

The Bangalow

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Authorised J. Elliot, ALP, 107 Minjungbal Drive Tweed Heads South

From the Editor

One of the pleasures of living in this village – and editing this publication – is discovering just how many different people, experiences and ideas contribute to the essence of our community.

Each month I wonder how I am going to fill 32+ pages with new stories and perspectives, and each month, I'm astounded by the variety of ideas, projects and achievements swirling around us. It's fascinating and inspiring.

As the Bangalow Show celebrates its 125th milestone, we revisit its colourful history, complete with agricultural rivalries, curious competitions and the occasional controversy. The Show's enduring bush poetry tradition reminds us that a good story, particularly one delivered with humour, can bring a crowd together.

Creativity runs through these pages in other ways too. Seven local women artists have formed a local art collective and will soon exhibit. We also hear from the sister of acclaimed musician Holly Throsby (who is touring locally this month) adding a personal perspective to a well-known creative career.

This month, we also explore the challenges facing women during the so-called 'danger decade' of midlife – menopause, the 'sandwich generation', mental and physical health and more. Plus, we meet a local author who has written about parenting and ADHD, bringing complex, challenging conversations and experiences about parenting neurodivergent young people out into the open.

Looking ahead, Jenny Bird considers how we might imagine the future of Bangalow, while our update on the Supreme Court proceedings concerning the Bowlo reflects the continuing community interest in the fate of a beloved local institution.

What emerges in this edition is a picture of a village shaped by its community. Its character comes from the people who live here, the stories they share, the things they create and the conversations they start.

And there are always more stories to tell.

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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Cover image: The Bush Poets celebrating 125 years of the Show

Photo Vanessa Reed

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The Bush Poets

From flaming damper to magnificent moustaches, the Bangalow Show's Bush Poetry Competition has never taken itself too seriously. Ahead of this year's event on Saturday 14 November, **Sally Schofield** asks host **Angus Thurgate** what makes a good bush poem, why the tradition endures and what it takes to win over an audience in just three minutes.

Bush poetry has a long tradition of storytelling, humour and capturing Australian life. What makes it relevant today, and how do you think the form is evolving to reflect contemporary Australia?

It's possibly more relevant today than ever as an antidote to the modern obsession with perfection. Bush poetry celebrates the imperfect, the flaws, and delights in puncturing hubris. If nothing else, it's a marvellous opportunity to look straight ahead and not at a screen.

The Bangalow

HERALD

BUSH POETS PRIZE

Head Steward: Angus Thurgate

Entries and enquiries to athurgate@hotmail.com
 Entries due by Thursday, 12th November 2026

1ST - \$100 & SASH

THE RULES: must be 3 minutes long
 must include the following words: one, two and five



2479

SATURDAY 11 AM
VILLAGE GREEN
 3 Judges - Decision is Final



The bush poetry competition has become an iconic part of the Show. What do you think makes it so popular, and why is it important that regional communities continue to celebrate this kind of storytelling?

Initially, I think folks were attracted by the dangerous spectacle of the cooking of the damper, a flaming tradition at the Bush Poets event ... word got out, and for a few years it provided a free-wheeling, distracting conflagration involving rum and a pyromaniac while featured poets struggled to engage the audience's attention.

Then *The Bangalow Herald* offered a prize, as they still do today, and the event was open to anyone brave enough to cobble a rhyming story together, then present it to the world in less than three minutes. They brought friends. A sash was added to the prize, and we never looked back.

As the host of the Bush Poetry Competition, what do you say makes a bush poem stand out? Are you impressed by clever rhymes, a cracking yarn, a distinctive voice or something else?

By way of example, we were fortunate to have local bush-poet royalty Ray Essery as a featured artist a few years back. Spellbinding to watch someone so accomplished deliver the rhymes and story, then add another dimension with thought-provoking recollections and compassionate insights. Lulled by the rhyme while the import of the words hit home.

What makes a bush poem stand out? It is alive at that moment of the telling. It is not just that poem and that poet, it is also the audience. It is community in its simplest form, so delivery is kind of crucial.

You have an extraordinarily dulcet speaking voice, the sort that seems made for radio.

Have you ever worked as a broadcaster or professional storyteller, or is that magnificent voice simply a gift of nature?

Firstly, stap me vitals! I stagger under the deluge of superlatives.

Secondly, yes, I have been involved with voice-based productions. One such was a sports segment on Bay FM (possibly the only sports segment on Bay FM), where I interviewed our photographer Vanessa about her team's win in the fifth-grade grand final in Summer 6s. A compelling and thrilling recitation (her team won) that garnered millions of likes. It would also make a good bush poem.

Bush poetry often finds humour and humanity in ordinary experiences. If you were writing a poem about Bangalow today, what characters, places or peculiarities do you think would deserve a verse or two?

Aha! There you have it! The crux, so to speak. It could literally be anything.

A dog behaving peculiarly around drones or a COVID-related split in the community.

I personally think something should be said about the prevalence of moustaches.

Whatever the topic, in this 125th year of the Bangalow Show, all any entry needs to include are the words 'one', 'two' and 'five' somewhere in the mix.

Three minutes or less. What could be easier?

The Bush Poets competition will again be awarding the Chad Morgan Memorial Encouragement Award of \$50 for the best up and coming bush poet, to be chosen by founder of the award, Brett Stephens.

The Bangalow Herald is the proud sponsor of The Bush Poetry event at the Bangalow Show.

Herald Show highlights

There's plenty of entertainment beyond the traditional agricultural competitions at this year's 125th Bangalow Show, with some wonderfully quirky events promising laughs for competitors and spectators alike.

The **Farm Kid Challenge** puts young competitors through their paces with farm-inspired tasks, including boiling the billy, unrolling a swag, stacking hay bales and navigating obstacles. Open to ages 12–18, the Saturday afternoon competition costs \$5 to enter.

The **Boot Toss** invites competitors of all ages to test their throwing skills, while those with a hearty appetite can tackle Bang Burger Bar's **Big Bang Bite**, now featuring separate competitions for under and over 12s.

Four-legged competitors get their moment in the spotlight at Saturday afternoon's **Dog High Jump**, with \$200 and a sash for the winner.

Things get considerably louder with **monster truck action** on Saturday, alongside the **Run, Rev and Ride Invitational Challenge**, combining running, motorbikes and horses in one unusual contest.

Saturday evening's **Team Stockman Ironman** promises more country-style competition, with teams tackling everything from chopping wood and digging postholes to riding an obstacle course and carrying a bale of hay on horseback.

The Bangalow Show runs Friday 13 and Saturday 14 November.



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Artists at work in Ewingsdale Hall Photos supplied

Preparing to exhibit

The Bangalow Herald was invited to a sneak preview of an upcoming art exhibition. **Christobel Munson** put up her hand.

Drive off Ewingsdale Road opposite The Farm, the concrete factory to your left, down William Flick Lane (once the M1). Pass under the graceful branches of very old and shady fig trees, and there, to the right, is Ewingsdale Hall – a modest heritage building, painted a creamy white.

A school in 1895, these days it's the venue for a vast range of activities every week: multi-instrument sound baths happen there Monday mornings, karate later in the day. Qigong, African dance and drumming, Argentine tango, 5-Rhythms dance, Dru Yoga, Pilates, adult dance classes and frequent weddings, all make use of the peaceful and convenient central location.

For the last couple of years, every Thursday afternoon, a group of dedicated artists hires the space for three hours, currently working towards their next group exhibition in mid-

November. Speaking for the group, art teacher of more than 25 years, Cas Coffey, says she reached a point where she no longer wanted to paint at home. There, she holds classes as Byron Art Space, but she longed for a neutral space, a specific destination away from home with just the right ambiance, where she could work with others of like minds.

Friends Maggie Wilson, an art therapist living in Fowlers Lane, and Rose Keping, from South Golden Beach (the Collective's treasurer), were the first to join her. Now there are seven who form The Artist Collective. "We've made fabulous friendships as our art and friendships grow," Cas says. "We make an appointment each week to share our passion with compatible others, and to develop our art in this creative space."

Stepping into the spacious wooden hall, with the sound of a Spotify Soft Jazz collection playing quietly, each artist has set up a workspace, with easels, paints and pens, brushes, images and visual prompts, conveniently arranged at hand. Some samples of the work being prepared for their upcoming show rest along the walls.



Elaine Oliver at the easel

Each artist works away in her own modality. Each one has her own body of work, with different areas of knowledge. "Maggie's doing water colours and working on illustrations for a book for children based on stories her mother told her, and which she then told her children, and now grandchildren. Elaine Oliver, also from Fowlers Lane, favours florals," abstract painter Cas explains.

Elaine, once a busy textile designer in England, tired of her professional work designing wallpaper and fashion fabric, so now follows a yearning to paint lace and florals. Karina Mereki, from Tyagarah, is a remedial massage therapist when not painting her semi-abstract works. Susan Joyce, another abstract painter from Bangalow, is the one who selects just the right music to set the scene. Conveniently, Odette Quigley lives not far away, in Myocum. She's set up her workspace on the stage, under a window, which focuses just the right amount of afternoon light on her work.

The weekly gathering provides an opportunity both to create artwork and get feedback or discuss challenges in their own emerging pieces. "We get on really well; it's a supportive group of individual fellow artists. We all have other lives and diverse backgrounds, but as an artist collective, we want to come and work together here. We're fortunate that we've blended so well. What I love is that no-one feels inferior – yet we have differing degrees of skill. Our focus on painting has been a strength."

Holding their first exhibition in the hall in which their work was created, this collective of local professional artists looks forward to welcoming neighbours, friends, connoisseurs and "sticky beaks" alike to their three-day show. They are also proud to be able to put on display the virtues of this highly valued historic community hall.

The Artist Collective Art Show will open on Friday 13 November (5–9pm) and run through Saturday and Sunday 14–15 November (10am–4pm). For more information, call Cas on 0477 438 096.



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'Smashing udders': the cattle yard at an early Bangalow Show Photo Bangalow Historical Society

A grand gathering at Bangalow, 1901

The fifth annual Bangalow Agricultural Show held Tuesday 5 and Wednesday 6 March has once again demonstrated the remarkable progress of this flourishing district. From magnificent dairy cattle and spirited horses to the finest farm produce, prize pigs and a bullock whose weight became the subject of considerable speculation, there was much to admire and no shortage of friendly rivalry.

The weather, unfortunately, was not entirely obliging, with Wednesday's rain interfering with proceedings. Nevertheless, the quality of the exhibits gave ample cause for satisfaction.

Those who attended last year's exhibition will recall the beautiful weather, excellent railway arrangements and fine displays within the pavilion. The Society has continued its efforts to improve the grounds, with additional cattle yards, pig pens and work upon the show ring contributing to the comfort of exhibitors and visitors alike.

The pride of the dairy district

The cattle section was undoubtedly a principal attraction, reflecting the growing importance of dairying to the prosperity of the Richmond River.

Mr D. Cooke secured the coveted champion bull award, while Mr J. T. Young took the honours for champion cow, with Johnston

Brothers receiving the reserve award.

Mr Young also distinguished himself in the butter-fat competition, his cow Ethel securing first prize for the greatest quantity of butter yielded in a single milking. Ethel produced 27lb of milk, with a butter-fat test of 4.1, yielding 1.107lb of butter.

Mr Cooke's Beauty and Fancy followed in the placings, demonstrating the quality of the district's dairy herds.

The judging was no mere matter of appearance. Milk yields and butter-fat tests are assuming increasing importance, as farmers seek not only handsome cattle but animals capable of providing profitable returns.

Among the younger stock, Mr Joseph Akers took first prize for a milking heifer aged two and under three years, while Fredericks Brothers secured the first two places in the corresponding dry-heifer class. Mr A. Kirkland won the class for heifers aged one and under two years, and Mr John Hayter secured first prize for a heifer calf under 12 months.

A bullock, a sewing machine and a remarkable guess

Among the lighter diversions, the fat bullock weight-guessing competition attracted considerable interest, with a Singer sewing

machine offered as the prize.

Mr A. Kirkland of Pearces Creek proved himself an extraordinarily accurate judge of livestock, estimating the animal's weight at precisely 819lb. Messrs W. McCormack of Federal and J. C. Noble of Newrybar were scarcely less successful, each submitting a guess of 819½lb and dividing the second and third honours.

The competition realised the handsome sum of £28 for the Society.

Nor was the public's skill at estimation exhausted. A bottle containing 1,275 grains of corn was the subject of another contest, won by Mr Fred Lee of Bangalow, whose guess was exactly correct. A further £10 6s was raised for the Society.

Fine horses and accomplished riders

The horse section provided another lively attraction, with fine animals exhibited in the buggy, hackney, trotting and hunter classes.

Mr W. Taylor enjoyed particular success, taking the champion hackney award and the prize for the best all-round horse. Mr J. Johnston was successful with his family buggy horse, while Mr J. Noble took first prize in the light buggy horse class. Mr W. Rankin secured the award for a buggy pair.

The ladies also demonstrated their considerable skill in the saddle. In the lady rider competition, Mrs A. Moles and Miss Navin divided the honours, while Miss Armstrong secured first place in the hunter class, ahead of Mr A. Moles and Mr R. H. Walker.

Such contests are always watched with interest, for the ability to manage a spirited horse with confidence and grace is no small accomplishment.

A difference of opinion among the pigs

The pig section supplied its own cause for discussion, particularly in the competition for the four-guinea special prize awarded to the best pen of bacon pigs exhibited by a *bona fide* farmer.

Mr Cameron secured the prize with three remarkably fat and even animals. Not all spectators, however, were satisfied with the judges' decision. Some maintained that another pen was more deserving, the winning pigs being considered altogether too fat.

It seems that even among prize pigs, one may have too much of a good thing.

Mr S. D. Caines exhibited a fine Tamworth boar, which secured championship honours, while his Berkshire sow was also much admired. The poultry section offered further attractions, particularly among the Silver Wyandottes, whose handsome markings and fine development drew favourable comment.

The fruits of the district

Away from the livestock, the farm and dairy produce exhibits provided further evidence of the richness of the surrounding country.

The fruit and vegetable prizes were shared among a number of exhibitors, including Mrs G. R. Powell and Messrs F. Wareham, G. Johnson, T. Kirkland, A. Warne and J. Armstrong.

The Byron Bay Co-operative Company distinguished itself in the dairy produce section, securing prizes for butter intended for both the local market and export, as well as presenting a commendable exhibit of bacon and hams.

Within the pavilion, the domestic and decorative exhibits provided their own attractions, offering an opportunity for the skill and industry of the womenfolk of local households to be recognised alongside the achievements of the district's farmers.

Good company and high praise

The Society's luncheon afforded an opportunity for visitors and local gentlemen to exchange compliments upon the quality of the district's livestock.

Mr R. Campbell, President of the Society, presided, with toasts offered to the King, the judges, neighbouring agricultural societies and visitors.

The luncheon was of a substantial character, with good things in abundance and a convivial atmosphere. Guests dined on cold corned beef and pressed tongue with fresh bread butter and mustard, followed by roast mutton with boiled potatoes and cabbage. The assembled gentlemen appeared to do full justice to the fare and thanked the ladies of the committee for their hospitality.

Visiting judges spoke in glowing terms of the dairy cattle, several declaring them equal to, if not superior to, those encountered elsewhere.

Mr W. Stephens, a Queensland visitor and experienced cattle breeder, expressed astonishment at the number of dairy cows assembled on one showground. He also offered practical advice concerning cattle ticks, warning that farmers should not suppose the border would keep the pest at bay indefinitely.

It is to be hoped that the district's cattle breeders will continue to prosper without the unwelcome assistance of such visitors.

At the conclusion of the luncheon, small sweet tartlets and fancies demonstrating the cookery skills of the district's women were served with a liberal supply of tea.

A promising future

The importance of the Bangalow Show extends well beyond the awarding of prizes. It is an occasion upon which farmers may compare their stock, exchange knowledge and observe improvements in breeding and agricultural practice, while residents of Bangalow and neighbouring settlements gather in a spirit of friendly rivalry.

Wednesday's rain undoubtedly deprived the exhibition of some of the success that might otherwise have attended it, but it could not diminish the quality of the exhibits or the enthusiasm of those responsible for their preparation.

Bangalow may still be a comparatively young agricultural centre, but its farmers have demonstrated that they need yield little to their more established neighbours.

And if this year's exhibition is any indication, the Society may look forward to many more successful gatherings, with finer cattle, faster horses and perhaps another gentleman capable of guessing the exact weight of a bullock.

L. M. Carpenter

An imaginative reconstruction of the The fifth annual Bangalow Agricultural Show, 5-6 March 1901, created from newspaper records from the day.

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Ian Jenner, Enduro Legend Photo Murray Hand



Hadassa Fielding, on the job Photo supplied

Local people

Local Enduro legend

A familiar face around Bangalow, Ian Jenner, has recently been crowned champion in the Legends category (50+) of the Australian Enduro Championships. That's cross-country motor bike racing, for the uninitiated.

This is a very serious sport which requires a very serious commitment if one is to rise to the top. It is extremely demanding physically and, as the word 'enduro' implies, it is mentally exhausting. Each Legends event comprises a sprint (up to 15 minutes), cross country (two hours) and a timecard Enduro of about six hours. About 70 riders from all over Australia compete in the event.

The Australian Championships are held over six weekends in all states except Western Australia. To help with the logistics of competing, Ian's wife Donna travels with him to each event to help as manager, cook, time-keeper and also mechanic. This year they drove to Roma, Dungog, Beaudesert, Caston (Vic) and Kempsey with Ian's KTM bike. The final event was in South Australia, however, Ian had accumulated enough points not to have to travel there.

Ian has been racing off-road bikes since the age of 17 and has represented Australia riding enduro in Spain and France. He is one tough cookie.

Murray Hand

Bye, darling

For 17 years, an effervescent and lively greeting from Hadassa Fielder has always met any customer entering the Bangalow Red Ginger Asian grocery. Early last month, she worked her last day at the store, a sad day for fellow staff and customers alike.

"Hadassa has been a mainstay of the store and is much loved in Bangalow," said Red Ginger owner, Leslie Ford. "She has always welcomed everyone with enthusiasm and love, and has run the store with great efficiency and order. We can't express how much she will be missed by the team and our community. Her warmth and wisdom will be irreplaceable."

Hadassa introduced something of the gusto of the Mediterranean to customers, not surprising when you learn that her parents – now in their 90s, were born in Morocco, while Hadassa was born in Israel. Possibly her favourite products in the store are the extensive range of Middle Eastern spices, from the biblical spice blend, Za'atar, to the North African herb and spice mix Chermoula. Though Red Ginger is an Asian-oriented store, Hadassa points out it "offers a selection of products not found in any other place".

Now a (long-time) Australian resident, Hadassa and her English-born husband first travelled the country before settling in the Byron Shire in the early 1990s and raising their son here. "We thought: this is the land of milk and honey!" she says.

Working at the Bangalow Red Ginger store for so many years, Hadassa says she was "always happy coming to work, it's a good company, we do things peacefully. I've found Bangalow people to be polite, patient and fun. It's been a privilege to work in here, it's a wonderful community. I've never had people who hassled me. Leslie has been a marvelous boss for all these years."

While the store is a bustling place, Hadassa reflected on the quiet COVID years. "They were not difficult. It was quite a blessing to be home in my garden." She's now looking forward to spending more time there with her fruit trees and herbs in her retirement, reading and listening to the news from Israel. "Actually, I'm quite a hermit!"

Christobel Munson

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SCAN TO ENROL

The village we make



The City We Make, a panel and community engagement session about the future Photo Elise Derwin

Fresh from the DINGO Festival and a visit to *The City We Make*, **Jenny Bird** turns her attention to Bangalow, what makes it special and how we can all play a part in its future. Fast forward to 2050. What do we want our village centres to be into the future?

How can we both protect and invigorate our unique identities, our cultural and economic prosperity?

Once the beating heart of a community, town centres all over Australia are becoming ghost towns. The impacts of climate change-related disasters, closures of essential services such as banks and post offices, and the impacts of online shopping on small retail businesses are all contributing. What

were once central service and shopping precincts have moved to the edges of town and into industrial estates – think Bunnings, home centres and shopping malls.

Our hinterland villages are luckier than many but are not immune. Bangalow, for example, has lost hosting-rights to two nationally significant arts festivals in recent years – the Byron Writers Festival and the Bangalow Music Festival. Severe weather



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events, prohibitive insurance premiums, reduced arts funding and changing social needs contributed variously to their reluctant withdrawal. Outdoor events are particularly vulnerable.

Arts and creative industries are built into the DNA of the Byron hinterland, as much a part of our cultural identity as our local economies. Whilst events like the Mud Trail and the Festival of Small Halls run hinterland-wide, most arts and cultural events happen in the centre of Bangalow, blessed with the A&I Hall, the showground, a pedestrian-friendly Station Street, cafes and shops in walking distance, lots of small halls and a main street with a perfect gradient for a billycart derby.

In the face of ongoing pressure from developers and the NSW Government to accept traditional models of urban development, what can we do to keep our town centres alive and thriving? Town and village plans articulate what is important about a town or village centre and offer protections to heritage character. But can we add to that and be more brave, innovative, exploratory, contemporary, confident in ourselves?

Recently a panel of urban designers, architects and creatives gathered in Lismore for The City We Make at The Joinery (NORPA's new home) to share blue-sky ideas that might re-enliven the struggling CBD of Lismore. The catalyst for the discussion was an essay written by Dan Etheridge from Living Lab Northern Rivers. Titled 'Our biggest challenge AND our greatest opportunity' the essay throws out ideas that "look beyond the usual development playbooks", ideas that could make the Lismore CBD "unlike any other in the state."

Panellists were asked to consider the necessary conditions for creative industries,

businesses, service organisations and communities to thrive, and how to turn constraints into opportunities. Whilst the focus of the conversation was on Lismore, some of the take-home messages are worth considering for Bangalow and other hinterland villages, especially in the warm afterglow of the successful DINGO Music & Arts Festival.

Idea 1: Make room and give permission to experiment (and fail)

The DINGO festival organisers took a huge punt on a radically different concept for a festival. They thought small, not big. They used spaces differently – verandahs, shops, walls, front yards, studios, restaurants, small halls, the street, The Lumber Yard, even the stables in the Showground. They tied the program together with the thread of an idea of jazz. It was an experiment that could have failed. It didn't. The centre of Bangalow buzzed.

Idea 2: Really listen to the community and what they want and need so that what happens is authentic

The organisers had meetings with local stakeholders and worked closely with Council. They understood the character and identity of the Festival precinct and the venues. They programmed in local performers, artists and musicians. It didn't take over. It fitted inside Bangalow like a hand in a glove. It was authentic.

Idea 3: The arts give expression to multiple points of view and that's healthy and a good thing

The program itself was diverse – electronic music, live music, local and international musicians, kids' activities, arts discussions, food, a free day for the community – something for everyone.

But DINGO wasn't just a collection of music gigs stitched together. Driving the programme was a question that the Festival posed of itself: 'What is the culture of the Northern Rivers Region and how can we understand what it is that makes this place such a fertile ground for grassroots creatives and cultural activity?'

Our village centres have all the necessary ingredients for a thriving future: walkable village size, heritage buildings and green spaces, good food, boutique retail. Can we support a rich calendar of contemporary arts and culture events that both fits in and fills these physical spaces, feeds our local economy and enriches our minds and souls?

Byron Shire Council recently announced its \$50,000 Events and Festivals Sponsorship Fund, aimed at supporting local events and festivals that have a positive impact on the community, the local economy and our arts and cultural life. Applicants can apply for a maximum of \$10,000, with most grants likely to receive \$3,000–\$5,000.

Applications close Sunday 22 November.

Find out more at byron.nsw.gov.au/Council/About-Byron-Shire/Grants/Events-and-Festivals-Sponsorship-Fund



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Normal sisterly magic



Holly and Caitlin in the Blue Mountains Photos supplied

Before she became one of Australia's most acclaimed singer-songwriters, **Holly Throsby** was a young musician whose talent was already turning heads. Ahead of her return to the Northern Rivers, **Darren Bridge** chatted to her sister, Bangalow local **Caitlin McCarter** about childhood memories, musical influences and what it's like to watch your sister find her voice.

Holly Throsby is one of Australia's most beloved and enduring singer-songwriters. Her debut album arrived in the 2004, establishing her as a singular folk voice with a remarkable gift for lyrical detail. Four acclaimed solo albums followed, an album of original children's songs, and her work as one third of the band, Seeker Lover Keeper. Together, Holly Throsby and Seeker Lover Keeper have amassed over 70 million combined streams. Holly has been nominated for five ARIAs – including two for Best Female Artist. She is also an acclaimed novelist, with three books published by Allen & Unwin selling over 40,000 copies, and a fourth expected in 2026.



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Holly and Caitlin with a family friend at their childhood home in Birchgrove

Some of you music hounds out there may recall the Spunk Music Label showcases held at the A&I Hall in Bangalow beginning back in the Noughties. Holly Throsby was on the bill on the first one and played alongside Andrew Bird, Joanna Newsom, Jack Ladder and indie cult band, Spoon. I was there and remember seeing a few big names shmoozing around the room including Billy Bragg and other music industry heavyweights. These were world class gigs.

Bangalow local, Caitlin McCarter, sister of Holly, remembers the night fondly too.

"This was very memorable and totally fantastic on many levels. Holly held herself so perfectly and matched all their brilliance."

After growing up in Balmain then living around the North Coast for years, Caitlin made Bangalow her permanent home about a decade ago.

Caitlin, when did you first have an inkling that Holly had her extraordinary songwriting talent?

Holly started playing to me and my friends' songs she had written when she was quite young and I remember feeling that she was going to go somewhere. It felt immediate. I remember it so well. It was beyond just a sister thing. Others felt it to. She had it!

She was given a guitar by my godfather Mark at a young age, which felt like it was the confirmation of the pathway for her and her songwriting and performing. This could be more my memory than hers.

Can you share a memory of one of the first times you saw Holly on a big stage and how did it make you feel?

First time I saw Holly perform I was way more nervous than she was. She is so great to watch perform. Articulate, connected, strong and confident. And funny. As soon as she started I relaxed.

What music did you listen to when you were growing up together?

We had a mixture of lovely music surrounding us. Margaret's (Holly's mother's) work was surrounded by music (mostly classical) and artists, and Holly's grandmother was a cellist with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. So classical was always there in some form. Jazz, folk, contemporary. A lovely mix. Leonard Cohen definitely dominated in the house.

What's one of your favourite songs of Holly's and why?

So many. That's too hard! I love her music so much. One that springs to mind is Would You - I can hear in her voice how magic this would have been singing alongside Will Oldham (Bonnie Prince Billy), with her song! I'm a big fan!

Holly's sixth studio album, *Normal Magic* marks a new direction for Throsby: a self-produced ten-song record, synth-heavy, with programmed beats, dirty electric guitars, saxophone, and banjo. This is a far more electronic and mesmeric sound, but the songs remain finely crafted: lyrically ambitious; playful and hypnotic.

Holly sought out a whole new group of collaborators for this album, including multi-instrumentalist Jordan Ireland (The Middle East), Helen Franzmann (Mess Esque, McKisko), Laura Jean, Oliver Mestitz (The Finks) and Jake Core (Soda Eaves). Recordings were made in various homes, with the bulk engineered at Stranded Studios in Bellambi (Babitha, Body Type). The record was mixed in Provence, France, by Burke Reid (Courtney Barnett, The Drones, Julia Jacklin).

Of *Normal Magic*, Holly says: "This record stemmed from a conversation about what is normal and what is magic. Art making, for example, is quite magical and quite normal at the same time, and the concept expanded as the songs were written to be a kind of a celebration of the magic of normal life – little moments of beauty and wonder which can be so sustaining. A sunbeam or a bird or a moment of synchrony."

Holly Throsby Normal Magic Tour

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Rallying to Save Bangalow Bowlo Photo Lyn McCarthy - Niche Pictures

Bangalow Bowlo battle reaches Supreme Court

A year after Bangalow's bowling club - the Bowlo - closed its doors, the community's efforts to understand what happened have reached the NSW Supreme Court.

For over 12 months Bangalow has been without one of its most familiar gathering places. The bowling greens have fallen quiet, the club's social life has been interrupted and the future of a community institution remains uncertain.

But the people campaigning to bring back the Bowlo have been anything but quiet.

Since North Sydney Leagues' Club Ltd (Norths) closed the Bangalow Bowling Club in October 2025, the Save Bangalow Bowlo campaign has organised public meetings, pursued discussions, rallied supporters and raised funds in an effort to secure the club's future.

Now, as the first anniversary of the closure

approaches, that campaign has reached a significant new stage.

Bangalow Bowlo member Greg Nash has filed a summons in the Supreme Court of New South Wales seeking preliminary discovery orders against Norths. If granted, the orders would require Norths to provide documents relating to the closure and its management of the club following the 2023 amalgamation.

Greg is pursuing the application in his individual capacity, with the support of the Save Bangalow Bowlo Steering Committee.

The proceedings are not an application to reopen the club. Rather, they seek information that may help Greg determine whether there are grounds to commence further legal action.

"This application will give me what I need to know if I am to make a decision to sue or not sue Norths," Greg says.

More than a bowling club

For Bangalow, the loss of the Bowlo has

meant considerably more than the closure of a sporting facility.

The club has long provided a place for people to gather, socialise and participate in community life. Its role has extended beyond lawn bowls, providing a familiar and accessible meeting place for people of different ages and interests.

That sense of community ownership, and the desire to preserve the club's sporting, social and cultural functions, has been central to the Save Bangalow Bowlo campaign.

Over the past year, supporters have explored possible pathways to returning the club to community ownership, while seeking greater clarity about the circumstances of its closure and the obligations arising from the amalgamation with Norths.

The campaign has attracted considerable public and financial support. Across successive fundraising efforts, close to \$200,000 has been donated, although an

initial fundraising campaign was subsequently refunded when the proposed pathway to community ownership changed.

A new Fighting Fund was established to meet legal advice and associated campaign costs. It is administered through the Bangalow Lions Club, with expenditure subject to approval processes involving both the Lions Club Executive and the Save Bangalow Bowlo Steering Committee.

The fundraising has been accompanied by public meetings and a recent rally at the Bangalow Showground, where supporters again demonstrated their desire to see the club returned to community ownership.

The search for information

While the community campaign has continued, efforts to obtain documents and explanations from Norths have also been underway.

According to the media release announcing the proceedings, Greg's legal representatives have written to Norths since 11 June 2026 seeking documents, further explanations of decisions affecting the Bowlo and opportunities for discussions with club members and community representatives.

The Supreme Court application now seeks access to documents that may clarify whether there is a legal basis for further proceedings.

Preliminary discovery is a process available to someone who needs particular information to determine whether they may have grounds to bring a substantive legal claim.

It is an important distinction. The current proceedings do not establish that Norths has breached any legal obligation, nor has the court made findings about its management of the club.

For Greg, taking the matter to court also involves personal and financial considerations.

"None of this is inexpensive and of course there's risk involved, especially for myself."

The Save Bangalow Bowlo Steering Committee supports his application, while continuing its broader efforts to secure a sustainable future for the club.

What happens now?

The immediate question is whether the Supreme Court will grant the preliminary discovery orders sought by Greg.

If successful, the application could provide documents relevant to assessing whether further legal proceedings are warranted. It would not, by itself, resolve the question of the Bowlo's future.

For the Bangalow community, this latest milestone is reminder of how long the club has been closed and how much effort has gone into trying to find a way forward.

There have been public meetings, negotiations, fundraising campaigns, a wonderful community rally and now an application to the state's highest court.

Throughout that time, the underlying questions have remained: what circumstances led to the closure, what obligations exist following the amalgamation and what future is possible for the club?

Almost a year on, those questions remain central to the campaign.

And for a town that has spent 12 months without its Bowlo, the answers matter.

The application is currently before the NSW Supreme Court. No determination has been made.

bringbackthebowlo.com

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Sally Schofield



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The danger decade



Lisa Fitzpatrick helps local women navigate the physical and emotional challenges of menopause

Midlife can be a time of unexpected upheaval, even for women who seem to have it all together. Bangalow-based physiotherapist, sexual health educator and author, **Lisa Fitzpatrick** explores why the 'danger decade' deserves more attention.

Gen X women, those born between 1965 and 1980, might appear as though they have everything together. Keeping an entire household under control, whilst raising kids

and cultivating a career and making it look easy. Privately, however, many women in midlife are sleeping badly, feeling anxious and wondering what happened to the vivacious woman she used to be.

It's natural for women to feel like they are failing when all their usual coping strategies begin to fall short of helping. This is exactly the experience I want more people to understand when I talk about 'the danger decade.' These are the years approximately between 45 and 55, when the menopause transition collides with some of life's greatest demands.

The phrase 'danger decade,' is a call to pay attention to what is happening to the women who may have been considered to be the strong ones. Women deserve support before they reach breaking point.

As a physiotherapist and pelvic and sexual health educator, I believe we need a broader conversation about midlife than just hot flushes and fatigue. Yes, hot flushes and fatigue are part of the story of the seismic hormonal shifts that happen throughout perimenopause and beyond. So are mental health, relationships, sexuality, work - and the often invisible, under-appreciated responsibility of caring for everyone else.

Perimenopause, the transition leading up to menopause, usually begins while a woman is still having a menstrual cycle. Hormonal fluctuations along with disrupted sleep, changes in mood and difficulty concentrating or brain-fog are common symptoms of perimenopause. Some women experience increased anxiety or depression. This includes women who have never struggled with their mental health before.

These changes can be bewildering and debilitating. A capable, smart and successful woman may begin doubting herself. Someone who has always felt socially confident may start withdrawing with social anxiety. Tiny frustrations can feel overwhelming. Especially when nights are repeatedly interrupted by broken sleep and a racing mind and there is little opportunity to recover.

However, hormones are only one part of the picture. These are also the years when children may need substantial emotional or financial support, elderly parents may become frail, and careers demand sustained attention because more senior roles are taken on. Grief, financial pressure, illness and relationship difficulties can converge,



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Advocating for women in the 'danger decade'

making this period of time the highest risk for divorce.

There may be very little space left for a woman to understand what is happening. Telling her to practise more self-care can feel like giving her another task. Sometimes what she really needs is someone to offer to share the load, to take her symptoms seriously. To take the time out to ask how she is really managing. Exhaustion, irritability and changing sexual desire may be so misunderstood – placing intimate relationships under pressure. A partner might interpret less interest in sex as rejection, all

while a woman may feel guilty, disconnected from her changing body or anxious about discomfort.

'I'm experiencing changes I don't understand, and I need us to work through them together,' can open a different pathway for intimacy. Some couples will also benefit from professional support. It's also equally important to resist explaining every relationship difficulty through menopause. Midlife can bring longstanding problems to the forefront of the relationship. Women deserve to have their concerns heard and not dismissed.

Pelvic and sexual health belong in this conversation too. Bladder symptoms, vaginal dryness and pain with intimacy affect the confidence and wellbeing of too many women without adequate care and treatment being provided. Many women feel shame about asking for help, especially if they have been the strong ones. They'll often assume these changes are an unavoidable consequence of getting older.

So how can women move through this decade with greater support? Start by noticing what has changed to let your local GP or women's health physio know. Depending on symptoms and medical history, support may include a team approach from your recommended counsellor or psychologist, menopause focussed doctor, body worker, acupuncturist, naturopath and physiotherapist. Persistent low mood, severe anxiety or difficulty functioning should never be dismissed and deserve prompt assessment.

Practical support matters alongside clinical care. Protecting time to prioritise sleep, gentle movement, fresh air, nourishing meals and connection all help. These only become achievable when responsibilities are shared and women are supported on the home

front as much as they are supported in the workplace and community. Take time to listen to your loved one and ask what might help. Offer something concrete and keep checking in.

Here in Bangalow, community connection makes all the difference. A familiar face on the street might look less at peace – an honest conversation may help a woman feel less alone. The great news is that there is hope beyond the struggle. Because of the challenges I've explored here, midlife can become an exciting time of reinvention: of relationships, expectations and the habits of putting ourselves last. Women may discover their authentic voice, put firmer and healthier boundaries in place and might establish a renewed sense of what brings them pleasure and meaning.

That possibility should never turn into pressure to change suffering into a personal transformation. Treatment, rest and support before transformation is key. In writing my latest book *Sexy Menopause*, I wanted to make space for both the seismic challenges and the exciting possibility that exists in this era of life.

The danger decade deserves our attention because women's wellbeing matters and women are craving soulful and supportive conversations about this time of life - not just collagen powders and oestrogen cream.

Lisa Fitzpatrick is a Bangalow physiotherapist and pelvic and sexual health educator, and author of Sexy Menopause, published on 27 October.

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Mongrel

by Hanako Footman

My daughter recommended this book to me and it did not disappoint. On reading the blurb on the back of the book, I thought it perfectly described the narrative without giving away any of the secrets necessary for this immensely readable novel. I'll do my best to do the same.

There are three central female characters. They are all Japanese and they have all been raised in stable homes with loving parents. But that doesn't guarantee that they are going to move into adulthood and live happy lives, and the author does a fantastic job of describing the various psychological behaviours that might occur when a person's growth is disturbed by an event. Even if that event might not seem at all significant to a different person.

Mei's Japanese mother dies when she is six years old and she is raised in suburban Surrey with her wealthy English father and stepmother. She has strong memories of the holidays she had with her Japanese grandparents when her mother was still alive but has had no contact with them since she was six. She forms a strong bond with her childhood friend, Fran, but during adolescence she suppresses her true feelings for Fran when Fran starts to take an interest in boys.

Yuki dreams of pursuing a career as a concert violinist and convinces her father and mother to allow her to attend a school in London. But once she is there, she falls in love with her teacher and works hard to avoid returning to Japan.

Haruka is probably the most complicated of the three protagonists. She lives with her mother and grandparents in rural Japan and shares her grandfather's love of the land. But her mother dies when she is 15 years old, leaving a massive void in her life and grandparents who are concealing a lot of secrets.

I particularly loved the measures the author took to conceal from the reader how these characters were connected.



It blows me away when a new author starts their career with an astounding first book – how do they do that? An amazing talent and one to look out for in the future.

4.3 stars from Goodreads readers

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Vegetable Quiche

This colourful quiche can be served hot or at room temperature as the weather warms.

METHOD

1. Preheat oven to 200°C.
2. Toss all the vegetables, except the spinach, in olive oil, salt and thyme or rosemary.
3. Roast for 25–30 minutes, until tender and caramelised.
4. Add spinach during the last 3–4 minutes, until wilted.
5. Whisk eggs, cottage cheese, milk, garlic, salt and pepper until smooth.
6. Stir in the other cheeses.
7. Spread roasted vegetables over the base of the pie crust. Pour over the egg mixture.
8. Bake at 190°C for 35–40 minutes, until set in the centre and lightly golden.
9. Let rest for 10 minutes before serving.
10. Serve with your favourite salad.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pie crust (23 cm), lightly prebaked, or use your own favourite recipe
- 1 cup carrots, sliced
- 1 cup butternut pumpkin, diced
- 1 cup beetroot, peeled and diced
- 2 cups fresh spinach
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- Salt and black pepper, to taste
- 1 tbsp dried thyme or rosemary
- 4 large eggs
- 1 cup cottage cheese
- ½ cup milk or cream
- ½ cup shredded mozzarella or Gruyère
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan
- 1 clove garlic, minced

Recipe and illustration Lyn Hand

A little history of quiche

Although we tend to think of quiche as quintessentially French, its origins lie in Lorraine, northeastern France, a region with strong historical ties to Germany. The word quiche is derived from the German *kuchen*, meaning cake.

Early versions were rustic affairs, made with bread dough topped with eggs, cream and sometimes herbs. Over time, bacon became a defining ingredient of quiche Lorraine, although cheese, now common in many recipes, was not traditionally included.

As the dish gained popularity beyond Lorraine, its bread-dough base was increasingly replaced by shortcrust pastry, creating the familiar quiche we enjoy today. By the 20th century, it had become an internationally recognised French dish.

Its versatility has helped secure its place on tables around the world. From traditional bacon and cream to combinations of spinach, pumpkin and cheese, quiche has evolved into a dish that makes excellent use of seasonal ingredients and tastes just as good cold as it does warm.

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Attention please

Sally Schofield talks to local ADHD specialist **Vivian Dunstan** about her new guide for parents of children with ADHD.

What is ADHD?

If you're unfamiliar with ADHD, or wondering whether it might explain some of the challenges you, your child or someone you know experiences, it helps to understand what it can look like in everyday life. ADHD stands for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, a neurodevelopmental condition that can affect attention, activity levels and impulse control, as well as getting started, staying organised, managing time and regulating emotions - and it can present differently in each person.

What would you say to a parent who has just received an ADHD diagnosis for their child and is feeling overwhelmed?

Take a breath. You don't have to learn everything or solve everything today. Your child is still the same child you loved before the diagnosis - you now have another piece of the puzzle to help you understand them better.

It's very easy to disappear down a rabbit hole of information and feel you need to change everything at once. That can create even more overwhelm, so choose one priority and start there.

Although there are common symptoms of ADHD, your child is unique. Get to know the particular challenges they face and understand that they may be struggling with things beyond their current ability to manage independently. They need your support.

Notice their strengths and encourage the things they enjoy and do well. Help with their struggles too, but don't let those become the whole story. Find reliable information and support for yourself along the way. You don't need to become a perfect parent - understanding, connection and a willingness to keep learning go a long way.

If a child with ADHD could tell their parents one thing they wished adults understood about them, what do you think it would be?

"I'm trying harder than you think."

A child might know exactly what they're

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supposed to do and still struggle to get started, remember the steps or manage their emotions. From the outside, that can look like not listening, not caring or being deliberately difficult.

I think they'd want us to understand that having difficulty doing something doesn't mean they don't want to do it. They need us to be curious about what's getting in the way and help them find a way through. Feeling that your parent is on your team makes such a difference.

What happens to a child's sense of self when they're constantly being told to hurry up, concentrate, sit still or try harder?

When a child repeatedly hears those messages, they can start to believe there's something wrong with who they are. "I'm having trouble with this" can become "I'm lazy", "I'm naughty" or "I'm never good enough".

They may already be putting enormous effort into things other children seem to manage easily. Being told to try harder, without being shown how or given appropriate support, can leave them feeling ashamed and defeated.

We can still have expectations, but we need to provide the support that makes those expectations achievable. I want children to grow up understanding their brains and trusting their strengths, rather than feeling they're a constant disappointment.

Screens can be both a refuge and a source of conflict for children with ADHD. How can parents find a healthy balance without turning screen time into a daily battle?

Start by understanding what screens are giving your child. It might be friendship, a sense of achievement, stimulation or a break from a day that's felt very demanding. That matters when we're asking them to switch off.

I encourage families to agree on clear, predictable boundaries together, at a calm time. Discuss stopping points, give transition warnings and help children move into whatever comes next.

We also need to help create alternatives they actually enjoy—doing something fun together, helping them explore an interest or setting up an activity with a friend. Connection might

even begin with a shared family movie night. If we're asking children to spend less time on screens, we need to help fill that space with something worthwhile to them.

Parents need to model healthy habits too. It's hard to ask a child to put their device away if we're constantly on ours.

The aim is a balance that leaves room for sleep, learning, movement, relationships and wellbeing. That's much easier to work towards when we approach it as a shared problem to solve.

You devote attention to parents' wellbeing. What happens when parents become so focused on helping their child that they neglect themselves?

Their world can become smaller and smaller until everything revolves around their child's needs. They might be researching, organising appointments, advocating at school and managing daily challenges while their own sleep, friendships and health slip away.

I know how easy it is to become "the expert" on your child while forgetting that you need support too. When you're running on empty, it's much harder to stay calm and respond in the way you want to. Helping a child regulate their emotions is especially difficult when you're overwhelmed and dysregulated yourself.

That's why parents' wellbeing is foundational to my approach. We ask parents to help their children regulate, but we also need to ask: who is supporting the parent? Caring for yourself is part of caring for your family.

What's the biggest misconception about ADHD that you wish would disappear?

That ADHD is a lack of effort, discipline or good parenting.

It's a neurodevelopmental condition that can affect much more than attention or activity levels — including getting started, managing time, remembering things and regulating emotions. Being able to focus intensely on something interesting doesn't mean a child can summon that same focus whenever an adult asks.

When we mistake difficulty for deliberate behaviour, we tend to respond with blame or punishment. When we understand what's happening, we can offer more useful support.

That shift can change the whole atmosphere in a family.

What prompted you to write a guide for parents of children with ADHD? Was there a particular experience or conversation that made you realise something was missing?

It grew out of my own parenting journey and the conversations I've had with parents through ADHD Support Australia, which I founded in 2013 after my daughter was diagnosed.

Parents were trying so hard, yet many felt overwhelmed, isolated and unsure whose advice to trust. They needed practical, reliable information, but they also needed understanding and support for themselves.

After a diagnosis, much of the attention can centre on medication and getting that right. Medication is an important part of support for many children, but parents also need to understand what else can help.

I wanted to bring that broader picture together in one book: understanding ADHD, building connection, supporting the nervous system, and looking at foundations such as nutrition, sleep and exercise. Those foundations matter for parents as well as children. I also wanted to shine a light on conditions that commonly occur alongside ADHD, so families can recognise when something else may need attention and access appropriate help sooner.

The Ultimate ADHD Parenting Handbook brings together what I've learned through lived experience, my monthly online expert talks, ADHD coaching and years of supporting families. It's the book I wish I'd had access to at the start of my own ADHD parenting journey, all those years ago.

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Get sorted before the silly season

The weather's warming up, and there's usually a fair bit to do around the place. Whether you're in Bangalow village or out in the hinterland, a few small jobs now can help keep your home and the people you care about safer.

Start with your smoke alarms. If you haven't tested them lately, give them a check. Can't safely reach the test button, even with a broom handle? Ask someone for a hand. No point risking a fall to tick a job off the list.

Then have a quick chat with everyone at home. If there was a fire tonight, how would you get outside? Would anyone need help? Choose a meeting place, too. These things are much easier to work out over a cuppa than in the dark with an alarm sounding.

In the kitchen, stay nearby while you're cooking. It's easy to duck out to the garden for one thing and find three more jobs on the way. Turn the stove off if you need to leave. Those weeds will still be there after dinner.

Outside, clear away fallen leaves and garden waste, check the gutters and keep driveways and access points clear. If a job needs a ladder or is getting beyond you, arrange some help.

Finally, give the shed or garage a look over. Most of us have a few paint tins and containers we've been meaning to deal with for years. Check with your council about safe disposal. And no, unfortunately, moving them further into the back corner out of sight doesn't quite count as sorting them.

No need to tackle the whole lot at once. Do a little when you can, and ask for a hand if you need one. Every job sorted is one less thing to worry about, and a little more peace of mind.

Fire and Rescue NSW offers free Home Fire Safety Visits, with practical advice and help checking smoke alarms. Contact Bangalow Fire Station to ask whether a visit is available at your address, or visit fire.nsw.gov.au for more information.

Fire and Rescue NSW



Steven Wedd's prize-winning Gigantic Swamp Lily
photo Carole Gamble

Garden beauties (and a beast)

Carole Gamble explores the beauty and curious history of *Phaius australis* (previously *P. tancarvilleae*), more commonly known as the Gigantic Swamp Lily, plus the emerging trend towards annuals, and the reappearance of the dreaded myrtle rust.

The region's premier Orchid Show was held in Mullumbimby recently and Steven Wedd from Coorabell took out a number of prizes including first prize for this beauty.

Phaius occurs in swamps and wet forests down the east coast from Cooktown to Lake Cathie but is classified as Endangered due to being 'collected' by enthusiasts and overwhelmed by woody weeds.



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Imagine stumbling across a clump of these enormous blooms whilst wandering through the bush! The clumps can be a metre across and their natural propagation method, which can be copied, is the ability to grow from nodes on nonflowering stems that fall into the leaf litter or water and become new plants.

Flowering in late spring and early summer with fantastic large (10cms across) orchids appearing on long stems up to two metres high would be very exciting to find or grow. Each stem can have between four and 12 blooms.

Needless to say, at the Orchid Show, Steven's specimen really stood out on the groaning tables full of orchids grown by the many orchid enthusiasts in our region.

First identified and named by Baron Ferdinand von Mueller in 1858, the scented flowers of the Gigantic Swap Lily have a rather unusual colouring (*Phaius* is from the Greek, meaning 'dusky'). The outer sepals and petals are a dark purple-brown-pink and the inner surface is white, with the outer colour sometimes present at the centre. Divine!

At various times the taxonomy of *Phaius australis* was questioned, but this is the name that has stuck.

If you are lucky enough to obtain *Phaius*, and Burringbar Native Nursery often has stock, it is obvious that you must recreate their natural conditions and provide shady to intermittent morning sun and rich soil and moisture. In the garden or in a large container, provide lots of organic matter and protection from strong winds and natural soil improvers like Seasol and perhaps weak solutions of Epsom salts (magnesium) to improve the overall health and strength of the growing bulbs and leaves.

Steven Wedd is always at Bangalow Garden Club which meets at 1.30pm on the first Wednesday each month in the Moller Pavilion at the Showground and is forever generous with his enthusiastic advice.

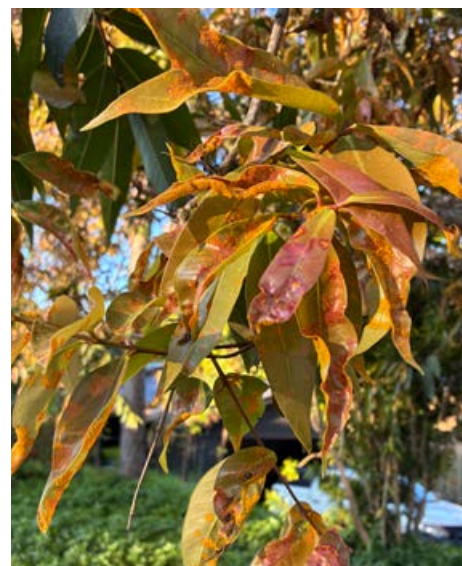


Cheerful colour coming soon to a garden near you

Annuals are back

After decades of garden design trends favouring permanence and structure, little streetside gardens are making a welcome return. They're appearing as part of larger garden designs in the 'leafy' suburbs of Brisbane, which share our subtropical conditions. Here, many people may not actually get their hands dirty but still love beautiful, enviable gardens to complement their lovely, restored Queenslanders.

Old-fashioned, colourful annuals including pansies, snapdragons and all manner of cheerful blooms are creating a fresh new look. It's something we can easily include in our own plantings, with annuals simply replaced when their short-lived beauty fades. Fresh, fashionable and perhaps even trendsetting. You heard it here first!



The devastating myrtle rust

Myrtle rust on the rise

Myrtle rust devastated our region's lilly pilli population some years ago and then seemed to disappear, but I recently spotted a large Jambos much affected – it's impossible to miss the damage. *Austropuccinia psidii* has come to us from South America and minimising its destruction is something that we can all help with. It is a fungal infection but the use of antifungals should only be used as a last resort. Antifungal treatments are not selective and usage will wipe out all the beneficial fungal activity that we now know is essential to soil and therefore, plant health. When you notice the beginning (brownish-purple spots on new foliage) practising good plant hygiene- remove all affected foliage. DO NOT put into your green bin or compost but carefully place prunings into black plastic bags and tie up the top before placing into your red bin. Be as careful as possible because the orange and bright yellow spore bodies that quickly develop in the centre of each spot will spread on contact and wind.

If not removed the plant will soon be covered in dry, withered and distorted branchlets and foliage. This all happens fast so your action is really important. Botanists have been working on rust resistant species, the most popular being Sublime Acmena but we don't wish to lose all of our lilly pillies which are used in most gardens.

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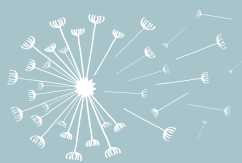
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Arts and About

Explorations

Local artists Leah Thiessen and Steve Waller bring together works shaped by curiosity, experimentation and close observation. Leah's richly layered paintings draw on the landscapes and waterways around the Terranora Broadwater, while Steve works with drawing and fragmented materials to explore time, memory and perception. Their exhibition invites visitors to look closely and discover new ways of seeing.

When: until Saturday 21 November, Wednesday-Saturday 10am-4pm

Where: Lone Goat Gallery, 28 Lawson Street, Byron Bay

Tickets/info: Free entry

Melia Naughton is Amalfi Roast

Following sold-out shows at the Drill Hall and Byron theatres, and a Sydney and Melbourne Fringe tour, Melia Naughton brings Amalfi Roast back to for a special encore performance. Blending original songs, sharp observations and plenty of heart, Melia finds the humour in life's awkward and joyful moments. An evening of music, storytelling, big laughs and a few saucy surprises. **Age:** 15+ years

When: Thursday 26 November, 7pm (doors 6.40pm)

Where: Brunswick Picture House

Tickets/info: brunswickpicturehouse.com

nUdGe nUdGe Wink Wink

A party with a conscience returns to the Billinudgel Hotel, with DJs Groove Terminator, Mirus, Dale Stephen and Lord Sut. Cunning Stunts' events combine dancing with fundraising for local charities, with more than \$466,000 raised for 42 organisations to date. The November and December events support Human Nature Adventure Therapy, which provides nature-based mental health support for young people across the Far North Coast.

When: Saturday 7 November, 4-11pm

Where: The Billinudgel Hotel, 1 Wilfred Street, Billinudgel

Tickets/info: cunningstunts.com.au/event/nudge-nudge-wink-wink-07-11-2026/

The Artist Collective art show

A smorgasbord of work by local women artists – including three 2479 residents – fills Ewingsdale's 1895 country hall for the Artist Collective art show. The exhibition opens on Friday 13 November, with a gala evening followed by two days of art on display. Read our feature story on page 6.

When: Opening Friday 13 November, 5-9pm; Saturday 14 and Sunday 15 November, 10am-4pm

Where: Ewingsdale Hall, William Flick Lane (off Ewingsdale Road)

Tickets/info: Free entry

Contact: 0477 438 096

The Rocky Horror Show

A wrong turn, a stormy night and a mysterious castle lead Brad and Janet into a world where the usual rules no longer apply. Ballina Players brings Richard O'Brien's cult musical to the stage, complete with the flamboyant Frank-N-Furter and a rock-and-roll score that has inspired generations of devoted followers. Expect outrageous characters, playful provocation and the irresistible pull of the Time Warp. With only two designated interactive nights across the four-week season, audiences keen to join the traditional call-outs should check the booking information when choosing their performance.

When: Friday 13 November to Sunday 6 December, selected performances

Where: Ballina Players Theatre, 24 Swift Street, Ballina

Tickets/info: ballinaplayers.com.au

A Streetcar Named Desire

Blanche DuBois arrives in New Orleans seeking shelter with her sister Stella, carrying the remnants of a life she is determined to keep intact. Her encounter with Stella's husband, Stanley Kowalski, sets in motion a devastating struggle between desire, power and illusion. Bangalow Theatre Company brings Tennessee Williams' landmark drama to Byron Theatre, exploring the vulnerability beneath Blanche's carefully maintained appearance and the forces that threaten to overwhelm her. Continuing from its October opening, the season offers November audiences a chance to experience one of theatre's most compelling and unsettling classics.

When: Sunday 1 November, 3pm; Saturday 7 November, 1pm and 7pm; Sunday 8 November, 3pm

Where: Byron Theatre, 69 Jonson Street, Byron Bay

Tickets/info: byroncentre.com.au

Byron Wellness Festival

Three days of music, movement and mindful living come to Red Devil Park as Byron Wellness Festival returns to Bundjalung Country. Boy & Bear headline a diverse music program featuring YAIMA, Kim Churchill, Kyle Lionhart, Dubarray and Samuel J, alongside sound healing, yoga, ceremony and talks from leading wellness practitioners. With sessions designed to restore body, mind and spirit, the festival invites visitors to slow down, reconnect and enjoy a weekend of music and community.

When: Friday 27 to Sunday 29 November 2026

Where: Red Devil Park, Byron Bay

Tickets/info: byronwellnessfestival.com

Sprung Dis-Co Ball

Sprung's Dis-Co Ball brings together dancing and pop-up performances by Sprung artists. The d/Deaf and disabled community, friends and supporters are invited to dress as their favourite icon and enjoy an afternoon of music and performance. The venue is fully accessible, with Auslan interpreters.

When: Saturday 28 November, 2-6pm

Where: Ballina RSL Club, 1 Grant Street, Ballina

Tickets/info: events.humanitix.com/sprung-dis-co-ball-2026/tickets; sprung.org.au/disco-ball

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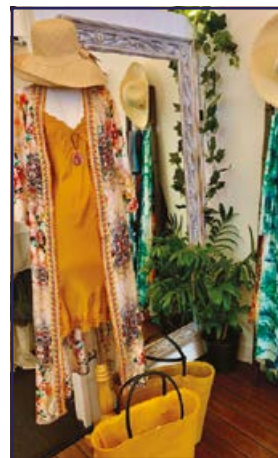
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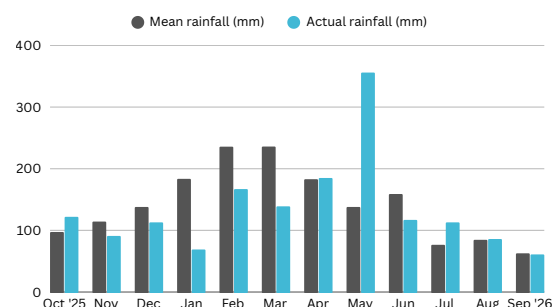


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Bangalow Rainfall



Source: BOM daily rainfall data Nashua (Wilsons River) station 58162

A hidden hunger

Behind Bangalow's beautiful homes, bustling cafés and relative prosperity, some people are struggling to afford life's necessities. A dedicated group of local volunteers are making sure that those doing it tough have somewhere to turn.

There's an assumption that life in our village and surrounds is peaceful and abundant for all. But that's not always the case.

Tucked away at the creek end of the Men's Shed car park, is a modest but essential community pantry. The small, purpose-built structure was made possible through donated materials, local tradespeople and volunteer labour.

It is accessible 24 hours a day, allowing people to collect basic food items without having to identify themselves, make an appointment or explain why they need assistance.

Volunteers restock the pantry daily, with community contributions of in-date, non-perishable items always welcome. Baby supplies, school supplies and pet supplies are often donated. There is something both heartening and sobering about a community pantry that needs replenishing every day.

The Pantry's guiding principle is straightforward: take what you need and give what you can.

For someone struggling to put food on the table, the pantry offers immediate practical relief. But its importance goes beyond the groceries on its shelves. It provides a measure of privacy and dignity, allowing people to seek help without fear of judgement. Vouchers are also distributed weekly to those who require a bit of help making ends meet.

The need for that discretion is particularly important in a community where poverty can be difficult to acknowledge.

The combined cost of food vouchers and pantry operations is approximately \$50,000 a year. Bangalow Lions and the CWA contribute roughly half, while Byron Services Club has donated \$10,000 in each of the past two years. Individual donations help meet the remaining costs.

As the organisers acknowledge, "Ongoing funding is always an issue."

David Noakes from the Mens Shed, Neil from Bangalow Lions, Ruth from Bangalow CWA and their fellow volunteers are among those keeping the initiative running. They are part of a much wider network of people who have contributed their time, skills, money and care over the years.

According to the organisers, between 10 and 12 vouchers worth \$50 each are usually distributed every week. They estimate that around 80% of those seeking assistance are women, while approximately half are regular visitors. Others need a helping hand through a particularly difficult period.

These are not necessarily people whose struggles are obvious to their neighbours. They may be working, raising families, caring for others or managing circumstances that have changed unexpectedly.

The difficulties are varied, but the need for practical help is very real.

The vouchers, the pantry, the cups of tea and an encouraging chat cannot solve every problem associated with financial hardship or housing insecurity. But they can make an immediate difference to someone who needs food and care today and are a reminder that they have not been forgotten.

Donations can be made via

Lions Relief and Assistance
BSB 728 728
Account 223 157 67

The Bangalow Herald

FEDERAL DAY OF BLUES
SATURDAY 21st NOVEMBER

Nathan Beretta
Mojo Webb
Federal Blues Inc. (FBI)
JB's Bluesbreakers
Trombone Kelli Gang
How Dare You's

TICKETS HUMANITIX

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What's on

Micro 20 × 20

When Until Sunday 29 November

Where The Front Room,
Station Street Co-op, Bangalow

Info gallery3byronbay.com.au/micro-20-2026

The sixth exhibition in the MICRO series brings more than 200 works by 150 local artists to The Front Room at Station Street Co-op. Running from late October through November, this exhibition is an opportunity to explore a wide range of small-scale works and discover the creativity of artists from across the region.

Rain of Animals + Pirritu

When Thursday 5 November, 6pm

Where Pearces Creek Hall

Tickets events.humanitix.com/rain-of-animals-at-pearces-creek-hall

Info linktr.ee/PearcesCreekHall

Straight from Scotland, Pepita and Theo of Rain of Animals bring accomplished fiddle and mandolin playing, close harmonies and a lively mix of bluegrass, old-time music and swing. They share the evening with Ngilyampaa musician Pirritu, whose gentle, melodic songs tell stories of sadness, love and hope. A special night of acoustic music in the Hinterland.

Wild Aid

When Saturday 7 November, 4pm-midnight

Where Arts Factory, Byron Bay

Tickets \$120 plus booking fee

Info wildaid-2026.raiselysite.com

Wild Aid returns to the Arts Factory for an evening of live music in support of Wildlife Recovery Australia. Kate Miller-Heidke, Sarah McLeod, Clea and more will perform, with proceeds supporting the organisation's work caring for sick, injured and orphaned native animals. Come for the music and help make a difference for local wildlife.

125th Bangalow Show

When Friday 13 and Saturday 14 November

Where Bangalow Showgrounds,
Market Street, Bangalow

Info bangalowshow.com.au

A much loved fixture on the local calendar, the Bangalow Show brings the community together for a celebration of country life, agricultural traditions and local talent. Expect livestock judging, horse events, pavilion exhibits, farm produce and plenty of friendly competition. From prize-winning animals to the handiwork of local exhibitors, it's a chance to enjoy the traditions that have made the Show part of Bangalow life for generations.

Dr Baz Open Mic

When Friday 13 November, 7pm

Where Coorabell Hall

Tickets \$10 entry

Info coorabellhall.net

Musicians and music lovers are invited to Coorabell Hall for Dr Baz Open Mic. Take your turn on stage and share your musical talent, or settle in to enjoy performances from the community. Curry and the bar will be available from 5-7pm before the open mic begins at 7pm.

Rehydrate Australia Film Screening

When Saturday 14 November, 6.30pm

Where Pearces Creek Hall

Tickets \$5

Info events.humanitix.com/rehydrate-australia-screening-and-q-and-a-at-pearces-creek-hall

Food security, floods, drought, biodiversity, clean water and farm productivity are among the issues explored in *Rehydrate Australia*. The film follows land managers using natural sequence farming to improve their land and its ability to retain water. Stay for a Q&A with Stuart Andrews of Tarwyn Park Training and Joshu Wellman of Banyula Farm. Food by Take Care will be available. Supported by a Rous Community Grant.

ArtsNational presents: A Road Less Travelled

When Monday 16 November, doors 6pm for 6.30pm start

Where A&I Hall, Station Street, Bangalow

Tickets Members free; guests may purchase a \$35 single event membership

Info trybooking.com/au/event/1479043

Discover intriguing and little-known places in Mexico, Lebanon, Iran and Alaska through four short presentations by travellers with unique experiences to share. The evening begins with the group's AGM, followed by the presentations and a Christmas celebration. Guests can enjoy food, beverages, raffles and a festive get-together at the A&I Hall.

Bangalow Community Association AGM

When Tuesday 17 November, 7pm

Where Heritage House, 4 Ashton Street, Bangalow

Info 0414 959 936

Residents and business owners across postcode 2479 are invited to the Bangalow Community Association's annual general meeting. The evening will provide an opportunity to hear about current development and infrastructure matters affecting the village, offer informed feedback and join the conversation about Bangalow's future. Those interested in membership are also welcome.



Connecting Generations - fun for the whole family Photo supplied

Christmas Cake & Craft Sale

When Saturday 21 November, from 7.30am until sold out
Where Bangalow Heritage House Museum, 4 Ashton Street, Bangalow
Info facebook.com/Bangalowheritagehouse
 Get ahead of the Christmas preparations with a homemade Christmas cake from Bangalow Heritage House Museum, ready to mature in time for Christmas Day. Visitors can also browse a display of art and crafts created by members of the Bangalow Historical Society. Come early, as cakes will be available only until sold out.

Federal Day of Blues

When Saturday 21 November, 2-10pm
Where Federal Halls, 3 Federal Drive, Federal
Tickets \$75
Info events.humanitix.com/federal-day-of-blues
 Eight hours of live blues music will fill Federal's historic community halls, with performances from Nathan Beretta, Mojo Webb, Federal Blues Inc, JB's Bluesbreakers, Trombone Kelli Gang and How Dare Yous. Japanese, Chinese and Australian food, coffee, gelato and an on-site bar will be available. All proceeds support the maintenance and repair of Federal's community-owned School of Arts hall and former church, cared for by local volunteers. No BYO alcohol.

Connecting Generations Bangalow Spring Event

When Saturday 21 November, 3-6pm
Where Bangalow Heritage House & Museum, 4 Ashton Street, Bangalow
Info facebook.com/ConnectingGenerationsBangalow
 Young families and older members of the community are invited to spend an afternoon together at Heritage House. Activities include tying knots to make teepees, building a village from cardboard boxes, weaving, nature crafts, music and dancing. There will be plenty of opportunities for different generations to share skills, stories and fun, with pizza available to purchase from Gunter's Flammkuchen.

CWA Christmas Cake and Produce Stall

When Saturday 28 November, 8am-1pm
Where Bangalow CWA Rooms, 31 Byron Street, Bangalow
Info facebook.com/BangalowCWA
 There's nothing better than a homemade Xmas cake, slap on some butter, pop on the kettle, and you have fruity, nutty seasonal magic! Store bought cakes just don't hit the spot. There's no love in a mass-produced cake. The Bangalow CWA make some of the best Xmas cakes in the land. Their Xmas Cake Stall has a selection of incredible cakes - from gluten free to gluten full, some are grandma favourite recipes, others are classics from the CWA cookbook, and others are modern adaptations of a classic seasonal staple. Get your jingle bells on and have a Xmas cake your whole family will be raving about! You can even pretend you made it!

Diary

November 2026

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7	Wild Aid
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	Bangalow Museum Christmas Cake & Craft Sale
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	Tap Divas
28	CWA Christmas Cake and Produce Stall

December/January edition deadlines

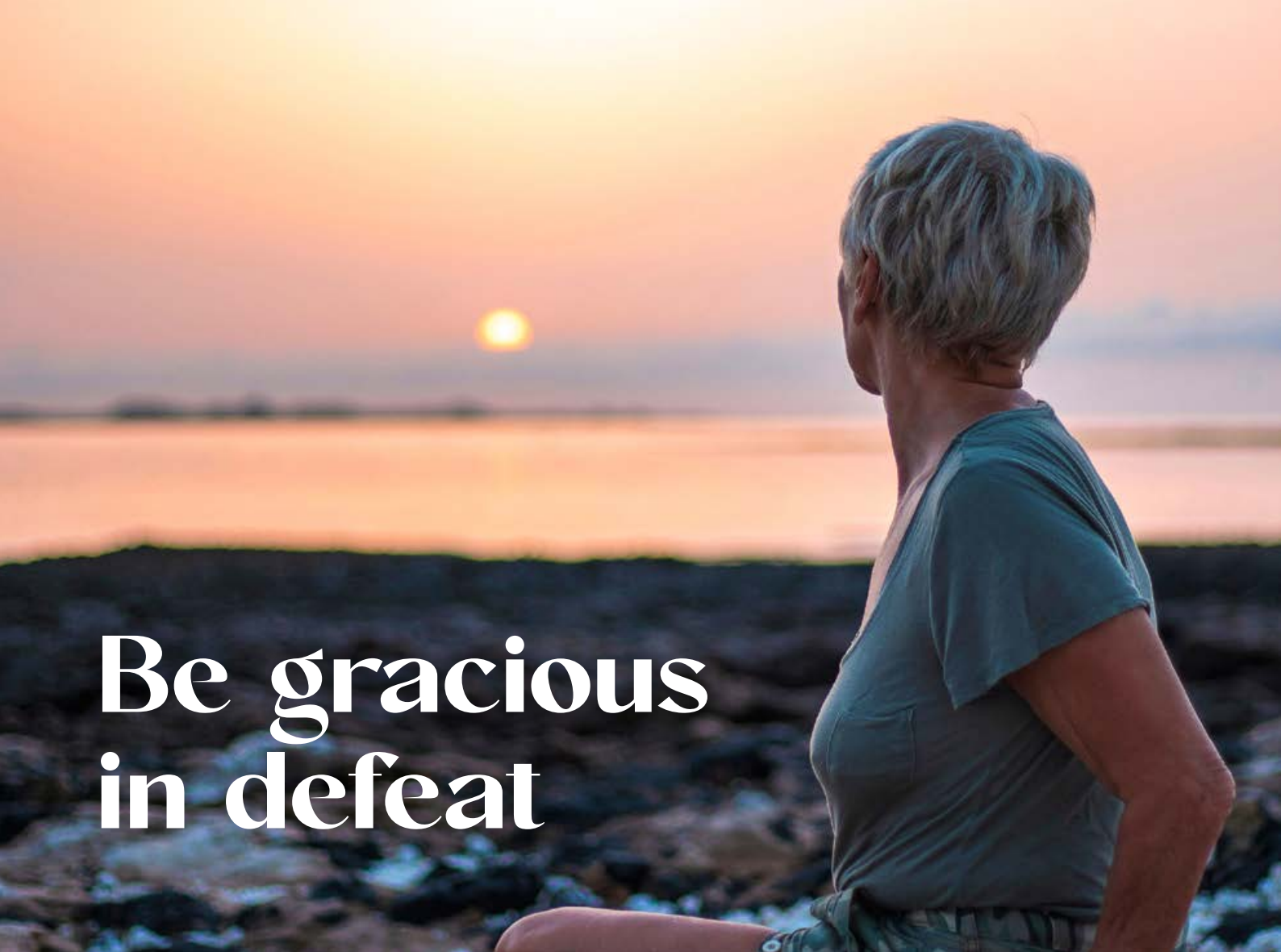
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Join the Bangalow Tap Divas for an afternoon of Tap Dancing, Vintage Glamour, Music, Fun & Afternoon Tea!



Be gracious in defeat

A little wisdom can go a long way, until life decides to teach you a lesson of its own. **Dr Airdre Grant** discovers that pride comes before a fall, sometimes more than once.

Have you ever had to take your own advice? It can be galling. The other day my son-in-law was ranting about a parking ticket he had received. Upon inquiry, it was apparent that the ticket was a fair cop. He had overstayed in a clearly marked spot. This was an insult to his hip pocket that had to be absorbed.

As I recall, I was annoyingly sanctimonious at the time. I said, be gracious in defeat, and I quietly shone my giver-of-good-advice badge.

But, ungrateful, he simply looked irritated and walked off grumbling. Why was it not apparent that I was showing him how to become a wiser, calmer person like, for example, me?

But no, I was smug. That is until a few days later when the same thing happened. I was a

mere 10-minute overstayer and there was my ticket. I was just as irritated as my son-in-law.

So much for graciousness. Life's rich irony. The moment you set yourself up on a pedestal, you can be sure there will be a come-uppance.

A man I faintly knew saw me in the street and said, 'You write those columns in *The Bangalow Herald*, don't you?'

'Why, yes,' I said, preparing to be praised for my wit and incisive writing.

'Never read them!' he said. 'Just read it for the council news and the ads. I really like the What's On. That's it. Har! Har! Har!' and off he strode in his crusty work boots, faded t-shirt, too short shorts and high-vis shirt.

I looked at the What's On and thought can't see you attending the upcoming full moon ceremony, mate. But people come in all sorts of disguises. For all I knew he might be a warlock with a huge following of lithe young men and women, outfitted in loose linen outfits in creamy shades of pink and beige,

chanting together in a vine covered, flag bedecked tipi out in the hills. He might even be a guide for mushroom and ayahuasca journeys. You never know what goes on in the secret valleys of The Shire.

I went to the beach and watched the dreamy sunset. A few dolphins splashed about in picture-perfect waves. Life was just too gorgeous to be caught up in petty frustrations. I was calm, cleansed by the sweetness of ocean and the serene, late afternoon sundown.

Lucky me, I thought, returning comfortably to my smugness.

When I got back to my car, there was another ticket.

Gracious in defeat, I muttered as I drove home a tad quickly. Gracious in defeat.