

HERALD

The Bangalow

FREE March 2018

Art for art's sake



Exit stage right

Karen, Ruth and Jack Ryan in their Barebones Art Space.

Photo: Sue Gow

One of the most enchanting and, indeed exciting, things about small country towns like Bangalow is the interaction between all sorts of folk, from all walks of life. Unlike big cities, where people tend to keep to themselves – often to avoid conflict or

unnecessary attention – people in regional areas are more likely to rely on relationships with, and support from, neighbours.

And, in most towns there are certain 'go to' people who combine a love of the area with a strong and active desire to contribute
(continued page 4)

**Watermelon
gazpacho**
page 16



Your guide to what's going on in 2479 for March.

Bangalow Writer's Group

The group meets on the first Thursday of each month, next meeting is **1 March** at the Bangalow Scout Hall at 9.15am. Everyone has a story inside them. Come along and share yours. All welcome. Contact June at 6687 1004 or David at 0400 152 006.

ABC Friends

Newly elected State President of the ABC Friends, Professor Ed Davis AM, will be speaking at a meeting from 2 to 4pm on **Sunday, 4 March** at the Bangalow Bowling Club.

Professor Davis, Emeritus Professor in the Faculty of Business and Economics at Macquarie University, is visiting

the Northern Rivers to discuss issues facing the ABC, such as funding cuts and threats to its independence.

"The role of the Friends is as vital as ever. There is an ever-present need to press government and opposition political parties for adequate funding for the ABC and SBS," Professor Davis said. "We are all the poorer when the ABC is diminished."

Mr Peter Dickson, President of ABC Friends Northern Rivers, said members appreciated the contribution the ABC makes to Australian society despite attempts from sections of government and media to make the ABC 'go quietly'.

To attend, please phone Jennie on 6687 9167 or email hicksanddickson@gmail.com.

ADFAS

Monday, 5 March kicks off the 2018 Australian Decorative and

Fine Arts Societies (ADFAS) calendar for Byron Bay and Districts. We will be presenting eight evening lectures through the year for anyone interested in arts, history and culture.

The first lecture is presented by Dr Christopher de Hamel who has studied medieval manuscripts since 1963 and lectured about them extensively.

This month's presentation is on Medieval Manuscripts in Australasia. There are (perhaps surprisingly) about 260 original medieval illuminated manuscripts in Australian libraries, and well over 100 in New Zealand. This is a lavishly illustrated introductory tour of what are the oldest books in Australasia, how they got here, and why they matter.

ADFAS is held at the A&I Hall, Bangalow, at 6.30pm. Doors open at 6pm for a welcome drink. All welcome. For information go to www.adfas.org.au.

[org.au/societies/new-south-wales-act/byron-bay/](http://www.adfas.org.au/societies/new-south-wales-act/byron-bay/)

Bangalow Garden Club

At the next meeting on **Wednesday, 7 March** at 1.30pm in the Moller Pavilion the guest speaker's topic will be heliconias. The March Saturday Social Visit will be to the garden of Margaret and Robbie Orr in Wollongbar. Steven Wedd's lovely dahlias were displayed at Heritage House after the February meeting and much admired there.

Red Cross

Please join us at our fund-raising street stall – usual treats – on Bangalow's main street, from 8.30am on **Friday, 9 March**.

Byron Music Society

Byron Music Society's next concert, 'Lullabies for Zander' by Muses Trio, features the

Spotlight: Family celebrations for venerable Bangalow elder Jan Hulbert

On February 15, family and friends of respected local identity Jan Hulbert, nee Jarrett, gathered to celebrate her 80th birthday. Of her four children, sons Alan and Noel travelled down from Queensland, while Owen and Wendy live locally. Seven of her 10 grandchildren as well as other relatives and countless friends also took part in the various celebrations.

Jan, who has lived overlooking the Bay at St Helena for 44 years, is descended from Walter and Eliza Jarrett, who bought land at Talofa in 1907. Six Jarrett generations have now lived in the neighbourhood and, remarkably, the Talofa farm is still in the family today.

Jan is a well-known sight, purring around the neighbourhood in her 1964 Holden beige and white station wagon (complete with hand-made matching gingham curtains on the rear windows), and no visit to the monthly Bangalow Markets is complete without buying a cup of tea and homemade scones from her at the Moller Pavilion.

But what she's probably best known for is her participation in countless committees, from the current Guidance Group to the venerable Parks Trust. In none of these is she 'backward in coming forward' with her point of view.

Of the countless community achievements in her long life, Jan is proud of two results in particular. "In 1986, Byron Shire Council wanted to knock down the A&I Hall. The Parks Trust got hold of a heritage architect and we got it saved and restored. That was



Bangalow legend, Jan Hulbert, with her Holden chariot. One of Jan's proudest achievements was receiving an RSL ANZAC of the Year medal. The jewel in Jan's crown of community-based projects – the restoration of the A&I. The work in progress in 1994, Jan with Jeff Lovett.



a great achievement.

"It was re-opened on 11 June 1994 after Council was awarded an Arts Council grant and gave us \$220,000 for the hall's restoration."

A ball to celebrate was held in the A&I on that night, attracting 700 people.

In 2000 Jan was honoured to have been awarded an RSL ANZAC the Year medal for "exceptional service to the Australian community, demonstrating compassion, endurance and dedication", reflecting the story of her life. Jan travelled to Government House for the presentation, "a wonderful thing, actually".

Christobel Munson

world premiere of a piece (trio) inspired by Byron Bay. The music was proudly commissioned by a local arts lover and supporter, and written by Natalie Williams.

The concert will be preceded by Byron Music Society's 2018 concert series launch, a free event at Byron Theatre on **Sunday, 11 March** at 1.30pm.

Boomerang Bags Sewing Bee

Sewing bees are held on the fourth Saturday of each month. The next meeting is at the BPS Hall from 3–5pm on **Saturday, 24 March**.

Bring along scissors, pins, sewing chalk and a sewing machine if you have one. No sewing experience necessary, just enthusiasm to join a great community project.

If you can't make it, donations of old fabric are appreciated.

For enquiries call Andi on 0438 924 609 or check Facebook: Boomerang Bags Bangalow.

Bangalow Koalas

On **Saturday, 24 March** at 9am Bangalow Koalas, in conjunction with Byron Shire Council, are planting 1400 koala trees as part of our planned koala corridor on the western edge of town. This will

Bangalow Poultry Club

The Club will meet on **Sunday, 11 March** at 2pm in the poultry pavilion in the Showgrounds. Anyone interested in exhibiting and breeding poultry of all breeds, including waterfowl, is welcome to come along. There will be birds there for discussion; this is a great way to learn about different breeds.

Champion Black Leghorn Cockerel Bantam, winner of the 2017 National Titles in Wyong. Photo: Hec McKenzie



be at Hilary Herrmann's farm at 49 Tristania Street Bangalow.

For more details contact Linda Sparrow on 0411 491 991, 6687 2760 or twodogsmedia@optusnet.com.au or check out Bangalow Koalas Facebook site.

coming later...

Wine tasting

The Cellar Bangalow is holding a wine tasting event at Heritage House and Museum on **Wednesday, 11 April** from

5.30 to 7pm. Caroline Brown will be introducing the luxe Brown Brothers 'Patricia' wine range. Tickets are \$15 per head and include nibbles and five different wine samples. Only limited spaces available. Call Liette or Pippa 6687 1262 to reserve your spot.



Bangalow Poultry Club

A busy year is planned for the 2018 season, with the Northern Rivers Pure Breed Poultry Auction being held on **15 April** and the Bangalow Poultry Annual Exhibition scheduled for **26 May**. Please add these dates to your calendar for a 'must see and do' as they guarantee a good day out.

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Courage needed for a fresh start

February 2017 was drenched in unseasonable humidity: dripping days and nights of fitful sleep, punctuated by feverish dreams and the maddening buzz of that one elusive mosquito.

We should be able to slow down on days such as these, but the relentless pace of modern life and the pressures to survive make that a luxury few can afford, even in affluent Bangalow.

The climate is changing – only the most wilfully purblind would deny that. Change is inevitable and generally healthy, and our region is blessed with clear-sighted renewable energy activists, solar advocates and experts in carbon capture. Our kids are back at school, a change for them that is radical and, we hope, positive.

In and around Bangalow there are developments proposed that are neither beneficial to the environment, the landscape nor the fabric of the community. Bangalow is changing demographically. More and more people want to live here, including talented youngsters such as designer Mimi Holvast.

Our 'institutions' are adapting: the Bowlo is seeking to attract board members in their 20s and 30s; the CWA, at 70, is adapting to the changing needs of society.

This magazine has seen many changes in the past year. The latest, sadly, is my departure as editor. Life for all of us is not getting any more affordable; for many 'oldies' this can be seriously uncomfortable. I've been fortunate enough to find gainful employment elsewhere, and the chance to work for positive change in a bigger arena. I'm grateful for the support the community has shown me.

Like all our community organisations, *The Herald* is an institution with depth of talent. For months – years – the magazine has been lovingly maintained by a community-minded cabal of people. Di Martin, Stephanie King, Niels Arup, Christobel Munson and Jenny Bird all swung into action when the going got tough. I applaud their commitment and willingness to give of themselves to ensure that *The Herald* thrives. Now we are looking for younger contributors who can speak to their own demographic in the town. *Digby Hildreth*

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COVER STORY

Exit stage right

(from page 1) in a way that provides the glue which keeps all residents working together in mutual respect.

This town has had a small rallying procession of people like this, but as town – and the region – grows at a rapid rate, strains and cracks start to appear. That is when the glue becomes even more important. And, at this time, Bangalow is in a huge growth spurt and the dynamics of interaction seem to be splintering.

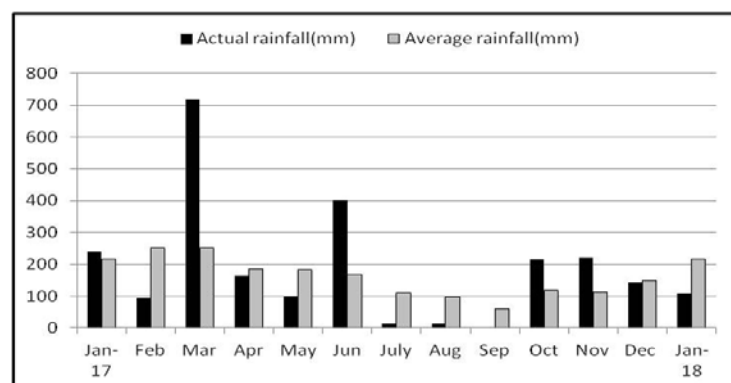
Case in point is the news that the Ryans, famous for their centre-of-town Barebones Art Space, are leaving this big North island and are settling down in the smaller South island – Tasmania. We have been used to dropping in to Barebones for a myriad of information about concerts and activities – sitting and chatting away in their beautiful gallery for over 10 minutes reveals their involvement in, or passion for, so much of town life. People dropping by, or just passing then pausing for a quick hello and gossip catch up. For me, as a journalist on *The Bangalow Herald*, it was always my go-to place to find out the 'real story' of someone or something that was under discussion.

The Ryans – Karen, Ruth, Robert and his then partner Jodie with baby Molly Jean – converged on Bangalow over a nine month period from three different directions, 24 years ago. Finding somewhere to live was a bigger issue then than it is even now. There were only 12 streets in town, and – it was said – you had to wait for someone to die before you could get a house. Bangalow life was an illuminating introduction to the country, but 'different' though it seemed, the street camaraderie was welcoming. There was truly a village community where families lived behind or above their shops, and often, after shop hours spontaneous little get-togethers were held on the roadside footpaths – OH&S wasn't part of the language then.

Trained as printmakers in Adelaide, Robert and Jodie set up the Bangalow Print Studio and Karen and Ruth set about transforming their new shop into an art gallery. Over the years the gallery has provided a sort of barometer for Bangalow life. In the beginning art



Barebones in its first of many colour iterations. All pics: Judy Baker & Karen Ryan



was sold mainly to visitors, but these days it works 50/50, with locals now appreciating the diversity of the artist stable the Ryans represent.

As locals, Karen and Ruth became more and more entrenched in the life, times and opportunities that were on offer. The opening of the new highway in 1994, with the bypassing of the town, challenged business owners to be creative in luring visitors into town.

With the increase in housing developments the small population of Bangalow naturally grew and the town began to gentrify. The 90s was a fun time – it seemed like the whole town would get involved in fundraising for the various interests and pursuits. The little town of, say, 800 people in the 90s held artisan fairs and masked balls for the building of a pool, trivia nights for a myriad of worthy pursuits, the Billycart Derby, and countless street stalls – all added to the creation of a tight little community.

Close to Karen and Ruth's hearts were Ruth's involvement with the Park Trust as Secretary for 20 years, and Karen's role as Secretary for the Bangalow Show for 17 years. And for 14 years they both produced the performance art of Cabaret da Desh. Many of these magic moments still resonate. The contribution of people like Ruth and Karen has ensured that Bangalow has that little extra 'edge' that draws so many of us to this place.

Barebones Art Space will be operating until early May in Bangalow, when the Ryans migrate south. Karen will be reopening a



Left: Karen Ryan and Wilson Draper at the 1994 opening of their brand new venture: Barebones Art Space. Right: A typical after-work street get-together, chatting with neighbours.



Left: A DaDesh performance highlight – The Mongrel Dogs – Karen with Mark Kinneally, Ian Grissell, Rebecca Zentveld, Dave Bennie. Right: The much beloved 'Mayor' of Bangalow: Michael 'Napoleon' Malloy.



Left: Karen with Mark Noble, Chief Steward outside the Bangalow Show office at the top of the Showgrounds. Right: A grand opening at Barebones of Michelle Dawson's work. Karen with Sally Pearson.



version of Barebones in Swansea, Robert is heading to the surf beaches of the north east coast and Ruth, who feels 80 is a good age

to start a new business, will finally have her handicraft shop. We wish them godspeed.

Ruth and Karen Ryan with Stephanie King

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Council matters

9 Station St

After Council's resolution of 2017 to request changes to, and more information about, the second DA for No. 9 Station Street, the developer has chosen to take the matter to the Land and Environment Court.

The court has responded with a requirement that council and the developer enter conciliation, with a meeting scheduled for June 2018. If an agreement can be reached at that meeting, a proposal will go back to Council for their consideration. If the conciliation fails, then the matter will be heard in the Land and Environment Court in December 2018.

At the February Council meeting speakers from the community spoke against the development application as being of an unsuitable bulk, scale and design for Station Street. Whilst the speakers acknowledged that some development in Station Street is not unwelcome, proper consideration of the heritage values of the street, the primacy and proximity of the A&I Hall, and traffic considerations in Byron Lane had not been satisfactorily addressed in the DA. Nor, it was argued, did the DA contain sufficient information about the design features of the building for an adequate assessment to be made.

201 Lismore Rd Rural Industries Food Precinct public meeting

The public determination meeting before the Joint Regional Planning Panel (JRPP) about this \$37 million DA will be held on **15 March** at 4pm at the A&I Hall. Details of the meeting will be announced through the local press and by personal communication with everybody who has made a submission regarding this development. Speakers will be invited to register for the public meeting via the JRPP website no later than two days prior to the meeting.

The full assessment report from the Council town planner, with his recommendation, will be submitted to the JRPP on the 1 March, 2018 and will be available to the public on the JRPP website as soon as possible, but at least seven days prior to the public determination meeting. Any supplementary reports and plans will be made available as received. Those interested should regularly check the Development and Planning Register for updates at <http://www.planningpanels.nsw.gov.au/DevelopmentandPlanningRegister/tabid/62/language/en-AU/Default.aspx>

Garbage bins

Council is currently engaged in a Shire-wide rollout of converting single public garbage bins to double bins to separate recyclables from other garbage. A posse of locals including representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, the Progress Association and Heritage House walked the main street recently with Council staff to discuss the redesign, rationalisation and relocation of bins in the main street. Council is aware that the village masterplan is looming, and is proposing an economical short-term solution to adding recycling bins to the public bins in the main street. The good news is that the current design and colour will be maintained.

Jenny Bird



Artist's impression of Mayor Simon Richardson's solar shuttle train.

Transported?

It's long been a complaint in this region that there is such limited infrastructure provided, over a range of basic amenities that are considered standard in big cities.

There is no question that size does matter in terms of the scale of facilities offered by governments of all shapes and functions. Canberra and Macquarie Street are constantly promoting that a move to regional areas would (should, could) relieve some of capital city issues, but there seems to be an unwillingness – in terms of transport – to provide any other help than a big, beautiful highway. More cars!

Considering the long distances that need travelling – for people of all ages and occupations, from school kids to workers – it seems extraordinary that we have been essentially left to our own devices in sorting out our transport alternatives.

Sure, there are car pools and small people-movers associated with individual businesses, but there is so little in the way of standard 'just getting around'. Since the trains were shut down (and they seem like a far, far distant dream) an occasional bus has provided a rail link – but commuters are not able to buy a seat. Small private buses provide a welcome facility as they travel to Brisbane and the airport. School bus owners often welcome the older shopper to use their service – but it's a full day out. Hitchhiking is still considered a 'normal' way of getting about.

But perhaps, hopefully, the time for whinging is over. Solutions are being offered and/or proposed with new train links and bus services. It requires us all to participate, to use what is being provided, and to let those attempting to help overcome this problem know that they will be supported. And, PLEASE, don't object just because it doesn't suit personally – it is a huge concern that must be solved.

And think, if we solve this one, we might get train transport to Brisbane city and the airport.

Some solutions:

Byron Bay Railroad Company Train: The first fully solar powered train in the world was officially launched in December 2017 in Byron Bay, attracting massive international media attention.

In the first 19 days over 10,000 passengers took the 15-minute ride between Sunrise and Byron Bay township. The demand far exceeded all expectations. Train driver, Robert Jarvis, says "We get

a lot of locals and a lot of people bringing their kids and grandkids for the experience."

The not-for-profit operators renovated a disused two-carriage heritage train that was built in the 1940s in Sydney and had been retired to Lithgow in the mid 90s. The train seats 100 passengers, with room for luggage, surfboards and bikes, but no pets. Unfortunately the heritage-sized doors are not wide enough for wheelchairs wider than 660mm. They also renovated the tracks and the corridor.

The service runs seven days a week, hourly between 10am and 5pm, into the future. Adults are \$3 one way, 6-13 years \$2, and 5 and under are free.

Who says there is no demand for public transport in the Shire?

Bus lines: There have been buses (often nearly empty) observed traveling the back roads between villages like Bangalow and Ewingsdale and the bigger towns of Byron, Lismore and Lennox. But gathering information on them is not easily come by and public awareness seems to be minimal. According to Phil Lobban, operations manager at Blanch's buses, the company running the service, it's a six-month trial – started on 4 December, 2017 – proposed and financed by Transport NSW. Services run only once a day, Monday to Friday, each way.

While these trials are not amazingly user-friendly, they are a start and are to be applauded – and used. Then perhaps it might become a more accessible trek.

Most relevant to 2479 residents is the 641X which starts at Lismore Uni at 8.50am, goes through Bexhill, Clunes, Bangalow, Ewingsdale and arrives in Byron at 10am. In the evening, it's the reverse, starting in Byron at 3.55pm and getting to Lismore at 5pm.

There is also the 640X service, which starts at Byron at 7.20am and goes through Suffolk, Lennox, Ballina, Goonellabah to Lismore and the Base Hospital, the Square, the city and then the Uni. In the evening, the return trip starts at 5pm at Lismore Uni and ends up in Byron at 6.32pm.

For more information go to transportnsw.info



Byron Solar Train

Photo: James Chuang

The Byron Line: Some time ago the Mayor, Simon Richardson, launched his vision for The Byron Line – a shuttle light train service plus a cycleway in the rail corridor that would run between Billinudgel and Bangalow.

Council is now moving with urgency to complete the brief for expressions of interest to conduct an economic feasibility study and to identify the costs of infrastructure to support the idea.

Prompted by the success of the world's first solar train now running

regularly between Elements Resort and Byron Bay, and the increasingly ridiculous traffic problems experienced across the Shire over summer. Council is keen to pursue ideas that might help get locals and visitors out of their cars.

"By the middle of the year we can see if a shuttle service from Bili to Bangalow, with a cycle way alongside, can be used as a tourism experiences and – more importantly – get locals around the Shire," said Mayor Richardson.

Rail Trail update

The announcement last month of matching State and Federal funding for a rail trail from Murwillumbah to Crabbes Creek has certainly stimulated discussion on uses of the rail corridor. One big issue is – can the rail trail be done alongside the old track to leave it available for light rail? Some rail trail supporters who have walked this northern section of the track feel while it would be possible in many parts, the cost would be prohibitive. They point out the frequent low-lying areas where large amounts of fill would have to be brought in. There is also a tunnel that would need a long detour through private property, and there are many narrow cuttings and old bridges. Tweed Council has sought tenders for both options for their section of the rail trail – on the old track or beside it. When these quotes are in, sensible decisions should be possible. Byron Council's study on the possibility of a light rail, 'tourist train' will also throw light on the options (see below).

All parties agree on the importance of keeping the corridor in public ownership. If there is no train or rail trail, this becomes harder to ensure.

Jenny Bird, Brian Sundstrom and Stephanie King



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More than just knitting

The Bangalow Branch of the CWA is about to celebrate its 70th birthday. Established by 26 local 'mesdames' in 1948, our local branch has a history and a place in our community about which we can be proud.

"What hasn't changed over the years is the strong commitment to women and children, and seeking equitable services for people outside of city areas," reflects Di Campbell, the current Branch President. "Friendships, the skills and our commitment to women is the glue that binds us all together."

One could be forgiven for thinking that the CWA is little more than soft toys and padded coat-hangers, scones and marble cake, and jams and chutneys. It's true to an extent. This is how they make their money. This is how they maintain standards, inducting new members into the fine arts of making lamingtons that conform exactly to the regulation size, and sponge cakes that are so light they might float off the plate if given half a chance.

But the modern CWA is so much more than that. In 1987 the State CWA decided to shed its old 'tea and scones' image for one of a new, energetic lobby group working for the welfare of women and children.

"I love going to State Conference," says Di, "watching 500 women converge, with briefcases or shoulder bags, ready to do business. It's another chapter of the sisterhood, something about having that voice. It's just this wonderful sense of belonging."

What is really interesting is what they do with the money they earn from all that



Tools of the crafty trade.

Photo by Jenny Bird.

knitting, cooking and handcrafting, and what issues they get behind politically. They are, after all, the largest women's organisation in NSW.

A close look at 70 years of service by the Bangalow CWA shows its support for a multitude of services.

The very first objective of the Branch back in 1948 was to establish in Bangalow a baby centre and rest room. At that time there was nowhere to breastfeed or change a baby's nappy. This might seem hard to imagine now, when MPs can breastfeed in parliament, but at the time a rest room for women was seen as a measure of the modern status of a town.

Over the years the branch has supported hospital visiting services, food parcels to England, a piano and a talking book for the blind, Israel's reforestation program, flood relief throughout NSW and as far afield as Holland, a baby-minding service at the annual Show and school scholarships. Di Campbell notes a shift over time from

general community services like the rescue helicopter and the rural fire service. "Recently we've been more focused on services for disadvantaged groups like Liberation Larder and local women's refuges," said Di, "although we still support services like the Royal Flying Doctor Service."

This year the Bangalow Branch has had, possibly for the first time in its history, a motion tabled at the annual State Conference. The motion seeks support for a state-wide campaign to address a problem growing at an alarming rate – the housing needs of older women in rural and regional areas who find themselves homeless.

In 1948 young women needed a place to breastfeed. In 2018, many older women need a home. Bangalow's CWA has recognised and responded to the changing needs of women across its 70 years. It still provides a breastfeeding space and a change table. Now dads are welcome and regularly use the amenity (the change table that is).

Happy anniversary CWA. *Jenny Bird*

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The grass is always greener

What's 107 years old but youthful, dynamic and a focal hub of Bangalow's social life? It's the Bowlo, says **Murray Hand**.



This community-owned treasure has, over the past few years, become a focal point for the local community to enjoy great food and entertainment, where parents with young kids can kick back and relax while the kids literally have a ball in the security of the 'cage'.

The current success is due to the hard work and clear vision of the manager, Shane

Ironside, community members on the board and the popular Stockpot Kitchen run by Jen and Gray Stockdale.

It is also due to the financial assistance of the Bangalow community. Back in 2012 the Bowlo was in such strife that it closed its doors for a few months until the community came to its rescue, chipping in \$179,000 in

the form of loans. The donors have come to the party several times since then, chipping in another \$46,000 and agreeing to extensions on repayments. Improvements to facilities, like the paved and shaded outdoor area, have been made possible by the generosity of local businesses and tradies who have donated materials and many hours of labour.

In the past few years the focus of the Bowlo has been on providing a safe, fun, community facility for families. Bangalow is a village full of young families. Friday evenings at the Bowlo are particularly vibrant, made more so with the weekly raffles. Maintaining the balance between family friendliness and compliance with liquor and safety laws will be a focus for 2018.

As a community-owned club the profits flow back to the community with sponsorship of sporting clubs such as the Rebels Rugby, Blue dogs Soccer, Bangalow Cricket and the women netballers, totalling \$25,000 in 2017. The club opens Friday night raffles to various community organisations to run. In 2017 over \$50,000 was raised for community groups and projects.

The Bowlo's AGM is on **Monday, 26 March**. The club would love to have new members nominate. Current board member and local resident of 20 years, Beck Harwood, is a teacher with a young family. "I've been on the board one year but have found it a very rewarding experience. I decided to nominate as I saw how much the Bowlo meant to the community and wanted to contribute fresh ideas. Passionate people are always needed to keep the club relevant and an important part of the Bangalow community."

Another current board member, Rowan Keast, who joined the committee last year agrees. "I was attracted by the mixture of people, the range of ages and backgrounds. I felt I could use my personal and professional experience to give back to the community through my directorship."

Nominations for the Board close on 5 March.

Companion Animals Welfare Inc



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Working – Home and Away

Recently, on a humid Bangalow morning, a dozen people gathered upstairs at Town Café to share breakfast and talk about business. It was a diverse group ranging from a young entrepreneur to a former CEO of a large government organisation and a massage therapist.

The event was a monthly meeting of Byron & Beyond Networking, established in 2009 by Rosemarie and Arnold Toynbee as a way of connecting local small business people.

The speaker was Niki Joseph, an ESL teacher and freelance writer who gave a lively and clever presentation about the advantages and pitfalls of working as a freelancer. One great advantage she says, is the freedom to pursue a writing career from a rural property on the Northern Rivers.

The variety of business types represented reflect something of the creativity and entrepreneurship of people who have come here to live.

Of course, starting a local business from scratch, or transplanting an existing one, is only one of the ways local people make a living. Census figures show that almost 40% of the Bangalow work force works in Bangalow, 20% work in Byron Bay, 8% work in Lismore or west of Clunes, 5% have no fixed workplace and almost 5% work in Newrybar. That leaves 22%, many of whom are commuting out of the area.

Michael O'Halloran, who works for marketing agency Clemenger BBDO, has been commuting weekly to Sydney for five years. Recently the commute has been reduced to fortnightly. Michael says, "My boss realised it was more economical for



Gary and Ronnie Seaman.

me to work from home."

Michael keeps business hours when working at home, but enjoys "the flexibility to have an early morning surf instead of dealing with city traffic."

Gary and Ronnie Seaman have built a home in Bangalow for their imminent retirement from the Queensland Rural Fire

Service later this year.

Commuting weekly or fortnightly to Caloundra on the Sunshine Coast, the couple are often away for a week at a time. Gary says "We typically leave at 5am to avoid traffic congestion, the drive taking anything from 2¾ to 5 hours. We live a divided life – professional life on the Sunshine Coast and village life in Bangalow." Ronnie, who has always loved living in country areas, says "We were married in Byron Bay in 2012 and are really looking forward to living here full time."

Matt Hart, a Qantas pilot, moved to Bangalow three years ago with his wife, Jade, a small-business owner who works from home. Matt commutes to Sydney regularly (six days on/six days off). He says, "Luckily at Qantas, in my role, everyone commutes. If you manage it well it's a lot easier to drive to Ballina and fly down, rather than drive through traffic from a Sydney suburb."

Overall the people I spoke to about commuting are very positive about it.

Whether commuting, working in a local business or managing your own small business from home, the general consensus is that living in Bangalow makes it all worthwhile.

Mery Stevens

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Treasures or Trash?

Bangalow's Anglican Op-shop is a wonderful Aladdin's cave of treasures. Staffed by a dedicated band of volunteers and very popular, it's a great source of funds for local charities.

Some of the local organisations that have benefited include the Westpac rescue helicopter, The Buttery, Anglicare North Coast, the SES and occasional one-off donations, such as for the Hearing Loop at Bangalow Public School.

However, the volunteers are in need of a bit more help. Are you interested in joining this happy band? There are a few changes to the volunteers' roster so that you can come in for just half a day, morning or afternoon, and you can come weekly, fortnightly or monthly. All volunteers are required to have a 'Working with Children' check from Services NSW. If you call into the Op-shop they have the appropriate application forms available.

There will be an information afternoon on **Monday, 12 March**, from 3-5pm, so go along and hear all about the organisation and how you could contribute.

The shop also serves as a collection point for goods to be distributed more widely. When the shop is overflowing with



A sea of colour and possibility for the fossicker.

Photos: Judy Baker



donations, some are sent to the Matthew Talbot Centre at Goonellabah, where they are sorted into saleable clothing and then sent on to Vinnies' network of stores in other

local communities and also overseas.

The Op-shop is grateful for all donations but be mindful of the quality of goods. Please don't take in any broken or chipped items and clothes need to be clean, without tears, holes or stains.

It's currently costing \$500-800 per month to hire a skip and dispose of unusable goods. The bill hit \$1100 in January! Think of how many good works could be carried out in our communities with that much money.

In this throw-away society it's good to know that many people are willing to pass on unwanted goods, to help those who may be struggling, or those who are very happy to augment their wardrobe or spruce up their home with something 'new' at a good price.

Judy Baker

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Mimi's clothes are available: mimiholvast.com, wellmadeclothes.com and The Corner Store, Bangalow.

For the everyday woman

Australian designer **Mimi Holvast** designs and makes her small collections of expertly thought-through garments from her studio in Bangalow.

Ever since she launched her eponymous line two years ago, business has been growing steadily for Mimi Holvast.

She's been busy developing her own signature mix of clean silhouettes on luxurious fabrics to make clothes that are streamlined, elegant and practical.

But the 25-year-old Bangalow-based designer doesn't exactly follow today's fast-paced fashion world.

Mimi Holvast pieces are an antidote to the ever-growing fast fashion market in Australia, which contributes mass amounts to landfill each year.

"All of my garments are transeasonal, so creating a collection that can fit any

wardrobe at any time of the year is important to me," Mimi said.

"What I enjoy the most about fashion is the tactility that garments have, which stands out for me more than trends ever could."

Her small collections are expertly thought-through, with every garment designed, pattern made, cut, sewn and sent out by Mimi herself.

With a focus on high-quality, her label features cotton, linen and denim pieces with a contemporary twist – think plenty of pockets, low backs, and other quirky bits and pieces.

"I'm really interested in practicality, style, and comfort, which extends from carefully

chosen fabrics, to taking extra care in the details of designing, pattern making, cutting, and producing," she explained.

"I create garments in small scale to avoid waste – there is so much waste in the fashion world and I want to avoid having excess stock. I also cut using waste-minimising practices which means it can take longer for me to create garments.

"When designing, pattern-making and sewing clothes, I'm my happiest. I know that I'm contributing to society with clothing with a good ethos."

Mimi said growing up in a creative family she was always encouraged to do creative things and the one thing she really took to was sewing. She began by repurposing clothes from op shops, then studying fashion production at a Sydney TAFE and finally launching her own label before moving to Bangalow a year ago.

Now her pieces are coveted by mothers, daughters and grandmothers. *Ashlee Burke*



Photos by Anna Hutchcroft

It's a Kid's Life

So, the kids are back at school, high-fives all 'round and time resumes its shape as a weekly routine. Now to negotiate the smorgasbord of 'extra-curricular activities'.

With so much on offer and so many competing priorities, nailing the family roster can be a complicated process. Here are a few tips I've learned over the years that might be helpful:

- When considering options for your kids, check your own unfulfilled ambitions stage left.

- Similarly, don't get too excited if your kid shows potential from an early age. Chances are they'll be average like the rest of us. And there are detriments to having high-achieving children. For starters, it will involve a lot of driving.

- Understand what you will be asked to contribute (both in time and money) and why. There is a difference between a not-for-profit, voluntarily run club and a privately-operated business.

- Coaches, teachers and mentors

influence children's lives. Know who will be leading the activities.

- Big tick if your kid gets themselves there.

- Nagging is not conducive to harmony.

If your kid has no personal motivation to play/practise an instrument, you are fighting a losing battle.

- Don't choose activities based purely on friends, but note that it is a relevant consideration (both theirs and yours – it makes a difference who you're sitting on the sidelines with).



Sarah Swan and business partner Jeremy Burn

A Tasty Success

Don't you love a story when the scene is set by the protagonist at the age of 14 and continues and grows for another 37 years? That's the tale of chef **Sarah Swan** as told at a recent women's networking group.

Sarah seemed to know what she wanted to do from that early age, probably in part because her mum was a great cook and the family had lots of dinner parties and also dined out. "Quite a lot, in fact plenty," Sarah recalls.

In her formative years, with the support of her parents and driven by her own personal ambition, she left New Zealand to work in London and Sydney – initially under the direction of mostly male chefs.

Two huge influences in her early professional life were Neil Perry, who she still refers to as her mentor, and Kylie Kwong, who employed her at Billy Kwong.

Seeking a break from the demands of being a chef in Sydney, and feeling she had done her time there, Sarah moved to the Northern Rivers five years ago, to perhaps do some pop-up dinners and set up a catering business.

That was then. Now she operates a very successful catering business and café in the Byron Industrial Estate. When she opened her acclaimed 100 Mile Table Café there were only three places for a coffee – now there are 18. As a destination it has changed dramatically – in part due to her hard work.

As Sarah's business grew, she saw the need to get a business partner to help balance the work and the ideas. She convinced Jeremy Burn to leave NZ and join her. Jeremy and family are now very much entrenched in Bangalow. Their successful partnership grew from not being close friends at first and understanding each other's strengths and weaknesses. Late last year they opened DUK restaurant in Byron – the Bay's only bbq Chinese Restaurant.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/BangalowBusinessWomen/> Mary Nelson

- Many of the benefits of extra-curricular activities are indirectly related to acquiring particular skills. Look beyond personal glory and consider the opportunities to acquire more general social and life skills.

- It is almost inevitable that your child will go through life with an undiscovered talent for something. Exposure to a range of activities may be an advantage, but the search is personal.

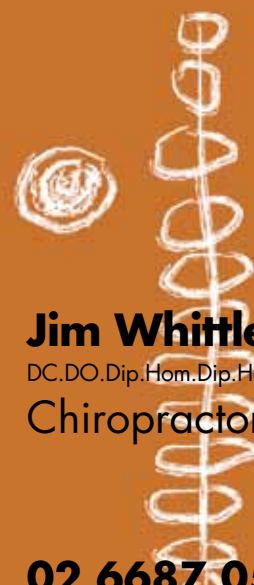
Indeed, the search continues into

adulthood and increasingly parents' activities are part of the mix. With the health and well-being benefits of life-long learning and fitness firmly established, this is surely a good thing. But just remember that planning the family roster should be a team sport. Middle-aged members over-indulging in half-time entertainment may require de-listing.

Don't forget to claim the Active Kids Rebate (not applicable to a mid-life crisis).

Bec Sargeant

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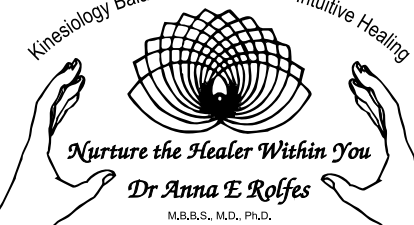
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Organic Bio Compost Workshop

Remember our Nov 2017 article 'Farming on a human scale near town'? Well 96Bangalow, the subject of that article, is holding the first of a series of workshops, this one on **Saturday, 24 March**, 10am-4pm, to instruct in "the tools to be more productive in your backyard, farm, greenhouse or apartment".

Its aim is to teach you how to "increase production and vitality using natural chemical-free processes" through something called Bio Inoculum Compost, "for restoring degraded soils, protecting plants from disease and reducing the need for fertilizers".

The instructor is Paul Taylor, a third-generation farmer and horticulturalist who has "developed the Bio-Vital System of biological soil management as a practical, easy-to-understand, easy-to-apply soil recovery and food production system". Born on an organic farm in the USA, Paul has lived in Australia for 30 years. He also teaches at the Permaculture Research Institute in The Channon. Intrigued? Want to book your seat? \$65 for the day. \$50 for early birds. Email blair@96bangalow.com



Book with Blair, pictured, at 96Bangalow.

Christobel Munson

Business Wise

An occasional look at the comings and goings of businesses in Bangalow.

C&C Kitchens and Bathrooms. The first proper shopping spot in Bangalow for great kitchen and bathroom ideas and products has moved to Byron's Industrial Estate. Much more room for inspiring displays. Worth a trip 'down the hill'.

Bangalow Holistic Dentist. Not only one of the most thoughtful and highly regarded dental practices on the FNC, but also totally focused on the well-being of patients. Great dentistry rooms, very relaxing.

New Art Gallery. Barebones may be leaving but Ninbella (Aboriginal Art) and JEFA (contemporary modern) has opened in the old Elders store.

Readings Building. Finally this beautiful historic building is full, with the addition of The Body Method and She Made Me.

Planning to sell up and leave are: The Finders Club and Obsession.

Bangalow Industrial Estate. It's a little out of town, but definitely worth checking-out. A new highlight is Felix's Art Deco shop.

Bangalow Medical Centre has a turnover of doctors which may seem disconcerting. But, worth knowing is that the Centre provides training for new up and coming doctors and nurses. New fully qualified doctors (registrars) are on a two-year training program to gain extra skills, experience and knowledge. New now are Dr Lydia Hubbard and Dr Cam Hollows. Student nurses come from SCU for work experience.

Dr Carlos Perez-Ledesma, a very experienced GP who specialises in cosmetic procedures, has also joined the team.

WHAT'S THAT NUMBER?

AA	Tues 5.30	Richard	0466 885 820	Pool Trust	3rd Wed	Dominic	6687 1425
ADFAS		Anni	6684 3249	Poultry Club		Hec	6687 1322
Aussie Rules		Bill	6687 1485	Progress Association		Ian	0414 959 936
Aussie Rules Junior		Greg	6687 1231	Quilters	2nd,4th Thurs	Helen	6684 1161
Bangalow Parklands Team		Terry	6685 4107	Rainbow Region Dragon Boat Clubs		Monica	0408 776 171
Bangalow Markets	monthly 4th Sun	Jeff	6687 1911	Red Cross	monthly - 1st Fri	Dell	6684 7405
Bangalow Bowlo		Shane	6687 2741	Rugby Union		Richard	0415 773 064
Bridge	Fri 12pm	Eda	6685 1984	S355 C'mtee Heritage House		Don	6687 1897
Cancer support	1st Wed 1-4pm	Chris	6687 0004	Scouts	Tues 6.30pm/Fri 5.45pm	Jim	0408 546 522
Chamber of Commerce	2nd Tues	admin@bangalow.biz		Show Society		Karen	6687 1033
Childcare Centre	7.45am-6pm	Kerry	6687 1552	Soccer Club	2nd Mon 6pm	Nick	6687 1607
Cricket Club		Anthony	0429 306 529	Social Golf	every 2nd Sun	Brian	6684 7444
Co-dependents Anonymous	Thurs 7pm/Sat 4pm	Guy	0421 583 321	Sporting Field	bookings	Nick	6687 1607
CWA	2nd Wed	Di	6685 4694	Tennis Court Hire			6687 1803
Garden Club	1st Wed	Fay	6687 2096	Writers Group	1st Thurs	June	6687 1004
George the Snake Man		George	0407 965 092	WIRES			6628 1898
Historical Society/Museum/Cafe		Wendy	6687 2183				
Land/RiverCare	1st Sat working bee	Liz	6687 1309				
Lawn Bowls, Men	Wed & Sat 1pm	Gerry	6687 1142				
Lawn Bowls, Women	Wed 9.30am	Dot	6687 1246				
Lions Club	2nd/4th Tues 7pm	Brian	0408 899 555				
Men's Shed		Brian	0413 679 201				
Netball Club	train 4.15 Thurs	Rachel	6687 0402				
Op Shop	10-3pm, Sat 9.30-12.30		6687 2228				
Parks Committee	3rd Tues 7.30pm	Jan	6684 7214				
Playgroup	Tues 10am	Sue	0421 030 438				
Police		Peta	6687 1404				
Pony Club		Kim	6687 8007				

VENUES

A&I Hall	Station St	Brian	0427 157 565
Anglican Hall	Ashton St	Matthew	0488 561 539
Bangalow Showgrd	Moller Pavilion	Karina	6687 1035
Sports/Bowling Club	Byron St	Shane	6687 2741
Catholic Hall	Deacon St	Russell	0423 089 684
Coorabell Hall	Coolamon Scenic	Ouida	6687 1307
Newrybar Hall	Newrybar Village	Tom	0407 189 308
RSL Hall	Station St	Charlotte	6687 2828
Scout Hall	Showgrounds	Jacinta	0417 547 242
Heritage House	Deacon St	Wendy	6687 2183



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Mens 4.45 - 5.45pm & Yin Yoga 6 - 7.15pm
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Perfect for a Hot Summer's Day

The gazpacho is a classic Spanish soup that is traditionally served cold. In these muggy summer days it's a great pick-me-up. Try this recipe with a watermelon twist. It has four simple ingredients but you can really add whatever you like – try ginger, minced shallot or chives.

To finish, use our locally grown native finger limes, commonly known as citrus caviar, that are now in season. Their skin colour can range from dark green to rusty red. Inside, translucent greenish to white to pinkish caviar-like bubbles 'pop on the tongue with citrus lemon/lime tartness. The flavour, colour and texture is a great contrast to the pink soup.

Finger limes can be used in a variety of dishes – from sweet to savoury – as a topping, garnish or main event. Gazpacho can be refrigerated, tightly covered, for one week. Don't forget good olive oil and salt to finish.

Watermelon Gazpacho with Finger Lime

Serves 8

Ingredients

Watermelon – about 4 cups separated from rind and cut into chunks
2 ripe tomatoes, chopped
1 garlic clove, minced
2 tablespoons of fresh lime or lemon juice



Watermelon Gazpacho soup with finger limes. Illustration: Lyn Hand

Salt and pepper to taste

3 – 4 ice cubes

Garnishes: fresh basil, olive oil and pulp of finger limes (or limes)

Method

In a food processor or blender, pulse watermelon, tomatoes, garlic, lime/lemon juice, salt and pepper until combined, add a bit of ice.

Let mixture chill in fridge for 3-4 hours or overnight.

To serve, garnish with fresh basil,

pulp of finger limes and a drizzle of olive oil.

Finger limes are available from Rainforest Foods who have a stall at the Bangalow Farmers Markets. They will also take orders and bring in produce the next week. Although finger limes don't keep particularly well, they are good to freeze.

A big thankyou to Sheryl Rennie from Australian Fingerlime Caviar for the finger limes to illustrate the recipe.

Lyn Hand

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DID YOU SEE OUR AD FOR
HERALD
The Bangalow
EDITOR
On page 10 of this issue?

Bangalow's history through plants

As a follow-up to last month's article on viewing our history through plants, we continue our walk through the town and stop at the RSL Hall. There we see a variegated shrub commonly called copper leaf, or botanically, *Acalypha wilkesiana* 'Java White'.

Pacific Ocean and Naval connections

It is believed that this remaining specimen may have been propagated and supplied by Lyle Wright, who had set up a plant nursery in 1947 after serving aboard the HMAS Arunta during WWII. Incidentally, the name *wilkesiana* honours the American Rear Admiral Charles Wilkes who explored the South Pacific in the mid-19th century.

It is important to note why this plant may have been chosen for the RSL over so many others. After the fall of Singapore and Java there were over a dozen prisoners of war from Bangalow. Perhaps this was a way to remember the many comrades who were lost in that region. This plant originates from Melanesia and can vary in leaf colour from

greenish-yellow to ivory with irregular splotches of green.

The variegation gets stronger if the plant gets some protection from the sun in the afternoon.

Care and Propagation

This is a very tough plant; the Bangalow specimen has survived years of pruning by volunteers of the RSL with various degrees of plant-pruning skill. The ideal time to prune *Acalypha* is in late winter to early spring. Propagation is done by taking short cuttings of mature new growth. Remove the lower leaves and stick them into moist soil in a high humidity environment, such as under a plastic tunnel. Rooting hormones or dipping



the cutting in honey will increase the chance of it taking.

Planting with connection

Choice of plants has to be seen in its historical context; once we do this we can start to connect with the people who planted it and start to have a better understanding of their pain and joy, and how plants may have helped them to come to terms with their grief. This is why replanting around historical monuments, or locally significant monuments, needs to be done with a respect due to the past. *Patrick Regnault*

BANGALOW MARKET

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You've gotta laugh

Bangalow is perfectly poised between coast and country – and is similarly culturally blessed, with the racy delights of touristy Byron down the hill, and the more searching offerings from the excellent NORPA just up the road in Lismore.



Josh Earl and characters

Three comedians appearing in that diverse 'inland country' town this month make claims about themselves that you or I might prefer to keep to ourselves.

Tommy Little says he is "as stupid as they come"; Merrick Watts boasts that he has all the answers to life's many confusing questions. It's just that none of them is correct. "But at least I'm having a go," he huffs.

Josh Earl asserts that his family is weirder than most – which is arguable but just goes to show he hasn't spent much time in either Byron or Lismore. What is irrefutable, however, is that he is the funniest librarian you're ever likely to come across.

Ex-librarian, anyway, at a Melbourne school. Josh still orders his books and CDs alphabetically, and draws on his former work for some of his comic material, while employing a librarian's skills to deal with audiences, young and old.

But it is his purportedly peculiar family which provides the inspiration for his Lismore show, and why it is called *My Family Is Weirder Than Your Family*.

It's a children's show, with plenty of the scatological humour that seems to appeal to the young and, he insinuates, their parents too. In fact, *Weirder* manages to engage all ages, with storytelling, songs and routines that have had audiences in stitches for a couple of years now.

It has a serious aspect to it too, Josh believes. By parading the weirdness of his family, it eases the embarrassment many children may feel about their own mob.

"It's rare that kids have seen live comedy," he says. "I see them turn around to check with their parents if it's OK to laugh at this stuff, and watch them warm to it."

That shared laughter helps them accept that a little weirdness can be found in the most normal-seeming family.

Josh's Lismore show is on a Saturday afternoon and is followed in the evening by Tommy Little, the 'stupid' one. His show is even called *The King of Stupid*. But Tommy is no drongo. He makes a pretty smart living out of comedy, managing to fill theatres all over the country last year, and leaving audiences begging for more.

Merrick Watts is the *Man of the Hour*, apparently, attempting to answer all the questions nobody's asking. No, not, "has the concept of public service vanished from our political landscape" but more searchingly: "Where did all the bull ants go?"

A warning though: Josh Earl may dwell on bodily functions, but Merrick's routines contain language and content that only adults should be exposed to.

Check out Lismore Laughs at lismorecityhall.com.au/whats-on/

Digby Hildreth



Home Fire by Kamila Shamsie

Kamila Shamsie is a British Pakistani novelist and I put her book, *Home Fire*, on my summer reading list at the recommendation of the ABC's First Tuesday Book Club.

This book explores what it is like to be a citizen of one country whilst having the cultural background of another; what extra efforts are required for you to be accepted; how you might be treated when returning to visit family in your country of culture; what might happen if your father (now dead) was a jihadist; how to elevate yourself to public life whilst retaining your cultural beliefs; what extremes would you go to protect your family.

There are five parts to this book, each focused from the perspective of a different protagonist. First we meet Isma, an intelligent, gentle woman, orphaned at 18 and the primary carer for her 12 year-old twin siblings. She is offered a USA uni scholarship but, due to airport complications misses her flight. She then meets, and becomes friends with, Eamonn Lone, the son of a successful UK politician, Karamat Lone. Back in London, Eamonn becomes involved with the younger sister, Aneeka, who despairs over her missing twin brother, Parvaiz. The story continues to be told by Parvaiz, Aneeka and finally Karamat Lone who is in charge of the UK Home Office.

It's a fabulous plot and tells so many stories. Shamsie writes beautifully – in that way that makes me return to the start of a sentence; not out of need for a deeper understanding of what was said, but for the pleasure of admiring the beauty of the sentence structure. Carolyn Adams



Lulo Reinhardt and Bart Stenhouse in concert last year

Bart Stenhouse and Jazz at the Bowlo

Bangalow residents are lucky music lovers. We are visited by musicians of all kinds from bluegrass to flamenco, folk and classical

On January 27, the newly formed Byron Bay Jazz and World Music Club held its inaugural concert at the Bangalow Bowling Club, featuring CubanOz, a lively collective of Australian and International Latin/Jazz musicians who pay homage to traditional Cuban music.

A welcome addition to the local music scene, the club is the brainchild of local musician and composer, Bart Stenhouse, a highly skilled guitarist and proponent of Jazz World Fusion. Bart says: "It has always been a small goal of mine to run my own jazz/world music concert series to help promote this wonderful music to the community at large, and create opportunity for other artists."

A graduate of the Queensland Conservatorium of Music, Bart also plays bass guitar and electric mandolin. His playing style is a reflection of his many influences – from his musical education in the Brisbane jazz scene to his international travels and exposure to flamenco, European jazz and Indian music. His first jazz fusion album *Blue Benares*, recorded in the Indian city of Varanasi in 2014, is a collaboration with musicians from the region. *The Best of Times*, released in 2015, is an inventive blend of Indian classical, jazz and flamenco.

Bart says, "I love Bangalow. What a great town! My teaching studio is located in Talofa (right next door), so I am often in Bangalow myself. When I toured with Lulo (Reinhardt) last year, I think, for me, our Bangalow show was the highlight of all of the shows we did. The response was amazing and so warm and inviting. I am so very happy that the club now resides in Bangalow."

On Saturday 24 Feb (as *The Herald* went to print) the Bowlo show was 'Flamenco Guitar Meets Sitar' featuring new flamenco-inspired jazz and some flamenco-Hindustani fusion music.

Coming up on **Saturday, 24 March** is the wonderful local jazz vocalist, composer and musician Sharny Russell, and on **Thursday, 5 April** the flamenco program continues with the incredible Spanish flamenco guitarist Paco Heredia, who has worked with Paco De Lucia and many other significant players.

As a working musician, composer and producer with a young family, Bart's life is very full. He says, "I will be touring the country four times in total this year: with Paco Heredia from Spain in April, Lulo Reinhardt in September, and two artists from India in July and December."

Fortunately for us and despite his busy schedule, Bart is determined to continue bringing these exciting events to Bangalow. To find out more, search for Byron Bay Jazz and World Music Club.

Mery Stevens

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Compassion needed/All Souls' Refugee Campaign

Driving past All Souls' Anglican Church in Bangalow you've probably noticed the sign on the corner with the chalked message, "Manus Island. Lord have mercy". This is the initiative of Fr Matthew Smedley and the social justice committee attached to his church, All Souls'.

Fr Matthew has been at All Souls' for four years. The social justice focus started before he came here, however his strong social justice principles were important for the position at All Souls'. "For many years the parish has been focused on social justice, particularly regarding refugees and asylum seekers. We have been writing to members of Parliament to seek their compassion," says Fr Matthew. "For the season of Lent (the 40 days prior to Easter), we are encouraging people to come into the church and light a candle for the 35 refugee children in detention on Nauru."

"It is the plight of these children that is of great concern. According to the NGO ChilOut, workers at the detention centre have described the facility as 'cruel' and 'inhuman'. The Australian immigration department recently closed down the



Fr Matthew Smedley

Photo: Murray Hand

school inside the detention facility, forcing the refugee children to attend the poorly resourced local schools. Australian teachers who taught on Nauru have claimed that the offshore detention regime is 'engendering illiteracy and robbing children of their childhood'.

Fr Matthew is fond of a quote from Edmund Burke: 'The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good [people] to do nothing.'

"We also have a refugee and asylum seeker working group in the Grafton diocese (from Grafton to Tweed Heads) which has written to members of parliament about this issue as well. Praying for refugees is also important to the members of the parish. We have raised funds to assist Sister Jane, based in Sydney, who has travelled to Manus Island to give assistance to the refugees there".

Murray Hand

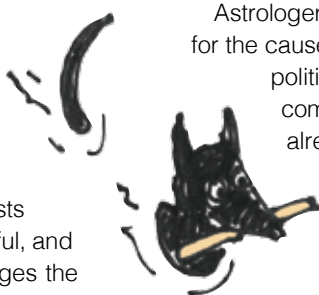
March diary

- 1** Writers Group
- 4** ABC Friends
- 5** ADFAS lecture; Bowlo board nominations close
- 7** Garden Club
- 9** Red Cross stall
- 11** Poultry Club; Lullabies for Zander
- 12** Op Shop Info Day
- 15** Meeting with JRPP
- 24** Boomerang Bags sewing bee; Sharny Russell; Koala tree planting; Compost workshop
- 25** Bangalow Market
- 26** Bowlo AGM
- Bangalow Herald deadlines:**
- Ads** Wednesday 14/03
- Copy** Monday 19/03

Compassionate companion

This year, in the Chinese zodiac, it's the Year of the Dog. The Dog sign signifies qualities of loyalty and honesty. It is said that people born under this sign exhibit the best traits of human nature: friendliness, faithfulness and committed relationship.

Without sounding too alternative, the sign suggests that this year we can be more caring and thoughtful, and perhaps set ourselves on a path that acknowledges the pain and hardship we impose on others – especially our refugees and asylum seekers.



Astrologers add that this year should also see people fighting for the causes they believe in – manifesting either as large-scale political movements or something as simple as local community work and small acts of kindness. Actions already point to this, with the rise of #NeverAgain and the #MeToo movements, for a start.

It is also said that the Dog is a true companion with a strong sense of right and wrong. Astrologers believe that the Dog does its best to protect high-integrity people and support their cause. Let us all follow that path.

Stephanie King



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