



Photo: Amber Wallis

Denzil Thomas has finally closed the doors of Glen Eden, his Possum Creek dairy – one of the last four remaining in 2479. His story, and that of his family, is part of our rich history. He tells **Stephanie King** why the business of modern dairying was no longer viable for him.

Dairying as a commercial enterprise came to the Far North Coast of NSW in the late 1880s and has remained a major contributor to the development and financial wellbeing of the area ever since. But the heyday of the business of providing milk and its offshoots (cream, butter and even yoghurt) is fast being subsumed by gentrification, the rise of alternatives such as rice and almond milk and the enveloping greed of the main buyers:

supermarkets. Now that Denzil Thomas has shut down his operation, the region has only three working dairies left.

The history of white settlement in 2479 is, like much of the North Coast, based on hard, backbreaking work: newcomers creating a path through dense rainforest just to reach a destination, before there was even the opportunity to make a living. It was the cedar-getters who first swarmed the coastline, chasing

those magnificent trees that once grew in abundance. While today there are very few cedars left, the timber industry did help forge the way for dairying, which required open pasture. The green rolling hills and productive earth of the Northern Rivers were ideal.

Immigrants, many from England and Ireland, moved to Australia in search of opportunity and a place to call their own. In terms of this region, they mostly came from the Illawarra and

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Facing an uncertain future

Southern Highlands of NSW, looking for the lush, fertile land north of the Clarence River that would provide a livelihood for their typically large families. Dairying took over much of the region and it still hangs on today – by a thread.

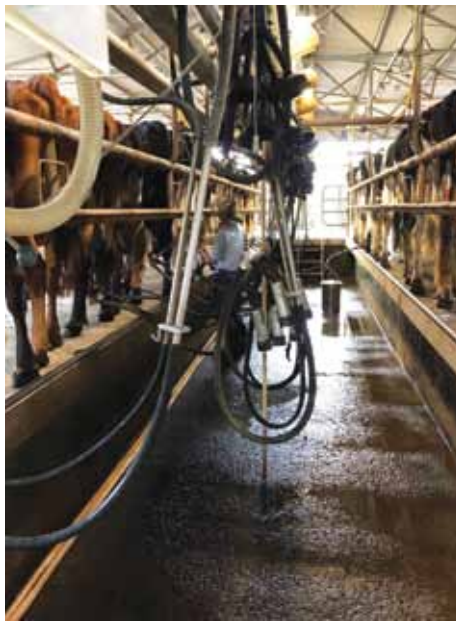
And now, after seven decades, Denzil has finally hung up his milk bucket. His story, and that of his family, is part of the rich history of this area, and the reason they chose to close the dairy is attributable to modern-day business models.

Speaking to Denzil and his sons, Geoff and David, it's clear their suppressed but still raw anger at the supermarkets must have been a hot topic over the dinner table for more than a few years. Big business has, in essence, shut out small family dairies – and many other food producers – squeezing their margins to a point where it seems only sensible to look to other ways to earn an income.

Denzil was born in Australia to English parents. His father, Harry, had migrated with his mother, sister and younger brother in 1911 and they lived in what was then an outer rim of Sydney. As a young man, Harry bought a milk run in Ryde and his workday was a gruelling slog. He'd get up at 2am, hand-milk 25 cows and by 5am he had harnessed his horse with cart ready to do the morning delivery. At 2pm the process was repeated. Every day. More milking, more delivery. For this, he would get threepence a pint.

After a few years, on hearing tales of the fertile land up north, the family decided to move here and in 1918, Harry met his future wife, Mary. They married the following year and, between 1920 and 1930, had six children: five boys and one girl. Surviving are Denzil, now 89, and his sister, 91.

"As we were growing up," reminisces Denzil, "we all helped Mum and Dad at the dairy before



The last milking was an emotional day for Denzil Thomas. Photo: Marg Burnett

walking to Possum Public Creek School. When my older brothers started high school in Lismore, they used to walk to Bangalow – about two and a half miles – to catch the train to Lismore. We didn't have a car, only a horse and sulky. Around 1936, Dad bought a second-hand car that made life easier. As kids we didn't realise how tough it must have been during the Depression years. One year we got no Christmas presents, but my parents always fed us well, so we were unaware of their hardship.

"I started high school in Lismore in 1942. For some of the time in the early '40s, I used to ride my horse to Bangalow to catch the train, leave the horse in my aunt's backyard and ride home

again in the afternoon. Quite often, during the war years, the train was four hours late and we'd wait at South Lismore station until 8 o'clock at night. It used to take another hour to get to Bangalow. Then I'd catch my horse and ride home after that."

After leaving school in 1946, Denzil worked the farm with his father, growing bananas, pineapples and sweet potatoes to supplement the dairy income. It was a life he loved and has stayed with until this day.

Romance entered his world in 1949, when he met "the love of my life – a beautiful, blonde teenager called Audrey Rose". Although she went to Sydney to train as a nurse, they kept in touch and were finally married in Bangalow in 1954. "We had four children – twin daughters and two sons – and had 63 wonderful years until Audrey passed away at 83 on 14 June 2017."

Attending Bangalow's Anglican Church has been an ongoing and important thread in his life. For 54 years, until 2018, he served on the parish council. Then there's his 'temporary replacement' job of playing the organ on Sundays, which he has done for more than 70 years. "They originally asked me, saying I was good enough to play hymns – and they still haven't found a replacement!"

Sons David and Geoff continue to live on the property, while daughter Margaret visits often from Ballina. Her twin, Susan, works in Sydney. Geoff is in partnership with Denzil but has switched from dairying to beef cattle, and David works for Sunshine Sugar.

Denzil, meanwhile, is busy clearing up at Glen Eden and is wondering what lies ahead for him. He has worked as a dairyman for 73 years – morning and night, seven days a week – initially milking by hand but, more recently, using the modern machinery he has kept, as "you never know what might happen", he says.

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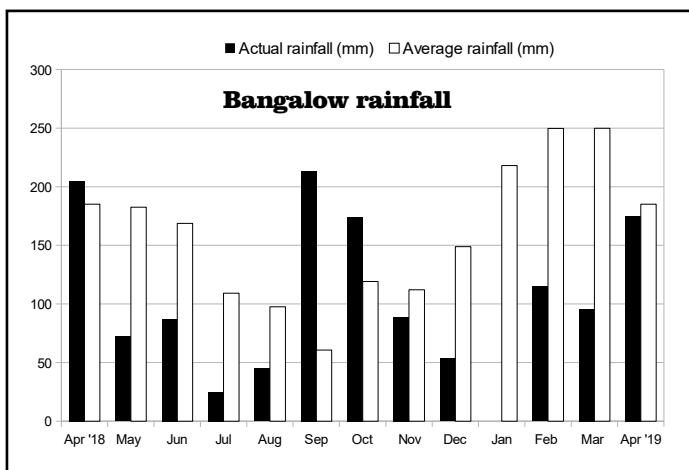
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HERALD

The Bangalow

From the editor

After a hectic May, with major community events such as *Dreamland* and the Billycart Derby – not to mention the hotly contested federal election – June approaches in a slower register. The early winter chill has begun to creep through the floorboards of our old timber house, the mulberry tree across the road is bearing fruit and the camellias are in full bloom.

Echidnas are on the march between dusk and dawn, looking for mates – watch out for them on the road and slow down. If you're lucky, you might see a 'train' of up to 10 echidnas. Local wildlife carer group WIRES tells us the train will be led by a female trailing a string of males behind her in order of size. She may take up to six weeks to choose her mate.

In this issue, our stories about the threatened dairy industry (page 1), electric cars and climate change (page 8), refugees and their detention (page 14), and native title (page 16) reveal how major national and international issues are playing out at the local level. Our relationships to land and natural resources are under question as the climate changes and threatens the natural world and food production and distribution.

This month, we also welcome newcomers to our community, such as Bangalow policemen Senior Constable Dave Feeney, and say farewell to others, like the larger-than-life Paul de Fina.

Jenny Bird

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Distribution: Bangalow postal contractors, Brian Sundstrom, Peter Bradridge, Neil McKenzie, Judy Baker
Accounts: Neville Maloney
Printed by Lismore City Printery

DISCLAIMER: This news magazine is published by The Bangalow Herald Inc. (registration no. INC 1601577). Membership applications are open to all adult residents of the 2479 postal district and surrounds. The opinions expressed by individual contributors are not necessarily shared by the editor, nor members of the association's editorial or management committees.

Council matters

Car-sharing in the Shire

In a bid to reduce the number of cars and car movements on local roads, and make town centres more environmentally- and people-friendly, Byron Shire Council will launch a 12-month car-share pilot program later this year – the first of its kind in the Northern Rivers. Sydney-based partner Popcar will provide 10 vehicles, located in Byron Bay and Mullumbimby, that can be hired for between one hour and four days by licensed drivers over the age of 18. Once drivers sign up for Popcar membership, they can book a car, paying only for the time they use it. See byron.nsw.gov.au for details.

Combating pest animals

Council has endorsed a new five-year *Pest Animal Management Plan* to help contain the destruction caused by European red foxes, wild dogs, feral cats, European rabbits, Indian myna birds and cane toads. While the plan focuses on land managed by Council, there are also opportunities to assist with pest animal management on private land when resources allow. Council is aiming for a more collaborative approach with landowners, offering technical advice and acting as a conduit between private and public land managers and agencies. View the plan at byron.nsw.gov.au or contact environmental projects officer Peter Boyd on 6626 7253.

Village plan implementation

During the community consultation phase of the *Bangalow Village Plan*, the community identified five priority initiatives:

1. Creating a network of walk and cycle paths, including a combined walk/cycle pathway in the rail corridor extending from Rifle Range Road to the Bangalow Sports Fields.
2. Reviewing the existing planning controls to protect the heritage character of the village and centre, with the focus on the creation of a Structure Plan to inform future Development Control Plan amendments for Station Street and the area known as 'The Triangle'.
3. Improving the pedestrian experience within the village centre through improved shade, street trees, seating, shared zones and periphery car parks.
4. Reducing the speed limits on the town's entrance roads and main street.
5. Improved community services and social inclusion.

In March, Council approved the *Bangalow Village Plan* with two resolutions for further action: to prepare an Implementation Plan and commence work on a Structure Plan for Station Street. Council has now begun actioning these resolutions, marrying the implementation priorities to budget processes and current Shire-wide strategies and plans. Council is seeking the advice of the Bangalow Guidance Group, which represents more than 20 community groups.

Jenny Bird

And the grant goes to...

Bangalow Koalas is one of three successful recipients (from a field of 26 applicants) of the inaugural Northern Rivers Large Grants Program. An initiative of the inGrained Foundation (ingrainedfoundation.com.au), established by Stone & Wood, the program – themed around 'creating connection' – targeted social and environmental projects. Bangalow Koalas will use the grant to fund new planting along a critical link in the planned Byron Bay-to-Lismore koala corridor. It aims to plant an entire forest covering an unused paddock on a property on the edge of Bangalow.

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On the radar



Bangalow Soccer Club's mighty Bluedogs are on a winning streak

Bluedogs the team to beat

The men's open Premier team at Bangalow Soccer Club is having a bumper season. In May, the Bluedogs won the region's Anzac Cup for the first time since its inception 70 years ago – beating Byron Bay 2-1 during extra time in a nail-biting match in Lismore. The Bluedogs then conquered Kempsey in the FFA Cup, advancing to the fifth round – their best-ever result in the nationwide competition. Coach Neil Fuller puts the team's success down to "camaraderie, effort and enthusiasm".

Lorikeet syndrome on the rise

Over the past few years, wild lorikeet populations have been suffering from what is now called lorikeet syndrome – the cause is unknown. Usually loud, lively and gregarious, lorikeets with



Lorikeets affected by the mysterious illness. Photo: WIRES Northern Rivers

the illness display symptoms similar to concussion, a lack of coordination and an inability to fly. Severe cases display staggering, a croaky voice, paralysis, dilated pupils and an inability to blink. WIRES Northern Rivers is receiving more calls from the public about sick lorikeets, with many birds being brought into care for up to six weeks before being released post-recovery. To report a lorikeet that's in trouble, call 6628 1898.

12,000 koala trees and counting

Bangalow Koalas will reach a milestone on 1 June, when the 12,000th koala/ rainforest tree is planted. After just 18 months, the local conservation group is well on the way to creating a koala wildlife corridor connecting properties from Byron Bay and surrounds and out towards Repentance Creek. So far this

year, it has planted trees in Binna Burra, Dudgeons Lane, Ewingsdale, Federal and Coopers Shoot. It's an incredible achievement for what started out as a small community group protecting a 400-metre stretch of koala trees.

Save water and win a rainwater tank

Rous County Council has launched the 160 Litre Challenge water-saving competition. In a region with a rapidly growing population and increases in extreme weather conditions, being waterwise is more important than ever. Run in conjunction with Ballina Shire, Byron Shire, Lismore City and Richmond Valley councils, the challenge is on for community groups, schools and households to come up with innovative ideas about how to reduce water use. There are separate competition categories and prizes

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Waterwise: are you up for the 160 Litre Challenge? Photo: Rous County Council

exceeding \$5500. Community groups, including community gardens, landcare groups and community and youth centres can win a rainwater tank for their public space (up to 5000 litres in capacity, with a maximum value of \$11,500 towards tank and installation costs). One photo or video of your water-saving efforts is all that's needed to enter. Simply email your photo or video to savewater@rous.nsw.gov.au – the competition deadline is 31 July 2019. For more information, see rous.nsw.gov.au/160litrechallenge or Instagram (@160LitreChallenge).

Calling caretakers of the environment

For the past eight years, Bangalow Land and Rivercare has survived mainly through its Patrons of the Environment program, with community funding and support facilitating landcare projects, such as the All Souls' planting and the



Byron Bay Croquet Club is offering free introductory lessons.

rainforest regeneration at the sports fields. Like many volunteer groups, its members are ageing and numbers are dwindling, so the group is proposing to caretake existing work but not start any new projects. Maintenance of existing projects will be reviewed on a year-to-year basis. In preparation, they are now working towards completing all existing projects in the hope that the plantings will naturally regenerate, reducing the need for maintenance. Community support, either donations or labour, are most welcome as it transitions to a different model of landcare. For more information, contact Liz at bangalowlandcare@gmail.com

Croquet anyone?

The Byron Bay Croquet Club, which is the only venue for mallet games in the shire, meets on Monday afternoons, Wednesday mornings and Saturday

afternoons. If you fancy playing, the club offers free introductory lessons for golf croquet and ricochet. Contact Graham on 0477 972 535 or John on 0421 696 680.

Sympathies to the Meanwell family

Deepest condolences to Val and Colin Meanwell, long-time residents of Binna Burra, on the recent death of their daughter, Cheryl, who lived in Bangalow. Both their children – Warren, in 2010, and now Cheryl – have predeceased them, suffering from cancer. Val and Colin appreciate the local community support and effort that's gone into fundraising events to help eradicate this disease, which has devastated their family and those of so many others. After the sad but uplifting farewell service on 10 May, the Bangalow CWA held a morning tea. *Words: Jenny Bird and Helen Johnston*

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The EV revolution: coming, ready or not

The road to an emissions-free future looks bright. For everything you need to know about solar-powering your ride, check out the EV Forum this month. By **Christobel Munson**.

Giles Parkinson with Hyundai's EV Kona.

Photo: Mike Frey



It's no big news that technology has rapidly brought incredible changes into our lives. Scarcely a decade ago, who would have thought that more than two million Australian homes would have solar panels creating fossil-free renewable energy on their roofs by 2019?

Around 2010, the first plug-in, emissions-free electric vehicles (EVs) started being registered to drive on our roads. Today, there are nearly 7000 EV owners in the country, with many cars powered by their own solar energy.

Electric skateboards, cargo vans, scooters, mopeds, motorbikes and outboard motors are also spilling onto the scene – and the first two- and four-seater electric planes are already in use in Australia.

A celebration of this electric transport 'revolution', presented by Zero Emissions Byron, will be held on 8 June at the Cavanbah

Centre in Byron Bay. Billed as the 'Byron EV Forum: the first EV forum in the Northern Rivers', it will bring together "exciting new technologies that will revolutionise the way we move", according to pre-event information, as well as a program of expert speakers.

Local resident and journalist Giles Parkinson will open the event. A former deputy editor and business editor of *The Australian Financial Review*, Giles founded and now edits *Renew Economy* (reneweconomy.com.au) – Australia's most-read website focused on clean-energy news and analysis and climate policy – and *The Driven* (thedriven.io), an insider's guide to electric vehicles. (Both sites are incredibly popular; *The Driven* has 150,000 site visits each month, while, in 2017, *Renew Economy* received The Deni Greene Award for reaching more than 25 million page views.)

Giles says he's noticed "huge interest" in electric vehicles in Australia, "accelerating quickly since Tesla came and changed the conversation, making EVs desirable if not affordable". Tesla's costly Model S landed here in 2014 and the less-expensive Model 3 is expected to arrive soon.

"A lot of people are attracted to electric cars but have been waiting for the price to come down," he adds. "Some are already paying far more than they ever thought they would for a car."

But the pricey Tesla is no longer the only kid on the block. Many other manufacturers are now in on the game, with lower-priced options bringing the possibility of EV ownership much closer. Until fairly recently, hybrid cars were the most affordable means of reducing the use of fossil fuels, halving the



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Australia has nearly 7000 electric vehicle owners.

Photo: Bridie Schmidt

consumption of petrol and being kinder on the environment. Brands from Toyota to Porsche, Mercedes-Benz to Mitsubishi offer petrol-electric hybrid cars.

So, what does Giles think people are looking for in an EV – is range the most important consideration? “A lot of people are happy with the driving experience in an EV. And you don’t have to go to a petrol station, so you’re not polluting the air. With early adopters, range is not so important. They’re very happy to make a change to their charging habits to accommodate driving an EV.

“For a mass audience, range may be an issue,” he adds. “But EVs invite you to think in a completely different way. Conventional ideas change pretty fast. For Australian conditions, I really think it comes down to what suits your own lifestyle.”

Electrify your future

Outside the forum: A range of manufacturers will showcase their latest models at the EV Forum. Hyundai will display the electric version of its Ioniq and Kona. There will also be Teslas (including a number of cars from the Tesla Owners Club of Australia), along with other brands of electric cars, bikes, mopeds and scooters. As well as speaking with salespeople at the event, visitors will be able to hear the ‘real story’ directly from local owners of Tesla, Nissan, Hyundai and other EVs, plus two-wheeled vehicles.

Inside the forum: Environmental films will be screened throughout the day at the Cavanbah Centre, while industry experts will speak from 11am to 3pm on a comprehensive range of EV-related topics, including: Australian Innovation; EV Conversions; Buses and Car Hire; Scooters, Bikes and Trikes; Charging Infrastructure; and Local Policies. See zero Byron.org for the full program.

Kids’ comp: Kids aren’t forgotten, with two design competitions offering great prizes.

For five- to 10-year-olds: Draw a picture of an electric vehicle you’d like to ride in, then bring your entry to the forum by 11am.

For 11- to 18-year-olds: Describe your ideal EV transport solution in under 400 words (illustrate it, too, if you want). Email your entry to zeb@zero Byron.org by 5pm on 7 June. Judging and prize presentations will take place at 2pm on 8 June. Entries will be displayed in the foyer. Entry to the EV Forum is by gold-coin donation.



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Vale Paul de Fina 23.01.53-14.05.19

Paul de Fina's Italian grandparents migrated to Australia from Salina, a small island off the coast of Sicily. Paul grew up in Sydney's seaside Coogee and went to the local Marist Brothers school. He studied town planning on and off for 15 years and graduated from Charles Sturt University. He then married and moved to the Gold Coast, where his first son, Sam, was born, later relocating to NSW's Central Coast, where second son Matthew was born. Paul moved to Bangalow with Sam around 2000 and they were joined by Matthew in 2008.

Matthew remembers Paul as "an amazing dad", adding "I'm gonna lose my best friend and my father". He recalls all the hours they played golf together at what Paul liked to call "The Royal Mullum Golf Course". Says Matthew, "I was with him through his first time with cancer. Then I got cancer and we just had each other's backs."

Mike Dowd remembers his friend, Paul, "always cracking jokes. [He was] an all-round happy type of person. We were good mates."

Paul had a passion for rugby that started as a boy. He joked – but was partly serious – that playing rugby had kept him on the right track and off the streets. It also instilled in him a genuine belief in the power of team sport, especially rugby, to be a positive influence in the lives of young people.

He brought his love for the game with him when he moved to Bangalow, along with a desire to give back to the community, especially to junior rugby. "The rugby club was his extended family," says Matthew.

He played a key role in the formation of the Bangalow Rugby Club (the Rebels) in 2003 and was also instrumental in establishing the

junior club in 2007. He served on the committee and coached junior teams. As their president, he took a genuine interest in individual players and their families, organised social events and fundraisers, cooked a thousand sausages and sold a million raffle tickets.

Every year, he delighted in organising quirky trophies for each junior player and was as proud as the kids themselves when it came to the end-of-season presentation. He even had a hotline to Santa, who appeared at the junior rugby Christmas party for many years – bearing a remarkable resemblance to Paul.

In 2015, he was awarded honorary life membership of the Rebels for his services to the club and to rugby in Bangalow.

Paul worked as a town planner for both Gosford and Byron Shire councils but preferred private practice. "He liked [to keep] his own hours and I think he enjoyed fighting local councils," says Matthew. "Dad always said he would retire, but he never did – he loved his job too much."

Paul served tirelessly on many council/community consultation processes over the years, including the Bangalow Guidance Group that helped develop the village plan.

He had a wry sense of humour that he would pull out of his pocket at crucial moments in meetings, just when everyone needed a circuit-breaker.

"Paul was a man who had his foot in a lot of things. He helped out a lot of locals," says Mike.

But the last word goes to Paul, who said to his eldest son, Sam: "For every tear that's shed for me, I want at least three laughs."

Neil Moran, Mike Dowd, Matthew de Fina and Jenny Bird



Paul at 'Royal Mullum' – when he wasn't on the footy field. Photo: Matthew de Fina

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Community-minded policeman
Senior Constable Dave Feeney.
Photo: Jenny Bird

On the Bangalow beat

I find Bangalow's new policeman, Senior Constable Dave Feeney, off duty and reading a Hulk book to his two-year-old son, Roman. Dave and his family have just moved into the residence next to Bangalow Police Station, having won a hotly contested application process for the blue-ribbon post.

Dave, his wife, Charlotte, and their three children – Anderson, Claire and Roman – are settling in and the older kids have started classes at Bangalow Primary School. "We love the new school. Charlotte and I are relieved at how smooth the transition has been for them," he says.

Dave takes over from Senior Constable Peta Erickson, who has moved to Byron Bay Police Station. "I've got big shoes to fill, but I'm grateful that Peta is still in the area. She will be a great help while I transition into the community."

Having started his career on NSW's Central Coast at the age of 20, Dave has worked in a variety of policing units during his 12 years in the Force, including plain clothes' work with detectives, drug units and targeted response units that focus on recidivists at high risk of reoffending.



But Dave loves community policing and during his previous post in the Great Lakes town of Bulahdelah, he focused on building relationships with the community as well as crime prevention. He initiated programs such as a blue-light disco and a police award at the local primary school. Crime rates went down during his tenure.

"I'm really looking forward to joining and immersing myself into this lovely community," he says. "I am very approachable and would be more than happy to discuss any issues by phone or at the station. I'd like it if people felt safe to share any information with me so that police and the community can work together to reduce and prevent crime." You can contact Dave on 6887 1404. *Jenny Bird*

Locals love... Phil Kingston's hapkido class

Hapkido ("way of focused ki") is an ancient martial art that upholds the core values of truth, honesty, love and perseverance – a philosophy practised by Phil Kingston, who has run Bangalow Martial Arts for the past seven years. At their own pace, participants learn methods of self-defence in a non-competitive environment. The training helps improve breathing, movement, balance, flexibility and conditioning of the body. Regular practice contributes to the wellbeing of the mind, body and spirit. "It's an excellent way to keep fit," says Dennis Mocerino, who has been a member of the club for five years. "We have a great group of men and women who train regularly, and the local coffee and chat after our early classes really kickstarts the day." Training is held four times a week at the RSL Hall in Bangalow. For more details, visit bangalowmartialarts.com

Helen Johnston



Club members (from left) Gabe Muller, Colleen Weaver and Tom Muller. Photo: Phil Kingston

KOALA TREE PLANTING WORKING BEES



We are looking for volunteers to help us plant koala trees. There is **NO** Weeding, **NO** Digging, **NO** Whipper Snipping, just planting trees in pre-dug holes and mulching – **EASY!** So if you can spare a couple of hours please see below for details. **PLUS** as a thank you for your time and hard work there is a sausage sizzle thanks to Bangalow Lions and sandwiches thanks to Julie Frankham.

What you need to bring and wear: Trowels, drinking water, sunscreen. Wear long sleeves, long pants, gloves, fully enclosed footwear, hat.

Planting 2,000 Koala Trees

Date Sat 1st June 2019, 9am start

Where 460 Bangalow Rd, Talofa

Biggest ever planting and marks 12,000 trees planted in 18 months.

Planting 1,500 Koala Trees

Date Sat 29th June, 2019, 9am start

Where 199 Myocum Road, Ewingsdale

Thanks to IFAW.

RSVP: Linda Sparrow on twodogsmedia@optusnet.com.au

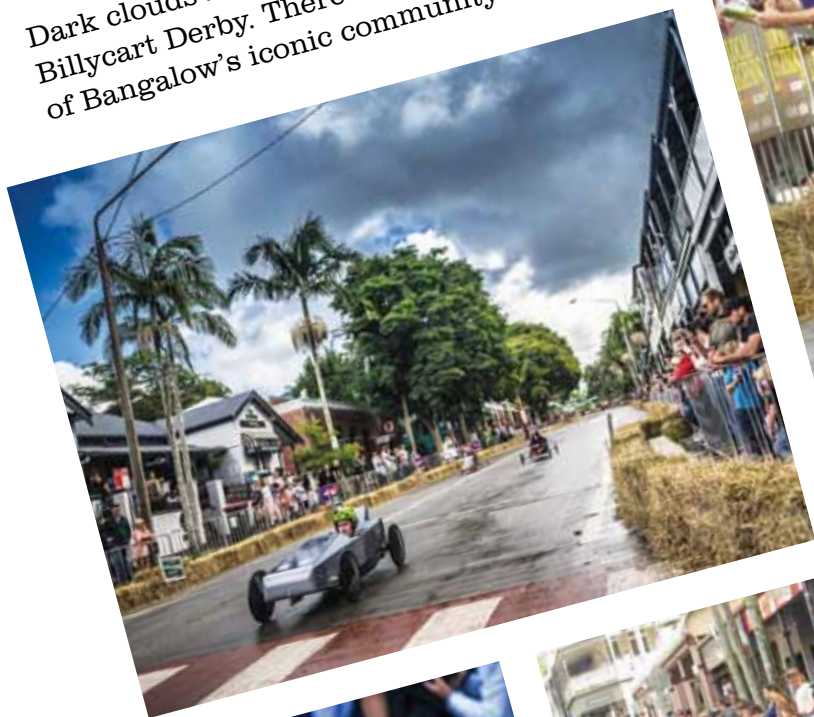
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Bangalow daredevils race

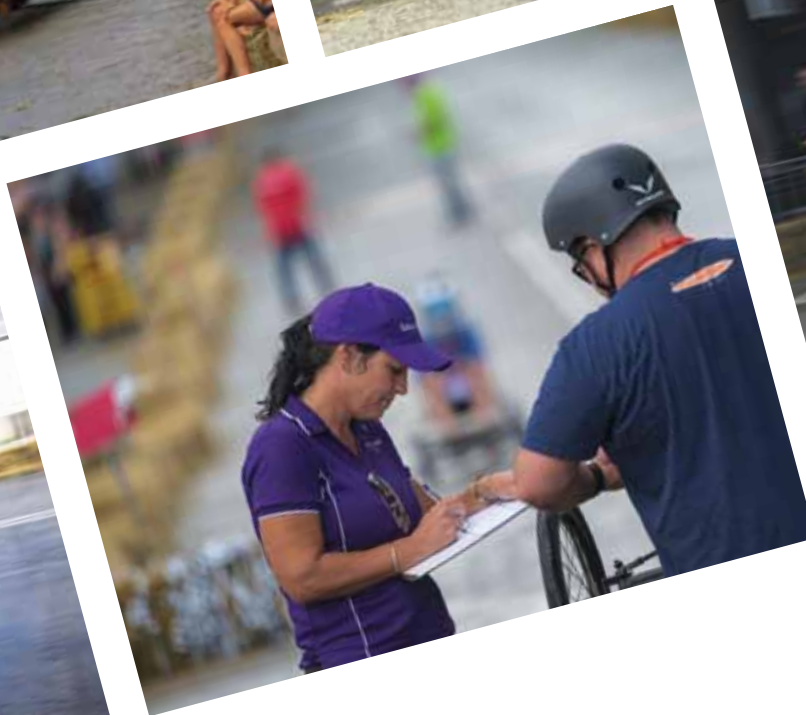
Dark clouds loomed overhead and a treacherous slick of water lined the road, but not even intermittent Billycart Derby. There were bagpipers, a wheelie-bin brigade and all the usual race-day thrills, spills and of Bangalow's iconic community event, brought to you by the Lions Club and a bunch of hardworking





for the chequered flag!

rain could dampen spectators' spirits – or slow down the speedsters – at last month's cart crashing at the bottom of the big hill. Missed the action? Here's our annual wrap-up volunteers and generous sponsors – not to mention all those backyard billycart builders!



Photos: Judy Baker and Mike Frey

Tristan Bancks takes us inside his latest page-turner, *Detention* – a children's thriller with heart.



Tristan Bancks is a local author with many books for young people under his belt, including the award-winning crime and mystery novels *Two Wolves* and *The Fall*, as well as the *Tom Weekly* series. His new novel, *Detention*, is another fast-paced thriller for readers aged 10 and over, which begins with a bungled escape from an immigration detention centre. A 12-year-old Afghan Hazara girl, separated from her parents, is forced to take refuge in a local school. The school is put into lockdown and she's discovered by a 12-year-old boy, Dan, who must decide whether to do her in or help her get away. Here, Tristan reflects on the process of writing *Detention*.

Photo: Amber Melody

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Ten years ago, I was presenting at a school in Queensland when there was a fire drill right in the middle of my talk. We were evacuated, 1200 kids and maybe 70 staff, to the school oval. While we were there, a few teachers and kids told me about lockdown situations they'd been in and I was fascinated. Escaped prisoners, wild animals on the loose, mistaken sightings of suspicious characters on school grounds. While lockdowns could be scary for kids, I wanted to write a book about a class being forced to pull together with their teacher to overcome whatever it was that caused the lockdown.

One of my favourite books as a teen was Gabrielle Lord's *Fortress*. I love stories that take place in a contained space; it's a good scenario for suspense and tension.

I thought about the idea for years but I was busy writing other things. Then my wife told me about a news item where a group of Vietnamese asylum seekers, including five teenagers, were in community detention in South Australia, about to be put back into a detention centre. So they headed out on the run. And I wondered, "What if some of those people took refuge in a school toilet block? And what if the school went into lockdown and one of the students found them? And what if that kid had a choice to either do them in or help them get away?" It seemed like a small and human way to explore one of the biggest and most pressing issues of our time.

The story was initially told entirely from Dan's point of view, the kid who finds her hiding in the toilet block, and we only saw Sima through his lens – but it just didn't seem right. I needed to know what her experience was from the inside. I spoke to a lot of people about this. I knew how much more challenging it would be and that I would need to do my homework in order to write her authentically. I didn't want a story featuring refugees and their experiences to feel sensationalised or stereotyped. I took

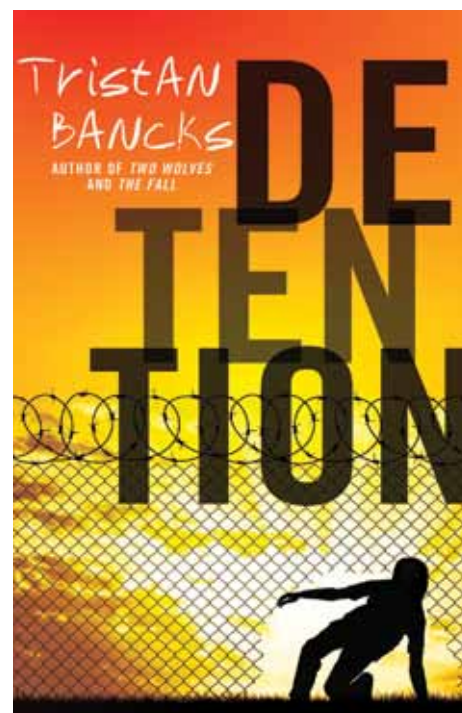
a long time to think about it but I didn't really feel that I had a choice: I needed to know. And it was the best decision I could have made. I had good advisers; people who pushed me to research and explore and understand more deeply what Sima's experience might have been. The process of trying to understand this character and to empathise with her was a profound learning experience.

I had lots of conversations and read a lot about Afghan Hazara people. One of the most well-known episodes in Australia's history of dealing with stateless people was the 'children overboard' disaster in 2001, which involved many Hazaras. The more I learnt about Hazara people, about their resilience, intelligence and ability to survive, the more I knew that I wanted Sima to be Hazara. I read books like Kon Karapanagiotidis's *The Power of Hope* and an extraordinary book called *They Cannot Take the Sky*, stories of detention from people who have lived it and survived.

The book took me about seven years of thinking and note-taking and two years of writing. As with *Two Wolves* and *The Fall*, I didn't outline the book before I began. I had a sense of where I was heading but I like to write like a reader in the early drafts and follow my nose. This is time-consuming and results in lots of dead ends, but it also allows me to uncover gems I might not have discovered if I outlined from the beginning.

I hope readers think it's an exciting story with characters they care about in a high-pressure situation. I hope they read it as a human story rather than a story where an author decided he wanted to teach them something. For me, story and character always come first. But I hope that, after the reading, it provokes interesting questions and conversations and stays with the reader for a long time.

To find out more about Tristan Bancks or read his blog, visit tristanbancks.com



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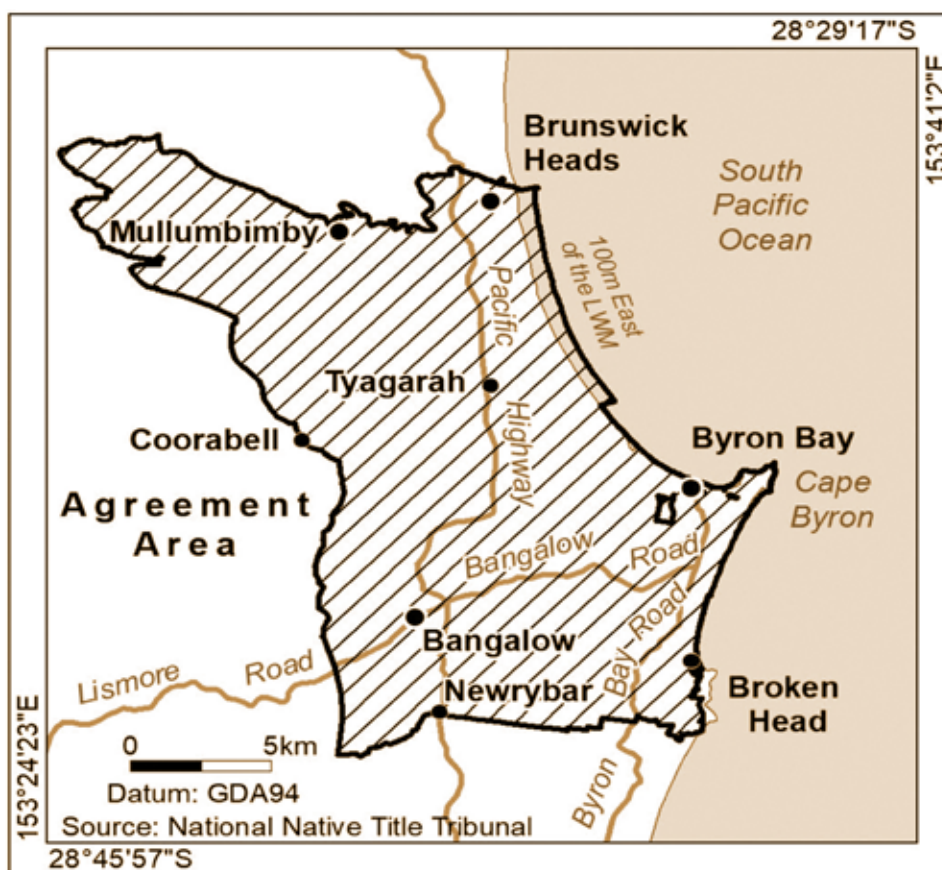
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NATIVE TITLE

Arakwal-Bumberlin native title agreement area (right). Source: National Native Title Tribunal

Bundjalung people's long wait for land and sea rights is over



On 30 April, the Federal Court approved the native title claim of Byron Bay's Arakwal-Bumberlin people, one of 15 tribal groups that make up the Bundjalung Nation stretching from Grafton to Ipswich and Beaudesert and across the Great Dividing Range.

The Arakwal claim to native title has taken 25 years to be determined and recognises the Arakwal-Bumberlin people's pre-existing rights as the traditional owners of the agreement area (see map above). The determination covers an area that includes Mullumbimby, Brunswick Heads, Byron Bay, Broken Head, Newrybar and Bangalow.

According to Native Title Service Corporation chairperson Michael Bell, it is the first positive determination of an area in NSW in an intensely settled part of the state. The determination is non-exclusive, meaning the status quo will be maintained in the area and existing freehold titles are not affected.

The area around Bangalow and Newrybar has "social and ceremonial significance", says

Arakwal spokesperson Delta Kay. "The Arakwal travelled through the Big Scrub to meet other tribes and it was also a source of food." The rainforest bush foods were a regular part of the diet. Roots such as yams were a staple, supplemented with seasonal fruits from lilly pilli, plum, black apple and ash trees, nuts such as macadamias, seeds from bunya pines and native bee honey. The bush also provided pain-relieving medicines, anti-inflammatories, antiseptics and insect repellents. The rainforest was teeming with bird and animal life, including wallabies, pademelons, possums and fish.

The boundaries of the native title claim were determined before the claim was lodged. "The Elders who formed the Bundjalung Elders Council determined the boundaries with all the neighbours," Delta told the *Herald*. "It was critical that we had agreement within the local groups before making the claim." The neighbours are the Minjungbal in the north, the Widjabul to the west and, in the south, the Nyangbul people.

The Arakwal-Bumberlin people have lived around the Byron Bay area for at least 22,000 years. Elders Lorna Kelly, Linda Vidler and Yvonne Graham made the first native title application on behalf of the Arakwal in 1994. Subsequently, three Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUA) were negotiated with NSW. An ILUA is a voluntary agreement, outlining the use and management of land, made between a native title group and other people.

The first ILUA, in 2001, created Arakwal National Park, a joint agreement between Arakwal people and the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. It was the first of its kind in Australia and won an international award for distinguished achievements in wildlife preservation. Two more ILUAs followed.

Delta is very proud of the outcome and is particularly proud of the elders who commenced the claim but are no longer alive. "The process we followed is now used as an example for others in making their native title claims," she says. *Murray Hand*

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Chicken braised with mushroom and thyme

Winter is coming – warm up with a hearty Italian-style braise starring a medley of mushrooms.

The key to getting enough vitamins and minerals in our diet is to eat a variety of colourful fruit and vegetables. In many cases, a food that lacks colour also lacks the necessary nutrients. But this isn't so with edible mushrooms, which are commonly white. Mushrooms are neither a fruit nor a vegetable; they are classified as fungi.

They are the only vegetarian food that can make vitamin D in a similar way to how your skin synthesises the vitamin in response to sun exposure. Mushrooms are also a great source of protein, fibre, vitamins B and C, calcium and selenium, and contain powerful antioxidants unique to themselves. Health benefits include lower cholesterol levels and relief from diabetes due to their low glycaemic index. They can strengthen the immune system and, being 80 to 90 per cent water, can aid weight loss.

Mushrooms also have umami, which naturally enhances flavour without adding sodium. They are found on every continent in the world and therefore used in almost every cuisine. The types of mushroom include enoki, which have long white stems and are known as 'snow puffs' in Japan; and cremini, common button-type mushrooms that are shown to have anti-inflammatory properties.

When choosing mushrooms at the market or grocery store, look for firm, dry and unbruised specimens. Store them in a paper bag in the refrigerator – don't wash or trim until they're ready to use.

Wild mushrooms have been part of the human diet for centuries, but uncultivated wild mushrooms may pose a risk to those unable to distinguish between ones that are safe to consume and those that are not.

With the colder weather upon us, this Italian-style braise is a satisfying winter warmer. If you can't get your hands on a mixture of mushrooms, it's fine to use only one type – though the flavour won't be as

intense. Also, if the liquid is too thick, thin it with a little water. Serve the dish with penne or polenta or just on its own. *Lyn Hand Recipe courtesy of goodfood.com.au*

Ingredients

10g dried porcini mushrooms
100g button mushrooms
150g Swiss mushrooms
150g portobello mushrooms
3 tbsp olive oil
2 small brown onions, sliced
2 tsp chopped thyme leaves
80g rindless pancetta or bacon, finely diced
1 tsp sea salt
600g skinless chicken thigh fillets, cut in quarters
½ tsp Worcestershire sauce
½ tbsp Dijon mustard
¼ cup white wine
1 cup chicken stock
1 cup pouring cream
Freshly ground pepper

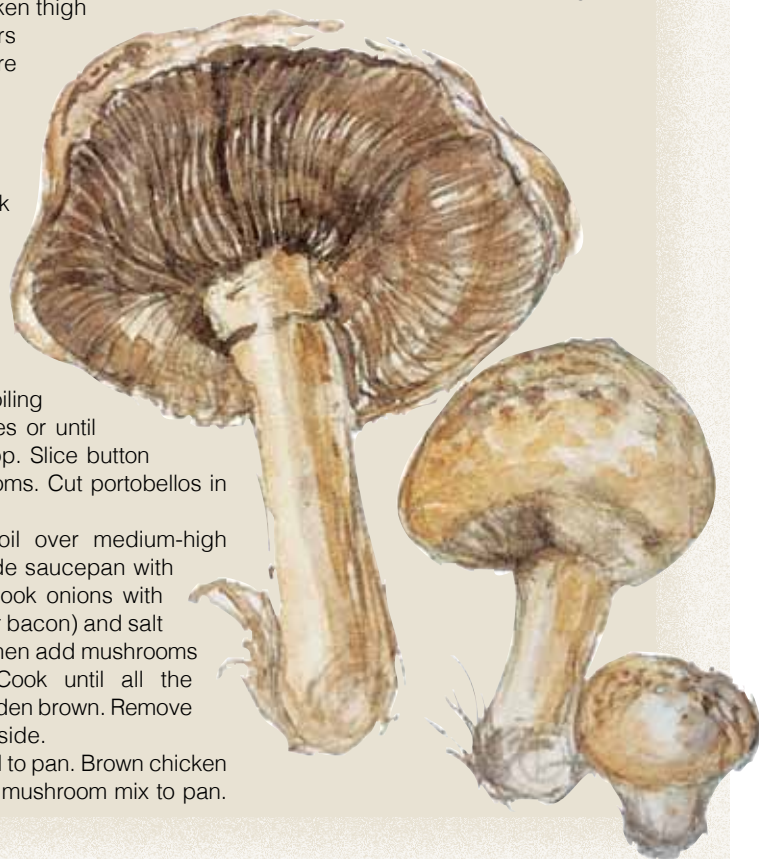
Method

1. Soak porcini in boiling water for 20 minutes or until soft. Drain and chop. Slice button and Swiss mushrooms. Cut portobellos in half and slice.
2. Heat half the oil over medium-high heat in a deep, wide saucepan with a tight-fitting lid. Cook onions with thyme, pancetta (or bacon) and salt for three minutes, then add mushrooms (except porcini). Cook until all the ingredients turn golden brown. Remove from pan and set aside.
3. Add remaining oil to pan. Brown chicken pieces, then return mushroom mix to pan.

Add porcini mushrooms, Worcestershire sauce and mustard and cook for one minute. Deglaze with wine, scraping the bottom of the pan with a wooden spoon. Add stock and bring to the boil. Turn chicken, reduce the heat and simmer with the lid on for five minutes.

4. Add cream and continue to simmer until chicken is tender and sauce has thickened. Add pepper, check seasoning and serve. Serves four.

Illustration: Lyn Hand



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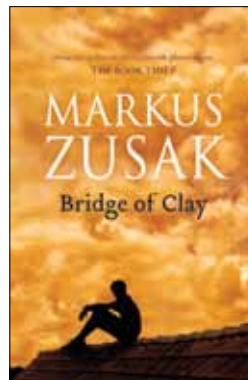
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BOOK REVIEW

Bridge of Clay by Marcus Zusak

The latest novel by Markus Zusak (author of *The Book Thief*) explores the bonds of brotherhood through the family of Michael and Penny Dunbar. Several stories are told throughout the book. One – narrated by the eldest Dunbar son, Matthew – recounts the early life of his mother, Penelope, the daughter of a Russian widower, who covertly plans her escape from communist Russia. The feisty Penny arrives in Australia and eventually meets the divorced Michael Dunbar, a man crippled by his failed first marriage. They produce five boys who, Penny insists, must all learn the piano and be lovers of the classics: *The Iliad*, *The Odyssey* and the mythical *Quarryman*.



Tragedy strikes when Penny is diagnosed with cancer and the boys' father walks away from their life, leaving Matthew to be both parent and breadwinner. Their family home in Archer Street eventually becomes a haven for a number of pets – classically named in honour of their mother, whom they all adored.

In *Bridge of Clay*, a number of great stories are told over three generations, but the principle plot focuses on the survival of the family of boys and their fierce loyalty to, and love for, each other. The loss of their mother hits fourth son Clay the hardest and when their father 'the murderer' returns, it's Clay who will eventually build the familial bridges.

As someone who grew up in a family of girls, I found it difficult to connect with the bruising, rough-and-tumble nature of this household of frequently violent boys. But their tale is engaging and the narrator, Matthew, turned out to be my hero.

Carolyn Adams, *Bookworms & Papermites*, Bangalow
This review was written in partnership with the Byron Writers Festival (byronwritersfestival.com). Catch Markus Zusak at the festival from 2 to 4 August.



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Every row, column and cluster, including the fragmented green cluster, must contain the numbers 1 to 6.



Camellia sasanqua.
Photo: Lyn Plummer

At first blush

Camellias are in full bloom – here are some tips for growing this hardy shrub.

Did you know...?

- Camellias originated in Japan and China but were first seen in England in 1739. They have graced Australian gardens since the very early days of the colony.
- Within the genus *Camellia* sits *Camellia sinensis*, the plant whose leaves and buds are used to produce tea. Its fragrant flowers are white with yellow centres.

Camellias are one of the loveliest easy-care shrubs or small trees we can grow in the subtropics. For those of us who long for a seasonal garden reminiscent of those in colder climes, they are a wonderful choice, their dark, shiny foliage adding structure to any garden. They work well as an understorey plant and are very tidy, needing little care once established. However, they do take time to establish, so be patient.

Always buy a good healthy plant that's as big as you can afford. Camellias have shallow roots, so plant them in a wide, shallow hole in well-drained acidic soil. Keep them well mulched and make sure they have a good soak about once a week over the warmer months, until they are established.

I fertilise in early spring with a slow-release camellia and azalea product, then again in late summer with an organic pelletised fertiliser such as Dynamic Lifter. Disbudding (the early removal of some of the flower buds) will improve the size and quality of the remaining blooms.

Camellias come in a variety of forms. Sun-loving sasanquas make lovely hedges, while japonicas – which prefer shade – have large leaves and spectacular varied flowers. Reticulatas are small trees with sparser, dull foliage and large ruffled flowers. Lutchuensis, my personal favourite, has delicate weeping foliage and small, fragrant white flowers.

Healthy, happy camellias are pest-free and we often see old specimens around town, putting on an abundant display of enormous flowers every autumn and winter.

Carol Lea

The social network



The club's Autumn Feast. Photo: Stephanie Clifford Hosking

Since launching in February, The INClub – run by estate agent Janice Maple – has already attracted 92 members, assisting women of all ages who live in and around Bangalow to connect, grow friendships and have fun.

The club has held four events, including an Autumn Feast lunch and a *Dreamland* theatre night at the A&I Hall, with an event to celebrate the Winter Solstice coming up in June. Plans are in place to launch smaller group activities that focus on fitness and the creative arts, which may suit women who like a more intimate social experience. Janice also wants to make use of all the beautiful venues in Bangalow, including the newly renovated Heritage House after it reopens in July.

Club member Teena Hulbert, a busy stay-at-home mum, says she loves to pencil in an event especially for her. Linda Antonsson, who moved to the area in January from Sydney, says the club has enabled her to meet lots of women from all walks of life. She appreciates that there's no agenda; you can just be yourself as you meet and mingle in a relaxed atmosphere. Shae Bleakley went along to the launch event at Bangalow Guesthouse and found a diverse, interesting and friendly group of women. The word "INClub", she adds, is a clever, modern twist on promoting inclusion, which is important to her.

The club has a closed interactive website (theinclub.com.au) so members have a network of like-minded women to contact if they wish. New members (\$37) are welcome. Helen Johnston

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1	6	4	2	1	5

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Community		
AA (5.30pm Tues)	Richard	0466 885 820
ADFAS	John	0438 778 055
Al-Anon (2pm Fri)		1300 252 666
Bangalow Koalas	Linda	0411 491 991
Bridge	Dennis	6687 1574
Chamber of Commerce		admin@bangalow.biz
Community Children's Centre	Kerry	6687 1552
Co-dependents Anonymous	Gye	0421 583 321
CWA (Wed)	Di	6685 4694
Garden Club (1st Wed)	Annie	0417 636 011
George the snake man	George	0407 965 092
Historical Society/Museum/Cafe		6687 2183
Koala rescue line (24 hr)		6622 1233
Land & Rivercare (8.30am Sat)	Liz	6687 1309
Lions Club (7pm 2nd/4th Tues)	Chris	0416 005 700
Market (4th Sun)	Jeff	6687 1911
Men's Shed	Brian	0413 679 201
Op Shop (9.30am-2.30pm, Sat 9.30am-12.30pm)		6687 2228
Parklands	Lynn	0429 644 659
Park Trust Committee	Jan	6684 7214
Police	Dave	6687 1404
Pool Trust	Jo	6687 1297
Progress Association	Ian	0414 959 936
Poultry Club	Hector	6687 1322
Quilters (2nd/4th Thur)	Helen	6684 1161
Red Cross (1st Fri)	Liz	6687 1195
Scouts (6.15pm Tues)	Jim	0408 546 522
Show Society	Anne	6687 1033
Sport		
Bowls men (1pm Wed & Sat)	Gerry	6687 1142
Bowls women (9.30am Wed)	Dot	6687 1246
Cricket	Anthony	0429 306 529
Netball (3.30pm Wed)	Ellie	0429 855 399
Rugby Union (Rebels)	Dave	0412 080 614
Soccer (Bluedogs)		0434 559 700
Tennis court hire	Denise	0409 579 231
Venues		
A&I Hall	Brian	0427 157 565
All Souls' Anglican Hall	Matthew	0488 561 539
Bowling Club	Chris	6687 2741
Coorabell Hall	Ouida	6687 1307
Heritage House		6687 2183
Moller Pavilion	Karina	6687 1035
Newrybar Hall	Katrina	0410 975 572
RSL Hall	Charlotte	6687 2828
Scout Hall	Karen	0400 591 719
St Kevin's Catholic Hall	Russell	0423 089 684



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Wed Barre Fusion 9.15 - 10.15am & Yin Yoga 6 - 7.15pm
Thurs Yogalates 9.30 - 11am & Gentle Vinyasa 5.30 - 6.45pm
Fri Barre Fusion 6.30 - 7.30 am
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Updated class times & ByronTown/Suffolk timetable see yogalates.com.au



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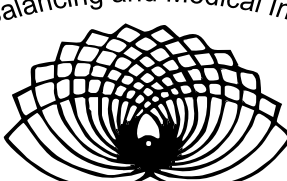
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Check out the latest happenings in and around town.

Bangalow Koalas tree planting

When Sat 1 June, 9am

Where 460 Bangalow Road, Talofa

When Sat 29 June, 9am

Where 199 Myocum Road, Ewingsdale

RSVP Linda.twodogsmedia@optusnet.com.au

Two thousand koala trees will be planted in Talofa, with 1500 more to follow in Ewingsdale. The Lions Club will provide a free sausage sizzle, while vegetarian sandwiches are courtesy of Julie Frankham.

WIRES wildlife training course

When Sun 2 June and 13 October

Where Southern Cross University, Lismore

Contact WIRES Northern Rivers on 6628 1898 or wiresnr@wiresnr.org

The Rescue and Immediate Care course offered by WIRES Northern Rivers prepares you to undertake the rescue and short-



Jamie Birrell and Melia Naughton. Photo: Kate Holmes

Shire Choir

When Thurs 6 June, 7pm

Where Bangalow Hotel

Information Facebook (@theshirechoir)

Tickets \$10 via Eventbrite

An interactive pop-up choir experience for anyone who's ever sung into a hairbrush 'microphone'. Join the fun and learn a classic pop/rock song in three-part harmony with 100 new friends. Led by vocalist and songwriter Melia Naughton from Scarlett Affection and accompanied by multi-instrumentalist Jamie Birrell. Don't miss it!

term care of most native animals. Pre-registration and completion of an online course is essential before attending this introductory workshop. WIRES is always in need of volunteers.

Bangalow Garden Club

When Wed 5 June, 1.30pm

Where Moller Pavilion, Bangalow

Contact: Annie 0417 636 011 or anne.abbink@yahoo.com.au

A representative from the Australian Native Bee Association (australiannativebee.org.au) will talk about the importance of bees to biodiversity and how to attract these insects into our gardens. Lyn Plummer will open her garden in Newrybar for members on Saturday, 8 June; details will be provided at the meeting (bring a mug for afternoon tea).

Old & Gold Festival

When Sat 8 June, 8am-2pm

Where Brunswick Heads village

Information 6685 1003, 0429 150 555 or oldngold.com.au

Celebrating the old, the second-hand and the recycled, Brunswick Heads once again turns itself over to its giant annual whole-of-town garage sale. Browse the stalls, check out the vintage caravan display, enter the marbles competition or raffle and enjoy the live entertainment.

Bangalow Progress Association

When Tues 11 June, 6pm

Where Bangalow Hotel

Contact Ian 0414 959 936

Members and residents are welcome to attend this meeting for an update on the *Bangalow Village Plan* and discussion on the impact of Byron Shire Council's *Residential Strategy* and the NSW Government's

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Bangalow Networking Breakfast

When Thurs 13 June, 7.45-9am

Where Town Restaurant and
Cafe, Bangalow

Contact Rosemarie 0412 575 543
or rosemarietoynebee@gmail.com

Susanna Freymark – editor of
the *Richmond River Express
Examiner*, a novelist and short-
story writer – will share ways
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about your business that can
make a profound impact on
your audience.



Silk and cotton net dress by
drapers Murray and Magee,
South Brisbane (circa 1904).
Photo: Queensland Museum

ADFAS Byron Bay lecture

When Mon 17 June, 6.30pm

Where A&I Hall, Bangalow

Information adfas.org.au,
Facebook (@ADFASByronBay)
or 0417 636 011

In his lecture, *Romance &
Glamour: Dressing Australian
Women during the 19th Century*,
Michael Marendy – clothing
designer, fashion educator
and textile conservationist –
explores the period from 1851
to 1901, when advances in
technology resulted in mass-
produced clothing. Doors open
at 6pm for a welcome drink,
with a light supper afterwards.
Non-members most welcome;
tickets are \$25.

The INClub: Winter Solstice event

When Sat 22 June, 5.30-8.30pm

Where Butcher Baker, Bangalow
Information and tickets
theinclub.com.au

Join The INClub for its special
Winter Solstice social event with
a delicious winter-inspired spread
created by Paul and the team at
Butcher Baker. Tickets include
food and a complimentary warm
mulled wine on arrival. The bar
will be open to purchase drinks.
All women welcome!

Email events for the July issue
to whatson@bangalowherald.com.au
before 10 June.

June diary

1 & 29 Bangalow Koalas tree planting

2 WIRES wildlife training course

5 Bangalow Garden Club

6 Shire Choir

8 Old & Gold Festival; Garden Club
Saturday Visit; EV Forum, Byron Bay

11 Bangalow Progress Association

13 Bangalow Networking Breakfast

17 ADFAS Byron Bay lecture

22 The INClub: Winter Solstice

23 Bangalow Market

Deadlines for July 2019 issue:

Advertising 8 June

What's On 10 June

Copy 12 June

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Photo: Mike Frey

It's a dog's life

Bangalow's dog-walking club has been meeting at the Showground for more than 15 years. We join them for a playful morning stroll.

It's a perfect autumn morning and the dogs are keen to enjoy every bit of it. Douglas is ready for mischief and can smell fresh cow dung in the air. Bindi is taking a wide berth, giving herself a clear run on the dewy grass. Gracie is keen to play – and the puppy's up for it in spite of her size difference – while Toby's keeping a firm eye on proceedings.

Old Benny, a 13-year-old Labrador, prefers to sit and watch these days. He remembers mornings like this from years gone by. He is deaf now and most of his generation are gone, including his partner in crime, Kindra. He likes to watch the young ones, though; it helps with the loneliness.

"Benny is one of the few remaining dogs from the early years," says owner Jo Millar, who believes the club is one of the largest in Bangalow. When her beloved Kindra died recently, she held a wake. Sixteen-year-old

Ruby, the club's last surviving original canine member, dropped by to pay her respects.

Started by Jim Migdoll, who sadly passed away last year, the club has held social events such as Christmas parties and a summer swim club. Ruby's owner, Jo Tracey, remembers the early years fondly, when the group referred to itself as the Greyhound Chasers – inspired by Milo the greyhound's impressive turn of foot. Yvonne Huntley recalls the spectacular sight of Milo streaking across the Showground.

The four-legged friends, along with their owners, meet at the Showground in the mornings and afternoons when the fields are free. On Thursday mornings, the group is made up of an assortment of breeds, including a German shepherd, boxer, border collie, kelpie-cross and Yvonne's irresistible pair of Irish water spaniels, Dodge and Lottie.

"It's all about the dogs," says regular Terry Brown – dogs' names even take precedence in the introductions. "It's an opportunity to observe your dog socialising and get to know them better."

It's clear the dogs thrive in this safe and familiar environment. Eighteen-month old Tutulma had been chained up for six months before current owner Dan rescued her last year. Watching Tutulma and Milly frolic in the autumn sunshine, there are no signs of past trauma.

Terry believes the dogs reflect their owners and, as a collective, they're a friendly bunch. Meanwhile, Jan Hulbert credits dog people as "the cleanest people", always sure to pick up after their dogs. The considerate pooches are also happy to help tidy up after the Sunday market – Douglas particularly likes the banana skins! *Rebecca Sargeant*



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