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Meet Our Contributors



Duncan Leadbitter is a director of fisheries and natural resource consulting company, Fish Matter, which advises industry, government and NGOs on the sustainable use of fish. Most of Duncan's work is based in Asia. He is a Visiting Fellow at the Australian Centre for Ocean Resources and Security at the University of Wollongong. A keen scuba diver, snorkeller, spearfisherman and photographer, Duncan has lived in Stanwell Park for 20 years.



Brian Kelly first stepped into the *Illawarra Mercury* office as the new kid from Thirroul nearly 40 years ago and is still managing (just) to hold on tight to a career he is grateful has dragged him to the UK (10 years), then Perth and Melbourne before a return to the district in 2008. He deems it a pleasure to get back into the grassroots stories of the northern suburbs.



Dr Ben Bartlett graduated from the University of Sydney in 1972. He has worked in general practice and public health in a range of settings, including Aboriginal health services in Central Australia and the Illawarra. He joined the team at Bulli Medical Practice in 2017 and has

special interests in acupuncture, mental health, paediatrics, musculo-skeletal disorders, pain management and chronic disease management. Ben studied acupuncture at the Shanghai College of Traditional Chinese Medicine in the early 1980s and continues to attend courses.



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NEXT DEADLINE July 21, 2021

COVER Shyla and Zahlia Short. Photo: Anthony Warry

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NEXT DEADLINE
July 21
for August's
issue

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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Watch 'Croker Island Exodus'

By local studies librarian Jo Oliver



Mavis Kelso, at left, & Ruby Brawn. Photo: State Library NSW

Celebrate Naidoc Week with a special presentation of the documentary *Croker Island Exodus* at Wollongong Library on Tuesday, 6 July at 10am and Wednesday, 7 July at 6pm. You will have an opportunity to view an exhibition of photographs of the child evacuees who came from Croker Island to Otford during World War II.

In 1942, 95 Aboriginal children from a mission station, along with their three cottage mothers, escaped the threat of Japanese invasion. Travelling from Croker Island in the Northern Territory, by foot, boat, canoe, truck and train, the children arrived in Otford. There, they lived at the Methodist Conference Centre and attended local schools until 1946.

The image, at left, from the exhibition shows two girls – Mavis Kelso and Ruby Brawn – who met because of the exodus and became friends at Scarborough Public School during that time.

View more photographs capturing this important time in local history in an exhibition at Wollongong Library from 2 July to 31 August curated by our Local Studies team, with 40 photographs provided by the State Library of NSW and the Helensburgh Historical Society. **2515**

History of Wollongong JPs

By Ray Vaughan, president of the NSW Justices Association Wollongong Branch

Justices of the Peace have been around for many years, over a century in Australia. The first gathering of JPs was in Sydney in 1910 and it was decided that an association should be formed in NSW. In 1911, a committee was chosen and the association rules and regulations were drawn up.

There were 444 association members in March 1911 and by June 1911 660 JPs had joined. In those days, JPs were sworn in and remained a JP for life but that's changed and now you are only accredited for five years. The life part was abolished in 2003 by the 2002 Justice of the Peace Act.

After five years you have to sit an exam and pass to remain a JP. All the questions are taken from the Justice of the Peace Handbook, which lays out rules for JPs to follow.

In 1992, all JPs were given a registration number which must be on every document that they sign, witness and certify. There are many branches of the Association all over NSW and Sydney.

The Wollongong Branch has been going since 1955. We have Community Desks 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).

Wollongong Branch holds a meeting for our members on the second Tuesday of each month (except January and December) at the Church of Life Hall, 129 Jardine Street, Fairy Meadow.

All JPs are welcome to attend and after three meetings we do ask that they join us in the association. Any person who is thinking of becoming a JP and wants assistance and help with the application, exam and knowledge of what we can and cannot do, is welcome as well.

There are some documents and forms that a JP does not have any jurisdiction over, but we are able to assist you in finding the correct person or department/office to go to.

All services given by JPs are free of charge and we are not allowed to accept any form of payment or gift for the duties we have performed.

The association holds training programmes in Sydney throughout the year and Wollongong branch does the same. This is done to ensure any changes of the duties and manner of dealing with documents presented to us is kept up to date.

Members working on Community Desks wear a uniform of the association with its insignia upon it.

For further information, please contact the current president on 0419 293 524. **2515**



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Tour of the learning place

Brian Kelly takes a bush tucker walk with Clarence Slockee



Two decades ago, Clarence Slockee pivoted and twisted in an Indigenous dance troupe. Today, he's ducking and diving as the questions come thicker than a forest of burrawangs – and all from a gaggle of girls by turns precocious and cute.

The *Gardening Australia* presenter is conducting a bush tucker guided walk through Wollongong Botanic Garden on a sunny Sunday morning, and the young ladies, despite their shushing mums, have picked up on our guest's casual, relaxed manner and willingness to have a chat on the run. They keep up a running commentary on spiders, BandAids and May Gibbs' banksia men.

Our group is 20-strong, and demand is such that the event is oversubscribed, but our visiting TV star is only too happy to agree to another tour.

It's fitting that a fuss is being made of the garden's Towri Bush Tucker Garden as Naidoc Week nears – it's been nine years since it opened in Naidoc Week 2012. Tucked away in a northern corner (closest to Northfields Ave), Towri was named by traditional custodians. It means "learning place surrounded by trees and flowers".

Having seen a few bee species sip breakfast from nasturtiums, we set off from beneath a towering stringybark, the younger element balanced by a more mature set all too ready to chip in with the correct genus name of a turpentine or bottle tree.

Clarence, from the Bundjalong nation (NSW-Queensland border), gives us a quick and impressive lesson in Indigenous languages, including a chanted greeting in the Illawarra's own Wodi Wodi. Under his jacket is a T-shirt bearing his daughter's drawing of a goanna – in his tongue

known as "jiwah", his totem animal and the name of his landscaping company.

Slockee's path has had plenty of turns since his own childhood, when he and friends would match the right tide with the right moon phase to pick up crabs from a creek near the Tweed River. Jiwah, his company, landscapes rooftop gardens on city buildings with native plants. Twenty years ago, he starred in a documentary about Indigenous dancing, something that helped him take his culture to other parts of Australia and the world.

First stop today is a eucalypt, where we learn that Australia has about 800 types, of which koalas will eat leaves from up to 50 but prefer to stick to a dozen. So far, so informative. The entertainment kicks in courtesy of jokes about a nearby "bum tree", or bottle tree. Clarence mentions that its roots are edible, and that its cousin is the Illawarra flame tree, *Brachychiton acerifolius*.

The second stop brings us to a paperbark, and a mention of how powder in its bark layers can be used as an antiseptic. Clarence says the sap from the spider fig behind him is a coagulant that might be handy for stemming bleeding but might cause a rash, and there's a handy reminder not to use sandpaper fig leaves as toilet paper.

"All native figs have fruit, which are maybe not so palatable, but edible," he says.

Stop three is among plants that enjoy drier conditions, such as saltbush, and Clarence alerts us to the threat of myrtle rust – an airborne fungus that can kill bottle-brush, tea-tree and eucalypts.

Before we can make the fourth stop, a creature emerges ... gnome-like, bearded, not overly burdened with height. We realise it's the commonly spotted Costa Georgiadis, host of *Gardening Australia* himself. Wearing a knitted hat given to him that morning by a fan who spent three hours making it, Costa is wielding a mobile on a selfie stick and apologises for the interruption as he asks Clarence what he's doing in Wollongong.

The occasion is, his colleague reminds him, the botanic garden's 50th birthday, and our walk is one of many events plant lovers have flocked to on the weekend of May 29-30.

We barely make the bush tucker area itself, so distracted is Clarence by plants and all their stories on the way to the Towri area. The astringent qualities of kangaroo apple, the measures taken by Indigenous people ("the women – because the women are the smartest!") to render toxic seeds edible, and how "calendar" plants reminded ancestors of natural movements, such as whale migration, get brief mentions before we depart.

After further amusement from the younger set (mandarin being misheard as mandrake) and a final warning to watch for myrtle rust, our guest must take his next group, surely conscious that when it comes to loving plants and banter and engagement on the topic, this region's junior gardeners are as sharp as secateurs. **2515**



Costa Georgiadis (above) and Clarence Slookee (opposite) led tours on Botanic Gardens Day. Photos: Wollongong City Council



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A traffic improvement?

By Murray Jones

On March 22, 2016 the *Mercury* reported that Transport for NSW (TfNSW) was conducting a traffic study in the area and it was due to be completed in May. Five years later, TfNSW published two options for Thirroul. The second option is clearways. How can this option be acceptable, given their recent impacts in Bulli and Woonona?

The first option, for a single through-lane optimised for continuous flow, is preferred by TfNSW. They claim the look and feel of the town will be maintained yet Thirroul will lose 65 car parking spaces along Lawrence Hargrave Drive (LHD). This will lead most shoppers to walk within inches of moving cars. Vehicles will veer close to gutters and footpaths as they steer around right turning vehicles. Some of the 50 or so shopkeepers along LHD estimate their future loss of revenue at around 20 to 30%. Is this all for an estimated average 20 second faster transit? Surely there must be a less damaging solution that also addresses other basic concerns not addressed by these options.

Is this all for an estimated average 20-second faster transit? Surely there must be a less damaging solution that also addresses other basic concerns not addressed by these options.

Travelling north by road from Bulli, you enter Thirroul by crossing the single-lane Bulli Pass Bridge. This is the only practical vehicular access point to LHD. Then after one kilometre, LHD crosses the quaintly named Overhead Bridge. These bridges, 1km apart, are choke points. Within minutes of a minor accident, traffic stops and rapidly backs up along LHD. Gridlock occurs when either bridge is blocked. The only bypass is via Helensburgh, a 40km round trip.

Actually, a traffic accident anywhere from Bulli to Austinmer rapidly creates a concerning situation. People are easily trapped with their cars. What if this situation coincides with a bushfire, house fire or tsunami warning? Already, twice this year, small road accidents have locked up Thirroul, each time for over an hour.

Even the northern suburbs of Wombarra, Coledale and Austinmer have secondary access routes via Buttenshaw Drive. However, for these residents, if a medical emergency coincides with a gridlock event, an ambulance would come from Engadine then return to their nearest hospital, Sutherland. This is an hour-and-a quarter round trip outside peak hours.

Is it not obvious a second road is the solution?

A second road is Council's responsibility as TfNSW only looks after the arterial roads. With Council elections in three months, is it not time to ask Councillors if they will support an alternate road?

Though, in all fairness, shouldn't Council call on State Government to help fund this solution, because their actions or otherwise, led to this problem? The half-kilometre-wide stretch of land that connects Thirroul and Bulli was developed by Stocklands around 2006 under new legislation that allowed State Government to control all large developments. The NSW State Department of Planning (DOP) supervised the planning process. At the time, calls by locals for secondary access were ignored and Wollongong City Council appears to have no say in the matter.

We also need to consider that Bradfield, Sydney's third city centre, is being fast-tracked inland from Thirroul. Bradfield is five minutes closer to Thirroul than it is to Bondi or Cronulla. Large parts to the south of Bradfield are also being rapidly developed. So it is fair to say that a significant proportion of Sydney's 2041 projected population of 7 million will have Thirroul as its closest beach. Given this increasing source of visitors, I fear that TfNSW proposal will rapidly become inadequate, then leaving a four-lane clearway along the horse track that is LHD as the only option.

There are at least five options for additional road access. Each option will upset some residents affected by increasing traffic on a residential road, however, the alternative is to perpetuate a growing risk to residents of the northern Illawarra and damage forever the character and commercial viability of Thirroul.

It is worth considering that outlying suburbs of Wollongong, like Balgownie, Port Kembla, Mt Kembla and Mt Keira at some time, like Thirroul, were linked to Wollongong by a single road. Over time road networks merged them into Wollongong. This is how cities grow. Road networking is the very fabric of a modern city. Thirroul became a suburb of Wollongong in 2005 yet remains isolated by single road access. Is it not time for our actual merger into Wollongong?

If you agree with this, can I suggest asking questions of your prospective Councillors and sending a big NO to southprojects@transport.nsw.gov.au before 5pm Friday, 9th July? **2515**

Murray is a member of Thirroul Village Committee (TVC), a group of local residents who share an interest in the future of Thirroul. Visit www.thirroulvillage.com



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Oystercatchers use long bills to pry limpets and sea snails off their rocky homes. Photos: Amanda De George

Backyard Zoology

With Amanda De George

The Sooty Oystercatchers announce their arrival, just as they announce their departure, with a high-pitched call, almost like a squeaky toy being given a series of short, sharp squeezes.

I've gotten into the habit of not paying a lot of attention to these lovely birds even as they make their dramatic entrance. I keep doing what I'm doing, looking down into the rock pools, searching for movement, a tentacle unfurling perhaps, a hermit crab snatching at teeny ocean debris from within its newly acquired shell home.

But today, I let my attention wander over to the Oystercatchers as they forage over the rock shelf, using their long bills to pry limpets and sea snails off their rocky homes before turning to the meat inside.

There are two of them, searching together. I usually see them in pairs and apparently the males and females can be distinguished from one another as the female has a longer and more slender bill. To me though, they look exactly the same and so I give up trying to decipher who is who and just watch them go about their day.

Eventually they make their way onto the sand with a half leap, half flying move, their wings shifting ever so slightly, up and down, before being tucked once again neatly against their bodies. Both

birds, their legs strangely pale against the vibrant orange of their beak and their eyes, head straight for the various clumps of *Cunjevoi* washed up after the huge seas. They poke and prod at the animal, using their feet to turn it over and those long beaks to break in, looking to get to the fleshy goodness inside. There's a few defensive squirts of water every now and then from the *Cunjevoi* but that doesn't stop these birds tucking in. Clearly, it's a bit of a favourite in their diet.

Sooty Oystercatchers are found along the coast around Australia, usually not more than 50 metres from the water. Watching them flying in and out and making their way confidently along the shoreline, it's hard to believe that these birds are classed as Vulnerable in NSW. It's kind of what you'd expect – a combination of human activity that destroys nesting and roosting sites and the proliferation of dogs, foxes, cat and rats where the oystercatchers live. So keep them in mind as you make your way over and around the rocks and shoreline.

Don't worry, if you don't see them, you'll definitely hear them coming in! **2515**

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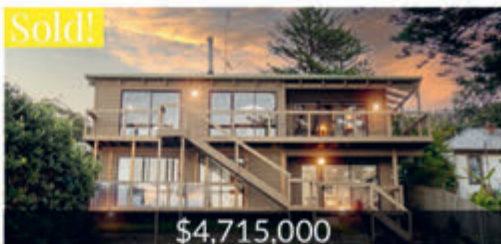
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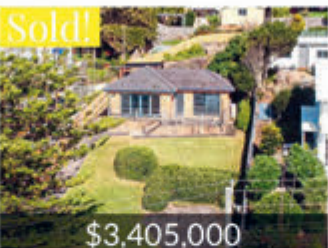
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Vale Keith Caldwell

Crowds gathered at Kembla Grange Racecourse to celebrate the life of the Bulli Surf Club president on June 11, Brian Kelly reports.

Given the vast sprawl of vehicles in the racecourse car park, the casual observer might have thought it strange to have a funeral on race day. Except there were no races.

“Nah, no races – this is just for the funeral, mate,” said the car park steward, gesturing toward the rare remaining spaces a long stroll from the Kembla Grange entrance.

Such was the popularity of Keith Caldwell, the Bulli Surf Club president of 17 years whose presence was both keenly felt and sorely missed at his send-off. Known as “Cocky” – a nickname not given for his exuberant, confident manner but which suited it – Keith left a massive community footprint in his 60 years across numerous fields, mostly in surf lifesaving but also in the NSW Police, particularly its rugby league scene. He died in hospital on May 30.

Keith entered the enclosure area in a coffin vividly coloured with drawings and messages from his grandchildren as the bombastic rock of *Knockin’ On Heaven’s Door* (Guns N’ Roses version) filled the air. With two surf boats, banners and a reel forming a backdrop, the sun peeked through for a moment on a chilly day vastly different to the thousands of sunny ones Keith spent on Bulli Beach.

His son, Jamie, later noted how fitting the venue was, as Keith had engaged his passion for the punt at the course and had once been thrown the keys and asked to lock up one night after a particularly convivial social session in the members bar.

Four speakers recounted his contributions to the lives of others beyond his equally impressive CV of police work and surf lifesaving with the emotion

and humour that had underpinned his connection with people.

There were chuckles amid the tears, particularly over stories regarding Keith impersonating a contract killer during his undercover years with police, and the day he almost drowned long-time friend Noel Freeman during a belt race in a Sydney surf carnival.

That one person could have collected such a list of official plaudits and accolades – arguably peaking with last year’s life membership to Surf Life Saving Australia – is an imposing achievement, but all anecdotes asserted that it was the personal bonds forged over the years that mattered most to Keith.

“He would see the best in people definitely before the worst – and if there was enough best, he would give them a go,” Jamie said in a eulogy containing a humorous pot-shot at his father’s dubious DIY skills alongside an acknowledgment of how the outpouring of grief had been humbling.

Jamie related how, as a grandfather, Keith had perfected the parent-frustrating art of dropping in half an hour before his grandkids’ dinner with a bag of lollies, geeing them up and then leaving, often after staying for dinner himself.

A memorial scholarship in Keith’s name on gofundme to help young adults achieve goals had raised more than \$39,000 at press time.

Jamie also reinforced the importance of registering for organ donation. Keith left his liver, kidneys and other tissues for the benefit of ill strangers – for a bloke who did 45 years of lifesaving, a different but no less profound method of saving lives. **2515**



In a final act of life saving, Keith Caldwell donated his organs, a move his family hopes will inspire others to follow suit. Visit www.DonateLife.gov.au Photos: thanks to Maria Caldwell



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Sub-Tribe gig at Beaches

By Mistica Maiana



From left to right, Tommy-John Herbert, Nich Polovineo, Te Oranga Nolan, David Reglar, Jevon Tawhai, and Will Endicott. Photo: Tad Souden

From the roots-driven frequencies of Aotearoa/ New Zealand and the natural environs of the Dharawal coast, Sub-Tribe have established a sound that takes the vintage elements of dub reggae music and blends them in a digital dance-scape of body-hitting bass and harmonies that soar.

Sub-Tribe is the six-headed groove culmination that defies traditional band arrangements, utilising drum machines instead of drum kits, gigging with a backbeat of bass instead of pushing heavy bass rigs, and the sound is often more diverse, expansive and easy on the ears. Their key ingredients are also three-part vocal harmonies, complemented by one of Sydney's most sought after three-piece brass sections. The result is filling dance floors and still nodding heads.

Much of their music is composed and produced by local brothers Tommy-John Herbert and Jevon Tawhai, based in Bulli and Thirroul, along with lead vocalist Te Oranga Nolan from the Sutherland Shire. Sax player David Reglar teaches at the Wollongong Conservatorium of Music. Trumpet player, Will Endicott, also teaches music students

throughout Sydney, while Nich Polovineo, on trombone, also plays full-time in Aussie favourites Lime Cordiale.

Throughout a confining year for many musicians and music lovers, Sub-Tribe took full advantage of the opportunity to hunker down in their local studios, recording and releasing a catalogue of new music. Their single *The Road* led to the launch of their first EP in May last year, making headway into music charts here in Australia, NZ and further afield into Europe, Japan and the Americas. Their following release was their EP *Remixed*.

This year, as NSW allowed venues to reopen and lift dancing restrictions, the boys have since released their first vinyl record containing all their music from the previous 12 months.

Sub-Tribe will be returning to play at Beaches on July 9, supported by Chris Munky and local outfit, Ren & The Rude Boys. Free entry before 8pm or \$10 thereafter. **2515**

Follow the band on Facebook @SUBTRIBE and on Instagram @subtribemusic

Calling First Responders

Are you a lifesaver, a firey or an SES volunteer? A charity founded in the Illawarra would like to offer you a free weekend to work on your mental wellbeing.

Applications are now open for the first First Responder Emergency Services Health Education Retreat (FRESHER), to be held at the Sylvan Glen Estate in Penrose from 6-8 August.

"We are calling for applicants across all volunteer emergency first responder organisations, including RFS, SES, St John Ambulance, Surf Life Saving, Marine Rescue," said Churchill Fellow Louise Murphy, a Registered Nurse and St John volunteer whose passion for helping others with mental wellbeing drove her to found the not-for-profit

Australian First Responder Foundation last year.

"This is the first retreat in NSW specifically for our volunteer emergency first responders – we are a little bit proud," Louise told 2515. "It's foundations are on peer support, prevention.

"We have 15 places available. The weekend is at no cost to volunteer emergency first responders."

The aim of the retreat is for first responders to reconnect through peer support, reframe views through conversation, listening and learning, and reset via mindfulness workshops, outdoor and creative exercises. **2515**

Find more information on the AFRF Facebook page @ Australian First Responder Foundation or apply via <https://form.jotform.com/211481058421852>

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Some time ago I wrote about the mid-century modern fibro beach cottage making the endangered list of buildings in our seaside suburbs. After I wrote this, it made me think about how each of our homes has a story behind it. They really become the backdrop for our lives (believe me, I know this, I'm married to a film director!).

I like to think that we don't ever truly own our homes. Even if we've paid off the mortgage and built completely new, in the grand scheme of a building's lifetime we are, at best, custodians of our man-made caves and plots of terra firma.

This might be a confronting concept for those who feel that home is our own, our inner sanctum. Yet this is illusory. Most of us don't live alone and therefore we share our home stewardship with our partners, kids, pets, at times visitors, as well as the multitude of insects, the odd house mouse, possum and other biota that don't recognise the boundary we attempt to create with Nature.

So if we give into the idea that our home is not completely ours, does that mean we should just give up on keeping house? I don't think this will ever happen. The success of Bunnings and our DIY culture attests to our love of home making. We are the bowerbirds of the mammal world.

Renovation is like the busy stage teams behind the scenes at the theatre – one performance finishes only to be replaced by the next. Some stage artists are so good that they've made a living out of buying and renovating, so much so that home becomes a moving montage of sets.

This is a relatively new phenomenon. Once upon a time, we would stay in one place for much longer. I once worked with a lady who told me about her mum who lived in country NSW. She had never left her own region, not even to visit Sydney. Her biggest trip was to travel into the local big town to go to the post office!

According to CoreLogic, in Australia, the average house is owned on average for 10.5 years,

whilst in the US people on average move 11.5 times over a lifetime. So what does it mean for our homes with this flux of old and new owners?

Well, this takes me back to the stage-like nature that our rooms take on. The private intimacy of bedrooms, the camaraderie of the living rooms, the nourishing utility of the kitchen, the cleansing functionality of the bathroom – they are the backdrops to our daily rituals.

They affect the way we face our world and in turn we affect them.

The scratchings of children's height marks on a door frame, the hole in the wall caused by an angry tantrum, the historical layers of paint or wallpaper fashions behind the kitchen cupboards. It is in our homes we seek to curate our lives, but it is not the end of the journey.

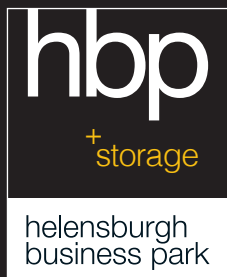
Many houses will have multiple kitchen and bathroom facelifts, extra bedrooms added for expanding families, attic lofts, basement dens, and many will be scratched off the earth to form the particleboard of a new home's flooring.

If then, we re-calibrate our idea of home to one of stewardship, I believe this is a more conversational approach to our relationship with the buildings around us. We can give the building a character of its own, like any other member of the household.

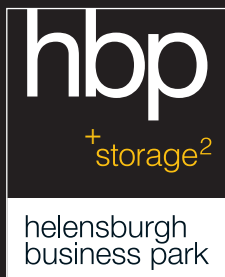
You may want to ask the question next time you go to renovate, "Hey house, I need to enliven my relationship with you, what do you need to help me make this happen?"

One of the world's most celebrated architects, Louis Kahn, would talk to building materials like this. His famous conversation to a brick goes something like this: "What do you want, brick?" And brick says, 'I like an arch.' And you say to brick, 'Look, I want one, too, but arches are expensive and I can use a concrete lintel.' And then you say: 'What do you think of that, brick?'

Brick says: 'I like an arch.'" **2515**



&



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Pad Thai King Prawns

Ingredients

200g package Thai thin rice noodles
 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
 2 tablespoons tamarind pulp
 2 tablespoons palm sugar
 20g extra firm tofu
 6 medium to large fresh king prawns
 ground dried chilli pepper
 2 teaspoons fish sauce
 1 egg
 20g preserved sweet turnip
 10g chopped Spanish onion
 Garnish to top, such as garlic chives, bean sprouts, shallots, lime, crushed toasted peanuts

Method

1. Heat up a wok pan on medium.
2. Add vegetable oil then sauté onion
3. Stir in preserved turnip and then increase temperature to high.
4. Add prawns and stir until cooked.
5. Drain the noodles and add to the wok, stir quickly to keep things from sticking.
6. Add tamarind, tofu, palm sugar and fish sauce – keep stirring it for a minute until all the ingredients are cooked, then add a little bit of water so it helps the noodles to become soft.
7. Crack the egg into the wok and scramble it. Fold the egg into the noodles. The noodles should be soft and a brownish colour. Add bean sprouts and chives. Stir a few more times. Add crushed peanut and lime to the top and serve. **2515**

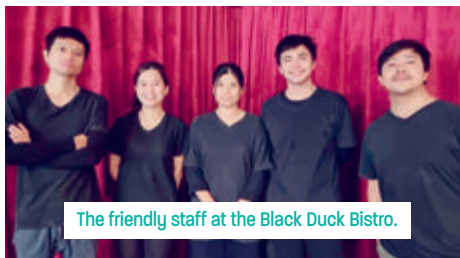
Black Duck chef shares secret to great Pad Thai

By Jo Reed

Sam Jotikasthira and his wife, Boom, have been operating the Black Duck Bistro at Wombarra Bowling Club since Valentine's Day 2014. The bistro has continued to gain popularity ever since, serving up their famous Bowlo BBQ Duck, Pad See Ew, as well as many Australian classics, such as burgers and schnitzels.

Sam is a qualified chef who has worked in many restaurants in Sydney, and although he is of Thai heritage, Sam never worked in a Thai restaurant until he had his very own business.

Cooking is in Sam's blood, and he spent his younger days driving his very fussy Mum all over Bangkok to try a variety of restaurants. Sam likes to do photography as a hobby in his spare time – and also spending time going out for dinner at other restaurants where the cooking is done for him.



Well done, Adventure Racers!

The Mountain Designs GeoQuest 48hr Adventure Race 2021 gave four local women from the ALL TALK team a run for their money this year, with everything from boggy sand trails, to near freezing temps on a midnight paddle, to steep 33% gradient mountain bike climbs. Despite the 48 hours of adversity, the ALL TALK team battled it out to triumphantly cross the finish line together! Full story next month. **2515**

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Time to paint

Janice Creenaune meets Moira Kirkwood, a long-time resident of Coledale. At work, Moira helps others to navigate our aged care system; at home, she finds release through painting. Photos supplied

Moira Kirkwood is warm and welcoming from the first, which gives us an immediate connection. Moira has a background in nursing and her caring nature extends not only to her work in the welfare sector, but beyond – to the environment that envelops her house and even to the world of her art.

At 61, Moira continues to enliven herself to produce abstract works of art that show irregular angles, glorious shapes and both intense and muted colours. With a nod of respect to the works of Piet Mondrian, Moira's work examines honesty on canvas. "I always found the visual arts scene to be highly mysterious, until a conversation with a neighbour," Moira says. "A simple task of a plaster-cast body cast and the ensuing discussion left me realising it was artistic, and that I was indeed an artist. So I left nursing and began studying full-time at West Wollongong TAFE."

At TAFE, Moira found her true self.

"I found my tribe through creative expression in TAFE. It was a totally cynical and short-sighted move by the government to close it down."

Moira's work is almost exclusively abstract and 2D in effects in painting, colour, texture and mark-making. "There is no representation of anything really, but it is definitely the process which is important. I don't plan. I rid myself of all preconceptions and feel as if I act like a channel for the creative force. It is not really about me but emptying myself so that a universal creative energy

finds a way. Just like water finds an easy channel in the landscape."

Moira works in acrylic paint, charcoal, pen and ink, and many collage elements. "I go in with a wide canvas, trying not to close off all possibilities, and up until the very last stroke I am prepared to brutally edit."

Some works can take two weeks, some may take months. "It is for me primarily, but when I am finished I am able to part with it and really I am delighted if somebody else wants to enjoy it. I must admit my art is a luxury. It is personal but I place no real pressure on myself because I'm fortunate enough to have other paying work."

Moira finds moments of joy in her work.

"There are no shortcuts. It has to be the real thing, an honesty to the work must come through. But I can triumph too. I can say 'I am proud of myself, I stuck with this and worked through the issues. I have surmounted obstacles in my path but I had the tenacity to keep going.'"

Moira has a solo show at Timbermill Studios in Bulli at the end of August and is exhibiting with four other artists in Balmain in July. "I enjoy working with others to organise group shows. An artist's life can be challenging; we all need to support each other." **2515**

Writer Janice Creenaune is a volunteer for the PKD (Polycystic Kidney Disease) Foundation. For more info, contact janicecreenaune@gmail.com

Symbio helps kids Discover wild life

The zoo has a new 'pay it forward' plan for Discover NSW vouchers

NSW residents are jumping at the chance to perform a Random Act of Kindness, with thousands of people taking up Symbio's new 'Help Kids in Need Discover a Wild Life' initiative.

The zoo's initiative allows residents to convert a Discover NSW voucher into a Symbio Zoo ticket, then donate it to one of five charities: Sydney Children's Hospital Foundation, The Starlight Foundation, Variety, Canteen and KidzWish.

For each \$25 gift card, Symbio will provide two entry passes, valued at \$78. At press time, the value to the charities was almost \$500,000.

The initiative has sparked hundreds of comments on social media, ranging from "fantastic idea" to "I hope it brings a little happiness to some special little people".

It sure will.

"The opportunity to get up close and to feed the animals is always a win with KidzWish families," said Renee Hawira, fundraising and events manager at KidzWish. **2515**



How to donate and help children in need

Log on to symbiozoo.com.au/paydiscoverforward, redeem your unused Discover NSW vouchers, and choose one of four charities to receive a \$25 Symbio Zoo Ticket. Your chosen charity will then receive two-entry passes to the wildlife park, valued at \$78, and Symbio will absorb the entirety of the price difference.



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Bee happy at Darkes

Enjoy junior beekeeping fun this July holiday at
Darkes Glenburnie Orchard, writes Jo Fahey

Have your kids always wanted to understand bees and how they make honey, and how honey gets out of the hive and into a jar?

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It's pretty much a first for us to be able to offer this unique experience.

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extraction. We will see the bees and the queen in safety doing their daily chores.

To round off the experience, after learning about the bees, the hives and honey, you will go on a tractor ride through the orchard to see a field of beehives.

If this sounds like your kind of experience, jump onto our www.darkes.com.au website and go to the 'What's On' page to book. Yes – you can use your NSW Discover vouchers to go towards payment on the day! **2515**

Visit www.darkes.com.au



A History of Hearses

By Edwina Ellicott, Community Engagement Manager at H.Parsons

Hearses are synonymous with funerals and they are evocative of so many feelings and symbols. In the old days, the whole town would stop, shops would close, and the community would bow with respect as the funeral procession passed by. Today the funeral cortège will drive by with its lights on, while traffic pulls over to allow the procession to proceed. Over time, our hearses have changed, but the constant focus has been to ensure your loved one is transported in a respectful way to their final resting place.

Below is a journey through the history of our hearses, from horse and cart to our modern customised hearses.

An early-day cortège, image no. 1 shows a horse-drawn hearse with motorised cars in a funeral procession. (Also note Huddy Chemist in the background, now the site of Aussie Disposals on Crown and Keira Street in Wollongong).

Motorised hearses first started to appear in the early 1920s and image no. 2 shows the first model owned by H.Parsons, most likely in the 1930s. This photo was taken outside St Michael's Anglican Church in Wollongong. At the time, motorised cars were very expensive, especially

customised ones. But, the Parsons family was very resourceful. Combining the old with the new, this motorised hearse is the product of a horse-drawn cart placed on the back of an existing Chevrolet Ute.

On the side of the hearse is a plaque that depicts the H. Parson name and phone number – 61. If only it were so easy to remember phone numbers these days!

Eventually, cars become dated, and upgrades are needed to keep up with the times. Image no. 3 shows a sleeker model, a 1949 Ford that certainly made for a more comfortable journey.

Fast forward to now, and H.Parsons has a modern fleet of custom-built hearses, continuing to ensure your loved one is looked after in a respectful and dignified way. We are very grateful for the support provided by the Hammond family from Hammond Conversions in Pambula, who have purpose-built these beautiful hearses (see image no. 4).

We always welcome input from the community. Come in and say hi to our team in Bulli, or visit us in Wollongong, Warilla or Dapto. All of our sites have contemporary facilities, and our team welcomes your visit.



Bulli: 278 Princes Highway (ph 4284 3163)
Wollongong: 34 Belmore Street (ph 4228 9622)
Warilla: 10 Woolworths Ave (ph 4296 7834)
Dapto: 4 Princes Highway (ph 4262 0400)



Winter wonders

Red, orange and gold flowers are lighting up Illawarra Grevillea Park, writes John Elton.

It is amazing how many grevilleas and other natives are in flower in winter. There are some stunning plants to see, from the bold to the intricate. Grevillea 'Elegance' (at left) is always a favourite at the Park and it is coming into bloom. It makes a bold statement if planted in a spot that allows it room to grow. It has a somewhat weeping habit and finely divided dark green leaves. The large bright red flowerheads are simply brilliant.

Want bright yellow flowers? Then go no further than Grevillea 'Kimberley Gold' (pictured left). The parents of this plant comes from the Top End, so it likes a nice warm position. The grape-like clusters of flowers hang down and are a great contrast with the grey-blue foliage. And if your preference is orange then 'Amber Blaze' is still in flower. It draws the eye with its large bright, large, orange flowers.

The Grevillea Park is just behind the Bulli Showground and is open the first two weekends in July. **2515**

Open Days: 10am-4pm July 3 & 4, 10 & 11. Adults \$7, kids free, www.illawarragrevilleapark.com.au

Celebrate National Tree Day

By arborist Clive Woodnutt, aka Bohmer, his climbing name

One of the biggest days on the calendar for anyone passionate about trees, and the key role they play in the environment, is back!

While we all know trees are for life and not only National Tree Day, this is a very special date indeed. It all started in 1996 and has grown into Australia's largest community tree-planting and nature care event.

It is our responsibility as parents, grandparents and protectors of the planet to educate the next generation about the role that the environment plays in our wellbeing and everyday lives.

We are lucky to live in the leafy Illawarra – there are trees aplenty in our schools, our playgrounds and, of course, the stunning escarpment above.

Our neighbours down the coast know all too well how precious trees are also, having lost so many in the horrific Black Summer bushfires.

It brings us immense joy to be able to take care of the trees in our community, while enjoying a bird's eye view! (The area looks even more impressive from up high – check out our YouTube channel to see videos of us at work.)



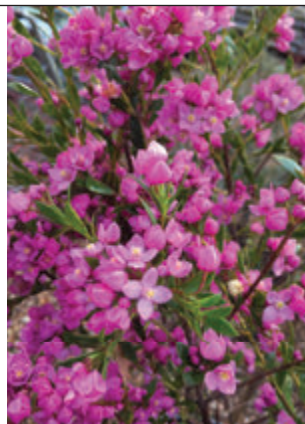
There are two Tree Day dates to celebrate, in association with Planet Ark and the National Tree Day organisation.

In 2021, Schools Tree Day is on Friday, 30 July and National Tree Day is on Sunday, 1 August.

This year we're excited to be returning to Coledale Markets on Sunday, July 25, for an early Tree Day celebration. The markets will be held from 9am-3pm in the grounds of Coledale Public School, who we are proud to have worked with over the years, donating mulch and more to their impressive garden.

The Tree Whisperer might be back for some fun and games, with tree art and craft by his Tree Fairy Honora. In 2019, we gave out a selection of seedlings so families could take home their own tree to plant in their garden.

We look forward to hearing how they've been growing and seeing you all at July's Coledale markets on Sunday, July 25 to celebrate Tree Day in true Bohmer's Tree Care style! **2515**



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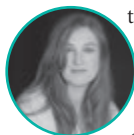
"Absolutely sensational. From quote to job, the customer service was second to none. They were so helpful. The clean up after the job was amazing!"
- Stu, Shellharbour

What's on at the Writers Centre

By director Sarah Nicholson

What do Harry Potter, Mandy Nolan and a group of exceptional young writers all have in common? They are all part of the South Coast Writers Centre's July literary program at Coledale Hall.

For starters, if you know that it is Harry Potter's birthday on 31st July, then you've got a head-start on our Harry Potter's Birthday Trivia event. This will be a night of family fun hosted by father and daughter trivia masters Martin and Hazel Henchion (Monobrow Comedy). Join us in Coledale's transformed Great Hall for Hogwarts-



themed food and drink, dress-ups, trivia and a bit of disco. Start brushing up on your Harry Potter knowledge and get booking as this event is already selling fast!

Next up, the South Coast Writers Centre's community of talented young writers kicks off in Coledale with weekly after-school creative writing classes for 10-14 year olds (plus some exceptional nine-year-olds) for the first time. The Young Writers Program is run by novelist Helena Fox, who last year won the Prime Minister's Award for Young Adult Literature. This is an exceptional opportunity for young creatives.

On 11th July, Mandy Nolan is going to bring the Coledale house down with her show *The Full Mandy*. Comedian Mandy is a force of nature. She's written five books, she has five children, three husbands, she hosts an internationally acclaimed podcast, she went viral last year in the UK with the *Sun* declaring 'Woman 52 says she wants to live like a man', she's the Green Candidate for the seat of Richmond, and she's a comedian. Yep, she's The Full Mandy. This hilarious night of comedy will be complemented by delicious organic Hunter Valley wines served at the SCWC's fundraising bar. **2515**



More info and bookings: southcoastwriters.org

Join a Rebel Rabble

By Kristen McDonald, of Extinction Rebellion Northern Illawarra

Care about our natural world? Then we should meet. The Rebel Rabble has recently started up and we'd love you to come.

What, why? Ever glanced over at someone using their Keep Cup at a café or refusing plastic at the supermarket and thought 'that person is a little bit of a legend – thanks for caring'? There are so many little legends in our local community and we thought it would be lovely to get to know each other more.

The Rebel Rabble is a casual, social shindig for anyone and everyone who, like us, gives a toss. You could use it as an opportunity to get more involved in local environmental happenings or simply to meet other like-minded community members.

Who? You, your kids and your granny. Extinction Rebellion may conjure up a particular image worldwide, but here in the Northern Illawarra, we come from all walks of life and are keen to connect



with anyone who cares about climate change and the health of our planet.

When? The 3rd Sunday of each month from 1-3pm. Next one is Sunday, 18 July.

Where? Glastonbury Gardens, Austinmer (top park)

More info? No need to tell us you're coming, just pop along. However, feel free to email or contact us on social media. Check out www.xrni.org.au **2515**



Author talks in July

By the team at Collins Booksellers Thirroul

July's shaping up to be an exciting event month for Thirroul with two of Australia's most influential writers heading our way.

Collins Booksellers Thirroul will be hosting two in-conversation events.

7 July: Bri Lee – award-winning journalist, activist and influencer, author of *Who Gets To Be Smart*.

28 July: Maggie Dent, author of the ABC podcast and new book *Parental As Anything*. This event is a must for parents, educators and anyone interested in improving the lives of young people.

Bookings essential for both events. Call 4267 1408 or email thirroul@collinsbooks.com.au **2515**

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Is it time to fix your mortgage rate?

Analysis of rates over the last 20 years has shown a variable rate achieves a lower overall cost but in more recent times a fixed rate may prove better. Since COVID came along in early 2020 we have seen fixed rates drop to their lowest levels in history, many below 2%. The government had assisted lenders provide these low rates by providing them a virtually interest free loan. In the past few months most of these rates have increased and now sit in the 3% range. This is still lower than most variable rates and now record numbers of borrowers are fixing. However, there are downsides to fixing, break costs involved to exit the fixed period early and also the limited ability to pay extra off your loan. If in doubt consult your mortgage broker or financial adviser to find the right solution for you.



Families rally for safe streets

By Jon Lindley, founder of the Safe Streets to School Action Group

Wollongong should be a place where children are safe to walk and ride to school. Best practice for pedestrian safety is to separate those on foot from fast-moving traffic or slow down traffic to 30km/h.

More than 550 local residents have signed the Safe Streets to School petition. The petition asks that all streets within a 2km radius of schools either have footpaths and safe crossings or 30km/h limits.

Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery tabled our petition at the Council meeting on 31 May.

On this chilly May evening, a number of families with their children gathered before the council meeting to show their support for these actions to be implemented in the Wollongong LGA as a matter of urgency.

Slower speeds on local, non-arterial streets have a significant impact on the safety of road users. Slower speeds have minimal impact on travel times and can actually reduce congestion, especially during busy school drop-off and pick-up times.

To travel 3.5km in an urban area, walking at an average speed of 5km/h will take 42min. Riding a bike at 15km/h is three times faster, i.e. 14 minutes.

Driving a car will take 10 minutes if the speed limit is 30km/h or eight minutes when the speed limit is 50km/h.

While the impact of lower speed limits on travel time is minimal, the increase in safety for people in cars, walking or cycling is significant.

In Wollongong most people live within 1km-3.5km of an arterial road. Who wouldn't give up two minutes a day to make sure our children are safe? Not many, according to a 2021 survey by the Heart Foundation, which found the majority of Australians support slower speeds in local streets.

Slower speeds, safe priority crossings and separation are not only about road safety, these measures improve the liveability and vitality of neighbourhood streets.

Our delivery of the "Safe Streets to School" petition came after the UN Global Road Safety Week in May, which campaigned using the hashtags, #StreetsforLife and #love30.

The current risks built into our system are unacceptable. It is the collective responsibility of adults to keep children safe when they are walking or riding to school. It is time to make changes to our road transport system that will benefit all community members, especially children. **2515**

New car for SCARF

By Cristina Sacco, of SCARF Refugee Support

SCARF has a new car for its popular L2P driver mentoring program.

The L2P program is designed to assist learners from refugee backgrounds to become independent, safe and informed drivers. For SCARF community members, getting their licence can be the one thing that makes a difference when seeking employment.

However, continuing the program with a 19-year-old vehicle had become a challenge. But thanks to a Stronger Communities Programme grant, SCARF has been able to purchase a new vehicle. If you are interested in joining SCARF as an L2P driver mentor, please email volunteer@scarfsupport.org.au. **2515**



SCARF supporter MP Sharon Bird hands over the keys to the new L2P car.

Manage chronic pain

By Dr Ben Bartlett

Pain can be acute or chronic. Acute pain comes after a particular event, such as a fall. Chronic pain is pain that persists for more than three to six months. About 20 to 25% of Australian adults have experienced chronic pain. Some of these people become addicted to opiate drugs.

Pain is a neurological condition. It is also an emotional and subjective experience.

It occurs when stimuli from parts of the body (eg an arthritic joint) persists and is not resolved in a way that satisfies the brain. So the limbic system (the part of the brain involved with memories, emotions, fears and pain) gets bigger. This neurological process does not easily distinguish so-called physical pain from emotional pain.

There's no easy fix. Most medications have their problems. Paracetamol is safe if your liver is functioning well and daily maximum doses are not exceeded. The anti-inflammatories have varying tendencies to cause stomach bleeding and can have a negative effect on the heart. The opiates are all addictive, and, in the long run, do not reduce the pain. Opiates should be avoided where possible.



Options for chronic pain

1. **Deal with your fear.** Often people with chronic pain are afraid physical activity will cause more damage. This is mostly not the case but check with your doctor about this.
2. **Physical activity** is important for managing pain. Ideally this should be rhythmical exercises for at least 20-30 minutes every day.
3. **Physiotherapy** is helpful.
4. **Pilates, yoga and Tai Chi** can also help.
5. **Meditation.** This requires practice and involves intense concentration (often on breathing). It can help release endorphins from the brain which are the body's own opiates.
6. **Counselling** can help you develop techniques to manage, and divert attention from, pain.
7. **Visualisation of the Limbic System** (however you imagine it) and seeing it get smaller in size. This is based on neuroplasticity – that is, how the brain can change itself. (Read *The Brain That Changes Itself*, by Norman Doidge).
8. **Acupuncture** can help.
9. **Drugs** have a place, used sparingly.
10. **Surgery** should be a last resort. **2515**

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Surf sisters

2515 caught up with Austinmer locals Zahlia and Shyla
Short ahead of the 2021 NSW Junior State Titles.



Zahlia (left) and Shyla (right) at Austinmer Beach.
All photos: Anthony Warry Photography

Surfing's junior state titles are coming to town and Austinmer's Short sisters – Zahlia, 15, and Shyla, 13 – are looking forward to competing on home ground.

From 14 to 21 July, 300 of NSW's best junior surfers are set to descend on the Wollongong coast for the 2021 Woolworths NSW Junior State Titles, presented by Ocean and Earth.

Zahlia, in grade 9, and Shyla, in grade 8, will both be competing in the U16 girls category.

One competition. Two sisters. Same age group. It's an idea that might have many parents ducking for cover, but these girls aren't just family.

They're best friends.

"Honestly, it might sound strange to people but Zee is my best friend no doubt," says Shyla. "We are so close in age we do everything together – train for comps, surf, dance, have the same friends, school and travel."

"Shyla and I are super competitive but it's an advantage for us, I think, being in the same age group – most of the time," Zahlia says.

"We push each other and Shyla is usually really motivated to beat me because she's younger.

"We definitely lift each other's performances being so close."

What's it like to be a teenager juggling high school, surf training, social media and top-level competition? Zahlia and Shyla kindly took time to give us a peek inside their world.

When did you learn to surf?

Zahlia: When I was four years old.

Shyla: I learnt to surf at the age of 3. I always wanted to do what Zee did so when she started surfing, I did. I mostly learnt to surf at Bulli Beach.

Who taught you?

Zahlia: Mum and dad always surfed, so it was always gonna happen. It wasn't too long and we were all in it together! I love it when we all go out together including my younger brother and sister, Keoni and Koa.

The Junior State Titles will be held in the Illawarra this year. Why is this comp a big deal for you?

Zahlia: State is a stepping stone to qualify for the Aussies (Australian Titles). Last year due to Covid it took place online and I ended up 3rd in the U16s for Australia. So I'm really excited this year to get back into surfing actual heats and competing.

Shyla: If you do well at the Aussies you can potentially represent your country at the national titles. It would be super cool to do well and represent the Illawarra.

What has your preparation involved?

Zahlia: I have been working out a lot and going to

Shyla



Cover
feature



Zahlia

the gym in the mornings. I also do a lot of surf training with Dave Hyslop. Shy and I go to the sports school in Berkeley (Illawarra Sports High). There is heaps of training prep we do there with our school surf coach, Geoff Latimer.

Shyla: The school's Surf program is awesome and helps us a lot in all aspects of our competitive surfing. Apart from that, we've been working a lot with Dave on dialling in on my boards and focusing on good healthy preparation.

What's your goal?

Zahlia: Obviously winning would be amazing! But top 5 will also be a great achievement and would mean I qualify for Aussies. It's gonna be held at Stradbroke Island (Queensland) this year, which will be awesome as I've never been there.

Shyla: The main goal is to perform at my very best in every heat. Hopefully make the final and, of course, the end goal is to win and beat Zahlia.

What form does sibling rivalry take?

Zahlia: Shyla and I are super competitive ... We definitely lift each other's performances being

Left: Shyla at Austi. Right, the girls with coach David Hyslop.



so close. It can be hard to swallow at times when she beats me because she is my little sister but it also pushes me harder and becomes more motivation for me to push harder, so there's a positive that comes out of it after the initial sting.

Shyla: When Zee and I are competing against each other every second year, because of our age difference, I always get super competitive and want to beat Zee. If I was surfing against my other sister, Kiki, I would probably give up waves for her – but maybe that's just cause she's younger and I don't really ever have to surf against her in comps yet.

Zee is so supportive of me and tries to help but I just can't help but want to beat her and see her as the biggest threat in every comp I am in.

Once the hooter goes, though, we just go back to being sisters and leave the competition in the water, most of the time – haha.

How about sibling support – tell us how you've helped your sister.

Zahlia: Often before Shy's heat I will sit with Shy to help assess the conditions and talk about where to sit. Strategies for the heat and call her back into place if she falls out of place during a heat. Even when we are in a heat together, I will try to give her advice during the heat, especially if I am winning and she needs to get a score to help her progress to the next heat. Although she's beaten me a few too many times lately, I think I might have to start keeping my advice to myself, haha.

Shyla: I could never imagine doing any of it without her, we fight occasionally like normal sisters or best mates do, but it never lasts more than 10 minutes. I can't ever remember being angry with her for more than 10 minutes and I think that was

when she wore my white jumper. Anyone that knows us knows she can't wear any of my white clothes. It will cause a fight every time, haha.

But other than that and my white clothes I am supportive of everything Zee does and try to help encourage and motivate her.

You're often away at surf comps.

How do you fit schoolwork in?

Zahlia: I try really hard to do my schoolwork whilst away. A lot of our work we do online using Google Classroom.

Shyla: That's why Zee and I decided to go to the Illawarra Sports High. They prepare all our work to be done easily online whilst on the road.

What do you like about the school?

Zahlia: They help us a lot with our schoolwork when we are away. All I have to do is ask Mr Latimer (Math teacher and surf coach) to email my teachers then my work is set up for me to do online. The surf program is amazing, we get to surf a lot at school and train in the school gym.

Shyla: Illawarra Sports is a great school to be at for any young athlete trying to find a good balance with competing and getting a good education. The coaches and teaching staff are awesome.

Social media – love it or hate it?

Zahlia: I like social media, I enjoy making edits and TikToks and planning things out for my social media. It's a great platform to show your ability if kids are looking to get sponsored and stay connected with friends and see their achievements.

Shyla: Social media for me can be a love-hate relationship at times. The positives for me is it can

help keep you connected with friends that you meet along your travels from far away. But it can also psych me out a little before comps when you see how well your competitors are surfing.

I recently had to compete against Sierra Kerr in the Billabong Oz Grom Cup and it was right around the time everyone was posting her huge airs and that was nerve-racking. And, of course, I drew her every heat to the final for that comp.

But mostly I try not to focus on it too much. I'd say Zee is better at the social media thing than me. She likes editing and doing all that sort of stuff.

What do you do in your downtime?

Zahlia: I hang out with friends, go to the gym, I love singing, dancing or playing guitar. I enjoy cooking, watching YouTube and Netflix and I always make time for TikToks!

Shyla: When we aren't surfing we dance a lot. Mum owns a dance school here in Austinmer (JR Dance). Other than that it's always good to hang with friends, squeeze in some homework and love listening to heaps of music in our spare time!

Where's your favourite surf break?

Zahlia: Locally my favourite surf break would definitely be Sandon Point, best Right Ever if you can get a wave out there! But Keramas in Bali or Pit Stops and Four Bobs in the Mentawais are my favourites overseas.

Shyla: There are so many awesome breaks we've been lucky enough to surf, so it's a hard choice. In Australia my favourite would have to be Little Austi, that left can really pump when it's working. I can say that cause this is an Austi mag and anyone from Austi that surfs already knows that.

My favourite break overseas would be Keramas in Bali, which is the most perfect and fun right hander. I love surfing my backhand!

Who do you most admire?

Zahlia: In surfing, I admire Caroline Marks. She qualified for the CT [Championship Tour], which is the world professional surfing league, at the age of 16. That is extremely inspiring! In life, I admire my parents, they do so much for all of us.

Shyla: Caroline Marks. I admire her because she is an amazing surfer, super friendly, and has a super-strong backhand.

Good luck! Have you got any rituals before a comp – how do you stay calm under pressure?

Zahlia: In the morning of the day I compete I always have to have an early-morning surf, I listen to music before my heat and I have to plan well.

Shyla: I do like to use a few breathing techniques ... Just super-slow breathing to try lower my heart rate and calm me down before the panic sets in.

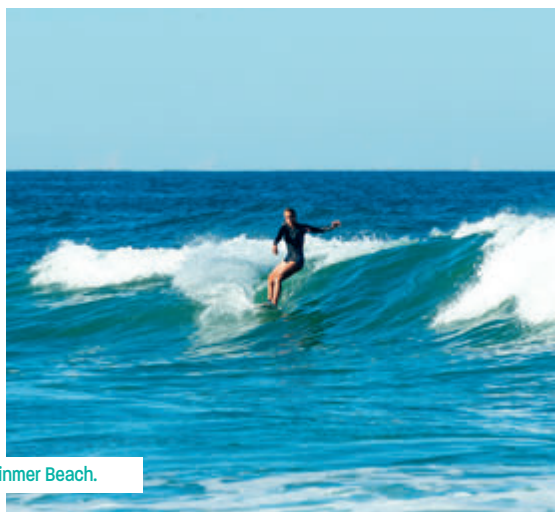
I don't really have a ritual, I did have a favourite wetsuit I always wore but the first heat I lost in it I stopped making that a thing, haha. **2515**

WATCH 'SWAP' AT THE BOWLO

Last year, after Covid halted overseas travel, one of Zahlia's teachers had an idea: what if she swapped sports with her schoolfriend, Stanwell Park snow star Mia Rennie. Could they become better athletes by sharing skills? So Zahlia took Mia surfing on the South Coast and Mia took Zahlia skiing in Jindabyne. The results are captured in a short film filled with fun, friendship and stunning scenery. *SWAP* will screen at 5pm on 19 July at Wombarra Bowl.



Zahlia at Austinmer Beach.



Q&A with Paul Ryan



With the Contemporary Art Fair opening at Clifton School of Arts on 2 July, co-curator David Roach talked to one of the high-profile participating artists.

Paul Ryan's striking, often provocative paintings are sort by collectors both in Australia and internationally. Many feature the Northern Illawarra coast and escarpment as seen from the ocean. A Thirroul local, Paul has been surfing as long as he has been painting.

When did you start surfing?

I started surfing about the age of 15. I was living near Wollongong University at the time. I would catch the train up every weekend with a surfboard. It was actually surfing that really introduced me to the wonders of the Northern Illawarra landscape. I'd be getting off the train just as the sun was rising. And there would be the escarpment with the sun hitting it. You'd hear the sound of the waves. I just remember that it was magical. And I fell in love with Thirroul and everything north of Thirroul, at the age of 15. And that love affair continues to today.

After you left high school, you went to TAFE. You met the sculptor Ian Gentle at about this time.

Yes. At that time Ian Gentle was living in what is now the Clifton School of Arts. Downstairs was his really grubby living quarters. Upstairs was his studio where he made his work which he called his "critters". He would go out in the bush and come back with all sorts of beautiful sticks he'd found.

And he'd somehow weld them together using gum. That studio was literally wall to floor sticks in one corner, just piled up in a giant heap. And there was Ian with his big beard, smoking cigarettes, drinking a beer and making these critters. At the age of 16, that was my first insight into what an artist could be. I think Ian is one of the great Australian artists. He was such a generous man and he loved his students.

What happened after TAFE?

Four years straight of surfing on the dole! We were the Bob Hawke surf team! (Laughs.)

How does your experience in the ocean influence your work?

I do lots of paintings of the Northern Illawarra. It's almost like a stage set. Years spent sitting out there on a surfboard, all those wasted years on the dole, I've always been looking and absorbing and seeing the escarpment couched in all its many moods, always different sorts of weathers. The perspective is from the water looking back to the land, which in turn feeds into my colonial work, which has a lot to do with the first view of this landscape by Cook as he sailed up the coast in the Endeavour. His view would have been of the waves and then the escarpment and the sky. And a few wisps of smoke here and there coming out, which would have been the only sign that they could tell that there were inhabitants there somewhere. As a visual artist, you tend to think about the people who lived here before we came. What were their stories? Who were they and how did they survive?

Tell me about the work that you're putting into the Clifton Contemporary Art Fair.

It's part of a series I've been working on this year on sailing ships. I've been thinking a lot about the stories I've heard of the Indigenous Australians. The first thing they saw of the Europeans were these sails on the horizon. You could just imagine this mysterious white. The pure definition of a UFO. Unidentified floating object! In some of the paintings the ship is reflected in the ocean. Some of the ships are being wrecked on the coast. I know indigenous people had words for those spaceships they saw. But I can't use those words. I'm fascinated with the idea that they were just living their life and then one day, these forms came past, these white forms and they must have thought, "The ancestors are returning!" Their words meant something like "white ghosts and death". They couldn't have been more spot-on because that's what it brought upon them, wasn't it?

Paul, I've always considered you to be a bit of a provocateur. Is that the role of the artist for you? To push back against the status quo, to challenge



how our community operates?

Some artists are provocateurs and I think that there's an important role to be played there. I often have my art dealers begging me to tone things down a bit and make things less provocative. But I'm always looking for something new, some new way to make a mark, to make an image or a new idea to come up with. That's what has always driven me. I'm lucky enough that the collectors and buyers follow me on that journey.

Has this part of the world changed significantly since you've been living here?

I've lived around the area for about 40 years, and I've seen major demographic change. A lot of the people I grew up with are either dead or in jail. Growing up here, there was this strange, sort of insular culture, xenophobic, suspicious of anyone different. There was heavy drinking and drug taking. A lot of that has gone and I think that's bloody good. But let's just hope that this place doesn't get too gentrified to the point where all the artists and writers, filmmakers, musicians and poets end up leaving. That would be really sad. Because it is one of the things that makes this place so liveable and such a wonderful community for those of us who feel part of it. **2515**

Contemporary Art Fair: 2-11 July, www.artsciflton.org

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2nd - 11th July 2021

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Q&A with a surf coach

2515 chats to Austinmer local David Hyslop, who coaches talented teens at Thirroul Beach.



How did you come to be a surf coach?

A good friend asked me if I would be interested in coaching his children. Coincidentally, this friend is a professional coach in another sport, so I was able to gain some valuable tips. With a lifetime of experience competing in and watching competitive surfing, I found myself in a great position to share what I had learned. I was never the most talented surfer, but I was very driven, tactical and obsessed with the sport of surfing, so much so that I competed on the world qualifying series for a few years back in the early 2000s, getting right around the top 100 level. Mind you it was much less competitive in those days!

While I was competing, I was studying and, among other things, a surf instructor for beginner surfers. So I had some background in coaching but, overall, I would say it's my passion to see kids succeed that led me to start kids surf coaching.

Why is it important to give back to the sport?

Surfing is something that has given me so much joy and positive life experience it is only natural to want to share that experience. Giving back adds true meaning to what we do.

How lucky are kids today! Tell us how perspectives on the sport have changed...

It is a reoccurring conversation amongst the parents just how lucky they are. They are so fortunate, and they don't even realise it! Today the kids have a coach, they get to see themselves on video, their parents are very supportive and overall surfing is seen as a great activity for kids physically

and mentally. This definitely wasn't always the case.

The first wave I ever caught was at South Narrawallee beach, I learnt to surf in the Mollymook area where my grandma lived. My parents thought the waves were too dangerous around Wollongong and they weren't surfers, so I was only allowed to surf down the coast. Plus, I could walk to the beach, so it was harder to stop me. Back then surfing was still a pastime, rather than a sport or even career choice, this was especially true in my house. It is so nice to see the perception of surfing change in the community.

Have you seen more girls enter the water?

Absolutely! When I began surfing it was nearly 99% males, now we have multiple female divisions in the local boardriders club, there is the Coal Coast mums surfers' group (it's quite funny to watch the mums and dads jostle for surfing time) and at the competitive level the top women surfers are earning equal pay to their male counterparts.

Coaching Zahlia and Shyla Short, it is incredible to see the pathways that have been created by Surfing Australia to nurture future talent. The South Coast has always had a strong representation of female surfers, from Sandie Dryden, Kim Wooldrige and Kate Scarrett to Sally Fitzgibbon and Tyler Wright. Competition aside, drive past Sharkeys any given day and female surfers make a high percentage of bodies in the water.

The Illawarra has given rise to great surfers, and also surf photographers. Who's your favourite?

This is easy – Ray Collins. I love how Ray took a

departure from your standard surf/ocean photography and carved a niche for himself.

Who are some of the juniors you coach?

The kids all surf amazingly ... It is hard to say without leaving anyone out... In saying that though, three of the kids I coach just recently became Illawarra champions for their respective age groups. Jesse Fitzgibbon U12 Boys, Taj Air U14 Boys and Zahlia Short U16 girls. Then there is Saxon King: that is a name to remember, he is only five years old, surfs Sandon Point regularly and has all the makings of a superstar.

You're launching a natural ear drop for surfers – what's inspired this new venture?

After having surfers' ear for a long time, I came across "Sassall Surfers Ear" created by local naturopath Darren Sassall. I have been using Darren's drops for over five years and been able to stay surfing and not undergo any surgery.

After mentioning this to a close friend who tried the drops and had the same experience, we gave some drops to a close friend, professional surfer Nathan Hedge. Nathan has been plagued by ear issues his entire career and since using the drops, his ear issues have subsided.

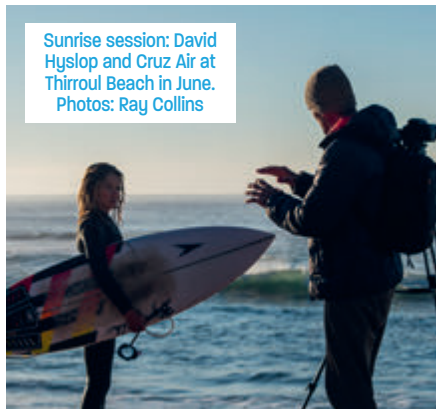
Nathan's excitement about the product and his reach amongst the best surfers in the world, coupled with my network and experience in the surf industry, has led us to rebrand and relaunch the ear drops as "H2O – Drops" this spring.

There are four of us involved in the company, we all have full-time careers, so the creation of "H2O – Drops" has allowed us to work on a fun project and stay connected in our spare time.

You're also a fulltime real estate agent. After work, where are your top 3 places to relax?

Garage Jiu Jitsu, Sublime Point Track and Papi Dulce (love those burgers) **2515**

Sunrise session: David Hyslop and Cruz Air at Thirroul Beach in June.
Photos: Ray Collins



The slice is nice

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

This recipe was given to me by one of my lovely clients (thanks Claire!) and I have tweaked it slightly to add a little extra goodness. It is a great refined sugar-free, gluten-free, dairy-free and super nutrient-dense treat for the cherubs for afternoon tea or for the busy mummies in need of a quick pick-me-up with a cuppa after the school drop-off each morning. I like to bake a batch, slice it up into individual serves and then freeze them separately so they are ready to pull out and defrost within 10 minutes when needed. It ticks all the boxes for me as a mum and a nutritionist.

Seeded Slice

Serves 4-6

Ingredients:

1 1/2 cups of dedicated coconut
1/4 cup coconut flour
1/2 cup sunflower seeds
1/4 cup sesame seeds (or pepitas)
2 tbsp chia seeds
1 cup rice malt syrup
1/4 cup cacao nibs (or currents)
2 tsp vanilla extract
pinch of salt

Method:

Preheat oven to 160°C degrees (fan forced) and line a 20x20 brownie tray with baking paper and set aside. Pop all the ingredients into a food processor and blitz until all the ingredients are broken down, but not completely ground into a paste, so there is still some texture.

Tip the mixture into the brownie tin and press down firmly into the tin to compress it well.

Bake for 25 minutes or until slightly browned on top and around the edges.

Wait to cool slightly before slicing into bite-sized squares. Don't cut it straight out of the oven as it will crumble, but don't wait until it is completely cooled as it will be too tough to cut through. Best to cut when warm.

Enjoy. **2515**

Good luck, juniors!

By Scarborough Boardrider Ian Pepper

The local surfing community is excited to be hosting the Woolworths NSW Junior State Titles presented by Ocean & Earth from July 14-19, 2021.

The event will see the best junior surfers from all over NSW compete at one of our local beaches. Possible event locations are Woonona Beach, Sandon Point, Stanwell Park, Bellambi Harbour Beach, Wollongong Beach, MM Beach (Port Kembla), and Corrimal Beach.

The Surfing Australia championship format will be used with a priority system. The divisions and dates are: U16 (Boys and Girls) Wednesday 14th - Sunday 18th July; and U18 (Boys and Girls) Thursday 15th - Monday 19th July.

In addition to prizes and accolades for winning or reaching the finals, the event is also used to select the state team to represent NSW at the national level. From each division the following surfers will be elected:

- Under 18 Boys: 7 / Under 18 Girls: 5
- Under 16 Boys: 7 / Under 16 Girls: 5

Qualifying for the Australian Junior Nationals also guarantees a spot on the Team NSW Junior High-Performance Program, which was launched last year with great success.

We have seen many juniors from local boardrider clubs competing in events to qualify. Scarborough Boardriders juniors have achieved amazing results at these two events.

Illawarra Regional Surfing Titles

Held Bellambi Harbour on May 8th. Coming in first place and receiving high seedings for the state titles were Jesse Fitzgibbons, Mannix Squiers and Zahlia Short. Our other juniors who ripped their way to the finals were Anna Chamberlain, Shyla Short, Oscar Hargreaves, Kye Kulmar, Macey Jolley and Ashton Mekisic.

Illawarra Schools Surfing Titles

Held Tuesday 15 June at Woonona Beach.

Scarborough Boardriders had an impressive showing from our female surfers with Zahlia Short winning the Junior girls while sister Shyla came second and Anna Chamberlain took second place in the Senior Girls, just nudging club mate Zoe Gelder into third. In total Scarborough Boardrider surfers qualified for finals in three of the four divisions with Amira Rankin and Summer Cahill coming fourth and fifth in the Senior Girls while Mannix Squiers and Lennox Golding took third and fourth in the Junior Boys.

Support our juniors, keep an eye out for event locations on our Facebook and Instagram pages and support our local crew.

We would like to wish all the best to our junior surfers in the upcoming state titles. **2515**



From left to right: Lenny Golding, Amira Blu-Rankin, Zoe Gelder, Shyla Short, Zahlia Short, Mannix Squiers. Photos: Raylee Golding.

Girls in Senior Final at Illawarra School Surfing Titles, from left: Summer Cahill, Amira Blu-Rankin, Anna Chamberlain, Zoe Gelder, Oceanna Rogers.





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



On Board With *Surfrider*

By Coledale's Susie Crick, board director at Surfrider Australia

Welcome to Plastic Free July! What changes can we make to eliminate unnecessary single use plastics from our daily diets of convenience? Let's start with the low hanging fruit. We all love a cup of coffee; according to the ABC's *War on Waste*, Australians consume and then 'throw away' 50,000 single-use disposable coffee cups every 30 minutes. This statistic is shocking and we cannot sustain this type of blasé lack of concern for our future environment. Thankfully in 2515, our cafes support customers who BYO keep cups – we should encourage everyone to make use of some good old-fashioned practices and slow down our pace of living to keep up with the natural world. She's been here for billions of years and if we want to share her bounty then we need to treat her with respect, if not us, then certainly for our children.



plastic water bottle won't make a difference. The journey of eliminating coffee cup waste starts with your next cup.

Surfing Day data

I'm writing this article on International Surfing Day and today the community came together at the RETRO SURF Competition to wax up and clean up, while the swell was up. Great waves and great fun! Best of all we collected necessary data to send through to Australian Marine Debris Initiative, which tallies the waste collected at each site to put pressure on the offending polluting companies whose products litter our rivers, beaches and waterways. As usual, the biggest culprits were cigarette butts.

Hurray for Drain Buddies

Wollongong City Council has started a campaign where they are educating the community by spraying messages on the pavements and providing butt bins at problematic areas; yea to Wollongong City Council. On that note – the Surfrider South Coast crew and Wollongong City Council worked together to install 12 'Drain Buddies' near the lighthouse and at Wollongong Harbour. These Drain Buddies capture loose garbage that washes down the drain preventing unwanted garbage on our beaches and in the ocean.

Happy 30th to Surfrider

This month Surfrider celebrates 30 years of existence in Australia and will hold a celebratory dinner at the Currumbin Vikings Beach club where the group formed 30 years ago. **2515**

Swap balloons for bubbles

There are many plastic items that we can swap out for positive alternatives. Having a party? Swap out the balloons for bubbles, as in blow your own! They are a lot more fun and now there are products on the market that make massive and longer lasting bubbles – twice the fun and you get to pop them without any guilt! Thankfully the NSW State Government has put sweeping changes into effect that will eliminate plastic bags, disposable cutlery / stirrers and straws, along with pesky plastic cotton buds sticks. However, the big offending items still loom at large. They are coffee cups and lids, and takeaway food containers. There needs to be greater self agency so that we can be a better example to those who think that 'one' cup, or one

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What's on

Antipodean exhibition: Opening July 2, 6.30pm.

Emerging artist Caitlyn McIntosh, a Visual Arts teacher based in North Wollongong, is set to showcase artworks celebrating home and heritage in her first solo show entitled *Antipodean*. Caitlyn's curiosity about art and the natural world has inspired a multi-disciplinary exploration of media, including painting, drawing, ceramics and digital photography. *Antipodean*, which Caitlyn describes as "a love letter to Earth, experience and kin", will be exhibited at Timbermill Studios Bulli during the first two weeks of July. Her colourful, expressive works feature landscapes and organic forms, drawing inspiration from the Northern Illawarra region, and spiritual places in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Depicting places that resonate strongly with the artist; both locally and abroad, *Antipodean* conveys her cultural and spiritual connections to land, water, and sky.

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: Saturday, July 3, 11am-noon. Settle in on the first Saturday of each month for an hour of live music in the library featuring local musicians playing some mellow tunes.

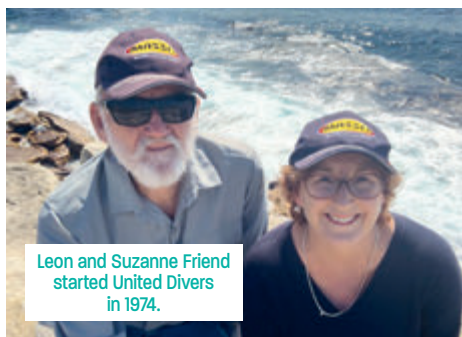
Book Club: Tuesday, July 20, 1.30-3pm

Poetry Club: Tuesday, July 20, 3-4pm

Join the RAGE: Hey kids, did you know Thirroul Library has an after-school club on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month and it's called RAGE? It's for kids aged 8-12 and we do all sorts of fun stuff to do with Reading, Art, Games and Entertainment! But first you get some drinks and snacks. YUM. You never know what mischief we'll get up to – a Harry Potter break-out session, making creative collage, displaying your skills in a talent show or playing games. So, come along after school and meet some old, or make new friends, and have some FUN! **2515**

So long, and thanks for all the fish

By Duncan Leadbitter



Leon and Suzanne Friend
started United Divers
in 1974.

By the time you open the magazine, an icon of the local diving fraternity, United Divers, will have closed its doors for good.

Established by Suzanne and Leon Friend in 1974, United has offered all the key services sought by the recreational dive community, and many in the commercial sector too, including air fills, gear service, organised dives and dive travel.

For 38 years they had their own dive charter vessel, the Friendship. At one stage, they not only had a store in central Wollongong, but also a weekend shop at Kiama Harbour (see end of the video). I can't remember when I first went to the Wollongong store but I started diving 40 years ago. I do remember buying a pair of pink fins on a giveaway special because Suzanne couldn't find anyone else with poor enough taste to buy them.

The mainstay of United's dive sites were around the Five Islands, although they did venture further afield and, when the boat was located in Kiama, there were dives around the various headlands and reefs to the north and south.

The Five Islands offers some great diving with some beautiful sponge gardens, steep drop-offs,

schools of colourful fish, giant cuttlefish, even more giant stingrays and protected species like the weedy sea dragon and blue devilfish. A major attraction is the growing colony of seals on Martin Islet.

My two favourite dives are the pinnacle on the eastern side of Pig Island (Bass Islet) and Terry's reef, which extends north from Martin Islet. The pinnacle is a steep wall descending into 33m of water and can have lots of fish life, but it's exposed to currents and not dived often. Terry's reef is a flat terrace with lots of gullies and some of the deeper areas have sea whips growing on the sea bed. There also some good shallower dives around Toothbrush (Flinders) Island, where there are some caves to be explored.

So, it's a big thanks to Leon and Suzanne for having opened the eyes of many to what lies beneath. **2515**



HELLO FISH: Scan the QR code to watch Duncan's film, 'The Islands', a short thanks to United Divers, for serving Wollongong divers for 47 years and opening our eyes to the Islands and beyond.



Oceans of opportunity

Wollongong's only dive shop is gone – will anyone fill the gap?

2515 asked Mark Sleigh, general manager of Destination Wollongong, if the organisation sees diving and snorkelling as an opportunity to bring tourists to our region. "Theoretically, 100 percent," he said. "I think we're incredibly lucky that we've got such a beautiful blue highway, up and down the coast. I think they're fantastic experiences and well

received by tourists and the community alike."

However, he said many small tourism businesses are still struggling to stay afloat and that, while a new "ultra impressive" Sydney operator had been looking into taking trips to the Five Islands, this was before the pandemic. Mark said a 20-year vision for monetising marine tourism was published in the NSW South Coast Marine Tourism Strategy. This document lists many goals, including better infrastructure at harbours, but is dated 2019, so parts – think an expanding cruise sector – read like something out of a time capsule. **2515**

Port Kembla Tidal Chart

July 2021

TIME	M	TIME	M	TIME	M	TIME	M
1 0053 1.55 0745 0.47 TH 1403 1.31 1939 0.76		10 0244 0.39 0835 1.24 SA 1357 0.58 ● 2032 1.80		19 0308 1.35 0919 0.45 MO 1558 1.61 2232 0.53		28 0530 0.32 1136 1.33 WE 1712 0.58 2329 1.60	
2 0145 1.42 0829 0.52 FR 1455 1.35 ● 2047 0.78		11 0321 0.36 0915 1.25 SU 1437 0.58 2112 1.81		20 0421 1.30 1015 0.47 TU 1656 1.72 2344 0.42		29 0609 0.40 1220 1.33 TH 1802 0.64	
3 0242 1.32 0911 0.55 SA 1545 1.41 2158 0.76		12 0400 0.34 0957 1.25 MO 1520 0.58 2151 1.80		21 0531 1.28 1111 0.47 WE 1753 1.83		30 0010 1.46 0645 0.47 FR 1307 1.34 1858 0.70	
4 0341 1.25 0953 0.57 SU 1632 1.47 2303 0.70		13 0440 0.34 1040 1.27 TU 1605 0.59 2232 1.76		22 0045 0.31 0636 1.29 TH 1207 0.46 1847 1.91		31 0055 1.32 0725 0.53 SA 1356 1.36 ● 2002 0.73	
5 0440 1.21 1035 0.58 MO 1717 1.54 2358 0.63		14 0521 0.34 1126 1.28 WE 1654 0.60 2315 1.71		23 0141 0.22 0733 1.31 FR 1301 0.45 1940 1.97			
6 0536 1.20 1116 0.59 TU 1759 1.61		15 0604 0.35 1215 1.31 TH 1747 0.63		24 0232 0.17 0827 1.33 SA 1355 0.45 ○ 2030 1.98			
7 0045 0.55 0626 1.20 WE 1157 0.59 1838 1.67		16 0003 1.63 0648 0.37 FR 1307 1.36 1848 0.64		25 0320 0.16 0916 1.33 SU 1445 0.45 2117 1.94			
8 0127 0.48 0712 1.22 TH 1237 0.59 1916 1.73		17 0057 1.53 0735 0.40 SA 1401 1.42 ● 1958 0.64		26 0406 0.19 1004 1.34 MO 1535 0.48 2203 1.86			
9 0205 0.43 0754 1.23 FR 1316 0.59 1955 1.77		18 0158 1.43 0826 0.43 SU 1459 1.51 2115 0.61		27 0449 0.25 1050 1.33 TU 1624 0.52 2246 1.74			

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

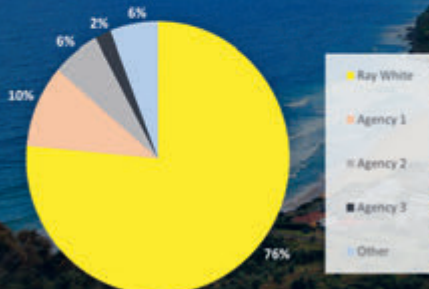
MOON PHASE SYMBOLS New Moon ● First Quarter ◐ Full Moon ○ Last Quarter ◑

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A man with short brown hair, wearing a light blue button-down shirt, is smiling while riding a bicycle. A small, fluffy brown dog is sitting in a black plastic crate basket attached to the front of the bike. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with a fence and trees.

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