

2515

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Coast news

Sheralee Rae

Meet the businesswoman with
a collective vision for Thirroul

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Meet Our Contributors



Louise Wellington was born and raised in Coledale and now calls Thirroul home. She has a Masters in Urban Management and Planning, and spent 16 years working as a planner in Local Government and the private sector. She helps drive the Facebook Group “Thirroul Community for a Sustainable Town Centre” and savethirroulvillage.com. Despite now primarily working in the creative and hospitality industries, she still has a passion for collaborative and sustainable urban design and community engagement in the built environment.



Ali Millgate is a freelance writer, copywriter and marketing consultant who has a passion for social media, content and helping small businesses succeed. With a Bachelor of Media Communication (Public Relations & Journalism) and a Diploma of Business (Marketing), Ali enjoyed 10 years at creative and communications agencies in Sydney, before migrating to the Northern Illawarra five years ago. A mum of twin boys, Ali can be found at alimillgate.com.au, in her Thirroul home office or chasing her boys at a playground somewhere.



Dr Anna Putnis qualified in 2000 from Sheffield, England. She initially trained as a general surgeon in London and worked in a trauma hospital in South Africa. She retrained as a GP on return from Africa, qualifying in 2010. She worked in London in a predominantly Asian area, with a high incidence of diabetes, before moving to Australia in 2014. Anna is a very friendly and approachable doctor. She lives locally, with her husband and three sons. In her spare time she enjoys exploring the world, camping, exercising, food and wine.



Marie-Noel Brassat has been working with and advocating for small businesses across three continents, for over 30 years. She has written several business profiles, training manuals, internal and external communication documents and advertising copy for a wide variety of independent businesses. She recently created a ‘Virtual Market’ in the UK for independents, artisans and small food producers to support them during Covid. Marie-Noel has now settled in Wollongong with her two children.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: The publishers acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and their cultural and spiritual connection to this land. Their stories are written in the land and hold great significance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, from the mountains to the sea.



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NEXT DEADLINE May 20, 2021

COVER Sheralee Rae of Thirroul Collective.

Photo: Anthony Warry Photography

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NEXT DEADLINE
May 20
for June's
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Kaya Jewellery's
Marie-Noel Brasset
and Marlowe
Richards (at right).

What's our secret to staying sane as working mothers?

Building strong social connections, writes Marie-Noel Brasset

Marlowe Richards and I met a few years ago when we were both facing challenges in our lives.

I had recently moved with my family to Australia from the UK. Meanwhile Marlowe was struggling with how to take her business to the next level. We bonded over our Canadian heritage, motherhood, food and, most certainly, our respective challenges.

For my part, I was busy helping my two children as they settled into new schools, a new home and life without the immediate love and support of their friends and extended family. Their father, meanwhile, was struggling to adjust to his new life as well and fell into a depression. I began by reaching out in any way I could to build a new community around my isolated family.

Meanwhile, Marlowe was trying to find a way out of doing the tough slog of selling her jewellery at markets to find a more profitable and effective way of doing business. She founded Kaya Jewellery at a time when everything shifted, when her family suddenly needed her more than ever.

Marlowe's need to be more available for her children and husband meant that her demanding career in interior design had to take a backseat and Marlowe had to find an alternative to continue to work, as well as support her family.

Kaya Jewellery was borne out of her passion for combining her love of design with supporting people to find greater wellbeing using natural remedies. Kaya's wellness jewellery is made for meditation, yoga, diffusing essential oils and

chakra healing. However, working at various markets took Marlowe away from home most weekends while evenings would often be spent making jewellery and doing the necessary admin to keep the business going.

It was a difficult time for both of us, each one trying desperately to support our respective families and, as is often the way, we were overwhelmed, too busy and therefore putting our own needs last.

Connecting as friends became a lifeline for us. When you spend so much time looking after the needs of the people around you on top of attending to your numerous daily commitments, your own wellbeing can often become neglected – even if wellbeing is your business!

Marlowe and I now work together, building the business, as well as supporting one another as we navigate motherhood and all of life's ups and downs. It is by fostering friendships that we build a community (particularly important when extended family isn't readily available).

It is by building strong social connections in our lives that we are more likely to enjoy feelings of happiness, self-worth and overall wellbeing. And when we look after our own wellbeing, we become better mothers. **2515**

Visit Kaya Jewellery at the Timbermill Studios in Bulli or go to www.kayajewellery.com.au

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Slow Down Day ahead

In a first for the Illawarra, three schools are hoping to trial 30km/h zones later this year. Here's how three determined parents met and are making it happen. 2515 reports



From left to right: Jon Lindley, Lena Huda and Kelly Andrews at the hazardous Uralba Street crossing near Lindsay Park Public School.

Ever since Frank the lyrebird was killed in a hit and run on the back streets of Coledale in July 2020, the forces of change have been gathering. Now a series of serendipitous meetings has brought together the dream team of local road safety advocates.

30please.org founder Lena Huda was at the Buttenshaw Drive meeting last July when Cr Mithra Cox heard residents' road safety fears. Mithra introduced Lena to Jon Lindley, founder of the working action group, Safe Streets to School. Then the pair met Kelly Andrews, CEO of Healthy Cities Illawarra, at a Zoom meeting late last year.

Now the trio – all parents of school-aged children who know the hazards first-hand – have joined forces to lobby for change.

"We're looking holistically at community attitudes and behaviours and infrastructure to make active transport, walking and cycling, to schools safer," Kelly tells 2515.

In February they started on the paperwork – applying for grants and preparing a joint submission for NSW Treasury for Wollongong to become a pilot city in a \$10 million Active Transport Project.

They are determined to seize the momentum generated after Wollongong was chosen to host the UCI Road World Championships in September 2022 and are applying for UCI legacy grants.

"One idea that we are putting together is working with three school communities in the Figtree area – Figtree Heights, Lindsay Park, and Mount St Thomas public schools," Kelly says.

This project would have three components. Firstly, advocating for infrastructure improvements

(like pedestrian crossings) and educating children (eg, with a bike safety workshop at schools).

"Then the third part, which would be more challenging, would be trialling, just for one day in that school area, to slow down to 30km/h. It's called a Slow Down Day and it's modelled off of a World Health Organisation event. Going 30 is much safer than 40 if you have a collision."

It's a fledgling plan but already principals and P&Cs are on board. The trial may take place in term 4 and would be a first for the Illawarra.

"We're trying to get less kids driven to school," Kelly says, "because about two-thirds get driven when they live within 1 or 2km of the school, so you get all that congestion too, which is unsafe."

"It will increase physical activity, and the kids will get all the health benefits from that."

"It's got so much going for it, but it's really difficult to make it happen. It's just quite fascinating, the dominance of the car."

"Motorists think that they're in control. They think that the car has more right to be on the road than a cyclist or a pedestrian."

"One advantage in slowing down and piloting just slowing down is that it doesn't cost anything."

"It's not a huge infrastructure change that has to go through a capital works project. It's literally just residents having a change of mindset and behaviour, to make it a safer environment for kids to walk and cycle to school."

"It's really controversial. But it can be changed."

Visit healthycities.org.au; safe-streets-to-school.org and 30please.org 2515



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Climate Camp Out sparks hope

By Kristen McDonald, of Extinction Rebellion Northern Illawarra

"Hi, I am Craig and I work in the steelworks." This isn't a line you would expect from a keynote speaker at a climate activist event. But it was ex-coal miner and current steelworks employee, Craig Perritt, who got everyone's attention at the Camp Out for Climate last month.

Craig shared his story of how he came to realise the devastating impacts that mining has had on our region's ecology and on the climate at large. However, rather than shaming or leaving the industries that have supported him, he's advocating for change from within and for a just transition for our coal community.

This is just one of the positive messages that were shared at the Camp Out for Climate, which brought together over 250 community members to connect over the critical issue of climate change. Mithra Cox, Greens MP, reflected on how years ago it would have been unthinkable that the polluting Hazelwood Power Station would today be en-route to closure, or that our local council would have declared a climate emergency thanks to the actions of many demanding change. Tim Flannery, 2007 Australian of the Year, reminded us that the scientific and technological solutions are available now, all that is lacking is political willpower.

The message of hope and of the importance of community collaboration was reflected throughout the Camp Out. Kids enjoyed coffee sack races and recycled craft activities, whilst adults wrote letters to their MPs, shared ideas in an open mic forum and enjoyed musical acts, such as Dream Good and Street Foxes. Local businesses, including Thirroul's bookshop, health grocers and cafes, supported the event by donating items for an auction.

Yet underlying the festive day, an urgent message wasn't lost. We are in the midst of an emergency. The Black Summer bushfires gave us a taste of what a world with 1.5°C warming will look like and we are on track for an even greater temperature

increase. The funeral procession by Les Femmes Fatales sang a sombre tune: every day 150 species may become extinct due to climate change, something reflected in an art installation of tombstones, which Camp Out participants helped to complete on the day.

Let's continue to join together as a community to share ideas and create change. If you'd like to get further involved in positive climate action, please join the Extinction Rebellion Northern Illawarra's mailing list: www.xrni.org.au **2515**





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Quiller extraordinaire

Thirroul artist Wendy Verity won three 1st prizes at the 2021 Royal Easter Show for her unique quilled artworks. Thanks to Wendy for sharing her story.



Please tell us a bit about yourself.

I have lived in Thirroul for 22 years and grew up in Helensburgh. Now retired, I have time to pursue my passion of quilling. I also love watercolours, travelling in Australia and overseas, which gives me inspiration for my pieces.

Tell us about your background as an artist and the kind of works you make.

My artistic journey started in childhood. I elected visual arts in high school, my teacher saw raw talent and was supportive of my works. Also my mother was very creative and I inherited many skills and her "can do" attitude towards making unique creations.

Not many people knew what quilling was when I started 30 years ago. I stumbled upon the ancient craft of paper filigree while doing art research and, after trying it, was immediately hooked.

Over the years I've won prizes and judged many competitions, had my works published in magazines and exhibited several times. I am one of three people in Australia who have been accredited by The Quilling Guild.

Basically, I make artworks from strips of paper, rolled to make tight and loose coils, then glued together to create a design. These can be made into greeting cards, a wall hanging or a 3D object.

Congratulations on your Easter Show triumph! What prizes did you win?

At the 2021 Royal Easter Show I was awarded three first prizes in the Quilling category of the Arts and Crafts Section. Two of the art works – *Orchids* and *Lighthouse* – were displayed in the Showcase of Excellence, which is quite an honour.

What inspired your award-winning works?

My three pieces were all quite different in style and technique.

Orchids was inspired by the orchids my father grows. I wanted to achieve a life-like flower using only traditional techniques. Making the individual parts, shaping them and joining the fragile components to make a 3D flower was a challenge. I think I achieved a realistic spray of flowers.

Fascinator was a whimsical, unconventional creation. I wondered if I could make a wearable headpiece entirely out of paper. It is made up of giant ring coils that quite often collapse if left unsupported. This piece is a little space-age and defies gravity.

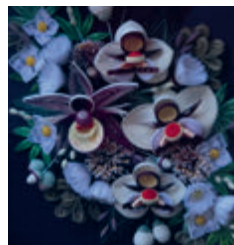
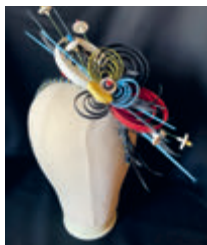
Lighthouse came about because of a new "on edge" category. All the paper had to be glued on its spine with minimal traditional techniques.

What's next, and where can we see your work?

After a year of creating for the Show's Feature Display and entering the competitions, I may take a little rest but will start on next year's entries soon. I also hope to put together a solo exhibition.

Look at Sydney Quillers Facebook page and my Instagram to see my art. **2515**

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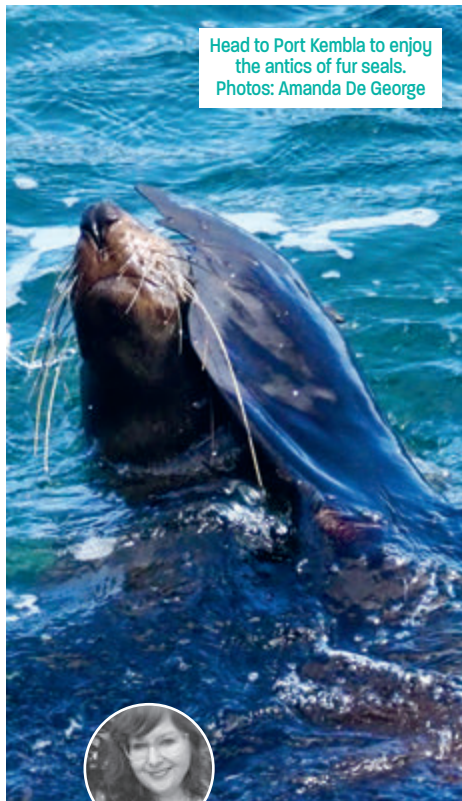


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Head to Port Kembla to enjoy
the antics of fur seals.
Photos: Amanda De George



Backyard Zoology

With Amanda De George



I learnt a new word. As someone who loves words and uses way too many of them in the one sentence, that was an exciting moment. I mean, who doesn't love to fling a new word around? The word is 'galumphing' by the way and I'll get to how I came about it in a moment.

I recently strayed outside of the Northern Illawarra as I was searching for a very particular animal in a very particular spot after a particularly stressful few weeks. Some people turn to chocolate or wine when stressed, I turn to nature. Who am I kidding? I turn to nature AND chocolate AND wine, preferably all at the same time!

As soon as I had a free minute and the sun was shining, I jumped in my car and headed to the eastern breakwall at Port Kembla. If you've never been, when you first turn up it looks as though you won't be able to access the break wall itself with a huge metal fence, rusted from the salt air, surrounding the entrance.

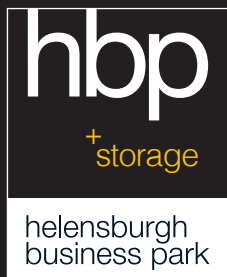
The break wall is closed from dusk to dawn and occasionally if the weather is really bad but, if the gate is open, you're all good to step through and out onto the path. You'll be in good company with lots of locals out walking, along with people fishing at various spots. But I didn't head out to people watch. I wanted to see a fur seal.

Martin Island, which is about 10 minutes from Port Kembla by boat, is home to a bachelor group of young male fur seals. The numbers vary from around 50 to 100 animals and are made up of both New Zealand and Australian Fur Seals so keep your eyes peeled further out and you might be lucky enough to spot one of the boys out hunting for fish.

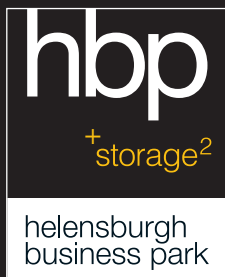
But if you want to see one closer, there is usually one or two fur seals that hang around the break wall itself and, luckily for us, they choose to sun bask and swim, rolling over and over again in the emerald-coloured water near the end of the wall and very conveniently almost directly under the sign attached to one of the rocks warning people to not touch the animals. Basically you just keep walking until you see the sign and then peer over the edge. Thank you, seals!

Now to that new word. 'Galumphing' is a kind of hilarious sounding word but also the perfectly descriptive term used for the way that seals move along on land. Once in the ocean they are graceful and playful and also lightning fast when hunting for food but on land, well, it's all flopping along on their stomachs, like some huge, blubbery caterpillar. And that makes them all the more loveable if you ask me. **2515**

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Surfrider South Coast has branch meetings on the first Wednesday of every month at Coledale RSL at 6.30pm. New members welcome.

The Mona Vale PEP11 protest. Photo: Tim Seaton

On Board With *Surfrider*

By Coledale's Susie Crick, head of the Plastic Research program at Surfrider Australia

Goodbye shark nets!

Great news for the residents and visitors of Coledale, Austinmer and Thirroul beaches as we are set to receive more efficient and innovative technologies to deter sharks.

Last month Wollongong City Council voted unanimously to get rid of the outdated shark nets and replace them with more progressive and effective methods such as aerial drones, helicopter surveillance, listening stations, personal shark deterrent devices and SMART drumlines.

Of the marine life that has been caught and entangled in NSW shark nets, 94% were dolphins, turtles and stingrays, as well as many other threatened and protected species. Of the new technologies that are presented as favourable alternatives to shark nets, marine scientists from the University of Wollongong welcome the use of SMART drumlines as they provide valuable data for ongoing research.

Petroleum Exploration protests

The Surfrider Foundation has been busy protesting against the Petroleum Exploration Permit 11 (PEP11) licence due to expire in February this year.

PEP11 is a licence for oil and gas exploration in the Sydney Basin just off beaches between Manly and Newcastle. Mining companies Advent Energy, BPH Energy, Bounty Oil & Gas are now pushing for NOPTA (National Offshore Petroleum Titles Administrator) to approve a licence extension and change the title to allow drilling for oil and gas offshore.

The decision, to be made by the Minister for

Resources, Keith Pitt MP, has been postponed from the February deadline but could be imminent, so we need to make lots of noise on this.

A few weeks ago, over 250 surfers and ocean lovers participated in a paddle out at Mona Vale Basin with former surfing world champions Tom Carroll, Layne Beachley and Rob Bain, and renowned cinematographer Jack McCoy.

Save the Farm paddle out

If you're up for a paddle out then join South Coast Surfrider and come to Killalea State Park (aka 'The Farm') on Saturday May 1st at 10am as we stand up to Reflections Holiday Parks and TAKE BACK THE TRUST and SAVE THE FARM.

Killalea is officially recognised as a National Surfing Reserve, which covers a stretch of 3.5km of protected coastline. We want Killalea to go back to being a community-based Trust, as the current professional Trust held by Reflections Holiday Parks has failed to satisfy community expectations, especially with regards to their recent development proposal.

We invite surfers to come and take part as we need all hands on deck to stop the overdevelopment of the National Surfing Reserve into a tourist holiday park. In addition to this, we aim to set a new Guinness World Record – the current world record paddle out set at Huntington Beach Surf Museum is 511 – and we will be observing the protocols of social distancing.

Finally, Happy Mothers Day to all you Salty Queens. For the rest of you, be kind to your Mum and tell her that you love her. **2515**



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How to get published

By Dr Sarah Nicholson, director of the South Coast Writers Centre at Coledale



Above, Laura Brading (WellRead).
Below, Winnie Dunn (Sweatshop).
Photos supplied



One of the questions that is most frequently asked of us at the South Coast Writers Centre is: "I've written a novel, how do I get it published?" To answer it, we've put together a full weekend on the topic of publishing, with perspectives on what's happening in the Australian publishing world from authors, editors, literary curators and publishers.

The first day of our The Business of Publishing weekend is a symposium with panel discussions on the state of play in publishing. We start by looking at the place of the small press in publishing. What can they offer authors? Why would you want to and how can you create your own publications? The Anthologies & the Small Press with a panel features Winnie Dunn, Editor with Sweatshop; Lore White, Editor in Chief of Baby Teeth Journal; and Sarah Nicholson, Editor of Heroines Anthology.

Next, Olivia Lanchester, CEO of Australian Society of Authors; and local authors Pamela Cook and Alan Baxter, discuss the current publishing environment for writers who want to get books published. What are the possibilities and the pitfalls of commercial publishing? What other legitimate publishing models are possible?

Finally, we hear from the publishers. Tom Langshaw, Editor from Pantera Press; Xavier Hennekinne, Publisher from Gazebo Books; and Laura Brading, from WellRead, will discuss what's going on in Australian publishing. Are there differences between the Australian and overseas markets? What are publishers looking for and what are the opportunities for authors?

On Sunday, we have an all-day intensive for authors who are ready to hone their pitching skills. Former publisher, agent and advisor to ACT Writers' Centre's highly regarded HARDCOPY program, Mary Cunnane will demystify the publishing process for writers as it operates in Australia and internationally. How are books 'signed' up? What will a publisher do for an author? Do you really need an agent? What's the best way to develop an effective book proposal? Drawing on her extensive experience as a publisher and a literary agent in the US and Australia, Mary will help participants navigate their way to representation and/or publication.

So, if you want to get the industry lowdown on what's happening in Australian publishing, come along to our The Business of Publishing weekend at Coledale Hall over the weekend of 22nd/23rd May.

[Visit southcoastwriters.org](http://southcoastwriters.org) 2515



Happy Mother's Day

From Deb Thompson & Amanda Isler,
of Collins Booksellers Thirroul

For many mums, relaxing with a good book is the ultimate pleasure! We have plenty to choose – from new fiction to books on Art, Photography, Gardening, Home and Design. For the little ones, share a special reading time with one of our beautiful children's picture books, specially designed to celebrate mums.

Exciting upcoming bookstore events:

Wed, 5 May – John Corker will be in conversation with John Baker, author of *Stalin's Wine Cellar*, a wild, adventurous and entertaining tale taking us deep into the world of high-end wine.

Wed, 19 May – Caroline Baum will be in conversation with Kate Holden, discussing her upcoming book, *The Winter Road*, an epic true story of greed, power and a desire for legacy.

Events are free but bookings are essential. Call us on 4267 1408 or email thirroul@collinsbooks.com.au

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What have we got to lose?

An opinion piece by Louise Wellington, of Save Thirroul Village

Could live music at
Beaches be at risk?
Photo: Chris Frape



It's been over a year since we saw the first proposal for the Thirroul Plaza redevelopment. We've had two exhibitions and now it's looking like it could go out for exhibition again. It's a good time to revisit the information – some old and some new.

What hits home is the overwhelming sense that we, the community, are going to lose a lot more than we gain. And the loss will reverberate long after the last A/C and plant machinery is plonked on top of those 82 apartments...

Here's what I'm getting at...

(This article is based on my understanding of the developers' documentation for the DA... there is a diversity of information and I have a Masters in Planning – and I too find it tricky!)

Cancel driving about Thirroul as you do now. Under the current proposal there will be another set of lights in Thirroul that you'll need to stop at. There'll be four lanes of congestion instead of just two – the railway bridge and the south village will remain as two lanes so expect more congestion as a result of the bridge "bottleneck". You'll no longer be able to turn right out of McCauley Street. A new bus lane and dedicated right-turn lanes in both directions means you'll need to weave in and out of traffic. Watch out also for the semi-trailers that can't turn in the King St site to make deliveries (that's right, the road won't fit them!).

Cancel parking. No more kerbside parking in most of the north village of Thirroul. So, no running in to grab your Finbox coffee, milk from IGA, bread from Sanhhuys. On the other side of the road, no more parking anywhere beside Anita's Theatre.

We'll lose parking on King St – no more dance school pick-ups, quick prescriptions filled, ducking in to pick up your new specs from the optometrist. The developer will provide new underground car parking and a handful of public spots near the clothing bins on King St – but how long can we park there for, and will it be free? Also, the carpark is privately owned so it's possible they could change the terms of parking on their land in the future.

Cancel walking. There'll be no more pedestrian island near IGA. Bollards are to be placed along the kerbside – presumably because the safety risk has been recognised by the authorities. There'll be two-lane traffic in each direction, making it like a freeway – just like Bulli is in peak hour. Children say they are worried about traffic safety when they walk to school now. They too have concerns with what will happen if the development proceeds.

Cancel outdoor dining. Bollards cluttering the footpath surely means footpath space will be at a premium. Cancel your conversation over a famous Thirroul coffee when you have to shout over the sounds of the four-lane traffic.

Cancel entertainment and live music. This is one for the longer term. Remember in the 1990s when land next to Luna Park was turned into apartments, then the residents complained about the noise from Luna Park? Even locally, music/evening venues, such as Scarborough pub, Jose Jones, and the Bombie Bar at Coalcliff. Not only live music venues are a target ... even teeny noise-makers, such as the basketball ring on Kilncar Crescent, the Return and Earn station at Club Thirroul. All of these cancelled because one nearby resident complained. No one currently lives at the plaza – what happens when residents of 82 units move in? Beaches and Anita's – how long will they last?

Cancel independent shops. If you can park inside the plaza, but not out the front of Nest, IGA, Saffron's, the bottle shop or the bookstore, how can we not assume that these family-owned businesses will struggle to compete with the new plaza shops. They already have the geographic benefit of capturing the "travel home" market (the Plaza is on the side of the road that most people travel on to return home after work). The developers have indicated a new Liquorland will go in. What's next?

Cancel views from the town centre. At present we have the iconic escarpment as our backdrop. The new buildings will fill the site from WF Jackson Park to King Street, and the escarpment views from Lawrence Hargrave Drive will be lost.

Please comment on the next iteration of the DA. It's an arduous process but a democratic one. If we don't speak now, it will change forever. **2515**

Follow Save Thirroul Village on Facebook and Instagram; visit savethirroulvillage.com

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Chewy Tahini Cookies

By Stephanie Meades, functional nutritionist at Thirroul's Life Wellness Co.

These super-delicious and nutritious chewy tahini cookies are the perfect after-school pick-me-up – a real winner in our house. There are so many things to like about them:

- They contain only a handful of awesome ingredients;
- They take less than 10 minutes to make;
- They are chock-full of calcium, magnesium and healthy fats to keep the kids going for ages;
- They last for up to seven days and also freeze really well;
- They taste awesome!

Chewy Tahini Cookies (the perfect after-school pick-me-up)

Ingredients:

- 1½ cups of almond meal (blanched works best in this recipe)
- ½ tsp of GF baking powder
- ¼ tsp of sea salt
- ⅓ cup raw honey
- ⅓ cup hulled tahini
- 1 tsp of vanilla extract /or 1 vanilla bean scraped
- ½ cup sesame seeds (to coat)

Method:

Preheat oven to 180°C (350°F) and line two flat trays with baking paper.

Spread the sesame seeds onto a small plate ready for coating.

In a small bowl, add the raw honey, vanilla and tahini and mix well to combine.

In a small bowl, mix the almond meal, baking powder and salt to combine, and then add to the wet mix, mixing well until it comes together.

Using teaspoon, scoop out mixture and place in the palm of your hand. Roll the mixture to form a ball, then place the ball into the sesame seeds and press down to coat the top of the cookie with seeds, then place the cookie on the lined tray. Repeat until all the mixture is used.

Bake the cookies for 8 minutes.

When you remove the cookies they will be slightly brown around the edges and very soft in the middle. They'll firm up as they cool, leaving you with a deliciously chewy cookie! **2515**

Marketing for small business

By Thirroul's Ali Millgate

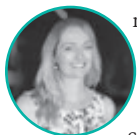
If you're a small business, it's always a good time to focus on your marketing – it's often the key to getting from where you are now, to where you want to go. However, a small business means a small team and marketing can slip through the cracks or languish on the 'must do' pile.

The good news is, there's no shortage of marketing communications tools and activities out there to help you reach your customers and they're often low-cost or free and easy to use.

With so much on offer, it's easy to get overwhelmed or take on too much.

So a good place to start is with a single business goal and one or two marketing plays to help you achieve it.

Marketing delivers the best results when it's strategic, so check yourself regularly – never set and forget. Look at the data, tweak as you go,



measure results against your objectives and invest more in what works. Repeat.

3 ways to boost your marketing

1. Think local

Sponsor a team or an event – it will lift your profile in your local area and it's a great opportunity to boost your SEO.

2. Build a social community

Respond to comments, tag other businesses in your posts and create an engaged community of followers who care about you and your business.

3. Share your brand stories

Tell your stories on your website, in blogs and on social media – authenticity stands out and draws people in. Be bold and let people see you. **2515**

Need help with your marketing?

Call Ali on 0411 930 017 or visit alimillgate.com.au.



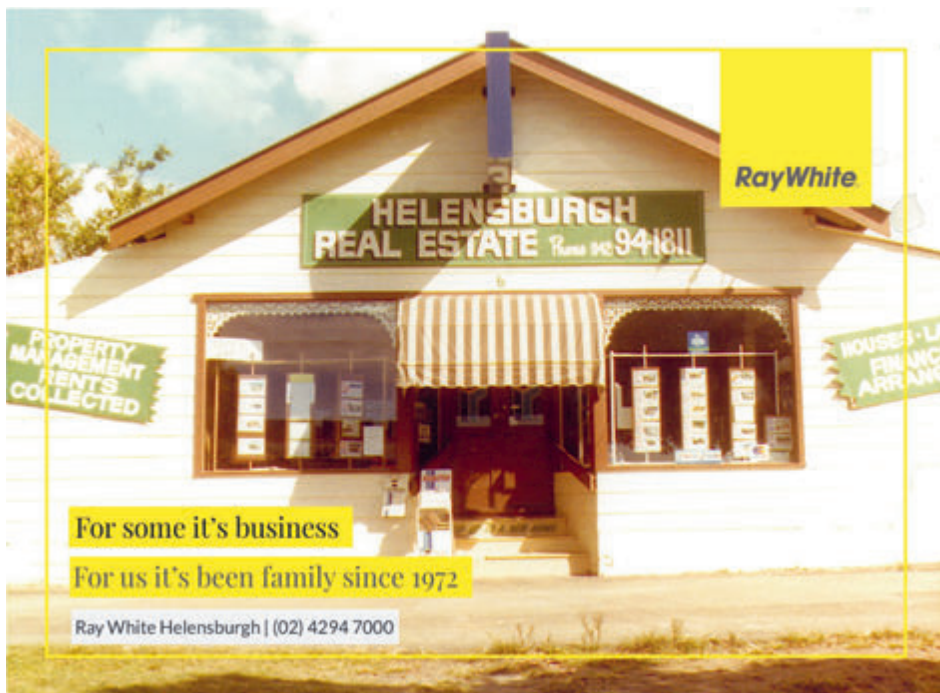
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What's On



'Shack Life' Author Talk by Ingeborg van Teeseling

Shack Life tells the story of three small beachside communities in the Royal National Park south of Sydney – Era, Burning Palms and Little Garie – and how their residents fought to save their beloved shacks. Tue, 11 May, 5.30-6.30pm at Helensburgh Community Centre, 26 Walker Street.

Travelling Quilters

Meet like-minded friends at Bulli Corner Quilters who meet at the Northern Illawarra Uniting Church, cnr Prince's Highway and Point Street, Bulli, on the last Wednesday of each month.

JPs available

The NSW Justice Association Wollongong Branch offers free JP services. We also hold a monthly

meeting for our members and other JPs on the second Tuesday of each month at City Life Church in Jardine Street, Fairy Meadow from 7pm.

Community Desks are held at Thirroul Library, (1st Thursday of the month, 11am-12.30pm); Corrimal Library (2nd Wednesday of the month, 10am-1pm); Wollongong Library (1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month, 10am-1pm); Dapto Library (2nd and 4th Fridays of the month and 3rd Saturday of the month, 10am-1pm).

Contact Ray Vaughan on 0419 293 524.

'Bushfire Stories' book launched



This book, about people affected by the 2019/20 NSW bushfires, is an initiative of Northern Illawarra U3A. Most of the stories are by South Coast U3A members. The book's cover image is a painting by U3A member Jeanette Southam.

The Hon. Fiona Phillips, MP officially launched *Bushfire Stories* on Thursday, 29 April at the Ulludulla Civic Centre. A supplementary launch by Margaret Stratton (who came up with the idea for the book as then U3A South Coast Regional Representative) will be held on Tuesday, May 2 at Banksia Retirement Village Broulee.

For more information, call Therese Jordan, 0413 218 957.



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Events at Thirroul Library

Places are limited and bookings are essential via Eventbrite. Go to www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/library/whats-on/events

Music in the Library is back May 1: An hour of live local music. Fiddledance will perform on Saturday, May 1 from 11am-noon.

Family Focus Storytime: National Families Week starts on May 15 and Thirroul Library is offering a Family Focused Storytime on Tuesday, 18 May from 10-11am.

Regular Children's Programs:

Storytime every Tuesday 10-11am (ages 3 to 5)

Toddler time 2 sessions every Friday from

10-11am and 11am-noon (ages 2-3)

Baby Bookworms has 2 sessions every Thursday

from 10-11am and 11am-noon (ages 0-1)

R.A.G.E (Reading, Art, Gaming, Entertainment)

is on May 5th and 19th, 3.30-4.30pm (ages 8 to 12)

Lego Club is on the 12th and 26th of May from

3.30-4.30pm (ages 5 to 12)

Deep Peace Meditation Classes

Mondays, 6.30-7.30 pm Coledale Community Hall.

Gentle Yoga Stretches Guided Relaxation – Yoga

Nidra Breath Meditation Mantra Meditation.

Class by donation. Please bring mat & blanket

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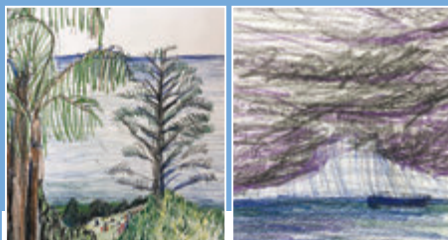
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Nothing to Buy!

The local real estate market continues to set record prices for streets and suburbs across the area and another overall record was broken in April at \$6.31m for a waterfront in Wombarra.

A combination of low interest rates and lack of houses to buy are the main causes for the hysteria. To illustrate the lack of stock, below is a table of the number of houses sold this year so far (to 21 April 2021) compared to 2020.

	2020	2021 (so far)
Helensburgh	105	10
Thirroul	81	8
Wombarra	19	1
Coledale	19	1
Stanwell Park	21	2
Scarborough	7	0
Austinmer	22	4
Clifton	3	0

(Source: Property Data Solutions Pty Ltd)

Yes, we can!

Jo Fahey reports from Darkes Glenbernie Orchard



Little Blue is now in cans!

We have a trial run of our favourite Little Blue Non-Alcoholic apple cider in cans. So now you can take it to the footy or glass-free area!

It's the same fresh sparkling taste as in a bottle. Try it with a twist of lime.

Champion Awards for Cider and Mead!

Darkes Perry has just won Best Perry In Show at the Redhill Cider awards in Victoria.

More than 70 cider producers exhibited at this show, so this is a huge accolade for Darkes!

Try it with a seafood dish. Perfect with salt-n-pepper squid, oysters or chilli stir-fry.

We are also excited that our Spotted Gum Honeymead won not only a 'gold medal', but Best Traditional Honeymead at the Redhill Mead Show. This show is the biggest mead competition in Australia.

Dreamy Darkes Dessert

For a nice dessert idea, drizzle Darkes Spotted Gum mead over spongecake (cut into bite-sized cubes) with dollops of vanilla custard and whipped cream, sprinkle with toasted almonds and garnish with sliced strawberries. **2515**

Visit www.darkes.com.au



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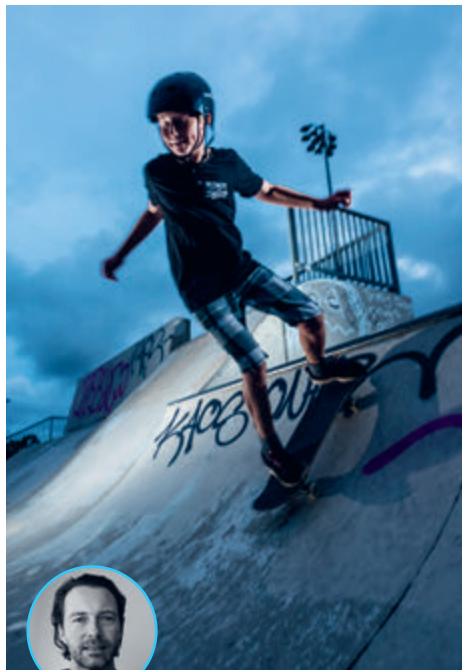
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Thirroul needs a skatepark

By architect Ben Wollen

I used to be a skater. “Used to” being the operative words. I found this out in early 2020 when I took my kids to the skatepark. It had been 20 years but I decided skating was like riding a bike – once you’ve done it once, you never forget. Well, skating is not like riding a bike. After giving the kids a demonstration of my prowess, and falling hard on my wrist, I discovered the ‘riding the bike’ parallel was painfully non-applicable. As one of the kids said, my wrist looked like a bent spoon. Broken in a number of places, it needed multiple surgeries and plates. A year later and I’m still getting physio.

My skating career might be over, but I still admire the sport. I love the interaction between the skater and the built environment. Who would have thought a plywood deck connected to four wheels could offer so many trick variations. Skaters will search far and wide to find the perfect combination of stairs, kerbs, plinths, walls or anything they can slide their deck on to create unique tricks. There’s a unique relationship between the architecture of public places and skateboarding that goes back to

the origins of modern skating.

If anyone has seen the movie *Dogtown and Z-Boys*, you’d know that skating wasn’t always as radical as it is these days. The first skateboards were flat and the tricks were limited to manipulating the board on flat surfaces and were more about what you could do with your body whilst rolling along.

It wasn’t until the surf culture of California took a hold of skateboarding that it evolved into a more radical form. As far back as the 1960s, surfers would hit the pavement when the surf was flat and practice their moves on the various concrete ramps they found in and around the place. If you haven’t seen *Dogtown and Z-Boys*, I highly recommend it.

The movie details one important event that occurred in California that took skateboarding to the next level and in which architecture, or in particular landscape architecture, played a critical part. In the middle of the 70s there was a major drought in California, prompting those with backyard pools to drain them. Skaters quickly realised they could ride the kidney-shaped pools and it was much more like surfing, allowing speed and more vertical tricks. This has evolved into the skate parks that we see today. The skatepark brings together the architectural elements skaters search for and puts them all in one place.

But we need to go further back to discover why there were so many ridable kidney-shaped swimming pools in California at the time.

All of these pools can be traced back to one pool that found its way into California’s *House Beautiful* magazine. The pool was in a lauded garden that was famous in the world of landscape architecture. Its shape is not the classic kidney shape but it has the same biomorphic design and importantly it has a ramped edge that means a smooth surface from top to bottom (perfect for skating).

The designer of the garden and the now famous pool was Thomas Church, a landscape architect. Prior to designing the pool, Church had spent time in Finland exploring the works of the famous architect Alvar Aalto. Church visited Aalto’s Villa Mairea, which has a pool in a shape strikingly similar to the pool shown in *House Beautiful*.

The theory goes that Church was influenced by Aalto’s pool and brought the now-famous pool shape to California. The pool design crossed with the drought, crossed with the evolution in skateboarding all came together to result in the modern form of skateboarding and, yes, the skatepark.

If you haven’t already signed the petition for Thirroul to get a skatepark, search for @thirroulskatepark on Facebook.

If it’s built, I’ll suggest the Council puts a big warning sign up to all mums and dads who think skateboarding is like riding a bike... **2515**

GPs on the front line

By Dr Anna Putnis

May 19 is World Family Doctor Day, a day to reflect on the essential role GPs play in our community. The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the work of GPs on the frontline. Not only did we treat patients with respiratory symptoms at the outset, but we also provided Covid-19 testing, and are now instrumental in the roll-out of the vaccine.

At Bulli Medical Practice, we began vaccinating patients eligible for Phase 1B in late March. It has been a significant adjustment for all our staff.

Practice nurses and administration staff are essential to the process, taking bookings, getting patient information, administering the vaccine and ensuring compliance with the Australian Immunisation Registration. A GP oversees every vaccine clinic, ensuring patient consent checking their medical histories, medications, and monitoring for any adverse reactions.

When patients book in for the Covid-19 vaccine, we encourage them make appointments for both their first and second shot. Ideally, this is spaced 12 weeks apart to ensure maximum effectiveness.

To ensure we could still see our regular patients



on our normal days, GPs have worked overtime to run the vaccination clinics. This is in addition to the respiratory clinic, still offered every weekday afternoon.

The past year has brought so many changes for general practice, including

Covid-19 hygiene protocols, telehealth, eScripts and personal protective equipment. We have all had to be very flexible and responsive. And this will continue, as there are likely to be last-minute changes with vaccine supply.

Autumn and winter will also be busy with influenza vaccines and the usual coughs and colds. We are encouraging patients to get their flu vaccination but to wait two weeks after (or before) receiving their Covid-19 vaccine. With the end of the pandemic in sight, we expect to start seeing patients who have weathered their health complaints and/or delayed seeing their GP.

To celebrate general practice, and the work GPs do in our local community, I found a quote by Dr Suneel Dhand: "In our job, you will never go home at the end of the day thinking that you haven't done something valuable and important." 2515

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Collective spirit

In the town with the heart of a village, businesswomen are reaping the rewards of working co-operatively at a Thirroul gift shop. 2515 reports

Cover
feature



Sheralee Rae at Thirroul Collective. Photos: Anthony Warry

Sheralee Rae's shop is a collective in the true sense of the word.

A shared retail store, Thirroul Collective has a dozen main members, selling everything from crystals to candles. Sheralee also stocks products by local artisans (think chilli, coffee, granola and honey) and artists, such as Lisa Rodden.

"Everybody is invested," Sheralee says.

"Everybody works together and it's for the greater good of their own businesses. We all give each other feedback, we collab together.

"The whole concept is about supporting local, promoting local, staying local.

"People love local. If Covid has taught us anything, it's that we really need to support local business and especially small local business."

The shop opened in February 2019.

"It's been amazing. I just gathered some friends and said, 'Look, we've got this space. Let's all work a day' ... Our hashtag is #foreverevolving."

The store has been a great launching pad. Brianna and Beti, of Furry'n'Fabulous, and Kellie, of Baby By Boutique Bundles, have gone on to open their own shops in Corrimal.

The collective (and its individual members) shone in the 2020 Local Business Awards and they're hoping for more accolades in 2021.

While men do play a role (notably, Graham of the Lobster Shack), the collective concept is particularly appealing to local mothers.

Sheralee says it's all about balance. "Nine till three, when the kids are at school, they can be involved in their biz... then they can do school pick-up and then they can be mum."

All of the 12 main members are mothers, including a few mum-and-daughter duos.

"It's really a biz mum hub. Everyone collabs and helps each other.

"That's why this works.

"Look, the hustle is real – you've still got to work. When the kids go to bed, we'll get back at our computers and do stuff.

"We have a chat page on Facebook, that's the easiest way for everyone to connect."

The shop's back room occasionally becomes a shared workspace. "We have a little wine at the end of the day, and come up with our best ideas. So it is networking and it's working off each other. It's collabing. It's not being isolated.

"To be a mother and have your own business, it can be really isolating when you work from home or if it's online. Having the retail store, having the collective, it eliminates all of that."

There are 12 main small business partners.

"I rent a space to each business," Sheralee says.

"They come in and merchandise and stock, and

look after their own area. Then I've got some smaller local businesses – they haven't got enough stock to fill a whole area – so that's why I'm doing a local shelf, I call it the Little Artisans.

"We have a non-compete agreement in store, so each business, if they want to put a new product in, must get admin approval."

Beyond her own store, Sheralee is passionate about promoting the town and the region, especially the Grand Pacific Drive tourist trail.

"My biggest thing is supporting local.

"I've been in this community for 25 years and I still shop in all the other businesses in Thirroul. If we don't have something, I'll send them around the corner, up the street.

"I come from a place of abundance and I believe there's enough business for everybody."

Many locals know Sheralee from the school run.

Her daughter, Chloe, went to Austinmer Public School and Sheralee was P&C president for a couple of years.

Chloe is now at Bulli High, doing business studies and is also part of Thirroul Collective – she runs the small business, In A Mans World, with Sheralee's partner.

"Behind every good business woman is a great man," Sheralee says.

"There is no way I would have been able to open Thirroul Collective and continue to work seven days in a retail store without the unconditional love and support from my partner, Gary Vaughan.

"Gaz is my business mentor and our family rock, which allows me to continue to thrive while pursuing my passion.

"My daughter has grown up going to trade shows with me – you know, in the sling."

Sheralee is immensely proud of Chloe, whose kindness was acknowledged with the citizenship award in primary school and is still evident today in her dealings with children in store.

"She dances locally at Thirroul Dance Academy, and she's a student teacher there.

"So all the local children just love coming in to see her, and they still call her Miss Chloe."

Chloe's business began 18 months ago, after she lost her father, "a kindred spirit".

In A Mans World focuses on men's giftware, such as leather wallets, Aussie undies, timber games. Running it with Gary has given Chloe independence, direction and helped her through a difficult time, Sheralee says.

"She is very much a part of this collective."

Sheralee's own business is the Eclectic She Shed.

"I don't know why men always have a shed. We're working as hard as them.

"Every woman should have a little She Shed in

the backyard with a nice lounge chair and a place that they can go to, with the salt lamp on, with their crystals, to either journal, to do yoga, to meditate.”

A She Shed needn't be an actual shed – it could even be a room, a chair – any small space that's your own, she says.

“I stock self-care products, like the salt lamps, the selenite, the crystals, coffee cups – anything basically that's for She, for your own self-care.”

Other businesses in store include pet-care specialists Furry'n'Fabulous, Kellie's eco-friendly Little Changes (“all about being user-friendly for our planet”); and Bella Bohemian by Sonya (“boho fashion, sunglasses, lipsticks, accessories”). Mellissa's Heim & Body stocks “beautiful things” for the home and body, including PJs.

“Harper and Rose (by Michelle and Eleanor) were a florist, but when Covid hit – no weddings, no fresh flowers, so they went into forever flowers.”

Janine, of Desiderate, is a local designer who makes sterling silver jewellery and gemstones. Baby By Boutique Bundles sells babies wear and maternity. I Am Aromatics products (from bath salts to beard oil) are all handmade locally.

“Melissa uses a local ceramicist to make the bowls to put her incense in. She also does a lot of work with the Eve Project, they help abused women get back into life and help upskill them ... so she's heavily entrenched in the community.”

Coal Coast Candles are made locally by Amy and Jess. Sheralee loves their wood wicks. “You get that crackle when it burns, it just burns beautifully

in the glass jar. Again, thinking of the environment, bring your jars back and they will refill them.”

One of the candle makers, Amy, is also a florist, who provides the greenery in store.

“All the businesses complement each other.”

Sheralee's had a varied career.

But her favourite things remain talking to customers and helping others.

She credits coming from a country background and a big family for inspiring her work ethic.

“Dad's got 12 brothers and sisters; mum's got nine brothers and sisters. They've all got four kids each. I grew up in the Bankstown-Punchbowl area; all my friends were Italian in those days.”

Sheralee fell in love with the South Coast on Harley rides with her late husband.

“My background is very varied, from medical to fashion industry and interior industry, and the wholesale section. I used to own garbage trucks – that's when recycling very first started about 25 years ago. It was mainly in the CBD of Sydney.

“So I've always been environmentally conscious, and also very creative and sales-oriented as well. I was on the road, a sales rep for a long time, I've done a lot of admin work, care work. I've done retail, wholesale, markets, design.

“Prior to owning the shop. I did a lot of pop-ups and things online, with other local businesses.

“I've travelled extensively overseas.

“You get to see views and aspects from so many different areas when you've had a varied life.”





How the store survived Covid

Other than mandatory lockdown closures, Thirroul Collective has continued to open 9am to 5pm daily throughout the pandemic.

"We are eternally grateful, we have been supported so well. People know it's local.

"Most of the people who shop here know the business owners. So they know that this is putting food on tables, it's sustaining a family.

"And they know when they come in here that there's good service. We'll look after the kids while they shop, we'll look after the elderly. We'll do free delivery, open late, gift wrap – nothing's a problem."

It's a small shop with wide aisles.

"We need to stay pram-friendly and wheelchair-friendly. We have some local customers that are in wheelchairs, they love the fact that this is the go-to shop. They can always buy a present in here.

"We open for appointments after hours. We also do workshops on weekends when the store closes.

"We want to be known as the local co-op, the local hub – people come, they meet, they chat.

"Pre-Covid, we had late-night shopping. This end (north of IGA) would stay open and we'd have nibbles and bubbles. It was like a street party."

Sheralee hopes to revive this idea with art trail nights. "They'll start at Van Yello. They'll come in here, there'll be a couple of buskers on the way. They'll pop across to Artspace. Then they'll go to Blackbird and have coffee..."

And maybe finish at Franks Wild Years.

Keeping Thirroul's village character is key.

Working in retail has had its challenges – from Covid to the shadow of a new Thirroul Plaza.

"The development proposal across the road is making a lot of local businesses nervous.

"It's a beautiful seaside village. You don't want to turn it into Byron Bay. We need to harness our village atmosphere."

Sheralee – who supports the Save Thirroul Village campaign by handing out stickers – says she is looking forward to events that will bring visitors to town, including the re-opening of Anita's and the possibility of a Seaside Festival later this year.

"Family comes first," Sheralee says.

This maxim dates back to when she was Austinmer's P&C president and parents wanted to chat at pick-up time.

"Chloe would stand there patiently, because everybody wanted a piece of me. Until one day she said to me: 'Mummy, it's just our time now'.

"I forgot that all she wants to do is tell me about her day. For me to look down and see that face..."

"From that day on – she's now in year 11 – every day, that time is carved out, time for her. She will tell me exactly what's happened in every subject, every day.

"Businesses is great, having a daughter in businesses is great. But without family, the value is not there. So that is my life's lesson." **2515**

Visit www.thirroulcollective.com.au

Miners' vision for Clifton revived

By David Roach, vice president, Clifton School of Arts

Walk around to the rear of the iconic School of Arts building at Clifton and you will see a set of double doors leading ... nowhere. The modest, two-storey brick building was erected in 1911 by volunteers – striking mine workers with time on their hands. It cost £100, the funds raised by public subscription. The original design called for two large light-filled rooms overlooking the ocean for meetings and lectures, a small reading library, space for an upright piano.

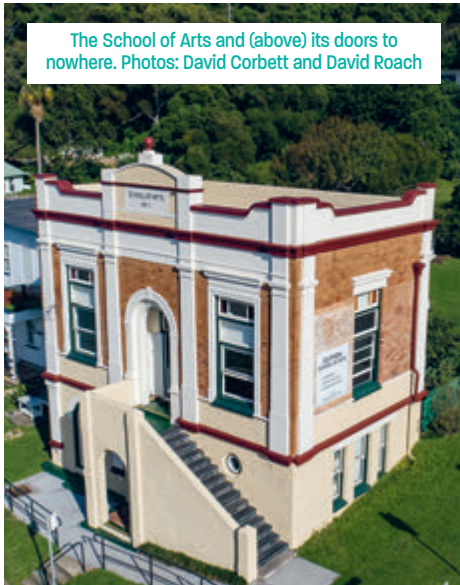
The community had plans in place for a second stage; those rear doors were to open into a large hall for dances and weddings. But before construction could commence the industrial dispute was settled and the miners went back to the pit. The decades that followed, the wars, economic downturns and global pandemics, meant that any plans for expansion were forgotten.

But throughout those difficult years a succession of committees kept the doors open and the School of Arts became central to the Clifton community, a much-loved local institution.

110 years later, the building is still in community hands. Successive waves of new arrivals to the area have fallen in love with the modest institution and have helped to keep its spirit intact. Now, incredibly, the dream of completing the vision of the original founders is being revived.



The School of Arts and (above) its doors to nowhere. Photos: David Corbett and David Roach



Last year, the Clifton School of Arts was bequeathed \$100,000 from the estate of philanthropist, Warren Halloran. Mr Halloran's generosity meant that much-needed upgrades could be carried out, including new kitchen and bathroom facilities, new handrails and lighting.

In committee meetings the inevitable question came up, "What would it take to get plans for the rear hall back onto the drawing board?"

We formed a Planning Sub-Committee and reached out for input and ideas from CSA members and the local community.

Out of this process a design brief began to take shape. The original plans for the rear hall have been lost to history, but documents describe a building that was to take up the entire block from fence line to fence line. These days council planning regulations are much more sensitive to the needs of neighbours, with shadow lines, green spaces and accessible parking to consider. So we knew that whatever shape this new iteration ended up, it would have to be smaller than the original.

Our design brief called for an energy-efficient

pavilion utilising ecological sustainable materials that would be set back from, and complement, our existing heritage building. It would incorporate an elegant multi-function gallery space with accessible facilities and level access via covered walkways so that, at long last, patrons in wheelchairs and walkers could have access to the entire upper floor of the School of Arts. The new space will allow for exhibitions, workshops and community gatherings of all kinds. But how to proceed?

Just like 110 years ago, the community provided.

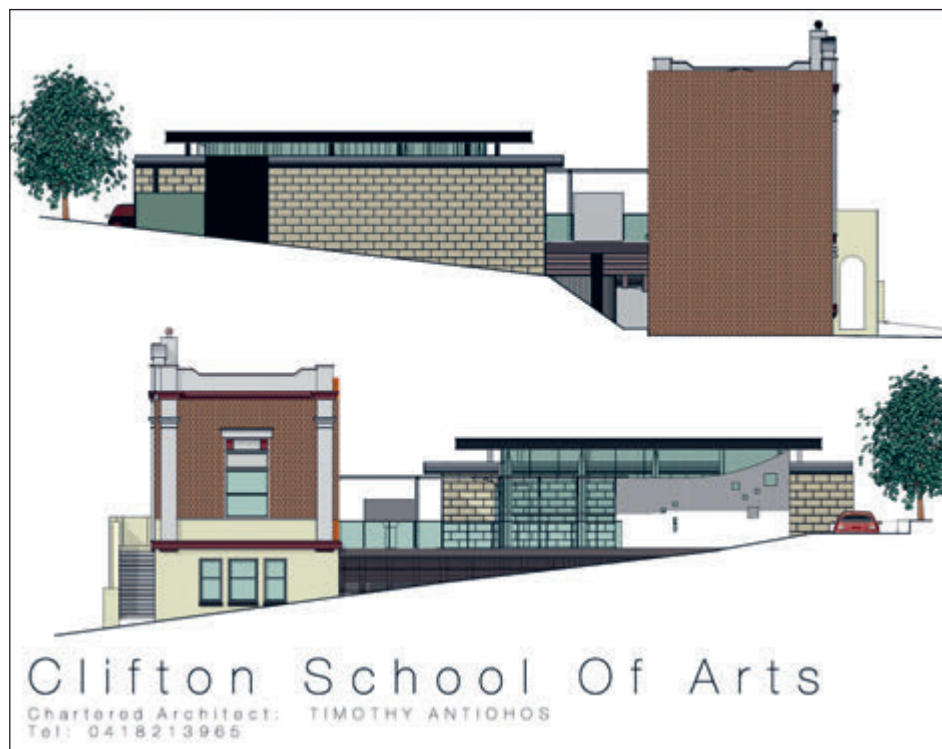
After decades of running a successful Sydney architectural practice and working with the likes of Harry Seidler, architect Tim Antiohos and his wife Kim settled in Wombarra. Kim became a member of the CSA. When the idea of completing the rear hall came up, Kim and Tim approached the committee, offering to carry out the entire design work pro bono. Tim says the reason for their offer is simple. Back in the 70s when he was desperate to study architecture but couldn't afford to go to university, Gough Whitlam came to power and abolished university fees. Tim says that act changed his life and ever since he has looked for ways to give back to the community to repay the Whitlam Government's generosity.

Tim's plans show an elegant pavilion featuring Australian hardwoods and local stone. The roof appears to float on pointed, cruciform steel columns which, he says, reflect the history of steel-making in the Illawarra. Large glass doors open out onto a broad deck with sweeping views to the ocean and escarpment. Tim explains that his design embodies the geometry and "golden mean" proportions of the heritage building.

With the plans going through the development application process, the Clifton School of Arts committee is now turning its attention to fundraising opportunities.

Clifton has become a vibrant precinct in recent years. The Sea Cliff Bridge and the re-opening of the Imperial Hotel mean that an increasing number of visitors are being drawn to our spectacular part of the world. All the more important then that community-based, not-for-profit organisations like the Clifton School of Arts continue to serve the local area. By continuing to adapt to the changing needs of our community we intend to keep our doors open for at least another 110 years. **2515**

For more information or to become a volunteer or member, visit www.artsciflton.org



Time to write

Janice Creenaune meets Thirroul's Bill Goodier, who retired from a career in journalism at Sydney news stations – then returned to the newsroom in Wollongong, where he is now State Producer of WIN TV.



Bill Goodier has held a life-long interest in the art of writing and, in particular, journalism. He has written for TV news and radio all his working life in Sydney, Adelaide and now Wollongong.

"I did retire once," Bill says.

"I had worked closely with Sandra Sully and the rest of the news team for many years. It was a special time there and we achieved so much working together."

Bill has produced many other shows, working with the likes of Graham Kennedy and Clive Robertson. He has also taught TV journalism at Macleay College in Surry Hills.

"Journalism has remained my life."

Bill and his young boys moved from Mosman to Thirroul in the late '90s.

"We all needed more space. We used to travel on day trips down to the northern Illawarra and we realised that the area was not only 'doable' for the price, but there was a great train commute that was particularly easy. So Thirroul became our home.

"The birth of my kids and seeing them now grown up – well, nothing can top that – but, work-wise, journalism holds my love."

Retirement was not what he expected.

"I just felt my brain becoming 'mushy' and I

realised I had to keep my mind active and busy – not stressed, but busy.

"So I decided to join the news department at WIN from Monday-Fridays, still a 38-hour week. But it works best for me."

Not only that, but each day Bill bikes to work and back, a round trip of about 40km, in most weathers. So a fit body and a fit mind. Not bad for a supposed 'retirement' period.

Bill's favourite writer is Hemingway. "He was young, offered descriptions of moonlight periods and often found himself (or his characters) in love.

"A huge brute of a man physically but he could paint a picture and applied the simple process in one declarative sentence."

Bill also enjoys other classics, the writings of stand-up comics and has "always loved the wit and humour of *Mad* magazines".

Clarity in communications is important. "I am a fan of Rudolf Flesch, who helped to develop readability levels. It is a plain English movement to which I remain true.

"Communication needs to be well-written, but help to connect all readers in understanding. Certainly it involves a simplicity of writing, otherwise people turn off on a word."

Bill says that TV news is viewed by 70 percent of the population, but the remote is "handy" and it is easy to flick over. "We need to consistently hold them to our channel."

Bill's personal research takes him in other directions as well. The microbiomes in the gut, how this affects well-being and longevity is one fascinating long-term research topic.

"Healthy eating, plus exercise and mental exercise are all essential," Bill says.

His greatest joy remains riding the bike. Years ago he would ride up to 110km, but he now takes on easier, less stressful rides.

Bill Goodier is not about to stop for retirement.

"Speech-writing is a much-needed area for my expertise and working with WIN locals, such as Bruce Roberts and Melissa Russell, offers me a future that is energised by the ever-changing forces of news." **2515**

Writer Janice Creenaune is a volunteer for the PKD (Polycystic Kidney Disease) Foundation. For more information please contact Janice on janicecreenaune@gmail.com or 4267 4880.

Giant leap in frog numbers

By Kevin Fallon at Symbio Wildlife Park



Symbio is celebrating a frogging triumph!

An endangered species breeding program that started with 18 green and golden bell frogs four years ago has become a 13,000-strong success story for the zoo and its conservation allies at Transport for NSW.

The green and golden bell frog (*Litoria aurea*) is a highly mobile, extremely tolerant amphibian that likes to live in marshes, dams and stream-sides.

It used to be common in Sydney but since the 1970s numbers have plummeted.

Land degradation and feral predatory fish such as the plague minnow have taken a toll. But the biggest

threat to the frogs' survival remains Chytrid Fungus, an introduced disease.

To help save the species, Symbio began working with Roads and Maritime Services (now Transport for NSW) in 2015. Our goal was to set up Symbio's first amphibian breeding facility and build an insurance population. Meanwhile, in the heart of Sydney, TfNSW was establishing safe ponds for the tadpoles born in captivity.

On 10 February 2017, the program launched with 18 frogs. Today, we've bred and released more than 13,000 tadpoles! And surveys show the green and golden bell frog is once again thriving in the wild. **2515**

Visit symbiozoo.com.au



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AFRFoundation@hotmail.com



Adventure Race is on!

Four local women are training hard ahead of the Mountain Designs GeoQuest 48hr Adventure Race in June. 'All Talk' team member Lisa Matuzelis reports

It started with a text ... "Thinking of pulling a team together for this. Interested?" ... reply ... "Yes!" And so began the 'All Talk' team's journey towards the Mountain Designs GeoQuest 48hr Adventure Race 2021.

The race will be held at Crescent Head on the June long weekend (11-14 June). Competitors will be pushed to their physical and mental limits as they navigate through a course that involves up to 130km of mountain biking, 60km of trail running and 50km of kayaking. Not exactly your average weekend!

The northern suburbs team giving it a go are Teresa Kay, Ange Tokley, Katrina Skellern and myself (Lisa Matuzelis). None of us have much experience in adventure racing, but we're all strong, independent, self-motivated women who have come together to take on this challenge and share our journey and achievement.

We reside in the suburbs from Thirroul to



Woonona, our lives filled with juggling family, work commitments, social engagements, and active lifestyles. By no means are we elite athletes (with the exception of Katrina Skellern and Ange Tokley who nudge that category!) but we are all passionate about maintaining our health and fitness, and occasionally finding the need to express our competitive nature.

The Mountain Designs GeoQuest 48hr Adventure Race will push us beyond our comfort zones, to where new skills will need to be acquired ... like how to use a map and compass! Mental toughness will be challenged ... how to function on no sleep! Training will be elevated beyond our usual leisurely pursuits ... we'll have to paddle 50km! We'll also have to adapt our individual competitiveness and independence to form a cohesive and successful team.

With no more than 17 weeks total preparation



At left, L to R:
Teresa Kay,
Ange Tokley,
Lisa Matuzelis,
Katrina
Skellern



time, the All Talk team has taken to this steep learning curve with great enthusiasm and optimism, despite the occasional fear and doubt that creeps in!

Training has highlighted each team member's unique strengths: Katrina excels at endurance events and has extensive knowledge and experience in multi-discipline racing; Ange showcases her competence as an experienced trail runner and competitor; Teresa is the ultimate workhorse – reliable, versatile and strong-willed; and I'm confident in all things mountain biking and bike mechanics.

Undoubtedly, there will be weaknesses amongst the team that will have to be navigated as we take this journey together.

No challenging endeavour is possible without the belief and support of others. Throughout this journey, the team has had support from family and

friends, and from organisations and businesses in the community, with particular mention going to The Edge Outdoor Adventure Store, Steel City Cycles, Thirroul Surf Lifesaving Club, Illawarra Canoe Club, Woronora Boatshed and many others (for more, visit www.alltalkwomen.com/support).

The generosity and encouragement we have received has been inspirational. **2515**

If you'd like to follow All Talk during the event, GPS Live Tracking will be available at the GeoQuest website (www.geoquest.com.au/live-tracking) or visit the All Talk website, www.alltalkwomen.com



Hardy aphids. Photo:
Alvesgaspar /
WikiCommons

Beetling About

With Helensburgh entomologist Dr Chris Reid

Reading a rather gruesome recent *Guardian* article on aircraft stowaways who freeze yet survive (less than a quarter of them) reminded me of aphids. Aphids (greenfly, blackfly) are those squishy things that infest bean and rose shoots. They're soft-bodied and stay out in the open all year, yet aphids in high latitudes like Canada can survive frosts.

Playing with aphids and temperature was a favourite zoology project in my undergrad uni, at Newcastle upon Tyne, famously cold in winter. In temperate countries aphids are important – they are major pests, as they are vectors of plant viruses (e.g. in wheat) and can develop huge numbers very quickly, each one feeding on the host plant juices.

As Shelley might have said:

*Hail to thee blithe aphid
Pest thou ever wert
While other insects pollinate
All you can do is hurt*

(Yeah, okay, apologies not just to Shelley but anyone reading this – I made it up to put in my third-year exam almost 40 years ago...)

How they breed quickly is another little magic thing about aphids – they are facultatively parthenogenetic. It means that in the right conditions the females keep producing babies without having all the fuss and nonsense of sex. That makes them easy to keep in the lab as well, so they are often 'lab rats' for experimental work.

Anyhow, going back to the cold, adult aphids are not tolerant of severe cold. Depending on the species, they can survive two weeks at -2°C (continuously), but do not survive temperatures much lower than that even for short periods. Cold-climate aphids get through winter in thick-walled eggs. But other insects, such as flies, may be freeze tolerant, surviving temperatures down to -40°C. How do they do this?

Their survival is based on having a mixture of chemicals in the blood system – some that can allow partial freezing in the blood but outside cells, and some, such as glycol, sugars and various proteins, that are antifreeze agents. Humans don't have these chemicals, so we have more trouble surviving cold. Of course, insects are cold-blooded, with no internal heat-generating system.

If those insects are not amazing enough, there's a non-biting midge called *Polypedilum* (family Chironomidae) living in central Africa with larvae that can survive severe desiccation (water content down to 3%) for 17 years and then be 'woken up' with water to develop normally. Such desiccated larvae can be heated to 100°C, frozen to -270°C, given high doses of radiation, or immersed in 100% ethanol, yet survive to develop normally.

Who needs science fiction? I suspect these things will be around long after we are gone. **2515**

Meet the 'last responders'

2515 spoke to mother and daughter embalmers Luan Murray and Shawnee Barker.

Embalmer Luan Murray (49) is a Wollongong mortuary manager. "I've always had an interest in death from a young age," Luan says. "Right through my schooling, I wanted to be involved in forensics in the police force."

However, after doing work experience locally and seeing things that were "very confronting", her plans changed. A police officer suggested she contact a funeral director. "Pretty much the first day I stepped foot into the mortuary, I said, 'This is it. This is where I want to be.'"

Luan did her embalming studies while working in Sydney. Three decades later, she is back in Wollongong, at H.Parsons Funeral Directors, working alongside her daughter, Shawnee Barker.

Shawnee (22) is a mortuary technician. "I was very interested in being in the Navy," Shawnee says.

"I had my sights set on being a clearance diver. I got high aptitude results, but didn't pass mental health testing. I hit a bit of a low point. Eventually, Mum said get up and come to work with me for a little bit.

"I started out as just her sort of lackey, carrying her toolbox and moving the embalming machine...

"After the first few weeks of watching, she said, go on, pick up the tools and give it a go. And I did, and I really enjoyed what I was doing."

Luan: "She had a natural ability."

Shawnee: "I'm quite creative. When it comes to trauma cases or even if someone has had a fall and they have a big bruise... I saw that as a route where I could use my creative brain, which I enjoy."

Luan: "My ability comes down to experience, I don't have to think too hard about chemical equations. Shawnee complements me – she's creative, she's artistic."

Shawnee: "I've a really good understanding of colour theory. I've looked back through the generational differences in how women used to do their make-up in the 20s, the 30s, the 60s, and like piecing together what age bracket, what style bracket a particular person falls into."

In the five years that the pair have worked together, Shawnee has risen from apprentice to qualified embalmer, achieving high marks in her examinations. "My challenge now is breaking away from the 'Oh, you're Luan's daughter,'" she says. "I've been asked to present and speak at conferences and I've got to try and prove that I'm my own person and my own embalmer, basically."

Outside of work, Shawnee will disappear on a bush walk in the mountains, Luan will head for the beach to relax. They share a love of music – Luan as a fan, Shawnee as a musician.



Shawnee Barker
(left) and
Luan Murray.
Photo: H.Parsons

Shawnee: “I play in a punk band. I’m a vocalist primarily, I do play bass guitar as well. I’m a songwriter. I listen to a lot.”

Luan: “Shawnee has very eclectic taste in music, whereas I’m pigeonholed into the rock scene...”

“We are very close. Shawnee and I don’t live with each other any more, but I do get the pleasure of spending that eight hours-plus a day with her. She’s one of my best friends.”

Shawnee: “There’s nothing I could not say to her. What benefits us in a professional environment is we can read each other pretty well. There’s days where we have songs going, we’re singing in there. In an industry that can be very dark and you can face things not a lot of people in the world have to face, us being close and being able to make it a light and happy environment is really important.”

Mortuary work is physically and mentally demanding and it has long been male-dominated. Thirty years ago, Luan was among some of the early female embalmers in NSW. She has seen the industry slowly become more progressive, to the point today where many families find the idea of a mother-daughter embalming team very appealing.

“Women deliver their compassion in a way that’s different to men,” Luan says.

Shawnee: “I know with the influx of students that are my age that the industry is drawing more women. It is a care role. Death is becoming less and less of a taboo. It’s taken down an almost hidden wall that we, as mortuary care workers, have been hidden behind. Now society is starting to go, Oh, that’s actually a job. How can I do that?”

Luan: “A lot more people are receptive to the way women deliver this as a job.”

Shawnee: “There have been a lot of situations where [working with women embalmers] has brought a lot of comfort to different families. Us having a personal relationship and being as close as we are, that also brings another level of comfort.

“I’m a big believer that every person should be treated the same. Everyone gets looked after with the same level of respect. I often go to op shops and buy business shirts or nighties, or just a pair of stockings [to clothe the deceased].”

Luan: “She does go the extra mile.

“As embalmers, our job is to embalm and to embalm is ...”

Shawnee: “The preservation, restoration and sanitation of the deceased, that’s the technical definition. But I like to say we’re here to care for the deceased. Whether that’s dressing, or doing someone’s hair – we are just there to care.

“Embalming is not a scary thing. We’re not morbid people – we’re just like a nurse or an aged care worker. I believe that everyone deserves to go out with dignity. We’re just here to step in and care for that person at that point in their lives.”

Luan: “We’re the last responders.” **2515**



Explore Grevillea Park in autumn

By John Elton

There is no better place to see our wonderful native flora than at the Illawarra Grevillea Park.

Autumn presents a display full of variety, interest and beauty. While the time of the large tropical grevilleas is mainly in Spring, there are still many in bloom, including the wonderful ‘Bush Lemons’ (pictured) and ‘Bulli Beauty’.

But it is the time to see many of our special Western Australian plants, including *Grevillea dielsiana* and the black flowers of *Grevillea hookeriana*. Another plant to look out for is *Grevillea* ‘Bulli Envy’ with its giant flowers that begin as a deep green and open to yellow.

It’s not just Grevilleas on show. The Banksias at this time of the year are simply stunning.

A highlight is always the bed of Banksia Bush Candles. Seeing hundreds of banksia cones in the one bed blows the mind! *Banksia praemorsa* from the south coast of Western Australia has unique purple, red or yellow flowers. The large golden cones are especially beautiful and well worth a close-up look.

A new addition to the Park is a garden of sensational standards – both Grevilleas and Eremophilas. Standing two metres high, the plants weep gracefully to the ground, making a real statement.

Increasingly, people visit the Park to buy their plants and hard-to-get grafted plants are always at the top of their list.

Bring your camera, your picnic rug, explore the rainforest and search the gardens for the plethora of flowers, and plant textures, forms and colours. As always bring your questions and Ray and the team will do their best to help out.

Autumn open days: Saturday and Sunday, May 1, 2, 8, 9 (10am–4pm); Winter open days: Saturday and Sunday, July 3, 4, 10, 11 (10am–4pm); Spring open days: Saturday and Sunday, September 4, 5, 11, 12 (10am–4pm). **2515**

Q&A with Daniel Hillyer

Founded in Wollongong and set to service the nation, tappON is an online platform connecting people with disabilities and additional needs with high-quality service providers



Coledale's Maryanne Harris and Daniel Hillyer founded tappON together. Photo supplied

Founded by Coledale husband and wife duo, Maryanne Harris and Daniel Hillyer, tappON was created as a result of their own struggle with a fragmented healthcare system after Daniel became a quadriplegic following an accident in 2010.

Daniel kindly took time to answer questions.

How did the two of you meet and what brought you to live in Coledale?

I met Maryanne through her cousin who was also my very close mate.

After my accident in 2010 and spending 10 months in Prince of Wales hospital I moved back into my parents house for three years in a granny flat purpose-built for accessibility. We chose to move to Coledale due to a more relaxed lifestyle and as it's close to work.

When and how did tappON start?

tappON started in 2018, where we started at iAccelerate, located at the UOW's Innovation Campus, North Wollongong.

tappON was created after our own experience with using traditional agencies for receiving care and support. There were days I was left in bed with no-one turning up or without a phone call.

A carer would turn up and not know my name nor the job they were there to do, which was very personal. I would phone my wife while she was on the way to work in Westmead, resulting in her turning around to come help me get out of bed and ready for the day.

There was a lot of missed communication between admin, carers and myself, resulting in missed shifts. There needed to be a better solution.

What did you find most frustrating?

Not being able to connect with reliable carers and communicate with them directly. I would need to contact the agency admin and wait for them to contact a carer, ask a question, sometimes taking days when I needed to change a time or request additional help.

tappON makes the communication between our members and support worker or small business direct. A question or request can be actioned more quickly with no need to be waiting days. tappON's platform is free for our members to access, and exists to help make their lives better.

What do you like about working with Maryanne?

I really enjoy working alongside my wife. We work

really well together, bouncing ideas and solutions off one another. It's really positive sharing the same goals and values around making tappON what it is today and being able to celebrate our success together. I really admire Maryanne's work ethic, she is super driven. She never gives up, and faces challenges with vigorous tenacity.

Maryanne is a kind and caring individual. She has been there to support my darkest days, and support me with the challenges I've faced over the years since my injury.

In the crowded online world, how is tappON different?

tappON has been developed with our members first and foremost in mind. As a tool to save them time and money, while coordinating their team to maintain their independence. When needing to build a team or people to support them, our members search our discovery section for their right fit of verified support professionals in the local area.

They can then view their profile, information and qualifications before making a booking. A booking can be made using NDIS funding, Aged Care packages and privately through our secure booking system.

Our members can connect with a support worker via our inbuilt messaging feature and get a quick response, removing the third person and not having to wait long periods for a reply.

We also have our virtual booking feature where a member can request support, such as art therapy, and participate and interact with a qualified art therapist, even if they aren't in the same local area.

tappON also offers Allied Health services such as Exercise Physiology, Podiatry and Occupational Therapy. It's all about giving our members autonomy over who they choose to work with, and personalising the connections between our members and the support people they can access.

Having someone come into your home is a very personal thing, and tappON helps our members feel confident about the help they're accessing.

What's been the biggest challenge?

Balancing our work and home time. It's all-consuming running a business like this, especially when we're experiencing such rapid growth.

What are your plans for the future?

To see our platform go Australia wide. We recently announced our new Impact Partners, the Black Dog Institute and SpinalCure Australia – we are donating funds to the important research of both organisation. **2515**

Visit <https://about.tappon.co>

Hello Fish

With Duncan Leadbitter at Flagstaff Point

Underneath Wollongong's iconic lighthouse (well, one of them) is Flagstaff Point. Compared to Bass Point or Hill 60 it is a moderately sized headland that offers some good snorkelling and diving, with options on the northern and southern sides depending on weather and swell.

In this article we explore the south side via scuba but there is lots to see on snorkel. There is plenty of parking and paths down to the rock platform are well formed. The best entry/exit point is marked on the video (see QR code). As always, take note of tide and swell.

There is always a bail out option of a swim to the beach but there can be a strong current heading out to sea along the rocks, especially if the swell picks up.

There is a lot of habitat structure at Flagstaff Point. By this I mean that there is a diversity of habitats such as boulders, overhangs, some sandy areas (note the flathead and the ray in the video) and a vertical wall at the eastern end. This mix provides shelter for some animals and the exposed areas favour others. The mix helps contribute to a diversity of species including some thick colonies of red and green zoanthids (similar to anenomes) on the walls and caves for cuttlefish and fish like juvenile bullseyes to hide.

I was drawn the habitat issue after a snorkel earlier in the week off Coledale rockpool where, at least where I looked, the seabed is flat rock with little or no habitat structure, and very few species of fish.

Flagstaff Point also attracts some ocean predators like kingfish, which come in to hunt small fish like the yellowtail that star at the beginning of the video. The flathead are also hunters as is the cave dwelling wirrah cod, a moderately sized predator on other fish. Everyone is on the look out for food! **2515**

Click on the QR code to be taken to the video stored on Ilawarra Underwater



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Cheers to sports mums

By Tony Ryan, the Northern Districts Tigers' women's coach

The autumn chill in the air brings a strange phenomenon to many houses across the 2515 area. It is the start of football season and now soccer, NRL and AFL jumpers cover many a Hills Hoist in the region.

All clubs have hardy volunteers who take home the jumpers every week after games to ensure that they are ready for the following week.

Volunteers are the lifeblood of any local sporting organisation and there are thousands of stories of what locals have done for their clubs: presidents, committee members, coaches, water carriers (pre-Covid) and tuck shop people who all give up hours of their time for little recognition. Their only reward is seeing their kids out having fun with their friends.

As we celebrate Mother's Day in May, it is great to see so many women take up roles that we once considered "men only". We now have women as presidents, coaches, assistant coaches and runners. Men and women share canteen, cleaning and team manager's duties, yet the barbecue seems to be the last bastion of male domain.

I remember when I started playing football as an eight-year-old in Melbourne's western suburbs, the club had this really nice old lady, "Ma Baker", who ran the tuck shop. She would always greet you with a lovely smile and "How did you go today, love?" Win, lose or draw you could rely on being called love, darl, sweetie or young fella as you went up for your post-match pie. Us young scallywags would always sing the Boney M song *Ma Baker* and she would laugh as if it was the first time she'd heard it.

One mum would fill up a bucket with warm

water and add her home concoction of what smelt like Pine O Cleen and metho. Her husband would soak old towels that looked like something from a WWI museum in the bucket and go around wiping each boy's face, whether it was muddy or not. The stinging sensation and the fact the water would be cold after the first quarter did not dampen the enthusiasm of the hard face-wash.

At the Tigers a couple of years back, a mother volunteered to do all the fitness and warm-up work with the players. When the team came back from a record 25-point deficit at three-quarter time to win the grand final, one of the factors was the fitness training she had done with the boys.

Every Mother's Day the kids would always put in a special effort in their Sunday morning games and ask, "When is Children's Day?" Nearly every mum would say, "That is every other day!" We would gather the Auskickers (Under 8s) after the game and give them a Fredo frog and say: run up to your mum, give her a big hug, say happy Mother's Day and give her the Fredo. The kids did run and hug their mums, but somehow the chocolate treat never found its way to the intended recipient.

So, on Sunday, May 9, as the mums of the Illawarra enjoy their breakfast in bed (a cold cup of tea, burnt toast and an egg that tastes like it has been boiling since the night before) and unwrap a gift from the school's Mother's Day stall, we hope they enjoy the one day a year that is not "Children's Day". **2515**

Visit the Northern Districts Tigers website at www.ndafc.com

Port Kembla Tidal Chart

May 2021

TIME	M	TIME	M	TIME	M	TIME	M
1 0556 0.28 1159 1.30 SA 1721 0.63 2355 1.82		10 0125 0.54 0718 1.43 MO 1317 0.49 1942 1.65		19 0051 1.56 0802 0.52 WE 1416 1.19 1928 0.82		28 0347 0.18 0947 1.41 FR 1517 0.50 2150 2.03	
2 0702 0.34 1307 1.23 SU 1821 0.72		11 0203 0.50 0757 1.39 TU 1346 0.51 2013 1.69		20 0153 1.54 0859 0.49 TH 1518 1.26 ● 2043 0.78		29 0445 0.20 1047 1.34 SA 1610 0.58 2242 1.96	
3 0056 1.72 0811 0.40 MO 1421 1.21 1930 0.78		12 0241 0.47 0835 1.36 WE 1416 0.55 ● 2045 1.72		21 0300 1.55 0951 0.44 FR 1613 1.37 2154 0.71		30 0545 0.25 1148 1.29 SU 1704 0.66 2336 1.86	
4 0203 1.63 0915 0.44 TU 1531 1.23 ● 2047 0.79		13 0319 0.45 0915 1.32 TH 1447 0.59 2117 1.74		22 0402 1.57 1039 0.38 SA 1702 1.50 2300 0.60		31 0644 0.32 1250 1.26 MO 1804 0.72	
5 0314 1.56 1012 0.46 WE 1630 1.29 2201 0.76		14 0358 0.45 0955 1.28 FR 1520 0.63 2152 1.73		23 0501 1.59 1124 0.34 SU 1748 1.65			
6 0417 1.52 1100 0.46 TH 1718 1.36 2305 0.70		15 0439 0.47 1038 1.23 SA 1556 0.68 2230 1.70		24 0000 0.47 0558 1.60 MO 1209 0.32 1835 1.79			
7 0512 1.50 1140 0.47 FR 1800 1.44 2359 0.64		16 0523 0.49 1124 1.19 SU 1636 0.73 2310 1.65		25 0058 0.35 0654 1.58 TU 1254 0.33 1922 1.91			
8 0558 1.48 1215 0.47 SA 1836 1.52		17 0612 0.52 1215 1.17 MO 1722 0.78 2357 1.61		26 0154 0.26 0751 1.54 WE 1340 0.37 ○ 2010 2.00			
9 0044 0.59 0639 1.45 SU 1247 0.47 1910 1.59		18 0705 0.53 1313 1.16 TU 1819 0.81		27 0250 0.20 0848 1.47 TH 1428 0.43 2100 2.04			

**TIMES AND
HEIGHTS OF HIGH
AND LOW WATERS
LAT 34° 29'
LONG 150° 55'**

MOON PHASE SYMBOLS New Moon ● First Quarter ◐ Full Moon ○ Last Quarter ◑

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High-performance surfing at Sharkies Rights

By Scarborough Boardrider Ian Pepper

Pointscore no.4 on 18 April was a full day with finals run in most divisions. The swell had been dropping from solid conditions the week prior, but there were still enough waves around to keep

nearly everybody satisfied at Sharkies Rights.

There was some high-performance surfing all round from Macey Jolley, who took out the Junior Girls final with a 12.57 total; Mannix Squiers who won the 18 Boys with 15.23; and Brett Davis, who notched another win in the Over 55s with a total 15.03 points.

The Open Women's saw a return of Kasey Hargreaves, who had to fight off a very hungry Anna Chamberlain for a win, with Talina Wilson coming third.

The Open A-Grade saw a top line-up after some firing semi-finals, but as darkness fell the waves started to get sleepy. Fin McLaren struck early picking up a 6.5 and a 7.5 hitting a series of sections all the way to the beach.

Will Clarke, surfing with a heavy taped ankle all day, kept up the pace with 2nd, while Nic Squiers managed to land the only air in the As – scoring at perfect 10 in the semi-final! – but this wasn't enough to secure the win and he came away with a third.

Next pointscore is 30 May and watch out for other local events over the next month with the Werri Slash 1st May and Junior Regional Surfing Titles 8th May. **2515**

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