

The Bangalow

HERALD

2479

Laugh and sing
with Melia Naughton

Endangered species:
the younger volunteer

All about arts
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Tricks and treats





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Authorised by J Elliot ALP 107 Minjungbal Drive Tweed Heads South NSW 2486

From the Editor

One of the threads that runs through this October edition is the courage it takes to step into the unknown. Several of our stories feature people embracing challenges that are at once daunting and exhilarating – whether it’s taking up a new skill, shifting careers, or embarking on the all-consuming, all-terrain adventure of parenthood.

There’s something both universal and deeply personal about that moment of standing on the edge of any new experience. Fear and anticipation mix in equal measure, often accompanied by that super-annoying voice in our head that says: “This is impossible.” Yet, time and again, we discover that ‘impossible’ simply means ‘unfamiliar’ or ‘untried’.

What makes the stories in this month’s edition so compelling is not just the triumphs but the vulnerability – the willingness to risk failure in pursuit of growth. Putting yourself out there.

In a world that often celebrates only the polished end result, it is refreshing to shine a light on the messy middle ground of learning. The doing, not the ‘be-ing’.

Of course, taking risks doesn’t always mean doing something outlandish or something that is even visible to others. Sometimes it’s about sharing your creative work or ideas with others for the first time, speaking up in a meeting, or enrolling in that community course you’ve been pondering for that past 10 years...

As the days lengthen and the air warms, it feels like the perfect time to lean into possibility – to try something that mildly unsettles, excites, or maybe even terrifies us. When we reflect on the moments that shaped us, we often find that the ones that took us out of our comfort zone make the most lasting impression on us.

So, here’s to a month filled with courage, creativity and the joy of embracing the hitherto unknown.

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: Hidden in the Hinterland performers getting into the Halloween spirit Photo Bobbie Field

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PO Box 45, Bangalow, NSW 2479

Contributors: Carolyn Adams, Jenny Bird, Georgia Fox, Carole Gamble, Dr Airdre Grant, Lyn Hand, Digby Hildreth, Chase Ingruns, Helen Johnston, Mary Nelson, Anne McClelland, Claire McLisky, Christobel Munson, Sally Schofield, Adam Susz. Printed by Lismore City Printery

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Clinton and Ari Photo supplied

How many nappies did Clinton change?

Dr Clinton Scott is a popular Bangalow GP. He and his partner Tess had their first baby in July last year. They both took six months full time parental leave, then slowly picked up part-time work. Clinton is due to return to work at the Bangalow Medical Centre in late October and will focus on his skin cancer work rather than full GP duties. **Jenny Bird** chatted with Clinton about being a new dad.

For Clinton and his partner there was no question that they would both take leave for the first six months. "We are relatively older parents, maybe not as robust as when we were younger, and we thought we might need it. We felt lucky to be in a privileged position to be able to afford it," said Clinton.

"What we did is out of range for a lot of people. I think income inequality is a big barrier for a lot of couples. It's still the case that men make more money than women do, even in similar work roles, and in this cost-of-living crisis it's just not possible for a lot of men to take time off."

But Australia lags well behind other OECD countries in the proportion of men taking parental leave. Less than 20% of new parents taking parental leave are men. This is despite significant changes made by the Federal Government in 2023 with extended periods of paid parental leave and a jump in the number of employers offering gender-neutral paid parental leave which abandoned the 'primary' and 'secondary' carer descriptors.

Clinton thinks that whilst cultural issues around masculinity and men's roles is probably still an issue, he thinks Australia is "coming around slowly" in some sections of society but not all. "It's really normal in

our social circles, our family, and it's pretty normal in the Northern Rivers, but that's not the case everywhere and for everyone."

For example, Clinton is acutely aware of how differently people respond to him when he is out alone with the baby, "I get lots of smiles and congratulations 'What a wonderful dad' and that kind of thing," says Clinton. "It shouldn't be like that. It should be an equal big deal for women, but it's not." One night at a restaurant Clinton said to his partner "Watch this. I'm going to walk around the restaurant with the baby. Look at how people react."

Despite an easy baby and a privileged financial position, Clinton still found the transition from GP to fulltime dad not without challenges. "In retrospect it felt smooth, but I don't think it was. I feel very attached to the Bangalow community and my work is a huge part of my identity. It felt strange to leave it. But when Ari came along, I was blindsided by a new set of instincts that landed on me. It was a massive identity change, but a good one. I embraced it in all its intensity and immensity."

As time went by Clinton, like all new parents, had to come to terms with the fact that his life was no longer his own, and that it would never be the same again. "It's a stark realisation. I had to figure out how to maintain a bit of 'selfhood', where to find my 'oxygen' when things get intense. A lot of the things you used to do get pruned. I had to allow myself time to pick up my guitar, go to the gym, enjoy our property and our animals."

Speaking as a doctor and a dad, Clinton is now more mindful than ever that parents need to look after themselves, and that it is OK to put your hand up and say "I'm struggling." "We need to normalise the struggle, the painful existential shift that comes with parenting. For the sake of our wellbeing, we need to be honest when things get difficult," he says.

Clinton is looking forward to returning to work. He's feeling a bit selfish but is aiming to enjoy both his roles.

Clinton doesn't know how many nappies he has changed so far. "I wish I'd counted them, just out of curiosity, so I could quote it. Thousands?" he wonders.

“

It is OK to put your hand up and say "I'm struggling."

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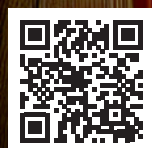
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Songs in the key of laugh

After a lifetime of performing, and freshly returned from three successful one-woman shows at Sydney Fringe Festival, Melia Naughton says she has found the perfect channel to express who she really is, writes **Digby Hildreth**.

Melia is well-known in Bangalow for co-founding Shire Choir and a host of other musical and theatrical ventures, and overseas for her performances with her sister as *Scarlett Affection*. But her experience of writing and performing the Sydney show – titled *Amalfi Roast* – has proven a milestone in her creative career.

Trying something new for her – combining music, songs and storytelling – was “a bit terrifying,” she says, “but people found it really funny. It felt like people wanted to hear it, which was really wonderful.

“It’s only taken me my entire life but I finally feel I have found the vehicle to express everything I want to,” she says.

A trained actor, experienced at inhabiting characters on stage, this time it was different: “I thought I was building a character, a woman called *Amalfi Roast*. I didn’t realise that actually, it’s me. It was a revelation to discover that, instead of hiding behind a character, I was actually exposing myself, as a parent living regionally, as a woman in her 40s who is a performer. Maybe it’s all those things just coming together, coalescing into a moment where I’m like, ‘this is my story to share’, or,” she laughs, “to over-share.”

At first she worried that she wasn’t a comedian, “but this thing speaks like a comedy”, and credits local comedian Mandy Nolan with helping her find her authentic voice, and came to see that it had both pathos and heart in it, “like all good comedy should”.

Her three *Amalfi Roast* outings got rave reviews and attracted healthy numbers



Melia shines in her one-woman show Photo Carlie Fairburn - Carlie Sings Photography

for the first two shows and then a sold-out audience for the final night – quite an endorsement in a festival with 460 events over the month.

Melia seems almost surprised by the reception but attributes the success to how relatable her material is. “There’s a song about going on a disaster date, and one about a personal hate of mine – self check-out scanning in supermarkets. That gets the biggest laugh because everyone’s had the stress of those awful bagging areas.” Another song is about a household’s morning chaos getting the kids to school. “If I were a fly on the wall in another family’s house, would their morning look like this? Because here it’s a shit show!”

The Sydney outing followed a “warm-up” performance before 100 people at Mullumbimby’s Drill Hall Theatre, and Northern Rivers locals can see the show at the Byron Theatre this month. “I’m very excited about that, because Byron Theatre has the Steinway,” the classically trained Melia says.

There are also three shows booked at the Melbourne Fringe Festival this month.

As if this wasn’t enough, Melia is also the frontwoman, songwriter and guitarist with The Gumboots, alongside Elodie Crowe and Ben Cox. They’re a rock’n’roll band for kids who have recently recorded a debut album, ‘*Cos Gumboots are the Best*, at Bernard Fanning’s Brooklet Studio, SAE/301, and with ARIA award-winning producer Chris Collins at his Major Label Records studio in Coorabell.

The experience of rediscovering the magic that can be created in a studio was “awesome,” she says. The album’s production also reveals the depth of talent in our area: people “who are very experienced and have great ears”, among them Andy Walker of Bunny Racket and ace producer and mixer Jordan Power.

As with *Amalfi Roast*, the songs are about offbeat but relatable subjects: “We’ve got a song called *Tiny, Tiny Tick*, which is about finding a tick; there’s *The Toad Lament*, about what to do with a cane toad; we’ve got songs about a talking seven-legged spider, and about cockroaches and leeches – animals that don’t often get a song. Wombats, for instance: the only animals in the world that poo in cubes.



Melia with members of her outdoor singing circle in Piccabeen Park, Bangalow Photo Olivia Katz

“They’re not all about animals. There’s a song about a digger, a jackhammer, and a fire engine – things that would appeal to kids who have grown out of the Wiggles and want something a bit rockier and edgier, but are still family-friendly.”

Release date for the album is imminent, and then The Gumboots plan to put on a local show, possibly at Coorabell Hall, making the event “like a little family fiesta, with a gelati stall and arts and crafts for kids”.

Melia was one of the founders of Bangalow’s legendary Shire Choir, which marked its 50th public event last month. The community pop-up choir, which is based in the Bangalow pub, aims at including everyone who’s present on the night. “There’s no repertoire to learn, no music notes to read. It’s very inclusive, just come and have a drink with lots of people who are also singing their hearts out. It’s collaborative, fun, and doesn’t matter what your voice is like.”

She trained in the UK as a Natural Voice Leader with the godmother of the movement, Frankie Armstrong, and believes “we all possess a voice, and it is our birthright to use it”. “Historically, we’ve suppressed our voice... perhaps after being shut down as a child, or shamed for singing. But we all can sing and I don’t think singing should be an elitist art form.”

With two boys of her own, Melia has reduced the number of children she gives music lessons to, so she can focus on her adult students. She also runs a singing circle for women on Wednesday mornings in the gazebo in Piccabeen Park – a relaxed and growing group where women can gather, explore their voices, sing harmonies, improvise and play vocally. Singing outdoors is magical, she says, with the creek babbling around the singers, and the sound of birds and kids in the playground.

Last year, she went back to England to train with the “phenomenal” Argentinian vocal improviser Guillermo Rozenthuler.

“His whole thing is immersive vocal improvisation; he refers to it as a singing village, where traditionally song was used to celebrate, to grieve, to gossip, to connect or purely for joy or to just while away the time.

“I worked with him intensively over two weeks and I absorbed a wealth of knowledge that I’ve brought back to Australia to share with the circle of women, my creative collaborators, and also with Shire Choir.

“It’s helping me grow as a performer, and that’s the ideal, isn’t it? To continue to expand and to share?”

Amalfi Roast is at Byron Theatre on 24 October.

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November Resilience workshops



Floods are a part of Northern Rivers life Photo Phillip Flores

Help boost Bangalow's community disaster response capacity at upcoming workshop with Monash University researcher Paul Cull.

The workshop, to be held at the RSL Hall, is an opportunity for community members to come together to map local risks and resources, take part in a simulated exercise, and help create an action plan for the 2479 community in times of disaster.

Paul, who harks from Aotearoa New Zealand, will be sharing processes from the Wellington Model of disaster response as part of his PhD studies at Monash University. The purpose of the workshops, according to Paul, is "to co-design and evaluate practical disaster response strategies with communities – especially those who have experienced disasters – so they can be better prepared in the future." Paul is particularly interested in working with the 2479 community due to our history – in the 2022 floods and Cyclone Alfred earlier this year – of providing resources and cooking meals for those impacted beyond our immediate area.

Local resident and Bangalow Resilience Network member Bronwyn Thomas describes the workshop as "a brilliant opportunity to get Bangalow organised." Local doctors, veterinarians, engineers, and people with critical skills are encouraged to attend and contribute to the plan. If you are interested but can't make it, please contact the Bangalow Resilience Network to contribute your ideas and what you might have to offer in the event of a disaster.

In the Northern Rivers, Paul will also be working with the community of Greater Uki – an area with a similar population to Bangalow but a very different disaster risk profile. He will arrive in our region fresh from delivering similar workshops in disaster-prone areas of Brazil.

The workshop will run for three hours on the morning of **Saturday 8 November** and an additional three hours on **Sunday 9 November**, with refreshments provided by Monash University's Flood2Flourish project.

For more information, or to register for the workshop, please email bangalowresiliencenetwork@gmail.com or call BRN Secretary Claire McLisky on **0478 785 191**.

Local news

Bangalow Show reminders

By now, you'll hopefully have your copy of the Pavilion Schedule.

We're looking forward to some great competition in the Show rings, with all the usual classes and events on offer. Whether it's horses, cattle or poultry, there's something for everyone.

The working dogs will be in the main ring from early Friday morning. If you have your dog at the showgrounds, please ensure it's on a lead – we can't have it getting ideas about helping round up the cattle.

In an effort to reduce waste and cut down on single-use water bottles, water will not be sold from the Moller Café. We encourage all patrons to bring their own water bottle – or, if you forget yours, you can purchase one of our great new Show-branded bottles from the Moller Café, Show Office or Ring Office. Make use of the new water refill stations, located at the Rotunda and on the Moller toilet block wall – installed this year thanks to Council and the Park Trust.

Memberships can now be paid, and cards collected, from the Show Office. Opening times will be posted on our social sites at the beginning of each week, but generally the office is open Monday, Wednesday, and some Saturday mornings leading up to the show. If you'd like your card mailed, the form and payment details are available on our website bangalowshow.com.au

Becoming a member is a great way to support the A&I Society – and it entitles you to entry on both days of the show.

The Show Committee is excited to bring you another great show this year. See you on Friday 14 and Saturday 15 November.

Anne McClelland

New Bangalow noticeboard

The Men's Shed in Bangalow is a very important organisation that reaches out to connect people and undertakes a range of projects to support the community. Most recently, they built a new noticeboard near the post office in Bangalow. Bruce Yip completed a major part of the work, encouraging others to get involved along the way. Thanks to Peter Bradbridge for coordinating the project, and to Erica Danaher for the signage on the board.

Helen Johnston

Correction

In the September edition of *The Bangalow Herald* local hairdresser Georgia Smith, from Hair by GG, was incorrectly referred to as Georgie Graham. *The Herald* apologises for any confusion this may have caused.



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Endangered species: the younger volunteer

Ana and Oscar in the wild All images by Olivia Katz

Two of the regular volunteers turning up at Bangalow Landcare's weekly working bees are in their 20s – rare examples of young people giving their time for the good of the community, reports **Digby Hildreth**.

Every Saturday morning, rain gods permitting, a flock of khaki-shirted volunteers can be spotted flitting about in the bush around Bangalow, digging, watering, planting seedlings. They appear an extraordinarily vigorous crew – especially given that they quite evidently belong to a more mature demographic.

Among them, but standing out, are two members of an increasingly rare species – the younger volunteer. Oscar McMahon and Ana Assis, both 23, with straight backs and bounteous hair showing no thread of silver, have been volunteers with Bangalow Land and Rivercare for about 20 months. Most Saturdays they turn up and help renovate and restore one of the handful of remnant native forest sites around the town – beside the sports fields, along the banks of Paddy's Creek at the bottom of Raftons Road, Little Maori Creek to the west of the town, or on the riverside walk from Piccabeen Park to Byron Creek bridge. Bushland near the Men's Shed and at Sansom Street Reserve also benefits from the group's loving touches.



Demographically, Oscar and Ana are outliers – and not just in Landcare. People of their age, or indeed anyone under 50, have stopped volunteering, and many organisations that need them in order to thrive have almost given up trying to recruit new members.

The Men's Shed is maintained entirely by volunteers but is struggling to enrol young men, a problem President David Noakes feels might be because of the belief that such sheds are for oldies only.

Ruth Kirby, Bangalow CWA President, says "we are always looking for ways to entice younger women to join", and invites anyone with ideas about how CWA could attract a younger cohort to pop in and share them.

Landcare's recruitment efforts over the years have rarely been successful, says Robert Lotty, a stalwart of the group. He attributes the lack of interest to many young people's obsession with their screens. As a nation, he says, "we have become more likely to stay inside rather than enjoying being in the outdoors".

Ana and Oscar are the exception, and Bangalow Landcare President Noelene Plummer says the group is delighted to have them on board. "They bring enthusiasm and knowledge, which help to motivate us older members to keep going." The couple have created an Instagram account aimed at reaching young followers.



The Landcare team in their natural habitat



Noelene Plummer and Rob Lotty encourage younger volunteers to enter the fold

Noelene co-founded the Bangalow group in 1998 and remains as enthusiastic as ever, motivated by the results achieved over the years. "We now have riparian rainforest trees where once there were eroded creek banks full of aquatic weeds. We get to see the wildlife return, the plantings have become a refuge and the banks of the creek have habitat that supports platypus as well as turtles, lizards and fish.

"When I look at the established rainforest along Byron Creek at the sports fields and the creek walk at Piccabeen Park, I realise what a difference we have made to the greening of Bangalow. These areas were once cattle paddocks with only one or two remnant trees."

The sports field planting now constitutes a significant wildlife corridor connecting to a parcel of remnant rainforest, she says. And the group can take credit for establishing a walking track around the fields that led to today's popular walking circuit.

"The environmental work is very rewarding," Noelene says, "but we also enjoy socialising and sharing a lot of laughs."

Conservation is a big inducement for Oscar and Ana but, perhaps surprisingly given the age gap, so is the social aspect – meeting like-minded people, networking, learning.

For Oscar, coming back from Melbourne, joining Landcare marked a real return to his roots: he grew up here, near his grandmother,

attending Bangalow Public School and enjoying a free-range childhood, exploring the riverbanks and bush, unaware that much of it was the product of Landcare's planting.

"I spent a lot of time down along Paddy's Creek with a couple of my friends, building stick huts and booby traps and fishing. As a kid, that just seemed like a massive forest. I didn't know the story," he says.

Next came Byron High, then Melbourne University, where he and Ana met on a COVID-induced Zoom lecture on Indigenous Knowledge. As a kid he had dreamed of being "a David Attenborough type of naturalist", and he completed a BSc, with a botany major.

Back in Melbourne following a trip to South America, the couple realised they needed to "get, like, a proper job now" and decided to give it a crack back at "home". Both environmental scientists, they arrived with no job certainty but were soon snapped up – Oscar by Ballina Shire Council, Ana by Ecoteam in Lismore.

Ana says she didn't know anyone here before coming north, and she wanted to meet new people in the community, and get some experience with the subtropical flora: "It's so different to that in Victoria," she says.

The Landcare group was "just stoked" when they joined, showering them with books, tools and protective clothing. "We instantly felt part of it," says Ana.

"The Landcarers are just wonderful," says Oscar. "Everybody's there because they want to be there. And you can see the effect of what they've done. Like, along the All Souls planting. As a kid I remember the trees falling in the water, the bank eroding. Landcare has transformed that little area. The water runs really clear there, and there are bandicoots and emerald doves."

Meanwhile, Lynn Smith, a member of the team that maintains Piccabeen Park, is struggling to attract new people to take on the work. "We have just four active members, all in their 70s and 80s, and we ain't gettin' any younger. We all love the Park and enjoy our working bee days. We are friends and are there for one another when times are tough. We have lots of laughs together. The work keeps us fit and active." But they're fresh out of ideas for attracting volunteers.

It's possibly a global challenge, and a complex one, fuelled, among other things, by rising economic pressures making people time-poor. But in an age of artificial everything, individualism and disconnection, contributing some time to the community and to the environment is possibly one of the healthiest things anyone can do. As Oscar says: "It's meditative, it's getting your hands in the dirt, which has got to be good for your microbiome." And we could all do with a bit more of that.



A flying visit to outback Queensland

Sunset from Rangelands Outback Camp, Corfield near Winton

Local adventurers **Mary and Graham Nelson** ventured from Coopers Shoot to explore Australia's famed Channel Country.

I wonder if you qualify as a local adventurer by taking the easy option and boarding a Cessna Caravan, flying just under 5,000 kilometres in four days? Our sense of adventure clicked into gear as our pilot flew us at low height through the Carnarvon Gorge, with the computerised voice yelling a "500 feet" warning at him every 30 seconds.

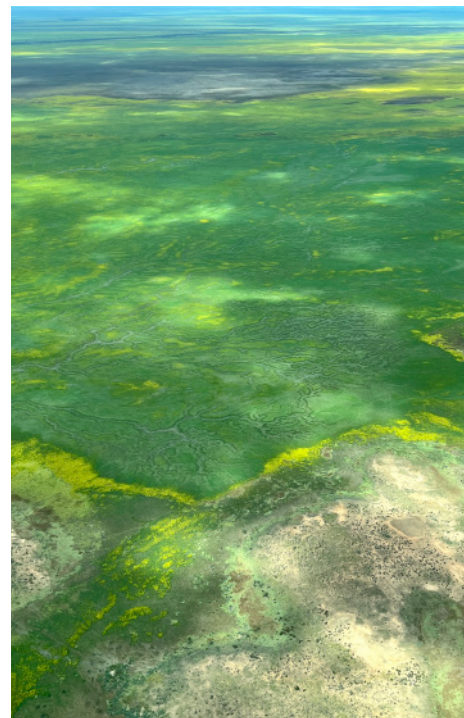
Before setting off on our tour, I imagined we would return home with dust in every crevice of our bodies, clothing and bags. How wrong I was. What I didn't realise was that a large component of the trip would be a geography lesson – one that I did not get at school.

Once airborne, crossing the Great Dividing Range, we saw acres of green cotton crops

– none flowering – and most divided or surrounded by large irrigation channels. Ten minutes further west, the land merged into a carpet of yellow wattles in bloom alongside large cattle farms.

First stop: Charleville and the Flight Deck Café, where we were greeted by Dan the dog and Bill – airport café manager, barista, and morning tea provider. A stretching of legs for us, a break for the pilot, and a stroll to the Royal Flying Doctor Museum set up in a secret air base used by the Americans in World War II.

Back on board, the geography lesson began. Australia's Channel Country is hard to describe. Colours you'd never expect in the outback of one of the driest countries in the world; a horizon as blue as the ocean; slurries of grass appearing hand-painted in nature's glorious palette; waterways that looked like they had been etched by tiny diggers, winding



Tanbar, Channel Country



Warburton River, Kalamurina

around the odd dried-up billabong of pink and brown hues. Close by was Yamma Yamma – a freshwater lake said to be full year-round, offering camping, fishing, and hiking holidays.

Next stop: Birdsville, on the edge of the Simpson Desert. A trip to 'Big Red' offered unforgettable sunsets and sightings of four-wheel drivers returning from desert adventures. The sand – so fine and rich in rusted iron tones – is every potter's dream. Thanks to recent rains, wildflowers were unexpectedly in bloom, and the Birdsville Racetrack never looked so green. The Diamantina River, which runs through Birdsville, peaked at nine metres in the March rains.

A morning flight over the South Australian border to Lake Eyre North (*Kati Thanda*) followed, where we witnessed the harbour-like convergence of the Warburton,



Cattle at the Adria Downs Station, Birdsville



Wildflowers at 'Big Red', Birdsville

Diamantina and Cooper Rivers. Not a bird to be seen – just pink-hued water, salt pan edges, and briny shallows with occasional splashes of silver beneath a vast blue sky.

Departing Birdsville, after a camel pie lunch at the Birdsville Bakery, we headed to Winton, flying over huge cattle stations, tiny towns and waterholes resembling artworks fit for gallery walls. This is boulder opal country – easy to imagine, given the iron-rich soils. Opals aren't the only gems unearthed here. In 1999, a local farmer found an unusual rock – and since he knew every rock on his land, this one stood out. It turned out to be the largest fossil evidence of dinosaurs roaming the region. Further discoveries and a generous

land donation led to the establishment of the Australian Age of Dinosaurs Museum, now a major tourist draw. Many fossil samples await discovery, with volunteers flocking north each southern winter to dig and scrape.

Now in country resembling African savannah, all we needed was the Big Five. From our glamping accommodation on a 'jump up' north of Winton, we saw little animal life – but many stunning sunsets, endless blue skies, and food we'd never have imagined finding in the outback.

Our final stop was a private cattle station bordering the Arcadia Valley. Cattle roam freely through the bushland and cycad-filled gorges. These cycads – said to be thousands

of years old – are harvested and sold to hotels and gardens across Asia, Europe and the United Arab Emirates. Indigenous stencilled rock art, different to what we've seen in the Northern Territory, was also found on the property.

We returned to the Gold Coast with a feeling of awe and wonder at being able to experience another area of Australia we had not previously given much consideration. I will now look at Indigenous art with new eyes and wonder: how did our First Nations people paint the land so precisely – most likely without ever seeing it from above?

All photos by Mary Nelson

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Lorraine with some of her unique, wrought-iron inspired ceramic pieces
Photo Georgia Fox

The shape of things

When local early childhood educator Lorraine Dean introduced clay to her kids at Bangalow Community Children’s Centre, she never imagined it would spark an obsession that would lead to a whole new career as an award-winning ceramic artist, writes **Georgia Fox**.

Messy play was always one of Lorraine Dean’s favourite parts of her 23 years working at Bangalow Community Children’s Centre

(BCCC). “I absolutely love messy,” she laughs. “Slime, finger painting... I’m always hands in”.

In 2020, as preparations began for BCCC’s annual Children’s Art Exhibition Fundraiser, Lorraine decided to shake things up from the usual paper-based activities of drawing, painting and collage. She enlisted the help of ceramicist Zani McEnnally, who loaned the Centre a wheel and took care of firing the children’s work. After a short demonstration from Zani, Lorraine and her room of toddlers dived in together, Lorraine cupping the children’s hands over the clay. “I was learning as the kids were learning,” she recalls. “And I just fell in love with it.”

Her partner Tony gifted her a term of classes at the Byron School of Clay. “I think he probably regrets it!” Lorraine laughs, given the speed and intensity with which ceramics proceeded to take over their lives. One class a week became three. Still wanting more, she successfully applied to Lismore TAFE’s two-year Diploma of Ceramics, dropping back to part-time at BCCC in 2022 to commit to her studies.

At TAFE, Lorraine delved into unconventional construction techniques, exploring her love of texture, and drawing on earlier training in theatrical costume studies. “I really like experimenting and pushing the boundaries,” she says. She became captivated with a mid-fire black clay, and started working almost exclusively in it, save for splashes of pastel pink and the occasional use of white porcelain slip. “It just brings me so much joy,” Lorraine smiles. “It has depth, it has character, and is such a beautiful colour!” She very rarely uses glaze, choosing to showcase the intrinsic qualities of its bare, unctuous surface.

Towards the end of her time at TAFE, Lorraine and Tony built a new shed on their two-and-a-half acre property on Bangalow’s outskirts, the building split between his woodworking and motorbike workshop at one end, and her light-filled studio at the other. Having her space fully functional by the time she finished studying saw her hit the ground running, taking out Best Emerging Artist in the North Coast Ceramics (NCC) Awards, and off the back of that, she was offered a solo exhibition at Makers Gallery in Brisbane, which was held in May 2024.

In this first year as an exhibiting artist, Lorraine continued to juggle working at BCCC while figuring out how she might be able to one day step away from early childhood education and focus entirely on ceramics. When her sister suddenly passed away last year, she gave herself permission. “I thought, what am I doing? I have to do this now.”



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Lorraine's striking ceramic creations Photos supplied

Her highly technical monochromatic sculptural pieces reflect her passion for the elaborate and over-the-top, reminiscent of darkly regal ceremonial objects from another time - a kind of "Baroque and Medieval reimagining". "I love the intricacies and details of elaborate and over-the-top things," she says, laughing at the irony of not liking to stand out. "I myself just want to blend in. But I'm happy for my work to be 'out there', expressing my inner self."

Her curious, playful and fearless approach to her process is incredible. "I like to move quickly through explorations then deep dive when I find something that resonates with me," she explains. Lorraine says she makes things for her own enjoyment, rather than with a particular market or audience in mind. Despite this, she seems to be striking the right chord with art prize judges up and down the

east coast, shortlisted 19 times, and winning four awards and one highly commended in the two years since graduation.

In addition to her success on the national awards circuit, Lorraine recently completed the Eutopia Art Residency in Greece, which saw her spend two weeks living and working at the foot of the UNESCO World-Heritage listed Meteora monasteries, soaking up ancient inspiration from every surface and artefact – both there and during her time in Athens.

Closer to home, she participated in her first North Coast Ceramics Mud Trail in August, opening her studio to the public alongside friend and fellow Bangalow ceramicist, Victoria Keesing. As a result of the Mud Trail, a collection of Lorraine's black metallic-glazed vessels is currently on display at Ninbella Gallery in Bangalow.

The past year, immersed in her studio without distraction, has been a dream come true for Lorraine. But amongst all her extraordinary achievements, there is a BCCC-sized hole in her heart. "I miss the kids so much!" she says fondly. Hopefully not for much longer, with negotiations currently underway to have Lorraine return in Term 4 for a couple of hours a week. She can't wait to not only get stuck into the full gamut of creative explorations with them again, but along with the new portable wheel she treated herself to with some of her prize winnings, share her life-changing love of clay with another generation of Bangalow kids.

You can find Lorraine on Instagram @lorr.de_ceramics, and at the NCC Christmas Market at Brunswick Heads Memorial Hall 29-30 November.

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Around the wicket



Arlo Wooldridge with proud mum Danielle
Photo supplied

As the footy season fades away and the sun starts to warm, it's time for cricket to wake from its winter slumber.

With the emergence of our new practice nets, there is real excitement around for spring and summer.

The season kicks off in October with our three senior teams, four junior teams and our new Master Blasters all ready to make an impact.

Our very own Bangalow cricketer Arlo Wooldridge has already started making an impact by being selected in the Combined High Schools (CHS) North Coast team that will be playing in a state-wide competition in November. Over 50 kids tried out for the team, which was selected from a huge region that runs from Port Macquarie to the Tweed.

At just 15 years old and standing 6'6" tall – or just under 200cms –, this express fast bowler is chasing his dreams and being rewarded for all the hard work and training required to take the next steps in representative sport.

Throughout the winter months Arlo has been refining his bowling technique, working on his fitness and making improvements in his batting – clearly evident from the few nets sessions the senior sides have witnessed.

Behind the scenes is where it all starts though. It takes parents' support, encouragement and a reliable car to help kids achieve their dreams.

Cricket is a sport for everyone and in small regional areas like ours, it needs all the help parents and the community can give.

Give a kid a bat and ball and they will play. They just need you to take them to the games and support them.

This is what Arlo's parents have done, and the rewards are now noticeable in the enjoyment we are all getting from watching this young man grow into a confident and hardworking member of our community that we can all be proud of.

There are many ups and downs in cricket and that is what is so special about the game. It teaches resilience, courage and most of all... patience.

There are also times in cricket, like waiting for your turn to bat, when the real essence of the game is formed – through laughter, stories and friendships with your mates.

Three of our other young Bangalow cricketers have also been selected in the Far North Coast U13 representative team to play in different tournaments throughout the summer. At just 12 years old, Cal, Vincent and Spike are only beginning their cricketing dreams and can definitely take inspiration from Arlo's progress – from a Bangalow U12s player to what he is achieving now.

So, walk over to the new nets when we are practising or come down to the mighty Shultz Oval on the weekends and cheer on our cricketers... young and old.

Chase Ingruns

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Embracing Bangalow's Halloween tradition Photo Sarah Whitaker

Every year on 31 October, as the sun sets and the bats (ahem, flying foxes), take to the skies, Bangalow's usually quiet streets transform. Dozens of children in costumes and carrying ambitious-sized lolly bags spill onto the footpaths, neighbours decorate houses with cobwebs, pumpkins and skeletons, and parents trail behind with torches. For reasons no one can quite explain, Halloween has become wildly popular here – so much so that Bangalow now has a reputation as one of the best places in the Northern Rivers to go trick-or-treating.

It's a surprising twist for a town better known for its heritage streetscape, markets and real estate prices. Some locals remember when hardly anyone marked the night; others recall a gradual build-up over the past two decades, fuelled by enthusiastic families, word-of-mouth, and perhaps a dash of American pop culture. These days, certain Bangalow streets

are firmly on the Halloween map with Rankin Drive being one of the most well-celebrated and frequented.

Of course, Halloween has much older origins. Two thousand years ago, the Celtic festival of Samhain marked the end of the harvest season and the coming of winter, a time when spirits were thought to walk among the living. Costumes and offerings were meant to ward off bad luck, and when Christianity spread through Europe, the festival merged with All Hallows' Eve, eventually becoming Halloween.

Irish and Scottish immigrants carried the tradition to North America in the 19th century. Pumpkins replaced the traditional turnips for carving, trick-or-treating took hold, and by the 20th century Halloween had become a beloved, and eventually heavily commercialised, celebration. From there it spread globally, reaching Australia largely

through television, film and social media, with large retailers cashing in on the popularity.

In Bangalow, the tradition has taken on a distinctive community flavour. Parents coordinate which houses are "in" for trick-or-treating, some streets go all out with decorations, and children from Mullumbimby, Byron Bay and Lismore descend for the evening. It's noisy, chaotic and sugar-fuelled – but also a joyful moment when neighbours open their doors, chat on the street, and kids experience the thrill of adventure with a safety net of community.

No one knows exactly why Bangalow embraced Halloween so wholeheartedly. But perhaps it's just like the magic of a witch's potion – a drop of borrowed festival with a dash of ancient tradition, and a handful of sugar, all simmered in the hallowed streets of a small Northern Rivers town.

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Experience, Expertise, Integrity



Emmanuel Anglican College kids form a circle to listen to Nickolla Clark in Piccabeen Park
All images supplied by teaching staff at Emmanuel Anglican College



Heather West broadens the horizons of the Year 2 students

Learning outside the square

What's behind the heightened interest of schools and teachers to expose their students to ways of absorbing knowledge other than in the classroom? **Christobel Munson** noticed things are changing with scores of students – primary and secondary – learning at our local museum and park.

There's more than one way to skin a cat, they say. In the past few months, Bangalow Heritage House Museum has started receiving requests from teachers for their students to explore the museum and neighbouring Piccabeen Park. What's the story?

The Living School in Lismore wanted their teenagers to visit the museum "as part of a unit on civilisation". A busload of 18 students

– 14- and 15-year-old young learners – visited in August, keen to see how life was lived from the 1930s to 1950s. Of particular interest to them was the old classroom set-up with its 'quaint' wooden school desk, plus the textbooks of that era. The teenagers were also interested to find out how to get involved in their local community, and a visit to the CWA followed.

For Emmanuel Anglican College, Ballina, the incentive to bring along 45 seven- and eight-year-old kids (plus a few teachers and parents) is a program called Mini Coastal College. It forms part of an Integrated Studies course that includes science, history, geography, mathematics, English and visual arts.

Roxanne Kent, the leader of Foundational Learning at Emmanuel Anglican College, explained their interest. "Inspired by the Reggio Emilia educational approach and the Forest Schools of Scandinavia, the aim of our

Mini Coastal College program is to introduce students to new, engaging, challenging and fun opportunities to learn, play and grow. The program is delivered by highly skilled educators whose purpose is to equip and support students to investigate, explore, discover, apply, practise and master new concepts, skills and understandings, whilst also meeting the syllabus requirements in a natural outdoor environment."

The "natural outdoor environment" Roxanne selected was Piccabeen Park and the Bangalow Museum. Though their school is located in Ballina, teacher Alyssa Marshall explained: "Many of our students also live in and around the Bangalow area, so it is part of their community. The motive was to deepen the students' understanding of the town's history, culture and environment while building a stronger connection to their local community. The exploration also encouraged curiosity, respect for the environment and a sense of responsibility in caring for the area, helping students appreciate both the past and the importance of protecting Bangalow's future."

But what did the kids themselves think about the experience? Leo said, "I love Coastal College because we get to go out into nature and experience lots of things." For Max, it was "because you get to be out of school and in the sunshine." For Rachael, "The thing I love most about Coastal College is that we got to learn about the park's heritage and explore nature." From the teachers' perspective, "It was a valuable learning experience for all students. Outdoor learning allows children to explore, discover, and learn



Making observations of Byron Creek



Year 2 kids swarming Heritage House, suitably white gloved



Heather gets the kids improvising on the rhythm sticks



Exploring Bangalow's past

in hands-on ways," added Mel McClelland.

Though the Emmanuel College students who visited were from Year 2 in a Coastal College program that runs over eight Thursdays during Term 3, their Year 3 students go to Seven Mile Beach and Lake Ainsworth in Ballina, while Year 4 students visit Ballina's Lighthouse Beach. The program will happen again every year.

And what was the experience like for the Bangalow Historical Society? "When the students visited Heritage House, they

discovered a wealth of new things which piqued their curiosity – so important for learning," commented Historical Society Secretary and former teacher, Heather West. "Coming here also exposed them to a diversity of ideas and information about different people, places and time periods, all contributing to broadening their horizons of knowledge. Handling Aboriginal artifacts and understanding their use helped contribute to their appreciation and respect of our Indigenous culture.

"There's no doubt about it, their visit was a

win all round. Our volunteers loved it, the teachers enjoyed observing their students being engaged and communicating with others, and the kids left with a head full of new knowledge and an understanding about our collective past. There are huge benefits for kids of all ages getting out of the classroom and into an informal learning environment where they're invited to explore and understand new concepts. The museum displays helped develop critical thinking skills and gave the kids an understanding of the past and how it compares with the present."



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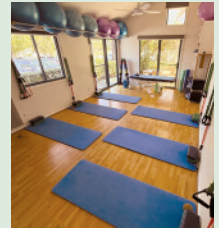
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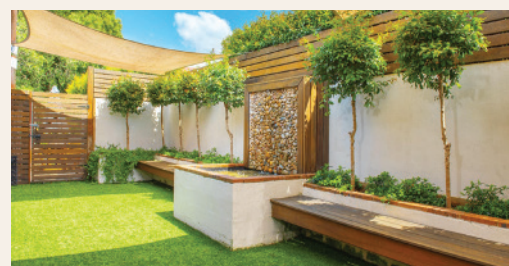
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Lisa at Juanita McLauchlan's exhibition at the AGNSW Photo Brian Hodges

focus closer to home. Her new project is a program that will bring high-calibre artists, curators and cultural thinkers to unusual venues across the Shire.

In a region where cultural life is flourishing yet often fragmented, Art Byron Gatherings feels like a welcome experiment: part salon, part supper, part celebration. At its heart is Lisa's belief that art should be lived, shared and enjoyed – not kept at arm's length. "But it's not just about showing the work. It's about hearing the stories behind the art, understanding the concepts, and connecting with the people who make it. That's where the real magic lies."

The first gathering takes place on 31 October at Byron Bay's Lychee Farm, in collaboration with Wagga Wagga-based artist Juanita McLauchlan, who is fresh from showing at the Art Gallery of New South Wales (AGNSW). In an expansive barn overlooking the hinterland, guests will enjoy a dinner with local produce including Clunes-based Jilly Wines and, excitingly, an exhibition that includes works from AGNSW. For those unable to attend the dinner, the exhibition will remain open to the public across the weekend.

There are plans for a panel on public art featuring Urban Art Projects (the firm behind Lindy Lee's monumental works) and local artists. Each gathering is designed to combine site, food, art and conversation in ways that feel immersive and memorable. "It's about marrying all the different elements so they sing together."

Accessibility is central to Lisa's vision. Too often, she argues, contemporary art events are either intimidatingly highbrow or

Curating connection

For Bangalow resident Lisa Cowan, contemporary art has never been just about the works on the wall. It's about stories, people, conversations – and creating experiences that leave an impression long after the exhibition is over. The Art Byron founder is putting that philosophy into action with Art Byron Gatherings, a new series of

intimate cultural events designed to connect artists and audiences in unexpected ways.

Lisa describes herself as an "experience curator". With years of experience in marketing and the Arts including delivering corporate art events for NAB Private, Audi and Giorgio Armani, she has now shifted her

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Installation view of 'Juanita McLauchlan: *yilaa minyaminyabal maaru-ma-lda-y (soon everything will be healing)*' at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, 5 July-19 October 2025, artworks © Juanita McLauchlan, image © Art Gallery of New South Wales, Felicity Jenkins

prohibitively expensive. By keeping ticket prices modest and creating warm, convivial environments, she hopes to attract a broader cross-section of the community. "Sometimes you go to these things and after ten minutes of academic talk, you start to glaze over," she laughs. "I want these gatherings to be fun, engaging and accessible – a place where people feel welcome, not excluded."

Digital documentary and distribution are both key elements in the project. Each gathering will be filmed, photographed and shared with partner platforms including *Vault* magazine, extending the reach beyond those in the room. "It means people who

can't attend still get to hear from the artist, see the work and feel part of it," Lisa says.

Her passion is palpable, and personal. "What excites me is connecting people, letting them into each other's worlds. For me, these events are almost like hosting the best dinner party – one where you walk away having learned something new, met fascinating people, eaten beautiful food and had a really good time."

Art Byron Gatherings

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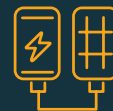
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Council matters

Raftons Road update

In an emotional and moving address to the August Council meeting, Jannine Campton spoke in detail about the hit and run that killed her husband Paul 'Campo' Campton in July this year. She put forward suggestions for improved street lighting and speed calming measures on Keith Street and Raftons Road – ideas that she believes would make a difference to the safety of Raftons Road and may prevent another accident. Acknowledging that implementing those ideas might take time, she asked for a temporary sign – like the koala signs – that might say 'recent fatal accident here' which would alert drivers to slow down.

Yvette Gregory, who has been instrumental in organising a public petition requesting a critical review of pedestrian safety measures also spoke at the meeting. With 638 signatories and still going, the petition requests Council to take urgent action with an immediate approach to the state government for paths, lighting, a crossing, and enhanced safety measures at the Keith-Leslie-Raftons Rd intersection and speed controls.

Council has proposed a three-stage approach to improving safety, starting with using Fatal Crash Response funding to implement quick minor measures such as changing the speed limit to 40km per hour, erecting signage, installing radar speed warnings. Council staff will meanwhile continue to push for the funding for the existing grant for footpaths.

To read the full report on Council's actions to date and proposed actions go to tinyurl.com/3d9s9vk3

Community Initiatives Program

Congratulations to two 2479 community groups who have been awarded grants under the Community Initiatives Program - both to improve community's management of disasters. Coorabell Hall Association was awarded \$3,500 for a new generator that will support both Hall and Community Resilience Hub operations during disasters. Power outages regularly affect core amenities such as the water pump (required for operating toilets) and refrigerator(s) that store residents' medicines. The Bangalow Resilience Network was awarded \$3,699 to strengthen emergency communication capacity with three high-powered CB radio kits. The radio kits will be strategically positioned to extend coverage, enabling messages to be relayed effectively across the network and to emergency responders during a disaster.



The roadside memorial for 'Campo' killed walking home on Raftons Road in July this year
Photo Andrea Smyth

Byron Shire Mayoral Fund

With applications closing on Friday 3 October, there's not much time to get a submission together, but if you are speedy there is a total pool of \$3,500 available to community groups, schools and P&Cs and not-for-profits for small projects. Last year, for example, the Bangalow Quilters received \$500 and Bangalow Public School \$300 from this fund. Apply at tinyurl.com/uvsp5cy

Regenerative Agriculture Small Grants Program

Also closing on Friday 3 October, this program offers local landowners and producers an opportunity to receive a grant of up to \$3,500 for on-farm activities that will improve production, soil quality and the ecological functions of your land. Find out more at tinyurl.com/37kn8a92

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The new park equipment getting already getting a workout
 Photos Mercedes Mambort



Freshening up Feddy Park

Federal Park has had a mini makeover just in time for summer, with a new outdoor table tennis table and hardwood timber seating now installed.

The upgrades, delivered by Byron Shire Council with a \$39,000 investment, are part of the Federal Village Master Plan – a community-led vision to enhance local public spaces. Council staff also undertook some paving works to better link existing paths, and the mosaic at the park’s entry has been carefully restored by original artists Turia Bruce and Pyari Cau, who volunteered their time and skills.

“It’s very exciting to share that a brand-new table tennis table and some additional seating have just been installed in Federal Park!” says Mercedes Mambort, who was actively involved with the project along with fellow PPC representatives for Federal Nick and Stuart.

“This came out of the Federal Village Master Plan, and we’ve worked closely with Council to figure out how to make a table

tennis table possible on a low budget. Council really pulled a rabbit out of a hat and found us one, and even helped secure extra funds for the seating.”

The new additions are already a hit. “The result looks fantastic: the table tennis table is so cute, the seating is well-placed and inviting, and the overall positioning in the park feels just right. Best of all, it’s ready for everyone to enjoy this summer,” says Mercedes.

Council’s Manager Facilities and Open Spaces, Malcolm Robertson, agrees. “Federal Park has something for everyone, and I hope the community enjoys these latest improvements and additions.”

“Stuart, Nick and I would like to thank everyone in the community for their input on this project – the work we are doing is in response to their requests for improvements. A big thank you to Council for making this happen and to all the Feddy locals who helped us with discussions about where it should go. We’ll be sharing more updates soon about other projects coming out of the Master Plan, so stay tuned.”

The Bangalow Herald



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A still from the video installation *A Tremble, A Tug, A Telling* by Gail Hocking. Photo supplied.

Toast

Toast is a new early-morning talk series hosted at The Corner Palm in Byron Bay and curated by communications agency Against the Grain. Designed for big conversations before 9am – with coffee and croissants in hand – the series explores how art, culture and leadership shape community.

The October session, 'Art as a Catalyst for Revival', features NORPA's Julian Louis and filmmaker Poppy Walker in conversation about the role of creativity in healing and resilience after the 2022 floods. November's event, 'Living Through It', welcomes endurance athlete and author Turia Pitt, who speaks with Jen Djula about purpose, mindset and showing up – even when things feel impossible.

Toast blends personal storytelling with a shared sense of momentum – and is quickly becoming a go-to gathering for Byron's creative community.

2 October – 'Art as a Catalyst for Revival'
events.humanitix.com/toast-norpa

12 November – 'Living Through It' with Turia Pitt
events.humanitix.com/toast-turia-pitt-in-conversation

The Corner Palm, 20 Shirley St, Byron Bay

Ghosting the Party – Drill Hall Theatre

The Drill Hall Theatre Company presents *Ghosting the Party*, a sharp, darkly funny and moving play about death, family and the way grief echoes through generations. Written by Melissa Bubnic and directed by Liz Chance, this local production features a strong cast of community actors who bring depth and humour to difficult questions.

Set around a funeral, the play follows three women – a grandmother, mother and daughter – as they reflect on their own lives, choices and fears. It's a character-driven work that asks what it means to have control over how we live and how we die – without offering neat conclusions.

While the subject is heavy, the writing is quick and generous, with moments of unexpected levity. The show is a good fit for audiences who want more than easy laughs – it's honest, unafraid and occasionally uncomfortable.

Until 5 October

Drill Hall Theatre, 4 Jubilee Avenue, Mullumbimby
drillhalltheatre.org.au

Arts and About

A Tremble, A Tug, A Telling by Gail Hocking

Lone Goat Gallery presents a timely and immersive new installation by award-winning artist Gail Hocking. *A Tremble, A Tug, A Telling* is rooted in the artist's personal experience of a seismic event – specifically, the audible P-wave that preceded it. That moment – and the panic it sparked – led Gail to reflect on how our bodies respond to environmental crises.

The result is a video and sound installation that invites quiet engagement. The work draws attention to the physical and emotional intersections between humans and nonhuman forces – how we absorb fear, how we make meaning, and how we recover.

This exhibition is part of Lone Goat's ongoing commitment to presenting contemporary artists exploring urgent ideas in thoughtful, reflective ways. All are welcome.

Until 18 October, Wednesday – Saturday, 10am–4pm

Lone Goat Gallery, 28 Lawson Street, Byron Bay
lonegoatgallery.com

Byron Bay Film Festival 2025

The Byron Bay Film Festival (BBFF) returns this October with 10 days of screenings, panels and creative community events across the Northern Rivers. Known for its thoughtful programming and local/global mix, BBFF 2025 offers film lovers a chance to see bold and original cinema that isn't always available in regional areas.

This year's venues include Palace Byron Bay, Palace Ballina, Starcourt Theatre in Lismore, Brunswick Picture House, Coorabell Hall and the Drill Hall in Mullumbimby. Expect a strong line-up of independent works, documentaries and award-winners from international festivals like Cannes and Tribeca.

There's also a strong showing of Australian films and First Nations stories – plus Q&As, industry talks and more. If you're looking for intelligent screen storytelling and thoughtful conversation – this is the week to mark in your calendar.

17–26 October

bbff.com.au

Nimbin Roots Festival – final edition

The Nimbin Roots Festival returns for its 10th – and final – year this October. Created and curated by ARIA-nominated musician Lou Bradley, the festival has been a fixture on the Australian regional music circuit for the past decade.

Held over three days across venues in the village of Nimbin, this year's festival features over 40 acts – including Dog Trumpet, Hussy Hicks, The Audreys, and more. There will also be poetry, workshops, markets and the iconic Peace and Love Parade. It's a celebration of original music and independent community spirit – and for many, a chance to say goodbye to something special.

Lou has announced plans to focus her energy on the new Mullum Roots Festival, which launched earlier this year. In the meantime, Lou will perform one final set on the Nimbin stage she helped build.

24–26 October

nimbinrootsfest.com

Halloween Cabaret – Hidden in the Hinterland

The Drill Hall Theatre hosts *Halloween Cabaret*, a one-night - only performance event from the team behind Hidden in the Hinterland. This isn't your average Halloween show – it's an atmospheric, film noir-inspired cabaret that leans into mystery, ritual and live music with a surreal edge.

From the moment you walk in, the scene is set – shadow play, fog, a gleaming grand piano and performers emerging from the dark. The storytelling mixes the playful with the unsettling in a night where cabaret meets contemporary performance – and not everything is as it seems.

It's recommended to book early and dress for the occasion. This is a limited-capacity event with a strong local following so grab your tickets before they... vanish.

Friday 31 October, 7.30pm

Drill Hall Theatre, 4 Jubilee Avenue, Mullumbimby
drillhalltheatre.org.au

Spaghetti Western – Spaghetti Circus x YUCK Circus

Spaghetti Circus and YUCK Circus come together to present *Spaghetti Western* – a fast-paced, family-friendly circus theatre show premiering at Brunswick Picture House.

Performed by the Spaghetti Circus Performance Troupe – a group of passionate young local artists – and directed by the award-winning YUCK team, the show takes the tropes of the classic western and turns them inside out. Expect saloon stunts, high-flying acrobatics, bar fights and cow folk – with nods to Spaghetti Circus own legacy of homegrown performance.

While light-hearted and energetic, the show also reflects values of collaboration, resilience and creative community. The season includes matinees, an Auslan-interpreted show and a strong focus on accessibility.

29 October – 9 November

Brunswick Picture House, 30 Fingal Street, Brunswick Heads
brunswickpicturehouse.com
spaghatticircus.org.au

Material Memory by Dean Stewart

The Tweed Regional Gallery presents *Material Memory*, an exhibition by regional artist Dean Stewart who uses salvaged materials and everyday objects to construct evocative assemblages that explore memory.

The exhibition invites viewers to reflect on what we keep, what we discard, and how meaning is formed through material and memory. Dean's work transforms the familiar into the poetic, with subtle arrangements that speak to emotion, history and connection.

The works reward close attention, sparking joy, nostalgia and contemplation in what we commonly overlook or even discard. It's a show that feels grounded in place and experience, resonating with anyone who's ever held onto something "just because".

Until 30 November

Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Art Centre,
2 Mistral Road, Murwillumbah
gallery.tweed.nsw.gov.au
deanstewartart.com/blog

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The original Coorabell School of Arts



Lissa Coote with young crooner Jack Watson



A Coorabell Hall mock deb ball event, 1960s.

property along Coolamon Scenic Drive (originally Coorabell Road) in the 19th and 20th centuries was a 100-acre dairy – an industry which peaked in the 1930s.

By 1907, Coorabell had a general store, a blacksmith, a butcher, fruit shop, boarding house, church, school, and from 1906, a public hall set up as a School of Arts. As a centre for all community functions, the hall offered a chance for locals to meet neighbours and friends, for celebrations, weddings, dances, euchre tournaments and clearing sales – all helping to raise funds to keep the hall operating.

The hall's first flower show was held in 1959, organised by the Ladies Auxiliary to raise funds towards lining and painting the hall's interior. The annual flower show tradition has been revived by a modern-day version of the Ladies Auxiliary.

Today, a diverse – and very active – handful of six volunteers keeps the lights on at the hall, keeping alive its origins as a community hub. The annual March Flower Show is still the hall's highest profile event, held midway through the peak dahlia season, primarily to celebrate the amazing blooms of Bruce and Stephen Wedd from nearby Possum Creek.

Lissa Coote is the hall's prime mover and shaker, inventively creating ways to keep

Coorabell calling

A tiny team of volunteers keep the action happening and the lights on, in the historic hall on the hill.

Christobel Munson investigates its origins and how it's done.

The Wiyabal people of the Bundjalung nation are said to be the original inhabitants of Coorabell, located on the tip of the ridge rising 156m above sea level. Some say the word 'Coorabell' means 'many hoop pines', but it's more likely to mean 'home of the winds'. Anywhere along the ridge, it's rare to find a wind-free day.

Despite the incessant wind, the views from Coorabell Hall are spectacular. Early white settlers started arriving around here in the late 1800s, first to plunder the finest trees from the Big Scrub, like the valuable red cedar. Trees were dragged to the top of the ridge, stripped of their bark, and shoved down the slopes – known as the Shoots – from the ridge to waiting bullock trains below, which transported the logs to a wharf in Byron Bay. From there, they were shipped around the world.

Once the trees were out of the way, dairying was the next big thing. Just about every



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Wedd family dahlias at the annual Flower Show All photos supplied by Lissa Coote

the doors open and costs covered. With a useful and highly skilled background in the film industry, she prides herself on “making something out of nothing”. It helps to have a lawyer on board, and Adele Smout is her ‘right hand’ in creating countless activities for this very active community hub.

A glance at the hall’s September newsletter, put together by Lissa and Adele, lists everything from a live ‘Magical Evening of Cabaret Theatre’, to the fortnightly Sunday Crop Swap (useful to share your excess produce with other locals for free), and ongoing raffles. On the first Wednesday of the month, the Coorabell Film Club screens a classic movie, while the work of talented local artists is exhibited in the Artspace.

Regular weekly events include both a coffee cart – a big hit with passing tradies – and the Hilltop Café, selling toasties and juices from a kitchen with surely one of the best views in the district. Monday night is pizza night; the first Wednesday of the month there’s Thai food from 6–7.30pm; while on Friday nights it’s Fun Friday, with Kamal Singh’s Punjabi curry and games (such as Scrabble, ping pong, mahjong and foosball); and on Sundays, enjoy the Trusty Dumpling or El Polaco Latin fusion food depending on the week. Needless to say, the hall is available to rent for weddings or other celebrations.

The next major event is billed as an Epic Fundraiser on 25 October, with a sculpture show planned pre-Christmas.

The hall receives no federal, state or local council funding, so it’s up to the innovative team to find ways to cover its costs. Lissa meets with volunteers from other local halls – Newrybar, Marvell Street, Eureka, Federal and Ewingsdale – to share ideas on ways to keep the doors open. In Lissa’s view, obtaining a liquor licence has been a “huge step up” (and very popular on Fridays from 5–7.30pm). Lissa and the team found \$65,000 to build a very popular outside deck, well used at every event, and she’s already dreaming of relocating the toilet block and creating a “proper” bar, once she works out how to raise the cash.

coorabellhall.net
565 Coolamon Scenic Drive, Coorabell

Historical information sourced – and gratefully acknowledged – from Coorabell School and District – the first 100 years, compiled by Ellenor Wadsworth, published by The Coorabell School Centenary Committee, June 1991.

The School of Arts movement

The School of Arts movement in New South Wales, particularly in Sydney, played a transformative role in shaping adult education, community life and cultural development throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Beginning in Scotland in the early 1800s, it was driven by Enlightenment ideals of scientific education, self-improvement and social reform. The aim was to educate artisans and mechanics in practical sciences, with the belief that this would uplift individuals and benefit society.

The School of Arts concept reached Sydney in 1831 via a group of Scottish tradesmen and educators. In 1833, the Sydney Mechanics School of Arts was established to spread scientific and useful knowledge through the new colony. Public lectures were held in School of Arts halls, alongside libraries and classes in science, art and political economy.

Over the next century, around 750 Schools of Arts or Mechanics Institutes were established across NSW, becoming hubs of community life, education and culture. Their legacy includes the establishment of public libraries, community centres and adult and technical education systems. The Sydney Mechanics School of Arts directly influenced the creation of institutions such as the University of Sydney and Sydney Technical College – which later became the University of Technology Sydney (UTS).

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Broken Brains

by Jamila Rizvi and Rosie Waterland

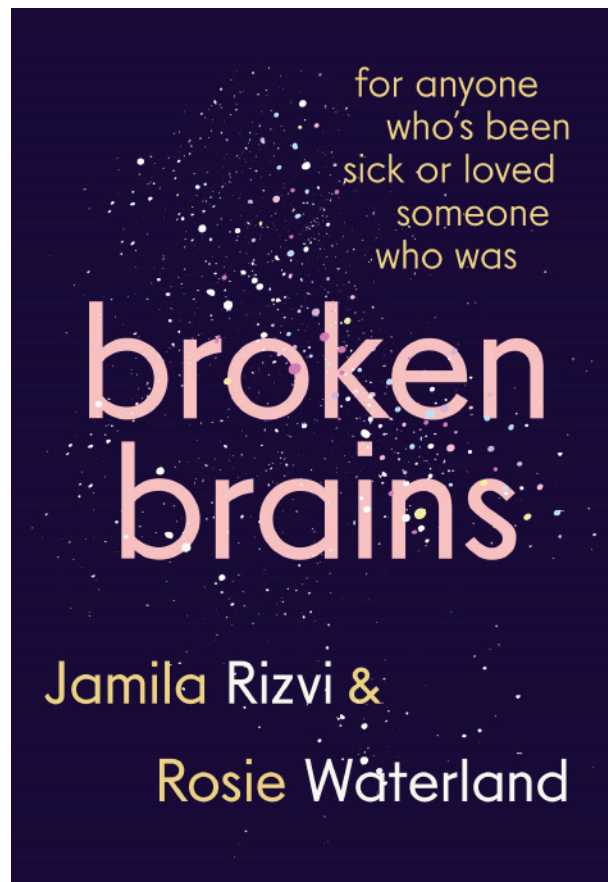
I was lucky enough to attend the opening day of the Byron Bay Writers Festival before it was cancelled due to weather. On that soggy Friday, as the rain pelted down on the roof of the marquee, I made the wise and fortuitous decision to stay put and listen to the next session rather than venturing out into the rain.

Jamila and Rosie have been unlikely friends for several years and together they have written a book about their commonality – brain injuries. Jamila was diagnosed with a craniopharyngioma (brain tumour) at the age of 31. Devastating news for a young woman with a successful career, a loving husband, and a delightful young toddler. Her diagnosis and the uncertainty of her future led to an outpouring of love and support from her family and friends – not to mention the arrival of numerous lasagnes to sustain the family in their time of need.

Rosie never got any lasagnes! Her brain injury was the result of extreme parental neglect and abuse – mostly received at the hands of her biological parents but exacerbated by foster parents. Rosie started therapy at the age of 17 and was diagnosed with PTSD. She has been seeing the same psychiatrist for the past 20 years, and he continued to treat her even during the times that she could not afford to pay his fees. You might be thinking – well, when is the therapy going to end? I mean, 20 years is a long time, isn't it? At what point is she going to get over it?

In 2025 we all know someone who has mental health problems – an illness that most people find really difficult to understand. Many of us know someone who has been diagnosed with a cancer or illness that drags on to the point where there is “support fatigue”. This book provides a window into the heart and soul of the sufferer and goes some way to fostering an empathy and understanding which can, at times, be hard to find.

I made the mistake of thinking that I would buy a copy of the book when I returned to the festival the next day. Instead, I made the



journey to buy it at The Bookroom in Byron the following day – and I'm so glad I did.

This book is written for anyone who's been sick, or loved someone who was.

Published in 2025 by Penguin

Carolyn Adams

There is a lovely but mysterious specimen growing near where I live and I have been observing its progress through flowering to seed production for some years – and have finally identified it!

For plant lovers, especially horticulturalists and botanists, this is a really buzzy and thrilling thing – although quite often I find that I forget the name unless I say it to myself every time I pass by.

Ah, the ageing filing cabinet of my brain is a bit full!

Anyway, this is what I have recently found...

Bixa originated in Central and South America but is now very widely grown in southeast Asia, particularly in the Philippines (indeed, the garden that it adorns is owned by a Malaysian family).

It needs full sun and good drainage, is evergreen, and grows to a maximum of four metres, but can also be grown in a pot and trimmed to size after the seeds have been harvested.

Bixa flowers during the summer months – lovely pale pink, five-petalled open flowers with masses of darker pink stamens.

Later, the seed pods develop in clusters of seven to 11 large, 20–30mm in diameter, hairy reddish teardrop shapes that eventually split open, revealing several large seeds.

The seeds are not edible, but the pulp surrounding them is harvested commercially to provide food colouring. Especially in the Philippines, this is used to colour rice, desserts, and sometimes butters and cheeses. Here too, the seeds are ground and used as a tasty condiment. When used in foods, the food colouring derived from the pulp is known as annatto.

Propagation is by seed only and is very slow.



Annatto magic

Bixa orellana, also known as the Achiote or Annatto tree Photo Carole Gamble

Soaking in hot water and then potting up in a seed-raising medium – with the top of the seed exposed and preferably under glass or a plastic bag to create some humidity – is the recommended method. Growers report a 30 to 50% success rate, with lots of careful monitoring.

They are often available at Fruitopia Nursery (fruitopianursery.com.au) and can be ordered.

I love this small tree for the almost continuous colour and interest – and so do the bees and lorikeets.

The evergreen foliage is lovely too: glossy and plentiful, so it makes a good shade tree.

Carole Gamble

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Stuffed Butternut Squash

An easy weeknight meal for when the season turns to spring. Look for smaller squash varieties when baking. Substitute any spring produce you fancy for the stuffing.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 butternut squash
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- ¼ tsp salt
- Freshly ground black pepper

Filling

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 185 g fresh spinach
- 250 g cream cheese
- 1 cup Parmesan cheese, shredded
- 6 strips bacon, cooked and chopped
- 2-3 tsp fresh thyme leaves

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 200°C.
2. Cut squash in half lengthwise and scoop out the seeds.
3. Place cut sides up, drizzle with olive oil, and season generously with salt and pepper.
4. Roast for about 40 minutes, then leave to cool slightly.
5. Scoop out the squash flesh, leaving a border along the sides.
6. In a medium skillet, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add spinach and cook until wilted (about 5 minutes). Remove from heat and cool.
7. Add cream cheese (at room temperature), squash flesh, Parmesan and half the chopped bacon. Mix well.
8. Divide the mixture among the four squash halves and level the tops.
9. Sprinkle with remaining bacon and fresh thyme. Roast at 200°C until the cheese mixture melts, about 15 minutes.

Recipe and illustration Lyn Hand

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Honk if you'd like to live on the water Photo supplied

SS Goose

An electricity outage leads **Dr Airdre Grant** to ponder life on the water.

As the new season rolls in and the days become brighter and warmer, I can feel myself mentally unfurling. The natural hibernation instincts of the cooler months recede, and I am enjoying the sun and the balmy days. I avoid thinking about the blistering heat of summer. Today I will live in the moment and appreciate the world as it is. Go me and my ability to practise acceptance.

At the house there was an electricity outage for the day. Something Terribly Important was being fixed, which meant my neighbourhood was to be switched off. Who does the switching off? Is it a brisk little man in a grey coat? Somebody called Clive with a comb-over, who walks up to a big red

box with DO NOT TOUCH written on it, and extracts a large key from the many he has looped on a chain around his tubby waist, opens the box, selects a lever, and pulls hard – grunting with severe satisfaction as he disconnects households from their fridges, fans, tellies, and forces them to be In The Now? Rubbing his meaty hands with glee?

Because I was feeling whimsical in my new off-grid life, and I'm a writer, I thought: How shall I do my work? With a quill and ink? So practical. (Hadn't even thought about where one gets ink these days. It's possible I'd been watching something informative on the now inaccessible History Channel.) I reasoned that if I could find a goose, I could get a feather and fashion myself a writing implement. Or a kookaburra feather. That would do.

So, I went for a walk to see what feathers I could find.

So much blossoming spring foliage. I saw fragrant jasmine and wisteria, bright blossoming bottlebrushes. Very pretty. I admired and mentally weeded, renovated and repainted the gardens and houses I passed. In no time, I had spruced up the entire neighbourhood. It was a very rewarding activity.

I abandoned the quill and parchment idea; it was too capricious. (Pen and paper would do, and geese are notoriously uncooperative.) Instead, I began a long and enjoyable fantasy about a life on the water. I constructed, in my daydream, a houseboat on which I sailed serenely up and down the waterways of the Northern Rivers. What would I call my boat? The Lady of Leisure? The Richmond Queen? The SS Goose? Yes, that would be the name.

As I walked back, I decorated the SS Goose. I picked the colours, stocked the fridge and chose the flag. Never mind that I have no idea how to sail a houseboat. It couldn't be that hard, I reasoned. I'd seen pictures of happy families skylarking on houseboats, of radiant couples smiling at each other, sipping wine, watching the sun go down as they cruised peacefully into the sunset. I could see myself leaning against a railing, a gentle wind in my hair, laughing lightly at my companion's witty stories as we glided along.

No one ever looked anxious or crashed into the dock. No one argued and demanded to be taken back to port because they hated someone else and wished they'd never come in the first place. No one ever complained they had left something vital behind such as an asthma inhaler or an enormous quantity of alcohol. Nothing like that would happen on the SS Goose. It would be a dream on the water.

By the time I got home the electricity was back on. I switched on the kettle, opened the fridge, and went to my computer, which whirred politely as I sat down. Clive's work was done and he had moved on – no doubt to another defenceless neighbourhood. It is possible I then spent quite a lot of time researching pictures of houseboats.



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Bangalow Koalas	Linda	0411 491 991
Bridge Club	Brian	0429 311 830
Community Children's Centre	Kerry	6687 1552
Co-dependents Anonymous	Gye	0421 583 321
CWA (Wed)	Georgia	cwasecbangalow@gmail.com
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
Piccabeen Park	Lynn	0429 644 659
Park Trust Committee	Shane	0475 732 551
Police - DCI Matt Kehoe		6629 7500
Pool Trust	Jo	6687 1297
Community 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

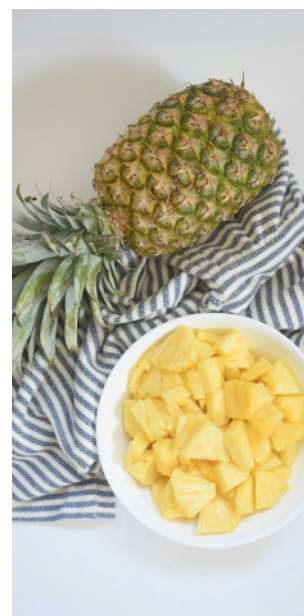
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Bowls women (9.30am Wed)	Frances	6687 1339
Cricket	Anthony	0429 306 529
Karate self-defence	Jean	0458 245 123
Netball (3.30pm Wed)	Ellie	0429 855 399
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Lions Club Kiosk	Nashy	0418 440 545
Moller Pavilion		6687 1035
Newrybar Hall	Kerry	0414 560 119
Scout Hall	Shane	0475 732 551
St Kevin's Catholic Hall	Russell	0423 089 684

Pineapple Fruit Cake

Each year, the Bangalow Show features a special Show Cookery Challenge in which the baker must follow a specific recipe. This year it's a classic Australian twist on a fruit cake – featuring a humble tin of pineapple. The result? Incredibly moist (and yes, this is one of the rare times it's acceptable to use that word).



INGREDIENTS

- 1 x 400g can pineapple pieces (undrained)
- 500g mixed dried fruit (no peel, no cherries)
- 125g butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon mixed spice
- 1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 cup plain flour
- 1 cup self-raising flour
- ½ cup brandy or whisky

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Soak mixed dried fruit in brandy or whisky for three to four days.
2. In a saucepan, combine the undrained pineapple, soaked fruit mixture, sugar, mixed spice and bicarbonate of soda. Stir over medium heat until the mixture comes to the boil. Set aside to cool completely.
3. Preheat oven to 160°C. Grease a deep round cake tin and line the bottom and sides with baking paper, allowing the paper to extend 4–5cm above the edge.
4. When the fruit mixture is cool, add the eggs and sifted flours. Mix well to combine.
5. Pour into the prepared tin and bake for 1½ hours. Check if cooked – the cake may need up to 30 minutes more.
6. Remove from oven and allow to cool for 10–15 minutes before turning out onto a cooling rack.

Top tip: A clean tea towel will prevent the cooling rack leaving impressions on your cake, which count as 'decoration' and a not permitted.

Note: The Full Schedules for all Ring Events and Pavilion Sections is now avail from select pickup points around town or online bangalowshow.com.au

Entry forms, costs, judging specifications and details of prize money and awards is also available in the Schedule and online.

A reminder that all Pavilion judging will take place on Thursday 13 November, with entries accepted from 7am on the day.

The Bangalow

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Dr Jane Reffell is excited to announce changes at Womens Health & Wellbeing

In July 2025 Womens Health and Wellbeing will be closing and I will be moving my practice to another menopause practice, Remi Menopause Clinic, where I will continue to provide ongoing dedicated menopause care. For appointments visit remi.com.au. If you have an existing appointment you will be contacted personally to confirm.

NEW ADDRESS FROM JULY 2025

Remi Menopause Clinic,
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	Wed	Hatha Yoga	6.00 to 7.15pm
	Thurs	Yogalates	9.30 to 11.00am
	Thurs	Yin Restore Yoga	5.30 to 6.30pm
	Sat	Yogalates	8.15 to 9.30am

For Suffolk Park class times and our Online Studio visit: yogalatesacademy.com

Vale Peter Crompton Haliday



Bangalow man Peter Haliday, who passed away on 4 August, aged 81, was an adventurer, a 'Prince of Fun', a great cook, always up for a nip of Irish whisky and a barbecue, a twinkle-eyed storyteller and a multi-skilled Mr Fix-it, always ready to lend a hand.

Above all of these, however, he was a consummate sailor and an adoring partner to Bangalow piano teacher Linda Armstrong. He had a broad set of practical skills, a talent for making friends, and a love of life – never more so than when facing the challenges that nature could throw at him on the world's oceans.

Peter was born in Melbourne and grew up in Brighton. He attended Wesley College, then Brighton High School, but school was too restrictive for him and he wagged often. He was an enterprising lad, once converting his dad's new motor-mower into a billy cart, and later fashioning a car key out of a penny – one night "borrowing" the family car, returning late to be greeted by his mother wielding a rolling pin.

Something of a larrikin, he was diverted from going too far wrong by the intervention of a Legacy member who suggested he join the Royal Brighton Yacht Club. Once he smelt the sea air, Peter never looked back.

He studied metallurgy at university and worked in the corporate sector, but sailing was his true passion. He spent much of his life as a yacht delivery skipper, delivering vessels up and down the east coast of Australia, from Indonesia and South-East Asia, and even further afield. On one occasion he brought a yacht out from the British Virgin Islands, through the Panama Canal and across the Pacific with a single crewmate, Fraser Johnstone – an extraordinary undertaking, and just one journey among hundreds that the pair sailed together.

When racing yachts, Peter was a master tactician, aware of tides and skilled at reading currents – "very flexible and unbelievably quick on the boat" – multitasking and keeping a cool head. A highlight of his sailing life was helping a mate win in the Cruising division at Hamilton Island Race Week in 2000, competing against 100 other boats.

Peter continued to deliver yachts up and down the coast until well into his 70s, and was only stopped by the COVID pandemic.

Naturally, it was on a boat that he met Linda, at the Hamilton Island racing fixture in 1995. Unable to compete because his vessel had been delayed, Peter was on the starter boat, where Linda was working behind the bar.

"He was charming and kind... and those blue eyes!" she says. The following year Peter sailed his Davidson 40 yacht Silverado from Sydney up to Airlie Beach, and their life together began. Peter was heavily involved in the running of the Whitsunday Sailing Club for many years, including serving as club chairman. He was also a volunteer at Airlie Beach with Marine Rescue.

Peter worked with acclaimed pole home builder Ray Johansson to create their dream home at Airlie Beach – an award-winning house. He was there alongside the builder every day, carrying timber, "and complaining afterwards about how strong these bloody builders were", a friend recalls.

In 2010 the couple moved to the Northern Rivers to be near Linda's family. Despite having no experience of farming, Peter contributed his considerable practical abilities to the Coopers Shoot operation. This readiness to pitch in was also evident when he co-founded the Bangalow Men's Shed, where he was "very, very patient and very giving of his time with our Shedders", says President David Noakes. "He had a wonderful skill set. And he was just a great teacher; he'd walk you through it. If we had working bees, or when we were making nest boxes, Pete would be there with a paintbrush, nail gun, whatever."

But it was Peter's ability to share that David remembers most fondly. "Peter loved to tell stories about the high seas and all that sort of thing. He loved a good yarn."

Before he became ill, Peter started an odd-jobs business in Bangalow and was an active member of the Bangalow Hotel Social Club – the "Pub Club" – a social group that also raises money to go to sports associations or to anyone in need.

There was a less public side to Peter that only a few people saw. Every year before Christmas, Linda's students, young and old, would gather at their home for a concert. Peter would welcome the guests, introduce the concert, listen with pleasure (and patience), and do everything he could to ensure the event was a happy occasion. A tough old sailor, he also possessed a sort of gentlemanliness, an old-world courtesy, a kindness towards strangers. With Linda, he always opened the car door.

No pianist himself, he enjoyed hearing Linda's students' playing improve over time. "The kids always liked Peter," Linda says – a worthy epitaph.

Peter is sadly missed by Linda, his two sons and their families, and the Bangalow community.

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What's on

Craig Silvey in conversation

When Sunday 12 October, 1.30-2.30pm
Where A&I Hall, Bangalow
Tickets \$30 Adult / \$25 Festival Friends / \$5 Kids
Info byronwritersfestival.com

Craig Silvey returns with *Runt and the Diabolical Dognapping*, a heartwarming and suspenseful sequel to his bestselling children's novel. Join him for an engaging conversation about Annie and Runt's latest adventure, full of twists, humour and charm. A family-friendly event that brings storytelling to life, presented by Byron Writers Festival.

Bob Brown in conversation

When Monday 13 October, 6.30pm
Where A&I Hall, Station Street, Bangalow
Tickets byronwritersfestival.com

Environmental campaigner Bob Brown discusses his memoir *Defiance* with David Heilpern. With warmth and insight, he reflects on a life of activism, the power of community, and the natural world's value. An inspiring evening hosted by Byron Writers Festival and The Book Room. Books will be available for purchase and signing.

The Maes at Pearces Creek Hall

When Wednesday 16 October, 7pm
Where Pearces Creek Hall
Tickets \$30 / \$25
Info pearcescreekhall.com.au

Folk favourites The Maes bring their new album *Abreast* to Pearces Creek as part of a national tour. Known for lush harmonies and award-winning songwriting, the duo has toured the UK and played major folk festivals this year. Expect an intimate, powerful performance in a cosy hall setting.

Rennie Pearson at Tintenbar Hall

When Friday 17 October, 7.30-9.30pm
Where Tintenbar Hall
Tickets events.humanitix.com/rennie-pearson-tintenbar

Multi-instrumentalist Rennie Pearson draws on the Celtic traditions of Ireland, Scotland and Maritime Canada, performing on wooden flute, guitar, tin whistles, bodhrán, fiddle and voice. Joined by guitarist and singer Kushla Kozeluh, he weaves soaring melodies, jigs and reels, and heartfelt ballads into an unforgettable evening of music and storytelling in the intimate setting of Tintenbar Hall.



Jane Harper Photo Mrs Smart Photography

ArtsNational Northern Rivers: October Lecture

When Monday 20 October, 6pm
welcome drinks for 6.30pm start
Where A&I Hall, Station Street, Bangalow

Tickets \$25 for non-members via trybooking.com/CWFLG
Info artsnational.au/societies/northernrivers
Sarah Cove explores Constable's daring late works in this richly illustrated lecture, *My Scrambling Affair*. Discover how his bold brushwork prefigured Impressionism and influenced Parisian collectors. Presented by ArtsNational Northern Rivers. Raffle prize: *Late Constable* by Anne Lyles. New guests welcome.

Minor Gold at Pearces Creek Hall

When Wednesday 23 October, 6.30pm
Where Pearces Creek Hall
Tickets \$30 / \$25 / Children free
Info pearcescreekhall.com.au

ARIA-nominated folk-rock duo Minor Gold bring their *Way to the Sun* tour to Pearces Creek. With just two voices and guitars, they create a rich, sun-drenched sound. Their international tour includes shows with The Teskey Brothers and major festival appearances. Catch them live in an intimate setting.

Amalfi Roast

When Friday 24 October, 7.30pm (Doors 6.30pm)
Where Byron Theatre, 69 Jonson Street, Byron Bay
Tickets \$42.40 General Admission
Info byrontheatre.com.au

Fresh from Sydney Fringe Festival, Melia Naughton brings her one-woman musical comedy *Amalfi Roast* to Byron. A whirlwind of songs and stories, she dives into everything from perimenopause to puppy school with hilarious honesty. A fast-paced, heartfelt hour of self-deprecating comedy and award-winning music on the Byron Theatre's grand Steinway.



Bob Brown Photo supplied

Queensland Dahlia Society tuber sale

When Saturday 25 October, 8-11am
Where Coorabell Hall, 565 Coolamon Scenic Drive, Coorabell
Info queenslanddahliasociety.com.au

Browse a vibrant selection of dahlia tubers direct from growers at this annual Coorabell sale. Prices range from \$10-\$25, with expert advice on hand for new and seasoned gardeners alike. Bring a bag or box for your blooms – no early entry, in-person sales only. Everyone welcome.

EPIC Fundraiser at Coorabell Hall

When Saturday 25 October, 7pm
Where Coorabell Hall
Tickets \$40 (includes light meal) via Humanitix
Info events.humanitix.com/epic-fundraiser-coorabell-hall

Celebrate the life and musical legacy of Jesse Balfour with a night of unforgettable live music. EPIC plays classic hits with flair, energy and top-tier production. Featuring musicians who've performed with Aussie legends, this fundraiser supports Coorabell Hall and promises a rocking, community-focused night out.

Diary

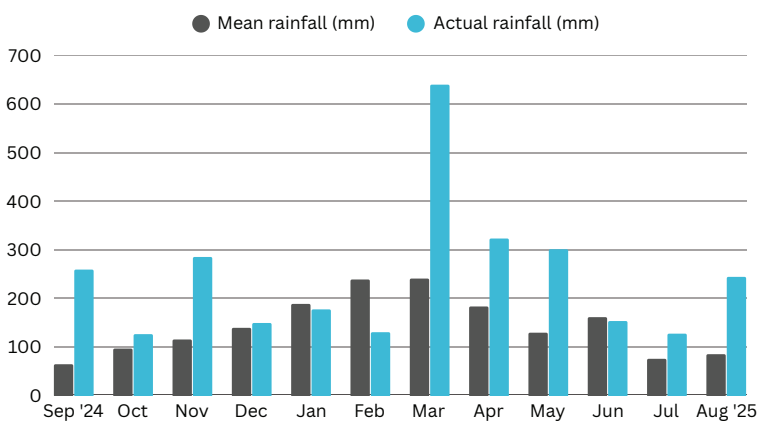
October 2025

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17	Rennie Pearson at Tintenbar Hall
20	ArtsNational Northern Rivers: October Lecture
22	Jane Harper in conversation
23	Minor Gold at Pearces Creek Hall
24	Amalfi Roast
25	Queensland Dahlia Society tuber sale EPIC Fundraiser at Coorabell Hall

November edition deadlines

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Copy	13 October
Advertising	13 October

Bangalow Rainfall



Source: BOM daily rainfall data Nashua (Wilson's River) station 58162

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Balancing Act



Like any typical teenager, life is a bit of a balancing act for 17-year-old Alex Cadwell. There's schoolwork to keep on top of, a part-time job (at the Brunswick Picture House), friends, chores, hobbies. The juggle is real – literally. The Bangalow local spends countless hours training at Spaghetti Circus, where a signature chair-stacking handstand routine has earned him and a handful of fellow performers a starring role in this year's feature production, *Spaghetti Western*.

The theme of this year's production is a contrast to the acclaimed 2024 original work *Monumental*, performed in 2024, with its themes of recognising quiet achievers, the importance of determination, and the growth that comes from failures. "Some of our past shows had a big message behind them, but this one is joyous and exciting," he says.

That sense of light relief feels timely. After years of floods, fires and relentless global headlines, audiences may be ready for a show that simply makes them laugh, gasp and cheer. *Spaghetti Western*, co-produced

with YUCK Circus, promises exactly that – a reimagining of the cowboy classic, circus-style. Expect prancing ponies, bar fights, cactus handstands ("because we thought they would be funny", 'shooting stars' and chickens flying through the air.

The chair stacking handstand act is far from poultry antics. Alex, along with circus teammates Jazzy, Amani, Ruby, Avalon and Amelie work together on the daring act, to build a tower of chairs and balance in a handstand at the top. "It's incredibly terrifying to do – and to watch," says Alex. The act demands extraordinary strength, laser focus and a lot of upper body strength. Alex has been training for 15 years, steadily developing the strength, precision and fearlessness that circus demands.

Behind the show is a troupe of young performers who have been training together for years. Directed by YUCK Circus, the production gives the Spaghetti Circus team a chance to work with some of the country's best contemporary circus artists. "They're an

incredible bunch of kind, talented, passionate performers, ready to rock the Picture House stage," says director Georgia Deguara.

Spaghetti Circus Director of Circus, Petrina Hutchinson, says the partnership is about more than putting on a good show. "The troupe are not just part of a show – they are part of a living tradition of contemporary circus, carrying forward skills, stories, and values for the next generation."

Tickets already selling fast, and with everything else that's going on in the world, this hour of high flying acrobatics and slapstick entertainment could be just what we need to lift our spirits.

"It's fun, it's exciting, and it's for everyone," Alex says. "That's what circus is about."

Spaghetti Western

**Brunswick Picture House, 30 Fingal Street,
Brunswick Heads
29 October – 9 November**

brunswickpicturehouse.com

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