

HERALD

The Bangalow

FREE | October 2023



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Connecting to Country

Delta Kay on our local history

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ARTS AND ABOUT



Flow by NORPA Featuring Mitch King and Blake Rhodes
 Photo Kate Holmes

FLOW - free outdoor show by NORPA

Gather together for theatre under the stars at FLOW, a free outdoor community event celebrating country, kinship and connection. Told through dance, poetry, video projection and rap, Flow is a yarn about Yaegl country. Inspired by the first native title claim on a body of water, the Clarence River, it's the tale of a man's search to discover more about his story, and our region's shared history. Everyone is welcome for this all-ages theatre concert. Please note this is an alcohol-free event. Book your free ticket via the NORPA website at norpa.org.au

Thursday 16 and Friday 17 November, 7pm at Maclean Showground
Thursday 23, Friday 24 and Saturday 25 November, 7pm at The Quad, Lismore

Bangalow Brackets Open Mic

Enjoy an evening of music and laughs at the Bangalow Brackets Open Mic night every Wednesday night at the Bangalow Bowlo! Running for over 25 years, and hosted by the one and only Dr Baz, this is a chance for local musicians to take to the stage and music lovers to be entertained. Bring your instrument (piano and guitar supplied), your voice, and your friends! Enjoy great company, delicious food, and the incredible sounds of our local music scene. Join the 'Artists for Yes' night on Wednesday 11 October, where performers are invited to pen or prepare a song supporting the Yes vote in the Referendum. The night will be livestreamed on Facebook.

Every Wednesday
Bangalow Bowlo, 7:30pm-10:30pm

Lismore's ceramic artists are back with a bang!

Clay Northern Rivers presents a ceramic pop-up show with the work of 28 local artists on display and for sale. The show offers a variety of functional ceramics, sculpture, ceramic jewellery, unique, handmade pottery and features a children's workshop facilitated by local artist and business owner, Emma Lang from The Maker Place. Clay Northern Rivers is a collective of ceramic artists local to the Northern Rivers region. The group comes together to support each other in their practices and holds community events to raise the profile of their members and engage with customers through markets.

claynorthernrivers@gmail.com
Elevator ARI, 3 Rural St, Lismore
14 October, 8am-3pm

HERALD

The Bangalow

From the Editor

When I was a little girl, I used to help my Pop make jars and jars of his famous chutney or green tomato relish. His not-so-secret sauce – Ezy-Sauce, the friend of many a country home cook – has now been discontinued (a shame but, perhaps, unsurprising). I looked up the constituent ingredients of Ezy-Sauce and found the usual suspects – pepper, cloves, chilli – but also the somewhat alarming warning in ALL CAPS to NEVER INGEST CONTENTS IN ITS CONCENTRATED FORM DIRECTLY FROM THE BOTTLE. The mind boggles.

Since embracing regional life some 15 years ago, and living through a global pandemic, my passion for preserves really came into its own. Locked inside the house with a cupboard full of empty jars and fruit trees laden with produce, what was I to do but bottle? I certainly couldn't afford to BUY fresh produce – the often derided, fusty old cauliflower now fetching up to \$10 a piece at the store, that tasteless salad stalwart iceberg lettuce costing almost the same. Time to sterilise the jars.

First came the cucurbits. The cucumbers seized their chance at veggie patch dominance. One day they'd be as big as your pinky, the next day, another body part entirely. We'd harvest dozens, and more would spring up seemingly overnight.

I mandolined the bejessus out of kilos, readied them for their salty bath, and then got to work on a steaming vat of brine, hunched under the rangehood like a Shakespearean hag. I may have even cackled. Forget turning lead into gold. Pickling is where the real magic happens. Have a go for this year's Show.

Sally Schofield

We acknowledge the original storytellers of the land on which we live and work, the Arakwal people of the Bundjalung Nation.

Editor: Sally Schofield

editor@bangalowherald.com.au

Advertising: Pippa Vickery

advertising@bangalowherald.com.au

What's On: Sally Schofield

whatson@bangalowherald.com.au

Design: Gaby Borgardts - GEEBEE design

Cover image: Bangalow Parklands by Christobel Munson

facebook.com/thebangalowherald

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Contributors: Carolyn Adams, Ben Alcock, Judy Baker, Bangalow Medical Centre, Byron Shire Rebels, Dave Cribbin, Simon Field, Georgia Fox, Carole Gamble, Airdre Grant, Lyn Hand, Murray Hand, Helen Johnston, Neville Maloney, Lyn McCarthy, Christobel Munson, Jo Falser, Asren Pugh, Angela Saurine, Sally Schofield, Sarah Tucker, The Reckoner, Ruth Winton-Brown

Accounts: Sue Franklin

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MICHAEL DODDS

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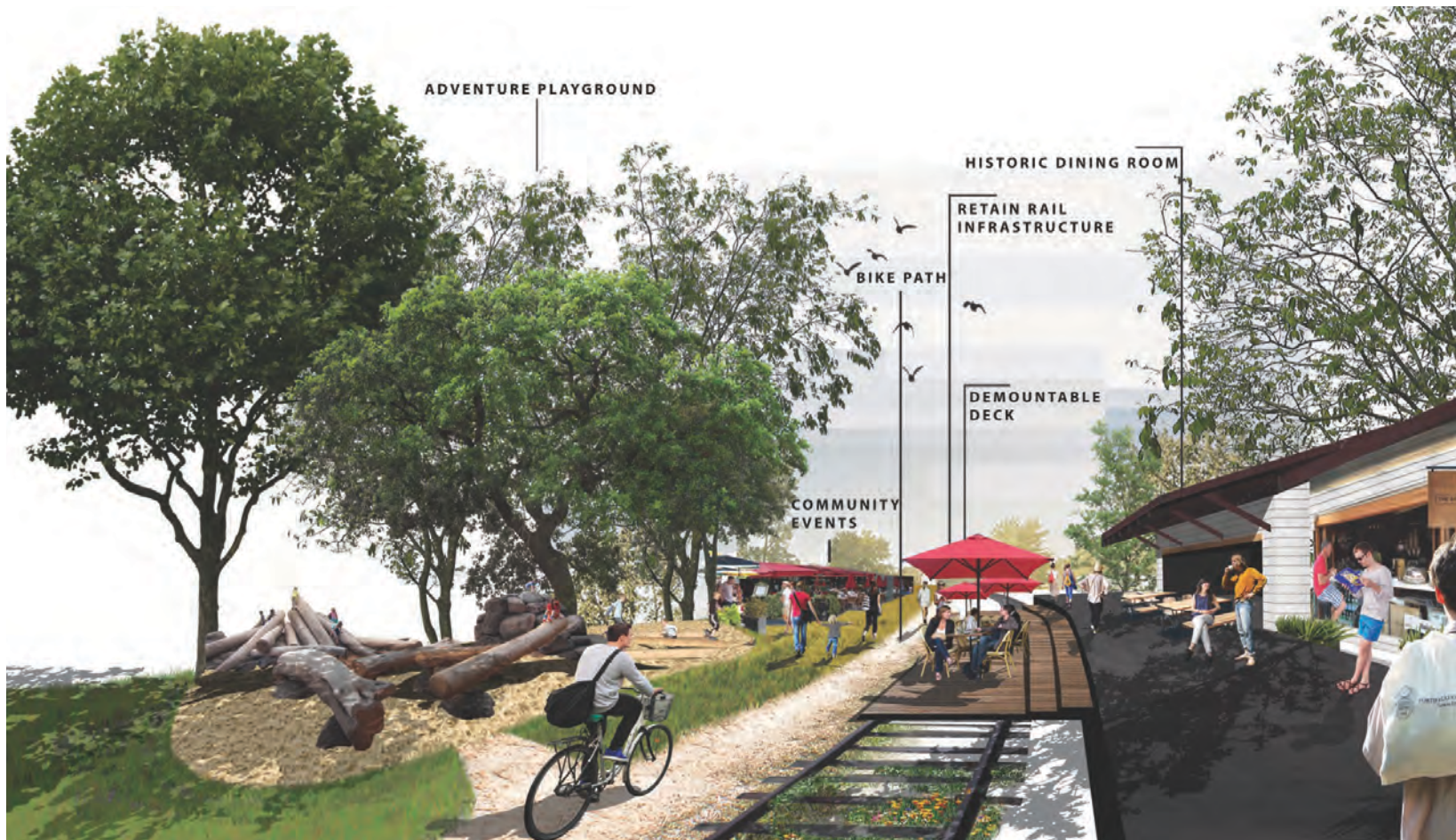
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CONTACT MICHAEL DODDS ON

0491 332 430

michael.dodds@eldersrealestate.com.au



Artist's impression of the Bangalow section of the proposed Rail Trail

The path ahead

The Bangalow community had a great win at the Council meeting on August 24, with a majority of councillors voting to support the Bangalow Shared Path and the Byron Shire Rail Trail projects. Council will now get on with their design and seek State and Federal grants to finally make these projects a reality.

Beginning seven years ago, Byron Shire's approach to using the rail corridor had been based on the idea of 'multi-use'. The idea was that you could get the trains to return and build a rail trail alongside the train tracks. Two studies were reported to council at the meeting that showed it was unviable to have both a path and trains within the rail corridor – we could only pursue one.

The reports looked at the whole length of the corridor from Mullumbimby to Crabbes

Creek and Bangalow to Booyong and tunnels, cuttings, embankments and other restrictions meant that it was simply impossible to have both.

With no viable plan to return trains and with the Rifle Range Road intersection works making it even more unlikely that trains would return, there was really only a choice between supporting the Rail Trail or continuing to do nothing with the corridor. Council will be waiting on train advocates to present a viable plan to return trains on the Mullum to Byron section of the corridor.

A shared path for all residents

The rail corridor runs right through the centre of Bangalow, cutting the town in two. It has lain dormant for nearly 20 years. The Shared Path Project runs from Rifle Range Road, past the Community Children's Centre, under Granuaille Road, to the Public School, the Showgrounds, A & I Hall and provides access to the Sports Fields. The Bangalow Shared Path project was developed by a group of community members over many years, as a path that can be used by walkers, scooters, wheelchairs, runners, bikes, prams and even unicycles for those inclined to do so. The essential thing about its design is that people can get from one end of town to the other without crossing a single road – making it safe for kids and people of all ages.

To get this project over the line, council needed the support of Transport for NSW and the private rail maintenance contractor UGL to access the tracks and deliver the community-led design. While council had previously endorsed the Shared Path Project, the continued uncertainty about the use of the rail corridor, particularly the pursuit of a return of trains, caused confusion for Transport for NSW and UGL. They said they would not support any shared path design within three metres of the existing rail tracks or that went under the Granuaille Road bridge unless the rail corridor was formally closed. If this path could not go under Granuaille Road, it would undermine the whole project, leaving the most dangerous road crossing in town.

Council had been lucky enough to get a grant worth nearly \$100,000 to complete the design. This grant was nearing its deadline and was at risk if councillors had not voted for the Shared Path Project.

A passionate video from the Bangalow Public School SRC students, a letter from the P&C and speeches from Clare Hopkins and Jay Kempnich from Common People Brewing made the case to council about why this project was so important to Bangalow locals.



Connecting to the region

While the shared path through Bangalow is most important for Bangalow, councillors also voted to support building the Rail Trail all the way from Byron, through Bangalow and the Industrial estate, to Booyong.

Every weekend we see locals from Bangalow get in their cars to drive up to Mooball, just to be able to go for a ride on the newly built Northern Rivers Rail Trail. The response to the Tweed section of the rail trail has been absolutely overwhelming, with over 70,000 people using the trail in its first four months, far exceeding the 17,000 they were expecting. How much better would it be if we could all access the rail trail right from our own front doors?

This is now a possibility, with businesses all along the corridor looking at the opportunities it might bring. We would be able to ride out to the industrial estate to go to Common People or the gym. Members of the running club are looking forward to having somewhere local to run safely. We will be able to ride into Byron and to and from the high school safely. When Lismore Council gets on board with their section of the Rail Trail, we would even be able to ride out to the wonderful Eltham Pub and back.

The rail corridor as community space

There is a great swathe of open green space in front of the old Bangalow station, right in the middle of town, that currently occasionally gets mown by UGL and is mostly unused. As part of the decision, council will be seeking a lease over as much of the corridor as possible to look at for community uses, environmental rehabilitation, options to help fund the upkeep of the Rail Trail and in some parts of the corridor, opportunities for diverse housing.

We will have to look at the space through Bangalow and make decisions as a community about what we want to do with it. What do you think we should be do with the old station and the green space out front?

The fight is not over

There is still a long way to go for the whole Rail Trail project. We will need to ensure councillors don't backtrack on their decision. We will need to get the designs right and, most importantly, we will need to lobby the State and Federal governments for the funds to make it happen.

Asren Pugh

Correction

The article 'Land Lovers' on page 10 of the September edition, should read 'As doctors, they are aware that one farmer takes their own life every four days, and so understand the pressures of farming.'

Source: Judd F, et al 2006 'Understanding Australian farmer suicides' in *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology* 41: 1-10



Delta Kay at Bangalow Parklands Photo Lyn McCarthy – Niche Pictures

Bundjalung woman Delta Kay is teaching everyone from school students to corporate groups about Bangalow’s Indigenous culture and history, writes *Angela Saurine*.

Sitting on a rock under the bridge at Bangalow Parklands, Delta Kay looks across the creek and tries to imagine what it would have been like before Europeans arrived. She sees children swimming, men spearing fish, women hunting for yabbies. It’s a scene not too dissimilar to the one seen on the mural on the nearby toilet block. Painted by local artist Sam Wortelhock, the mural depicts the park’s history from pre-European settlement to the felling of The Big Scrub, to the eras of dairy and orchards and the regeneration of native forest.

“As you can expect, the fresh waterways have an abundance of food, like yabbies and fish, and are places where Bundjalung people would gather traditionally,” Delta says. “The rainforest was like a shopping mall. You can see how pristine the country was. Then around 200 years ago the Europeans came and cut down the beautiful timbers and those hard-hoofed animals they bought here eroded and destroyed Bundjalung country.”

The Bundjalung Nation stretches north to the Logan River in Brisbane, west to the Great Dividing Range and south to the Clarence River, which passes through Grafton. Delta knows there are many sacred men’s and women’s sites throughout the hinterland that her mum used to point out when she was a child, but because they are on private land, she hasn’t been able to access them.

Delta, who grew up at Belongil Beach, began running her Explore Byron Bay cultural tour at



TAMARA SMITH MP
MEMBER FOR BALLINA

Authorised by Tamara Smith MP, Member for Ballina. Funded using parliamentary entitlements

SAVE THE ACTIVE KIDS VOUCHER FOR FAMILIES

In a cost-of-living crisis, we shouldn't be cutting relief for families.

Hundreds of families across our region rely on the support provided by the Active Kids Voucher to get kids participating in local sports. But now, the NSW Labor government is halving the number of kids eligible for vouchers, and cutting the amount provided from \$100 to \$50.

The government needs to step up and support local families. We should fully fund the Active Kids Voucher.



SCAN HERE

to sign the petition!
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Photo supplied

Cape Byron in 2020, launching a Bangalow Bush Tucker tour the following year. She has fond memories of Bangalow Parklands from her own childhood. "As soon as the north winds started blowing and the bluebottles came in, we'd nag Mum and Dad to bring us here," she says. "We'd swim, climb trees and eat bush food. That's why it's so close to my heart". When she decided to drive there to see her childhood swimming pool, she was surprised to see vast swathes of native bushland, which had been planted by Bangalow Parklands group and Bangalow Land and Rivercare. "I was so excited," she says. "My chest felt tight because this is how Bundjalung country should look, with all this diversity and plants and rainforest foods that Mum taught me about. I thought I have coastal tours, now I can do rainforest tours. There's been a lot of change since I was a child, but what the Bangalow Parklands group and the Landcare crew have done here is restoring country and that's the vision of my elders."

Delta also teaches students cultural tour guiding at Ballina TAFE, works with corporate groups and hosts an educational program for students from pre-school to Year 12, known as the Jarjum School Program. She shares traditional Dreaming stories that have been passed down from her ancestors and teaches some words from the Bundjalung language, as well as about tools, weapons, artefacts, natural medicine and bush tucker, such as lemon myrtle and native thyme. "People are curious about native food," she says. "A lot of locals have done my tours, and then they bring their visitors. Kids are asking for bush tucker tours for their birthday parties. Now people are learning about Aboriginal culture from the first source, from Indigenous people. I share the story of Junbung the platypus and why it's so special, my childhood growing up here and how important it is to look after the outdoors, because everything is connected. There's been a huge shift as people want to connect with nature. Nature is healing. That's a really big part of the tours. We should be



Delta Kay Photo Lyn McCarthy – Niche Pictures

looking after Mother Earth, because she looks after us."

When it comes to the Indigenous Voice Referendum on October 14, in which Australians will vote on a change to the Constitution to create an advisory body that will make recommendations to the Parliament and on matters relating to its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, Delta says it is a way for the nation to move forward in a positive way. "It doesn't affect white people," she says. "There's no reason to fear. It's going to be about issues like Aboriginal health, housing, employment and keeping our children out of jail. Imagine how much money we're going to save. We want to give them love, culture and connection. It's another step towards reconciliation."

The Herald called out to community asking for alternative perspectives on the Referendum. We received three responses and in the interests of balance, these opinions have been published on our website.

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Parklife

Boulder Rockway in the Bangalow Parklands

Christobel Munson goes deep into the features and facilities of the unique green oasis, Bangalow Parklands.

The year 2023 has brought new life and energy into the precinct currently known as Bangalow Parklands. Just a short walk away from the main commercial street of Bangalow, this 2.67ha (6.6 acre) area bordering Deacon Street provides residents of the town and hinterland, as well as countless visitors, with a designated green space, the envy of many other villages of this size.

Locals will be well aware of the two kids' playgrounds, the rotunda, the delightful Byron Creek meandering around its periphery, the open grassy areas (perfect for picnics), the numerous plantings of mainly native species and – let's not forget – the vital public toilet

block, beautifully enhanced with a mural depicting the history of the area going back thousands of years.

But this park precinct is more than just a pretty place.

In the post-COVID time, many different branches of our community have focused their activities in and around the park.

The Men's Shed is located to its west, offering exercise classes, art and woodworking classes, a Blues and Jazz group, even table tennis.

The well-loved and frequented Op Shop – known far and wide for its vast collection of second-hand clothing - is in the Anglican Church grounds to the east of the park.

The Bangalow Land and Rivercare group meets regularly to maintain and enhance its massive plantings around the park – the highlight of which must be their cool, green



creekside walk. In 2014 and 2016, the Landcare group obtained funding for (and organised the planting of) nearly 4,500 now-mature rainforest trees along the creek, just one of the many projects it has undertaken in the area since it began in 1998.

The small but perfectly formed Parklands group works with the Council's Open Spaces team to maintain many areas of the park, enhancing it by establishing garden pods of native and bush tucker plants. The Council's busy Bush Regen team recently substantially upgraded the Wetlands. (Did you know these Wetlands serve to trap and filter flood waters, removing pollution and providing fish and wildlife habitat?)

A workshop offered by the 2023 Byron Bay Writers Festival, had Dr David Roland making use of the Parklands environment to encourage participating writers to tune into nature for support and inspiration in a session titled 'Nature Connection for Creativity'.

Between 2011 and 2021, Bangalow's population grew by 48.7%, and, with the trend towards smaller house blocks, more families are looking to the park for recreational space. This park is now well known as the ideal space for kids – and adults alike - to 'swap screen time for green time'.

The Bangalow Historical Society's Heritage House (the House), on the corner of Ashton and Deacon Streets, is at the park's heart, with many community groups, individuals and families making use of its facilities. At its September 2023 Annual General Meeting, President Trisha Bleakley rattled off a list of the activities happening in the House since reopening in February.

The museum is open four days a week, but the House itself has rapidly become a community hub. Apart from staging three historical exhibitions to date this year, the Society has hosted garage sales, cake stalls and a craft fair, with another scheduled for November. It caters for funerals and wakes,



Parents and kids enjoying the nature playground
Photo Terry Bleakley

and has provided the space for weekly yoga classes, a meeting of a Christian group, meetings of the YES group, the CWA and visitors from Feros, an outing of 52 seniors from Burleigh Heads, monthly meetings of Community Connect, information days and meetings of Beacon Laundry, a new community business. The overhead screen and projector are proving extremely useful for small groups.

Kids' days at the museum are attracting keen interest from primary school-aged kids. One, in particular, was a hit: the 1950s games day, where youngsters could experiment with such toys as slinkies, hula hoops, dominoes, drafts, and knuckles. In keeping with the theme, 'fairy bread', milkshakes and Choo Choo bars were also available.

The Historical Society has also partnered with Zero Emissions Byron - and with the support of the Byron Shire Council Sustainability team - to create a demonstration Eco House. The dream is to retrofit the House to showcase 'best practice' sustainable innovations, materials and products. To date, with the additional backing and support of Community-Owned Renewable Energy Mullumbimby (COREM) and Rous Water, this small team has had consultant's reports prepared to show how residents can reduce the cost and use of both water and energy in a late 1890s-built, relocated wooden Queenslander house. The project is known to some as 'Pimp My Queenslander'. Already its energy costs have been reduced by taking up the consultant's suggestions, with more planned.

Falling back to its primary purpose, at the Historical Society's AGM, historical researchers Tanya Pearson and Fiona Smith made a presentation about the vast number of fires that demolished many wooden buildings in Bangalow's early days. (Were you aware that between 1907 and 1939 there were seven major fires in the main street, after which, insurance companies refused to provide buildings with insurance unless they were brick-built?)

Behind Heritage House is a car park, the space cunningly repurposed (thanks to a Parklands team grant) from its former use in the distant past as a cattle dip site. Up to 43 car park spaces are well used on monthly market days and when the town holds events like the Writers Festival, the Billy Cart Derby, Christmas Eve Carnival and the Bangalow Chamber Music festival.

The rotunda, also built with funds from a grant obtained by the Bangalow Parklands team, is used day and night for a variety of community activities such as tai chi, yoga and singing classes, and being a prime location - in town and in nature - for birthday parties.

Not many towns with a population of 2,808 can boast such a well-loved and well-used park in the centre of town, made popular thanks to the volunteer work of so many community groups, families and individuals. Best of all, entry doesn't cost a cent.



The Voice is above party politics.

Because people from all sides of politics support recognising Australia's Indigenous peoples in our Constitution with a Voice.

For more detailed information, head to yes23.com.au

Join the movement and make history!

If you can help hand out on Referendum Day, or support our campaign in the community, please contact:

Justine Elliot MP
 Federal Member for Richmond

(07) 5523 4371
justineelliot.com.au
justine.elliot.mp@aph.gov.au
www.facebook.com/JustineElliotMP

Authorised J Elliot, ALP, Tweed Heads South

LIVING LOCAL

The state's fire commissioner last month warned that this year we are poised to experience the worst bushfire season since 2020. To plan ahead, a two-day exercise involving multiple agencies was conducted to test emergency response teams in August in Bushfire HQ, Sydney, and communities across Australia held their Get Ready Weekend events in September.

For all emergency service crews, the last three years of La Nina's high rainfall has turbo-charged vegetation growth, causing concern for fire-prone areas. It's meant burn-offs have been hampered, so the state is not where it needs to be in terms of hazard reduction, plus experts are forecasting fires to commence earlier due to prevailing warm, dry conditions. There have already been several grass fires in the area and more are expected as we move into the warmer months.

As a result, many high-risk local government areas decided to commence their Bush Fire Danger Period a month earlier due to the increased fire risk, with Byron being one of the 32 areas gearing up for the season from the first of September.

Despite these challenges, Fire and Rescue New South Wales (FRNSW) Bangalow's Deputy Captain Mellissa Madden, says there is still plenty residents can do to mitigate risk, and it comes down to having a plan.

FRNSW Spring campaign will focus on helping communities safely clear clutter and dispose of potential fire hazards in their home and gardens.

Some actions our communities can take to reduce risk include:



Fire prevention in 2479

The Bangalow FRNSW recently attended a grassfire on Lismore Road. Pictured are FF Martin Reaney (on hose), FF Shane Olive on the McLeods Tool, and Motor Driver/Pump Operator, FF Gary Seaman. Also present were Captain Andrew Hill and Deputy Captain Melissa Madden Photos supplied

- Dust and check smoke alarms
- Clear lint filters regularly
- Check and replace damaged or frayed electrical cords
- Safely dispose of any flammable liquids
- Roll, don't fold when storing electric blankets
- Safely dispose of, or recycle, lithium batteries
- Safely store flammable materials such as paints and cleaning products
- Degrease oven, stovetops and rangehoods
- Clear leaves and debris from gutters
- Check and maintain BBQs
- Organise and declutter garages
- Review and update your family's fire and emergency plan
- Remove obstacles and clutter from emergency exits

There are four key steps to a survival plan. The first is for households to discuss what to do if a fire threatens their home. Having a conversation with your family about where you will go, when, and what you'll take will

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reduce panic at the time. Consider pets and livestock and what you will need to do in the event of an emergency, preparation is key.

A FRNSW Home Fire Emergency Plan can help guide this conversation.

Second, prepare your home for bushfire season.

- Trim overhanging trees and shrubs.
- Keep grass low and remove cuttings. Have a cleared area around your home.

- Remove material that can burn around your home (eg, wood piles, mulch, leaves, paint).
- Clear and remove debris from gutters. Embers can set your home on fire.
- Prepare a sturdy hose(s) that reach around your home. Have a reliable source of water.

The third step is knowing bushfire alert levels of active fires in your area. You can find this information on the NSW Rural Fire Service website rfs.nsw.gov.au and in the 'Fires Near

Me' app, which can be downloaded to your smartphone.

Importantly, the lighting of fires during bush fire season, including backyard fire pits, requires a permit. You can lodge this request for free via the local fire control centre for Byron, based in Mullumbimby.

The dangers of lithium-ion batteries

According to Fire and Rescue NSW, lithium-ion batteries are the fastest growing fire risk in the state. The reason is their high energy dosage and the fact they contain electrolytes that are highly flammable.

What is a lithium-ion battery?

They come in various formats, shapes, and sizes; cylindrical, flat, rectangular, pouches and as devices themselves. They're hard to identify, as there is no requirement to label them, however, most will contain the words 'lithium ion', 'Li-ion', 'Li-po', 'Lithium-polymer', or some other variation of 'Li'. They are found in electronic devices, e-bikes and electronic vehicles, just to name a few.

How do they catch fire?

When lithium-ion batteries fail they undergo a bursting of one or multiple battery cells, hissing, and the release of toxic, flammable, and explosive gases. The result is an intense, self-sustaining fire that can be difficult to extinguish. Instances include:

- Overcharging or use of non-compliant charging equipment
- Overheating or exposure to heat or extreme temperatures
- Physical abuse (eg, dropping, crushing, piercing, and/or vibrations)
- Short-circuiting, battery cell malfunctions or system faults
- Store batteries and devices away from heat or moisture
- Don't leave phones, computers or chargers in direct sunlight
- Don't use items that show signs of swelling, bulging, leaking, overheating or damage

How do I prevent a fire?

- Purchase from reputable manufacturers and suppliers
- Only use chargers supplied or certified third-party equipment compatible with the battery
- Check chargers bear the Regulatory Compliance Mark
- Once a device or battery has been fully charged, disconnect it
- Don't charge on combustible and insulating surfaces such as beds, sofas or carpet
- Charge larger batteries, power tools and electric scooters away from living spaces

How do I recycle lithium-ion batteries in the Byron Shire?

Lithium-ion batteries should not be placed into household waste bins or recycling bins. This is especially important for batteries that are damaged or have had liquid leaking.

Undamaged batteries can be safely disposed at the Myocum or Ballina Waste Management Facility.

Batteries can also be disposed of safely at ALDI and Officeworks.

It is recommended battery terminals (either end) are covered with tape and placed in a clear plastic bag.

The Bangalow Herald

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Bangalow & Lennox Head



Singing your heart out



Melia Naughton getting into character Photo Hamish McCormick Carnival Cinema



Multitalented musical powerhouse, Melia Naughton Photo Lyn McCarthy – Niche Pictures

Melia Naughton is a busy woman. She sings, acts, composes and plays music. Melia has her finger in many creative pies around the Shire. Here she tells Lyn McCarthy all about her current projects and her very first triangle solo.

"I think a lot of people were told, when they were kids, 'oh, stop it ... you're singing flat,' or urghh you're out of tune, maybe you should mime?" But it's just not true. In becoming a Natural Voice Leader I'm reminded of the vitality and uniqueness of our voice and to celebrate each voice, however it shows up, wherever it's placed, whatever it sounds like... it's your birthright to use it. I get goosebumps just talking about the power of that.

I love performing but I'm also deeply passionate about sharing the fact that we've all got a voice and we can use it. It was the inspiration for both the Shire Choir and the Singing Circle, a one-hour weekly session for women that I've been leading for five years. We gather and express ourselves, learning songs from around the world; lots of rounds, lots of harmonies, improvisation and exploration, trying out different colours and textures. the palette of the voice and the different shades that we can use.

Shire Choir is such a lot of fun. Usually because alcohol is involved. Well, it is held at the pub! But really, it's such an uplifting community event. So non-threatening, so joyous. You're in a room full of other people, just like you, there are no solos and you can't actually hear your own voice in the mass of the collective voice. It's safe and I think people love the experience of just using their voice in a big room of other humans. It's a pop-up so whoever is in the room is the choir. We choose songs that you probably know from your own

back catalogue, rock and pop songs that are familiar. We arrange each song into three parts and make it our own.

It's all about community. That notion is really important to me actually, because I've been so supported by the local community. I feel like the Choir is a beautiful giving back, a really nourishing interaction, because I'm getting so much from it too. What I understand from people who come along is that it's a great reason for them to be with other people with a connecting common purpose and to just enjoy themselves.

We've just received a grant from Byron Shire Council for a 'Community Feel Good Tour' with the idea of uplifting our community post floods. It's so good that Council recognises the value and the power of singing together. We'll be backed by a live band, the Birrell Bros and we performed at Eureka Hall and Newrybar Hall in September, with dates at Coorabell Hall and the Brunswick Picture House in October, and it will all be free. So, it's really exciting that we can do this for the community.

I'm also loving an extension of The Shire Choir that we've created called Sounds of the Shire Choir. It emerged because we did this dynamic collaboration with DJ Groove Terminator at the Byron Music Festival. He works with the Soweto Gospel Choir and he told us he wanted something like that. I'm like, 'Well, we're not the Soweto Gospel choir,



Melia and New Blood co-creator Mikey Bryant share a moment
Photo Hamish McCormick Carnival Cinema

but we are a great collection of local voices.’ We performed a medley of five songs while he was live DJing. That was a brilliant experience. We closed the recent Cabaret BanGala with one of the songs *Love is in the Air* by John Paul Young.

Besides the Choir work, I recently co-wrote the musical score for the Spaghetti Circus show *Monumental* at the Brunswick Picture House, with an amazing musician called Sue Simpson. I learned a lot from her, she’s really incredible. I loved the buzz of performing every night and how I had to stretch myself as a musician and collaborator. I play piano, guitar and sing but for *Monumental* I had a triangle solo (!) and I played percussion which I’d never done before. Performing alongside trapeze artists was a first for me. We’re hoping to remount the show next year for the National Circus Festival.

There’s also a murmur about a return season of *New Blood* the musical. Five of us (Anouska Gammon, Joel Cooper, Mikey Bryant, Elodie Crowe and myself) wrote a musical from scratch which was a pretty bold thing to do. We had sold out seasons locally and we were invited to perform at the Adelaide Fringe. I feel that it’s a really powerful work that speaks particularly to people who live around here. It’s all about development and progress and being local and belonging, and what it means to be part of a community.

And then there’s The Gumboots, which is an original band entertaining kids and their adults led by me with Elodie Crowe and Ben Cox. We played at Little Splendour and a few other local festivals. It’s a three piece and we’re all wearing gumboots, of course. We perform funny songs about cockroaches and leeches and ticks and fire engines, songs that I’m getting a big hit of satisfaction out of as a writer and performer, because I love playing with lyrics. And I get to play guitar. An electric guitar!

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“There has always been a tradition of song in community life”.



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Blueberry fields forever

Photos Lyn McCarthy – Niche Pictures



Jascha Saeck

Every year, the Bangalow Show's featured a show-stopping baked goods finale – the Tart of the Show. This year's key ingredients are blueberry and lemon, so the *Herald* connected with local blueberry growers, Jascha and Otto Saeck, to get the lowdown on growing this delicious, nutritious berry in the 2479 area.

Back in 1994, Otto Saeck and his wife Lynette bought their 65ha (160 acres) farm, Blueberry Fields, at Brooklet. Their beautifully positioned, relocated Queenslander home overlooks

undulating hills, growing over 100,000 blueberry bushes. Smaller quantities of figs, raspberries and blackberries diversify their production lines.

Many of the blueberry fields are necessarily shielded from ravaging seasonal storms with hail netting over 32 ha (80 acres), a very costly but essential protection. Despite the high cost per hectare, the nets aren't infallible. "Weather is the big killer," Otto says.

Farming methods have changed over the decades this family has worked the land. "In the early days, commercial growers needed to supply to wholesalers, who just wanted to make money and who didn't care how the product was grown. Once we started having stalls at the local farmers' markets our customers told us what they wanted, and didn't want."

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Blueberries on the bush

For this reason, they returned to what they term the “old-fashioned way of farming”, growing plants in organically rich soil. “We focus on enhancing and utilising what nature has provided to sustainably grow the best quality, nutritious berries. Water, wildlife habitat and biodiversity, all benefit,” Otto said. “More than treating the fruit tree, we focus on treating the soil and ecosystem,” Jascha added. “It’s expensive, as more labour is needed and there are higher input costs, but it’s worth it.”

Added to a core staff of around eight, seasonal workers provide the people power to pick the fruit for nine months of the year. Only February, March and April are down-time months. Fruit doesn’t all ripen on the same bush on the same day, so it’s vital to have pickers on hand to progressively harvest the fruit.



Otto Saeck

While Otto created and built up the business over the decades, today it’s son Jascha who has the role of general manager, while Lynette provides the admin needed, making it very much the family affair. As GM, Jascha handles “everything, all aspects of the farm, from HR, to managing staff, accounting, even welding, sales, PR and labour.” It’s not big news that a farmer needs to be a versatile jack-of-all trades.

Otto and Jascha make a point of taking good care of their workers. “We’re proud to provide safe and fair employment opportunities for local and seasonal workers, and thank them wholeheartedly for their support in undertaking essential farming work,” Otto says. Their website carefully details how visitors to the area - such as backpackers on a working holiday – can earn some cash, and describes the work as “gentle, physical outdoor work.

Bushes are pruned to 1.5m so there is little bending and no ladder work. But often it will be hot, and some people find it tedious.” Pickers are paid “piece rates”, meaning that the more berries that are picked, the more money a picker earns. Just the same, these days they are finding it more difficult to find backpackers who are prepared to work hard.

You’ve probably bought blueberries from their stalls at one of four local farmers markets: Bangalow, Byron Bay, New Brighton and Murwillumbah. They also wholesale them to a Sydney company, Morco Fresh, who then distribute the berries to independent grocers. Prices range from \$10 for 250g of blueberries, \$20 for 600g in a cardboard box, or \$30 for the 1kg white plastic tub. Prices are discounted if you BYO your own container. “It’s like having your own Keep Cup,” Jascha comments. “If you bring your own container, you’ll save money, which we encourage.” You may even have driven out to the Fernleigh Road stall outside the farm gate, where the smallest tubs are on sale.

Over the years, in addition to farming, the crew has planted 15,000 native Big Scrub rainforest trees along 1.5km of riparian corridors around the property. Sourced from Firewheel Nursery, the native plants encourage local wildlife and flora, and attract insects. Lynette has become a keen birdwatcher, eager to identify more and more bird species, while there are 15 native beehives placed around the farm to encourage pollination. Currently, in two large dams on the property, more than six platypus are currently muddying the waters as they build nests for their young to come.

Asked for their favourite blueberry recipe, both Otto and Jascha emphatically prefer to simply eat them fresh.

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Lemon and Blueberry Crinkle Pie

Blueberry and lemon pair together so well, combined with super-crunchy filo pastry, this is a simple but oh-so-delicious pie.



Illustration Lyn Hand

INGREDIENTS

- 375gm filo pastry, at room temperature
- 250gm butter, melted
- 600ml thickened cream
- 200gm caster sugar
- 5 eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla bean paste
- Zest of 2 lemons
- 125gm blueberries
- Icing sugar for dusting
- Flaked almonds to sprinkle on top

Blueberries have many health benefits due to their rich nutrient profile. They are antioxidant powerhouses, containing anthocyanins that protect cells from free radical damage, potentially reducing the risk of chronic diseases like cancer and heart disease. Blueberries promote heart health by lowering blood pressure and reducing LDL cholesterol levels. Blueberries also support blood sugar regulation and digestive health due to their low glycemic index and fibre content. They also contain vitamin C for immune support and taste delicious!

TO MAKE

1. Preheat oven to 180°C. Brush a 30cm round tin with butter.
2. Combine thickened cream, sugar, eggs and lemon zest into a jug and whisk to combine. Set aside.
3. Lay one sheet of pastry onto your work surface (I use a silicon sheet), with the short side of the pastry facing you. Brush with melted butter and lay a second sheet on top.
4. Fold the pastry into a concertina shape. Transfer folded filo into the centre of your tray, and coil it up like a rose. Repeat with remaining filo until tray is full.
5. Brush with remaining butter and bake for about 15 minutes until lightly golden.
6. Pour over custard. Don't overfill and scatter your blueberries all over, pushing some down into the folds.
7. Transfer tray to oven and bake for about 30 minutes. Check at 20 minutes and sprinkle flaked almonds over the top. Bake until golden. Cool for 10 minutes then sprinkle icing sugar over the top.

Adapted from Antoniou Pastry

Lyn Hand

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FRESH AIR

How often do you star gaze? When do you take time to walk out into the night, admire the moon and soak up the glory of the Milky Way? A fretwork of brilliance shines above every night. When do you take the time to truly appreciate their magnificence?

I went to an event where people from Indigenous communities from across the globe talked about the sacred star knowledge that is held in culture and sits deep inside ways of knowing. They described the way the heavens give guidance. Ancient mariners knew that as they travelled across vast oceans using celestial navigation. No nifty digital satellites then, but instead a profound understanding of the moon, stars, and their cycles. The Indigenous people at the event said there are other kinds of navigation there for us as well, if we be quiet, stop thinking, trying to solve – now there's a challenge – but instead sit, wait and be open to receive lessons from the heavens.

European herbalist Juliette de Barracli Levy wrote a great deal about the importance of living in nature. She counselled that children should spend time sleeping under the stars. The cosmic imprint, she said, was very important to their wellbeing and sense of self. The stars spoke to where they belonged as strongly as the earth under their bodies where they lay.

This may be too farfetched for some. When night falls, we draw the blinds and keep the dusk at bay. Also, there are a spate of dramas which emphasise the need to be afraid of the dark. But for others night-time is a gentler rhythm, where other another kind of internal settling down comes into play. In the night, under the stars we can be a different, softer self.

A spot of star gazing could be just the ticket to shift your consciousness away from the concerns of daily life and all the things you feel you must do/need to/ought to do. Enough of all that! When night falls, go outside and see what you can see. Sit. Wait. Plus, if you are patient and lucky you just might see a falling star and then you can make a wish.

Dr Airdre Grant



Celestial navigation

Don't forget to look up Photo Elliott Brennan

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Sleep Apnoea is a common condition in which your breathing stops and restarts many times while you sleep, gasping for air and frequent loud snoring. This can prevent your body from getting enough oxygen and good quality sleep. Individuals may notice increased daytime napping and tiredness, dry mouth or headaches.

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Confessions of a Pickle King

It's the life of brine for Bangalow's Ben Alcock Photo Lyn McCarthy – Niche Pictures

I'm not so sure I'm a 'Pickle King', but I'm definitely a pickler of some kind. I pickle almost exclusively for the Bangalow Show, but every now and then, I'll do some little thing on the side, like a fermented hot sauce or something.

I started pickling sometime in 2010, when we moved up here. My grandmother used to make pickled onions. I first tasted them in my early teens, and my mind exploded. They were delicious and amazing. She brought a nice big jar of them whenever she came over to our place. My aunt was also a bit of a foodie, and at some point, she jotted down the recipe for those particular pickled onions.

My first attempt at the Bangalow Show was just a jar of pickled onions using that recipe. I

was new to the art of Show Cookery. I think I got a highly commended or something, but I learned some things about the judging process that first year. (Ed: Ben's wife Grescha is Steward in the Cookery division but assures me that her role is completely unbiased and that tasting by the judges is a most earnest and scrupulous affair).

Over the years, I've picked up a few First Place blue ribbons, after tweaking the recipe to something I thought would hopefully appeal more to the judges.

Pickled onions are probably my favourite category to enter. From those iconic onions, I've diversified into mustards, pickles and relishes and various other things. (Ed: Ben is

also a blue ribbon winner in the mysterious Mock Chicken category).

Growing up as a kid in Sydney, the only real contact I had with an agricultural show was the Sydney Royal Easter Show. And for us city kids, it wasn't really about the agriculture, although we used to go and see the cows and that kind of thing. The Sydney Easter Show was all about rides and showbags, and good times.

When you move to a regional area, you quickly realise how important the Shows are to the life of the community and the region, to the farmers, the cooks, the crafters, the chook breeders. Participating in the Show by submitting an entry or two to the Pavilion is

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Preserve judging is serious business Photo Grescha Brewer

Also collecting a few bob from your winning entries is nice, and that promptly goes back to Lions Club at the kiosk, which is perfect.

Get your hands on one of the Show Schedules, there is stuff for kids, stuff for grownups. I encourage everyone to do it. The junior cookery sections are really fun and a great way to get kids into the kitchen, messing around with shortbreads, cupcakes, and jam drops. There's also The Written Word, photography, flower arranging, you name it, all kinds of things to

essential to keeping this wonderful tradition going.

Then the Show becomes part of your community calendar instead of just being a one or two-day thing. I'm thinking about it in the months leading up, even before the Show Schedule is published and distributed through town. I'll be thinking about getting my jars ready. Thinking about the individual categories I'm going to enter, and then some of the super exciting ones like the Best Pantry Collection (a collection of six different sauces, pickles or preserves) where you might come home with a very handsome rosette, which is always the goal on the day.

grow, make and display. Get involved. It really takes the Show to another level.

I actually can't wait for Show day. It's super exciting walking into the A&I Hall after judging. You're a little bit nervy to see how your various entries have performed. There's usually a great bit of banter with other entrants including *Herald* editor Sally Schofield, who doesn't mind a pickle herself. There's some very light-hearted, friendly competition, which is lovely.

Ben Alcock

(as told to Sally Schofield)

Preserving the rules

The Show Schedule is the list of all categories and sections available to enter and is now available in booklets around town or online bangalowshow.com.au/schedules

Seasoned entrants will know the rules, but for the newcomers, take note of the following specifications.

1. Brand names on lids must be covered
2. Exhibits no more than 250g
3. When entering Any Other Variety (AOV) please state the variety on your entry form
4. Exhibits will be donated to the Farm Produce Auction unless Stewards are otherwise advised by the exhibitor - a green dot on the exhibit card advises exhibit not to be donated.
5. Certificates and exhibits not for Auction may be collected from the Pavilion between 5pm -5:15pm Saturday afternoon
6. Collect prizemoney from Show Office Saturday between 10am and 6pm ONLY

HINTS FOR EXHIBITING PRESERVES

- Exhibit should be bright in colour and blemish free
- Fruit uniform in shape and colour
- Holds shape well on saucer
- Free from mould (e.g. around inside of lid)
- When packing jam in jar the 'headspace' should be 3/4 cm
- The liquid covers the product & there is little or no floating product (pips etc)

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Sample Food Festival



Bangalow's Showgrounds recently hosted yet another wonderful community event, this time the lip-smacking goodness of the Sample Food Festival. A gourmet heaven filled with foods from local restaurants, producers, distilleries and more, Lyn McCarthy from Niche Pictures was on hand to capture all the action. From leisurely picnics to spunky chefs to ladies who lunch, Sample had something for everyone. Save the date when the event returns to Bangalow Saturday 7 September 2024.







Baby Georgia Fox and her beloved Nana Nell Photo supplied

Nana Nell's Chocolate Fudge Cake

This is no ordinary fudge cake; it's not even cake - it's a slice. One whiff of its heavenly aroma, and I am standing back inside my Nana Nell's pantry, five years old, basking in that glorious smell and staring longingly at the tin. You were never to ask for a piece, and helping yourself was out of the question. It had to be offered, and only with a cup of tea. I don't remember ever seeing her make fudge, but it was always in the pantry. A bit like how the house always smelled of cigarettes, but you never saw her smoking. (My cousin swears he once caught her in the act though, vacuuming with curlers in her hair and two cigarettes in her mouth.)

This hobbit-like pantry was a small structure my Grandad Basil built in the corner of the kitchen, around the door to the loo. At some point, he knocked this opening through to gain indoor access to the outdoor toilet - my dad says after becoming tired of my aunts' complaints on cold New Zealand winter nights. To prevent it opening directly onto the kitchen, he constructed a scenic route through the pantry, which you entered via a narrow door at the short end, squeezing between shallow shelves on both sides, until you reached the toilet door on your right.

The loo itself was suffocating in the same floral carpet Basil inexplicably used in the kitchen and bathroom, and Nell's frilly purple lace toilet-seat cover and matching toilet dollies further reduced the available oxygen. Adding to the strangeness, Basil's handcrafted angled melamine kitchen stood disorientatingly low, set to Nell's four-foot-ten height. His sudden death in the seventies snap-froze the house in a time warp, with Nell's elephant collection covering every available surface, and her souvenir teaspoons hanging in timber display racks.

She might have been small in stature, made the best Dolly Varden cakes, and given the loveliest cuddles squeezed up against her bosom, but Nell was not a woman to be trifled with. Her temper so famously fiery, that to 'Have a Nelly' describes the losing of one's cool in many parts of New Zealand. Rocking side to side, fists clenched, steam shooting - like a furious Venus of Willendorf - I was only privy to one; its power nearly blew the plastic concertinaed kitchen door that I had been told to wait behind clean off its frame.

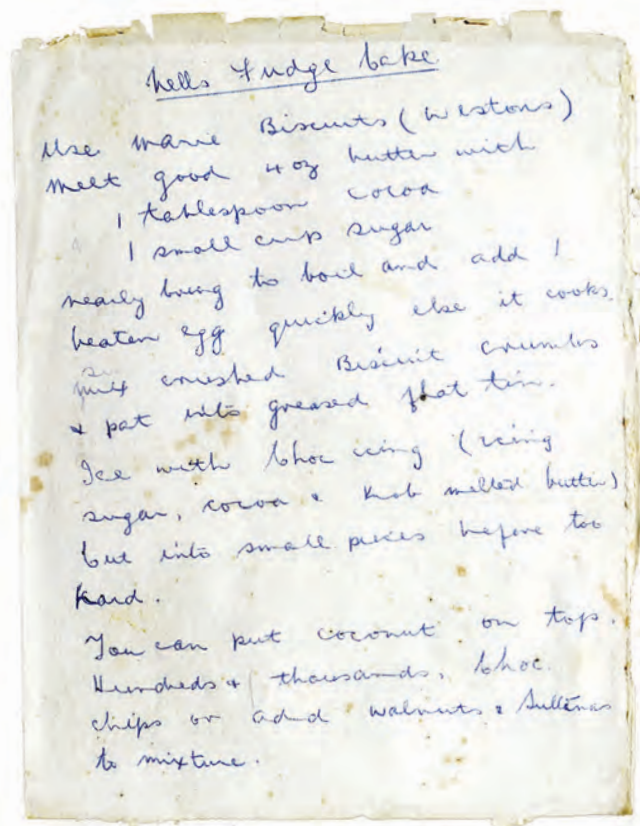


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Six children in seven years, Nell apparently kept finding herself pregnant “every time Basil’s hat was on the end of the bed.” I always laughed along when someone imitated her saying it, but it definitely made a whole lot more sense when I later found out the uncensored quote actually referred to his trousers. I grew up believing she and my Aunt Cheryl were married because they lived together, but for a while Nell had a boyfriend called Lionel. That is, until she discovered him slumped in the passenger seat, dead, after returning to her car in the driveway of the local petrol station. Nell said he got the last laugh, though, finding his dentures smiling out from under the seat days later.

The eldest of six children, she was born in 1920 and grew up in the town of Napier. An uncle also lived with them - a hook-handed trouble-finder who’d blown his own hand off with gelignite as a teenager and continued on that trajectory until he was found dead from

a bullet wound. Shortly before that, he disclosed to Nell’s father the location of the cash he’d stolen from the small-town mobsters he was involved with, in case something should happen. She vividly remembers her dad heading out into a raging storm one night armed with a shovel, returning the following morning, exhausted and covered in mud, after a fruitless night digging up the pine forest. Not completely empty-handed - he was accompanied by a billy goat he’d encountered, which ended up living in their garden for years, terrorising the children and eating washing off the line.

Nell’s mother was a particularly spherical woman with a pronounced goitre, and was reportedly so large that she was unaware she was pregnant with her youngest child.

The story I grew up on was that she told the butcher’s son delivering the meat that she felt faint, fell to the kitchen floor, and gave birth to a baby boy. I was eventually let in on the top-tier secret that she was actually pushing a car up a driveway when a baby appeared in her knickers. Either way, everyone got a shock when they arrived home that afternoon.

The devastating 1931 Napier earthquake struck soon after, levelling the town. For my 1987 assignment on the subject, Nell dusted off her wartime typing pool skills and drafted her account for me. She described how it hit just as school was let out for morning tea, the building collapsing behind them as giant fissures tore the playground apart. I imagined it so vividly happening at my own school, that it was pretty much the sum total of my memory of the whole assignment.

When I found the faded fax decades later, I couldn’t believe how much had gone over

my head as a nine-year-old. She recalled her father turning up on a bicycle, repeatedly battling torn-up roads, aftershocks, fires, and liquefaction, to ferry the five kids home one or two at a time - the order of which, apparently, causing lifelong family beef. The house destroyed but their mother and baby brother unharmed, over the next few days as the ground continued to shake, they camped in their backyard, cooked over an open fire, and collected water from a spring. Women and children were eventually evacuated, the men staying behind to rebuild the town in its famous Art Deco style.

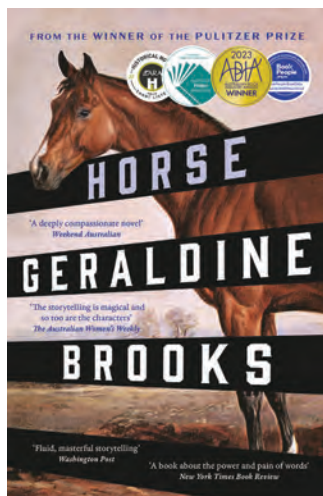
Nell had already shared many terrifying earthquake-related tidbits over the years. As we’d putter along in her comically small yellow car, she would point at the cliffs beside us and explain how people and horses and carts were buried underneath when they sheared off. “They’re still under there you know, they just built the road over them,” she’d say earnestly as we tootled over the top. She’d show you where the coastline used to be and explain how, as the sea rolled out, the dads put ladders against the surviving structures and corralled all the kids onto the roofs - waiting for the tidal wave that never arrived. When I asked what a tidal wave was, she described a giant wave that swallowed towns whole, unlocking a core fear on the spot.

We’d stay up late, watching wildly inappropriate thrillers on her little black and white television. We’d drink cups of tea and eat biscuits after we’d brushed our teeth, and at lights out, she’d tell me how we had to have a nice big sleep-in because she would “rather die than get out of bed early.” It was like topsy-turvy land - visits to Nana’s were the best. I didn’t even like tea.

On her last Sydney trip my cousin and I asked for a fudge-making tutorial. After finding a suitable Australian biscuit, she wrote out the recipe from memory and directed us through the process. Mine will never be as good as Nell’s, but it did take out Second Prize at the 2011 Bangalow Show in the ‘Slice, Plate of Six’ category - my greatest culinary achievement. Give it a go, and may Nana Nell’s feisty spirit be with you, especially during the vigorous whisking in of the egg, “else it cooks.”

Georgia Fox

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Horse by Geraldine Brooks

Geraldine Brooks is a master storyteller and her focus on historical eras always adds to the reader's own knowledge. Her latest book *Horse*, published in 2022, is no exception. The horse referred to in the title of

this book is Lexington, the greatest racehorse in US history. Brooks has split the story between three periods of time. In the present day, a young, ambitious Australian woman (Jess) is working for the Smithsonian Institute in Washington DC. Jess had intended to return to Australia, but the Smithsonian has offered her a dream career job at a brand new facility managing the Osteology Prep Lab at the Museum Support Centre (basically she reconstructs the bones of animals to represent how the skeleton might have appeared when the animal was alive). She will lock horns with an art historian, Theo, a Nigerian-American man; their first embarrassing meeting occurs when she assumes he is about to steal her bicycle. Theo has recovered a very damaged painting of a horse from a roadside clean-up pile from a neighbour across the road which, as an art historian, has piqued his interest. After the discovery of some archived horse bones at the Smithsonian, Jess and Theo become unexpectedly connected. Lexington, the horse, had a very short racing career but his prowess as a stud horse is legendary. In the mid-19th century, the horse's owner is a Dr Warfield, who has a farm in Lexington, Kentucky. In her fictionalisation, Brooks has imagined the care of Lexington to be in the hands of Dr Warfield's black slave, Jarret. Thomas Scott is the artist of this period who specialises in painting horses, and he has made several paintings of Lexington. The setting is around the time of the American Civil War, and whilst Dr Warfield is a kind and generous master, he doesn't share the emancipation views of his son-in-law. Fast-forward to Martha Jackson, an art gallery owner, who has possession of a Lexington painting in the 1950s, and in this third timeframe documents the ownership of the painting of Lexington. You don't need to be a horse lover to enjoy this most engaging read.

Good Reads rating 4.3 stars - Published by Hachette

Carolyn Adams



New exhibition and Twilight Market at Heritage House

The latest exhibition to be staged by the Bangalow Historical Society is titled 'Brides, Bridesmaids and Ballgowns' which had many Historical Society members rummaging in their wardrobes to find their treasured dresses. As president Trisha Bleakley said: "Come along and take a walk through the ages to see how fashion for these special dresses changes – or doesn't."

Meanwhile, bookings are coming in thick and fast as more and more community groups realise they can now hold their meetings on Heritage House's comfortable, well-equipped balcony overlooking Bangalow Parklands. (Makes an excellent location for your Christmas party, too.)

Apart from hosting meetings for groups and 'special occasion' events, the Historical Society is planning a pre-Christmas Twilight Market, to be held between 3 and 7pm on 11 November. A range of art and craft work – from pottery and photography to embroidered linen and crochet work - will be on display, and available to buy for Christmas presents. A sausage sizzle and entertainment will add to the festive atmosphere.

If you'd like to contribute to the art and craft work to the Twilight Market, please contact Jenny Holden on 0497 012 973. If you'd like to book a stall at the Twilight Market (for the modest price of \$15), contact Trisha Bleakley on 0429 882 525.

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Montepulciano, Italy
Photo George White

When two worlds collide

Montepulciano, a grape variety cherished for its versatility and vibrant character, demonstrates its chameleon-like qualities when grown in New World locations such as Australia and its homeland of Italy. A tasting experience that spans continents, offering enthusiasts the chance to explore the differences that emerge in the distinct expressions.

The Australian Montepulciano, such as the Hey Diddle 2020 Montepulciano, is a contemporary interpretation that showcases the innovative vibe of winemakers Down Under. When this grape variety is embraced by our Australian soil and climate, it evolves into a wine that encapsulates the true essence of the New World. You can expect a more fruit-forward profile, where juicy blackberries, ripe plums, and cherries dance across the palate. The warm climate encourages generous ripening, resulting in a wine with a slightly higher alcohol content and a riper, yet more exuberant fruit character which combined creates an elegance that's unmatched!

The softer tannic structure allows for earlier accessibility and immediate gratification. This is a wine that thrives on its vibrancy, boasting a lively acidity that lends itself well to pairing with a variety of cuisine, from barbecued meats to hearty pasta dishes.

Crossing over to Italy, Montepulciano takes on a more classical demeanour, deeply rooted in centuries-old winemaking traditions. The Italian terroir imparts a sense of place that is inherently tied to the history and culture of the region. Here, the Montepulciano grape thrives in the Mediterranean climate, resulting in wines that are marked by elegance, structure, and an unmistakable earthiness.

Italian Montepulciano, such as the Marco Gaudio 2017 VINO Nobile di Montepulciano, unfolds a bouquet of aromas that are often reminiscent of sun-soaked earth, dried herbs, and leather. The tannins are more pronounced and assertive, contributing to a wine that benefits from aging, allowing its complex layers to harmonise over time. With a balanced acidity, Italian Montepulciano works with traditional Italian dishes, such as hearty stews, aged cheeses, and tomato-based pasta dishes.

Tasting Montepulciano from Australia and Italy side by side is a journey of exploration to discover the intriguing contrast between New World innovation and Old World tradition, and the uniqueness and diversity that just like humans, defines the world of wine!

Travel well my friends...

Dave Cribbin



THE RECKONER

Hey Bangalow, 1923 called and wants its phone network back. Bangalow communication's authority, The Reckoner, digs deep into the issues affecting Bangalow's lovely heritage internet service.

WELCOME to Bangalow, a town with 21st century aspirations shackled to a communications network that perfectly matches the antique red telephone box that takes pride of place on the town's main street.

Boasting the best of creative and entrepreneurial spirit and ability Bangalow has nevertheless found itself wedded to a vintage copper wire network (admittedly with a gorgeous verdigris patina) buried in the cold damp earth at the end of the NBN fibre-optic network.

Data arrives at blistering speed to the town's mysteriously located NBN node only to alight onto the telecommunications equivalent of a horse and buggy to finally arrive, or maybe not, to homes and businesses.

Adding to the town's woes is the paucity of mobile coverage with a determined insurgency of 5G conspiracists, usually clutching the latest iPhone 14, running a disinformation campaign aimed at ensuring Byron Shire's mobile network continues to run at near dial-up speed.

"Above ground we are living in 2023 and paying 2023 prices but below ground it's still 1923," fumed local space worker, Stan Dadbloke.

"I've worked in the media space, the arts space, the retail space and the wellness space and every single space you can name has the same black hole...the old Telstra copper wire network stuck on the end of the N fricking B fricking N.

"Have you seen inside a Telstra pit? It's like a Charles Dickens novel down there.

"Depending on what mood the NBN and mobile network are in on any given day, I may, or may not be able to order some dimmies from the local take-away, let alone upload my latest hilarious hot take on modern life," Dadbloke said.

"Meanwhile the phone bills and chummy 'Tell us how are we doing here at the NBN' surveys keep arriving like clockwork!"

The Reckoner

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Eve achieved a Personal Best time in every event at the recent School Sport Australia Swimming Championships Photo Winkipopmedia



Coorabell Public School Tennis Team at Sydney Olympic Park, with teacher Mr Steve Eason

Young local swimmer makes a splash

Ten-year-old Bangalow resident, Eve Drew recently represented NSW at the School Sport Australia Swimming Championships at Sydney Olympic Park. Earning a place at this meet is tough: only three swimmers from all primary schools in NSW are selected to swim per event.

Eve was selected to compete in five events: the 200 metre Individual Medley (placing 4th), 50 metre Butterfly (placing 4th), 100 metre Freestyle (placing 7th), 100 metre Backstroke (placing 9th), and Medley Relay (placing 4th). "I like competing in all events, but my favourites are the 50 metre 'fly and 200 Individual Medley," says Eve.

Eve started swimming lessons with Ben at Bangalow Swim School when she was just a toddler, and now has a serious training regime that keeps her busy almost every day of the week. "I swim after school Monday – Thursday, and Saturday mornings at Alstonville pool," she says. Eve also likes running and athletics and manages to squeeze in cross country running on Sundays. "Emma McKeon is my idol. My coach's son trains in a team with her and other Olympians," says Eve who dreams of representing Australia in the 2032 Brisbane Olympics. "They came to the Alstonville pool for a week recently and she signed my swimming cap. She is an amazing swimmer."

Sally Schofield

Smashing news for Coorabell kids Tennis

Big congratulations to the Coorabell Public School Tennis team – Oliver, Miles, Maddy and Frankie – who just won 3rd place in the NSW Primary School Team Tennis knockout tournament. At the start of the year 111 Primary schools across NSW entered the knockout competition, with teams playing singles, doubles and mixed doubles. Coorabell won the North Coast regional competition and progressed to state playoffs. In the quarter finals, played in Port Macquarie, they knocked out last year's winners Artarmon PS and went on to play the finals at the amazing Sydney Olympic Tennis centre. The Coorabell team played some experienced and talented teams and through great skill, determination and teamwork secured 3rd place overall, an outstanding result for a small country school of 95 kids.

This was an amazing experience for the players who have been so committed to training and practising hard under the guidance of Bangalow Tennis Club's head coach Jack Cox. The team had the privilege of walking through the players tunnel into the Ken Rosewall arena for a presentation and bumped into tennis royalty Lleyton Hewitt who was training his son Cruz at the Tennis Australia academy. This has inspired the players to already start training for next year's competition.

Simon Field



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Rugby Grand Final winners Byron Shire Rebels Under 15s Photo supplied

Rugby Wins!

It's been a huge year for the Byron Shire Rebels after a successful joint venture between the Byron Bay Rugby Club and the Bangalow Rebels. After securing the minor premierships in both senior first and reserve grades and also our Under 15s, unfortunately, our senior first grade was beaten by a very experienced Wollongbar outfit. However, we celebrated as our Under 15s defeated Lismore, and our senior reserve grade defeated Casuarina in the grand finals to win inaugural premiership for the new club. A big thanks to the hard-working committee and all the volunteers and players who contributed to both junior and senior rugby this year. We are already looking forward to an exciting season ahead in 2024.

Byron Shire Rebels

Bluedogs bring home the gold

On Saturday 16 September, the Bangalow Bluedogs took out the Major Premiership in the Men's Premier League, after an incredible 3-2 victory against their cross-town rivals Byron Bay at the Bangalow Sports fields. For the first time in Club history, the Bluedogs have taken out the treble, winning the Anzac Cup, Minor Premiership and Major Premiership of the 2023 season!



Bluedogs take out the prestigious treble in 2023 Photo supplied

The Major Premiership game started very close, with Bangalow creating the better of the chances on the field. But it was Byron who scored first! Only 10 minutes later Byron capitalised, going into half time with a 2-0 lead.

It seems the break was the best thing that could of happened to the home team, as they returned to the pitch fired up with relentless press and a positive style of play putting pressure on the Byron team.

Then, in one of the greatest comebacks I've ever seen, the Bluedogs scored three goals in a 10-minute period to turn the game on its head! They powered on to close out a nail-biting game and the Bangalow supporters (and players) were ecstatic (and relieved) when the final whistle blew.

This was truly one of the Club's biggest accomplishments. A massive shout out to our major sponsors that made this year possible: Trip A Deal, Avid Construction, Byron Coast Cabinets, Wardell Pies, Bangalow Bread Co, Byron Bay Pizza Co, Bangalow Bowlo, and Summerland Credit Union.

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Emergency pillowcases



This summer, regional Aussie kids will be supported in prepping for natural disasters like bushfires and flooding thanks to Australia Post's support for the Australian Red Cross' children's education program, Pillowcase Workshops.

Pillowcase was originally inspired by events during Hurricane Katrina in the US in 2005. Created by

the Australian Red Cross to run in Australian primary schools, it's aim is to assist children to understand disaster preparedness. The one-hour interactive workshops teach kids practical skills like what to pack for an emergency, and how to prepare their minds for the thoughts and feelings that may arise before, during and after an emergency.

In 2015 the program was adapted to suit the Australian Red Cross' emergency preparedness framework as well as align to the Australian School Curriculum. Thanks to Australia Post, the program will now be delivered to approximately 6000 eight-to 10-year-old students in schools across high-risk communities in Australia over the next three years. Australia Post will also supply schools with the program's emergency kit pillowcases, which children are encouraged to design and decorated, whilst they are taught to fill with items they need versus want.



Preparing young people for natural disasters through the Red Cross Pillowcase project Photos supplied

Australian Red Cross Chief of Staff Penny Harrison said the partnership would strengthen community resilience and that empowering children to feel safe and prepared for emergencies is a vital piece of the puzzle for building a more disaster ready Australia.

Australia Post Executive General Manager of Community, Sustainability and Stakeholder Engagement, Tanny Mangos, says that with the frequency and intensity of disasters increasing, we need to focus on what we can do to prepare ourselves and our families now more than ever.

"We know the more prepared for disaster you are, the quicker the recovery is. Children have considerable strengths and can be positive change agents to influence family preparedness."

Stay tuned for more details about the project.

The Bangalow Herald

Bangalow Resilience Network is born

Over the past few months, several Bangalow community groups — motivated by the escalating cycle of climate emergencies — have been working towards their shared vision of a better connected and prepared community. During a recent meeting to clarify their purpose and priorities, Bangalow Resilience Network was born. The organisation includes members of Bangalow CWA, Bangalow Men's Shed, Bangalow Lions Club, Bangalow Fire Station, Connecting Generations and Community, Bangalow Heritage House Museum, Bangalow Anglican Op Shop, Bangalow Parks Trust, and Bangalow Bowling Club.

Disaster recovery expert Dr Jean Renouf, from Plan C, has provided mentoring and Byron Shire Council has offered practical support through its disaster resilience officers Sally McDonald and Mel Bloor. Speakers from Resilient Lismore and Resilient Uki have also shared what they have achieved in terms of resilience planning. Some powerful exercises have been facilitated by Dr Renouf and transformational coach and She Speaks founder Aurora Pagonis, which will help form resilience plan for Bangalow and surrounding villages, outlining strengths, areas for improvement and ways neighbourhoods can work together to prepare for and mitigate risks.

The next meeting will be held at Bangalow Heritage House Museum on Wednesday 4 October, 3-5pm.

Ruth Winton-Brown and Jo Palsler

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Hippeastrum papilio

Some years ago, I bought a couple of this rare maroon and green striped variety of 'Hippie' at the plant auction which is held monthly at the Bangalow Garden Club.

A generous gardener (we all love to share) donated them when she was dividing clumps, and the bidding was enthusiastic because we all like to have rare specimens.

There are over 90 species and 600 cultivars of Hippeastrum, and the originals came from South America.

They are sometimes called Amaryllis, but only two true Amaryllis originating from South Africa and a whilst similar, these flower in autumn, unlike Hippeastrum, which usually flower in late spring and summer.

They can be grown in bowl-shaped terracotta pots and are happy being crowded. Use good potting soil, packed firmly, with an inch or so of the bulb above the soil.

Water occasionally but these lovely plants are drought-hardy so not too much!

In the garden, keep mulch clear from the protruding bulb to avoid fungal disease and rot.

In the ground, the bulbs last for years but can be divided (and shared), and this should be done during cool weather.

Full sun or light shade is best for flowering, with a little bit of protection from strong winds.

When the flower spikes are spent, cut them down to the bulb and only remove completely dry leaves. This is a challenge because they look messy, but the nutrients in the leaves have to return each year to the bulb.

Regarding nutrients, readers may have noticed that I don't recommend fertilisers, relying instead on feeding the soil, not the plant.

I have been doing a couple of things recently having moved and left my beloved chickens behind: using kitchen scraps directly onto the garden instead of depending upon the hens' to produce soil improver (poop!).

I'm crushing eggshells which supply potassium, phosphorus and magnesium and strengthen stems and coffee grounds (diluted) which are a great source of potassium too, and the smell may deter the bandicoots that are not only digging up new plants but sharing their very irritating ticks with me.

The vegetable scraps feed my worm farm and produce great worm juice to aid microbial activity when diluted and sprayed on the soil. Amazing, low-cost, and chemical-free, what's not to like?



The Hippies are flowering! Photos Carole Gamble



The Melvin Jones Fellow is the highest award available in Lions International. It was named after Melvin Jones who founded the first Lions Club in Chicago in 1917. Recently Robert (Bob) Dudgeon was the first member of the Bangalow Lions Club to receive this honour. This was in recognition of his 45 years as an active participant in the local club and his outstanding service to the community of Bangalow. Bob Dudgeon descends from a very early pioneering family who settled in the area in 1855. In later years the Dudgeons were credited in a large part to the evolution of the Australian Illawarra Short Horn cattle. Dudgeons Lane in the Industrial Estate is named after the family.

Helen Johnston



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Bill Tracey, a full and adventurous life

William Noel Tracey
1 September 1942 – 3 August 2023

Bangalow lost one of its colourful local characters in August, with the passing of Bill Tracey at the age of 81.

Bill's daughter and fellow Bangalow resident, Jo Tracey, describes her father as the best dad any kid could have wished for. His childlike enthusiasm created a brilliantly fun childhood for Jo and her brother, filled with exciting holidays, spontaneous adventures, and silly backyard games of his own invention. He relished family life and, according to Jo, was above all else, "just a really lovely, kind, and generous man."

Born in 1942, Bill and his two brothers had a fairly unconventional upbringing in Sydney's Kings Cross, living between two boarding houses managed by their parents. Their father, a bookmaker who was reportedly hapless and cruel, was born in Australia to an Italian family by the name of Torazzi, which he anglicised to Tracey shortly before Bill's birth. Their mother, by all accounts, was an incredible woman, who battled debilitating MS. The boys grew up sharing their home with a revolving cast of characters, including the painter John Olsen for a period, enjoying unrestricted freedom amongst the neighbourhood's heady streets from a young age.

Emerging from the shadow of the Great Depression and world wars, Bill's father encouraged all three sons to become public servants. Bill joined the postal service, ascending the ranks from telegram boy to post office manager, before continuing his upward trajectory at Telecom.

Ultimately, he held the position of Chief Property Officer, responsible for acquiring and selling all the real estate used for telephone exchanges.

Just a stone's throw from his Castlereagh Street office, the long-closed but once high-end antiques department of David Jones piqued his interest. Spending his lunch breaks absorbing everything he could from the department's esteemed manager, he dedicated his legendary laser like focus to the realm of antiques and collectables, and set out to become an expert. A six-month family caravan journey across Europe in 1979 provided the perfect opportunity to fill a container with antique



Vale Bill Tracey Photo supplied

furniture destined for Australia, and saw Bill resign from Telecom on his first day back from long-service leave.

He and ex-wife Coleen went on to become one of Sydney's largest antique dealers, and their side venture flipping heritage homes furnished with their inventory, also flourished. He wrote a book called *Everything You Wanted to Know About Buying Antique Furniture, but Didn't Know Who to Ask* and for over a decade, served as a panel member on 2UE's *Antiques and Collectables* radio program.

In 2005, Bill semi-retired to Bangalow to join Jo and her family, his insatiable thirst for knowledge and irrepressible wheeler-dealer spirit ensuring he remained his requisite level of busy. He penned the *Antiques and Collectables* column for *The Bangalow Herald*, making three generations of Herald contributors alongside Jo and her daughter Sunny.

Bill had recently moved into Feros, but as Jo explains, "very quickly decided it wasn't for him, and made a hasty exit". She thinks he would have been delighted with what she describes as a wonderful departure, surrounded by love and laughter, and all the special people in his life. Vale Bill.

Georgia Fox

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Park Trust Committee	Shane	0475 732 551
Police – DCI Matt Kehoe	Fax: 6629 7501	6629 7500
Pool Trust	Jo	6687 1297
Progress Association	Ian	0414 959 936
Poultry Club	Hector	6687 1322
Quilters (2nd/4th Thur)	Karen	0413 621 224
Red Cross (1st Fri)	Liz	0409 832 001
Show Society	Anne	6687 1033
Sport		
Bowls men (1pm Wed & Sat)	Gerry	6687 1142
Bowls women (9.30am Wed)	Frances	6687 1339
Cricket	Anthony	0429 306 529
Karate self-defence	Jean	0458 245 123
Netball (3.30pm Wed)	Ellie	0429 855 399
Pony Club	Rebecca	0410 706 959
Rugby Union (Rebels)	Dave	0412 080 614
Soccer (Blue dogs)		0434 559 700
Tennis court hire	Bernie	0433 970 800
Venues		
A&I Hall	Brian	0427 157 565
All Souls' Anglican Hall		6684 3552
Bowling Club	Chris	6687 2741
Coorabell Hall		coorabellhall@gmail.com
Heritage House	Trisha	0429 882 525
Lions Club Kiosk	Nashy	0418 440 545
Moller Pavilion		6687 1035
Newrybar Hall	Kerry	0414 560 119
RSL Hall	Charlotte	0418 107 448
Scout Hall	Shane	0475 732 551
St Kevin's Catholic Hall	Russell	0423 089 684

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Frocks, flowers, films and more, there is something to delight everyone this month in 2479 and beyond.



Breathtaking floral art by Mark Pampling Photo supplied

Bangalow Gardening Club

When Wednesday 4 October, 1pm

Where Moller Pavilion, Bangalow Showground

Contact bangalowgardeningclub@outlook.com

This month our guest speaker is internationally renowned floral designer and artist, Mark Pampling. Mark, from the Alstonville Florist, is experienced in floral art, commercial floristry, floral design, educating, competing, judging and business. Mark has taught and collaborated in guest roles with schools and colleges from The Netherlands, Korea, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, England, China, Malaysia, Pakistan and South Africa, to Vietnam, The Philippines and Indonesia.

Coorabell Hall Film Club

When Wednesday 4 October

Where Coorabell Hall, 565 Coolamon Scenic Drive, Coorabell

Contact 0487900790 or visit coorabellhall.net

Tickets Memberships available at the door: temporary \$10, full \$30

Coorabell Hall Film Club presents Zorba the Greek. Travelling to inspect an abandoned mine his father owns in Crete, English author Basil (Alan Bates) meets the exuberant peasant Zorba (Anthony Quinn) and invites him along when the older man claims he has mining experience. In his father's old village, Basil is attracted to a young widow (Irene Papas) and Zorba takes up with the woman who runs the hotel (Lila Kedrova). When things go wrong, Zorba teaches Basil how to enjoy life even under the most trying circumstances.

"A magnetic charismatic performance from Anthony Quinn as Zorba. Exploring various outlooks on life with a memorable score and an iconic ending."

Food and drinks from 6pm, film starts at 7.30pm.

coorabellhall.net

Bangalow Business Networking Breakfast

When Friday 6 October 7:30 - 9am

Where Woods Café, Bangalow

Contact and tickets

byronandbeyondnetworking.com.au

'Composing Credibility' Personal branding photography and content creation establish trust and engagement with your audience. Establish the compelling relationship your clients crave in those first crucial moments. Kate Nutt is a highly-talented branding photographer and entrepreneur with over 20 years photographing portraits. Kate has a rare perspective, giving her the gift of identifying your natural genius, the value in YOU which the world desires - even when it's invisible to you.

Sam Buckingham and friends at Eureka Hall

When Friday 6 October, 6 -10:30pm

Where Eureka Hall, Cnr Eureka Rd, Whian Rd &, Federal Dr, Eureka

Tickets events.humanitix.com/sam-buckingham-or-eureka-or...

Sam Buckingham's DEAR JOHN Tour is back, by popular demand. Since releasing her 2022 album, Buckingham has graced main stages at Woodford and Queenscliff Music Festivals, embarked on a six-week tour with the Festival of Small Halls, and headlined a sold-out 34 date national tour to celebrate the album's release. She's also toured alongside Kate Miller-Heidke, Paul Kelly, Katie Noonan, Tim Freedman, The Whitlams and Ben Lee. Now she'll share the album favourites in intimate, acoustic mode - and add in a handful of stunning new songs that haven't yet been released. With special guest Tanya Ransom. Food by Il Carretto Pizza from 6pm, BYO drinks.

Shire Choir Community Feelgood Tour - Coorabell Hall

When Friday 13 October, 7.30pm

Where Coorabell Hall

Contact facebook.com/theshirechoir

Tickets Free but must be reserved on shirechoir.eventbrite.com

On the eve of the Referendum, Shire Choir are hitting the stage at Coorabell Hall to delight you all with an iconic, audience-powered singing session. YOU are the choir, and led by Melia Naughton, will learn a song in parts and then belt it out with a live band. What song? Well, you'll have to come along to find out, as it's a closely guarded secret until the night but being Friday 13th, perhaps you could expect something to suit the occasion. Come early and enjoy a curry and a drink from the bar (see listing below)

Boujee Bush Ball

When Saturday 14 October

Where A&I Hall Bangalow,
Station Street, Bangalow

Tickets [eventbrite.com/e/bangalow-boujee-bush-ball-tickets-673525973317](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/bangalow-boujee-bush-ball-tickets-673525973317)

Celebrating 40 years in Bangalow with drinks delicious food, hay bales and a DJ. Events on the Annual Bangalow Community Childcare Centre Art Auction and The Boujee Auction. Ticket price includes food and arrival drink. Drinks provided by Brookies and Common People Brewery. The events is to raise funds for additional resources and works at the Centre and so come along celebrate this milestone with the Bangalow community.

Byron Bay International Film Festival

When October 20-29, various times

Where Byron Palace Cinemas, Lennox Head Cultural Centre, Brunswick Picture House, The Regent Murwillumbah, Ballina Palace (schools sessions)

Tickets [bbff.com.au](https://www.bbff.com.au)

Byron Bay's world-renowned 10-day celebration of independent cinema opens this month for its 17th year. With a tagline of 'Anything Is Possible', this year's screen showcase includes the latest work of experienced and emerging local filmmakers alongside feature films and front-line documentaries from some of the world's most innovative directors. Surf adventures, eye-opening environmental investigations, human interest stories and insightful music and art narratives explore the familiar and the strange, while feature dramas from home and abroad will entertain, enthrall, and challenge.

Shire Choir Community Feelgood Tour – Brunswick Picture House

When Sunday 22 October, 6pm

Where Brunswick Picture House

Contact [facebook.com/theshirechoir](https://www.facebook.com/theshirechoir)

Tickets Free but must be reserved on [shirechoir.eventbrite.com](https://www.shirechoir.eventbrite.com)

Wrapping up their whistlestop Community Feelgood Tour of the Byron Shire, Shire Choir heads to the sensational Brunswick Picture House for their final free community event. Learn, then sing, a classic pop rock song in parts, led by the dynamic Melia Naughton, and then belt it out accompanied by the Birrell Bros Band (who you may remember from NORPA's 2022 Love for One Night show). It's joyful, it's uplifting, and it's free, made possible with funding from the NSW Government and proudly supported by the Byron Shire Council.



'The life of Julie Cope' Tapestry, Grayson Perry Photo supplied by Ian Swankie

ADFAS Northern Rivers

When Monday 23 October,
6pm for 6.30pm

Where A&I Hall, Station Street, Bangalow

Information and tickets

adfas.org.au/societies/northernrivers

This month's theme is 'Pots and Frocks: The World of Grayson Perry'. UK-based lecturer, Ian Swankie will present on Grayson Perry, a core part of the art establishment, a Turner Prize winner, Royal Academician, and popular broadcaster. This talk will examine Grayson Perry's work, his exciting and thought-provoking exhibitions, and the unique character inside the flamboyant frocks.

CWA Cake and Produce Stall

When Saturday 28 October, 8am - 12 noon

Where CWA rooms, 31 Byron St, Bangalow

Contact cwasecbangalow@gmail.com

Looking for a treat to have with coffee? Or a gift to say thank you? Or something for school lunches or the freezer? All the popular CWA goodies will be on sale at the monthly cake stall – scones, cakes, biscuits, slices, jams, pickles and much more.

Coorabell Hall Fun Fridays and curries

When Every Friday 5 - 8.30pm

Where Coorabell Hall

Contact [coorabellhall.net](https://www.coorabellhall.net)

Chill out at your community Hall on Friday evenings. Yummy curries to eat in or take away. Fully licenced bar at prices you can afford. Play checkers, chess, Scrabble, mini pool or perhaps table tennis! Curries served between 3 and 7pm. Don't miss out – these curries are delish!

Diary

October 2023

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6	Bangalow Business Networking Breakfast Sam Buckingham and friends at Eureka Hall
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November edition deadlines

What's On 13 October

Copy 13 October

Advertising 13 October



Photos Alex Hand

The heart and lungs of the village



In August, the Bangalow Showground was the site for the Byron Writers Festival for the first time, having relocated from its home in Byron Bay. Hosting the festival was a big deal for our small village, but the showground proved ideal for this huge event. The organisers and attendees all raved about what a beautiful location the grounds were for the festival. By all accounts, it was a resounding success.

The Bangalow Showground is the heart and lungs of the village. The 40 acres of parkland comprise two arenas, multiple pavilions, sheds, 'the Show Office', stables, and a decidedly block-shaped utility building mysteriously called the Rotunda.

Officially the showground is called Bangalow Park, which is emblazoned on the gates at the entrance.

Although it is called the Showground, the annual Bangalow Agricultural Show, or Show, as we know it, only takes place a couple of days each year. This year will be the 122nd Show.

However, each week the grounds are used by horse owners for dressage, jumping and whatever else horse owners do.

Chook shows and auctions also feature regularly in the aptly named Fowler Pavilion. The annual chook show is the largest in NSW

outside the Royal Easter Show. Other large events such as the Sample Food Festival, Bangalow Film Festival, and more are held onsite.

Since European settlement, the land was owned by village pioneer Robert Campbell, who first leased it to the newly formed Bangalow Show Society in 1897 for the very first Show. Later the Show Society purchased 12 acres from Campbell for £50 an acre.

The grounds are now Crown Land administered by the Byron Shire Council, which appoints a S.355 committee, known as the Bangalow Park Trust, to oversee the grounds' day-to-day running and associated buildings. The committee members are from the local community with some representing particular organisations that have strong ties to the Showground such as the Show Society (which is separate from the Park Trust), various equestrian groups and the Lions Club.

The most important person connected to the Showground is the bookings officer, Shane Olive, who, with wife Ashleigh and two sons, live on-site in a cottage with the biggest front yard in town. They maintain the property, provide security and ready access for users of the grounds.

The monthly markets held at the Showgrounds are a drawcard for visitors to the area and an important source of income for many locals. Income from the markets is also vital for the financial health of the committee running the Showground. The committee is dependent on this income together with the annual Show and hiring the facilities as it receives no financial assistance from the Council for the maintenance and improvements.

The importance of the Showground was seen during last years' flood emergency when it became the local hub for the collection of food and clothing for distribution to those in need, and the stables operated as a sanctuary for displaced horses.

Each day at the Showground kids play, people walk dogs and exercise, travellers have a rest stop, workers have morning tea and lunch, people meet for a chat or picnic. It's a showground by name but a social ground in practice.

**Murray Hand
and Neville Maloney**



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