

The Bangalow

HERALD

2479

Living in the 70s
Early music festivals

Playing the game
Chess and Two-Up

Resilient Bangalow
Floods and shortages

Facing the music



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From the Editor

It's hard to ignore the feeling that our everyday world is shifting. Fuel prices creeping up. Home loan interest rates too. The weekly food shop costs a lot more than it used to. And winter is coming.

At the same time, life beyond our region feels increasingly unsettled. It's hard to avoid the news of global tensions, economic uncertainty, extreme weather events and a loss of humanity the scale of which has not been seen before.

And yet, here in Bangalow, there is something reliable that supports us, and that's the unmatched sense of community. We've shown time and again we can rely on each other.

When things feel uncertain at a global level, local connection becomes more important, not less. It's the simple, practical ways we support one another that can make a real difference. Sharing excess produce from the garden. Offering a lift instead of driving alone. Swapping skills, bartering services, lending tools. Practising patience and kindness when dealing with others, especially in times of uncertainty and frustration. These are not new ideas, but they are powerful ones.

They also remind us that community isn't just something we talk about, it's something we actively participate in.

This month's edition reflects this in different ways. Stories of local events, volunteers, traditions and people stepping forward all point to the same idea: that connection matters. Whether it's gathering in the street, showing up for a cause, volunteering, or simply checking in with a neighbour, these small acts build something much bigger.

We can't control global events. But we can shape how we respond to them.

And often, the most meaningful and sustainable responses start close to home.

Sally Schofield

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

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Bangalow Chess Club founders Daniel, Shyla and Evan Photo Yutaro Fukuhara

Chess, mate?

Beer, banter, barracking: **Digby Hildreth** discovers that chess can prove to be a fun night out.

Every Tuesday night the Bangalow Hotel rocks to the sound of a bunch of passionate people doing what they love best – playing chess, and watching others play.

Five or six years ago the game broke free of its stereotypes to become one of the world's most followed spectator activities. The 20 or so regulars at the Bangalow Chess Club are a perfect illustration of this: young, diverse, enthusiastic, and willing to come from afar every week to socialise and compete against each other.

Avalon, currently No. 1 on the leader board, travels from Mullumbimby; and the reputed 'most improved' player, Bradley, comes all the way from Nimbin. There's even an international flavour to the line-up, but 2479 locals also feature among the throng, among them man about town, Lydian Dunbar.

They're drawn by the chess challenges on offer, but something more as well – an atmosphere of camaraderie and respect. There's an almost family vibe to the club: indeed, Evan Manttari founded it with his brother Daniel, and former girlfriend Shyla, a bar staffer at the pub. They were looking for something to get them off their screens and out of the house, something which meant the brothers could hang out together regularly. Now Daniel and his girlfriend Teagan – a recent recruit to the game – drive up frequently from their home in Yamba.

Shyla's mum, Bec, is another who started as a beginner, and says she's making solid progress. Her main weakness is taking too long to decide on a move, she says, and with each player rationed to 10-minutes for each of the four games played through the night, such hesitancy can mean an automatic loss. The time pressure suits Bec's other daughter, Amarlie, at 16 the club's youngest member, who credits her success to a fast, decisive style. It can intimidate opponents, she says,

smiling sweetly as she concedes the word 'aggressive' might define her style – including in games against her more tentative mum. But even ruthless Amarlie admits it's the sense of community that keeps her coming back.

Avalon is one of the more experienced players here: after being taught to play at a young age by his grandfather, he helped set up chess clubs at all the schools he attended while growing up, from Shearwater to Xavier to the Green School. Of the many chess groups and associations he's been part of, the Bangalow club is the best, he says. The reason? Because the focus is on actual playing. With at least four games guaranteed per player, it's like a mini tournament. Self-described as "incredibly competitive", Avalon enjoys the opportunity to play several games, face to face, and with a variety of opponents.

Some of them are, like him, top-notch players and on one rainy Tuesday night in early March, Avalon was slightly startled to find himself suddenly in a trap – the result of a mid-game "fried liver advanced attack variation" – laid, albeit semi-accidentally, by the equally competitive Miela. Checkmate!

At other tables, beginner or intermediate players compete with others at their level – matched appropriately through an algorithm-driven system devised by Evan. While the club offers no formal coaching, there's plenty of learning 'on the job' and during post-game analysis, when the better players offer fruitful feedback.

There are several tiers here; everyone finds their level and they're all eager to improve. Rob, in his 30s, plays games online. He also follows the games of world No.1, Norwegian grandmaster Magnus Carlsen, on YouTube and is "working on some new openings".

At 21, rising star Bradley, meanwhile, feels his strength is in his end game. Having come to the club every Tuesday since it began last September, his game has improved 100%, he says.

Towards the end of the four games an air of collective excitement builds at the prospect of a tie-break. At this point, the four 10-minute per person limit shrinks to three-minutes, demanding a heightened degree of concentration and rapid decision-making. The Velvets and Mazzy Star continue supplying the background music, but as the tension rises, even the drinkers and pool players fall silent to watch. The time pressure means mistakes are made: Black's excessive focus on a potential checkmate in one corner distracts him from the devious White manoeuvre diagonally opposite and whammo! It's all over.

Evan, meanwhile, has been scampering around in the background, a gleeful master of ceremonies, firing up the AI generated weighted system that records games, matches players and keeps everything moving. The nights represent a magical triad



A game of skill and strategy Photo Yutaro Fukuhara

for him: "It's an ancient game, aided here by modern technology, bringing people together."

Time to spin the prize-wheel, on which everyone features, with a 'slice' allocated for just turning up, and the awarding of the evening's \$20 voucher.

Chess has exploded in the past half dozen years – partly as a result of the massively popular streaming series *The Queen's Gambit*, which coincided with COVID lockdowns. Locked-up people found release and stimulation in "meeting" others over the virtual board. Evan says the fulfilment of that personal need is one of the main reasons for the club's success. Most of the members still play online, but they all state that it's the face-to-face interaction that brings them out at night.

Bec enjoys it because "there are so many different types of people" and the atmosphere is friendly and, while competitive, remains respectful, she says.

Chess is an incredibly valuable activity for young people, Avalon says: "It builds a level of resilience, a determination to persevere, to keep your chin up despite losing 100 times. It also develops the capacity for forethought."

There's even a moral, or character-building benefit to it: "It teaches humility and it's a demonstration that our actions have consequences," he says.

Mainly, however, at this grass-roots level, it's the "humanness" of it, says Evan, the craic and the connection, both intellectually sophisticated and innocent.

It's been a revelation for him: "Daniel and I started the club for ourselves, but it's become something for others. People have made friends here; it costs nothing, but there's real joy in that room."

Bangalow Chess meets every Tuesday, 6-9pm at the Bangalow Hotel. For details email bangalowchess@gmail.com

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Georgia Smith

Two-Up, the old way



Come in spinner! Photo supplied

Greg 'Nashy' Nash has been running the ANZAC Day Two-Up School at the pub, the Bowlo, and now the Showgrounds, for more than two decades. **Byron Leeworthy** finds out more.

How long have you been running Two-Up in Bangalow, and what exactly is your role in the ring?

I've run the Two-Up for 25 years at the Bangalow Hotel, the Bangalow Bowlo and now at the Bangalow Lions Club Bar and BBQ Kiosk at the Showgrounds. I'm the 'Boxer' and the 'Centre Banker', so I run the Two-Up School and cover the centre bet from the spinner, who must try and throw heads of course. 'Cowboy Olly' from Eureka is the 'Ringer', he supervises the penny spins and holds the centre bet, and 'Bangalow Maxy' is 'Penciller', recording the next up spinner and the heads or tails results. It works out pretty even on the day most years.

For someone who's never seen it before, what makes the Bangalow Two-Up School special?

It's quite a colourful old-school experience for the many visitors in town on the day, and especially tourists from abroad who have never seen anything like it. Of course it's unique to Australia, it has some measure of crude Aussie charm and that's why we do it every year. It's not something you can replicate or package up, it just happens organically with the crowd, the calls, the laughter and the odd groan when the pennies land the wrong way.

Why is it important to keep this tradition going?

There are a few reasons, but the main one is respect for Australian tradition and heritage,

respect for ANZAC Day and to preserve the memories of Aussie diggers who fought and died for our country. Secondly, it's a good fun old-school pastime and has to be the fairest form of light gambling imaginable, heads or tails, that's pretty simple. Thirdly: it allows Bangalow Lions to raise funds for our local relevant charities, so it's a fun community day for Bangalow with a bit of purpose behind it.

You mentioned ANZAC Day – what does the day mean to you personally?

My own forebears fought in the Great War, WWII and Vietnam and they all despised the conflict, the death, the destruction and abhorred the futility of war, but they all marched on ANZAC Day to remember their mates, those that made it and those that didn't. It's important that our children understand and respect our country's history and the *raison d'être* for Australia's ANZAC Day on 25 April every year. It's not just a piss up, it means something. It's important to Australia and Australians, and Kiwis of course.

There's a strong community element to the day as well – who benefits from the funds raised?

We will split any and all proceeds on the day between Lions for Legacy, The Younger Heroes and Bangalow Red Cross, who all do such a wonderful job of supporting the families of veterans. They deserve our support on ANZAC Day in particular. We will shake the donation bucket every 10 spins and encourage folks to throw in a few bob each time. The obvious winners will receive a lot more encouragement, that's for sure.

Some people might think it's just about the gambling – how do you see it?

It's not really that much about the gambling at all, we don't play for sheep stations. I'm

happy not to win or lose on the day and for everybody to have a laugh and enjoy themselves and each others' company. It's more about the atmosphere, the connection, and doing something together that's been part of Australian life for a long time.

It's actually only legal in NSW once a year on ANZAC Day, 25 April, and I think that's just perfect. We're allowed to start the game earlier in the day but I think 2–6pm is quite enough. It's bloody exhausting bouncing around the ring like a clown. And we don't need to overdo the gambling side of things; we want everyone to leave happy and have enjoyed their once-a-year Bangalow Two-Up School experience.

How does the day fit into the wider ANZAC Day events in Bangalow?

It's important to connect and participate in the ANZAC Day March down Byron Street and the Bangalow RSL Hall ceremony. That's what anchors the day. The Two-Up comes after that, and it's all part of remembering and respecting the reasons for ANZAC Day while bringing people together in a way that feels natural and local.

What would you say to someone thinking about coming along for the first time?

It's a fun day really for the Bangalow community with a subtle but solemn purpose of preserving ANZAC Day traditions and heritage, supporting our local charities and bringing people together for good old-fashioned Aussie community spirit. Come along, bring a few bucks and good vibes, and you'll understand what it's all about pretty quickly. See you at the Two-Up.



The Bangalow RSL ANZAC Ceremony Photo Lyn McCarthy Niche Pictures



The ANZAC March down Byron Street Photo Lyn McCarthy Niche Pictures

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Anzac Day March
 Byron Street Bangalow - assemble at top of street -
 10.30am for 10.45am start


Bangalow RSL Hall Ceremony
 11am - all welcome

Bangalow Lions Club Sausage Sizzle -
 11.30am for an hour or so at
 RSL Hall - gold coin donation only

Bangalow Lions Club Bar & BBQ Kiosk
 @ Bangalow Showgrounds -
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Anzac Day Two-Up School
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Members of the Byron Youth Council, known as the Byron Youth Initiative Program, will meet up to six times per year Photo Byron Shire Council



Bangalow's Charlotte Burns, second from left, with her fellow Youth Councillors Photo supplied

"I've lived in Bangalow my whole life and love being part of the community. I really enjoy being active, helping people and being involved in community activities," says Charlotte.

People tend to moan and groan a fair bit about the local council. What motivated you to apply for a spot on the Byron Youth Council?

To be honest, given this is a new initiative, I didn't really know what to expect when I applied. I wanted to apply because I think young people should have a say in decisions that affect our community and I thought it would be a great way to meet new people across the Shire. It can feel like young people's opinions are heard well in some areas, like schools or sports clubs, but there don't seem to be many opportunities outside of these spaces. The Youth Council is a really good opportunity for people my age to share ideas and help make positive changes in our community.

Council wants to give young people a platform to voice their views and advocate for action on issues that affect them. What issues do you think are important to young people in Bangalow and 2479?

Bangalow is a great place to live, and I think it's really important that young people feel included and supported here. I think some of the important issues for young people in our area include having safe places to hang out, especially since the Bangalow Bowlo shut down. It would be great to have more spaces where teenagers can spend time with friends in a safe and welcoming environment. Good sports and recreational facilities are also really important, because a lot of young people here are very active. And living in such a beautiful area, it's also important to make sure our beaches and natural environment are protected for the future.

A young voice for Bangalow

Sometimes you meet young people who inspire hope that the world may land in safe hands after all. At just 14, **Charlotte Burns** already has a strongly developed sense of community, volunteering and leadership. She is one of 15 young people chosen from across Byron Shire to be part of a brand-new Byron Youth Council that will meet throughout 2026.

Jenny Bird finds out more.

Being part of the Youth Council is a chance for us to actually have a say about things that affect teenagers in our area. I also love volunteering, and I think the Youth Council could be a great way to help more young people get involved in the community and feel like they're part of making a difference.

How will you connect to, and consult with, young people in order to stay in touch with issues?

I think it's really important to listen to lots of different young people. Given the restrictions around social media, in-person discussions will be the way to go. I'm lucky to have a younger brother at Bangalow Public School, and we have quite a few community events, e.g. the Billy Cart Derby and the Bangalow Show, that could provide opportunities to speak with local teens. I love chatting with my teammates through netball and many different sports about their concerns, and I connect with kids involved in community groups like Surf Life Saving. The local media could also help us achieve our goals. I want to make sure I'm listening to different perspectives so I can represent as many young people as possible.

What skills are you hoping to build on or develop during the 12 months you will be on the Youth Council?

It's a great chance to develop leadership skills and learn more about how local government works. However, for me, it's about building confidence in speaking up on issues I believe in. I'd also like to work on projects that can make a real difference to my friends and community.

Being part of the Youth Council will be a great opportunity to learn how to represent people and make a difference in the community.

Are you interested in a career in politics?

I am not totally sure about what I want to do when I grow up, but I am certain that the skills I learn throughout these 12 months will help me with whatever I choose to do.

What was the first Byron Youth Council meeting like?

The first meeting was a chance to meet everyone in the Council and the councillors. We got a chance to look over the opportunities that we will have over the 12 months. There is a wide age range and teens from all parts of Byron Shire. What I discovered was that we are there for the same reason, but all bring a variety of different perspectives and skills. Everyone was so welcoming and excited to kick off the next 12 months of action!

Keep your eye out for Charlotte in *The Bangalow Herald* over the next 12 months. She will be reporting in on the Byron Youth Council, and *The Herald* will support Charlotte in her efforts to connect to young people in the 2479 postcode.

The Youth Council is a really good opportunity for people my age to share ideas and help make positive changes in our community.



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Flash floods hit town

Bangalow flash flooding in Raftons Road Photo Claire McLisky

Flash flooding in the middle of March took the Bangalow community by surprise; while the forecast had been for minimal rain, over 115mm of rain fell between 9am and 1pm and water levels rose quickly. (Because the Bureau of Meteorology has no collection station in Bangalow, we don't have an official measurement, but I have reliable reports of local rain gauges collecting 229mm on Friday and 250mm from Thursday night to Friday night.) Houses and cars were inundated, roads cut off and the Bangalow Public School prepared for evacuation after the SES judged its grounds to be at risk of flooding.

If the floods shocked the community at large, they were devastating for those whose property was destroyed or damaged. Some Bangalow residents had more than 30cm of water come through their houses, damaging flooring, appliances and possessions, while others experienced flooding in under-house storage rooms and workshops, with thousands of dollars' worth of damage to tools and equipment.

As always, 2479 residents stepped up to help in the aftermath, putting in hours of work to clean, dry and help dispose of damaged goods. Friends, family and community members turned up with gloves, squeegees, fans and dehumidifiers, gurneys and wet/

dry vacuum cleaners, along with much-needed sustenance in the form of tea, coffee, biscuits, brownies, sandwiches and pizza to fuel the workers.

The role of the Bangalow Resilience Network

During the Friday 13th flash flooding the Bangalow Resilience Network (BRN) worked alongside the community, using our training and equipment to help clean-up efforts on the ground and calling in support via social media, in particular the Bangalow Community and Beyond Facebook page.

With many of our members trained as Community Carers and Responders (CCRs), we were able to put our skills in emergency communications, first aid, psychological first aid and disaster resilience planning to use as we supported the emergency response. We were also able to draw on the wider regional network of trained CCRs through Plan C's CCR WhatsApp group and Facebook page. Requests to this network were answered quickly and helped support the clean-up efforts with both hands-on and remote contributions.

"A dramatic and fast-moving weather event like this," says the BRN's Vice-President Jo Palser, "may not need a physical hub to facilitate coordination of helpers, like we

had in 2022, but what we can do is to get the word out so that people affected by the disaster get the help they need as soon as possible." The advantage of this approach is that it helps link up affected families with the exact equipment, or helpers with particular skills, that they need. Because every disaster is different, and people will quite often be affected in different ways in the same disaster, it can be really helpful to have a trusted source to spread the word.

"The BRN is connected to Council's recovery team and the shire-wide network of resilience volunteers. This team activates in declared natural emergencies and other widespread severe events. The system relies on having local volunteers who are on the ground to gather information and others with mobile or internet connectivity to enable them to publish updates on Facebook where possible."

The BRN wants to extend our network of volunteers to build up strong local communications across 2479 neighbourhoods, so we are well placed for any new events.

One silver lining of the event is increased community awareness about the risks of flooding in Bangalow, which many new

arrivals have understandably assumed to be less at risk than other towns in the region. But as long-time locals know, parts of Bangalow such as Deacon St and the sports fields have always flooded. With climate change making rainfall events more intense and less predictable, it is likely that going forward we will experience flooding in places that have not flooded before. Indeed, the Friday 13th flooding took place just a week after the Byron Shire Council released a flood study on the town that warned of the risks to the town of both riverine and overland flooding. The fact that floodwaters could rise as quickly as they did after only several hours of intense rain, and in a much less dramatic 'wet season' than we've had in previous years, points to the unpredictability of the situation we are now facing.

We at the BRN extend our sympathy and best wishes to all those affected by the flooding, and our gratitude to those who took part in the community response. We hope that more community members will come and join us before the next disaster, or even make contact by sending us an email or following our Facebook page.

Who are the Bangalow Resilience Network?

We are a group of 11 financial members who live in the 2479 postcode, with a wider network of around 30 people on our mailing list.

Our goal is to empower Bangalow's response to natural emergencies by being organised, sharing knowledge, creating strong connections and taking collaborative action.

In disasters, we aim to connect with people on the ground and keep the wider community informed through our Facebook page, reaching out to our wider networks (like the CCR network, the Byron Shire Community Hubs network and the Byron Shire Community Resilience Network) and our contacts at combat agencies such as



Some of the team at the Bangalow Resilience Network. Photo Claire McLisky

the SES, RFS, Fire and Rescue NSW and the Byron Shire Council.

We draw on our relationships with local groups such as the CWA, Men's Shed, Showground Committee, the Opp Shop and the Lions Club to help organise the volunteer disaster response and recovery, and have, over the past two and a half years, been slowly building an inventory of equipment including a generator, a Starlink unit with battery charger, plus 30 CB radios and three base stations.

However, our capacity to show up, gather information and communicate, and to liaise with our contacts is limited by our numbers,

so please consider joining!

If you would like to come along to a meeting and get involved, we meet quarterly at the Bangalow Heritage House; our next meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday 2 June, 5.30-6.30pm**.

Or if you simply want more information or to be added to our emergency WhatsApp group (activated only in times of disaster), please send us an email at bangalowresiliencenetwork@gmail.com

Claire McLisky
Bangalow Resilience Network



Contact Anna at
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MEDITATION IN BANGALOW

Interested in learning to meditate? Or if you are an experienced meditator looking for a sitting group, join us on Thursday evenings at the Men's Shed. Groups run for 6 or 8 weeks. The evening includes:

- Guided meditation practice
- Teachings drawn from the early Buddhist texts
- Group discussion & reflection
- Support for bringing mindfulness into daily life

Local news

Fuel for thought

Anthony MacDonald of Bangalow General Store and Petrol Station has taken to social media to respond to comments of 'price gouging' over increasing fuel prices.

Anthony revealed just how expensive it was for him to purchase fuel wholesale, and detailed the margin the business makes on selling diesel after factoring in the transaction fee – they are left with a measly 6%. Small servos, like the two that service Bangalow, rely on customers coming in and buying drinks, snacks and other goods, even more so now that the price of fuel has skyrocketed internationally. Anthony says they make more money from selling a can of Coke than they do from petrol sales at the moment.

Yes, the price increase is a blow for all drivers, and yes it's making fuel unaffordable for some. But accusations against a local small business operated by a family who is heavily involved in the supporting the community are misplaced and unhelpful. Shop local, and consider the false economy of driving out of town for a cheaper tank of fuel.



Fade to grey gracefully Photo supplied

Hurray for grey

There's a bit of shift happening across 2479, with more and more women choosing to embrace their natural silvering locks and letting go of the pressure to cover them.

What was once seen as something to hide is now worn with confidence - a reflection of personal style and changing ideals of beauty.

Leading the charge locally is Georgia at Hair by GG, now celebrating its first birthday at its 43 Byron Street, Bangalow location.

Known as a bit of a grey hair whisperer, GG has built a loyal following by helping women transition to grey gracefully, from salt and pepper to platinum, with care, skill and honesty.

"Grey hair doesn't have to be boring," she says. "It's not just about colour, it's about tone and finding a look that feels right."

Call 0431 674 011 to chat about your hair goals.



Bangalow Market,
simply stunning



Bangalow Showgrounds
4th Sunday of each month
8am ~ 2.30pm

Parking is available for \$2 in the
Showgrounds at the Market.



Let's have a look in ear Photo supplied

What's new at Bangalow Medical Centre

Flu vaccines are now in stock for all ages, including a new option for children aged six months to five years. For younger patients, the Centre is offering a gentle nasal mist vaccine, providing a needle-free alternative that is quick, effective and designed to make the experience easier for both children and parents.

The Centre has also expanded its ear care services, with Dr Caitlin Downes now joining Dr Pat Ivits in providing ear microsuction procedures. While relatively new to the practice, this is already a highly sought-after service across the Northern Rivers.

All patients can now access telehealth appointments, which can be conveniently booked online via HotDoc or by calling the practice. Appointments are now available from 7.45am, offering greater flexibility for those needing to attend before work or school.

To book an appointment or find out more, contact Bangalow Medical Centre on 6687 1079.

Sharon Rudgeley
Practice Manager



Rhoda Roberts Photo Daniel Boud

Vale Rhoda Roberts (1963–2026)

The Northern Rivers has lost one of its most powerful and generous cultural voices with the passing of Rhoda Roberts.

A Bundjalung woman of Widjabul Wia-bal Country, Rhoda's influence reached far beyond the region – the Dreaming Festival, the Garma Festival, the Boomerang Festival and so much more. Locally, through her work with NORPA, she helped shape a bold, inclusive vision for storytelling in the Northern Rivers, ensuring First Nations voices were not only present but leading.

In recent years, she spoke openly and from the heart – including an interview with *The Bangalow Herald* – about the Voice to Parliament, encouraging respectful conversation and deeper understanding. Her approach was never about division, but about listening, learning and walking forward together.

Rhoda Roberts leaves an immense legacy of courage, creativity and cultural leadership. She credits herself – 'modestly yet proudly' for having conceptualised the term 'Welcome to Country' and its place in public events and ceremonies.

Her voice will be deeply missed – but its impact will continue to resonate across this region she called home.

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Arts and about



Bleeding Hearts and Morning Glory by Guy Fredericks Photo Studio A

Art show fundraiser for Eureka Hall

Local artists are invited to be part of *Eureka: Where We Gather*, an inaugural exhibition celebrating 120 years of community life at Eureka Hall. The exhibition aims to become a much-loved annual event for the region, bringing together artists across all mediums to showcase original works in a shared community setting.

Local artists will be prioritised, and all submitted works must be original and available for sale.

The exhibition will open with a ticketed event, followed by weekend entry by donation, with proceeds supporting the ongoing care and preservation of Eureka Hall.

Artists are asked to submit an expression of interest including a short artist statement and up to three images of proposed works, along with a \$20 entry fee.

Artists will manage their own sales, with 10% of each sale contributing to the Eureka Hall fundraiser. Expressions of interest close Friday 10 April.

Email eurekahallartexhibition@gmail.com, or call Susan 0411 336 588 or Michelle 0435 773 033 for more details.

Diverse responses to climate change through art

Bleeding Hearts and Morning Glory is a socially engaged exhibition that places the voices of people with intellectual disability at the centre of conversations about climate change. Originally created by Studio A artist and environmentalist Guy Fredericks, alongside advocate Dr Chloe Watfern, the exhibition draws inspiration from the eco-warriors of Bushlink, a group of neurodivergent bush regenerators caring for coastal dunes and nature corridors in Northern Sydney.

Central to the exhibition is the image of a Morning Glory lasso, delicately rendered in glass, paying homage to the quiet, ongoing work of Bushlink's volunteers. Guy, who works with Studio A, a leading Sydney-based supported studio for artists with intellectual disability, brings a thoughtful and personal perspective to environmental advocacy.

Until 7 June
Wednesday to Sunday 10am - 4pm, Thursdays until 6pm
11 Rural Street, Lismore
lismoregallery.org



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caption



Students collaborate with artist Amanda Bromfield Photo supplied

Koalas at Lone Goat

A Forest of Koalas transforms the Lone Goat Gallery into a striking, immersive installation that speaks to both creativity and care for the natural world. Featuring more than 500 handmade ceramic koalas, the exhibition is the result of a year-long collaboration between Byron Bay Public School students, local artist Amanda Bromfield and teacher Nicky Greenlaw.

Students from Kindergarten to Year 6 worked alongside Amanda to create the individual pieces, learning about koala conservation, habitat loss and climate change in the process. Together, their works form a symbolic forest, inviting visitors to reflect on the fragility of Australia's koala populations and the collective responsibility to protect them.

For many children, this is their first experience working with clay – a tactile, expressive, and therapeutic medium that encourages curiosity, experimentation, and confidence. Together, their hundreds of small sculptures form a collective voice, reminding us that every action – no matter how small – can help protect the natural world.

Until 2 May
Wednesday – Saturday, 10am-4pm
Lone Goat Gallery
28 Lawson St, Byron Bay



Rhydian Lewis, our local king of the crooners Photo Richard Windeyer

Timeless tunes at Bubl  tribute

The music of Michael Bubl  comes to life this month in this tribute performance starring Coorabell's Rhydian Lewis, backed by nine-piece live band The Residuals. Celebrating the smooth vocals and timeless appeal of Bubl 's blend of jazz, swing and contemporary pop, the show features a selection of well-known favourites, from romantic ballads to upbeat big band classics, delivered with style and stage presence.

Presented in a relaxed club setting, the performance captures the energy of a full band while staying true to the charm and intimacy of the original songs. Rhydian's vocal delivery is impressive, and his band are all top-shelf players bringing a polished and engaging interpretation of Bubl 's catalogue including *Mack the Knife*, *Crazy Little Thing Called Love*, and *Theme from New York, New York*, appealing to both long-time fans and new audiences.



There are a range of ticket options available via the Ballina RSL website and bookings recommended for what promises to be a popular afternoon of crooner classics.

Sunday 19 April, doors 1pm
Ballina RSL Auditorium
ballinarsl.com.au



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Sport



Blocka and Shane sharing the glory Photo Carolyn Adams

Bangalow Bowling Club update

Despite the absence of a clubhouse, the annual presentation of the Bangalow Bowling Club awards proceeded on Saturday 21 February at the Bangalow RSL Hall. The event was extremely well attended by members and families, demonstrating the continuing commitment of members to their beloved club and fellowship with fellow bowlers.

This year's presentation saw the distribution of both 2025 and 2026 club championship prizes, as unforeseen circumstances (namely weather and other follies) resulted in delayed results of the 2025 club championship games.

The 2025 singles club champion, Shane Dettman, was in the unfortunate position of only being able to hold on to his trophy for a mere ten minutes before having it appropriated by the 2026 club champion, Jeff Nolan (Blocka). These two fellows have been playing tag with this trophy for the past four years. Blocka took a good swipe at the younger members, suggesting that they were a pretty useless bunch if they keep losing to an old fella in his 80s.

These guys and gals would dearly love to see their club resurrected, and let's hope, with continued community support for a solution, that this can be achieved.

Carolyn Adams



Courting success Photos supplied



Big wins for Bangalow Tennis

The Bangalow Tennis Club has plenty to celebrate after a fantastic 2025 season in the new regional NET League Tennis Competition. This newly formed graded Saturday team competition has quickly become a favourite among players from Byron to Pottsville and created a fun and social way to compete whilst strengthening connections across the regional tennis community.

In a remarkable result, Bangalow A, B and C grade teams all qualified for the finals in Mullumbimby, with all three teams winning their respective divisions. Huge congratulations to these teams, and the club committee is thrilled with the support and enthusiasm from everyone involved in this comp. A special shout out goes to Bangalow's head coach, Jack Cox, who led the A team to victory in an incredible doubles match, and was awarded the competition's Most Valuable Player.

Back home, the Bangalow Tennis Club is thriving, with locals young and not so young getting involved with friendly hits, social groups and excellent coaching through Jack and his brilliant team. Whilst the popularity of tennis means booking our refurbished courts is becoming a commodity, the Byron Shire Council master plan for the Bangalow Oval has identified the need to build additional tennis courts to be shared with the Bangalow Netball Club, something that would greatly support the growing demand for sport in Bangalow.

It's an exciting time for your local tennis club and our community. Good luck to all the players competing in the 2026 NET League Competition, and for anyone keen to be involved, head to bangalowtennisclub.com.au

Simon Field
Bangalow Tennis



The Billy Cart Derby is fun for the whole family Photos Maralyn Hanigan



The community of Bangalow comes alive on Billy Cart Derby Day. Its history begins with the town's main road bypass around 1995. The Chamber of Commerce (now taken on through Lions Club) established one of the biggest calendar events of the year for this town, largely to keep the town on the map.

And what an attraction it has become! The main drag used to be Pacific Highway One back in the day. That's right, all the way up to the mid-1990s, cars and trucks used to rumble through the village, northbound and southbound, one after the other. Standing in the public bar at the Bangalow Hotel, the B-doubles thundering past would knock the frothy head off your schooner of beer! Ahhh, those were the days. Or so I've heard.

Around 30 years on, as people more and more retreat into their online world, this event seeks to draw upon human connection, good old-fashioned fun and a strong dose of healthy competition. It brings together a special sense of community, something that our forebearers would be proud of. Bangalow attracts people from far and wide for this prestigious event, as well as lots of returning racegoers. This year, it takes place on Sunday

17 May 2026. The Bangalow main street, spectacularly lined with hay bales and closed off to vehicular traffic, gives entrants the opportunity to proudly strut their homemade and professionally-built billy carts down the centre of the street, with heats starting from 9am. Scrutineering of the carts starts from 7am, and competitors can have a few practice runs before all the fun officially kicks off.

Each race begins, nostalgically, outside the Bangalow Hotel, with the finish line adjacent to Abracadabra. Crowds and cheer squads line the streets, and a lucky few gather on shopfront balconies for the best vantage points of the day. There might also be an opportunity for some celebrity interactions.

Some stores remain open, others choose to close and enjoy the festivities. Many create pop-up stalls with lots of fun activities for the rest of the family, and the lovely P&C run a fundraiser for the local primary school. This is mainly down the other end of the street in the primary school playground.

Look out for the Billy Cart Derby Grand Parade, which starts at 12.30pm. Channel 9's Big Dog is attending, so the kids will love his

big smile and wave. Lots of street performers and local organisations will be marching as well.

If you're participating in the billy cart races, check out the program schedule, race categories, rules and regulations, and billy cart specifications. Download and print the registration and entry forms (complete and pay online, but you must bring the form and payment receipt with you on race day for billy cart scrutineering outside of Foodworks, registration confirmation at the Bangalow Hotel and final sign-off). Follow the detailed instructions and you'll be just fine.

To help support or volunteer for our local Lions, contact Bangalow Lions Club President Johnny Singh on 0418 662 781 or speak to anyone at the club. They are also taking donations through Billy Cart Derby merchandise sold prior to and on the day. The local school can be supported through sales at the fete in the schoolyard. Or they'd love to have you help out on the day setting up the hay bales, safety fencing and more.

bangalowbillycart.com.au

Danielle Mathie

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BANGALOW
Saturdays 7-11am
Piccabeen Park



New Zealand's Mi-Sex rocked the stage at the Summer Madness Festival in Fowlers Lane. Photo supplied

When the music came to the Bay

Tricia Shantz has followed the success of her first book, *Neverland* – a social history tracing the arrival and cultural impact on Byron Bay of American and Australian surfers in the 1960s – with *Musicland: When the music came to Byron 1974 to 1995*. Here, she speaks with **Christobel Munson** about what she discovered from her fascinating interviews, primarily with musicians and promoters, to write her new book tracing the early explosion of music in the hills around the shire. Included here are some juicy quotes from the book.

“We all know the stories of the cedar cutters in our shire, the dairy farms, the meatworks in Byron Bay, and the mining of the beaches. I wanted to tell the story of what happened after these industries finished, and what took their place,” says Tricia.

“In the mid to late ‘70s the music scene in Australia exploded,” she writes. “The stultifying conservative 1950s gave way to the swinging sixties and opened the door for Australian music in the 1970s and ‘80s. It was the most influential time in Australian music. A wave of bands formed, touring by road the east coast of Australia from Melbourne to Sydney to Brisbane. Many of them stopped in at Byron Bay, Bangalow and Lismore, including the most notable Australian bands of that era.”

Music had been happening for decades before the first annual Byron Bay Bluesfest in 1990. It erupted as outdoor music festivals on various rundown dairy farms like Fowlers Lane, in the Norco Piggery (recycled as the Arts Factory), at Music Farm Studio, and at other key venues like the Bangalow Bowlo.

“*Musicland* is the follow-on to *Neverland*,” Tricia explains. “*Neverland* finished with the story of American surfer-musician, Dan Doeppel, who came to Australia in 1967 in a band called The Nutwood Rug. Dan came to Byron Bay and bought the old Norco Piggery in 1974, with the dream to turn it into the Arts Factory.”

In 1976, Melbourne musician Garry Deutscher

created Music Farm Studio on an old dairy farm in Coorabell. Tricia and her partner, surfing legend Rusty Miller, lived next door to the studio for 33 years. “All the big names came here to Byron in the 1970s and 1980s: Midnight Oil, Cold Chisel, The Angels, Australian Crawl, Mental as Anything, Redgum, Goanna, Richard Clapton, Mondo Rock, Divinyls, Split Enz, Rose Tattoo, Kevin Borich, Eurogliders – and so many more.” These bands either recorded at the Music Farm and/or played at the Arts Factory.

From the 1980s, many other musicians also recorded at Music Farm, including Olivia Newton-John, Yothu Yindi, Mental as Anything and Jimmy Barnes (in Cold Chisel). Next month, Music Farm will have been operating as a working music studio for 50 years. “This is an amazing testament to all the people who were involved in building the studio, and the musicians who have recorded there. I wanted to acknowledge this, and pay homage to it,” says Tricia.

“Because I know many of the people involved in the making of the Arts Factory and Music Farm, I had access to their stories. However,



Splendid in the grass of Fowlers Lane Photo supplied



Tricia Shantz photo supplied



The makeshift set up added to the grassroots vibe of the events Photo supplied

for big, known bands that recorded at Music Farm, I relied on many musicians to share other musicians' contacts. Rob Hirst, from Midnight Oil, was the first of 80 interviews for this book. Rob, who very sadly died recently, was most generous in assisting me with the phone numbers or emails of his musician friends. This opened doors for me. I am so appreciative of his generosity of spirit towards my book."

Venues could be "make do". Between 1976 and 1982, concerts were held on the 113-acre Fowlers Lane former dairy property of Harry Fowler. Many were organised by music promoter Roger Danne, sometimes with his business partner Denni Scott. Well-known Australian music promoter Michael Chugg, who knew Roger Danne in Sydney, was also involved.

In her book, Tricia quotes Roger Danne: "I was living at Music Farm Studios, and Chugg was the promoter from Sydney who would bring the bands. I did Fowlers Lane with him for two years. Split Enz played at Fowlers Lane. They were fantastic. They played on the back of a semi-trailer with no roof. It was a full moon, and when Tim Finn sang: 'I hope I never, I hope I never have to cry again', it was unbelievable. It was one of those moments – one of the best, ever." This month Split Enz was due to perform at the now cancelled Bluesfest.

"There are glimmers that I remember about the Split Enz concert at Music Farm in 1979," recalls Mark Pope, who promoted that

event. "There are two things I remember about the concert. I remember speaking to Garry Deutscher about it and the table-top semi-trailer that was the stage that they played on. I don't know how we rigged the lights because there was no stage or roof. I think we might have had close to 1500 or 2000 people. Tickets were around \$5 a head. There was no security. We made it up as we went along. I was staying in a caravan near where the stage was set up. I woke up the next morning after the concert. I had my thongs on, stepped out of the caravan, took two steps, and literally between my toes was a freshly made cow turd. I still remember to this day, this warm shit coming up between my toes." Later, Mark Pope promoted INXS and Cold Chisel.

Roger Danne recalled a night when Cold Chisel played at the Bangalow Bowlo, which holds around 300 people. "The night Cold Chisel played there were 500 people. The place was packed; people were outside who couldn't get in. Someone picked up a chair and smashed the glass window in the foyer. We had to stop the show. Jimmy Barnes came down and said, 'Wake up to yourself!' He sang acapella through the broken window for the people who couldn't get in to see the show."

Tricia also quotes INXS guitarist Tim Farriss, who recalls playing at the Bowlo in September 1980. "That would have been when we first became INXS, having only just changed our name from the Farriss Brothers. It would have been the first time we played the North Coast. It was a really great crowd and audience."

Musician Barry Ferrier continues the recollections. "Innerspring was a five-piece band with two road crews when it included Michael Barnes. We were working solidly five nights a week. We supported Cold Chisel, who were the last gig at the Bowlo. Jimmy went out on the green and the girls followed him. It wasn't just the greens, it was the door also. People were having sex under the pool table. It was a wild gig. It was packed."

Tricia moved to the area in the early 1980s. Among her many other endeavours – ranging from social planning work, researching for a town planning company, 15 years in local government and 21 years teaching social science at Southern Cross University – she worked for a year researching and interviewing people on the history, development and activism on the Byron Shire coastline. "Again, it's documenting the history of our place, and the people who have been cultural shapeshifters. We live in an area with such rich contemporary history that is not really documented. I feel compelled to explain how and why Byron Shire is what it is today: what, and who made it this way."

Musicland: When the Music Came to Byron 1974 to 1995 will be launched in Byron Bay in August.

Email
triciashantz11@gmail.com
to pre-order.



Closed until further notice. Photo Andrew Winkler

Out of tune

The sudden cancellation of Bluesfest this year has landed heavily across the Northern Rivers and further afield. Ticket holders have been denied refunds promoting calls for class action. Hospitality and accommodation businesses including on-site festival stall holders and food trucks have been left in the lurch, costing some of these small operators \$1000s of dollars.

For decades, Bluesfest has brought thousands of people to the Byron Shire. It was a gathering place and a shared experience that many plan their year around. It has hosted global artists, supported local musicians and created an economic ripple across accommodation, hospitality and small businesses. And it's been incredibly lucrative for its operator.

So when news broke, just weeks before the event, that the festival would not go ahead, the reaction was predictably fierce. Confusion, disappointment and, for some, frustration. Particularly around the lack of clarity in communication and the impact on those who had already committed time, money and energy to attend or operate at this year's event. Begging the questions: at what point did organisers know of the cancellation – and why were they still selling tickets?

While the full details are still unfolding, the situation has prompted broader discussion. What happens when large-scale events or community assets are managed primarily through a commercial lens, and decisions are made quickly, with limited consultation?

It is a question that feels uncomfortably familiar in Bangalow.

The abrupt closure of the Bangalow Bowling Club last October came with its own shock and fallout.

One day it was open, the next it was not. The

speed of the closure and lack of warning raises similar questions: at what point did the operators realise the business was not viable and/or not compliant? These stated reasons for closing the club surely did not occur overnight.

The Bowlo was not just a venue. It was a third place. Somewhere between home and work where people gathered informally, where local sport, music, fundraising and social connection all intersected. Its value could not be measured purely in financial terms.

And yet, like Bluesfest, it sits within a broader structure where commercial realities inevitably play a role.

This is not to suggest that profit has no place. Festivals cost millions to run. Venues require maintenance, compliance and ongoing investment. Operators carry risk. These are real and often complex pressures.

But what both situations highlight is the tension between commercial decision-making and community expectations about transparency, ethical actions, and respect for the stakeholders who built the businesses in the first place.

In the case of Bluesfest, rising costs, insurance pressures, changing audience behaviour and post-COVID uncertainty have all been widely discussed as challenges facing the festival sector. Across Australia, we have seen events scale back, pause or disappear entirely. The economics are increasingly difficult.

The Bowlo sits at a different scale but evokes a similar response. It may not host international acts (though it once did, and may once again), but its role in daily community life is arguably more immediate. The expectation is not just that it operates,

but that it does so in a way that reflects local needs and values.

What links the two is not simply closure, but how closure is experienced.

When decisions appear abrupt, when communication is limited, and when community voices feel absent from the process, trust is eroded. Even if the underlying reasons are valid, the perception becomes one of distance. Of decisions made elsewhere, by others.

This is where the idea of 'profit over community' begins to take hold. Not always because it is strictly true, but because the process lacks visibility and shared ownership.

People are not just customers. They are stakeholders. An audience is not simply a market. It is a community that has grown over decades. Members are crucial part of the club ecosystem – without them, there is no club. There is a sense of ownership.

If there is a lesson in both Bluesfest and the Bowlo, it may be this. That community value cannot be treated as a secondary consideration. It needs to be part of the decision-making framework from the beginning.

Because when the music stops, or the doors close, what people remember is not just the outcome. They remember how it happened. And how they were treated.

Sally Schofield

Carole Gamble profiles Blueberry Ash, a beautiful and adaptable native combining soft seasonal colour with easy care, ideal for local gardens and coastal conditions.

This small rainforest cultivar is part of the large genus *Eleocarpus* that occurs in many parts of South-East Asia, as well as the Northern Territory and down most of the east coast of Australia.

There have been 30 species identified in Australia, including nine found in NSW, including *Eleocarpus grandis*, the enormous tree sometimes known as the Blue Quandong that is still to be found in our northern NSW rainforests.

Blueberry Ash will grow to approximately four metres high and two metres wide in cultivation. They are suited to hedging and light pruning, or left to attain their lovely natural open, bushy shape. In some regions they are used as street trees, where their pinky/bronze new growth and delicate, fringed, bell-shaped flowers make them an ideal choice. When in flower, the small flowers are closely clustered along all branches, which is a typical feature of *Eleocarpus*.

They are pest and disease resistant, tolerating most sunny locations and good drainage. They are also suitable for coastal plantings.

The lovely, scented flowers resemble ballet tutus and are prolific between spring and late summer, followed by blue berries (not edible), providing food for bees, butterflies and seed-eating birds.

The name is from the Greek: *Elaiο* - as they were thought to resemble olive trees, and *Carpus*, meaning fruit. *Reticulatus* describes the complex and obvious net-like veins in the glossy leaves.



Tu-tu pretty

The Blueberry Ash with its distinctive bell-shaped blooms Photo Carole Gamble

Seed propagation is complicated and this method is rarely used. Instead, cuttings taken in late summer from hardwood cuttings are easy and, of course, result in exactly the same plant as the parent, without the fertilisation variant that can occur when seeds are used. Like a lot of native rainforest species, it can take a relatively long time for growth to be noted because, firstly, the

root system must be established, which is a rainforest adaptation where low light conditions and competition demand good foundation growth.

Blueberry Ash can be grown in large containers for several years and benefits from regular applications of native plant food and, of course, mulching.



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Mary's Last Dance

by Mary Li

Here is a review of a book that I have had on my shelf for an age. You may recall *Mao's Last Dancer* because you read the book or because you saw the fabulous film adaptation. *Mary's Last Dance* reads as a companion and sequel to that book.

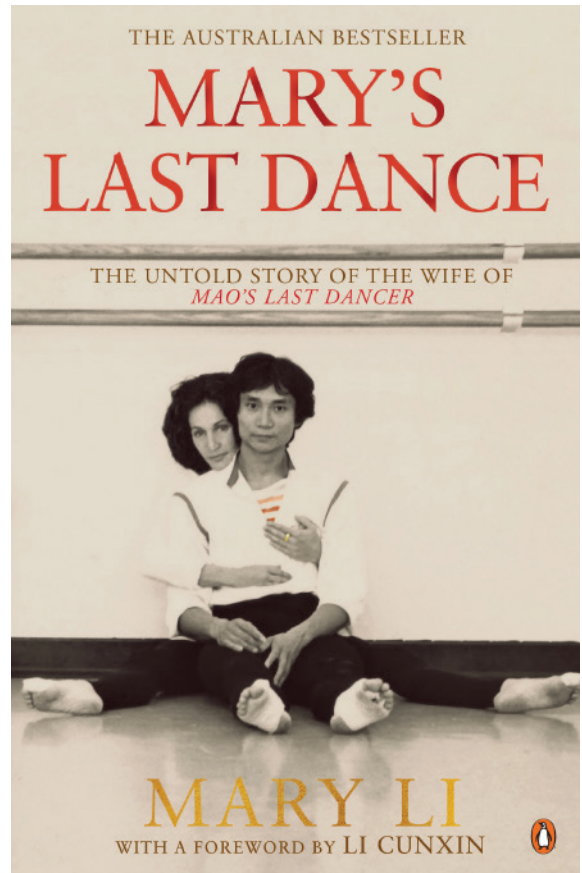
Mary McKendry's upbringing in Rockhampton, Queensland, was vastly different to that of her husband, Li Cunxin, who grew up in abject poverty in Mao's communist China. There were, however, important similarities. They both came from large families – Mary was one of eight and Li Cunxin had six brothers – and they both had very loving and devoted parents.

Growing up in a large and chaotic household, Mary's childhood was a happy time, and she recalls it in this memoir with fondness and humour. Being the first daughter, and with older brothers who were happy to include her in their shenanigans, she learnt to play rough and not to cry when she was hurt. Good training, it would seem, for the physical pain that all ballet dancers must endure. She was invited to join her friend's ballet class and went along to her first lesson at eight years of age, dressed quite inappropriately – but, from that very first day, she fell in love with ballet.

At 16, she was accepted into the Royal Ballet School in London and eventually became the principal dancer for English National Ballet. In 1985 she met Li Cunxin when she joined Houston Ballet and, in his words, "the chemistry and magic that ignited between us was immediate, and we became favourite partners on stage and fell in love away from the spotlight."

This book is full of magical moments of raw emotion, most significantly because the background to their married life is Li Cunxin's impoverished family in China and, for many years, his inability to return to China because of his defection.

In 1989 they had a daughter, Sophie Li, and when she was 18 months old, they discovered that she was profoundly deaf. Coming to terms with this diagnosis was extremely difficult for the family and took many challenging years to process.



Mary made the decision to abandon her dancing career and focus on Sophie so that she could live a good life in the hearing world. The challenges are not minimised, nor is the angst between mother and daughter as Sophie moves into adulthood. But it is Sophie herself who encourages her mother to tell her story, and this book is the rewarding result and a most enjoyable read.

4.1 stars from Goodreads readers

Carolyn Adams

TAMARA SMITH MP
MEMBER FOR BALLINA

THE GREENS

TAKING ACTION FOR OUR COMMUNITY
Sign my petition to restore the Richmond River

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



INGREDIENTS

- 300 g plain flour
- 135 g desiccated coconut
- 200 g rolled oats
- 80 g sesame seeds
- 2 tbsp ground ginger
- 95 g soft brown sugar
- 95 g dark muscovado sugar
- 250 g salted butter, chopped
- 2 tbsp date syrup
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 80 ml boiling water

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 150°C fan-forced or 170°C conventional. Line a baking tray with baking paper.

Place the flour, coconut, oats, sesame seeds, ginger and sugars in a large bowl and mix to combine.

Add the baking soda to a small bowl, pour in the boiling water and mix well. Melt the butter in the microwave or in a small pan, add the soda mixture, then pour over the dry ingredients. Stir well.

Roll the mixture into egg-sized balls. Place on the tray and use your palm to flatten them.

Bake for 15–20 minutes, or until golden. Allow to cool on the tray for about 5 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack.

If you prefer a chewier biscuit, don't flatten as much and cook for 12–15 minutes.

Recipe and illustration Lyn Hand

ANZAC Biscuits

I'm sure that lots of us have made the classic ANZAC biscuit recipe for ANZAC Day. This version doesn't have golden syrup, but includes other tasty additions such as date syrup and ginger. It can be chewy or crunchy, depending on your preference. In the words of the recipe's creator, Guy Mirabella, whose recipe I've adapted, "I don't want to disrespect the ANZAC biscuit, but take it somewhere else for a bit."

The traditional ANZAC biscuits we enjoy today are cousins of the biscuits baked for the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) soldiers during World War I, particularly those serving in the Gallipoli campaign. While the exact origin is debated, the most widely accepted story is that they were made by families and community groups at home and sent to soldiers abroad.

Because of the long sea journey, the biscuits needed to be made from ingredients that wouldn't spoil. Traditional recipes avoided eggs and milk, instead using rolled oats, flour, sugar, butter and golden syrup. This combination created a biscuit that kept well and remained edible after weeks at sea, and also happened to taste delicious.

It's important to note that these biscuits were different from the hard military rations known as 'ANZAC wafers' or 'hardtack' which were routinely issued to soldiers but were far less palatable.

After the war, the recipe was adapted and adopted to become popular in Australian and New Zealand households and was eventually named 'ANZAC biscuits' in honour of the ANZACs.



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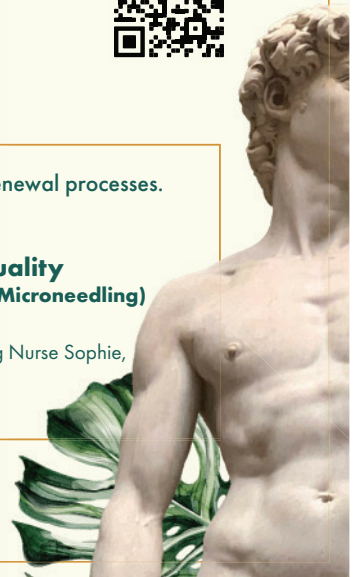
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A portrait of Dr Jean Renouf, a man with dark hair and a beard, wearing a blue button-down shirt, smiling against a background of green foliage.

Under pressure

Jean Renouf Photo supplied

Global conflict, rising costs and ongoing uncertainty can feel far removed from everyday life in Bangaloo. But as flu season, supply pressures and economic shifts continue, leadership advisor **Dr Jean Renouf** explains why global events are already shaping local realities in ways we don't always see.

When conflict erupts in distant parts of the world, it's easy to assume it has little to do with daily life in a place like Bangaloo. But according to Dr Jean Renouf, that sense of distance is increasingly misleading.

"Over the past few years, many of the leaders I work with have asked a similar question. A geopolitical crisis appears in the news, markets react, supply chains shift, and uncertainty increases, yet for organisations operating in relatively stable countries such as Australia it is often unclear how seriously these events should be taken or what they might mean in practice."

It's a question that has resurfaced again with the current conflict involving Iran. While much of the public focus remains on the geopolitical dimensions, Jean says the more important story lies in how these events move through interconnected systems.

"While the immediate focus is understandably on the geopolitical dimension of the war, the situation also

raises a broader question about how global shocks propagate through interconnected systems and eventually affect organisations that initially seem far removed from the crisis itself."

Jean describes these events not as isolated incidents, but as part of a larger pattern.

"A war unfolds in one region, a pandemic spreads across borders, a financial disruption affects markets, or a disaster damages a particular community. Yet recent experience increasingly suggests that many modern disruptions behave less like discrete incidents and more like system shocks."

This idea of 'system shocks' helps explain why events in one part of the world can have unexpected consequences elsewhere.

"Because global systems are tightly interconnected, disturbances rarely remain confined to their point of origin. Instead, they move across energy markets, supply chains, health systems, political relationships, and the everyday functioning of organisations and communities," says Jean.

One of the clearest ways this plays out is through energy markets. When conflict affects major oil and gas regions, the impacts are felt far beyond those borders.

"Tensions affecting major oil and gas producing regions can influence global energy prices, which in turn affect transport costs, food prices, and the broader cost of living. Organisations dependent on logistics, travel, or energy-intensive production already experience these pressures indirectly through higher operating costs and increased economic uncertainty," he says.

In other cases, the connections are less obvious, but no less real.

"One example concerns helium; a critical resource used in MRI machines for medical imaging," says Jean. "Much of the world's helium supply is produced as a by-product of natural gas extraction, including in parts of the Middle East connected to global shipping routes through the Strait of Hormuz. When conflict disrupts energy production or threatens maritime transport through the strait, the export of gas and associated by-products such as helium can be affected. Over time, these disruptions may constrain the availability of MRI capacity in some health systems, potentially delaying

A promotional graphic for BunCoffee Byron Bay celebrating 20 years. It features a background of shelves filled with colorful coffee bags. A white circular overlay contains the text: "BunCoffee Byron Bay Celebrating 20 years. Certified Organic and Fair Trade. Over 60 Single Origin coffees."/>

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Jean in action, leading a workshop. Photo supplied

certain diagnostic screenings and creating downstream implications for public health.”

While these impacts can be measured in costs and supply disruptions, Jean says there is another layer that is often overlooked – how people experience ongoing uncertainty.

“For organisations, the consequences of system shocks extend beyond markets and political developments,” he says. “They also shape the psychological climate in which people work. When crises accumulate over time, whether through pandemics, climate disasters, geopolitical tensions, or economic instability, individuals often experience a growing sense of uncertainty and fatigue. Disinformation and competing narratives can further complicate people’s attempts to interpret events, while the constant flow of global news contributes to what might be described as a form of collective cognitive load.”

That pressure can filter into everyday working life.

“Inside organisations, this cognitive environment can have subtle but real consequences,” says Jean. “Teams may find it harder to maintain focus, attention may become fragmented, and employees may carry a background sense of instability about the wider environment in which they are working. Even when a crisis appears geographically distant, the atmosphere it creates can still influence how people

interpret risk, security, and the future.”

For leaders, the challenge is not simply to react, but to help people make sense of what is happening.

“One of the challenges for leadership in these circumstances is the tendency to treat global disruptions as distant events that do not require organisational attention. In relatively stable societies such as Australia, geopolitical conflicts can sometimes appear remote from everyday operations,” he says. “Yet the interconnected nature of modern systems means that global shocks often reach organisations indirectly through economic pressures, operational disruptions, or changes in the broader environment.”

Jean sees this as a critical leadership function.

“This is where sensemaking becomes an important leadership function. Sensemaking involves helping people interpret complex and uncertain situations. It does not require leaders to predict the future or provide definitive answers. Rather, it involves acknowledging uncertainty, situating events within a broader context, and helping teams understand how external developments may relate to their work and organisational environment.”

Without that shared understanding, uncertainty can deepen.

“In the absence of this shared interpretation, individuals often attempt to make sense

of events on their own through fragmented information sources, which can increase confusion and speculation. Leaders who engage in sensemaking help stabilise their organisations by providing context and clarity, even when the full implications of a situation remain uncertain.”

Looking ahead, he believes organisations need to rethink how they approach resilience.

“Resilience, in this context, is not simply the capacity to recover from disruption, but the ability to operate effectively in environments where disruptions are likely to regularly occur and interact with one another.”

That shift has practical implications for how organisations think and operate.

“First, leaders increasingly need to interpret events systemically rather than in isolation. Understanding how shocks propagate through interconnected systems helps organisations recognise potential ripple effects before they become operational problems.”

“Second, organisations must remain attentive to the human dimension of cascading disruptions. Recognising the cognitive and emotional pressures associated with persistent uncertainty can help leaders support their teams through clear communication and realistic expectations.”

“Third, resilience needs to be embedded in organisational thinking and design. This includes examining supply chain dependencies, operational flexibility, and decision-making processes in environments where stability cannot be assumed anymore.”

For communities like Bangalow, the takeaway is simple but significant. Global events may still begin far away, but their effects are increasingly felt close to home – not always in dramatic ways, but through subtle, cumulative changes.

“The question worth asking is therefore not only what is happening in the world, but where the ripple effects may already be appearing within our own organisations and communities, and where greater awareness, clearer communication, or stronger support might already be needed today.”

For more information, visit jeanrenouf.com

The Bangalow Herald

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2023 Federal Village Masterplan community consultation meeting Photo supplied

When Federal comes together

Federal has a history of community solidarity, writes local architect and Federal enthusiast, **Mercedes Mambort**.

Federal sits quietly in the hills of the Byron Shire, a small cluster of buildings tucked between rainforest ridges and farmland: a park, a cafe, a shop, a hall, a church. To someone passing through, it can appear almost sleepy. But spend a little time here, and a different picture emerges.

Federal has always had a habit of showing up. When something in the village matters, people gather, talk it through, and get to work. Long before masterplans and village place plans became part of local government language, Federal had its own version: roll up your sleeves and shape the place yourself.

The roots of that spirit run deeper than most know. In 1882, John Bate and William Risley ventured from Lismore, carving a path through the bush in search of new land. Ever since, this area has thrived on community solidarity. Early settlers relied on each other

to clear the land. Families like the Bates played key roles in establishing local schools and churches. In time, residents pooled their resources, both funds and labour, to build the Federal School of Arts hall, opened in 1895 and still central to the village. By 1909, the Anglican church stood beside it, a testament to their shared dedication.

The pattern has repeated itself ever since. When something matters, locals step forward, often working alongside council or other institutions, and push ideas into being.

It's a spirit grounded in participation, care and collective effort.

It resurfaced in the late 1970s when the old Federal Public School was moved to Eureka. Rather than see the schoolmaster's house disappear, local parents pushed to retain it as a preschool and did the hard yards to bring the building up to the standard required for childcare. That preschool became more than a preschool. It seeded a wider culture of community development that later fed into the formation of the Federal Community Centre.

It surfaced again in the story of Federal Park. After years of patient lobbying, the Federal Community Centre persuaded Byron Shire Council to buy the land in 1995. Planning followed through a community mapping process, and planting began in 1999. Once the land was secured, the community turned up with gloves, shovels and seedlings. Twenty-four families each took responsibility for a small plot, planting, weeding and tending the young trees until they were established.

The circle of mature trees that now frames the lawn, where picnics, park parties and the 7pm kelpie club unfold, grew from that long volunteer effort.

The park matters because it is not just an ornament. It is daily village life: where people pause, talk, watch their kids, throw balls for dogs, and bump into each other in the most ordinary and essential way.

Another lesser-known example comes from 1987. As part of the United Nations International Year of Shelter for the Homeless, community members designed and built a tiny prototype house exploring ideas around low-cost living. The structure initially sat on Crown land near the preschool, quietly testing possibilities decades before "tiny homes" entered the mainstream conversation. It was later relocated to private land, where it still stands.

But if there is one story that captures Federal's collective determination particularly well, it is the moment the village decided to buy its own church.

By 2012, the Anglican church had not been used regularly for services for some time. Yet it remained an important part of the village's physical and social fabric. When word spread that the building was to be sold, the news landed heavily.

The concern was not simply about losing the building. The church sits directly beside the hall, and together the two form what locals now call Jasper Corner. The key issue was the lot boundary: the church block ran right up to, and potentially under, part of the hall's access and deck area. If it passed into private hands, it would not just be a symbolic loss. It could compromise how the hall itself functioned.

There was also, for some, a deeper



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2012, the Anglican church and the cashometer indicating community fundraising progress. Photo supplied



A tiny house prototype designed by members of the Federal Community Centre in 1987. Photo supplied

discomfort. The land had originally been donated to the church by local families generations earlier, which made paying to reclaim it sit uneasily alongside the considerable Archdiocese debt that had triggered the sale. But the practical reality was clear: if the community wanted to keep the building in collective hands, this was the path available.

So conversations began. People gathered on the grass between the hall and the church. Ideas were aired, concerns raised, possibilities debated. At one point the question was put plainly: this was all lovely in theory, but was anyone actually prepared to commit to the work, the donations, the organising and the fundraising needed to make it real? Hands went up across the crowd. Around 60 people were there at that moment. It was not casual support. It was a real show of willingness to do the legwork.

What followed was remarkable. Afternoon teas and book sales. Cocktail parties and art auctions, with local artists donating work. Music nights that filled the hall. A festival weekend stretched across several days, bringing bands, comedians, food and families into the shared space. Tex Perkins played one night, while other bands performed from the back of a flat-tray truck parked between the hall and the church.

Outside the hall stood a large fundraising thermometer. As donations arrived, the painted red line slowly climbed, a visible measure of the village's progress.

The support stretched well beyond the village. People from across the Northern Rivers came to events. Former residents and descendants of old families sent support from interstate and overseas, carrying their own stories of Federal with them.

Eventually the target was reached. More than \$220,000 had been raised, an extraordinary achievement for a small rural village. The purchase went ahead, and additional funds helped begin the work of repairing and renewing both buildings.

Together the hall and church became what is now known as Jasper Corner: a shared community precinct that continues to host gatherings, markets, workshops, music, film nights, weddings and celebrations.

In recent years the village has faced its share of challenges.

Landslides have disrupted access, floods have affected the wider region, and the pandemic paused many community events. At times the streets have felt unusually quiet. But new energy has also begun to appear: new shops, small pop-ups, and community gatherings slowly returning.

That same spirit of collaboration has appeared again through the Federal Village Masterplan process, where residents gathered to think collectively about the future of the village. Among the priorities emerging from those conversations are improvements to the main street, better paths and walkways, and a stronger connection between Federal Park and Jasper Corner.

Like many small villages, Federal moves through cycles. Older residents remember times when the shop closed and the main street felt almost empty, when Federal had a bad reputation, and when it seemed possible the place might slowly fade away. Yet somehow the village keeps renewing itself. The preschool survived. Federal Park flourished. Volunteers organised landcare groups, refugee support groups, repair workshops and other community projects. And young people have started moving back in again.

Each generation has found its own way to contribute. Much of what people value about Federal today did not simply appear. It was imagined, organised, fundraised, planted and cared for over many years by people who believed the place was worth the effort.

Villages are not static things. They are ongoing agreements between the people who care for them, shape them, govern them and gather within them. And if history is anything to go by, when the next challenge or opportunity arrives, the village will probably do what it has so often done before. Someone will call a meeting. People will gather. And the conversation will begin again.

Perhaps that is what defines Federal. Not a fixed vision of what a place should be, but a living practice of showing up, paying attention and getting to work when it matters.

The trees in the park are proof. So is the old church beside the hall. So is every meeting that ended not with a plan filed away, but with people going home to get started.

Some places are simply lived in. Federal has always been tended.

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Upskilling

Banyula Farm Photo supplied

Learn about soil health

A hands-on farm walk in the Hinterland, Wednesday 8 April, 2-4.30pm, will offer locals a chance to explore practical approaches to soil monitoring health. This includes identifying physical and biological constraints to production - two issues becoming increasingly important across the Northern Rivers.

Set on a working property near Clunes, the event will take participants through real-world examples of how landholders are responding to changing climate conditions, with a focus on improving soil structure, water retention and long-term farm resilience.

Attendees will hear directly from those managing the land, with insights into monitoring soil health and implementing rehydration strategies that support both productivity and environmental outcomes. The walk is designed to be accessible, with a mix of observation, discussion and practical takeaways.

In a region still recovering from recent flood events and facing increasingly unpredictable

weather patterns, the session highlights a growing shift towards regenerative practices and knowledge-sharing at a local level.

The farm walk is open to anyone with an interest in land care, sustainable farming or simply understanding how landscapes can better respond to extreme conditions.

Attendees are asked to please bring appropriate closed shoes for paddock walking, sun protection and water bottle. Some fresh fruit and nuts will be provided prior to and following the farm walk.

Tickets are free but bookings are essential. Address will be provided following registration.

For more details of this event contact Mark at mduncan@byron.nsw.gov.au or book at tinyurl.com/banyula

Community Responders training in Bangalow

Offered by local not-for-profit Plan C, Community Carers and Responders (CCR) training is a free five-day program that helps everyday people build the skills and confidence to support their community before, during and after disasters. Participants learn skills such as emergency communications, first aid, psychological first aid and how communities organise themselves during disasters.

If you'd like to feel more prepared, connected and able to help when the next emergency happens, this training is a great place to start.

CCR training will take place at the Old Scout Hall in Bangalow on 22, 23 and 29 May, with Psychological First Aid on 30 May and First Aid on 5 June.

If you can't make these dates but are still interested, Plan C will be offering other local training sessions in the coming months.

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Where to now? Photo Sally Schofield

Bangalow: a twisted labyrinth of deception

This month, we revisit *The Herald* archives where **Rebecca Sargeant** takes us on a meandering trek through the streets of our town.

As Charlotte threatens to consume her late husband Thomas' memory and reduce his legacy to a handful of house numbers, residents are asking, have we lost sight of the wood for the trees? If only it were that simple. With the woods proliferating almost as quickly as the trees, perhaps we've lost sight of both?

A Rosewood by any other name might be a Crescent. Or by another scent, a Muskwood. Or by another colour, a Blackwood. But only a Blackwood and a Marblewood could be a Place. A tree, on the other hand, could be a Place, a Crescent, or a Court – depending on whether the tree is a Parrot Tree, a Paperbark, a Wattle, a Cedar, a Palm Tree or a Gumtree.

Clover, being a Hill, has recently emerged as a unique species: a Circuit.

Some blame the Irish pirate Queen Granuaille for the confusion. Not content with being a Road, she had to be a Crescent too. Colin tried to follow her lead, but his Lane just led up the garden path.

Within the wooded labyrinths, strange things appear. While a Green Frog may be expected in these parts, a Leopard Wood is not. Even more unexpected, sightings of deer, with reports of a Staghorn protruding from a Palm Lily, and an Elkhorn protruding from a Palm Tree. Long-time locals and botanical enthusiasts say looks can be deceiving, and it's all much the same thing.

And just when you think you're on the right track, the track will behave in mysterious ways. Leslie crosses Granuaille only to turn a corner and continue at cross purposes

to itself, passing naming rights to Rankin, who continues in an orderly fashion. At least until Halloween, when Rankin and Co – Bannister, Hanlon, Ferguson and Barby – can be unpredictable. Campbell meanders around like a drunk. Ivory Curls in on itself. And Tristania casts a web of deceit, catching delivery drivers and potential tree changers in its twists and turns while they search in vain for the elusive Sansom. Many a local resident has been asked, "Am I in the Wright Place?"

Meanwhile, in Bangalay Court, Bangalow, residents are on the lay low. And even more so in Burrawan Place and Corlis Crescent, whose whereabouts remain unconfirmed. Conversely, Paddy's Court has emerged from a long gestation, and Deacon and Ashton Streets are experiencing a resurgence as flood levels recede.

Entry and exit should be relatively simple with so few access points. You can drive down Byron Street, the main street of Bangalow, which briefly becomes Byron Bay Road, and then continue to Byron Bay along Bangalow Road. Or drive up Byron Street, and continue to Lismore along Bangalow Road, which becomes Lismore Road. Ballina Road, however, will not lead to Ballina.

Charlotte longs for the old days when a street was a street, names were sensible like Keith and George, and helpful like Market and Station. She thinks modern names, like Jambos are ridiculous. And she laments that while there was once room for a Rifle Range, the town is now so packed to the Raftons that any suggestion of Meadows close by is simply laughable.

Yet change can be a good thing, she thinks. It's about time the male Pioneers made more room for the women! She likes the idea that one must navigate Charlotte and Robinson in order to find Thomas.

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Al-Anon (2pm Fri)		1300 252 666
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 (Mon-Fri 10am-2pm/Sat 9am-12pm)	Lydia	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
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Red Cross (1st Fri)	Liz	0409 832 001
Show Society	Anne	6687 1033

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Bowls women (9.30am Wed)	Frances	6687 1339
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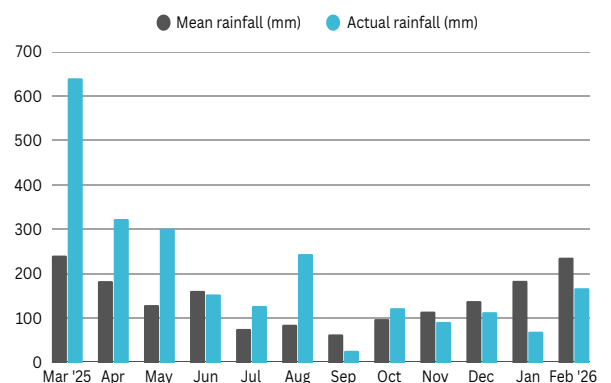
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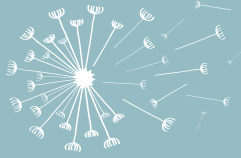


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Medical staff at Bangalow A&I Hall during the outbreak of Spanish flu in 1919. Nell O'Meara (back row second from the right), and Dr Lentaigne (centre, middle row) Photographer unknown

Nothing to be sneezed at

As flu season approaches, we remember the influenza epidemic that swept through the region in 1919.

Each year, as the weather cools and flu season edges closer, the reminders start to appear. Vaccinations become available, health warnings circulate, and we are encouraged to take precautions that, by now, feel familiar. But just over a century ago, influenza was anything but routine.

In 1919, Bangalow found itself in the path of a global pandemic. What became known as the Spanish flu arrived in Australia as soldiers returned from World War I, carrying with them a virus that would spread rapidly through cities, towns and rural communities alike.

At first, there was uncertainty. Early cases resembled a severe seasonal illness, and it was not immediately clear how serious the situation would become. But as the virus moved north from Sydney into regional New

South Wales, the impact quickly intensified. By January 1919, cases had been recorded across the Northern Rivers, including Lismore, Mullumbimby and Bangalow.

Public health advice of the time would sound strangely familiar today. People were urged to avoid crowds, keep their distance from anyone coughing or sneezing, and spend as much time as possible in the open air. Masks, made at home from layers of gauze, were recommended. Public life slowed dramatically as schools, churches, halls and places of entertainment were closed.

Despite these measures, the spread was difficult to contain. Bangalow's small hospital, with just 20 beds, was quickly overwhelmed. In response, the A&I Hall was transformed into an emergency hospital, with additional tent shelters erected on the showgrounds to cope with the growing number of patients.

Local medical staff worked under immense pressure. Among them was Dr John Lentaigne, who had arrived in Bangalow just a few years earlier. He treated patients from his home and played a central role in the community's response to the crisis, working long hours as demand for care surged.

Unlike more recent outbreaks, the Spanish flu had a particularly severe impact on young, otherwise healthy adults. Families were affected suddenly and, in many cases, tragically. The loss of 33-year-old Lillian Rankin, who left behind a husband and six children, was one of several deaths that brought the reality of the pandemic sharply into focus for the town.

Across New South Wales, more than 6,000 people died, and nationally the toll reached around 15,000. It is estimated that up to 40% of the population was infected.

And yet, like many communities, Bangalow endured. Over time, the virus became less severe, and by the end of 1919, the worst of the pandemic had passed.

Today, influenza remains a very different threat, but it is still a serious one. Seasonal flu circulates every year, and while most people recover, it can lead to significant illness, particularly for young children, older adults and those with underlying health conditions. Vaccination remains the most effective way to reduce the risk of severe disease and limit the spread within the community.

What has changed most is not just medicine, but preparedness. We now understand how viruses spread, how to treat complications, and how to protect vulnerable populations. Public health systems are better equipped, and communication is faster and clearer.

But community response still matters. The willingness to look out for others, to stay home when unwell, to take simple precautions such as handwashing or sanitising and disposing of used tissues carefully are the keys to containing the spread of viruses and keeping healthy as the weather cools down.

The Bangalow Herald



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What's on

Bangalow Garden Club

When Wednesday 1 April, 1.30pm
Where Moller Pavilion, Bangalow Showground
Tickets Yearly membership \$25. Guests welcome.
Info bangalowgardenclub@outlook.com
Diana Harden 0418 288 428

Bangalow Garden Club meets monthly and welcomes visitors and new members. The April meeting features guest speaker Peter Bundock, a plant scientist who will speak about plant genetics. Regular favourites include Flower of the Month and the always popular plant auction, followed by afternoon tea. Bring your own mug and enjoy a friendly afternoon with fellow garden enthusiasts.

Bangalow Chess Club

When Tuesdays, 6-9pm
Where Bangalow Hotel, 1 Byron St, Bangalow
Tickets Free entry (18+)
Info Instagram @bangalowchess

Hosted by Evan and Daniel Manttari, Bangalow Chess Club welcomes players of any skill level for a friendly night of games, learning and connection. Whether you're a curious beginner or a seasoned strategist, it's a chance to test your moves, share tips and enjoy a social Tuesday evening. Bar voucher for the winner on the night.

Open Mic Night with Dr Baz

When Friday 10 April, 6.30pm
Where Coorabell Hall,
565 Coolamon Scenic Drive, Coorabell
Info coorabellhall.net

Coorabell Hall's popular Open Mic Night returns with host Dr Baz welcoming local musicians, poets and performers to the stage. Whether you're keen to perform or simply enjoy an evening of live entertainment, the event offers a relaxed community atmosphere with a wide variety of acts. Performers can sign up on the night, and audiences are encouraged to come along and support local talent. Delicious authentic Punjabi curries and a full bar are also available.



ANZAC Day Photo Lyn McCarthy Niche Pictures

Saije workshop and concert

When Sunday 12 April, workshop 2-3pm,
concert from 3.30pm (doors 3pm)
Where Pearce's Creek Hall,
40 Pearce's Creek Hall Rd, Pearce's Creek
Tickets events.humanitix.com/saije-pearces-creek-hall-northern-rivers-nsw

Award-winning indie-folk duo Saije bring their soulful harmonies and dynamic guitar-driven sound for an intimate afternoon concert. Drawing on influences from international travels, the pair blend heartfelt storytelling with rich melodies and rhythmic energy. The event also includes a one-hour body percussion and singing workshop at 2pm, where participants can learn simple rhythms and melodies in a fun, beginner-friendly session. Concert tickets from \$30 online, with concessions and youth pricing available. Workshop tickets \$25 or \$20 when purchased with a concert ticket.

ArtsNational presents: Degenerates and Perverts: The Legendary 1939 Herald Exhibition

When Monday 13 April, welcome drink 6pm,
lecture 6.30pm
Where A&I Hall, Station Street, Bangalow
Tickets Membership \$160 single or \$280 double for
eight lectures. Guests \$30 per lecture.
Info artsnational.au/societies/northernrivers

Presented by Steven Miller, this lecture explores the famous 1939 Herald Exhibition of French and British Contemporary Art, often described as one of the most influential events in Australia's cultural development. Opening during a period of profound social change, the exhibition sparked fierce debate between cultural conservatives and modernists. The talk examines how the exhibition was organised and received, and its lasting impact on Australian art and society.



Bangalow Chess Club Photo Yutaro Fukuhara

ANZAC Day March and Service

When Saturday 25 April, from 9am

Contact Jason Wadsworth at
events@bangalowsrl.com.au

Join us on Anzac Day to honour the bravery and sacrifice of our servicemen and women. The day begins with service at Clunes (9-9.45am). Bangalow marchers assemble at 10.30am at the top of Byron Street for a commemorative march down the main street to the Bangalow RSL Sub Branch Hall, where a service will be held to reflect and pay tribute.

Bangalow CWA ANZAC Day Cake Stall

When Saturday 25 April, 11am-2pm

Where CWA Rooms, 31 Byron Street, Bangalow

Tickets/Info All welcome

The Bangalow CWA's popular cake stall returns in April – please note the opening time will be 11am following the ANZAC Parade march. Expect a tempting selection of homemade cakes, along with jams and preserves, handmade baby clothes, hand-knitted beanies and more. Funds raised support local charities including Liberation Larder, Fletcher Street Cottage, The Winsome Hotel, The SHIFT Project Byron Bay and the Bangalow Community Pantry. Visitors are welcome to drop in, pick up some baked treats and find out more about becoming a member.

ANZAC Day Two-Up School

When Friday 25 April, Two-Up 2-6pm,
Bar & BBQ noon-7pm

Where The Rotunda opposite The Kiosk,
Bangalow Showground

Bangalow Lions Club will run the traditional Two-Up School at the Showground following the ANZAC Day march and ceremony. The iconic game will take place in the Rotunda opposite the kiosk overlooking Jarrett Arena – an open-air setting with plenty of room for spinning pennies. A bar and BBQ kiosk will operate throughout the afternoon. All proceeds will support three charities: The Younger Heroes, Bangalow Red Cross and Lions for Legacy.

Song Sharing Circle

When Thursday, 10.30-11.30am weekly

Where Newrybar Hall,
Old Pacific Highway, Newrybar

Tickets By donation

Info Benita 0425 772 248
benitapeacock@yahoo.com.au
Instagram @benitasinging

Local songwriters are invited to gather for a relaxed weekly circle to share original songs, try out new ideas and connect with other musicians. Participants can bring finished pieces or works in progress and receive supportive feedback in a collaborative setting. Whether you are polishing lyrics, shaping a melody or simply curious to hear what others are creating, all levels and musical styles are welcome. Instruments are available.

Kindred Women Together

When First Thursday of the month, 5.30-7.30pm

Where Bangalow Hotel Restaurant Deck

Info kindredwomentogether.com

Kindred Women Together is a friendly social group bringing local women together to connect, share conversation and build community. The group meets monthly at the Bangalow Hotel, offering a relaxed opportunity to meet new people and develop friendships. Kindred Women Together also hosts a range of smaller clubs and activities that provide additional ways for women to connect. All women are welcome.

Diary

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Thursdays	Song Sharing Circle, Newrybar Open Mic Night with Dr Baz
first Thursday of the month	Kindred Women Together

May edition deadlines

What's on	13 April
Copy	13 April
Advertising	13 April

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Margies by the fridge



Who needs a holiday when you can have a new fridge instead? Photo supplied

After March's fridge mishap, **Gabby Le Brun** continues the story, where a new delivery brings with it grief, humour and a reminder that life rarely unfolds to plan.

It's the Monday after the Friday night fridge debacle (*The Bangalow Herald* March 2026) when the new-new fridge arrives. Unlike the previous attempt, this time there's no torrential rain and it's not dark or the tail end of a 12-hour shift for the delivery team.

1pm. "You order a fridge?" booms up from the kerb. Deja vu. But this time, the delivery truck is smaller and arrives with a different Delivery Guy duo. I wonder if this is by design.

Delivery Guy One grins at me and makes a derogatory comment on the competency of the guys who left the new-but-wrong fridge with us over the weekend.

"Who were they?" he asks.

"I'm not sure," I say. And even if I did know, I wouldn't dog on them – not after the kindness they'd shown me. The fridge model might have been wrong, but their back-step emotional-health triage was absolutely spot-on.

The guys want to bring the new-new fridge

up the side. But today there is no temporary picket fence to dismantle for access. At midnight on the Saturday night, our second night in the house, our beautiful boy Rusty had a seizure and passed away peacefully at 2am under the most compassionate care of Bangalow Emergency Vets. There was no longer a need to protect him from stumbling off the deck.

Today, my nerves are raw and I'm hyper-vigilant around our remaining rescue dog, Teddy. He is, however, determined to get between the moving trolley, the work-booted feet of the Delivery Guys and the back stairs.

They banish the new-but-wrong fridge (no 'U' and no tap) to the backyard. I can't meet her gaze.

"Can I put this down anywhere?" Delivery Guy One asks, referring to the new-new fridge, who has been unboxed and wheeled in. There are floorboards and rugs and he doesn't want to scratch or damage them. I gather from this that he must be careful in the other homes he delivers to, but I'm not precious about that kind of thing.

"Yes, anywhere but on top of the dog," I blurt. Sometimes grief and gallows humour go hand in hand. Well, they do with me.

He laughs. "Out the way, Tid." With his Kiwi

accent, Ted becomes 'Tid'. It's very endearing.

I swoop Tid up under my arm, out of harm's way, while Delivery Guy Two connects my new-new fridge to the plumbed-in tap. The way it should have been if I'd ordered the right fridge in the first place.

"I've never had a plumbed-in fridge before," I say.

"I've never bought a new fridge," he says.

Given that he delivers new fridges for a living, this must bite. My privilege guilt goes into overdrive, so I back-pedal and overshare. "This fridge is my holiday for this year."

There's a beat.

"Oh well," Delivery Guy One says, with an impish grin. "You can make margaritas with your automatic ice maker and stare at the fridge instead." Our shared laughter dissipates my embarrassment somewhat and when the chuckles fade, I realise he's made an excellent point.

Instant margaritas! I feel a swell of vindication. Sorry new-but-wrong fridge. This is where ice trays are deficient. The 'waiting-for-water-to-freeze' time is time you never get back. And as Rusty's recent departure has reminded me, life is short.

Cheers to technology. And RIP Rusty.



ANZAC DAY TWO UP

SATURDAY APRIL 25th AT THE KIOSK
BANGALOW SHOWGROUNDS
BAR FROM 12pm-7pm GAME 2-6pm

