

HERALD

The Bangalow

FREE | December 2023 | January 2024



Summertime and the living is easy

Living with snakes
A local guide

Tony Parkes
'Big Scrub hero'

Festive favourites
Recipes and gifts

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HERALD

The Bangalow

From the Editor

When reading the diverse contributions to this issue, I was reminded of the concept of 'returning' – to a place, to an idea, to a state of being.

Tony Parkes' life work, returning the depleted rainforests of our area to their pre-European splendour, is a rich and noble quest. In similar ways, local dancer/choreographer Robert Alejandro Tinning returns to his ancestral path, both literally and metaphorically, through the dismantling of dominant narratives in the arts (important work that has earned him a prestigious scholarship). Bangalow artist Ben Hellewell explains how materials returned from the sea are re-visited into sculptures that capture the power, magnificence and fragility of local fauna. Continuing this thread, Angela Saurine writes about living with snakes, an important reminder of the realities of summer in the hinterland and our responsibility to tread lightly, returning to equilibrium with the world around us. Meanwhile, Christobel Munson returns to a distant time in the history of her being where she revels in the playful fancy of a past life reading that leaves her feeling buoyant and energised.

Returning is all of these things and more. Of course, a new year is around the corner, the time when tradition urges us to make a vow to be better, do good. A revolution. A resolution. A promise. What will yours be? Returning a phone call, returning that long-overdue library book, or returning to a dream that you'd long given up on? There's no time like now to review the world anew, to realign, reflect and recalibrate. But first, a rest. See you in 2024.

Sally Schofield

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

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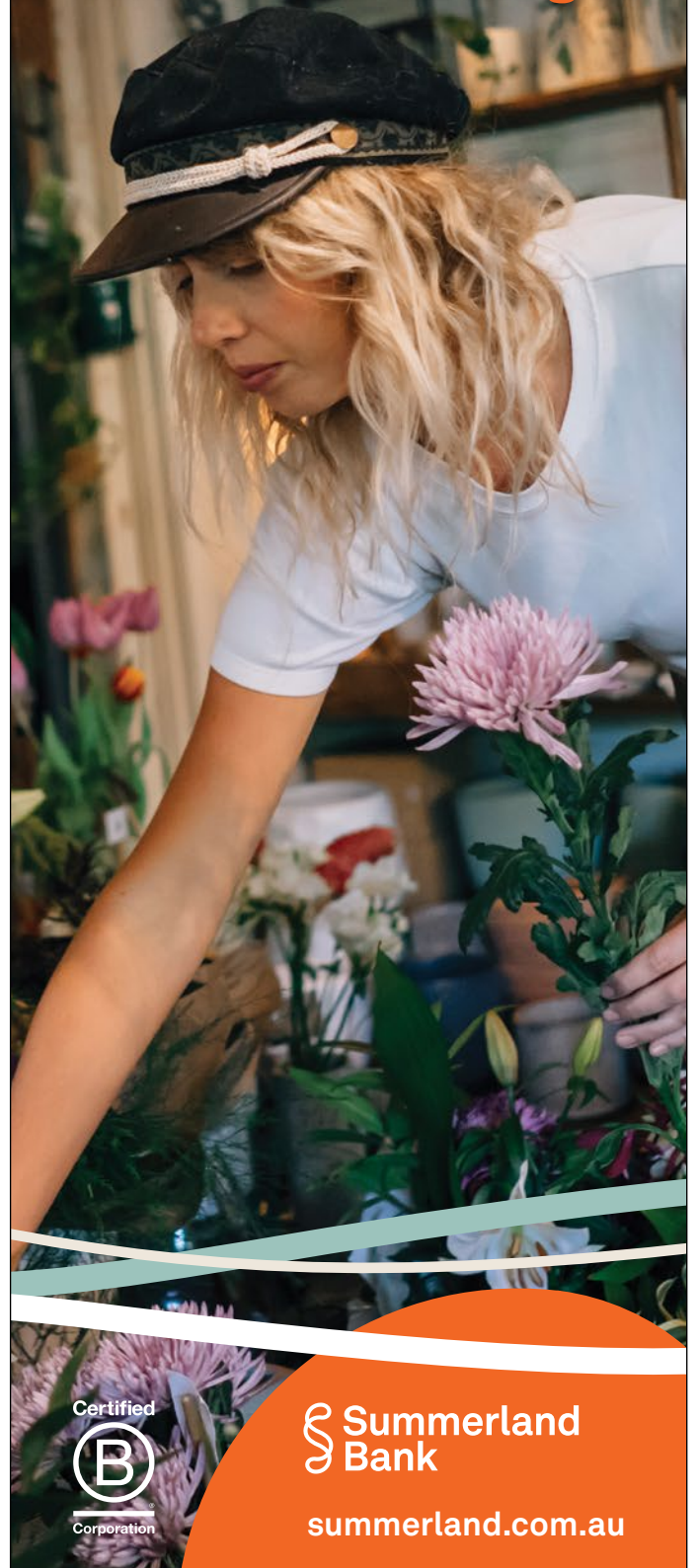
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Big Scrub hero Tony Parkes Photo Christobel Munson

‘Mr Big Scrub’: Tony Parkes

After leaving a successful international career in investment banking aged 55, Tony Parkes and his late wife, Rowena, hit the road, caravanning around Australia. That done, they returned to a scrubby 105-acre block of land they’d bought in 1985 on Friday Hut Road, Binna Burra, and wondered what to do with it.

In the following 35 years, with some good pals, he created what’s now the Big Scrub Rainforest Conservancy, to preserve and enhance the local native rainforest. Big Scrub Rainforest Conservancy, formerly Big

Scrub Landcare, facilitated the planting of 2.5 million trees, creating 600 hectares of rainforest, doubling the size of remnant Big Scrub rainforest. In 2019, he was awarded the Order of Australia for distinguished service to the environment through the restoration of endangered rainforest in northern New South Wales – one of many awards he’s received for his voluntary work.

What was the best influence on your life?

The 67-year relationship with a gorgeous woman.

What was the most fun you ever had?

Organising the Dis-Orientation week at the University of Tasmania, on a ferry, with a great jazz band, lots of girls, and lots of beer.

What’s the most important lesson you learned in your life?

To be optimistic. I had a beautiful childhood. My parents gave me total freedom. We lived at Sandy Bay, Hobart, between the bush and the Derwent estuary. I was a biophile and always had an immense connection with the environment. On the shoreline where we lived, everyone had boat sheds and dinghies. As boys, we’d borrow someone’s dinghy, use a broom handle and half a sheet to make a sail, and off we’d go, sailing and fishing. On Sundays, a one-legged WW1 veteran with a big yacht, would have some of his crew teach us 8-10 year olds elements of sailing, his contribution to a long-established Tasmanian tradition.

How tall are you? What’s been the advantage of being so tall?

6 foot 4.5 inches (when I had hair). You could see over crowds.

Favourite colour?

Blue – for the sky. And green, for vegetation.

Favourite flower?

Roses.

Favourite native plant?

Syzygium moorei, Coolamon. It has the most beautiful flowers on its limbs. There’s one here, hundreds of years old. It is threatened.

What did Rowena bring into your life?

Love.

What’s the most important message you want to leave to your children?

[He has three children, Richard, Katrina and Abigail; three grandchildren and one great-grandchild.] Be nice to your dad.

What’s the most important lesson life has taught you?

Be positive. Have concern for others. Love, where possible. I’m a loving sort of person

What’s the most awful thing you ever did?

Broke off my engagement to my wife-to-be. Rowena had come to London, where I was at uni, to marry me. I was 24, and said I wasn’t ready to make the commitment. (We later married in Montreal, once I had a job.) I had a PhD in organic chemistry from the University of Tasmania and was doing the postgraduate course in business administration at the London School of Economics, plus some postdoc research at Imperial College. The science plus the business, which were unique at that time, gave me great options through my life.

What's the most fabulous thing you ever did?

Marrying Rowena, and 32 years later buying a block of former dairying land at Binna Burra. We built the house in 1989. Now, 40,000 trees and 14ha of restored rainforest later, it's transformed. My daughter, Abigail and her partner, Kieran have been using regenerative agriculture practices to restore the fertility of the pasture on the rest of the farm. They're managing a buffalo farming enterprise, that will eventually produce and market on-farm buffalo mozzarella cheese and yoghurt.

Favourite food? Oysters and champagne.

Age? 94.

With the time you have left, what's the most meaningful thing you'd like to do?

Staying alive to see the fruition of the Science Saving Rainforest program. It leads the world in applying genome science to ecological restoration and recovery of threatened species. This is what will help save our critically endangered rainforest - and 30 of its threatened plant species - from extinction. This methodology can be applied around the world. How many people, after a career in business and investment banking, can turn around and have the opportunity to help save a beautiful and endangered rainforest? Plus the joy and satisfaction of what we've achieved.

Silliest thing you ever did?

Taking up golf, at which I wasn't good. Eventually I thought the better of it.

Any useful lessons from your time as an investment banker?

Expect human frailty. I was quite a good problem solver, with science and business behind me.

Best friends?

My beloved colleagues from the Big Scrub Rainforest Conservancy: Renee Borrow, Mark Dunphy, Martin Brook, Georgina Jones, Shannon Greenfield, Chris Byrne. And my son Richard – a very funny guy. I love a whole lot of beautiful, very talented women of all ages. I'm very blessed. How many people of my age have that?

My marriage with Rowena was based on love, mutual respect and great communications. As a result, our relationship was made in heaven. I adored her, till the day she died. I have had a blessed life.

What do you do to chill?

I read, novels and non-fiction. I enjoy the environment we've been fortunate enough to have created here. It's incredibly beautiful. I feel connected, at one with the natural world. That has a favourable impact on your health and outlook on life.

How did the Big Scrub group start?

In the early 1990s, the government wasn't doing anything about the disappearing Big Scrub. We held a public meeting at Clunes in 1993, and 120 people showed up. We formed the Big Scrub Rainforest Landcare Group. I was elected President, and we adopted the mission to help save the Big Scrub and its magnificent biodiversity. Can you imagine a better way to spend 30 years of your life - after age 63 - in a group of great people achieving such great environmental outcomes? bigscrubrainforest.org

Christobel Munson



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Living with snakes



Bridget Thomson from The Wildlife Twins with a coastal python Photo Sophie Thomson

Snakes are active throughout the Byron Shire throughout the warmer months, and it's important to be aware of what species are around and what to do if you see one, writes Angela Saurine.

If you've lived in the Northern Rivers for a while, chances are you've seen a snake of some kind slithering around. The reptiles are abundant throughout the region, with sightings more common in the warmer months when they are out and about looking for food and mating. Byron Bay Wildlife Hospital associate veterinarian Dr Chantal Whitten says several species of snake can be found in the Byron Shire, with the coastal carpet python the most common. "Last month we saw 17 of these snakes at our hospital," she says. "They were mostly hit by a car or injured by lawn

mowers and whipper snippers." Green tree snakes, also known as common tree snakes, are also common. "The venomous ones to watch out for are red-bellied black snakes and eastern brown snakes," Dr Whitten says. She says snakes usually hang around where there is food and shelter. "They seek refuge under wood and tin and try to steal eggs and chickens," she says. If you see a snake, Dr Whitten says the best thing to do is leave it alone. "They are just as scared of us," she says. If you are unsure if it is venomous, she recommends calling a snake catcher to relocate it. If it's injured, call WIRES or Northern Rivers Wildlife Carers, who will send an experienced handler to collect it and take it to the hospital for treatment. "We can do some things to help protect them, like not using rodenticide to bait mice and rats as snakes can get secondary poisoning, and checking the lawn for snakes before mowing," Dr Whitten says.

LOCAL WILDLIFE



Marion Nel from Safe Snake Services Photo supplied

Marion Nel, from Safe Snake Services, says if you come across a snake in your home, try to lock it in the room you saw it so it's easier for the snake catcher to locate, and place rolled up towels under doors to stop it escaping. "If your house is open plan, keep a safe distance while keeping an eye on it," she says. Marion says snakes are often found in bird aviaries and other animal enclosures. "Check your mouse-proofing," she recommends. "If it's mouse and rat-proof, it's snake-proof."

While she hasn't necessarily seen more snakes than usual this season, Marion says they seem to be bigger this year. "It's like they've had a good food season last year so they're all busting at the seams," she says.

Originally from South Africa, Marion has always had a love of animals and started volunteering with WIRES after moving to McLeans Ridges. "I decided to do snake training as I kept coming across snakes needing help and had my own scary python encounter when one got inside my bird cage and I had no idea what to do," she says. "One year later I was catching snakes, two years later I was reptile co-ordinator for WIRES, and I'm currently in my third season of private snake catching."

Marion says we live with snakes safely most of the time. She says to make sure you look wherever you put your hands or feet in the garden to avoid stepping on one. Eastern brown snakes, she says, have the potential to kill a large human with one bite. "Their venom is the second most toxic in the world," she says. "I've seen a really angry brown and it's not like a normal brown snake giving you a warning, it's hardcore defensive behaviour with intent to kill when you've really upset one and



Dr Chantal Whitten with a coastal python at Byron Wildlife Hospital Photo Lyn McCarthy Niche Pictures

I believe if they wanted to harm us handlers, they would. Red-bellied black snakes are dangerously venomous, but not nearly as dangerous as eastern browns. Snake catchers love red-bellied black snakes because they're cooperative, beautiful and an impressive snake. They're amazingly adept at finding their way out of a house if they accidentally get trapped inside. They just need space and time to get away."

Marion says dogs are by far the biggest problem when it comes to snake safety. "It's a tough one if the dog is hellbent on finding the snake, but once you're aware of the danger you have to do whatever you can to prevent an altercation," she says. "If you're getting a puppy there are training programs for snake safety, so contact your vet." Knowing the local snake species is important, Marion says, and every household should have a couple of pressure bandages stored somewhere easy to find and know how to use them in case someone gets bitten. "Always call 000 after applying first aid," she says.

Ballina-based Bridget Thomson, who is one half of The Wildlife Twins, began working as a snake catcher after studying a Bachelor of Applied Science majoring in wildlife science at the University of Queensland, before moving into wildlife education with her sister Sophie. She says 85 per cent of snake bites occur when someone is trying to catch, kill or handle a snake. If you find yourself within one to two metres of a snake, Bridget says to stay still and wait for the snake to move on. "Snakes have terrible vision," she says. "Most snakes in Australia can only see about two or three metres, so they react to movement. Even if the snake was startled, just stay calm, stay still, and the snake will move on." Bridget says that if it's a hot and windy day, it's also likely to be an active snake day. "They feel safer moving out in the open when there's a lot of foliage blowing around as predators like birds can't spot them as easily," she says.

Snakes, Bridget says, play an important role in the environment and don't want to hurt us. "I don't want to scare anyone, but for every snake that you see, there's probably another 10 around that you didn't see. We need to respect them."



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Robert Alejandro Tinning and Georgia Van Gils in Stephanie Lake Company's development of their new work, 'Chronicles' Photo Mark Gambino

From flying high to forest-bathing in the Northern Rivers

Northern Rivers dance/performance artist and fellow Clunes local, Robert Alejandro Tinning and I are discussing the Japanese concept of shinrin-yoku or forest bathing. The peripatetic, independent artist and choreographer says it best captures the feeling he gets when he returns home between frenetic periods of travelling and performing with leading dance companies all over the world. "I come back to my family, to the bedroom I grew up in, the land I'm connected to – to recharge my mind, body and psyche. I do a lot of yoga. There are few better places," he says. Taking time out to regenerate physically and mentally is vital for Robert, whose creative and career pursuits have led him to travel extensively across 33 countries, to participate in international exchanges, as well as meet, work with and learn from artists of many disciplines. "My body is my tool, which is my work," he explains.

When we speak, Robert is in transit, yet again, this time in Auckland, on his way to Salvador, the old capital of Brazil in the north-eastern state of Bahia to take up an Ian Potter Cultural Trust grant for two months. It's a significant career milestone that will see him embark on a transformative odyssey with the prestigious Sacatar Fellowship of Itaparica Brazil.

Salvador de Bahia was the first capital of Brazil (1549-1763) where the blending of

European, African and Amerindian cultures took place. According to the UNESCO World Heritage Convention website, Salvador de Bahia was also, from 1558, "... the first slave market in the New World, with slaves arriving to work on the sugar plantations." We discuss how colonisation, invasion, slavery, and war scar cultures for generations. "This place I am going to, there are buildings still around from the slave trade. With my Afro-Futuristic brand label, I want to participate in repurposing these structures, repossessing, and owning them and making our voices stronger for it. I want to be around that."

The child of an Australian father and an Ecuadorian mother, one of Robert's biggest inspirations is "the importance of honouring his ancestral paths of a recent and ancient diaspora." These are themes on which he has clearly thought deeply for a long time and that continue to inform his creative practice. Queer culture is another. "They are an amalgamation that have forged for me, withstanding violent and oppressive structures through history, the life I now pursue and dedicate to art and unravelling my Afro-Latin Futuristic voice and mixed Anglo heritages." Robert is conscious, having grown up in Australia, to have had opportunities not afforded to his family members in Ecuador, which he has visited a several times and where he feels a cognitive dissonance of belonging and yet not.

In the Northern Rivers, he notes there's a strong Afro-Latino-Australian population. His mother, a school-teacher, was also a Latin dance troupe leader, so he grew up watching her teach people the moves. Robert learned them by osmosis. "Then one day, when I was about seven, I walked in and my dad was watching *Rage* on television. It was Alien Ant Farm doing a version of the Michael Jackson song, 'Smooth Criminal'. There was this kid about my age dancing, and he was cutting sick. I thought, 'I can do that.'" He got interested in Hip-Hop, joined a dance eisteddfod then picked up dance at school. His dance teacher said, "You should look at this and really think about it." Robert was already playing football and tennis at state competition level. But dance began to win out. After school, he went to the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts. "I was hooked," he says.

As his professional bio demonstrates, the rest is history. Robert has been engaged nationally for a number of state bodies and independent creatives such as the Stephanie Lake Company, among others. His projects have been performed in both Australia and the USA, and his collaborations with actor/director Dacre Montgomery, famous for his portrayal of Billy from Netflix's *Stranger Things*, have garnered over two million views across social media platforms. He also pays



Robert Alejandro Tinning Photos Hamish McCormack | Carnival Cinema

tribute to First Nations Australian dancers commenting on how much he looks up to Bangarra Dance Theatre; and his particular respect for Kirk Page.

At the heart of Robert's fellowship, he is researching the Afro-Latin diaspora, the concept 'Sandunga': an embodiment of individual rhythm and flavour, the colonial scars left behind by the Transatlantic slave trade, and his cultural and ethnic DNA's relationship to that history. He will be utilising this research for the continued development of 'The Drip', a multi-artform performance installation designed for non-traditional spaces.

Robert views 'The Drip' as an internalised journey, a collision point where Afro-street style meets the profound complexities of multiracial heritage. Drawing inspiration from the notion of 'The Sunken Place' in Jordan Peele's movie, *Get Out*, the project takes a semi-self-biographical approach.

"'The Drip' becomes a canvas, illustrating the relentless struggle for sovereignty over cultural identities, minds, and souls. The project resonates with the echoes of history, weaving together narratives from past, present, future, and parallel timelines, that challenge societal norms and aims for the reclamation of power within one's own cultural voice." said Robert.

When COVID threw its spanner in the works, Robert says, "My industry disappeared." It was an especially dark period for an international performance artist approaching his prime. He's palpably energised to be well back in the swing of those serotonin and dopamine performance highs that he achieves through dancing.

After Brazil, Robert is off to New York. And, eventually, he'll be home again in the Northern Rivers enjoying the surf, skate and hippy culture, maybe hopping on his Mal in the water, sharing some calamari with his family at the inlet beach at Bruns; or Lennox; being around running water at Whian Whian Falls. Again, he'll recharge his mind, body and psyche as well as maybe catch up with some old buddies from Clunes Primary School, revisiting some secret childhood haunts.

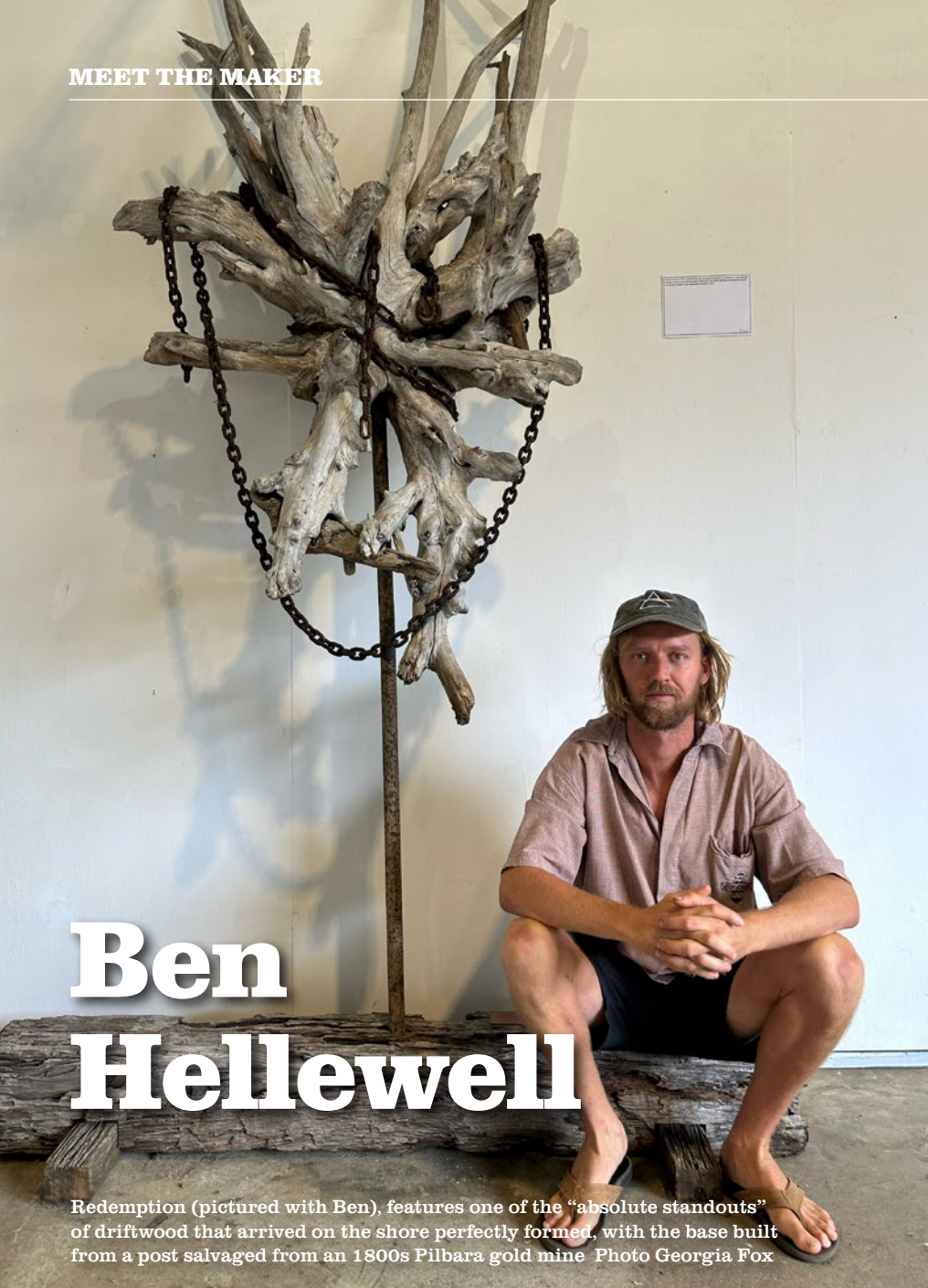
Sonya Voumard

A Northern-Rivers-based journalist and author, Sonya Voumard is due to have her fourth book, Tremor, published in 2024 by Ginninderra Press.



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Ben Hellewell

Redemption (pictured with Ben), features one of the “absolute standouts” of driftwood that arrived on the shore perfectly formed, with the base built from a post salvaged from an 1800s Pilbara gold mine. Photo Georgia Fox

Bangalow-based sculptor Ben Hellewell recently wrapped his first solo exhibition, *Where Movement and Stillness Collide*. Created mostly from assembled driftwood, it's a body of work that represents the deeply personal journey Ben has been on since the course of his life changed four years ago.

He'd lived in the Shire for about a year, led here on an “expansive journey” travelling around Australia and other parts of the world building off-grid earthen homes. During a rough patch in the ongoing pain of losing his mother as a child, he was camping on the beach in Mackay for a few days of time-out. Growing up near the coast in regional Western Australia, the beach has always held special significance. His mother's ashes were scattered in the ocean and it's the place he feels closest to her.

He'd never studied art, but walking the beach that morning, a beak-shaped piece of driftwood captured his attention. “I'm yet to know how to articulate it properly, what happened in that moment, but it was a turning point in my life. I felt so invigorated and excited, like this child within me that had been totally shutdown since Mum passed, came back alive, and I just knew that I had to make an eagle. I had to follow the feeling.” He spent the rest of the day collecting pieces that looked like feathers and talons. “It was one of the most satisfying, purposeful days of my life.”

A short holiday became two months scouring the coastline. About a month in, he was questioning his sanity - was he really going to make sculptures, or was he just becoming obsessed, and a hoarder in the process? Using a drill and chainsaw, he built a humpback whale on the beach from four perfectly weathered pieces, and knew he was on the right path.

Taking out a loan, he bought a truck, flew

Bangalow Streetscape Materials Design Guide

The new Bangalow Streetscape Materials Design Guide is on exhibition.

The Guide:

- Looks at the materials, treatments and street furniture used in the public areas, providing a guide for project designs and works being carried out in this space.
- Aims to ensure the local heritage character that makes Bangalow special is retained and preserved into the future.

Submissions close on 19 January 2024

For more information or to make a submission

- 🌐 <https://www.byron.nsw.gov.au/Bangalow-design-guide>
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BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

Best wishes for the festive season and a very happy 2024.





Shark Photo @ericasundrop

back to Byron to get his heavy vehicle licence and returned to Mackay, where he loaded up tonnes of driftwood and made the journey home. He set up a studio in the Bangalow Arts Yard and began work on the eagle.

Urged by a mutual friend, he reached out to Gabrielle Pool, who had recently opened Peek Gallery in Byron. To his surprise, she arranged to visit the studio, whereupon she offered him a contract on the spot off the strength of the whale, amazed it was his first-ever sculpture. She wanted three pieces, with the whale to headline Peek's inaugural show.

But the elation was soon shattered with the unexpected passing of Ben's father. It was an enormously difficult time, but full of inspiration, he explains. The eagle took on even more significance, being the animal his father always said he wanted to be reincarnated as. "It was how I processed everything. It was my therapy."

Reincarnate, sold before the show opened. "Adversity is there to help us grow. I'm getting

better at reminding myself that it's for the benefit of my life,"

Since then, he's participated in other group exhibitions and worked on private commissions. He feels the beauty of what's revealed by nature over time in the weathered wood is what makes the sculptures special. "These old hardwood pieces have such incredible stories I'll never know, although they do speak in their own way... I listen for the inspiration to come through."

The centrepiece for the solo show, a floating 400kg shark, crashed to the floor halfway through the exhibition run when the ropes suspending it from the ceiling snapped, breaking apart its lower half. After screaming at the sky out the back of the waves, he reframed the situation and embraced the shark's new form, piling the disassembled wood and snapped ropes on the floor underneath it, the inner structure now visible like a timber skeleton.



Eagle Photo Ben Hellewell

He says the exhibition has brought closure and clarity after the "scatteredness" of the past four years, and hopes his work inspires a deeper connection with nature for the audience. "When we engage in communication with the natural world, magic happens." Like that morning on the beach at Mackay.

"We're conditioned to think death's the end, and I've definitely learned that it's not. For so long I thought my connection with my mother was lost, but rebuilding my relationship with her over these past four years has taught me so much. She talks to me a lot. I talk with her a lot. Often through driftwood, and my work. Sculpture has helped me integrate my grief and form a stronger connection with both my parents. This is part of who I am."

Check out more of Ben's work on show at Vampt Vintage 14 Bayshore Dr, Byron Bay or on Instagram @ben_hellewell_

Georgia Fox



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Getting up close with nature at Federal Community Children's Centre Photo supplied

Accolades for Federal preschool

It's been an impressive few months for not-for-profit childcare centre Federal Community Children's Centre. The Centre was recently a finalist in the National Excellence in Early Childcare awards and also received a KindiCare Excellence award at a gala presentation in Sydney confirming their commitment to quality early childhood education. "Our goal is to collaborate with parents and the wider community to provide a service that allows children aged two to five years to engage in diverse social, cultural, and educational activities.

"We believe in learning through play and connecting with nature, as well as incorporating an Aboriginal perspective into our daily program and practices.

"We acknowledge the Widjabul people as the traditional custodians of the land and ensure that Aboriginal culture, language, and awareness are integrated into our activities. In 2014, we partnered with Auntie Dory Gordon, Auntie Karyn Roberts, Ngulingah Land Council and the Madgima Galgun and Federal Landcare to create the Bush Tucker Living Classroom on the crown land behind the preschool. We have been blessed to have Delta Kay come and run tours at the Bush Tucker Living classroom. This area replaced a large weed-infested space and is

now utilised by schools, the community, and Aboriginal tours. It offers children the opportunity to learn about local bush foods, flora, and fauna through signs and pictures. It has inspired other bush tucker gardens throughout Australia and has raised funds for the garden's maintenance."

To find out more about the Centre visit federalccc.com.au

Bowlo to be local heat haven

Bangalow Bowling Club has been designated as the first place to go for respite during heatwaves, with elderly people especially being urged to head to the air-conditioned venue when the temperature hits 38°C. Bangalow Heritage House Museum, Bangalow Men's Shed and Bangalow Anglican Church will act as overflow venues. Bangalow Resilience Network, which is made up of several local community groups, identified the heat havens at its last meeting in November. It is also urging residents to check on neighbours on hot days over summer and invite them into air-conditioned homes if they don't have air-conditioning themselves.

The organisation, which consists of local community groups including the CWA, Connecting Generations and Communities and Bangalow Anglican Op Shop, as well as representatives from Byron Shire Council, is working towards preparing a disaster plan for the area. Its key focuses are mapping Bangalow and its neighbourhoods to identify areas prone to bushfires, flooding and landslips; shelter and evacuation; coordinating donations; communication; and educating the community. It plans to work with other resilience groups which have formed at Federal, Coorabell and Possum Creek, as well as the SES and NSW Rural Fire Service.

In the event of an emergency, the A&I Hall is the key evacuation site, with the Moller Pavilion in Bangalow Showground being the back-up site. The group is investigating fundraising to purchase CB radios that can be located at key hubs and used to communicate if internet and phone services are down and encouraging local groups and individuals to buy their own where possible. Free calls can also be made from the Telstra phone in the red booth in Bangalow's main street. The group has also set up a Facebook page called Bangalow Resilience Network to keep the community updated.

The next meeting will be held at Bangalow Heritage House Museum on December 6 from 4pm to 6pm.

Angela Saurine

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Authorised J Elliot, ALP, Tweed Heads South

CWA says NO to violence against women

As 2023 draws to a close, Members reflect on another full year. While it may have already been a busy year, it's not over yet. Throughout the year members have continued to raise awareness on issues the branch is strongly committed to, participated in community events, raised funds for organisations supporting women and children in vulnerable circumstances through catering and craft sales, and passed on knitting and embroidery skills to those interested in learning.

2023 saw the branch donate over \$40,000 to the SHIFT project, Liberation Larder, the Winsome Hotel in Lismore, Fletcher St Cottage, Mullumbimby Neighbourhood Centre, Lismore Base Hospital Women's Unit, Bangalow Primary School, and Christmas vouchers to women in vulnerable circumstances.

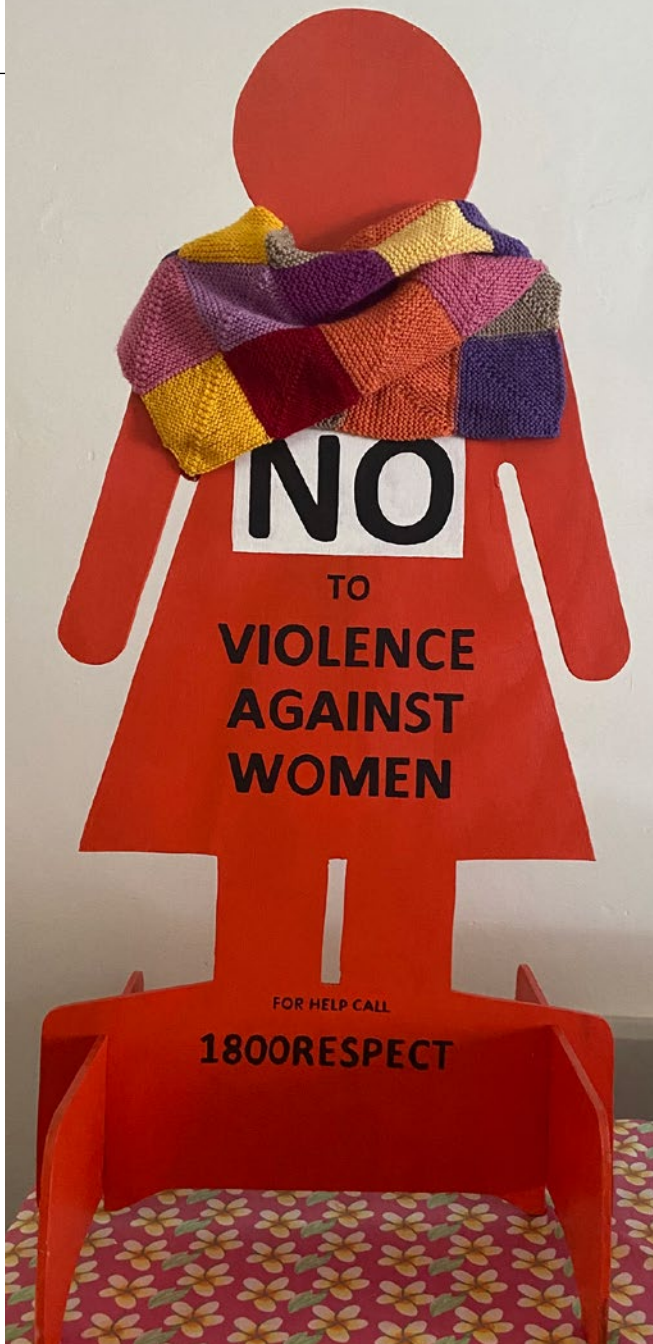
Alongside its financial contributions, the branch has continued its advocacy in areas such as homelessness, domestic violence, and support for the Uluru Statement from the Heart. Members have attended resilience training and are an integral part of the newly formed, Bangalow Resilience Network.

The year is not over yet. You may have noticed the orange figure in our current window display. She's the symbol of the United Nations global campaign to raise awareness and stop violence against women and girls. December 1 we will join other school, community and service clubs in Ballina and march under the CWA banner saying NO to violence towards women.

Globally, one in three women experience physical or sexual violence mostly by an intimate partner. Violence against women and girls is one of the most pervasive human rights violations. Since the outbreak of COVID-19, evidence has shown that all types of gender-based violence, particularly domestic violence, has escalated. On average in Australia, one woman a week is murdered by a partner or former partner and many more are hospitalised.

Violence against women is a complex issue and is perpetrated in many ways. We cannot solve this issue alone, so please join us in saying NO to Violence Against Women. If you are able to march with us on December 1, please meet us at the Ballina pool by 12.30pm.

Di Campbell
CWA Bangalow



Standing up to stop violence against women Photo supplied

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The family is growing!



The great Granuaille

It is believed that early European settler Robert Campbell and family brought the name Granuaille to town to honour the Irish Pirate Queen, 'Granuiale' also known as Grace O'Malley.

The road is not the only location in the village to bear the name. The site of the current Bangalow Hotel was once the Granuaille Hotel until it burned to the ground in 1939. The now disused railway station was originally called Granuaille, then later changed to Byron Creek before becoming Bangalow.

According to a letter written by the late Chester Snow, published in a local newspaper some years ago: "Granuaille is the highest hill around these parts and is situated the top of McLeod's Shoot where the road to Coorabell branches off. It is named on Government maps which give the height as 624 feet above sea level. Granuaille Road is named thus because it leads from Byron Creek up to Granuaille."

So who was Granuaille?

The daughter of a Gaelic chieftain, Grace O'Malley alias Granuiale, was born in around 1530 and thrived in her family's traditional maritime trade, travelling to Ireland, Scotland, and Spain while engaging, as you do, in the occasional piracy and plundering. Later, presumably when the pirate's life was no longer for her, she took on the more conventional roles of wife and mother, in a strategic marriage.

Legend has it that when Grace O'Malley was a little girl, she chopped off all of her hair to pass for a boy in order to board one of her father's ships on a trade mission. It was considered unlucky to have a woman on board when at sea, therefore he had declined to take her, so she improvised.

Her short hair is the source of her name Gráinne Mhaol (or bald Gráinne), anglicised as Granuaille.

The Pirate Queen eventually rose to the position of matriarch or overlord, ruling not only her own followers and her extended family but also the clansmen living nearby, whose chieftains had either perished in the many battles of the time or had abdicated their duties to look out for their reliant followers. She personally commanded her troops against English generals who attempted to limit her authority, fighting fearlessly.

She daringly sailed her galley to Greenwich Palace from her stronghold on Ireland's west coast's Clew Bay to engage in direct negotiations with Queen Elizabeth I, whom she regarded to be an adversary. Granuaille convinced the English queen to defy her own military men's counsel in Ireland, and she not only maintained her composure but also secured the independence and future security of her family until her death in 1603.

The Bangalow Herald



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

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Together, we've achieved so much for our community in 2023.

In a new minority government, we've been able to deliver a 60-Day Cap on short-term holiday lets in Byron Shire, a real pay rise for public school teachers, an end to no-grounds evictions for NSW renters, \$3.3 million in road repairs for the Ballina electorate, and so much more!

This is proof that together, we are being listened to in NSW Parliament - and we are delivering real results.

From my family to yours, have a very happy holidays and a wonderful new year. Here's to many more wins for our community in 2024!

With love,

Tamara Smith MP
Your local Member for Ballina

☎ 6686 7522

✉ ballina@parliament.nsw.gov.au

🌐 tamarasmith.org.au

Pedestrian signs for Granuaille Rd... maybe



Granuaille Road, Bangalow

Photo Saul 'Drone Dude' Goodwin – PSPPhoto

Transport for NSW is investigating placing pedestrian warning signs on Granuaille Road after a local resident was hit by a car crossing the busy throughfare at Easter. After the accident, which left 89-year-old Jenny Coman hospitalised for months, Ballina Shire MP Tamara Smith contacted TfNSW to share her concerns about pedestrian safety. Her office also raised the issue with the Local Traffic Committee, which is convened by Byron Shire Council.

Abbie and Anthony Macdonald, who own Bangalow General Store, also distributed a flyer to neighbours urging them to go to the Safer Roads NSW website to request the speed limit of 50km per hour on the road be reviewed, or other deterrents, such as speed humps, were introduced.

But TfNSW rejected most of the suggestions, saying the existing 50km per hour speed zone on Granuaille Road aligns with the NSW Speed Zoning Standard and is the appropriate speed limit for a residential area. "In July 2023, TfNSW collected traffic and speed data on Granuaille Road to understand vehicular movements and speeds in the vicinity of the General Store," it said. "That data indicated that the average speed in the 50 zone was 45km/h for southbound traffic and 47km/h for northbound traffic. The 85th percentile, which is the speed at or below which 85 per cent of vehicles are observed travelling, was 49km/h for southbound traffic and 53km/h for northbound traffic. This indicates to TfNSW that the 50 zone is operating effectively, with the vast majority of motorists complying with the speed limit and few instances of excessive speeding. Given the residential road environment, the speed zone criteria would not be met for a reduction to 40 km/h or lower. It also would not meet the criteria for the establishment of a High Pedestrian Activity Area due to the lack of high pedestrian numbers crossing the road."

TfNSW also said that, given the private access roads and road alignment, there is nowhere on Granuaille Road where it is safe to position a zebra crossing where pedestrians would want to cross.

"Pedestrian movements would likely be highest in the vicinity of the Bangalow General Store," it said. "However, this location is on a sweeping bend and unsafe for a pedestrian crossing. If the proposed crossing were to be located further south away from the sweeping bend, it would not be positioned in a location where pedestrians would actually use it. Lighting is a requirement for any pedestrian crossing and installing a crossing takes away valued car parking spaces. If a pedestrian crossing were to be installed on Granuaille Road, the lighting and less parking would likely be an issue for local residents."

There was also no clear location to install a pedestrian crossing facility, such as a refuge, that would achieve high usage due to Mirabelle Early Education Centre and the general store being 180m apart from each other, and the long line of parking spaces on both sides of Granuaille Road. "Granuaille Road is a state road and a heavy vehicle route," TfNSW said. "The installation of any infrastructure which would impact on the width of travel lanes would need to accommodate the continued movement of larger vehicles. This factor would likely limit or prevent TfNSW from installing a pedestrian refuge on Granuaille Road as there is no alternate road heavy vehicles can use in this area. If a location on Granuaille Road was identified which was wide enough to install a medium refuge while still accommodating larger vehicle use, it would also require kerb extensions and other kerbside infrastructure which would take parking spaces away. This may not be the preferred outcome for those community members who rely on parking regularly on Granuaille Road. For example, during drop-off or pick up time at the childcare centre, or customers parking to visit the Bangalow General Store."

Angela Saurine

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RECIPES

This month, *The Herald* team share some of their favourite easy festive recipes for you to enjoy at home.

Pippa's Homemade Limoncello

INGREDIENTS

- 10 x lemons
- 1 x 750ml vodka
- 1 x cup sugar

1. Peel the lemons, place the peel into a large jar, cover with vodka, and screw on the lid.
2. Allow to infuse for at least four days or up to a month.
3. Strain the infused vodka, prepare sugar syrup, bring one cup of water to a simmer and stir in one cup of sugar until dissolved. Cool and add to infused vodka.
4. Et Voila! You've got yourself some delicious homemade Limoncello! No secret ingredients required.



Illustration Lyn Hand

Lyn's Lemon Tiramisu

Try this zesty twist on tiramisu, it pairs so well with home-made limoncello for the festive season and holidays.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 free range eggs, yolks and whites, separated
- 80g caster sugar
- 250g mascarpone
- 2 tbsp limoncello
- 2 unwaxed lemons
- Zest only of one lemon
- Skin peeled and shredded of one lemon
- 200g savoiarde biscuits (sponge fingers)

1. Make lemon syrup. Place the strips of lemon rind and the juice of one lemon in a small pan.
2. Add caster sugar and 100ml water. Simmer until sugar dissolves and liquid is syrupy. Remove from heat and cool. Remove rind and chop finely.
3. To make the tiramisu, whisk egg yolks and sugar together until light and creamy. Add the mascarpone and continue to whisk. Stir in the limoncello and lemon zest.
4. Whisk egg whites until stiff and then fold them into the mascarpone mixture until well combined.
5. To assemble, choose a serving dish. Spread a little of the mascarpone mixture on the base of the dish. One by one quickly dip the sponge fingers into the lemon syrup to form a layer. Top with mascarpone and continue process until layered, ending with the creamy mix. Sprinkle more limoncello on your sponge fingers between layers if you wish.
6. Finish with a sprinkle of the finely chopped lemon zest. Decorate with raspberries and mint if you wish. Leave in the fridge to chill.

Adapted from a recipe by Gennaro Contaldo

Lyn Hand

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Festive Favourites



Fruit Mince Pies

I craved Fruit Mince Pies when I was pregnant with my son. But not just any. They had to be Baker Delight ones with the icing sugar on top. There was something so moreish about the pastry, with its hint of vanilla, and the fruit mix was syrupy but not too sweet. I was due to give birth on Christmas Day but there was no way I was going to be in hospital with a baby at Christmas. I tried all the usual tricks to hurry things along. Nothing worked. I still had a week to go and I felt enormous and defeated so I bought myself a box of fruit mince pies, well, two, from Bakers Delight. Back in my hot stuffy flat, I ate almost a whole box and immediately regretted it. My insides were churning. Too much dried fruit, I thought. But it wasn't that. My son was born the next day. He's a teenager now but has always loved a Fruit Mince Pie too.

Sally Schofield

Panettone

Believe me when I say that Christmas would be cancelled if I was unable to get my hands on my favourite panettone. It is my gift to myself each year, the anticipation building from its arrival months earlier, to the indescribable joy of cracking it open on Christmas morning and diving, headfirst, into the pillowy cloud of buttery heaven. Where I remain until January.

While panettone is synonymous with Italy these days, it's only since its production was industrialised by Angelo Motta in 1919 that this Renaissance-era sweet bread ventured further than its hometown of Milan. As well as popularising panettone, Motta is also behind its iconic shape and impossibly light interior, the result of hanging the loaves upside-down to stretch as they cool.

I'm a bit of a purist, preferring a traditional artisanal panettone with raisins and candied citrus, which I eat fresh and plain to fully appreciate the incredible texture. Supermarket varieties can benefit from a little zhuzhing, and make wonderful French toast and bread and butter pudding. It has a remarkable shelf life, but cutting through the middle and slicing alternating slabs off each half allows it to be sandwiched back together and stay extra fresh. Squisito!

Georgia Fox

The Christmas Pudding

Picture this: Christmas time in the early 1960s. I am nine or 10 years old. My memory of this day; a table groaning with food. The ham beautifully decorated and all manner of goodies bedecking the table (my father's mother was a chef by trade). After demolishing the main course a large Christmas pudding sat waiting for the adults to emerge from their food coma.

The table was left unattended with a knife beside the pudding. I grasped my opportunity. We all knew what was inside a Christmas pudding: mixed fruit, peel, brandy, sugar and eggs. Slowly steamed for hours, a labour of love for my grandmother. I wasn't a big fan of pudding but I certainly was of the silver coins secreted inside but you had to be lucky enough to snare a portion with the sixpences.

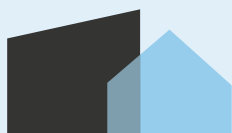
Having missed out on previous Christmases, I left nothing to chance. I cut, well I hacked more like, at random to retrieve those precious sixpences. I could imagine how many cobbles, musk sticks and other goodies I could buy with those small coins. Well, on discovery, as you can imagine all hell broke loose, lots of tears and apologies, no Christmas sweets for that naughty little girl.

Lyn Hand

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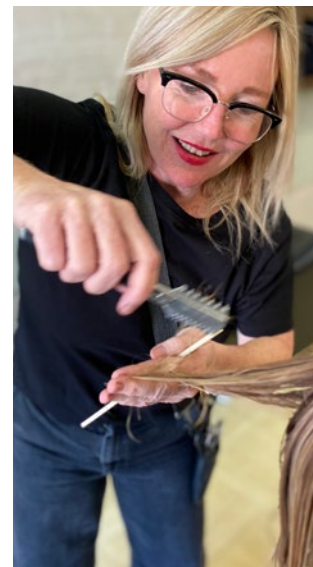
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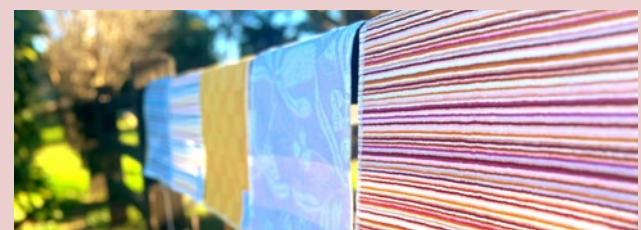
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Clay Northern Rivers presents the first annual Bangalow Ceramic Fair, Moller Pavilion - Bangalow Showgrounds 16-17 December 2023, 8 am - 3 pm. 50 local potters will showcase their work for sale alongside clay workshops, wheel-throwing demonstrations, live music, coffee, pastries, gelato, and food!

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interest to interiors and the extraordinary detail induces such a meditative feel that you will never tire of looking at them. Karena's work is in private, national, and international collections.

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BANGALOW FILM FESTIVAL

The Bangalow Film Festival is returning to its original stomping ground at the Bangalow Showgrounds in March with an open-air cinema and Festival Hub featuring food trucks, bars, activations and live music.

The 2024 edition will feature over 20 movie premieres, a school program and creative collaborations with local businesses.

Music will be the central theme, with music documentaries, movies with live music and masterclasses by some of Australia's best in the business.

Plus, a star-studded tribute to celebrate the 30th anniversary of one of Australia's most iconic movies; The Adventures of Priscilla Queen of the Desert, with special guests in tow!

**Bangalow Film Festival
Bangalow Showgrounds, A&I Hall and surrounds
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BYRON BAY DRESSING SHED

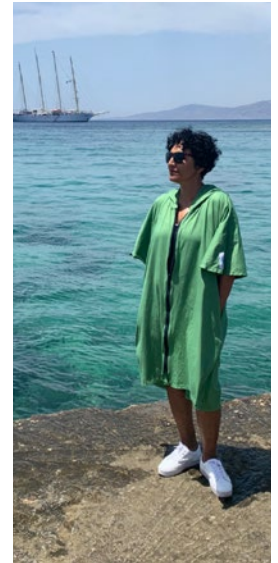
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2023

Wow yet another record breaking year!

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1 GOAL

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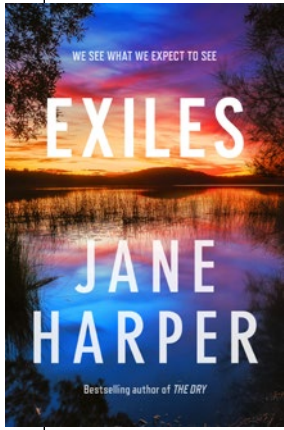


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Exiles by Jane Harper

All of Jane Harper's books can be read as a stand-alone and this is no exception.

Aaron Falk is on a break from work in the South Australian wine country. He's here for the christening of his godson – the son of his long-time friend and fellow detective, Greg Raco. It's a bittersweet gathering because it is overshadowed by the events of the previous year when the christening

had first been scheduled to occur. Coinciding with the Marralee Valley Annual Food and Wine Festival the planned christening was cancelled when a mother vanished from the busy festival site leaving her baby alone and asleep in her stroller. Kim Gillespie's body has never been found and her disappearance haunts her family and friends but none more than her 17-year-old daughter, Zara, who is the niece of Greg Raco.

The local police have worked with the family to present, at the opening of this year's festival, an appeal for information from anyone who might have a memory of Kim from the previous year's event. Aaron Falk had been there also, and her disappearance pervades his thinking as he remembers seeing Kim waving, from the top of the festival Ferris wheel, to her husband and baby daughter below.

Underlying the mystery of Kim's disappearance is the "hit and run" death of the father of Zara's friend, Joel Tozer. Is there some connection between the two unsolved events which took place five years apart at the same location?

What I loved about this book was the vast cast of characters, the authenticity of the rural connections between families and friends, the plotting and the clever way in which Harper hid (in plain sight) the true nature of the beast at the heart of this thriller.

**Good Reads rating 4.1 stars - Published by Pan Macmillan
Carolyn Adams**



Michael, Naomie and Roy Photo Murray Hand

Post Delivery Blues

For the past 17 years Michael Johnson has been the Australia Post contractor in Bangalow, responsible for the distribution of letters and parcels within 2479.

That is soon to end as he has decided to finish his contract in early February.

His two employees, Roy Powell and Naomie Jenkins, both of whom have been with Michael nine years, will also be gone. Roy's face is best known to those outside the village where he does his deliveries. He is referred to as the quiet achiever in contrast to Naomie who, on the other hand, is probably the most recognisable worker in Bangalow as she fangs around town on her motor bike, dreadlocks flying.

The contract for postal delivery is let by Australia Post. There are five contracts: one in town and four roadside, which will require five workers to operate. The licensee of the Bangalow Post Office will have first option on the contract then, if not taken up, it will be offered to existing contractors in nearby postal areas and then, if no interest, it will go the public tender.

Of course, the team has also been distributing the *Bangalow Herald* throughout the area. It will be sad to see this trio depart next year as they have become embedded in our lives in Bangalow.

Murray Hand

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Cheers to sparkling wine Photo Clarinta

Exploring the Artistry

As we welcome in the Festive Season, the clinking of glasses becomes a symphony of celebration, a sparkling ode to the culmination of the year and the excited anticipation of the one yet to unfold. In the world of sparkling wines, there exists an extensive spectrum of options, each offering distinct qualities that cater to a diverse range of palates and preferences. Let us delve into the subtle differences of four sparkling wines and what sets these wines apart.

WINE

Starting in Spain, Reyes de Aragon NV Reserva Cava is the epitome of tradition and expertise, made using the traditional method of sparkling wine production, also known as the méthode champenoise. The primary grape varieties used in this Cava are Macabeo, Xarel-lo, and Parellada, resulting in a crisp, dry, and elegant wine. It has a pale golden hue with delicate bead. Floral, citrus and nougat notes bounce out of the glass and are complemented by a subtle yeasty character. The aging process in the bottle adds depth and complexity, making it a fine choice for those who prefer a drier and more traditional sparkling wine experience.

Closer to home, the Caledonia Australis 2015 Umbra Method Ancestral, hailing from the Gippsland Victoria region of Australia, is a sparkling wine that follows the Ancestral method, which dates back centuries, leaving the wine unfiltered and full of character.


It boasts a cloudy appearance with effervescent bubbles, an exciting alternative to the clean, crisp sparkling wines that are on the market. This wine is alive, full of fresh vibrant flavours, with notes of stone fruits and subtle yeastiness, and is a captivating option for those who appreciate unique and less conventional sparkling wines.

Jumping across the border to the Adelaide Hills; La Prova Barbera Pet Nat, a product of the Petillant Naturel (Pet Nat), method. This sparkling wine from Australia is playful and approachable in nature. It is unpretentious and delightfully effervescent, featuring various fruity notes. The wine is sealed with a crown cap, and it undergoes fermentation in the bottle, resulting in a slight cloudiness and natural effervescence. This wine is ideal for those who enjoy a light, fruity, and fun sparkling wine.

Finally, the 2005 Aramis O'Aristocrats Sparkling Shiraz hails from the McLaren Vale region of South Australia and is a masterpiece. This wine's hallmark feature is its exceptional balance of rich, dark fruit flavours with a hint of spicy complexity. The deep ruby hue is accompanied by intense aromas of blackberry, plum, and an enticing touch of vanilla. The 2005 vintage imparts a refined maturity, giving the wine an edge in terms of complexity. It strikes the right balance between fruitiness and tannins, making it an excellent choice for those who appreciate both depth and vivacity in their sparkling wines. The ideal accompaniment to any Christmas lunch!

Extending warm wishes for a joyous festive season, to you and your loved ones. Travel well and stay groovy!

Dave Cribbin




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Community, creativity and conservation



The local community gathered at Frida's Field in Nashua on Saturday 4 November for an event that revelled in the natural world. Free nature-based activities for kids were the highlight of the day. Tepee making, using natural materials foraged from around the Frida's Field farm, was guided by the skilled hands of the Bangalow Mens' Shed members. The Flower Bar pop-up was buzzing with creativity as young and old constructed flower crowns. Elsewhere on the property, 800 trees were planted together with Richmond Landcare, Local Land Services and Big Scrub Regeneration. Mohini Cox and Friends added a musical note with live jazz entertainment while families enjoyed picnics on the grass, with gourmet snacks from Frida's kitchen and refreshments from local beverage brands.



Photos by Niche Pictures – Lyn McCarthy



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Heliotrope arborescens

There are flowers everywhere I look, and colour is brightening every garden.

Spring flowering seems to be especially profuse this year and I wonder why this particular perennial flowering bush isn't grown more widely.

It is drought tolerant and slightly frost tender; thrives in full sun or light shade; has no enemies and is visited by all the usual pollinators- nectar gathering birds, butterflies and bees AND it smells sublime.

Also known as the "cherry pie plant" for its slightly fruity, vanilla like scent, it is part of the family *Boraginaceae* that includes forget-me-nots and borage.

The name derives from the Greek mythological name for the sun god, Helios, and the ability of the flower spikes to turn to follow the sun, thus they are 'heliotropic'.

This ability, most marked in sunflowers, occurs quite often in other flowering plants and sometimes includes the foliage as well.

There are over 250 varieties of Heliotrope worldwide, and the flower colours range from white through pink to blues and purples which latter colours are the most often seen and the most dramatic.

Said to have originated in Peru, nevertheless there are some that appear to be native to sub-tropical parts of Australia but some botanists believe that these are naturalised garden escapees.

They are sometimes grown for their essential oils which can be used as the base for other perfumes, and like a lot of other flowering plants, the old-fashioned varieties have a more refined sweet scent than most of the new cultivars and hybrids bred for flower size and longer flowering seasons. Often the perfume is lost with these refinements.

It is a perennial in subtropical areas and often grown as an annual in cold climates where it sometimes can be grown indoors in a sunny window.

In the garden it has a slightly sprawling habit which is lovely but if you are a bit short of space, it can be staked and trained to be more upright.



The dramatic hues of the heliotrope make it a garden favourite Photos Carole Gamble

The colour looks brilliant with pinks, whites, yellows and oranges and the foliage is deep green with ridged oval leaves so perfect for flower arrangements.

Cuttings taken from vertical stems are relatively easy to propagate; growing from seed is challenging and slow!

Like many of our garden favourites, Heliotrope is poisonous to animals, but few cases of poisoning have been recorded, no doubt the smell is not attractive to pets.

I rather like the fact that a lovely purple-blue is known to artists (and decorators) as 'Heliotrope' and that the name means 'eternal love'.

A perfect name for the keen gardener who always loves everything growing for the sheer joy of it.

Carole Gamble



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Paul Williamson can guide you through memories of a past life
Photo supplied

Past lives

I could have had my DNA tested to find out more about the diverse nationalities of my forebears (and their biological impact on me today). Instead, I've decided to have a crack at another dimension: seeing who I was, and what I did, in an earlier life. And what I want to learn is what significance that has for me, in this lifetime.

But let's get this straight. I am not lying on a couch in a darkened room. I have not had a watch dangled before my eyes 'til I fall back in a mesmerised swoon. I have not discovered that I was Cleopatra in a past life.

It's a huge, very busy Gold Coast convention centre, with thousands of people attending a Mind Body Spirit-type event. A few metres away, loud drumming and chanting is happening. I am sitting upright on a canvas camp chair, in a small open-sided booth, facing a largish, kindly-looking fellow with fluffy white hair. He's a highly qualified

hypnotherapist with more than three decades of experience offering sessions in Past Life Regression and Life Between Lives therapy. It's all very down to earth, for something that's pretty other-worldly.

Apparently, if you can pretty easily imagine – or remember – the feeling of sand under your toes, walking along the beach, then it's likely you'll be able to slip into a past life just as readily. I'm curious and excited – and anyway, have decided for the occasion, to suspend those niggly feelings of disbelief.

As instructed, I close my eyes. I can still hear the chattering of the passers-by, but Paul's soft voice is soothing and steady, and I listen closely. Soon I find myself breathing regularly, relaxing deeply, open to whatever's going to happen. Following simple instructions, my mind becomes quiet as I pass through a transition into a past life.

I am a young person, on the edge of a walled field. I am very happy and excited. All I want to do is run and leap across the field. I have had good news.

I get a feeling for what I'm wearing; it's a light, filmy outfit. I'm about 10 or 12. I tell Paul.

He then does a kind of "quick replay" to a time which inspired the happy feeling. My mother is reading me a letter, bringing exciting news.

Then, I'm taken to a time a few years later. I'm in a square in the centre of a small village. People are milling around, and I'm about to make an important announcement.

In the next snapshot in time, I'm a mature person, doing my life's work. I have just finished writing a book, important to me, and I am content with how it's turned out.

The session goes on along these lines, where I observe different meaningful moments during that life. Towards the end, I see myself in the final moments of that life, then watch as my soul leaves my body and I meet a spirit guide. Together, we review what that life was about for me. It's a kind of "debrief" on the main lessons learned from that life's experiences. I get to see how those lessons link to my life today.

'Woo woo' though this sounds, next I grasp a cushion, and let the particular energy of that life seep into the cushion, and then hugging it, it's communicated to me. I feel the confidence and self assurance of the person I was in that life; the shackles holding me back have gone, and I know I am able to express whatever it is I need to.

The session ends – it's been 30 minutes – with a feeling of wellbeing and inspiration.

Watch this space to see if it hangs around!

Paul Williamson is one of the presenters at the Starlight Festival, being held over four days at the A&I Hall, Bangalow, between January 4-7, 2024. starlightfestival.com.au

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What in the world is WIRES?



Drew Paice, Chair of the Northern Rivers Branch of WIRES Photo supplied

As summer kicks in and holiday season fast approaches, many of us already know that the awesome animal loving folk at WIRES, Australia's largest wildlife rescue organisation, will be out there saving the furry ones from certain fate. But as Chair of the Northern Rivers branch, Drew Paice, explains, WIRES goes way beyond the initial rescue to provide desperately needed, much longer-term rehabilitation and educational services.

"In the eyes of the community, WIRES is often perceived as primarily a wildlife rescue operation, and while that's undoubtedly a crucial aspect of our work," explains Drew, "but it's important that people know the broader scope of what we do. The name WIRES stands for 'Wildlife Information Rescue and Education Services'. The 'R' can stand for rescue, rehabilitation, and release, underlining our commitment to the complete journey of a rescued animal.

"A significant portion of our resources, both in terms of time and investment, is directed towards the rehabilitation of wildlife for eventual release into their natural habitats. This involves an immense dedication of our members' time, coupled with financial investments for necessities such as food and medication. Some of the youngest and most

vulnerable creatures may require round-the-clock care for months before they can be safely released.

"And the process doesn't end there. We ensure a careful and considerate return to the wild for these animals. What's more, our commitment extends to community engagement, where we provide invaluable information during rescue operations and follow up with educational initiatives, including talks and visits to schools and markets."

Strategic investments made by WIRES, particularly in the Emergency Response Team and Volunteer Emergency Response Team, show just how serious the organisation is about providing a truly comprehensive emergency response for wildlife.

"Our Emergency Response Team, headquartered at WIRES, coordinates all aspects of a response during emergencies," explains Drew. "This includes not only rescue operations but also the intricate logistics involved in handling a crisis. The Volunteer Emergency Response Team, a specialised unit within our branch, undergoes rigorous training to effectively conduct search and rescue operations after emergencies like floods and bushfires.

"We are also fortunate to have a wildlife ambulance based here," adds Drew. "It symbolises a collaborative effort with other organisations and ensures a swift and efficient response. We're committed to being genuinely proactive and fully prepared for any situation that may impact our wildlife."

Volunteering or making a donation are two important ways we can help. "To volunteer we ask people to become members by completing our Rescue and Initial Care Course (RICC), which can be done online or face to face, or a mixture of the two," he says. The next face to face course is in February.

"Once you're a trained member you can volunteer, and we really need you. During this time of year we can average over 30 rescues every day. So, even a few hours a week



The WIRES rescue ambulance Photo supplied

makes a difference, and there's a diverse range of opportunities, like helping feed animals in care, being an education officer, transporting goods, or even marketing."

According to Drew, there are many benefits of being a WIRES member. "Diving into the world of wildlife rescue with WIRES is not just a commitment, it's an enriching journey with a bundle of benefits. As a WIRES member, you embark on a meaningful endeavour equipped with the best training, laying a solid foundation for your wildlife rescue and rehabilitation journey.

"And the learning doesn't stop there. Once you're part of the WIRES family, you get access to a growing range of free and highly subsidised advanced training courses, keeping you at the forefront of knowledge with up-to-date training manuals"

But it's not just about education, it's about community and support. WIRES provides you with a high-vis branded vest, subsidies for essential costs like approved wildlife food, and access to experienced mentors who guide you through the nuances of wildlife care. Joining WIRES means weaving yourself into the fabric of your local community, establishing ties, and enjoying networking opportunities within your branch.

Too busy to volunteer? Drew and his devoted team would be delighted if you could donate to their animal care services this summer – just head to wires.org.au

Justin Coombs

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How to Host Christmas

My brother Chris is manic
At least that's what they say,
And he's getting himself geared up
For a MASSIVE Christmas Day.

Each day I'm getting messages
They're coming thick and fast
About clearing out the junk
And cutting back the grass.

Cos he's sick of all the bullshit,
All the whinging and complaining,
The I hate Christmas grinching
So much work in entertaining.

He's planted out the veggie patch
There's potatoes, carrots, corn,
His multi-taskings' off the charts
The jobs he's done by 'morn!

It's a piece of piss he says
I'll make Christmas fun,
Just don't let dad control things
And give a drink to mum.

He'll do it on his ear he says,
It's easy, he's not crazy,
He's done 20 jobs by 8am
Coz he's just not bloody lazy.

Yep. He's decided that he's hosting.
And in the interests of disclosure,
I egged him on, the guy can cook,
He'll smash it, yeah I'll join you.

My brother Chris is manic,
He beat the Christmas rush
Now the family's in a panic
So ... what does this mean for us?!

I can't make that work says Jon.
What? Travel to Geelong?
I've got dogs and in-laws,
And the drive is two hours long.

I can't make that work says Will.
There's nowhere for us to stay,
And the kids are leaving for their trip
The day after Christmas day.

You'd have to give us notice
Its locked in at mum and dad's,
I'd have had it here again
But they wanted it at theirs.

I wish I could come says Dave
But you know, life is tough.
The crap that it keeps dishing up
I've really done it rough.

I hate Christmas, says mum
I dread it every year,
But your father thinks it best
That we should have it here.

My brother Chris is manic,
Now dad's trying to medicate him.
But the problem here is dad says Chris
It was the way he raised him.

Well, not just dad. The rich as well.
The way they treat the poor.
And Will has blocked his number.
His ex won't let him through the door.

But, he's so excited
Christmas bells are ringing
We'll find some takers, me and him,
There's cousins we could ring in.

My brother Chris is manic
And I might've misjudged the situation
The latest on his problem list
Is the U10s hockey association.

But he's got fans he assures me,
His ex's lawyer, Vinci, loves him,
There's the cop that he gives booze to,
Jim Tucker's helped him do some mulching.

And then there's his neighbour, Lorenzo
Who does Christmas lights each year
And whose grappa's always handy
Year-round, for Christmas cheer

We're reclaiming Ode to the Joy
Of escaping the powers that be.
He's dubbed it: the miserable marrieds
Versus the footloose and fancy free.

Yep, he's hosting me for Christmas
And, cheers to that I say,
I'll be drinking through to New Year
'Cos I was raised that way!

Rebecca Sargeant
Bush Poetry Winner
Bangalow Show 2024



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From all of us at Bangalow Heritage House and Museum, thank you for your support this year. We wish you a Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and safe holidays! We will close 22 December and open 10 January.

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Family misfortunes

My family is a funny thing,
You never know just what they'll bring.
We sometimes laugh, we often fight
no matter who is wrong or right.
We sometimes cry, we often bicker,
always there through thin and thicker.
Here they are in all their glory -
it's rated G, there's nothing gory.

My father, well, we call him Stew,
spends half his life upon the loo.
As he's enveloped by his stink
he says it's where he likes to think.
You'll understand that this explains
just why we call him shit-for-brains.

My mother, what a lovely lady!
Her cooking, though, is somewhat shady.
She's unaware her cooking skills
have been the source of many ills.
The kitchen's where her keep is earned -
she's only paid when food is burnt.

My brother, she was once a he
which really doesn't bother me.
The brother that I always had's
a daughter now to mum and dad.
His name was Ben, it did occur
that we should now call him Ben Hur.

My sister, well, she's quite laconic.
Her boyfriends are, she says, platonic.
Her figure and her dreamy eyes
are why she's hooked so many guys.
The bed is not just where she lies -
its squeaky springs say otherwise.

My Uncle Jack's a constant source
of laughter, though I've some remorse -
the time I helped Jack off a horse
(we had to ease him off, of course).
The dismount? It was pretty crappy.
The horse, of course, was rather happy.

My other Uncle gets his fixes
decorating crucifixes.
He hasn't done it all his life
but started when he met his wife.
He doesn't do it to impress her.
Put simply, he's a true cross dresser.

My cousin Sharon's now called Sage,
she changed it for her Facebook page.
She wears white linen, sometimes beige
(apparently its all the rage).
I claim that she is no relation
when she suggests collaboration.

My other cousin Dunc's a dope.
For him, my family's lost all hope.
He's quite a captivating bloke
but get-rich-quick has sent him broke.
In what is a recurring theme,
he lost it in a Ponzi scheme.

And last of all my Great Aunt Dottie,
her back of hand and face are spotty.
She likes a port and loves a sherry
with ice and maraschino cherry.
The boozy fumes upon her breath
suggest she'll be embalmed on death.

So there you have my family tree.
I can't uproot it or break free
and even though I'd like to force 'em,
apparently I can't divorce 'em.

They drive me mad, around the bend.
I'm stuck with them until the end
and though it may seem rather weird
we're closer than it first appeared.
I love them all, so let's rejoice
our families, but not by choice!

Dave Copeland

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Bangalow Show

What a wonderful weekend at the Bangalow Show. The Pavilions were full of stunning entries from cakes to crochet to craft. The show ring displayed many spectacular feats of man and beast, expert horsemanship through to hilarious novelty events. Thank you to the Bangalow Show Society and the Show Committee for putting on another unforgettable Show!



Photos Lyn McCarthy Niche Pictures



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X-Mas Cabaret

Join us for a night of opulence and allure as Hidden in the Hinterland presents an evening of extravagant and dazzling X-Mas Cabaret. Unwrap a number of steamy performances as our seductive artists enthrall with naughty twists on holiday classics. From flirtatious Santas to scandalous mistletoe encounters, this show guarantees a festive fusion of laughter and charm. Let the fairy-lit stage whisk you away to a realm where being nice takes a backseat to the thrill of the naughty. Our Christmas Cabaret serves up a wicked concoction of holiday spirit with an extra pinch of daring. Brace yourself for a yuletide spectacle like never before

Mullum's newly renovated Drill Hall Theatre is the perfect intimate setting for a drink from the licensed bar and a deliciously tasty snack. So, grab your friends and sit back in comfort and be mesmerised by all the spectacular local talent our region has to offer.

Hidden in the Hinterland is a collective group of local artists and producers, who have been involved in a number of SOLD OUT Theatre shows around the Byron Shire. The creative team are very excited to bring our Cabaret Show and kick start the festival season!

Thursday 21 December, 7:30pm

Drill Hall Theatre, Mullum

Tickets trybooking.com/events/landing/1148347

Hidden in the Hinterland



Christmas is coming Photo Kelly Sikkema

Bangalow Christmas Eve Carnival update

Bangalow will once again have its traditional Christmas Carnival on Christmas Eve. Like last year, the celebrations will be held in the Showgrounds, and organised by Bangalow Lions. Many people have expressed a yearning for the good old days, pre-COVID, when the Carnival was held in the main street and organised by the Chamber of Commerce. Unfortunately, the Chamber no longer exists, so the Bangalow Lions is again stepping in to organise the Christmas Carnival. Holding it in the main street is no longer viable due to the high costs, amount of planning, and the numerous approvals required for street diversions, traffic management and more.

The community, on the whole, enjoyed last year's event at the showground; however, as a result of feedback, this year, the Carnival will start an hour later at 5pm. Numerous food vans and the Lion's Kiosk will cater for all food tastes. The Lions bar will, of course, be in full swing.

There will be heaps of entertainers, including the famous Space Cowboy doing his high-risk juggling and sword swallowing. Specific entertainment for kids includes Santa arriving on the fire engine and doling out goodies, face painting and t-shirt tie-dyeing.

The fireworks will commence at 8:30pm, and the evening will wrap up at 9pm. There will be plenty of on-site parking. Money raised on the night will go to the Bangalow Lions Family Assistance Program which assists the local schools.

Volunteers for the evening are welcome to call Nashy 0418 440 545.

Murray Hand

Bangalow Uniting Church Christmas What's On

Saturday 2 December - Fair Trade Fair in the car park of the church. 8am-1pm. Lots of Fair Traders, excellent Fair Trade coffee and homemade cakes and snacks available. Come and buy ethical and sustainable gifts, homewares and much more.

Sunday 3 December - Family gathering on the theme of Advent. All ages worship- music, craft, story and a Christmas themed shared meal afterwards. From 5pm Everyone is welcome.

Tuesday 5 December - Christmas Crafternoon for kids aged 4-12 years. Just come along, you can leave your children or stay and join in. Craft activities, games, afternoon tea, songs and a story. All welcome from at 3.15pm - 5pm.

Sunday 17 December - Outdoor Carols and grand opening of this year's Christmas Tree Festival. Bring a chair, food if you like and get ready for Christmas! 5pm start.

Sunday 17 December - Saturday 23 December Christmas Tree Festival, nightly from 6-8pm. Come and see all the trees created by local community organisations displayed in the church. Some evenings choirs will be performing. On Friday we have a visit from Santa if you'd like to get a selfie with him!

Monday 25 December - Christmas Day service at 8.30am. Family friendly, relaxed and welcoming.

17 Station Street, Bangalow

Anglican Parish of Byron Christmas Services 2023

Friday 15 December - Lessons and Carols Service 6pm on in All Souls' Bangalow.

Sunday 24 December - Christmas Eve Family Worship with Christmas Pageant and Holy Communion 6pm, All Souls' Bangalow

Monday 25 December - Christmas Day Holy Communion 9am, All Souls' Bangalow

1 Ashton Street, Bangalow



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WHAT'S THAT NUMBER?

Community		
AA (6pm Tues)	Karen Mc	0403 735 678
ADFAS	Dianne	0412 370 372
Al-Anon (2pm Fri)		1300 252 666
Bangalow Koalas	Linda	0411 491 991
Bridge	Dennis	6687 1574
Community Children's Centre	Kerry	6687 1552
Co-dependents Anonymous	Gye	0421 583 321
CWA (Wed)	Lorraine	0417 705 439
Garden Club (1st Wed)	Diana	0418 288 428
George the snake man	George	0407 965 092
Historical Society/Museum	Trisha	0429 882 525
Kindred Women Together	Janice	0401 026 359
Koala rescue line (24 hr)		6622 1233
Land & Rivercare (8.30am Sat)	Noelene	0431 200 638
Lions Club (6pm 2nd/4th Tues)	Nashy	0418 440 545
Men's Shed	John	0427 130 177
Op Shop (M-F 10am-2pm, Sat 9.30am-12.30pm)		6687 2228
Parklands	Lynn	0429 644 659
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 (Bluedogs)		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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WHAT'S ON

There's plenty to delight and entertain in 2497 and surrounds this festive season.

Pearces Creek Artisan Fair

When Saturday 2 December, 4-8pm
Where Pearces Creek Hall, Pearces Creek
Contact linktr.ee/PearcesCreekHall

Pearces Creek Hall are hosting their third Artisan Fair, with (very) local visual artists, as well as makers of gifts, prints, homewares, honey and beautiful flowers grown within a stone's throw of the hall. Music by Myki Jay and Jode Arnold. Food by Fernando's Mexican. This free community event proudly supported by the NSW Government in collaboration with Ballina Shire Council.

Photos with Santa at Newrybar Hall

When Saturday 2 December, 10:30am-12:30pm
Where Newrybar Community Hall, 13/15 Old Pacific Hwy, Newrybar
Contact newrybarhall.com

Santa is coming early to visit our free community event in Newrybar! He will happily sit for you, your children and even your fur babies to take a photo. Please bring your own camera to snap a shot of Santa before he heads off to get busy for Christmas! Note: There will be no professional photographer on site.

Shire Choir Pop-Up Choir Experience

When Thursday 7 December, 7:30pm
Where Bangalow Hotel
Info shirechoir.com.au
Tickets \$20 via shirechoir.eventbrite.com

Wrapping up 2023 with a wonderful community songfest, Shire Choir is on again at the Bangalow Hotel Thursday 7 December. Come and learn a song in three parts, led by the dynamic Melia Naughton and accompanied by the Birrell Bros Band, and then sing your heart out. One song, one night only. All voices welcome.

Bangalow Business Networking Christmas Lunch

When Thursday 7 December 12:30 pm
Where Woods at Bangalow
Contact rosemari@byronandbeyondnetworking.com.au
Tickets byronandbeyondnetworking.com.au

Come, celebrate another wonderful year of networking, with a delicious Christmas lunch created just for us by Sam Campbell at Woods, Bangalow.

Sylvie (USA) + Tex Crick

When Friday 8 December, 5-8:30pm
Where Harvest Newrybar
Tickets \$26.50 via Eventbrite

In 1975, John Schwab and his band "Mad Anthony" sat in a barn in Southern California and recorded their songs. Decades later, in a small town in Ohio, his son Ben Schwab came across them. The recordings would imprint a sound and feeling that he would end up chasing. They were timeless, effortless, and soulful. A harmonic birthright. Catch Sylvie on the lawn at Harvest for some gentle nostalgia, supported by melodic piano pop virtuoso Tex Crick, and Baby Cool.

Bangalow Community Association AGM

When Tuesday 12 December, 7:00pm
Where Mens Shed Bangalow carpark, off Station St
Contact 0414 959 936

All 2479 postcode dwellers are invited to attend the Bangalow Community Association AGM to review the annual scorecard on development and infrastructure projects and preview some game changing ideas for 2024. Proactive community engagement and feedback will ultimately produce better outcomes for our village, so come along and become involved.

Indigo Sparke at the Eltham

When Wednesday 13 December, 7pm
Where The Eltham Hotel, Eltham
Tickets \$43+bf elthampub.com.au/music

Sydney-born, New York-based indie-folk artist Indigo Sparke is making a pitstop at the Eltham as part of her December tour supporting The War on Drugs and Spoon across Australia and New Zealand. Described as 'whirlwind of lyrical expression and vocal pageantry calling to mind the early works of PJ Harvey, Meredith Monk and the like', she's also played Splendour and SXSW. Don't miss this sonic treat.

CWA Christmas Cake and Produce Stall

When Saturday 16 December, 8am-midday
Where CWA rooms, 31 Byron St, Bangalow

Whether it's a gift for a neighbour, a teacher, something to take to drinks with friends or just a little bit of Christmas to have with a cuppa, there'll be lots to choose from at the last stall for the year.



Sing your heart out at Shire Choir Photo Jaka Adamic

Clay Northern Rivers Bangalow Ceramic Fair

When 16-17 December, 8am-3pm

Where The Moller Pavilion, Bangalow Showgrounds

Clay Northern Rivers presents the first annual Bangalow Ceramic Fair where 50 local potters will showcase their work for sale across two days in an event designed for the whole family. The diversity and volume of work within the group means there is something to suit everyone's taste and a great way to support local artists and meet the maker while Christmas shopping.

@ClayNorthernRivers

Newrybar Christmas Markets

When Wednesday 20 December, 1-7pm

Where Newrybar Community Hall, 13/15 Old Pacific Hwy, Newrybar

Tickets Fabia 0412 345 529

Browse Newrybar's Christmas Markets held 6, 13 and 20 December, the final date also features celebrations with the whole main street of Newrybar will be getting involved! Come and celebrate Christmas with your community. Live local, shop local, and support local producers.

Bangalow Markets

When Sunday 24 December, 8am-2:30pm

Where Bangalow Showgrounds

Bangalow Christmas Eve Carnival

When Sunday 24 December, 5-9pm

Where Bangalow Showgrounds

Back again for some wholesome family fun in the green grounds of the Bangalow Showgrounds, this year's event promises lots of great food options, family-friendly entertainment including the wild antics of the Space Cowboy, and of course, the much-anticipated fireworks finale.

Starlight Festival

When 4-7 January

Where A&I Hall Bangalow

Tickets \$35 - \$75 | starlightfestival.com.au

The festival features markets, sound healing, healing, all-day yoga, workshops and talks all facilitated by acclaimed local and national presenters, renowned practitioners, and specialists across a variety of fields including massage, yoga, natural products, soulful food, healing, music and much more.

Jewellery Making Class

When Saturday 20 January, 10am

Where Byron Bay Wildlife Sanctuary

Contact byronbaywildlifesanctuary.com.au

Tickets \$60

A dynamic beading workshop, where you can immerse yourself in the captivating world of seed bead jewellery creation. Explore your artistic side with a wide array of vibrant colours and exquisite bead combinations. Ages 10 and older.

Pearces Creek Talks - Greening the Desert

When Thursday 28 January, 6-8pm

Where Pearces Creek Hall, Pearces Creek

Contact linktr.ee/PearcesCreekHall

Tickets \$25/\$15

Pearces Creek Talks have invited Sam Parker Davies to share his journey from the Northern Rivers to the Greening the Desert Project in Jordan, where he works as an educator, designer, aid worker, project manager and farmer. Sam has practiced permaculture as his sole profession for almost a full decade, coming from a family of farmers, gardeners, and eco-village builders. Sam is visiting from Jordan in January to teach two courses on long term highly productive permaculture systems at Zaytuna Farm in The Channon.

Diary

December 2023

2	Pearces Creek Artisan Fair Photos with Santa at Newrybar Hall
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January 2024

4-7	Starlight Festival
20	Jewellery Making at Wildlife Hospital
28	Pearces Creek Talks

February edition deadlines

What's On 13 January

Copy 13 January

Advertising 13 January



Frozen

Nailed it. A stunned rabbit Photo Kenny Eliason

Apparently, there are some animals like the stoat or cobra that hypnotise their prey. The victim animal is paralysed by fear and stands defenceless, unable to escape from certain death. I remembered this fun fact when I was at a party recently. It was held in a lovingly renovated house, festooned with coloured lights and tasteful compositions of candles, flowers and fruit. New old-look mirrors reflected soft lighting and gorgeous music filled the rooms. The kitchen was packed with people drinking and carrying on with loud and involved conversations. Shrieks of laughter fell out of the door. I looked in and decided to go and sit on the veranda. A wee way from the clutch of smokers I sat, peacefully minding my own business, when a man stumbled out from the kitchen. He looked around, saw me, and came to sit on the other end of the couch. He then embarked on a long story about the injustice of the voting system in the UK, and the rise of bogan democracy. I was trapped, and so, like the obedient and good girl that I famously am, I sat and pretended to listen. He was barefoot, and as he talked, he picked his toes. Not the most appealing thing to do in any conversation, but somehow oddly compelling. Slowly he tugged at his big toe. A large, yellow toenail unfurled as he continued his rant. Without missing a beat, he leaned back and stuffed the nail behind the silk cushions. Like a rabbit facing a stoat, I was paralysed in horror.

My mind raced. This man lived here. How many toenails had he stuffed behind the cushions? Was the couch balanced on a mouldering pile of yellowing and ragged toenails? Where else did he stuff things? I was suddenly deeply uncomfortable. But my couch companion was only just warming up. He swapped feet, and as he began a dissertation on the situation in the US, he began work on the other big toe.

I shook myself, like a startled rabbit, and stood up. 'Please excuse me, I said, I have to leave.' As I turned away a friend came from the kitchen. My toenail-mangling companion didn't miss a beat. He smiled broadly and patted the vacated couch space. As my friend sat down, I smiled kindly. At times like these, I thought, it's every rabbit for herself.

Dr Airdre Grant

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