek forgiveness to forgive and to create a world where everyone can feel safe.

He wasn't the only one who opposed President Herzog's visit. Over 1,000 Jewish Australians took out a full page ad in *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Age* opposing the visit. The Jewish Council of Australia (JCA) has today launched a major advertising campaign supported by over 1,000 Jewish Australian academics, legal professionals, artists, and community leaders, including Robert Richter QC, Alex Wodak AM, former magistrate David Heilpern, Louise Adler AM, Josh Bornstein and Professor Dennis Altman AM.

The campaign argued that welcoming President Herzog, whose public statements suggesting the collective responsibility of all Gazans for 7 October, have been cited in the International Court of Justice (ICJ) as evidence of genocidal intent, undermines Australia's commitment to international law and risks further inflaming division in the wake of the Bondi tragedy.

Sarah Schwartz, Executive Officer, Jewish Council of Australia stated that, 'By framing this visit as providing support for Jewish Australians, the Prime Minister has politicised our grief and ignored the thousands of Jewish people who stand for Palestinian human rights and against Israel's atrocities.'

'This advertising campaign exists because Jewish Australians are being spoken for by our political leaders without our consent. Our identities have been flattened for political gain. Welcoming President Herzog in our name does not reflect our values, and it does not make our community safer,' the ad stated.

'We refuse to let our collective grief be used to legitimise a leader whose rhetoric has been part of inciting a genocide against Palestinians in Gaza and has contributed to the illegal annexation of the West Bank.'

'Australia's recognition of the State of Palestine is a hollow gesture if we now welcome the head of the state that is actively destroying Palestinian sovereignty. We call on the Prime Minister to listen to the diverse range of Jewish voices and put human rights at the heart of our foreign policy.'

What is vital to remember is that not all Jewish people are from Israel, and Israel does not represent all Jewish people. Criticism of the country of Israel is legitimate and it is essential that we decouple being Jewish from Israel.

Over 500 people gathered peacefully in Lismore to protest Herzog's visit as they did in Brisbane and other centres across Australia. It was in Sydney, where police used their powers to ban a legitimate protest by Australian citizens, that things became violent.

Protest and gathering together are ways for people to create unity, to highlight what they see as important. Denying them the right to do so peacefully is obviously a recipe for disaster.

Aslan Shand, editor

State funerals for sex and favours

From a legal perspective, it is much safer to defame the dead than the living because luckily they cannot sue from the grave. On the other hand, the Latin phrase *nil iisi bonum* counsels us not to speak ill of the dead. My rule is to wait a short time for the mourning and grief, and then pour shit on those who I was too scared to slander when they were alive. Like John Laws and Graham Richardson.

But this column is actually only a sideways swipe at those two, with the main culprits being the very living and breathing Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and our learned Premier Chris Minns. They gifted these grifters state funerals. What an abomination.

A state funeral means that the government pays for the whole shebang. Plus it says 'we owe you the respect and honour because you were a really exceptionally great person and the community wants to say thanks'. Trying to find out the actual cost of this has occupied many of my sleepless hours, but it is likely to be in the millions. Such funerals were previously reserved for the likes of Bob Hawke or the Unknown Soldier, but now seem to be thrown around like confetti to sports people, comedians, and entrepreneurs. But the practice has now reached a new low when the likes of these two get the gong.

John Laws was a shock-jock commercial radio broadcaster known for his divisive language on everyone from gays to Aboriginal people to single mothers. The cash for comments furore was a watershed expose of the industrial-scale corruption of touting products and services whilst receiving undisclosed secret commissions. It was illegal, dishonest, and Laws's *raison d'être*.

His disregard for the rule of law was legendary – in 1998 he referred to an accused by name in the middle of the trial, calling



'Why on earth would convicted criminals and scoundrels ever get the honour of a state funeral?'

– David Heilpern

him 'scum', leading to the jury being discharged with all sorts of pain for the victims and the defendant. He then went on in further contempt to interview a juror, resulting in being sentenced to a jail term of 15 months, which was suspended.

Laws once typically told a fellow with mental health issues – 'Graham, for goodness sake say something constructive like you're gonna kill yourself'. When a woman disclosed familial sexual abuse as a six-year-old he said 'My god they were having a good time with you', and asked if she'd been 'provocative'.

His poetry, alone, is sufficient to disqualify him from any accolades in any part of his life or death. Bob Ellis generously called him the worst poet in the entire universe. Perhaps it is jealousy on my part, because five 'poetry' books sold in excess of 25,000 copies (mine sold three copies, thanks mum), making him the bestselling Aussie poet ever. Here's a taste:

*I love school girls
Not for the reason that you
might think
Well maybe just a little
But I think we all do*

As for Graham Richardson I worked with him on a by-election once, way back, and he was a disgusting pig to everyone around him the entire time.

When he wasn't slurping, burping, and farting like a trooper he was demanding to know where the closest whorehouse was so that he could 'relieve himself'. I heard he walked into a bar and approached a group of women and said 'does anyone want to f—k a fat ugly man who has lots

of power?' Staggeringly, one of them took the bait.

But that was just the surface. There have been whole books written about his involvement with Rene Rivkin, Alpine Press, Ron Medich, Tom Domican, Eddie Obeid, Gregory Symons, and Dr Geoffery Edelsten. He actually puts John Laws to shame, as Richo's bribes were well, well hidden, for cash and for sex and favours. When he offered to help Leanne Edelsten get her husband off a murder charge for a 'root', she said 'I love my husband. But not that much', which has to be one of the best put-downs in history. He had dodgy extensions on his house built for free, a liberal clutch of Swiss bank accounts and had a political opponent from the left beaten to within an inch of his life.

So why on earth would convicted criminals and scoundrels ever get the honour of a state funeral? Both were worth squillions by the time of their deaths, so it was not to avoid a pauper's service that's for sure. I watched the services and there was not a single reference to Richo's criminality and misogyny. Not a mention of Law's victims or his bigotry or (thankfully) his dirge. They both put filthy lucre above all else.

Well, rest in peace fellas, and in future, let's keep state funerals for those who at least have morals befitting. I know they'll offer one to me, but I'm refusing. If you lie down with dogs...

■ David Heilpern is a former NSW magistrate and is now Dean of Law at Southern Cross University.



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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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Volume 8 ~ 2025-2026

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I'm sorry to read Sapoty spent his money fighting Roundup.

I know a place that does lunch for two people for \$50.

Can you get your money back?

Andrea Farrell
Bangalow

SEPTICK

We know Byron Shire Council has a fondness for getting things wrong. Council's approval of Byron Bay's Special Entertainment Precinct would obviously be SEPTICK.

Has a nice ring to it, eh?

Jim Rose
Mullumbimby



The Middle Eastern military industrial complex has been welcomed to our shores! A full-page open letter has been published in *Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Age* calling on Prime Minister Albanese to rescind Israeli President Isaac Herzog's invitation. It was signed by over 1,000 Jewish Australian academics, legal professionals, artists, and community leaders. All image

prohibition was imposed, let's hope Council will now finally implement this condition of approval. It's never too late to save our wildlife.

Michele Grant
Ocean Shores

Woodlands NCAT

Regarding the Woodlands NCAT saga, in an area recognised by Byron Shire Council as home to vulnerable and threatened species, I wonder how the native wildlife feels about its territory being invaded by humans?

Land has been cleared, trees felled, hard road surfacing installed, cars constantly drive in and out and machines and motors are regularly employed, all so people can build houses in what Ms Armytage herself acknowledges is 'an environmentally sensitive corridor'.

We humans seem to have a blind spot when it comes to regarding our own impact.

Louise Andrews
Lennox Head

Nero's horse doco

Between the Donald's rants and Melania's doco, I suspect that Nero and some other Roman emperors would be impressed. Is there a horse in the doco?

Larry Hoofs
The Pocket

Clarkes Beach and development

Heaps of praise for the recent efforts by *The Echo* to increase local content and provide more 'in depth explanation and analysis'.

The original founders Nicholas Shand and David Lovejoy would be proud.

As a very long-time reader of the weekly hard copy, I was especially impressed by last week's edition.

It is not easy in the electronic era of 'news and information' to maintain the standard.

Special mention to Aslan Shand and Paul Bibby for maintaining quality in spite of their huge volume of print.

No, I'm not related to anyone who produces *The Echo*. I have never even met any of them.

Re: letter writers last week and their opinions on Clarkes Beach drain and Byron development.

According to the NSW government press release, 1 December 2025, regarding the Sandhills development, the intention is that all that runoff that has been going onto Clarkes Beach will be caught and then slowly redirected towards Belongil Creek.

Secondly, I agree with the opinions of letter-writer Simon Alderton: Bonobo by Rae's on Jonson St does look to me also, like a 1960s housing commission development! I was 12 years old in 1960 and that brick colour was everywhere.

I also agree with everything else you said in your letter Simon, developers are great on impression management but relatively poor on final outcomes. Unfortunately Byron wears it!

Paul Gannon
Coopers Shoot

Mandy: Heat Speech

I was so looking forward to reading the many letters of support for Mandy's 'Heat

Speech' article in the 28 January *Echo*, but there wasn't one.

So I feel obliged to congratulate her for hitting the nail on the head. 'Why aren't we culling big fossil fuels?'

Why aren't we holding our governments to account, for letting the real sharks into the water?'

Is our silence contributing to our governments' inaction? Well said Mandy.

Jay Pearse
Byron Bay

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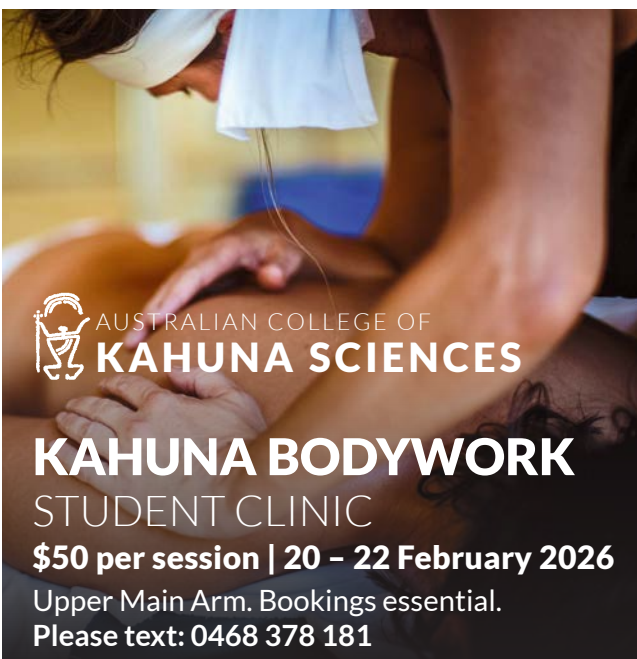
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That letter from Jonny O'Brien

I am writing to express my extreme concern about what I consider racist language, and misinformation in O'Brien's letter.

While I understand the letters section is meant to be an earnest view of the community, it begs the question if his view is widely held in the community or merely held by one individual with a keyboard.

Firstly, the misinformation. The federal government has not let in 'thousands of Gazans'. This is a totally baseless view. Where he has found it is beyond me.*

I am a Christian man myself, and naturally, I highly regard Christian values.

But I believe that to be arguing for a government to uplift 'Judeo-Christian values', allegedly connected to Australia's history

(although I fail to see how the genocide on First Nations is at all connected to Christ's commandment to love given to us in the Book of Matthew), and to devalue 'Islamic' values, i.e. those held by those from a different ethnicity, is to argue for a racist view.

O'Brien fails to explain what either of these esoteric values are and fails to explain why they're incompatible.

I ask, was O'Brien complaining about the Judeo-Christian values being incompatible with Australian society following the attempted bombing in Boorloo/Perth, or the murder of three innocent people by a white man in rural NSW? Not to mention the slow rise in sovereign citizen terrorism on our police force?

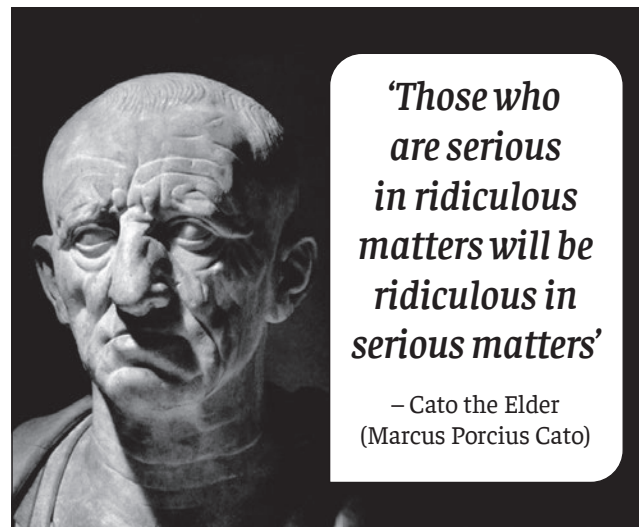
Is O'Brien supporting Iranians in their fight for freedom himself? Or is he just using the pain of the Iranian peoples as a political pissing contest to claim one side is simply virtue signalling, while he himself does nothing?

Why should only Muslims guilty of incitement to violence be deported? What about other supremacist ideologies? Should the terrorist who committed the killing at a mosque in New Zealand also be deported?

Should the transphobic preachers who I often see misrepresenting Christ's love be deported? Why are Muslims the only population that should be deported?

Furthermore, where is this complaint of illegal immigration coming from? This isn't America.

Yet he lastly tops his hypocritical letter with 'unity is our strength', a sentiment he claims to hold after however



'Those who are serious in ridiculous matters will be ridiculous in serious matters'

– Cato the Elder (Marcus Porcius Cato)

many paragraphs of clearly dividing and mistreating others.

The letters section of *The Echo* should be, and usually is, a faithful representation of our cosy community on the north coast. But I unfortunately believe that O'Brien's letter is not a view held by our community.

Lachlan Hall
Ballina

■ *Approximately 1,300-1,732 Palestinians from Gaza arrived in Australia on temporary visitor visas between October 2023 and September 2024. (ABC, SBS 5/12/24). On 16/10/2025, Sky News reported that the latest update from the Department of Home Affairs was that 1,921 Gazans had arrived in Australia 'as of December 2024'. At the National Press Club on 16.10.2025 Minister Tony Burke said the department had a caseload of '600-700' more Gazans who could come. – Letters Ed

Judaism and Israel

Judaism is a well-respected religion with millions of practitioners worldwide. Israel is a state or country run by a comparatively small clique of adherents to a clique or cult within Judaism called Zionism. Criticism of the country or the clique seems to be getting conflated with criticism of the entire religion.

Which is passing strange and ridiculous.

But there is danger to such critics of falling foul of new laws and regulations concerning something called hate speech. I have yet to see a viable definition of hate speech in that connection.

There are so many reasons to be critical of Israel, the country or state, without implying any disrespect to the religion of Judaism itself.

Daniel Berg
Lismore

Make them comply!

I am appalled at the ignorance of BSC's department of compliances.

I made them aware of a vehicle parked illegally in

Cowper Street, Byron Bay four months ago.

There is a person sleeping in the vehicle, Council has signage there stating no camping, and parking requirements.

Council's compliance staff responded by issuing a work order but nothing happened. I contacted the compliance office again and spoke to a staffer who told me that compliance officers would not deal with this man as he is antisocial and homeless.

The staffer also told me the police would not get involved for the same reason.

So while people are being fined for parking infringements or camping in their cars, this person is being ignored by BSC's compliance department for doing exactly that.

The concerns over the Clarkes Beach stormwater discharge onto the beach is warranted. The wetlands constructed in Middleton Street unless maintained will not supply a great quality of effluent. There are already signs of this in those supposed wetlands now. My experience with wetlands was managing the wetlands at West Byron STP, [sewage treatment plant] constructed wetlands must be maintained which this current Council executive fails to understand.

The continued claim of 'wetlands' being at Ocean Shores STP is quite untrue. Prior to the 1995 interim upgrade of Ocean Shores STP a serpentine channel was dug with an excavator. The purpose of this channel was to expose the effluent leaving the plant to longer exposure to the sun's UV rays. In the 1995 upgrade a mechanical UV disinfection plant was installed for the treated effluent leaving the plant to flow through and be disinfected. The serpentine channel is in such a terrible state that it is actually recontaminating the treated effluent leaving the plant and entering the Brunswick River.

While sitting on the WW&SAC [Waste Water &

Sewer Advisory Committee] a drawing of the OS plant was submitted which showed the effluent leaving the serpentine channel was being pumped back through the UV disinfection plant to remove fecal coliforms (FCs) picked up in the serpentine channel.

This was actually requiring the UV plant to be taken offline once a year due to algae, and be cleaned with chlorine.

While I was relieving as the acting coordinator in water and recycling in 2004 the operator in charge of OS STP expressed concerns about the serpentine channel. I had a test done at Council's laboratory on effluent leaving the UV plant and effluent leaving the serpentine channel.

The effluent leaving the UV plant was nil for FCs, the effluent leaving the serpentine channel was extremely high in FCs. The serpentine channel should have been cut off then.

Alan Dickens
Byron Bay

Roundup

I thank Ginny Black for the back stories she presented when writing of contact with Roundup – the most toxic poison ever.

I felt the sensitivity of inner silence and grief when she spoke of the death of her husband: 'an unfortunate death in 2012 at the age of 69'.

A lovely young male became a deep family friend. He was 20 years old. He went to stay on a farm for a period of time. They had just sprayed with Roundup. He became very ill. Doctors associated his cancer with the Roundup spray.

Within two years of severe illness he too passed over.

All communities have a right to demand best practice when pest sprays are used.

Jo Faith
Newtown

Speedway noise

I live in North Lismore just downstream from the proposed development [by the NSW Reconstruction Authority to build residential lots].

I wonder if anyone has even thought about the horrifically loud noise made during speedway race nights? The proposed housing estate will be perched directly above the speedway in a natural sound bowl! There is no way that many people are going to put up with it. On speedway nights you cannot hear your TV. You can't hold a conversation. The noise pollution is comparable to living under a jet flight path.

Paul Paitson
North Lismore

Big questions

How is it that we can spend \$368 billion (and rising) on the dumb and dangerous Morrison/Albanese AUKUS submarine deal?

How is it that we are fed some line about a Chinese threat and spend the billions on nuclear attack submarines, while one partner is currently attempting to make deals and attempting to reset relations with China?

Is this an intelligent use of taxpayers' money?

Does anyone really believe there can be any winners in a nuclear exchange? Has humanity learned nothing from thousands of years of endless wars, while we prepare to follow the US into yet another war?

Why is Australia (at the request of the Zionists) inviting the president of a government accused by the UN of genocide and crimes against humanity, yet the mainstream media are largely deafening in their silence?

In fact, the Jewish Council of Australia and the Australian National Imam's Council have formally requested to authorities 'to issue and be prepared to execute an arrest warrant upon Herzog on his arrival'. So how does this equate with so-called antisemitism?

Will we see a day of mourning for Palestinians?

Currently, over 72,000 Palestinians have been killed since 2023. This includes 20,000 children and 1,108 killed by illegal Israeli settlers in the West Bank.

Also 20,000 people are waiting for medical evacuation in a situation the Red Crescent have called a 'medical apartheid'.

Why are Palestinians continuing to be killed during a so-called 'ceasefire' since Oct 25, yet Australia and our AUKUS partners remain silent and indifferent? Current numbers are 509 deaths and 1,405 injured.

Why do we hear nothing from the gov. about the 37 aid agencies prevented from entering Gaza?

Why does the Zionist political movement have so much influence in Australia yet any criticism is branded antisemitic and the subject of rushed through so-called hate speech laws? Laws that so far, have been beyond the explanations of the attorney-general in their detail.

How much more land will Australia cede to the US military such as the Pine Gap submarine base and the increase of bases in the Northern Territory?

Why do people keep voting for dishonest, morally

bankrupt, shysters, who are leading this country down the road of totalitarianism, in the pocket of the US, instead of voting for a party with some compassion and intelligence?

Why doesn't Australia believe in and invest in an independent, cooperative foreign policy?

If the two major parties were on the right side of history we wouldn't be selling armament parts to genocidal regimes, poverty and the cost of living wouldn't be on the rise, we wouldn't have a housing crisis to the benefit of investors, and companies and billionaires would pay their honest, fair share of tax.

Why does Australia still not have a Bill of Rights?

Rod Murray
Ocean Shores

What is a corporation

Corporation? Hmm, maybe a nonhuman, amoral money harvester that will consume anyone or everything it reaches, even consuming its creators when their use-by date expires.

Empathy or sadism can flavour the crop.

Len Hend
Thailand

Epstein and Mossad theory

The latest tranche of the Epstein files reveals how extensive Epstein's network really was and how it snared people of significance and power, from scientists to politicians to influencers.

Frequently, the text of Epstein's emails uses the term 'goy' or the plural 'goyim' to speak about non-Jews, with the assumption, in my opinion, that the goyim exist to serve Jewish interests.

I think that Epstein exemplified Zionist and white supremacism.

It seems clear, to me, that he was working for Mossad, the Israeli Intelligence Service. Ghislaine Maxwell, his partner, was the daughter of Robert Maxwell, who was also, I believe, a Mossad operative.

It seems abundantly clear to me that Epstein and Maxwell were at the centre of a honey pot trap in which the rich and powerful were lured to have sex with underage girls.

No doubt they are scurrying now to hide their illicit activities.

One of Epstein's closest friends was none other than the former Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak, who, before he became prime minister, was head of Israeli Intelligence.

So, to me, the evidence is in that Epstein's global empire was a Mossad operation, which explains the astounding pro-Israel attitudes and behaviours of governments around the world.

Palestinian poet Bassem Tamimi had his visa cancelled in 2017 because it was thought his visit would damage social cohesion.

But now the Albanese government seems to think that a visit by Israeli President Isaac Herzog, [who made statements after the 7 October 2023 Hamas attack, which critics, and some UN officials, allege amount to inciting genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity], would not have this effect.

It's clear to me that this magical thinking is a consequence of Zionist pressure and we should all be alarmed.

Gareth Smith
Byron Bay

Auschwitz: one blood

I wake up in mourning; haunted by images of emaciated children behind electrified barbed wire fences.

It's 81 years today since the liberation of the German extermination camp Auschwitz-Birkenau, where more than one million Jews were brutally starved, tortured and murdered by Hitler's government.

There is no denying of such facts. Today I cherish my friendship with many Jewish families here and in Tel Aviv, some with small children. I have travelled in many Muslim countries and only met kind people: all Jews and Muslims are fond of laughing and playing with their kids.

There is no difference between them or any of us. Racism runs deep, in fact it's only skin deep - all of humanity shares one blood and it's red.

My father was an unemployed young man and joined Hitler's SS, which we only realised after he died aged 91.

We were in absolute shock. I remember him as a most kind, loving and generous father.

What had happened, how had his mind become corrupted? After the war I grew up in a morally bankrupt country called Germany.

Our high school history lessons in the 1970s covering World War II were kept to a minimum when it came to the Holocaust. Denial was the order of the day: better talk about German

► **Continued on page 18**

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Cuba's uncertain fate needs an independent lens

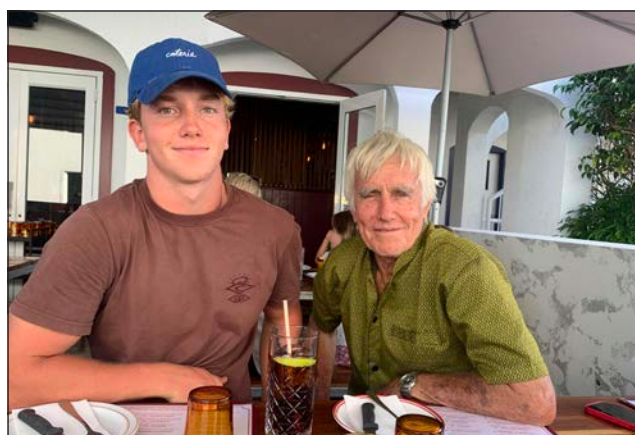
David Bradbury

In all my comings and goings to Cuba over the last 40 years, the fate of its wonderful people has never been as bleak.

Not since the revolution of Fidel Castro, Che Guevara, and tens of thousands of ordinary, anonymous Cubans who gave Uncle Sam (the United States) the finger and broke away from the noose around their neck in 1959.

I want to return to Cuba in the coming months with my 16-year-old son, Omar, and make a film together about it. And I need your help to make it happen.

I'm crowdfunding for \$10,000 to pay for our return airfares, and some money for food and accommodation while I'm in Cuba for several months.



Budding filmmaker Omar with father David. Photo supplied

Why has this come about? What Trump is doing to Cuba now follows the rule book for executing regime change that the US and its spy agency, the CIA, have invoked since the 1950s to topple any government they don't like. The Cuban people worked together in the '50s and '60s to rid the country of the

brutal Batista dictatorship, who did what the US told him to do. The reassertion of the Monroe Doctrine by Trump and co - that South America is the fiefdom of the United States - was brought home to the world by the bombing and kidnapping of Venezuelan President Maduro. Maduro's capture and

the effective silencing of the Venezuelan government saw the immediate severing of Cuba's already thin lifeline of oil - 30,000 barrels a day - provided to them by Venezuela.

In a few phone calls to people I know in Cuba in recent weeks, they all tell me the same thing: the population after 60 years of struggle and holding out against their imperial giant neighbour, are extremely exhausted, worn out.

If you'd like to contribute to my go-to-Cuba film fund, please make a tax deductible donation to: Frontline Film Foundation: BSB 722744, Acct: 100014482. If you want a receipt with a 100 per cent tax deduction, please email david@frontlinefilms.com.au with your address, and how much you kindly gave.

Hang glider accident in Lennox

At around 5.15pm on Sunday, 8 February, the Westpac Rescue Helicopter was called to a hang gliding accident at Lennox Point, Lennox. According to the police report, a paramedic was winched to the patient.

Local police said, 'A man in his 30s was treated for lower leg injuries and suspected fractures before being transported to Lismore Base Hospital in a serious condition'.
 Photo North Coast Crime

Boys light up in Bruns

James Rayne and his band, along with Boom Crash Opera, performed at the Bruns Hotel last Friday to a packed crowd. Photo Hans Lovejoy

► Continued from page 17 engineering, Mercedes and BMW, rather than Zyklon B, developed for the Auschwitz gas chambers and the killing of six million Jews.

It deeply saddens me what was, and is, happening nowadays to our First Nation brothers and sisters in a new wave of outright racism and white supremacist sentiment.

It deeply saddens me what is happening today to two million Muslim homeless in Gaza including countless children.

It deeply saddens me what happened during the unimaginable horrors inflicted on innocent Israelis during the October 7 attacks.

And the senseless and brutal murder of our Jewish cousins celebrating with open hearts in Bondi saddens me deeply too.

The Israeli government led by populist fundamentalists Netanyahu, Ben-Gvir and their radical cronies does not

speak or act for all Jews; the fundamentalist and populist life-negating Hamas does not speak for all Palestinians; Hitler didn't speak or act for all Germans.

He tortured and murdered not only Jews, but also Social Democrats (Labour), union members, gypsies, Christian priests, innocent children with disabilities, gays and lesbians and anyone else opposing his war and ethnic cleansing.

Is there maybe a difference between a people and their leaders?

I'm grateful and love my Jewish friends with their larger-than-life aliveness, I'm grateful and love the hospitality of Muslims which I met in Lebanon, Syria, Turkiye, Iran, Afghanistan, Malaysia and Pakistan.

I'm grateful, and love our First Nation cousins spiritually enriching all our lives down under. Imagine we're all one, our shared love and mutual respect for a peaceful

coexistence going more than skin deep.

Denying that we have racism against our First Nation people, that there is antisemitism and Muslim-bashing in Australia hurts us all. It's on all of us to stop this madness by standing up and being counted.

Lest we forget the horrors of Auschwitz, may they never ever happen again.

Horst Tietze
 Montecollum

Animal agriculture

Scientists say bird flu is now 'completely out of control,' spreading across continents at an unprecedented scale, devastating wildlife, and - in the US - establishing itself in dairy cattle, creating the risk of igniting a human pandemic as early as this year.

Experts have been warning for years that animal agriculture creates the perfect conditions for viruses. Crowded barns, stressed bodies, weakened immune

systems, and constant human contact turn farms into factories for the next global health crisis. Bird flu is simply the latest proof.

Every factory farm increases the likelihood that a virus will adapt, reassert, and learn how to move efficiently into and between human bodies. At the same time, the animals caught in this system - gentle cows, pigs, sheep and chickens - suffer intensely, treated as 'products' instead of sentient beings who have families, feelings, and a will to live.

If we truly want to prevent the next pandemic - and live compassionately - we must address the disease incubators hiding in plain sight and stop raising animals for food.

So please, make future meals animal-free.

Dr Desmond Bellamy
 PETA Australia
 Sydney

► Letters also online at www.echo.net.au.

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The fragility of certainty: how culture wars are redefining politics

Chaïy Donati

Australia is drifting into a political age where culture wars no longer appear as noise at the edges of public life, but as a key organising principle of politics itself.

They flourish in a political and media environment finely tuned to provoke outrage, harden belief, and prize the comfort of moral certainty over the slower, more vulnerable work of reflection.

Culture wars demand certainty. They reduce complex, multifaceted issues into rigid binaries, where to hesitate, to question, is to show weakness or disloyalty to the cause.

In this world, complexity is not a virtue but a threat, and doubt which could spark genuine reflection, is treated as a betrayal of moral clarity. The beauty of nuance is lost, replaced by the simplicity of 'right' and 'wrong.'

Consider Australia Day. Or is it Invasion Day? Well it depends on the allegiance one is compelled to declare. Is it a celebration of nationhood, or a reckoning with a history shaped, in part, by dispossession and injustice?

The uncomfortable truth is that it is both.

Yet culture wars offer no space for such ambiguity.

They demand clarity, even

'Once the frame is set, the conclusion often feels inevitable. There is little room for grey areas, for the nuance that defines so many human experiences.'

when it is a false clarity.

They insist on allegiance, even when that allegiance requires the sacrifice of truth.

In the realm of culture wars, subtlety and ambiguity are the first casualties.

Take the COVID-19 vaccine debate, where many who defend women's right to choose on abortion were unwilling to extend that same logic to women resisting vaccine mandates.

The moral argument employed, 'Think of others, the innocent and vulnerable who might be affected by your choice', mirrors pro-life rhetoric.

It's a paradox: the same logic that defends personal choice in one context is rejected when it challenges the same autonomy in another.

Once the frame is set, the conclusion often feels inevitable. There is little room for grey areas, for the nuance that defines so many human experiences.

Instead, we are left with stark dichotomies: right and wrong, moral and immoral, and those

who disagree are not merely mistaken, but adversaries.

This is the danger of language and framing, it distorts the moral complexity of life, reducing it to a binary struggle, where moral clarity is prized over complexity, and where certainty often trumps understanding.

Greens & One Nation

The Greens and One Nation are, in different ways, products of the culture-war era. They are political parties defined not by broad governing visions but by tightly framed existential narratives.

For the Greens, climate change is the civilisational threat. For One Nation, immigration takes on the same existential weight.

Each frames its defining issue as not just important, but overriding, eclipsing all other concerns.

Both sides may be right. Both may be wrong. It's even possible that neither represents the most pressing challenge we face. Artificial intelligence, for example, could prove far more consequential than climate change or immigration.

But political risk is shaped not by objective danger alone, but by the issues that mobilise political bases, what people see, fear, and demand action on.

Minor parties, driven by identity or single issues, continue to grow

not because they offer viable governing programs (though they may), but because they provide moral clarity and a sense of belonging.

Even the major parties are not immune to the fragmentation brought on by culture wars. Labor, despite holding a commanding majority in the House of Representatives, now faces historically low primary support, hovering around 33 percent.

Low voter support for major parties

The Coalition's position is incredibly weaker. The dominance of Australia's major parties now rests more on the mechanics of preferential voting than on any enduring voter loyalty. Australians are increasingly drawn to political ideas rather than traditional parties.

Allegiance has become fluid, conditional, and transactional. This is why culture wars are so potent, they dissolve traditional party loyalty and reframe political identities around moral causes.

What makes the dynamic of culture wars so corrosive is not hypocrisy, everyone is hypocritical, but the refusal to admit it. Once a position becomes fused with identity, challenging it begins to feel like self-erasure. Reasoning halts not because it has reached a

conclusion, but because continuing would be personally costly.

Culture wars do not resolve themselves, because they are not debates aimed at truth. They are defences of identity.

Any idea, no matter how fragile, can be protected indefinitely if questioning it is framed as an attack on one's existence.

When morality supplants curiosity, when certainty silences thought, and when identity is forged only through opposition to others, culture does not deepen; it fractures. As we argue over identity, language, and allegiance, the deeper questions about power, labour, dignity, freedom, and meaning remain unresolved.

The real challenge then, is not choosing sides.

It is asking a far more difficult question: Why am I so quick to pledge allegiance to ideas that demand far more scrutiny and reflection? Where does my logic stop, and why?

These question does not yield slogans. What they offer instead is the one condition culture wars cannot sustain for long: intellectual honesty.

■ Chaïy Donati is President of the Mullumbimby Brunswick Valley ALP Branch. The full-length version of this article is online at www.echo.net.au.

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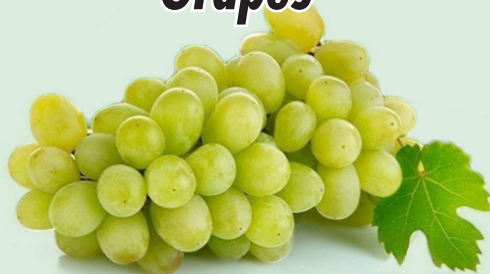
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Roller derby to raise funds for Byron's Fletcher Street Cottage



This will be the sixth year of the Northern Rivers Revolt roller derby fundraising event in Byron Bay. Photo supplied

Six roller derby teams from across Australia are coming to Byron's Cavenbah Centre on 21 and 22 March. They will raise funds for the Fletcher Street Cottage in Byron Bay a vital service providing breakfast, shower facilities, and support for those experiencing homelessness or housing stress.

Tweed Valley Rollers and Northern Rivers Roller Derby have come together to create the Northern Rivers Revolt – the sixth annual tournament that combines athleticism

with community spirit and a deep commitment to social impact and growth.

'The Northern Rivers Revolt has become a staple of the Australian roller derby calendar,' say the event organisers.

Strong community

'Reaching our sixth year is a testament to the strength of our local derby community. This year, the competition is tougher than ever, and we're excited to showcase both our six-team

tournament and a high-energy open-gender game.'

The six participating teams are: Geelong Roller Derby League – VIC (2025 winners); Canberra Roller Derby League – ACT; Inner West Roller Derby League – NSW; Mackay City Rollers – QLD; WestSide Roller Derby League – VIC; and River Valley Rollers – TVR/NRRD – NSW.

Tickets are available at the door, \$5 adults and \$1 kids and the first round starts at 9am.

Marine Rescue Ballina funds raised by Lennox-Ballina Boardriders



Photo from left to right: Jonny Hewett (Le-Ba Vice President), Zac Wightman (Le-Ba President), Peter Hill (Unit Commander Marine Rescue Ballina), Evan McGregor (Le-Ba Junior Club President) with his children Beau and Mini. Photo supplied

Tony O'Brien

A huge congratulations to Lennox-Ballina Boardriders (LE-BA) on another successful golf day – and an even bigger thank you for directing the proceeds to Marine Rescue Ballina.

'LE-BA enjoys giving back to the community... Marine Rescue Ballina helps keep our local coastal waters

safe,' said President Zac Wightman.

Unit Commander Peter Hill expressed his gratitude: 'This very significant donation is a big morale boost for our volunteers. We'll make sure it goes toward improving our capability to keep people safe on the water.'

During the presentation at the Marine Rescue Tower,

volunteers were busy logging vessels and assisting in a real-time search and rescue operation – a reminder of just how vital their work is.

Marine Rescue Ballina crews regularly work alongside NSW Police Marine Area Command, Surf Life Saving, and the Westpac Rescue Helicopter to keep our waterways safe.

Sports lunch will raise funds for Westpac rescue helicopter

On 27 February Byron's 2026 sports lunch is coming up again and is bringing together 'big personalities, rugby banter and a touch of lyrical flair to an afternoon sports lunch at Byron Bay,' say organisers.

The lunch raises funds for the Westpac Helicopter Service.

Grab a ticket and you can join MC David Arthur along with Wallabies star Tom Lawton, who played 41 tests for Australia in a seven-year international career and Murray Hartin, one of the best Australian rhyming poets of the modern era, for an intimate sports luncheon. 'Sit back and enjoy a

two-course feast with a three-hour drinks package at Byron Bay Services Club, while being entertained by sporting stories and poetic punchlines,' said organisers.

For more information call John Bancroft on 0458 66 999 or email: john.bancroft@rescuehelicopter.com.au.

Why Pauline?



A few weeks ago a trans woman told me she was a big Pauline Hanson supporter.

WTF. How can a trans woman feel she is anyway represented, or safe, with One Nation? The same woman who teamed up with Holly Valance to release a parody version of Valances' previous 'hit' (can we even call it that?) that mocks poor people, LGBTQ+ youth, women and the trans community? It's mean. It's stupid. And it's shameful. Yet, somehow this woman whose only policy is hate and division is cutting through. Newpoll this week had One Nation polling at 27%. That made me feel sad. What does that say about who we are? Or what we are becoming? I think it says one thing very clearly.

Fascism is on the rise.

Want to know the basic principles of fascism? There's two major ones, and they're sounding very much like One Nation's political strategy.

1. Powerful, often exclusionary, populist nationalism centered on the cult of a redemptive, 'infallible' leader who never admits mistakes.

2. Political power derived from questioning reality, endorsing myth and rage, and promoting lies.

Award-winning journalist, syndicated columnist, and anti-globalisation author and academic Naomi Klein describes the phenomenon of the ultra-right and the capture succinctly. 'They got the feelings right and the facts wrong'. Getting the facts wrong isn't a mistake, they are in the business of getting the facts wrong. In uncertain times, where the voting public lose faith in government, (that's the 'feelings' bit) they look towards a charismatic leader. A 'strongman', or in this case 'a strong woman'. Although I'd say Hanson enacts the power in a way that fulfils all the tenets of patriarchy. In that way, it's a kind of cognitive dissonance and confuses 'woke' ideology. Don't we want more female leaders? Yes. But not women who lead like scary men. Really, really scary men.

The ideology being enacted is straight from the fascist playbook. There must be a terrifying internal and external enemy. Migrants. This demonisation of outsiders becomes the way we define ourselves as the 'insiders'. It's about validation and control. It's about simple answers for complex systemic problems like the housing crisis.

Instead of sensible analysis of the Census data that had vacancy at 1 million

Racism has always been Pauline's centralising call to action, it is her simplistic theory of change. This bizarrely is not called hate speech. It is called political ideology. Its purpose is to exclude.

homes – and looking at the tax breaks that make housing a sure bet for wealth creation, Hanson blames migrants. Too many migrants living in our homes. Forget they are looking after our children and elderly, and filling the roles we can't fill without them. Let's just blame people for what is actually well designed policy for making lots of people poor and a small amount of people rich.

When Hanson gave her maiden speech 30 years ago she said Australia was being 'swamped by Asians.' She has targeted Muslims, referring to Islam as a 'disease' in 2017, and calling for a 'vaccination' against it. She has called for a ban on Muslim immigration, a royal commission into Islam and a ban on the burqa.

In 2018 she proposed a motion in the Senate with the slogan 'It's OK to be white'.

In 2019 she was secretly filmed in meetings with the NRAA [National Rifle Association Australia] discussing softening Australia's strict gun laws. Al Jazeera reported on One Nation's dealings: 'Far-right party sought up to \$20m from pro-gun groups in the United States'.

In 2022 she responded to a tweet by Senator Mehreen Faruqi telling her to piss off back to Pakistan. In 2024 the Federal Court described the remarks

as 'racist' and 'anti-immigrant' and 'anti-Muslim.'

In 2025 she was formally censured and suspended from the Senate for seven sitting days after repeatedly wearing a burqa into the chamber, something deemed 'racist' by other senators.

Racism has always been Pauline's centralising call to action, it is her simplistic theory of change. This bizarrely is not called hate speech. It is called political ideology. Its purpose is to exclude. Because when you 'other' marginalised community groups, you create a new group – forged in the furnace of hatred and fear. It's the fascist honey pot. It's us. And it's them.

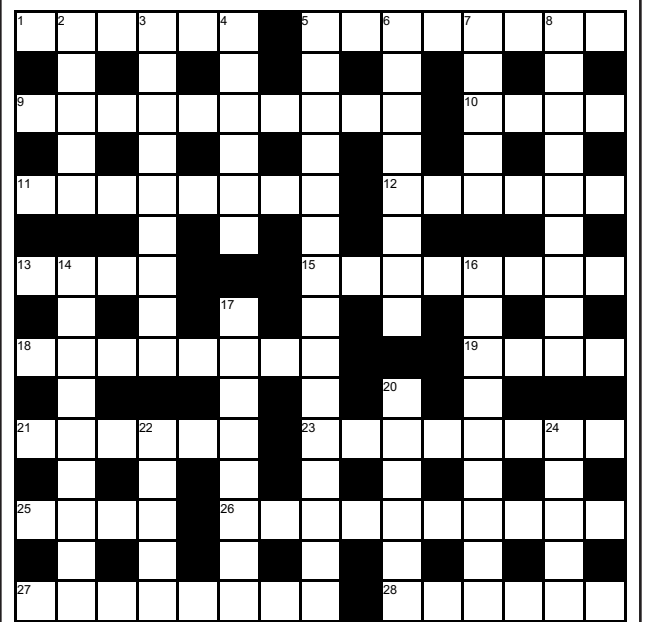
Don't fall for the propaganda. Be kind. Be tolerant. Be informed. Be better than the hate.

And please, don't become a fascist.

If you know anything about history, it never ends well for them.

■ *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.*

Crossword by Mungo MacCallum #4



Cryptic Clues

ACROSS

1. Puts down, like, in Lincolns (6)
5. Black holds unknown line and length in a single speech element (8)
9. Henry has power in scowl – well, 2/6d worth (4,1,5)
10. Popular points of pubs (4)
11. Two hookahs near Bowral (4,4)
12. Hardy's Bay? (6)
13. Turn first class state into a continent (4)
15. Men commissioned bids about 99 (8)
18. D... dumb person (4-4)
19. Uncouth game of French (4)
21. Scents overdose of you and me (6)
23. Great catch, caught right in ball that cut off the pitch (8)
25. Points of attention for Foreign Office 101 (4)
26. Snipe and Jacana, SCEGS girls! (5,5)
27. Strained and unhappy without Di (8)
28. Wide way to treat a tomato? (6)

DOWN

2. Party makes pulse zero (5)
3. Look after metal container with watch (9)
4. Dry rot turns up in division (6)
5. Wild foul hogs from the French lake form an obstacle to Pilgrim's Progress (6,2,7)
6. Great duration of existence of confused elf lingo (4,4)
7. Farewell. Nowadays setter is over the old continent (5)
8. Lavishly lugged, like a bandicoot (4-5)
14. Leaked in little canoe, a recreational craft (9)
16. Buttonhole country of motorists? (9)
17. Tiresome people cover work-related illness which goes on and on (8)
20. Inexperienced politicians? (6)
22. Wee Geller takes a bearing (5)
24. Presbyterian tree (5)

Quick Clues

ACROSS

1. Shames, humbles (6)
5. Word segment, single sound (8)
9. Two shillings and sixpence in the old money (4,1,5)
10. Bars, taverns (4)
11. Town in New South Wales famous for picnic races (4,4)
12. Bay tree, girl's name (6)
13. Largest continent (4)
15. Commissioned soldiers (8)
18. Idiot, senseless person (4-4)
19. Rough, impolite (4)
21. Scents (6)
23. One who yells, great catch (8)
25. Points of convergence (4)
26. Avians frequenting tidal regions (5,5)
27. Strained, emphasised (8)
28. Extra in cricket (6)

DOWN

2. Wild feast (slang) (5)
3. Protection, defence (9)
4. Division of a circle, slice (6)
5. Depressing obstacle in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (6,2,7)
6. Extended use-by date for consumer products (4,4)
7. Farewell (French) (5)
8. Having extended organs of hearing (4-5)
14. Fast pleasure craft (9)
16. Flower often used as a buttonhole (9)
17. Continues, perseveres (8)
20. Political party concerned with the environment (6)
22. Liquid excrement (5)
24. More senior, church officer (5)

Last week's solution #3



■ Crossword circa 2008

STARS BY LILITH

The zodiac invites you to extend this week's big red heart day beyond the strictly romantic via some inspiring love talk from fellow star signs ...



AQUARIUS THE WATER POURER

ARIES: You can either practice being right or practice being kind. It's about choosing to believe this one thing, that love is bigger than any grim, bleak shit anyone can throw at us. Love gives us a shot at becoming the person we were born to be. – Anne Lamott, Aries author.

TAURUS: In nature I find grace tangled in a rapture with violence; I find an intricate landscape whose forms are fringed in death; I find mystery, newness, and a kind of exuberant, spendthrift energy in the world's water and weather, the world's nourishment freely given, its soil and sap. – Annie Dillard, Taurus author.

GEMINI: God help us to live slowly. To move simply. To look softly. To allow emptiness. To let the heart create for us. Love one another and you will be happy. It's as simple and difficult as that. There is no other way. – Michael Leunig, Gemini artist/social commentator.

CANCER: To be loved is a great privilege. Pause regularly to bask in the knowledge that there are people out there who care for you and want you to thrive and hold you in their thoughts with fondness. Animals, too: you've been the recipient of their boundless affection. – Rob Breznsky, Cancer astrologer.

LEO: I am happier when I love than when I am loved. I adore my husband, my son, my grandchildren, my mother, my dog, and frankly, I don't know if they even like me. But who cares? Loving them is my joy. Love exists, nothing else matters. – Isabel Allende, Leo writer.

VIRGO: Lean back and be loved by all that is already loving you. It is your effort at love that is preventing you from experiencing it. So come my friends, be not afraid, we are so lightly here. It is in love that we are made, in love we disappear. – Leonard Cohen, Virgo poet.

LIBRA: To love oneself is the beginning of a lifelong romance. Keep love in your heart. It takes a great deal of courage to see the world in all its tainted glory, and to still love it. Always forgive your enemies – nothing annoys them so much. – Oscar Wilde, Libra author.

SCORPIO: Love is where you find it. There is love enough in this world for everybody, if people will just look. I am proof of that. I have had some experiences with love; the ones I have liked best could easily be described as 'common decency'. – Kurt Vonnegut, Scorpio author.

SAGITTARIUS: I think the kind of landscape you grew up in, it lives with you... You may love a building, but I don't think that you can love it in the way that you love a tree or a river or the colour of the earth; it's a different kind of love. – Arundhati Roy, Sagittarius writer.

CAPRICORN: When the heart is ready for a fresh beginning, unforeseen things can emerge. Beginnings are new horizons that want to be seen. Somehow they win clearance and become fiercely free of the grip of the past. What is the new horizon in you that wants to be seen? – John O'Donohue, Capricorn poet.

AQUARIUS: During my years of being engaged in changing the world I have seen fear turn into courage. Sorrow into joy. Funerals into celebrations. Because whatever the consequences, people, standing side by side, have expressed that they believe in the love of the world and each other. – Alice Walker, Aquarius writer.

PISCES: The only transformer and alchemist that turns everything into gold is love. The only magic against death, aging, ordinary life, is love. And you don't find love, it finds you. It's got a little bit to do with destiny, fate, and what's written in the stars. – Anais Nin, Pisces writer.

Good Taste

Eateries Guide

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The Good Life



Byrons' newest Indian restaurant Namaste: Indian taste redefined

As most travellers would know, namaste is a manner of respectfully honouring a person or group used in the Hindu, Buddhist and Jain traditions, at any time of the day. At the restaurant Namaste Byron, on the western side of Jonson Street near the Marvell Street intersection, you feel that the intention is to honour the customer, whether by offering something simple like the choice of beautiful open-air outside dining, with the option of sitting inside and seeing the chefs at work, or in more subtle ways.

'At our restaurant we offer a number of very rare, but interesting, healthy and delicious items that you cannot find anywhere else,' says chef Manish, who has over 21 years of culinary expertise. He's worked for practically every hotel



Chef Manish is redefining Indian taste one dish at a time at Namaste Byron.

chain worldwide: Hilton, Intercontinental, TAJ, ITC, Raddison, Holiday Inn, etc. across Thai, Chinese,

Italian, French, Mexican and Mediterranean cuisines, as well as, of course Indian. 'Our tagline is 'redefining

Indian taste', and we take pride in being able to justify that – dishes like our Chicken Tikka Lababdar, Chilli Milli

Cauliflower (a proper Asian delicacy) and the delectable Portuguese seafood Xacutti are something special.

'Our approach to even the regular Indian dishes is that we try to come as close as possible to the authenticity of Indian cuisine, although our taste is very different to other Indian restaurants. Most people don't know that Indian food has a balance of texture, aroma, colour and (most importantly) spices, which don't just create a unique flavour, but have also been scientifically-proven to take care of your immune system.'

There is also an option to eat with 'no seed oil', and meals are offered to suit customers with every diet like vegan, seafood or vegetarian.

And finally, of course, customers love the generous portion sizes, with customer

reviews noting that they are bigger than other restaurants, despite the lower price. 'We like people to be able to eat themselves, and then feed their family and friends by taking it home as well,' says Manish.

With the combination indoor/outdoor space, they can accommodate big bookings, family functions, etc. and also offer catering, for example if you have a birthday, marriage, small get together, or corporate event coming up.

■ **Namaste Byron:**
Open: Wednesday to Monday, 4:30pm to 9pm.
Closed Tuesday.
Lunch: Friday to Sunday, 12 noon to 2:30pm.
namastebyron.com.au,
84 Jonson St, Byron Bay,
(02) 6680 5986.

Valentine's Day: sharing the love with free mushroom drink samples

Allie Godfrey

This week, as Valentine's Day rolls around, most of us will be rushing to buy flowers, chocolates and last-minute gifts. At Shroom Brothers, co-founder Andrew thought it was the perfect time to do something a little left-of-centre and share a different kind of love story, one rooted in mushrooms, daily rituals and simple ways to support wellbeing.

Mushrooms have been at the heart of Shroom Brothers since 2014. Over the past 12 years, Andrew and the team have focused on cultivating both flavour and function, growing seven varieties of fresh mushrooms alongside a

carefully-considered range of dried products, mainly Lion's Mane and Reishi.

Fresh and dried mushrooms each have their place. Fresh mushrooms shine in the kitchen, where texture, aroma and umami matter most. Lion's Mane, for example, is best pressed when frying to remove moisture, then finished with garlic butter – it absorbs flavour beautifully. Dried mushrooms, on the other hand, are designed for everyday rituals. Powders

offer consistency, convenience and an easy way to build mushrooms into daily life.

Lion's Mane is a key focus in dried form because it fits seamlessly into routines. Often chosen for its

association with focus, mental clarity and long-term brain support, it's used by people looking to support cognition without stimulants. Reishi complements this by

supporting calm, balance and stress resilience.

Pairing these mushrooms with coffee and matcha is as much about flavour as it is function. CALM, a green adaptogenic blend featuring Reishi, naturally aligns with matcha's grassy, vegetal profile. Lion's Mane, a beige-to-brown powder with deeper, earthy, almost cacao-like notes, pairs beautifully with coffee. A simple guide is to follow the colour of the powder – when it looks right in the cup, the flavour usually blends more smoothly too.

You can try these blends for yourself at the New Brighton Farmers Market on Tuesday, 27 February, when Shroom

Brothers will be offering free samples. Visitors can taste ready-made drinks in five flavours and take home 20g sample packs, providing around a two-week supply to explore how the powders fit into their daily routines.

■ **Find Shroom Brothers** every Tuesday at New Brighton Farmers Market from 8am to 11am, and every Friday at Mullumbimby Farmers Market from 7am to 11am.





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Jin Wu Koon Karate – Byron Bay

Jin Wu Koon (JWK) Karate was established in Byron Bay in 1977 by Sensei Light. The club produced champions at regional, state, national, and international levels in karate, kickboxing, and kung fu, while positively shaping generations of Byron Bay locals.

When taught well, karate supports strong personal development, building concentration, confidence, self-discipline, resilience, and self-awareness. Training also helps students manage stress, find purpose, and live by clear values. JWK Karate supports both children and adults to achieve goals on and off the mat through commitment, perseverance, and striving to be their best.

Their code of conduct follows Bushido principles: loyalty, honour, courage, honesty, respect, and humility in daily life.

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www.dcalaw.com.au



Crystal Creek Rainforest Retreat

A luxury retreat nestled within 250 acres of pristine rainforest in the beautiful Northern Rivers of NSW. This retreat features 13 beautifully appointed villas and lodges, individually positioned throughout the estate and hidden within the landscape to ensure exceptional privacy, seclusion, and breathtaking rainforest and mountain views.

Each villa is designed for romantic getaways, offering cosy lounges with log fireplaces, floor-to-ceiling glass windows, luxurious bedrooms with ensuite bathrooms, and indulgent couples' spa baths. All accommodation includes fully fitted kitchens, outdoor Weber BBQs, and both indoor and alfresco dining areas. The expansive Luxury Mountain View Lodges also feature large decks with private heated plunge pools.

Guests can enjoy 11 kilometres of scenic walking trails, professional massage treatments, and an elegant new Bar Lounge and Wine Cellar.

02 6679 1591 • 0488 473 533
relax@ccrr.com.au
www.ccrr.com.au



Viridian Advisory

With rates on the move, a simple financial check-in can help

With the RBA interest rate rise, plenty of locals are already feeling it; higher mortgage repayments, tighter cash flow, and more pressure on day-to-day budgets are becoming the new normal. If there's one upside, it's this: moments like these are a good reminder to check in on your finances. Not later 'when things settle', but now.

A financial review can often uncover simple ways to ease the pressure. Meeting with Alana Pincombe for a financial review can help you take practical steps to gain peace of mind, confidence, and plan how to stay ahead if rates move again. This is where having a local adviser in your corner really matters.

One good conversation can make all the difference.

Get in touch with Alana today:
0491 204 142
apincombe@viridianadvisory.com.au
www.viridianadvisory.com.au



★ The SCOOP ★



Byron College

Term 1, 2026 is buzzing at Byron Community College! A fresh lineup of creative courses is about to kick off, including Screen Printing, Printmaking, Intermediate Guitar, Beekeeping, a flavour-packed Kimchi Workshop, and Spirits & Cocktails. Students can explore new skills, make something with their own hands, and meet fellow enthusiasts.

Practical work skills courses are also starting soon, such as First Aid, CPR, White Card, RSA, Barista. Fee-free places are available for eligible students, thanks to NSW Government subsidies.

Byron Community College is ready to help students learn, connect, and gain skills that matter.

Discover more at:
02 6684 3374
www.byroncollege.org.au



Peace Studies at UNE

Humanity is in crisis. Around the globe, we see new forms of imperialism, growing militarism, rising authoritarianism, deepening inequalities, systemic injustices, and threats to freedom of speech. The climate crisis continues to intensify, reshaping lives, livelihoods, and ecosystems. It is easy to feel overwhelmed, yet history reminds us that crises also create possibilities and demand action toward just, sustainable, and peaceful futures. If you are driven to make a difference or eager to learn, unlearn, and explore, Peace Studies at the University of New England (UNE) offers a pathway forward. At UNE, you gain insights and practical skills for peacebuilding across local and global contexts, grounded in over 40 years of research and teaching excellence.

Contact discipline convenor
Dr Johanna Garnett
jgarnet4@une.edu.au
www.une.edu.au



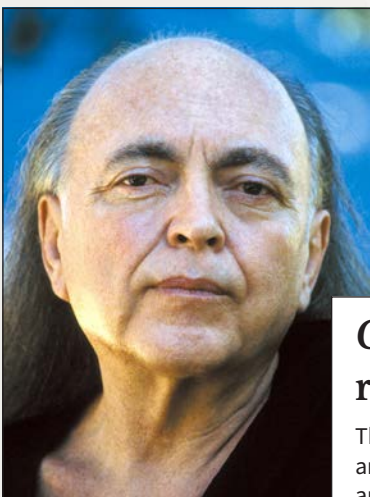
Food Culture's secrets of cacao

Cacao, grown in the forests of Peru, was used for ceremonial practices long ago by the Mayan people and thought to be delivered from the sky gods and known for its heart opening and awakening properties. Today it is taken in ceremony, in friendship or as a daily ritual.

Food Culture's cacao is sustainably harvested from the source and allows the community to buy in bulk (5kgs with a 10% discount) or just as needed, knowing that a traditional ceremonial dose is about 35g per cup.

Cacao is naturally high in theobromine and magnesium making it ultra-nourishing. To prepare, simply melt cacao into warm water or milk, sweeten with honey or maple. The ancients sometimes enjoyed their drink with warming cinnamon or sweet vanilla.

Shop 22a, 82 Rajah Road
Ocean Village Shopping Centre
02 6680 1122
shop@foodculturebulkfoods.com.au
www.foodculturebulkfoods.com.au



Conscious Light – the divine life and revelation of Avatar Adi Da Samraj

This award-winning documentary offers an intimate look into the life and enlightened teachings of Avatar Adi Da Samraj. Drawing on rare archival film, photography, audio recordings, and interviews with long-term students, the film explores his work to establish a way of ultimate spiritual realisation for all.

Avatar Adi Da devoted his life to revealing the true nature of reality as conscious light – the 'Bright' – communicated not only through teachings, but through direct spiritual transmission. His great message affirms that humanity's deepest need is to transcend mortality and realise infinite love, perfect freedom, and boundless happiness, which he revealed as our true and inevitable destiny.

The film screens 7–9pm on Thursday, 19 February
2a Booyun St cnr Park St, Brunswick Heads
Free admission

Community confidence remains low as Byron Bay SEP process continues

Community confidence in Byron Bay's proposed Special Entertainment Precinct (SEP) remains low as Council progresses a potential trial, with data showing alcohol-related harm already sits well above the NSW average, raising serious concerns about policies that could intensify late-night activity.

NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research data shows alcohol-related sexual violence in Byron Bay is more than 8 times the state average. Disorderly conduct is 17.5 times higher, and alcohol-related assaults are 6.7 times higher. Yet Council and the business chamber continue to advance the SEP, a proposal consistently opposed by residents and many local businesses.

There is no guaranteed funding for critical safety measures such as lighting, monitoring, or policing. With responsibility likely falling on residents and workers, concern remains over why the proposal continues.

saynotothesepp@outlook.com
change.org/p/keep-byron-vibrant-safe-no-late-night-sep



Filter Off

beauty style fashion grooming



ZÓCALO

Born in Mexico as an ethical collective, ZÓCALO brings its vibrant spirit to Australia with its third location in beautiful Newrybar in the Byron Bay hinterland. A bohemian, well-travelled haven, it's filled with color, prints, and an ever-changing collection of ethical fashion, gifts, jewellery, and globally-inspired pieces – making it the perfect place for holiday gifting.

Every purchase gives back, with a portion of each sale supporting four local charities in Mexico, keeping ZÓCALO's roots and purpose alive. Alongside artisanal Mexican finds, they stock Australia's favorite brands, including Spell, Nine Lives Bazaar, The White Raven, Ottway, BOPO, Posie, Leif Products, Gentle Habits and more.

Shop ZÓCALO in store or online:
17 Old Pacific Highway, Newrybar
shopzocalo.com.au
@shopzocalo
0493 382 497



Bodypeace Bamboo Clothing

Be at peace in your body. Born in the heart of Bundjalung Country, Byron Bay, Bodypeace welcomes you into their world of sustainability, inclusivity, and freedom. Discover their buttery blends of bamboo. Breathable, moisture-wicking, UV-protectant, thermo-regulating, antibacterial, sustainably-sourced, natural fibres. Better for your health and the planet.

Join them in revolution, spreading love and ethical consumption.

The goddesses who grace their seven boutiques across Australia can't wait to meet you and support you in embracing your fullest expression of self. Alternatively, find peace in shopping on their online portal.

bodypeacebamboo.com

HEAD OFFICE

Byron Bay • 2/1 Boronia Place, Banksia Drive • 02 6685 5616

BOUTIQUES

Byron Bay • 21 Fletcher Street • 02 6680 8885

Mullumbimby • 49 Burringbar Street • 02 6684 4006

Brunswick Heads • 12 The Terrace • 02 6685 1081

Burleigh Heads • 26 James Street • 07 5535 6945



Stewart's Menswear

As summer winds down, Stewart's Menswear is making room for the cooler season ahead with a wide selection of styles now available on sale. The family-owned Mullumbimby store is offering seasonal savings across a range of clothing, including a clearance sale on the St Goliath brand, giving customers the chance to pick up relaxed, easy-to-wear pieces at great value.

Known for its laid-back approach to everyday style, St Goliath is well suited to our Byron Shire lifestyle, with options ideal for weekends, holidays, and casual workdays. With limited sizes and styles available, February is a good time to browse in store or online and find favourites before they're gone.

stewartsmenswear.com.au
02 6684 2148
52-54 Burringbar Street,
Mullumbimby

Hempire

Local founder Trimayne Meader has launched Hempire, an Australian hemp-based intimates brand focused on sustainability, comfort and women's wellbeing. With hemp as its core muse and textile focus, the brand is rooted in a deep appreciation for the earth's waterways and soils, and the regenerative power of conscious fibre choices.

Created as a considered alternative to synthetic underwear and chemically processed textiles, Hempire champions fibre literacy and transparency across its supply chain. Hemp, a regenerative crop requiring minimal water and no pesticides, is valued for its breathability, durability and natural odour resistance. Blended with organic cotton for softness, each piece is designed without underwires or heavy padding to support everyday comfort and skin balance.

Produced in small batches to minimise waste, Hempire reflects a slower, more responsible approach to fashion.

www.hempirecollective.com.au
IG: @hempire.collective



Seven

Seven days of entertainment

Eclectic Selection

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK



Suzie Miller's *Prima Facie* has captivated audiences worldwide – from London's West End to Broadway. Now, **NORPA** brings its original production of this landmark Australian play to the Northern Rivers.

Thursday, Friday and Saturday at Byron Theatre. Tickets from \$30 +bf from byroncentre.com.au.



Vagina Conversations #11 – after years of sell-out performances, this diverse collective of some of Byron Shire's powerful, creative women, and people with vaginas, present personal, professional or political stories to inform, educate, entertain, and support.

Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday at the Brunswick Picture House, Brunswick Heads. Tickets from \$38 from brunswickpicturehouse.com.



Beccy Cole steps into the new year with her long-awaited

and highly anticipated ninth studio album ***Through The Haze***, and what better way to promote a new album, than hitting the road around the country.

Sunday 3.30pm at the Ballina RSL. Tickets \$49 from ballinarsl.com.au.



California-born, Australia-based roots artist **Manoa**, and his Swedish wife **Caroline**, blend folk and reggae to create an uplifting musical experience. Caroline, steeped in Scandinavian folk traditions, brings warmth and harmony through her soulful voice. Together, they offer sound healing sessions that fuse natural soundscapes, breathwork, and live music.

Friday from 5pm at Elements of Byron. Free show.



James Sherlock and **Lillian Albazi** are Naarm-based improvisers with distinguished careers spanning jazz, classical, and experimental music delivering a performance that is both innovative and deeply moving.

Saturday 7.30pm at The Citadel, Murwillumbah. Tickets \$30 +bf from humanitix.com.



Multi-platinum-selling singer, producer and rapper **Winston Surfshirt** returns with his first new music in two years; the kaleidoscopic new single 'Boots' – a dazzling ode to artistic evolution, weaving together sparkling bass undertones and swirling disco-house melodies into a rich tapestry of sound.

Saturday 8pm at the Australian Hotel, Ballina. Tickets \$25 +bf from moshtix.com.au.



Don't miss a beautiful afternoon of chamber music in the newly refurbished Con Concert Room. **Lyrical Masterpieces** brings together outstanding violinist Doretta Balkizas and pianist Brieley Cutting for a richly expressive program of French and German classics.

Sunday 5pm at the Northern Rivers Conservatorium Concert Room, Lismore.

Tickets \$18 from nrcac.edu.au.



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Psych-Surf Hat

Surf Hat is the ever-evolving and fun-loving creative brain child of the duo of **Jon Allan** and **Evan Camm**. A melting pot of surf, psych, folk, and indie. After some lineup changes at the end of 2024, the band returned to the live scene with some new faces and instrumentation. Based out of Squamish, BC, the group has released two full length albums since 2022 and performed relentlessly across western Canada.

Known for their electric live show, catchy tunes, and reverb-soaked guitars, Surf Hat's self-titled debut album has racked up millions of streams and helped them build a loyal fanbase across North America and beyond. With influences from Allah-

Las, The Ventures, and The Beatles, they blend classic pop, surf, and psychedelia to create a sound that is uniquely their own – their third full-length album, *Modern World Blues*, was released last November.

With a fresh batch of songs that push their sound forward, they have set out on international tours across the United States, Australia, and Europe, including Byron Bay, bringing their new sound to new fans around the globe.

It's an exciting new chapter for Surf Hat – stay tuned as they continue to make waves – Saturday from 8pm at The Northern, see thenorthern.com.au for more details.

THE GREAT NORTHERN HOTEL
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A GREAT STORY STARTS HERE

35-43 JONSON ST
BYRON BAY
6685 6454

THENORTHERN.COM.AU
@thenorthernbyronbay

THUR 12 FEB	Front Bar: Sarah Grant Duo 6pm DJ Quendo 9.15pm Duelling Piano Bar 8pm BACKROOM: BEN MORGAN WITH JORDY QUINN & IZZY DAY doors 7pm FREE
FRI 13 FEB	Front Bar: Donny Shades Trio 7pm Jamie Lowe 10.30pm Duelling Piano Bar 8pm BACKROOM: DEEPDOWN WITH VICTOR RUIZ doors 9pm \$55
SAT 14 FEB	Front Bar: Kane Muir Band 7pm DJ Oren Selecta 10.30pm Duelling Piano Bar 8pm BACKROOM: SURF HAT W/ STONE WAVES & EARTH TO JOSH doors 8pm \$35
SUN 15 FEB	Front Bar: Izzy Day 5pm Vinyl Sunday ft. Wax Addicts 8.15pm \$15 MARGIS & SPRITZERS ALL DAY Duelling Piano Bar 6pm
MON 16 FEB	BACKPACKER MONDAYS Front Bar: Jerome 6pm DJ Davi Bangma 9.15pm Duelling Piano Bar 8pm
TUES 17 FEB	Front Bar: Marshall Okell 6pm DJ Alice Q 9.15pm Duelling Piano Bar 8pm
WED 18 FEB	Front Bar: Ino 6pm DJ Renee Simone 9pm Duelling Piano Bar 8pm

BEN MORGAN
AUS SUMMER TOUR

VICTOR RUIZ
PHIL SMART
BRUJO B2B INDE

BACKPACKER MONDAYS

Seven

Seven days of entertainment



Relaxed, upbeat and easy

Carly, Roo and Alex play live music the way it should be – relaxed, upbeat and easy to enjoy. With great vocals, familiar songs and a natural connection with the crowd, they create a welcoming atmosphere that suits everyone from early diners to late-night locals. Their last gig at the **Brunswick Bowlo** was a huge success, with a strong crowd and a buzzing, feel-good vibe throughout the night. Whether you're tapping your foot from your seat or up dancing with friends, their music makes it easy to settle in and enjoy the moment. Carly, Roo and Alex are the kind of band that keep people coming back.

Saturday, 21 February from 6.30pm at the Brunswick Bowlo, for more info visit brunswickbowlingclub.com.



Save the Stone & Wood date

Music and beer lovers of Byron and beyond, mark your calendars! Stone & Wood is thrilled to announce the return of the **Festival of the Stone** for its 12th year, welcoming everyone back to the brewery for a winter celebration filled with great music, good company and the age-old tradition of stone brewing.

Taking place on **Saturday, 20 June** from **3pm to 10pm** at the Stone & Wood brewery in Byron Bay, the much-loved festival marks the ceremonial tapping of Stone & Wood's annual Stone Beer, made using glowing hot stones in homage to ancient brewing methods.

Each year, a month before the festival, Stone & Wood's brewing team and local community gather for Stone Brew

Day, a ceremonial gathering to heat stones over woodfire before lowering them into the kettle, creating the rich, smoky flavours that make Stone Beer so distinctive.

Following another hugely successful event in 2025, Festival of the Stone 2026 is set to deliver another unforgettable day of top-notch Australian talent, freshly poured brews and delicious bites from local food vendors.

Best of all, it's for a great cause.

The latest NSW Street Count figures show Byron Shire continues to face one of the highest rates of rough sleeping in the state, with 291 people recorded sleeping rough in 2025, second only to the City of Sydney.

In response, Festival of the Stone 2026 will once again proudly support Fletcher Street Cottage through the Ingrained Foundation, helping raise vital funds for the community hub's essential services, advocacy and practical support for people experiencing homelessness across the Northern Rivers.

Festival of the Stone 2026 is shaping up to be one of winter's must-attend events, all for a worthy cause. Save the date, book your leave and keep an eye on the website and socials for lineup reveals and ticket releases!

For more info, visit: stoneandwood.com.au.

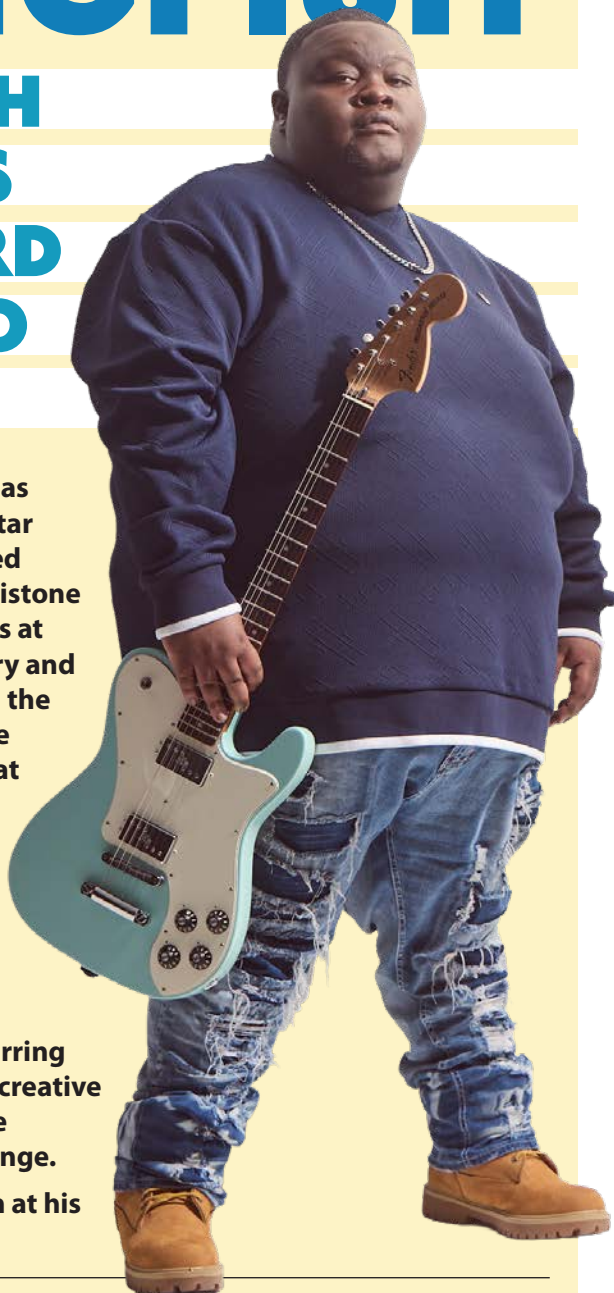


INTERVIEW KINGFISH

KINGFISH TRAVELS THE HARD ROAD TO BYRON

Hailed by *Rolling Stone* as 'a rare 21st century guitar hero and the undisputed future of the blues', **Christone 'Kingfish' Ingram** stands at the crossroads of history and innovation, channeling the spirit of the Delta, while boldly reimagining what comes next. Now, with his new album, *Hard Road*, Kingfish is touring with this previously unexplored musical territory, infusing his signature sound with a genre-blurring approach fraught with creative urgency and heretofore untapped emotional range.

Seven spoke to Kingfish at his home in LA.



First and foremost tell me about your new record.

The album, *Hard Road*, just dropped, back in September. It has a lot of roots and, you know, roots of the blues, and so I just wanted to showcase that and it's been great. Folks have been loving the material – it's been awesome.

You've been to Australia quite a bit. You keep coming back. You like us?
Oh yeah, I love it for sure. Australia's response to the blues has always been super great. You know, you guys love it. You guys don't treat it like 'yesteryear' music. We always have a fun time when we go to Australia.

I imagine you have a lot of guitars. Is there one that you just really love playing?

Yes, the last year or two, maybe even more, I've been using my Fender Signature tele (Telecaster – it truly is a beautiful instrument). This is pretty much like a tele 'Deluxe'. Also I have an LP (a custom Les Paul) that I really love – so those have been, like my two main guitars.

You've had a huge career from a young age – you just turned 27. How do you feel approaching your 30s, is your approach to your music maturing?

Definitely – the reason being, as I get older, I'm having more experiences, meeting new people from all walks of life, and influences in my music.

Of course, the older I get, I feel like my music will change as well.

Do you come from a musical family?
Yes, for sure. On my mum's side of the family, my mum was a singer. All of my uncles and aunts sang and played

instruments, so they were the first musicians that I was around before I started learning, and playing the blues.

You're constantly touring and recording – are you still finding enough to inspire you for new material?

Oh yeah, definitely. Even when we were recording *Hard Road*, I was always making songs. I have a lot of material, for maybe at least two more albums. Even after we were done recording I'm always in the studio making songs and stuff like that.

People hail you as the new innovation in blues. Are you finding that you're battling between the old style blues and new things that you're trying to bring to the blues?

Oh definitely. That's something that I've been kind of struggling with for a few years now.

Because of where I come from people expect me to sound a certain way, but they don't know that I have a lot of influences, and a lot of people that I draw inspiration from, that's not blues. I've always been told that I have the potential to do stuff outside of the box and that's what I really want to do. But the more you go outside the box, the more you lose the essence of what the music is. And it can be a slippery slope.

I think for me, the best thing that I can just do is just play – you know, somebody will like it.

Kingfish with special guest Ash Grunwald, is playing The Green Room, Byron Bay on Thursday, February 26 at 6pm. Tickets and information from www.thegreenroombyron.com

Seven days of entertainment

She's every woman!

Direct from Canada, award-winning international performer **Bonnie Kilroe** brings her hit live show *Divas: She's Every Woman* to the NSW coast this March.

Her high-energy, one-woman show pays homage to classic divas while blending current pop culture in hilarious mash-ups, bringing audiences of all ages together for a night of music, laughter, and celebration. Known for her rapid-fire costume changes, audience interaction, and powerhouse vocals, Bonnie creates unforgettable, joyous experiences wherever she performs.

'In a time of much unrest online, and rising levels of depression and anxiety, I hope my show brings welcome laughter, connection, and a joyful escape for audiences,' says Kilroe. 'Australian audiences are incredibly warm, and I'm thrilled to be touring the NSW coast.'

Kilroe has toured Canada, Europe, Mexico, and the United States, performing in theatres, festivals, casinos, and corporate events. Her accolades include Most Unique Act, Best Comedy, Best Costume, The Carol Burnett Award, and The Award of Excellence at the Las Vegas Reel Awards and the Sunburst Convention of Professional Celebrity Impersonators in Florida. Her shows have been praised as 'a powerhouse of vocal versatility' and 'the ultimate girls' night out.'

***Divas: She's Every Woman* is on at the Ballina RSL on Saturday, 7 March at 8pm.**

Tickets: ballinarsl.com.au/event/divas-shes-every-woman.



Saturday 14 March

RESTORED

At The Con

JOIN US FOR A DAY OF MUSIC CELEBRATION & COMMUNITY AS WE UNVEIL OUR

★

BEAUTIFULLY RESTORED BUILDING

Northern Rivers Conservatorium

Workshops, performances, tours, try an instrument, face painting & ice cream!
Everyone welcome | **Free event** | Saturday 14 March 10am - 2pm

Our building works were supported by the NSW Government through Create NSW.



Northern Rivers Conservatorium



Seven

Seven days of entertainment

ReStored at the Con

The **Northern Rivers Conservatorium** has continued to make music throughout the years of flood recovery, and now the community is invited to celebrate the completion of its major restoration works and the renewal of one of Lismore's most iconic buildings.

While the Conservatorium has remained operational during the restoration period, **ReStored at the Con** marks the formal completion of the project and provides an opportunity to truly show what has been achieved. It is a moment to pause, reflect, and celebrate the care, craftsmanship and vision that have gone into restoring this much-loved cultural landmark.

On **Saturday** the Con will host this free open day to formally acknowledge the completion of the works and welcome the community to experience the renewed building.

The restoration followed significant damage caused by the 2022 floods, which affected teaching rooms, studios, performance spaces and essential infrastructure. The works were proudly supported by the NSW Government through Create NSW, alongside the commitment and determination of the Conservatorium Board, staff, teachers, students, and the wider community.

Executive Director of the Northern Rivers Conservatorium, **Anita Bellman**, said they are incredibly proud of what's been achieved through this restoration. 'With the support of Create NSW and the dedication of our Conservatorium community, we've been able to care for this much-loved building while keeping the music flowing, and ensuring it remains resilient, accessible and welcoming for years to come.'

Delivered by a dedicated project team including Richard Mason Construction Projects, Richard Stone Design, Bennetts Construction and a wide range of skilled contractors, the restoration has been undertaken with sensitivity to the building's heritage and a strong focus on long-term resilience and accessibility.

The completed works have enhanced the Conservatorium in both subtle and striking ways. Visitors will have the opportunity to see and learn about restoration elements



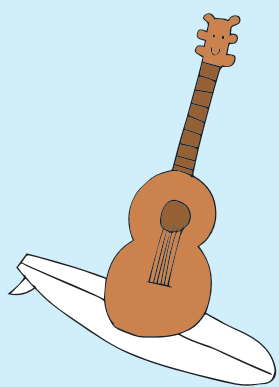
ranging from the bell tower, beautifully-renewed internal spaces and a new goods lift, ensuring the building continues to serve the community for generations to come.

Throughout the day, the community can enjoy performances by Conservatorium ensembles in the Concert Room, open rehearsals, and informal performances showcasing the depth and diversity of music-making at the Conservatorium.

Guided tours will offer insight into both the restoration and the spaces that support learning and creativity. Visitors can also take part in a 'try an instrument' session, meet Con teachers, explore open studios, and experience early childhood music workshops designed for younger participants and their carers.

ReStored at the Con is a celebration of resilience, creativity and community, and a chance to honour the renewal of a treasured cultural home.

Everyone is welcome to the Northern Rivers Conservatorium, Lismore on Saturday from 10am to 2pm. This is a free event.



LISTEN TO SOMETHING ELSE

There's no 'same old, same old' at BayFM. Our wide range of music shows are diverse and dangerous (and a couple are deadly).

Jump onto 99.9FM for the best in dance, pop, rock, blues, reggae, soul, folk, punk, Americana and vintage, plus hot local acts and music from around the world in our foreign language shows. Check our online Program Guide for details.



More at bayfm.org



BABY SHOWER

The magic of cinema

Bringing the magic of cinema from Australia and the world to **Mullumbimby, Flickerfest** and **iQ inc** are back for their 29th year, kicking off their three-day festival of short films at the **Mullumbimby Civic Hall**.

With just over 40 incredible short films to share, handpicked from a record 3,700 entries received for Flickerfest's Oscar and BAFTA-qualifying short film festival, the festival promises to delight audiences with the most creative, inspiring and entertaining shorts on offer, including Oscar nominees and award winners, screening alongside exciting, fresh local talent.

On **Thursday, 26 February** from **7pm**, raise a glass to 29 years of Flickerfest in the Northern Rivers at the festival's opening night party with delicious craft beer, organic wine, organic juices, and sumptuous snacks from Yaman.

Following, at 8pm, Flickerfest will take you on a trip across the world with the **'Best Of International Shorts'** program. Among a host of international highlights enjoying their Australian premieres, is the Oscar-nominated ***A Friend of Dorothy***, starring UK acting royalty **Miriam Margolyes** and **Stephen Fry**, where friendship is found in the most unexpected places. Also hot off its Oscar nomination is the powerful and intimate ***The Singers***. Joining them is the poignant Indonesian short ***My Plastic Mother***, awarded **Best International Short Film** and ***Radix***, winner of the **Yoram Gross Animation Award** for best Australian animation.

On **Friday, 27 February** from **8pm**, Australian films shine. Catch a collection of stunning shorts supported by big names both in front of and behind the camera. Moving drama ***Tuesday Tuesday***, stars **Peter Phelps** (*Stingers*) in a stellar performance as a man whose world is fading – ***Packed Away*** gives us the directorial debut of actress **Michala Banas**, (*McLeod's Daughters*) who shines both on and off camera in this personal drama, and actor **Matt Day** (*Rake*) writes and directs the comedy ***Baby Shower***, starring the legendary **Hugo Weaving**.

On **Saturday, 28 February** at **2pm**, join Flickerfest for a free workshop on the journey from shorts to features and go behind the scenes with award-winning Flickerfest alumni who share their own career pathways.

At **4pm**, Flickerfest and iQ inc will again shine the spotlight on a host of local talent at the 21st year of **'Byron All Shorts Competition'**. Enjoy a selection of incredible Northern Rivers short films on the big screen, and meet the filmmakers on the day to introduce their films. **Full program announced on 18 February.**

On **Saturday** at **8pm**, **'Short Laughs Comedy'** brings big laughs to the screen with a riotous collection of off-kilter Flickerfest shorts from Australia and around the world. Don't miss ***Carcassonne-Acapulco***, where a chance encounter at 30,000 feet sparks a surprisingly funny existential debate, ***Baby Blues***, a sharply observed comedy that hilariously captures the anxieties, and emotional free-fall of new parenthood; and ***Shrimp Fried Rice***, a warm and witty tale that finds humour in cultural misunderstandings, the emotional significance of a humble takeaway meal, and so much more!

For the full Flickerfest Mullumbimby & Byron All Shorts program and tickets go to www.iQ.org.au.

SENSORY BLENDER & THE CITADEL PRESENTS

SUNSET ASSEMBLY

SLOW GROOVE GATHERING OF DUSK DRIFTERS

DJ'S

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SUPPORTING MURWILLUMBAH COMMUNITY CENTRE

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 e: gigs@echo.net.au
 w: echo.net.au/gig-guide
 DEADLINE 5PM ON FRIDAYS



AFRODISEA

GIGGUIDE

WEDNESDAY 11

- RAILWAY HOTEL, BYRON BAY, **NATHAN KAYE**
- BEACH HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 6PM **KATIE WHITE**
- THE NORTHERN, BYRON BAY, 6PM **INO PIO**, 8PM **DUELLING PIANOS**
- THE PADDOCK PROJECT, MULLUMBIMBY, 4PM **CURRY JAM**
- OTTLIES, MULLUMBIMBY, 6PM **MONDO JAZZ CATS**
- ELTHAM HOTEL 6.30PM **IRISH FOLK JAM**

THURSDAY 12

- RAILWAY HOTEL, BYRON BAY, **TAHLIA BRAIN**
- BEACH HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 6PM **INO PIO**
- BYRON THEATRE 7.30PM **PRIMA FACIE**
- BYRON BAY GOLF CLUB 6PM **HEEL HOOK**
- THE NORTHERN, BYRON BAY, 6PM **SARAH GRANT + DJ QUENDO**, 7PM **BEN MORGAN**, WITH **JORDY QUINN AND IZZY DAY**, 8PM **DUELLING PIANOS**
- HOTEL BRUNSWICK 6PM **JASON DELPHIN**
- BRUNSWICK HEADS PICTURE HOUSE 7PM **CHEEKY CABARET**
- SAINT MARIES, BRUNSWICK HEADS, 6PM **MONDO JAZZ CATS**
- LENNOX HOTEL 8PM **THURSDAY JAM NIGHT**
- LISMORE CITY BOWLO 7PM **THE SUPPER CLUB SOUL BAND**
- THE CITADEL, MURWILLUMBAH, 7PM **THE DELTAZ**

FRIDAY 13

- RAILWAY HOTEL, BYRON BAY, **BULLETPROOF**
- BEACH HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 5PM **CHRISTIAN PATEY + JEROME WILLIAMS BAND**
- BYRON THEATRE 7.30PM **PRIMA FACIE**
- NORTH BYRON HOTEL 4.30PM **DANI QUAYLE MUSIC**
- BYRON BAY GOLF CLUB 5PM **CARLY & ROO**

- ELEMENTS OF BYRON 5PM **MISS RENEE SIMONE BAND**
- THE NORTHERN, BYRON BAY, 7PM **DONNY SHADES TRIO**, 8PM **DUELLING PIANOS**, 9PM **DEEPTOWN WITH VICTOR RUIZ**, 10.30PM **JAMIE LOWE**
- COORABELL HALL 7PM **FUN FRIDAY OPEN MIC**
- HOTEL BRUNSWICK 6PM **PETE MURRAY W/ FELIPE BALDOMIR**
- BRUNSWICK HEADS PICTURE HOUSE 7PM **CHEEKY CABARET**
- WANDANA BREWING CO., MULLUMBIMBY, 4.30PM **DJ PAPA BITCHO**

- ST JOHN'S SCHOOL HALL, MULLUMBIMBY, 7.30PM **ECSTATIC DANCE MULLUM WITH DJ DANKINI**
- MIDDLE PUB, MULLUMBIMBY, 8PM **KRAPPYKOEK WITH JESS**
- LENNOX HOTEL 4PM **DON ROGERS BAND + MARSHALL AND THE FRO**
- CLUB LENNOX 7PM **INO PIO**
- BALLINA RSL LEVEL ONE 9.30AM **DEAN DOYLE WITH SOPHISTICATED MORNING MELODIES**, BOARDWALK 6PM **ANDY JANS-BROWN**
- AUSTRALIAN HOTEL, BALLINA, 8PM **KANE MUIR**
- ELTHAM HOTEL 7PM **JONNY FRITZ AND JOSHUA HEDLEY + CHRIS ACKER**
- THE CITADEL, MURWILLUMBAH, 7.30PM **JERZANIA FLAMENCO**
- KINGSCLIFF BEACH BOWLS 5PM **MARK CROTTI**
- SALTBAR, KINGSCLIFF, 5.30PM **CHRIS PALMER**
- TWIN TOWNS, TWEED HEADS, THE SHOWROOM 8PM **JERSEY FOREVER**
- CLUB TWEED 7.30PM **CHARLIE BRAVO COUNTRY BUNKER**
- MO'S DESERT CLUBHOUSE, GOLD COAST, 7PM **BLOOM**

SATURDAY 14

- RAILWAY HOTEL, BYRON BAY, **LEMON CHICKEN**
- BEACH HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 3PM **EMILY RINK + QUEST**
- BYRON THEATRE 1.30PM + 7.30PM **PRIMA FACIE**

- THE NORTHERN, BYRON BAY, 7PM **KANE MUIR BAND**, 8PM **DUELLING PIANOS + DJ OREN SELECTA**, 8PM **SURF HAT**, WITH **STONE WAVES AND EARTH TO JOSH**
- NORTH BYRON HOTEL 5PM **DJ JR.DYNAMITE**
- BANGALOW HOTEL 4PM **ADAM HARPAZ**
- HOTEL BRUNSWICK 4.30PM **MOJO RISING**
- BRUNSWICK HEADS PICTURE HOUSE 7PM **CHEEKY CABARET**
- WANDANA BREWING CO., MULLUMBIMBY, 3PM **ROOTS RECYCLED SOUND SYSTEM**

- BILLINUDGEL HOTEL 7PM **GANG GANG**
- CLUB LENNOX 7PM **LUKE YEAMAN**
- LENNOX HOTEL 8PM **BATTLE OF THE BANDS - HEAT 2**
- AUSTRALIAN HOTEL, BALLINA, 3PM **JB'S BLUES BREAKERS**, 8PM **WINSTON SURFSHIRT**
- BALLINA RSL BOARDWALK 6PM **BEN WHITING**
- THE CITADEL, MURWILLUMBAH, 7.30PM **LILLIAN ALBAZI AND JAMES SHERLOCK**
- KINGSCLIFF BEACH BOWLS 5PM **CINNAMON SUN**
- SALTBAR, KINGSCLIFF, 5PM **MATT ARMATIGE**
- SALT & STONE, FINGAL HEAD, 6PM **PAUL A. GEORGE & ANDY V**
- TWIN TOWNS, TWEED HEADS, THE SHOWROOM 8PM **ROCKETMAN**
- CLUB TWEED 7.30PM **SMOOTH ODYSSEY**
- COOLANGATTA HOTEL 5PM **SONIC FX**

SUNDAY 15

- RAILWAY HOTEL, BYRON BAY, **THE HILLBILLY SKANK**
- BEACH HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 4.30PM **GOODRICH**
- THE NORTHERN, BYRON BAY, 5PM **IZZY DAY**, 6PM **DUELLING PIANOS**, 8PM **VINYL SUNDAY FT. WAX ADDICTS**
- HOTEL BRUNSWICK 4PM **LISA HUNT + HAYLEY GRACE**
- BRUNSWICK HEADS PICTURE HOUSE 2PM **CHEEKY CABARET**

- BILLINUDGEL HOTEL 1PM **GRAVITY'S GUMBO**
- PEARCES CREEK HALL 3PM **WICKER SUITE**
- BALLINA RSL BOARDWALK 2.30PM **BALLINA BLUES CLUB FEAT SAM BUCKLEY BAND**, LEVEL ONE 3.30PM **BECCY COLE & THE SISTERS OF TWANG**
- SHAW'S BAY HOTEL, BALLINA, 3PM **PISTOL WHIP**
- ELTHAM HOTEL 4PM **ROD MURRAY DUO**
- NORTHERN RIVERS CONSERVATORIUM, LISMORE, 5PM **DORETTA BALKIZAS AND BRIELEY CUTTING**
- UKI MARKET 8AM **COSMICOS**
- CLUB TWEED 1PM **RHYDIAN LEWIS + ROSE POWELL**

MONDAY 16

- RAILWAY HOTEL, BYRON BAY, **GUY KACHEL**
- BEACH HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 6PM **HARRY NICHOLS**
- THE NORTHERN, BYRON BAY 6PM **JEROME WILLIAMS**, 8PM **DUELLING PIANO**, 9PM **DJ DAVI**
- LENNOX HOTEL 9PM **PINK ZINC**

TUESDAY 17

- RAILWAY HOTEL, BYRON BAY, **SAM BUCKLEY**
- BEACH HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 6PM **LEIGH JAMES**
- THE NORTHERN, BYRON BAY, 6PM **MARSHALL OKELL**, 8PM **DUELLING PIANOS**, 9PM **DJ ALICE Q**

WEDNESDAY 18

- RAILWAY HOTEL, BYRON BAY, **MATTHEW ARMITAGE**
- BEACH HOTEL, BYRON BAY, 6PM **TAHLIA MATHESON**
- THE NORTHERN, BYRON BAY, 6PM **INO PIO**, 8PM **DUELLING PIANOS**, 9PM **DJ RENEE SIMONE**
- THE PADDOCK PROJECT, MULLUMBIMBY, 4PM **CURRY JAM**
- OTTLIES, MULLUMBIMBY, 6PM **MONDO JAZZ CATS**
- SHAW'S BAY HOTEL, BALLINA, 3PM **PRETTY VACANT**

More feeling, less frenzy

Why **Sunset Assembly** matters right now – in a culture obsessed with hustle and bustle and the next big drop, Sunset Assembly offers a quiet rebellion. It doesn't shout for attention – it slows you down and invites you back into your body. Slowly.

Landing at **The Citadel** in **Murwillumbah** on **Friday, 20 February**, Sunset Assembly is equal parts a community DIY party and a shared ritual.

Doors open in daylight and unfold gently into night, guided by music that values space, warmth, and emotional resonance over excess. Think dub, downtempo, Balearic, soul, ambient and organic house – sounds that shimmer rather than demand.

The setting plays a starring role. An acoustically rich art deco room, a large wooden dance floor worn smooth by history, limited capacity and an atmosphere that encourages eye contact over phone screens.

This is a room designed for listening as much as moving. Curated for this edition is an all-female guest DJ line up of deeply respected selectors: **Afrodisea**, **Taz Miller** and **Lisa** join **Lord Sut**.

Each brings decades of musical devotion and a willingness to play beyond genre, geography and expectation. The result is a dance floor that feels guided, not driven – communal rather than chaotic.

Add Japanese food by **OKI**, a full bar, an outdoor space to cool off, and a share of profits supporting the Murwillumbah Community Centre, and Sunset Assembly becomes something more enduring than a night out. It's a reminder that music can still be generous, inclusive, and nourishing.

In uncertain times, Sunset Assembly doesn't promise escape. It offers connection.

Settle in. Breathe out. Move slowly.

Presented by Sensory Blender on Friday, 20 February from 4pm at The Citadel, Murwillumbah. Tickets from thecitadel.com.au.

PALACE CINEMAS
 BYRON BAY - BALLINA FAIR

SESSION TIMES
 THURSDAY FEBRUARY 12
 TO WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 18

COMING SOON
FACHAM HALL

NOW SHOWING

SCAN TO BOOK ONLINE

PALACE BYRON BAY

SPECIAL SCREENINGS

JIMPA (CTC) GOLDEN CLUB PREVIEW
 Fri: 1:00PM

PILLION (R18+) SNEAK PREVIEW
 Sat, Sun: 3:45PM

ROYAL OPERA: LA TRAVIATA (CTC)
 Sun: 1:00PM, Wed: 11:00AM

SCREAM (30TH ANNIVERSARY) (CTC) FRIGHT NIGHT
 Fri: 8:30PM

FAMILY FILMS

LITTLE WONDER BEAR (PG) NFI
 Sat, Sun: 11:10AM

ZOOPTOIA 2 (PG)
 Daily: 10:50AM

ALL FILMS

"WUTHERING HEIGHTS" (M) NFI
 Daily: 11:00AM, 1:40PM, 3:20PM, 4:20PM, 6:00PM, 7:00PM, 8:30PM

AVATAR: FIRE AND ASH (2D) (M)
 Daily: 11:30AM

BLUE MOON (M)
 Thurs, Fri, Mon, Tues: 10:50AM, 4:00PM
 Sat, Wed: 4:00PM, Sun: 6:10PM

CRIME 101 (M) NFI
 Daily: 11:00AM, 1:45PM, 4:30PM, 7:15PM

HAMNET (M)
 Daily: 1:15PM, 3:20PM, 6:10PM

IRON LUNG (MA15+) NFI
 Thurs: 3:45PM, 8:40PM, Fri: 3:20PM, 8:40PM, Sat, Sun:

8:40PM, Mon, Tues, Wed: 3:30PM, 8:40PM

IS THIS THING ON? (M) NFI
 Thurs: 10:45AM, 2:00PM, 6:00PM, Fri, Mon, Tues, Wed: 10:45AM, 2:00PM, 6:00PM, 8:40PM, Sat, Sun: 10:45AM, 2:00PM, 6:00PM, 8:20PM

IT WAS JUST AN ACCIDENT (M)
 Daily: 1:10PM

MARTY SUPREME (M)
 Thurs: 11:00AM, 1:00PM, 4:00PM, 7:30PM, Fri: 11:00AM, 1:00PM, 4:30PM, 7:45PM, Sat, Mon, Tues: 11:00AM, 1:00PM, 4:30PM, 7:30PM, Sun, Wed: 11:00AM, 4:30PM, 7:30PM

SEND HELP (MA15+) NFI
 Daily: 6:10PM

SHELTER (M)
 Daily: 6:20PM

SOMEBODY TO LOVE (M)
 Daily except Thurs, Sat: 10:45AM, Thurs: 11:10AM, Sat: 10:45AM, 6:15PM

SONG SUNG BLUE (M)
 Thurs: 1:15PM, 8:30PM, Fri: 6:00PM, Sat, Sun: 12:50PM, 8:30PM, Mon, Tues, Wed: 12:50PM, 6:00PM, 8:30PM

THE HOUSEMAID (MA15+) NFI
 Daily except Thurs: 3:45PM, 8:30PM, Thurs: 4:30PM, 8:30PM

THE SECRET AGENT (MA15+) NFI
 Daily: 10:45AM

WHISTLE (MA15+) NFI
 Daily: 1:50PM, 4:00PM, 8:40PM

BALLINA FAIR CINEMAS

"WUTHERING HEIGHTS" (M) NFI
 Daily: 10:15AM, 1:00PM, 3:45PM, 6:30PM

CRIME 101 (M) NFI
 Thurs, Mon, Tues, Wed: 12:50PM, 3:30PM, 6:30PM, Fri: 12:50PM, 3:30PM, 6:45PM, Sat, Sun: 1:50PM, 3:45PM, 6:45PM

HAMNET (M)
 Daily except Sat, Sun: 10:15AM, Sat, Sun: 10:00AM

LITTLE WONDER BEAR (PG) NFI
 Sat, Sun: 12:00PM

MARTY SUPREME (M)
 Daily except Sat, Sun: 1:00PM, Sat, Sun: 12:45PM

SCREAM (30TH ANNIVERSARY) (CTC) NFI
 Fri: 7:00PM

SHELTER (M)
 Daily except Sat, Sun: 4:10PM, Sat, Sun: 4:30PM

SONG SUNG BLUE (M)
 Daily except Sat, Sun: 10:15AM, Sat, Sun: 6:45PM

THE HOUSEMAID (MA15+) NFI
 Thurs, Mon, Tues, Wed: 6:20PM

ZOOPTOIA 2 (PG)
 Sat, Sun: 9:45AM

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.

CLASSIFIEDS THAT WORK ALL WEEK!

Echo Classies also appear online:
www.echo.net.au/classified-ads

Echo

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PUBLIC NOTICES

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL is proposing to lease the following sections of road reserve to a private landowner for advertising signage:

* 12sqm on the corner of Ewingsdale Road and Harvest Boulevard (Part Lot 58 DP 1299678);

* 3sqm on Harvest Boulevard (Lot 55 DP 1299678)

In accordance with Section 154 of the Roads Act 1993, interested parties are invited to make submissions about this proposal within 28 days.

Submissions close 11 March 2026. For more information go to byron.nsw.gov.au/Public-Notices

SOUL SONG

Community-led uplifting devotional singing and short meditation. 1st and 3rd Sunday 10am Scout Hall Bangalow. 0402052457

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 Providore 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

AGMs

The Brunswick Heads and Billinudgel RSL sub-branch AGM

will be held at 5pm Wednesday 18th February at the Brunswick RSL Hall. New member are welcome to attend.

DEATH NOTICES

LEO JAMES MCDONALD



Passed away peacefully:
1 February 2026

aged 72 years, at Byron Bay Hospital. Dearly loved partner of Vika, beloved father of Lisa, Tracy, Cameron, and Jessica. Cherished grandfather to Jenna, Bailey, Jayden, Grace, Brooklyn, Jemima, Noah, and Aylah.

There will be a memorial service to celebrate his life on Sunday 15th February at 2pm at CWA Brunswick Heads, cnr Booyun and Park St, Brunswick Heads NSW 2483 Please RSVP vika.metta@gmail.com

At peace. All is one.

FUNERAL NOTICES

Rest in Peace
Geoff Langford
1954 - 2026 - 71 years old



Dearly loved husband of Stephanie Irvin and devoted father to Jahria and Ben Langford. Cherished grandfather to Beau Langford.

It is with heavy hearts, and mixed emotions, that we announce the passing of Geoff Langford.

A private farewell at the home he built in Myocum will be held, followed by aqua cremation. Geoff's ashes will be scattered at a later date in Lake Macquarie, where he spent many happy years sailing.

Tiare Funerals
www.tiarefunerals.com.au

HEALTH

KINESIOLOGY

Clear subconscious sabotages. Reprogram patterns and beliefs. Restore vibrancy and physical health. De-stress. 0403125506

SANDRA DAVEY, Reg. Pract.

HYPNOSIS & EFT

Simple and effective solutions. Anxiety, Cravings, Fears & Trauma. **Maureen Bracken 0402205352**

HYPNOSIS & NLP

Over 30 years of experience WendyPurdey.com. Ph 0497 090 233

Relationship and Sexuality Sessions

Ending Our Human Suffering and Living the Lives That We Truly Want

Talks with Toni Makas

Toni Makas trained as a psychologist. He is a researcher and a relationship, embodiment-practice, and non-duality teacher. He has been working for over 30 years investigating the root cause of human suffering, and human potential. His work draws on, and engages with, the research and teachings of all leading thinkers and contributors to this body of human knowledge. His revolutionary discoveries and synthesis of knowledge and experience are now being offered as part of these talks.

Suffolk Park Hall - Thursday 19th February 2026, 4.30pm-6pm
Suffolk Park Hall - Saturday 21st February 2026, 4.30pm-6pm
Cost: \$40 Cash

Mindfulness @ Work

Bring greater focus, clarity and calm into your workplace.

Certified Mindfulness Educator Paul Bibby
0401 926 090

Body Based Psychotherapy Somatic Practice

Julie Wells
Anne Goslett (nee Mannix)

Dip.Som.Psych, Clinical PACFA Reg. Individual and Couple Therapy Supervision and Coaching

(02) 6685 5185
9 Fletcher St, Byron Bay

TREE SERVICES

LEAF IT TO US - Tree Care Specialists
Local, qualified, insured, free quotes. Big to small we enjoy it all - 0402487213

SUMMERLAND TREE SERVICES

• Arborist • 15" Wood Chipper • Stump Grinder • Fully Insured

Byron Bay & Surrounding Areas
6681 3140
Mobile 0417 698 227

HART TREE SERVICES

20 years local experience
• 19 inch chipper • Stump grinding
• Cherry picker • Crane truck • Bob Cat

Fully insured • Free quotes
0427 347380



TRADEWORK

Septic Waste Removal Summerland Environmental The Liquid Waste Specialists!

• Septic tank cleaning
• Grease trap servicing
• Oily Liquids
• Portable toilet hire
• 24 hour service
6687 2880

FOR SALE

GOLF CLUBS

plus new golf bag, surfboard, pushbikes, plumbing tools \$neg. Ph 0403658860

GARAGE SALES

Tip Runs & Rubbish Removal

0408 210 772

WANTED

TREE FERNS
Any shape, size. Royalties paid. Ongoing supply needed. 0414904396

LP RECORDS: good condition, no op shop crap! Matt 0401955052

MOTOR VEHICLES

VW POLO TSi 2013 f/f Sat Nav, Blu/T, CD, FSH, rego+CTP Dec 2026 One lady owner, 129K. \$4500 ono. 0459577118

CARAVANS

CARAVANS
We buy, sell & consign. All makes & models. 0408 758 688

BUSINESS FOR SALE

MOBILE COFFEE VAN
FULLY EQUIPPED 10 yrs est. business at local rest stop. Ph 0433704686 or Melissa 0404545375

TO LET

LOCAL REMOVAL
& backloads to Brisbane. Friendly, with 10 years local exp. 0409917646

BALLINA SELF-STORAGE UNITS
Secure. From \$22p/w. Ranging from 10-44 m3. Across 3 locations. 66867011

TO LEASE

BYRON ind. 2nd floor w/house space for long lease. 3 rooms, large floorspace + lounge area, balcony, car space. \$675 pw. For more info please txt 0424906036

OFFICE/WORKSPACE 42sqm \$350pw Billinudgel. Ph Lifestyle Group 66851206

POSITIONS VACANT

PRIVATE MODELLING, young women 18-25yo. Express your naked beauty artistically in complete privacy/confidence, good pay. Andrew. Ph 0431393320

CLEANING POSITION. Must have eye for detail, be reliable and have own vehicle. 12 months minimum. Email: eyefordetailbyronbay@gmail.com

MATURE HOUSE CLEANER

4hrs weekly. Lovely Ballina West home. 0413743640

ADMIN/ RECEPTIONIST

wanted for busy, fun Byron Bay law firm. Full time, plenty of opportunity. Salary negotiable. Please send resume to sue@bvk.com.au

KITCHENHAND needed: The Other Joint. Email resume: mullum@otherjoint.com

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

WORK WANTED

WORDPRESS WEBSITE CREATION
Fair rates info@wordpressit.com.au

1 or 2 MEN + UTE

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

HANDYMAN/CARPENTER



Renovations, Decks, Fencing, Landscaping, odd jobs. Reliable, honest and hardworking local 20 years experience in construction. \$75 ph free quote.

Call Red 0433 547 162

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

NOW RECRUITING

Volunteer with **Marine Rescue Cape Byron** and help save lives on the water

Find out more: mrns.com.au/join



COMMUNITY HOT BRUNCH FREE

FIRST SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH

• Sausage sizzle • Hot dogs • Sandwiches
• Coffee & tea • Fruit Salad

EVERYONE WELCOME

Come one come all and join us in a meal or just a chat. Takeaway most welcome: COVID safe rules apply. Frozen takeaway meals now available.

10am to 12pm
In the Ballina Presbyterian Hall

Corner of Cherry & Crane. Just behind the Presbyterian Church.



Mullumbimby & District Neighbourhood Centre
Connecting the Byron Shire Community

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

- Kitchen Hands -
- Retail Assistants -
- Drivers and Co-driver -
- Community Support Assistants -

MDNC is in need of dedicated volunteers to be part of a big loving family. All skill sets welcome.

Contact Sylvia - Volunteer Coordinator Mon-Fri 6684 1286

ANIMAL LOVERS!!

Volunteer to make a real difference to neglected, abused & unwanted farmed animals. Regularly or occasionally. Help with animal care, building, admin, grant writing, transport.

volunteer@owlandpusycat.org.au

www.owlandpusycat.org.au

TUITION

FUN NEW TEEN a capella group starts 10 Feb. Weekly adult group and private tuition avail. Ph Maddy 0437274354

Adobe Tutoring

Experienced Professional Trainer

- Photoshop
- Indesign
- Illustrator

contact@thinkblinkdesign.com
www.thinkblinkdesign.com

BIRTHDAYS

Happy Birthday Zoe
Keep dancing :)

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FELIX. LOVE PIPIN AND THE REST OF THE FAMILY XX

HAPPY BIRTHDAY COREN
Love Cous Cous and the rest of the family Xx

Go Shawty it's your birthday!!
Happy 21st Eva

You're still our favourite love Mum & Dad xx

PETS

PET SITTER AVAILABLE

Kind, confident animal carer available for your four-legged fur baby. References available. Call Pawla on 0415340744

Byron Dog Rescue (CAWI)

HAZEL

Meet Hazel
Cattle X Female 4 years
Looking for love, just wants to chill and hang out with you.
Seriously snuggly, professional ball player! Social with dogs but best suited as only dog in home.

M/C: 953010004574864
Call Julia on 0458 461 935 or apply via byrondogrescue.org

CHARLIE

Charlie is a 5-year-old, Jack Russell x Pug. She is a sweet natured little dog, who is timid at first, but warms up to you once she gets to know you. She will need a home with good fencing and someone who is home a lot.

MC #953010004925484
Please fill out an expression of interest below:
www.friendsofthepound.com/adoption-expression-of-interest/
For more information on Charlie please email Tracy: johnsontracy832@gmail.com

Visit friendsofthepound.com to view other dogs and cats looking for a home. ABN 83 126 970 338

SABRINA

Meet Sabrina, a ten-month-old beauty with sleek black fur and striking green eyes. Affectionate, confident and people-obsessed, she loves attention and happily asks for it with head bumps, nuzzles and loud purrs. Playful and curious with a touch of mischief, Sabrina's favourite spot is right beside you. She'd thrive in a home full of interaction and cuddles. If you want a cat who adores being part of everything, Sabrina is ready to meet you.

Mandatory Re-homing #R251 00 00 60

NRAS
Northern Rivers Animal Services
T: 6681 1860 E: shelter@nras.org.au
W: www.nras.org.au

Who gives a Cluck?

This boy (#48) has been looking for a home for a couple of months now. He's with foster carers but he's patiently waiting for a small flock of girls to care for & protect. He has been health checked, wormed, and lice/mite protection. He has a lovely temperament and we help to transition him and your flock to be together.

Here's the link to adopt him.
www.whogivesacluck.org/shop/roosters-to-adopt/
[@whogivesacluck](http://whogivesacluck.org)

SALEM

Salem is a fluffy tailed girl who is looking for a quiet home & to be a loyal companion. Prepared to share her love of her toy mouse, Salem is also happy to share smooches once she gets to know you. Salem has experienced other cats & dogs.

To meet Salem & 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**

Like us on Facebook!
AWL NSW Rehoming Organisation
Number: R251000222

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

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.

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SUN, MOON & TIDES - TIMES FOR NEXT 3 WEEKS

DATE (Feb / Mar)	DAY / MOON PHASE	SUN RISE / SET	MOON RISE / SET	HIGH TIDES, height (m)	LOW TIDES, height (m)
11	W	6:24 19:35	0:21 14:56	04:47 1:35 16:20 0:96	11:39 0:75 22:15 0:58
12	TH	6:25 19:34	1:06 15:51	05:55 1:41 17:51 0:98	12:48 0:67 23:30 0:55
13	F	6:26 19:33	1:56 16:42	06:49 1:49 18:54 1:03	13:37 0:59
14	SA	6:26 19:33	2:51 17:29	07:35 1:58 19:41 1:11	00:30 0:49 14:15 0:51
15	SU	6:27 19:32	3:50 18:12	08:16 1:66 20:21 1:18	01:17 0:42 14:47 0:44
16	M	6:28 19:31	4:50 18:50	08:54 1:73 20:59 1:26	01:58 0:34 15:18 0:38
17	TU	6:29 19:30	5:51 19:24	09:30 1:77 21:36 1:33	02:36 0:28 15:49 0:33
18	W	6:29 19:29	6:52 19:56	10:04 1:79 22:15 1:40	03:15 0:24 16:20 0:28
19	TH	6:30 19:28	7:52 20:26	10:38 1:77 22:55 1:46	03:55 0:24 16:52 0:26
20	F	6:31 19:27	8:53 20:57	11:13 1:70 23:36 1:51	04:37 0:27 17:24 0:25
21	SA	6:32 19:26	9:55 21:30	11:47 1:60	05:22 0:34 17:58 0:27
22	SU	6:32 19:25	11:00 22:06	00:21 1:53 12:24 1:46	06:13 0:44 18:33 0:32
23	M	6:33 19:24	12:07 22:48	01:10 1:53 13:07 1:30	07:12 0:55 19:15 0:38
24	TU	6:34 19:24	13:16 23:36	02:10 1:52 14:03 1:15	08:30 0:64 20:07 0:45
25	W	6:34 19:23	14:24 23:36	03:26 1:52 15:25 1:03	10:12 0:67 21:20 0:50
26	TH	6:35 19:22	15:29 23:33	04:52 1:56 17:09 1:01	11:51 0:61 22:47 0:50
27	F	6:36 19:21	16:26 23:36	06:08 1:64 18:32 1:09	13:01 0:51
28	SA	6:36 19:19	17:16 24:44	07:09 1:73 19:30 1:19	00:05 0:43 13:51 0:42
1	SU	6:37 19:18	17:58 25:19	08:00 1:80 20:19 1:29	01:07 0:35 14:32 0:35
2	M	6:38 19:17	18:35 26:02	08:45 1:83 21:02 1:38	01:58 0:28 15:08 0:30
3	TU	6:38 19:16	19:07 26:42	09:24 1:81 21:42 1:45	02:43 0:24 15:41 0:28
4	W	6:39 19:15	19:37 27:02	10:00 1:76 22:19 1:49	03:25 0:25 16:11 0:28

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

On The Horizon

DEADLINE NOON FRIDAY

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

Holi - festival of colour, women and girls community event

Join Together She Thrives for a joyful Holi celebration at Banner Park, Brunswick Heads on Sunday, 1 March from 10am to 11am. This free community event is for women and girls, with children up to eight years welcome. Come together to throw colour, dance, laugh and celebrate connection in a safe, inclusive space. Please wear a white T-shirt and sunglasses and be ready to get colourful. Registration is essential for both women and children. For more visit www.togethershethrives.org.au.

Drill Hall Film Society screening

The next Drill Hall Film Society film, *A Matter Of Life And Death*, will be screened Wednesday, 18 February, from 7pm. Starring David Niven and made in 1946, this is another classic from Powell and Pressburger and is a thoroughly mischievous look at what can lie between life and death. It is set in the immediate post-WWII era so, of course, it involves a dashing RAF Squadron Leader (Niven) who leaps from his burning plane into the English Channel but before he does, he has a riveting radio conversation with a North American radio operator and of course they fall instantly in love! All bookings and enquiries to drillhallfilmsociety@gmail.com Membership for the coming year is available and guests are always welcome.

Tennis Club AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the Riverside Tennis Club, Mullumbimby will be held Tuesday, 24 February from 9.30 am at the clubhouse.

Friends of Libraries

Friends of Libraries (FOL) are now collecting books for next year's Book Fair. Any books both clean and in good condition will be gratefully accepted, highlighting the need for children's books, young adults, art, fiction, non-fiction, history, and sport, to name a few. Book drop-off will take place on the first Monday of each month between 9 and 10am, until the Book Fair in July, 2026 at the Byron Bay Self Storage Shed 8-10 Tasman Way, Byron Arts & Industry Estate. Donated books will be collected by a FOL member at the storage shed gate. Contact: Janene Jarvis 0407 855 022 if unable to deliver books or for any other queries.

BV VIEW Club

The Brunswick Valley VIEW Club starts the year with the monthly luncheon and annual general meeting on Thursday, 12 February at 11am. The venue is Brunswick Heads Bowling Club. During the year, guest speakers are a feature of the luncheons. Come along at 10.30am for a cuppa and friendship before the meeting. The VIEW club supports eight students in The Smith Family's Learning for Life project, which supports thousands of children with their education throughout Australia. Come and join us! For more info: President Rita Strong 0424 852 679 or thestrongs@bigpond.com.

Mullumbimby CWA

The first meeting for Mullumbimby branch of the Country Women's Association of NSW is on Wednesday, 11 February at 10am at the CWA rooms in Tincogan Street. All welcome. Bring your ideas for fundraising this year. Bring a plate for a light lunch following the meeting. For more information: cwamullum@gmail.com or call 66847 282.

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Deadline: For additions and changes is **12pm Friday**
Line ads: \$99 for 3 months or \$340 for 1 year prepaid
Display ads: \$70 per week for colour display ad.
 Minimum 8 week booking 4 weeks prepaid.
 Please supply display ads 85mm wide, 38mm high.
 New ads will be placed at end of section.
Contact: 6684 1777 or adcop@echo.net.au



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Occupying a freehold 1.609 hectares (3.97 acres), this scenic escarpment block is a haven for nature lovers and those seeking space and tranquility without sacrificing accessibility. The outlook from the top captures the essence of coastal hinterland living, combining lush foliage, native bushland, and glimpses of the distant sea – all within a short distance of Cabarita Beach and Hastings Point villages.

The property already features a studio shed powered by a 10 kW off-grid solar system and supported by tank water, making it ideal as an instant weekend retreat while you plan your future home (STCA).



Well-formed access tracks, cleared pads, and thoughtfully designed house plans specifically tailored to the site mean much of the groundwork has already been done.

For those with a love of the outdoors, this location speaks for itself. Ride your horse just 1.7 km from the paddock gate directly to the beach and along the surf, or

explore nearby equestrian and sporting venues and community clubs. From here, it's only 2.5 km to Hastings Point, 3.4 km to Cabarita Headland, and an easy 25.5 km to the Gold Coast International Airport – perfectly balancing coastal seclusion with urban convenience.

Whether you envision a peaceful

weekender or a visionary future build, this property promises endless potential in an inspiring, elevated setting. With our vendors ready to move, now is the time to act – contact your rural sales agent Brad Franks on 0404 051 111 to secure your inspection and experience this exceptional opportunity firsthand.



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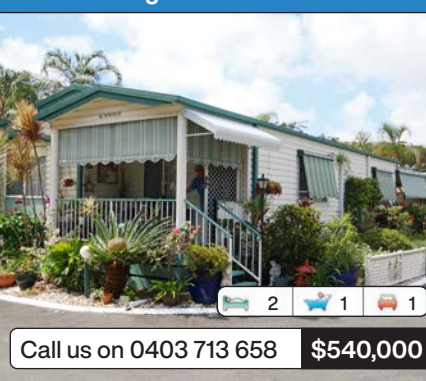


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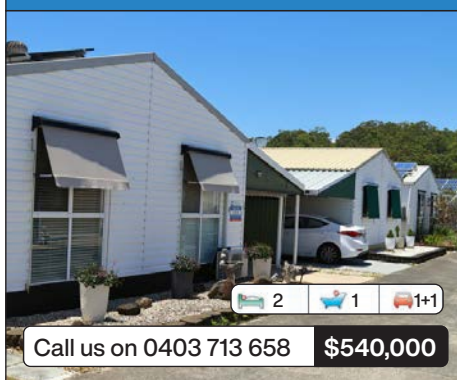
Tweed Broadwater – Tweed Heads South



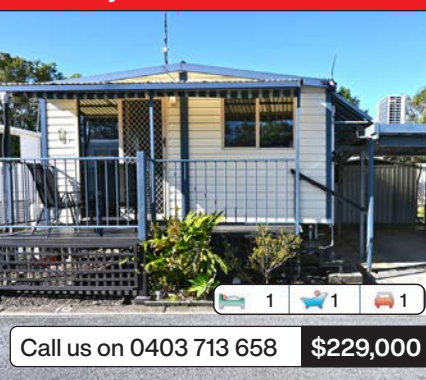
Palms Village - Tweed Heads South



Banksia Waters - Tweed Heads West



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AUCTION

"Nutmac Farm" via Eureka

- Over 90 acres of Eureka Plateau's finest agricultural land
- Attractive brick family home on level landscaped house paddock with pool
- Huge dam for irrigation, recreation and wildlife habitat
- Amazing northerly vistas to the mountains from second homesite
- Rich grazing land happily combined with productive orchard income
- Just minutes to Bangalow Village and Byron's amazing coastline

■ We bring the *whole* team

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View
Saturday 11-11.30am
1050 Lismore Road, Nashua

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

raywhiteruralbangalow.com.au



AUCTION

Prime 90 Acre Farm at Federal

- Rich elevated hinterland grazing and orchard country
- Big family residence offering amazing rural valley panoramas
- Pockets of unspoilt rainforest surround stunning swimming holes on Stony Ck
- Private country lane location

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AUCTION

Deceased Estate Sale - Charming Family Cottage

- Entry level opportunity into Byron Hinterland's most iconic town
- Attractive light filled home offering enormous character and appeal
- Peace and privacy in a quiet cul-de-sac position, backing onto leafy reserve
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2 PALM PLACE, BYRON BAY

Spacious and Private Resort Style Home

4 bedrooms 2 living areas 3 bathrooms 2 cars 650M²

- Renovated, spacious layout with multiple living areas, office/study options and generous bedrooms
- Resort-style outdoor living with covered alfresco area and large saltwater pool
- North-east aspect providing plenty of natural light and the lush gardens provide complete privacy
- Park-front position in a tightly held Byron Bay pocket, close to beaches and town

ON SITE AUCTION | Sat 14th Feb 11am
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 Sat 14th February 10:30 - 11am



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PRICE | \$1.65M - \$1.7M
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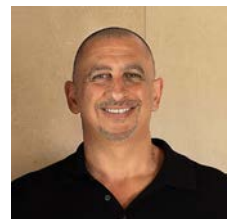
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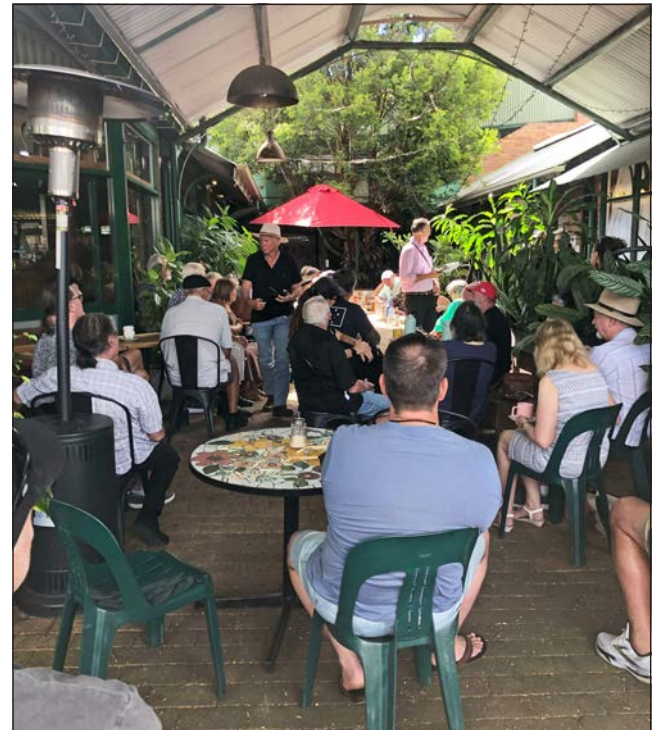
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The fact that a One Nation meeting shut down Lulu's Cafe in Mullumbimby last Saturday, 7 February, left some of their customers reeling. Not only could they not get their desperately needed coffees and chai teas, but in some cases they were chased down the street by overenthusiastic One Nation supporters who were demanding their right to free speech! *The Echo* contacted Lulu's for comment but received no free coffees or masks (or comment) in response. Photo supplied



Unsurprisingly it was lobby group Coal Australia who supplied almost all of the funding to 'Australians for Prosperity' to run attack ad campaigns on Labor, Greens and teal candidates at the last federal election according to disclosures made to the Australian Electoral Commission.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■

The Onion says, 'Moltbook, a Reddit-style social network where AI agents communicate exclusively amongst themselves without the need for humans, has taken the tech world by storm, with as many as 1.5 millions bots using the service to chat about the work they're doing and the problems they've solved.'

■ ■ ■ ■ ■

The NSW Upper House has rightly expressed deep concern over ICE's Minnesota

operations. 'It's shocking to see this warm and generous community under siege by their own government,' said Cate Faehrmann MLC.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Apparently Trump thinks you should smile when talking about paedophiles. On 4 February he scolded 'CNN reporter Kaitlan Collins for not smiling as she asks about survivors of Epstein's abuse,' according to *The Guardian*.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■

'Crikey went along to the Melbourne cancelled-then-uncancelled premiere of Pauline Hanson's cartoon propaganda flick *A Super Progressive Movie*. As Alex Zucco and Emily Grace report, it was everything you might expect: a tired, racist, transphobic and misogynistic critique of "woke" leftism - but it had its target audience in stitches.'

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