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Community news and events for Lennox Head

Issue 240 | April 2025



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March packed a punch. We were lucky to dodge the worst of Ex-Cyclone Alfred, but oh, did Alfie make an entrance. Much like a theatrical diva, it toyed with us - fashionably late, overflowing with dramatic flair, and determined to be the centre of media attention once it finally arrived. Yet, the real whirlwind in my house wasn't outside - it was my kids, storming through the kitchen and devouring four days' worth of emergency food supplies within the first few hours of lockdown.

Our thoughts are with those who faced Alfred's full fury. Watching the immense power of the ocean hammering our shores was both humbling and awe-inspiring - a striking reminder of Mother Nature's unstoppable force. The sheer size and strength of the waves, reshaping the coastline with every crash, was testament to her raw, untamed power. In the face of such majesty, all you can do is step back, acknowledge her supremacy, and surrender to the reality that she will always have the final say.

As we transition into the autumn months, here's to calmer and brighter days ahead. With Alfred forcing many of March's events to be cancelled, we have even more reason to look forward to what April has in store. From Easter celebrations and delicious chocolate treats (yes, those Easter eggs and hot cross buns that appeared on shelves right after Christmas. I'm not complaining, they're a year-round delight in my book) to music festivals and the arrival of crisp, cooler evenings, this month is brimming with energy, connection, and joy.

Natalie Grono - Editor

Got a story? Get in touch

Email: editor@thelennoxwave.com.au
Phone: 0405 662 567

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Publisher



Email: milt@northernriversmedia.com.au
Address: PO Box 407, Lennox Head, NSW
Phone: 0412 461 559

Managing Editor

Kate Parry
Email: editor@theballinawave.com.au
Phone: 0424 610 732

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Photograph by Michelle Shearer



Acknowledgment of Country

The Lennox Wave respectfully acknowledges the past and present Nyangbul people of the Bundjalung nation and pays its respects to their descendants as the traditional custodians of this land. We acknowledge their living culture and unique role in the life of the region.

The fine print

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0414 282 999



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What: Sparkle and Sip
When: Sunday 6 April, 5 - 7.30pm
Where: Australian Hotel, Ballina

The ultimate rhinestoning experience with the fabulous Drag queen Terry Daktyl. Terry will guide you through the art of rhinestoning to transform your garment into a sparkling masterpiece.
Book: eventbrite.com.au/e/sparkle-sip-ballina



What: Brooke Boney with Daniel Browning
When: Tuesday 8 April, 6.30 - 7.30pm
Where: Bangalow A&I Society Hall

Byron Writers Festival presents Brooke Boney, journalist and proud Gamilaroi woman, to share stories from her life and career. Brooke will be joined in conversation with writer Daniel Browning.
Book: events.humanitix.com/brooke-boney-2025



What: Tintenbar UpFront
When: Sunday 13 April, 3.30pm
Where: Tintenbar Hall

Featuring Bronny and the Bishops with their satirical antics guitar, keys, vocals and Headliner Chorus and poet Tony Koellner.

Book: tintenbarupfront.com



What: Rabbits Eat Lettuce
When: Thursday 17 - Monday 21 April
Where: Cherrabah Resort, Elbow Valley QLD

A place of freedom, love and dance music. Camp in a beautiful natural environment and form a community of like-minded souls who want to escape the hustle and bustle of the city life.

Book: rabbitseatlettuce.com.au



What: Byron Bay Triathlon
When: Sunday 27 April
Where: Byron Bay Surf Club

Iconic in destination, with a spectacular ocean swim, combined with Byron's much-loved relaxed vibe, it's easy to see why the Byron Bay Tri is one of Australia's favourite end of season celebrations.
For more information visit: byrontri.org



What: Guy and Nicci
When: Sunday 27 January, 5-8pm
Where: Lennox Pizza

Ease into the new week with a laid-back afternoon featuring Guy and Nicci, an acoustic duo who brings fresh life to pop, soul, and country classics.

Visit: Facebook/GuyandNicci

Monthly markets

1st Saturday	Brunswick Heads
1st Sunday	Byron Bay Potsville Beach Lismore Car Boot
2nd Saturday	Bangalow Flea Market Woodburn (bi-month)
2nd Sunday	The Channon Tabulam Hall Coolangatta
3rd Saturday	Alstonville Mullumbimby Murwillumbah Salt Village Casuarina
3rd Sunday	Federal Uki Potsville Beach
4th Saturday	Byron YAC Flea Market Wilson Creek Kyogle Bazaar
4th Sunday	Bangalow Nimbin Coolangatta Murwillumbah Yamba
5th Sunday	Nimbin
Last Saturday	Evans Head Rotary

Weekly farmers markets

Tuesday	New Brighton Organic Lismore
Wednesday	Murwillumbah Nimbin Newrybar Hall
Thursday	Byron Bay Lismore
Friday	Mullumbimby Evans Head
Saturday	Bangalow Uki Blue Knob Gallery Lismore Markets
Sunday	Ballina

For more information visit
discoverballina.com.au

Justine Elliot and Labor will fund CCTV and crime prevention infrastructure for Ballina and Lennox Head!

Dear Resident

I've been working with police, councillors and locals to improve community safety. **Now, I've secured a \$3 million commitment to deliver CCTV and other much needed security upgrades for our area.**

As a former frontline police officer, community safety is my main priority, and this is part of **my plan to keep our community safe**. Full details at:

www.justineelliot.com.au/communitysafety

Justine Elliot MP

Your Federal Member for Richmond

- ✓ Former frontline police officer
- ✓ Serious about community safety
- ✓ **Here for you**



Labor



For serious action to address crime & community safety

VOTE

JUSTINE ELLIOT

Thank you to everyone who has shared their views with me through my *Community Crime Report*. Have your say at www.justineelliot.com.au/crimereport

Authorised J Elliot ALP 107 Minjungbal Dr Tweed Heads South

Ex-Cyclone Alfred

Lennox Head narrowly avoided the worst of the winds and rainfall from former Cyclone Alfred as the system stalled and weakened just off the coast of Brisbane. Originally forecast to bring severe weather, it became the first tropical cyclone to affect the region so far south in 50 years. Although its intensity lessened, the cyclone still brought significant impacts to the area.

Cyclone Alfred, which originated as a tropical low in the Coral Sea on 20 February, quickly gained attention due to its potential to become one of the most significant weather events in recent Australian history. Initially expected to bring severe conditions, the system prompted warnings, evacuations, and school closures across South East Queensland and Northern New South Wales. Public transport services were suspended, and tens of thousands of residents braced for the worst. Locally, schools and businesses were closed for several days, and shopfronts in Lennox Head were sandbagged in preparation for expected flooding from the high tides. The cyclone also caused a large swell with a 12.3-metre wave on the Gold Coast, the highest recorded in 38 years of measurement, further adding to the intensity of the storm's impact.

By 7 March, Byron Bay recorded gusts of over 120 km/h, highlighting the strength of the system as it continued to move along the coast. The tropical low made landfall on 8 March, further impacting the already affected region, especially in areas that rarely experience the direct effects of tropical cyclones.

However, as the system approached land, Cyclone Alfred weakened considerably, eventually being downgraded to a tropical low with winds of up to 85 km/h, much less powerful than first anticipated. Despite its weakening, Alfred still brought significant rainfall to the region, leading to widespread flooding and severe disruption.


The evacuation efforts were extensive, with around 19,000 people across the Northern Rivers region ordered to evacuate by the New South Wales State Emergency Service (NSW SES). Over 230,000 households were left without power as the storm's remnants continued to affect the coast.



Many residents found themselves without essential services as local infrastructure was damaged by the severe weather.

Though Cyclone Alfred may not have lived up to its initial expectations in terms of wind strength, its impact was still significant, particularly due to the flooding, widespread school and business closures, and the scale of the evacuation orders. Communities in South East Queensland and Northern New South Wales are now working to recover from the major disruptions caused by the tropical low.

Photographs by Natalie Grono




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Residents' Association

by Robyn Hargrave



Our 3 March meetings, with members, two visitors, Crs Bailey and Dicker were very positive.

The Association is in good hands for 2026 with Geoff Wegg re-elected as President; Pam Chilman Treasurer; Narissa Phelps Secretary; Stephan Holle, Robyn Hargrave and Sharron Short Committee members, at the AGM. Congratulations to all as we progress through our 100th year.

Community action against crime in Lennox and environs. Our President forwarded an Open Letter to elected politicians and the shadow NSW Police Minister urging action. While it would have been a real celebration to have money spent prior to the Federal election, it was pleasing that Prime Minister Albanese and Richmond MP Justine Elliot made a \$3m commitment to fund crime prevention strategies, including CCTV for Ballina, Byron Bay and Lennox Head, subject to re-election. Thank you to community members for keeping pressure on our politicians for action (pg16) or Security Plan tips and welfare contacts.

Rough sleepers in Ballina Shire
Cr Dicker's notice of motion to attempt to make more suitable arrangements for those living under canvas and

sleeping in cars was upheld at Council's February meeting, with the General Manager indicating staff would have a report prepared for Councillors within a few weeks.

Community Connections Expo
The Association was well represented and well received on the day. Much discussion centred on crime aspects and safety strategies for enactment by the community. We welcomed renewing and three new members. Great appreciation goes to our B Ward Councillors who were active in this initiative and we look forward to Expo 2026.

Upcoming meetings: 7 April, 5 May and 2 June 2025, from 7pm in the CWA Hall. Feedback is encouraged by email to lhrainc@gmail.com or Facebook/Lennox Head Residents' Association.



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Roundabout works begin



The scope of the project includes:

- concrete kerb and medians
- asphalt pavement
- shared path connection for pedestrians and cyclists
- pedestrian refuges
- linemarking
- signage
- street lighting.

During the construction phase, motorists can expect some delays, although there will be no full road closures. Traffic control will be in place from 7am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, with the area speed limit reduced to 40 km/h to ensure safety. Some nightworks may be required during the project, Council will provide further information as the project progresses. The works will be completed in four broad stages. The temporary roundabout has been removed and the intersection has temporarily reverted back to a T-intersection for Stages 1 to 3 of the works. This will allow Council crews to complete the project more quickly and ensure the arterial road remains open.

Work has commenced on a new permanent roundabout at the intersection of Byron Bay Road and Byron Street. The new roundabout which will replace the existing T-intersection and temporary structure, improving traffic flow and safety.

This significant project is expected to be completed by the end of June 2025, weather and site conditions permitting.



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Inaugural ANZAC Dawn Stand-To

by Grant See, Ex SASR Trooper, C Troop, 1 Squadron, SASR



You're invited to Stand-To with myself and a few others at our first public Ross Park ANZAC Dawn gathering on Friday 25 April.

We will be meeting under the first light of our morning sun to acknowledge and remember the courage, service and sacrifice of our veterans, serving brothers and sisters, and all their families.

It will be a casual but reverent stand-to commemoration to honour and preserve the memory of our fallen.

Origin of Stand-To

In the First World War, the half light of dawn was one of the most favoured times for an attack. Soldiers in defensive positions were roused in the dark before dawn, so they were awake, alert, and manning their weapons before first light. This is known as the Stand-To.

For all they have done. This we will do.

Times

5:45am Stand-to

5:50am The ODE (Grant See)

Let us now remember our fallen and departed friends. For they shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old. Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun, and in the morning,

We will remember them, lest we forget.

5:55am *The Last Post*
(Bugler, Anneke Withers)

Minute of Silence
(face east and bow heads)

The Rouse

6:00am Stand-down

Support local business and go have an early brekky somewhere with the kids.

Ventriloquist Natalie MAY



Tuesday 15 April

Doors: 3.30pm

Show: 4pm

Free Kids Show

Join us for a fabulous show with Australia's leading ventriloquist Natalie May as she lets her funny little friends loose on the audience for a holiday event.

SUPER PARTY WITH LISA HUNT



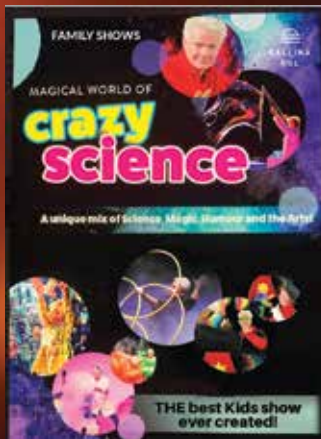
Good Friday, 18 April

Doors : 7.30pm

Show Time: 8pm

Free 18+ Event

Soul diva Lisa Hunt and her Forever Soul band are back to create another fantastic night of soul, disco, boogie and Motown.



Tuesday 22 April

Doors: 10.30am

Show: 11.00am

All Ages Event \$15

Crazy Science Show is full of Amazing and Fun Science Demonstrations, Incredible Magic from an Australian 'MO' award winner, Richard Scholes.



Sunday 27 April

Doors: 2pm

Show: 2.30pm

Tickets: \$54

18+ Event

Enjoy swing classics made famous by the great superstars from Dean Marting and Frank Sinatra to Harry Connick Jr and Michael Bublé.



Councillors thoughts: Rough Sleepers

Each month, B Ward Ballina Shire Councillors have the opportunity to share information on a subject that carries importance to the community. All comments are those of the authors. This month we asked our Councillors their thoughts on how to accommodate Rough Sleepers in the Ballina Shire.

Cr Kiri Dicker

I spent my early career working with the homelessness sector in Australia and the UK. It's an issue I am extremely passionate about and I fundamentally believe that safe and affordable housing is a human right that we all deserve, regardless of our life experiences and choices.

Rough sleeping is really the blunt end of the housing crisis that our region has been experiencing for decades. On any given night we have over a 100 people sleeping in tents and cars across the Shire. It is the end result of a combination of poor housing affordability and availability, economic pressures that force people into poverty and a constant cycle of climate disasters which further exacerbate the problem.

Some rightfully point out that Councils are not the primary level of government responsible for housing, this is true. But rough sleeping is also a public space issue, which is squarely within the responsibility of local government. Byron Council has an entire team of staff dedicated to addressing rough sleeping, both from a practical and systemic lens. So to say we cannot do anything is a cop out.

It's important to note that rough sleepers have different reasons for being homeless. Some are economically excluded from the housing market (they may even be working but still not be able to afford a house), others are in the grip of mental health, drug and alcohol addiction, many are highly transient and just moving through on their way somewhere else.

We'll continue to do our best to manage this complex and uncertain challenge with compassion, including exploring the feasibility of a safe camping area. I'll conclude this contribution with a shout out to Council's Rangers, who do a phenomenal job building relationships with rough sleepers and deserve to be acknowledged.



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Cr Eva Ramsey

Rough sleepers - those experiencing homelessness without shelter - face extreme hardship and vulnerability. Factors such as unemployment, mental illness, domestic violence, and a lack of affordable housing contribute to this crisis. Many struggle to access basic necessities, including food, healthcare, and safety.

Our governments must prioritise long-term solutions, including increased social housing, expanded mental health support, and stronger employment programs. Compassion is also crucial in reducing stigma and shaping inclusive policies. Addressing rough sleeping is not just about providing shelter - it's about restoring dignity and creating pathways to stability for society's most vulnerable.

Our state and federal governments have fallen far behind in their responsibility to provide housing and services, allowing the gap to widen to crisis levels. Urgent action is needed before the problem becomes even more unmanageable.

Cr Michelle Bailey

Reflecting on my first six months as a Councillor, I've gained invaluable insights through training with Ballina Council staff - thank you for your support and efforts.

As Councillors, we manage traditional responsibilities like rates and roads while addressing social challenges. This balancing act often frustrates constituents, with some questioning our actions.

The rise in rough sleepers and lack of affordable housing highlight the limitations we face, particularly with state and federal government roles. Promoting social cohesion requires open conversations within our Council and with state officials, non-profits, and local businesses. By engaging in dialogue as a diverse group, we can collaboratively tackle our community's challenges. Fostering partnerships can lead to grassroots initiatives that make a difference, even under constraints.

I'm committed to listening and representing our community while supporting economic development. Together, we can create a brighter future for all.

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Lions Club stay connected

by Graham Shaw

Are you connected? We Lions certainly are after the hugely successful Community Connections Expo staged recently by B Ward Councillors at the Lennox Cultural Centre. Bringing the community into contact with the 40-ish volunteering organisations present, enabled those who were part of the excellent community attendance to sample the range of volunteering opportunities available in our area. After countless exciting conversations on the day, we Lions are likely to attract three or more new members, but more importantly, we were able to profile the nature of our organisation to numbers of 'hot prospects' who may seriously consider membership.

Frequently our community sees us as the BBQ Boys and Belles. Yes, we are involved in these sorts of

fundraisers but also in a wider range of community help. The community may not notice that to service our fund raising effort, significant equipment is required. How do we afford to run a trailer with built in efficient catering equipment? How do we pay the rent for a storage shed for our equipment? These are central questions to our continued efficiency in servicing the needs of our community. Well, there's a simple answer to this, we depend on government grants. As our work in the community becomes more notable, so we have been blessed by grants from all three levels of government. In this way all of our fundraising goes back into the community to serve those in need.

One of the clear needs identified lately has been the need to collaborate with

local schools on eye health. Recently, in combination with delegates from clubs across the region, we undertook a training programme on how to operate and understand the outcomes provided by advanced eye health equipment. Having successfully trained six of our members we have now acquired advanced eye health testing equipment and our next task is to approach local schools. We hope that this intervention will assist schools to gain early identification of eye health issues. Schools and parents can then determine what further action is necessary. April brings a plethora of Fundraising opportunities with ANZAC Day and the Easter holidays beckoning with BBQs, Surfing with the Disabled, and catering for major functions for the Bridge Club.

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Evening VIEW Club

by Lianne Brennan



March arrived with a bang, bringing a mix of celebrations, heartbreaks, and plenty of action. The impact of Cyclone Alfred is still being assessed at the time of writing. It reminds me of the saying, 'Change is the only constant,' along with death and taxes. We must be prepared to adapt.

Our Club was honoured to be the Charity of the Day at the Wharf River Club's monthly live music and community event hosted by Wharf Bar & Restaurant Ballina. On Sunday, 2 March, JB's Blues Breakers performed and had patrons dancing to their

fantastic music. It was a wonderful day out and a great way to engage the community and local clubs in charitable activities. We are deeply grateful for the contributions and community donations, which gave us a fantastic start to the year. The generous support from the Wharf River Club event has been particularly impactful.

The Lennox Head Evening VIEW Club meet the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 2F The Lennox Hotel, 6pm for drinks and chat, followed by the official start at 7pm \$35 for dinner and \$5 for raffle tickets.

Rafiki Royale

On Saturday, 17 May, Lennox will transform into the Vegas Strip for one night only, as Rafiki Mwema hosts a glamorous Vegas-themed fundraiser. This exciting event aims to raise crucial funds for a life-changing initiative - building a self-sufficient farm to provide fresh, nutritious food for over 100 children in their care.

The funds raised will be used to purchase cows, cows in calf, and chickens, enabling Rafiki Mwema to produce their own meat, milk, yoghurt, and eggs. This will reduce reliance on donations for food and help make the charity more sustainable. As Claire Harding, the event organiser, explains, 'Not only will this provide substantial cost savings, but it will also offer invaluable life skills for our older children, empowering them to become independent.'

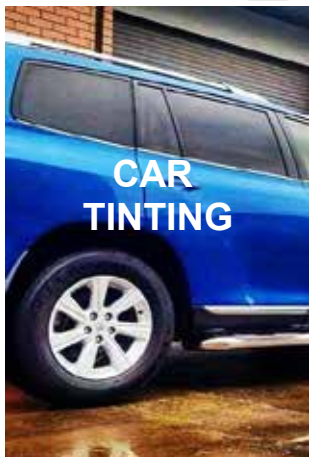
The evening promises to be unforgettable, with real casino tables, live music, entertainment, delicious food, a cash bar, and incredible prizes to be won through raffles and auctions. Hosted by Mandy Nolan, every dollar raised will directly benefit the children of Rafiki Mwema.

Rafiki Mwema provides a safe haven for 65 children and operates a vital street program for 100 homeless children in Kenya. Without government funding, they rely on fundraising and donations to cover their \$55,000 monthly costs.

You can help by becoming an event sponsor, purchasing tickets, or donating. For sponsorship enquiries, email: claire@rafikimwema.com, or visit: rafikimwema.com to buy tickets or donate.

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Community v crime: security plan

by Robyn Hargrave

Concern and insecurity around safety of homes, vehicles and property prompted drafting of a Security Plan which residents can apply to their own set of circumstances. Similar to a Fire or Storm Plan, the Security Plan is designed to provide practical advice for residents – not to create alarm.

Community Watch. Think of this as a 2025 version of Neighbourhood Watch with some key principles. Neighbours are our strength. Speak to them; exchange contact details; consider using a group communication method such as WhatsApp, facebook messenger; look out for each other; advise neighbours about absences to collect mail, bins and the like. Residents in a number of streets have commenced their WhatsApp groups, sharing information and alerts and chatting with neighbours.

Lock up. Sadly, Police have advised the days of leaving doors unlocked are past. It is recommended that residents secure homes, sheds, garages, cars, lower floors, rooms not in regular use and gates. Hide securely your emergency key or protect with a digital lock. Lock up at night, including the dog door, as offenders are known to enter that way. Consider installation of sturdy security screens on doors and windows.

Keep valuables out of sight or secure. Bags, wallets, phones, car and house keys, jewellery, laptops, tablets, dongles are all targets. Also,

remove knife blocks from kitchen benches – don't provide offenders easy-to-find weapons.

Security systems. Various options such as security lights, CCTV with siren, internal motion sensors, glass break detectors and security warning systems which deliver alerts to your phone are all worthy of consideration. For bikes and vehicles, installation of a tracking device will allow you to identify where your vehicle is travelling in real time, giving Police the opportunity to catch thieves in the act.

Gathering evidence. Home and business CCTV footage can be uploaded to NSW Police to assist in identifying and tracking offenders. Descriptions, with times, locations, clothing worn, weapons carried, type of voice, and vehicle description with registration if possible, is invaluable for Police.

Importantly, report to Police.

Contacts are Ballina Police Station: 6681 8699; Police Assistance Line: 131 444 for non emergencies; Crime Stoppers: 1800 333 000 to provide confidential crime information; Triple Zero: 000 for emergencies. You can also use the NSW Police Force on-line Community Portal at police.nsw.gov.au/s/login/ to report some incidents or receive updates on crimes already recorded. Store the contacts in your phone, noting which service is appropriate for your situation. Ensure you receive an incident number for your report.

Use local social media, including Lennox Head Community Crimewatch, and WeWatch app for updates on what's happening. You will find advice and offers to assist your security.

If you, your family or friends have been affected by crime and feel concerned, there are **assistance measures** you can access

Your local GP; or GP Telehealth:
1800 931 158

Beyond Blue: 1300 224 636

Care Leavers Australasia network (CLAN): 1800 008 774

Headspace: 1800 650 890 (young people 12 – 15 years)

Head to Health: 1800 595 212

Kids Helpline: 1800 551 800 (children under 12 years)

Lifeline: 13 11 14

MensLine Australia: 1300 789 978

Mental Health Line: 1800 011 511

NSW Victims Services: 1800 633 063

Police Victim Contact Officers

ReachOut: au.reachout.com

Suicide Call Back Service:
1300 659 467

The Lennox Wave will follow progress of initiatives in future editions.



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Free fibre upgrades

by Alexander Sharkey, Business Lennox Head



At Business NSW's recent Chamber Day, committee members from several Northern Rivers Chambers of Commerce explored innovative tools and resources to empower our local businesses and communities.

For many in Lennox Head, slow internet remains a daily frustration as most connections still rely on fibre to the node. However, Chris Simon, NBN's Regional Development and Engagement Manager, announced that NBN is now offering free full fibre upgrades to Regional NSW. This \$750m

upgrade promises to deliver a much-needed boost in speed and reliability, empowering businesses and residents alike. To check service availability and learn how to upgrade your eligible service, visit www.nbnco.com.au.

In addition to improved broadband, local businesses are invited to strengthen their ability to weather future disruptions through Resilient Ready's new initiative, Business Beyond Disasters - a free NSW Government program for Northern Rivers businesses and non-profits running from March to May 2025. Participants can access practical workshops, a personalised resilience toolkit, and five minute e-learning modules covering disaster preparedness and continuity. Weekly online check-ins and sector-specific tracks - from retail and agribusiness to tourism, healthcare, and construction - ensure tailored support for every organization.

Take the next step in supporting your local business community by joining Business Lennox Head. Sign up online at businesslennoxhead.com.au or connect with us on our social channels @businesslennoxhead

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Conscious women connect



The Conscious Women Connect group in Lennox Head is embracing 2025 with renewed energy and excitement. Since its inception in July last year, this vibrant community has become a cornerstone for women seeking connection, support, and personal growth.

The group concluded 2024 on a high note with a joyous Christmas lunch at Seed and Husk. As we stepped into 2025, they embraced new beginnings with open arms. An intention setting circle was held on New Year's Eve, harnessing the powerful energy of the new moon. Many women seized this opportunity to set intentions for growth and new beginnings, paving the way for a transformative year ahead.

January marked the start of regular moon cycle circles, aligning with the Chinese Year of the Snake. These circles offer a unique space for women to connect with lunar energies and learn how to work with the seasons to support their manifestations and personal energy. Looking ahead, the Conscious Women Connect group is set to continue its journey of empowerment and mutual support. Regular circles will be held

throughout the year, providing a sacred space for women to be guided by the moon and seasons, fostering a deeper connection with themselves and each other.

Fiona Kable, the group's facilitator, expressed her joy at seeing the positive impact of these gatherings. 'It's been such an honour to witness the growth and connections forming within our community. These women are not just supporting each other; they're creating a ripple effect of positivity in their lives and our wider community.'

If you're interested in joining this supportive and empowering community of women, reach out to Fiona Kable at hello@fionalumina.com or ph: 0410 274 106. Embrace the opportunity to connect, grow, and thrive with like-minded women in the beautiful Lennox Head community.

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Byron Blues



Australia's most iconic music festival, Bluesfest, will return this Easter long weekend, running from Thursday, 17 April, to Sunday, 20 April, marking its evolution into a four-day celebration.

Set on the stunning grounds of the Byron Events Farm in Tyagarah, Bluesfest has come a long way since its humble beginnings in 1990, when it drew crowds of just 6,000. Now, it regularly welcomes an audience of over 100,000 music lovers. Bluesfest has hosted some of the world's most legendary artists, including Buddy Guy, Bob Dylan, BB King, Bonnie Raitt and many more. It's also Australia's most awarded festival. This year's highly anticipated lineup is headlined by Crowded House, TOTO, Gary Clark Jr, Chaka Khan, and other exceptional acts.

Limited tickets are on sale now at bluesfest.com.au

Thrillfest



The Ballina Youth Network is thrilled to present Thrillfest, an exciting free event for the young people of Ballina Shire. Exclusively for those aged 12–18, this action-packed night promises live music, prizes, and entertainment at the Lennox Head Cultural Centre on Friday 11 April from 5pm.

One of the night's highlights is the Battle of the Bands, showcasing incredible performances by talented young artists. Whether you're performing or cheering from the crowd, this is your chance to enjoy a vibrant musical experience. Thrillfest will also offer free food for all attendees, exciting door prizes, and raffle giveaways. Plus, there will be community stalls and engagement activities hosted by local youth organisations, providing a fantastic opportunity to connect and have fun with peers. For more information please visit Eventbrite and search Thrillfest.

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Geoff Wegg: representing Lennox Head

by Robyn Hargrave



This year, the Lennox Head Residents' Association celebrates a remarkable milestone - its 100th anniversary. To mark this special occasion, we introduce readers to the current President, Geoff Wegg, who has been leading the Association since 2022.

Residing in Lennox Head from 2014, Geoff found himself drawn to the relevant role the LH Residents' Association plays in representing concerns of the community. Geoff says, 'There are so many matters which deeply affect the amenity of our town, including the current crime issues. With Ballina Shire Council, the Mayor and B Ward Councillors we have developed a meaningful relationship which is valued and respected.'

In 1962, aged 19, Geoff joined the NSW Police Force. At that time there were no traffic lights in Sydney so he was the Traffic Control on some of the busiest city intersections. Goulburn Special Traffic Patrol (now Highway Patrol) was next with a Matchless 650 motorcycle, basic wet weather gear, a crash helmet, and a Traffic Infringement Notice book: no radios or phones then. 'It didn't take long before the thrill of riding the old Hume Highway in the middle of winter wore off. After being transferred to the Upper Hunter area, I looked for other options and gravitated to criminal investigation,' says Geoff. 'The life of a Detective seemed pretty good. I qualified and was transferred to Nowra in 1968'.

Never one to stand still for long, Geoff progressed through the ranks and in 1973 he took his young family on a two-year secondment to Papua New Guinea during their period of self-government before returning to Nowra. Having avoided city placement for most of his service, in 1981, Detective Sergeant Wegg was transferred to No 15 Division (Maroubra) where he met an argumentative Administrative Officer, named Robyn Hargrave.

'I enjoyed every day in NSW Police, it was a great career choice, obtaining a Masters Degree from Macquarie University MGSM, and an Associate Diploma of Justice Administration from MCAE, Bathurst. I received several commendations including the Queen's Commendation for

Brave Conduct, made many firm friendships, saw the good and bad of humanity and it gave me a lifetime of stories to share,' Geoff said. 'I retired in 1997, as a Detective Superintendent, Commander of Organised Crime Task Force BAX. My daughter has followed in my footsteps and she and her husband hold senior positions with the Australian Federal Police'.

As a member of the NSW Police Sailing Association team, he participated in Interpol blue water regattas in England, the Netherlands and Croatia. 'We also competed in Australian ocean classics including the Sydney-Hobart, Brisbane-Gladstone, Sydney-Southport and Sydney-Mooloolaba yacht races. These were lifetime experiences, especially the storms in Bass Strait'.

It was during a Sydney-Southport race, Geoff first spotted Lennox Head from the ocean, noting it looked an interesting spot to visit.

Not until 2012 when the 30+ year friendship became a permanent relationship, did Geoff actually visit Lennox, where Robyn's parents lived and her brother's family owns a beach house. 'We officially retired from our respective work roles in 2013, lived in Italy and France for 13 months, then became residents in Lennox', said Geoff. 'We renovated our house and after a short time I was welcomed into the Lennox community and made an entirely new circle of friends'.

It seems one Presidential role is not enough for this energetic 82 year old. Geoff is also President of the Ballina Mens Bowling Club, playing bowls three or four days a week; and a member of Goonellabah Rotary Club; enjoying his 'retirement' to its fullest. 'With the ocean and Seven Mile Beach on my doorstep, an idyllic holiday destination for my family, Robyn's family nearby, and the benefits of life in Lennox Head, I really have found my place,' he concluded.

Photos: 1. 1962 Brand new Policeman; Wegg collection; 2. By R Hargrave 2024

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From Sydney to Special Forces: Grant See



Born in Sydney in 1958, Grant grew up in a world of carefree adventures - shirtless summers, dragster bikes, and backyard wrestling matches with his younger



When and why did you decide to join the Army?

In 1985 at 27, I decided to join the Army after a mate told me he just joined and the money was good. My family and friends all thought it was

brother and friends. Guided by the unwavering strength of his mother, who raised four children with tireless dedication, Grant found inspiration in her resilience and work ethic. These early lessons in discipline and determination would shape a life marked by service and adventure, culminating in his decision to join the Australian Army in 1985 and eventually become part of the elite SASR.

In the lead-up to ANZAC Day, *The Lennox Wave* sat down with Grant to talk about his journey and the deep significance the day holds for him.

great, and it was no surprise for any of them as I was always involved in gym training, boxing, wrestling and outdoor adventures.

At that time the only thing I knew about the Australian Army came from watching the 1979 movie, *The Odd Angry Shot* which was all about Aussie SASR (Special Air Service Regiment) soldiers during the Vietnam war. They were so feared by the enemy who named them 'Phantoms of the Jungle.' I wanted to be a Phantom.

What were some of your experiences as an SASR Trooper?

Normally a soldier has to spend three years in the Army before they can apply for the SASR. They must have seen the Phantom in me, and I was accepted within one year. As with all Special Forces, the training and preparation is 'pretty intense,' so goes the SAS regimental motto - 'Who Dares Wins'. I served as a Vehicle Mounted Trooper (desert patrol) and Counter Terrorist Assaulter (gun fighter). They were paying me to travel the world and be fighting fit. I got out of the Army in 1990 before the 1st Gulf War, so I never fired 'the odd angry shot,' but I did hurt someone's feelings once if that counts.

When did you move to Lennox?

I've always loved the coast, and moved here with my kids' good mum Angela in 1998. All three of our children, Curran, Jade and Danny were born and raised here. We couldn't find a better place to call home, and it's always been like a big community family.

Why is ANZAC Day important to you?

More SAS Soldiers have been killed in training than on the battlefield. Over the years I've had four SAS mates killed in training to protect and defend our country. Even if just for a few early morning minutes, for just one day of the year, I 'Stand-To' - to honour the memory of our fallen, and the sacredness of the military uniform - because it's the last thing they are wearing when they pay the ultimate price for our freedoms.

Readers can join Grant to Stand-To on ANZAC Day at Ross Park in Lennox from 5.45am. See page 11 for details.



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The unconventional life of Leila Stead

by Natalie Grono



Leila Stead's life unfolds like an eclectic script, from dabbling as a social influencer and navigating single parenthood to encountering cults, trolls, plant medicine, aliens and even

conversations with the dead, her journey is one of resilience, self-discovery, and controversy. It is a cocktail of intrigue, challenge, and transformation.

At just three years old, Leila began talking to what she described as 'imaginary people.' By primary school, she realised her experiences were far from ordinary when she asked her best friend if she could also see the 'people' around them. The answer was no. Her parents later recalled extraordinary conversations she had as a child with unseen presences, and the gift of mediumship was revealed to be a family trait. But in a bid to fit in, Leila suppressed her abilities, wary of how different people were treated at school.

From single parenthood to influencing stardom

In 2016, Leila's life took a sharp turn when, at 29 and 13 weeks pregnant, she found herself single. Seeking an outlet and connection, she started a blog called *The Single Mum Diaries*, which later became *Ever The Daring*. 'I felt there wasn't enough emotional support for women who had been left pregnant, and I wanted to be the change I wished to see,' she recalls.

Leila Stead's candid and heartfelt posts quickly resonated, growing her online community to over 30,000 followers. Her influence attracted major brand partnerships with Audi, Jaguar, and Warner Bros, cementing her as a force in the digital space. Despite the challenging start, she and her ex-partner have cultivated a positive co-parenting relationship, a testament to the effort they've both made.

But with the love and admiration came the inevitable haters. Her online success took a significant hit during COVID when her controversial views on vaccines - widely debated at the time - sparked intense backlash. Since the relentless trolling she faced has continued. Critics have dissected every aspect of her life, from her assortment of business ventures and even her appearance. The attacks have grown deeply personal, with Leila enduring body shaming, criticism over her life choices, and cruel remarks about the death of her beloved 13-year-old dog and her mother's battle with cancer.

'Trolling has been a part of my life for almost nine years,' Leila explains. 'At first, I found it really challenging to deal with. You'd think it would stop after school ends, but here we are. That said, I've grown a lot as a person. Now, I deal with it by staying deeply anchored in my truth, my work, and raising my daughter. When it's brought to my attention, I try to use it as an opportunity to learn more about the human experience. Finding love or understanding for even those who are dedicated to misunderstanding you or bringing you down - and exploring the 'why' behind their actions instead of being offended - has been one of the most profound ways I've grown. There's a reason books like *The Courage to Be Disliked* and *Let Them* are bestsellers. I'm one of the lucky ones who is regularly confronted with opportunities to put those teachings to the test.'



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Spiritual journeys: Cults and ayahuasca

After a tough breakup with a boyfriend, Leila's healing journey led her to relocate to the tiny, 'pastel-colored' town of Tyalgum, where she soon discovered an unexpected twist - it was home to the cult of the Hermes Far Eastern Shining, also known as the Water People. 'It took me six months to figure it out. Basically, the whole town is part of the cult. Everyone had water goblets around their necks' she laughs. Though she didn't join, she admits that some of their beliefs resonated with her.

Her path to healing also included a transformative yet intense experience with ayahuasca. 'I went in naive. It ended up being nine hours of intense tripping,' she recalls. During the ceremony, she encountered what she describes as tall, dome-headed beings who performed a healing on her injured hip. 'When I came out of the trip, my hip was healed. It was incredible, but I'm not sure I'd do plant medicine again. The insights given to me weren't all easy to face.'

The awakening of psychic gifts

Amid heartbreak and upheaval, Leila sought guidance from two psychics, both of whom encouraged her to embrace a long-suppressed gift: mediumship. 'I thought, 'I can't tell people I talk to the dead - that's just weird,' she admits. Still skeptical, she decided to test her abilities with willing participants. To her surprise, the feedback was overwhelmingly positive, paving the way for the birth of her mediumship business.

'At first, it was overwhelming. Spirits don't respect boundaries until you set them,' she jokes, recounting a memorable incident in a supermarket checkout line when a persistent spirit urged her to deliver a message to a stranger.

Triumphing over Breast Implant Illness

In recent years, Leila has faced another battle: breast implant illness (BII). A decade after getting implants, she experienced debilitating symptoms and ultimately had them removed. The decision drew criticism online after her sister raised funds for the removal surgery via GoFundMe. Despite the backlash, Leila speaks openly about BII on her Instagram (@leilawellher), hoping to raise awareness about the misunderstood condition.

Reflecting on her decision to get implants, she says, 'I was in my 20s at the time. Back then, Botox and implants were so normal in my world. During ayahuasca, I was told anything not aligning with me would have to leave my body. My body had gone into toxic overload.'

Finding home and purpose

In 2023, Leila moved to Lennox Head. 'At first, I found it a bit cliquy, but I'm starting to find my feet,' she admits.

Recently, Leila has discovered renewed purpose in her work as a medium, offering comfort and closure to those seeking to connect with lost loved ones. 'The way I understand it, we go through a life review after we die. It's like the seven minutes of brain activity people talk about. Spirits often want to resolve lingering questions to cross over peacefully,' she explains.

Her journey is far from over, but one thing is certain: Leila Stead is unafraid to forge her own path, no matter how unconventional it may appear. Whether she's navigating life's chaos or connecting with the otherworldly, she does so with an unshakable spirit.

'Everything can be healed with saltwater, sweat, tears, or the sea,' she reflects. 'How lucky we are in Lennox to have such a beautiful, healing ocean right at our doorstep.'



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Seasons

by Lennox Art Collective



In Kai Gecso-Thorndrycraft's upcoming exhibition *Seasons*, he invites viewers to embark on a journey through the ever-changing tapestry of nature. Kai's work is a celebration of the vibrant cycles that surround us, capturing the essence of each season through mixed media techniques.

Kai is deeply inspired by the local landscape, the native plants and fauna that flourish in our environment, seeking to convey their beauty and complexity in his art. Using a variety of materials, he blends traditional painting with elements of collage and texture, allowing the viewer to experience a multidimensional perspective of nature.

The warm hues of summer - golden yellows, fiery reds, and lush greens - contrast with the cool tones of winter, such

as serene blues and soft greys. Through this interplay of colours, Kai aims to evoke the feelings and sensations associated with different times of the year, from the heat of the sun on a summer day to the crispness of a winter's morning. Each piece in this exhibition reflects his fascination with the relationships between colours, forms, and the natural world.

Kai strives to create an immersive experience that encourages contemplation and connection. The native plants he portrays are not just subjects; they are symbols of resilience and beauty, thriving in their unique ecosystems. As you explore *Seasons*,

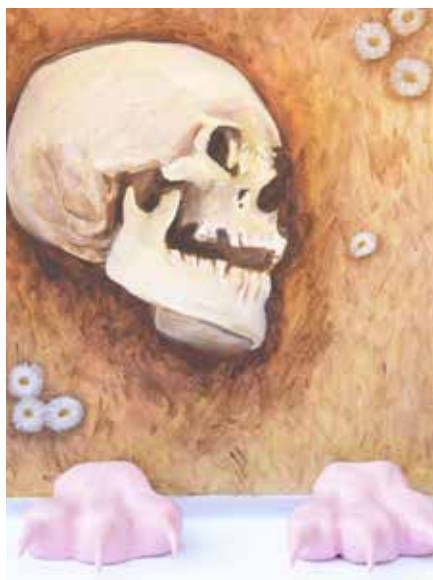
Kai hopes you find moments of reflection and inspiration, allowing you to appreciate the delicate and sacred balance of nature and its profound influence on our emotions and experiences. Kai's work serves as a reminder of the beauty that exists all around us and the importance of preserving the natural world for future generations.

Seasons exhibition opens at the Lennox Arts Collective gallery on Friday 25 April and runs until Thursday 5 May. Join us for drinks and nibbles at the opening night from 5.30pm.

The Lennox Arts Collective gallery is located in the busy hub of Lennox Head and is open seven days a week, from 10am-3pm daily.

Pushing Up Daisies

by Northern Rivers Community Gallery



Pushing Up Daisies by Emma Lynn Winkler, fuses painting, animation and ceramics and explores the themes of death and avoidance.

Centred around the irony of euphemisms that allude to our inescapable decay, this exhibition reflects on absurd phrases as expressions of anxiety. With sincere curiosity, the works in this exhibition playfully highlight the absurdity of contemporary attitudes towards death and the futility of attempting to ignore it. Like its eponymous euphemism, *Pushing Up Daisies* dances around the topic of death, creating an intriguing network of connections and associations.



Emma Winkler is a multidisciplinary artist working with a range of mediums including collage, painting and animation. Her practice works with ideas of death, absurdism and the unknown, drawing on fears and experiences as we grow.

Exhibition Dates: Until 27 April
Where: NRCG, 44 Cherry St, Ballina

Meet the beloved goats of Lennox

by Natalie Grono



Photographs by Michelle Shearer and Natalie Grono

Tucked away on a paddock on the hill leading up to North Creek Road is a lively family of goats who have become a beloved part of Lennox Head's charm. From playful mini goats to a wise old matriarch, these goats have carved out a place in the hearts of locals and visitors alike. We caught up with one of their owners, Michelle, to get the inside scoop on this quirky herd and their delightful personalities.

A fun herd with big personalities

The herd consists of nine goats, each with its own unique character and charm. Neddy, the friendly, dog-like goat, is the unofficial mascot of the group. Born right here on the property, Neddy is super social and loves hanging out with anyone who'll give him attention. Then there's Patty, the old matriarch, who's a bit on the shy side but is incredibly gentle once she trusts you.

Next up are the mischievous trio of young males: Brocky, Salty, and Berty. These three know how to keep things exciting, always up to some antics and keeping everyone on their toes. Pepper, the introverted young female, tends to hang out on the sidelines, keeping to herself and quietly observing the world around her.

Lil Betty is another key figure in the herd. She's one of the mothers, and she's fiercely protective of her little one, Berty. Then there's the adorable duo of Tino and Lil Bro - two dwarf goats who were dubbed after NRL players. Tino, being the little chunk, earned his name from his resemblance to a certain tough player, while Lil Bro is just as cute as can be.

The mystery of the abandonment of the mini goats

One afternoon, a loud ruckus had the whole herd galloping across the paddock, and to everyone's surprise, they found two tiny kids in need of help. Michelle's son went to investigate and discovered they had been dumped there. 'We did try to find out in the local Face-y group who had dumped them so we could learn if they had been vaccinated, how old they were, that kind of thing, before having them as part of our herd - but no one knew anything,' Michelle shares. Despite later hearing rumours of how the goats were dumped, no one has come forward.

'The goats had been confused and scared. We called the vet to check on the mini goats, who confirmed they're young dwarves, and after getting them all sorted, they've happily joined the rest of the herd, though they're not too keen on humans.'

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Goat food and favourites

When it comes to food, these goats are happy to munch on whatever grows in their paddock, but their all-time favourite treat is goat muesli - though it's only given on special occasions. The herd also enjoys vegetable scraps from local chefs, who drop off leftovers after a long day. The goats are always ready for a snack and have a keen eye for anything delicious.

Visiting the goats at sunset

Lennox Head residents and visitors alike love to stop by and say hello to the goats, especially at sunset. And the goats don't mind the attention - most of them enjoy being petted though the little ones and Patty are a bit more shy. For those planning to visit, Michelle kindly asks that visitors refrain from feeding them, as the goats are quite content with their natural diet.

Whether you're looking for a moment of calm or just want to meet some of the friendliest goats around, this herd has become a true icon of Lennox Head. Their antics, unique personalities, and adorable faces have made them a favourite spot for locals and tourists, adding a bit of joy and charm to the beautiful landscape of the area.



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Landmarks of Lennox

by Robyn Hargrave



Undoubtedly the busiest of the original laneways in Lennox Head, Rayner Lane was simply designated 'Lane 30.5Lks wide' on the 1922 Lennox Head Estate Auction Plan and design to service the adjoining 32 properties.

A planned seaside reserve and roadway subsequently succumbed to the ocean, and the large blocks were, in the main, subdivided with Rayner Lane now primary access to at least 45 premises most with two or more vehicles.

It is believed the lane was named for Clarrie Rayner, known as 'mayor' 'because of all the odd jobs he used to do for the people of Lennox Head'¹.



The first house constructed on the Lane was that of James Allen c1925 on what is now #6.² Fred and Betty Hutley built Lennox Head's first shop in 1923 at #14³. Lot 16 Section 1, #1-5/67 Ballina Street and Lot 33, #13 (eastern side) fetched the highest prices at the Auction of £72 10s and £45 10s respectively.⁴

Originally a sandy track, by the 1970s a strip of bitumen was laid and over time was added to for increasing traffic, including heavy vehicles accessing major building construction, resulting in its present sorry condition. Residents are hopeful of a major overhaul and rebuild of the roadway commensurate with its status.



Sources: ^{1,2} Goodman J, Rayner Lane Recollections, *RRHS Bulletin From North Creek to Lennox Head*, RRHS #162, September 1997 ps 16,17; ³ Minutes Tintenbar Shire Council 10.12.1923; ⁴ *The Northern Star*, 12 December 1922.

Photos: **1.** c1923, Hutleys' first shop #14, LHC D3; **2.** c1930, Allens' House #6 Rayner Lane, LHC D3a; **3.** 2025 by Kim Collins

Readers with information on this or other Landmarks of Lennox, please contact Robyn Hargrave, Lennox Head Heritage Committee by phone 0412 660 994 or email at lennoxheritagecommittee@gmail.com



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The name's meaning: Lennox Head

By William Conlan

Have you ever wondered where Lennox Head got its name and what that name means?

Let's get into the meat and potatoes.

'Lennox Head' is the name given by the European colonists, who have lived on the land for less than 200 years as of the writing of this article.

Captain Henry James Rous, aboard the *HMAS Rainbow* when surveying the coastline in 1828, coined the name 'Lennox Head'. He chose this name in honour of his friend Charles Lennox, the Duke of Richmond and Lennox. In this initial usage, the term 'Lennox Head' referred to the hill now housing Ballina's lighthouse. Later, a possible mapping error would cause 'Lennox Head' to move to its current location.

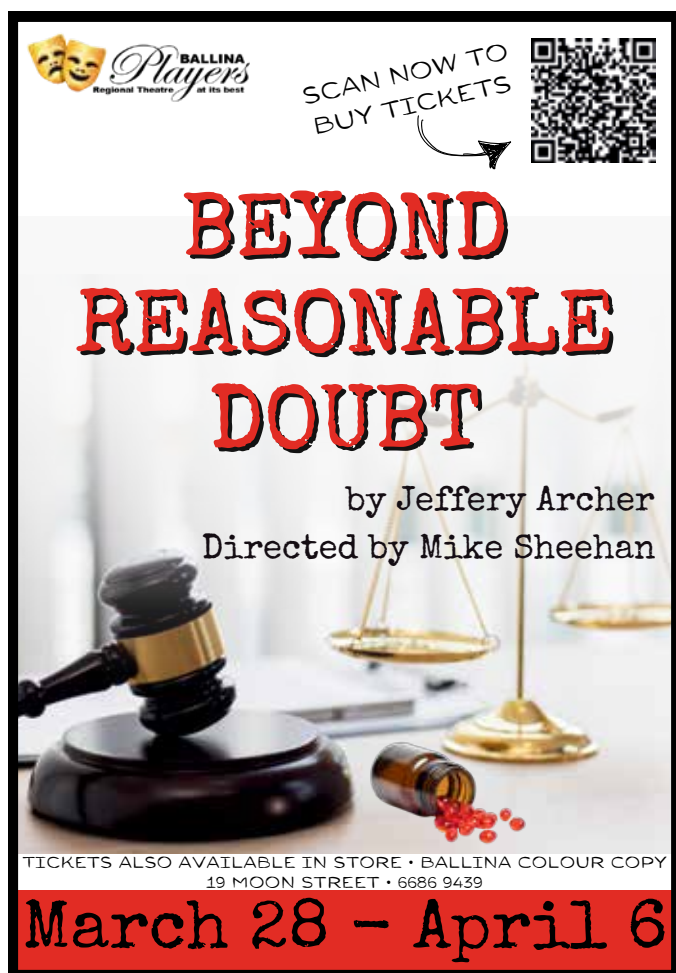
And that is how Lennox Head got its name. But what is the meaning behind the name?

Let's start with the most apparent part, the 'Head' in Lennox Head. This portion of the name overtly references the Lennox Headland, a prominent piece of local topography created by

the now-dead Miocene shield volcano about 23 million years ago.

However, 'Lennox' is a more loaded term, as it is of Gaelic origin. As mentioned earlier, the name 'Lennox' was derived from a ducal title of the peerage of Scotland held by the Chief of Clan Lennox. The Lowland clan has held the title of 'Duke of Lennox' since 1581 when the incumbent chief, Esmé Stuart, was granted the title alongside the position of High Chamberlain of Scotland. Before this point, Clan Lennox held the title of Earls. In their eldest known days, they were Celtic provincial leaders known as Mormaers. 'Lennox' is the anglicised form of the Scottish Gaelic *Leamhnachd* or *Levenach*, meaning 'field of the smooth stream', referring to the Vale of Leven, an historical part of the province of Lennox in Scotland.

Thus, Lennox Head means 'Field of the Smooth Stream Headland', a Scottish Gaelic name coined by an English-speaking person on Aboriginal Bundjalung land.



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Cars of Lennox

by Shan Railton



This month it is time to be a little self indulgent. I haven't featured one of my own cars before but this time I'm keen to share. Bit hard to interview myself so I'll just tell the story.

Over the years myself and a few family members have been Honnigan /Gymkana fans, especially the work of rally and stunt legend Ken Block. His videos were the stuff of great awe, what he could do in a car was absolutely mind blowing. The whole production was a real - life video game featuring some of the most iconic cars, driving and locations you could imagine: London, San Francisco, Dubai, Las Vegas and more.

Like many people who push the limits, unfortunately Ken passed away, not in a car but in a snowmobile accident in the beginning of 2024. When I heard of Ken's passing my sadness turned to thoughts that I'd love to build a tribute car, something that those who know will recognise and maybe just be a reminder of Ken's contribution to motoring folk law.

The car I chose was this 2013 Ford Focus (Ken drove a heavily modified Focus in one of his early videos). I had my originally blue car wrapped satin black then carefully copied the livery the best I could, only adding a few cheeky SurfWagon (my business name) stickers to make it my own.

The process was made easier by the fact that SurfWagon has a vinyl cutter and plotter enabling me to design and create the decals and designs. I also have plenty of contacts in the motor trade so I could source a few custom bits to make it a bit more authentic.

'Blocky' as it is known will be cruising around on sunny days on the way to or from a Cars and Coffee events or just doing the rounds putting smiles on faces. Give us a shukka as we burble past, we'll be sure to give you one back.



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April tide chart for Lennox Head

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	Time m 1 0519 0.33 1120 1.41 TU 1712 0.30 2353 1.78	2 0620 0.41 1209 1.23 WE 1751 0.39	3 0045 1.72 0730 0.49 TH 1304 1.08 1836 0.49	4 0145 1.64 0850 0.55 FR 1415 0.97 1934 0.58	5 0256 1.56 1015 0.58 SA 1551 0.95 2056 0.64	6 0315 1.52 1030 0.56 SU 1618 1.01 2127 0.66
7 0428 1.51 1127 0.54 MO 1719 1.11 2245 0.62	8 0526 1.52 1207 0.51 TU 1806 1.22 2344 0.57	9 0611 1.54 1239 0.48 WE 1845 1.33	10 0030 0.53 0648 1.53 TH 1307 0.45 1919 1.42	11 0111 0.51 0721 1.52 FR 1333 0.43 1952 1.50	12 0148 0.49 0752 1.48 SA 1358 0.41 2023 1.56	13 0226 0.49 0823 1.43 SU 1422 0.41 2053 1.61
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28 0224 0.36 0825 1.52 MO 1419 0.28 2100 1.92	29 0319 0.35 0915 1.40 TU 1500 0.32 2147 1.94	30 0418 0.38 1006 1.27 WE 1542 0.39 2238 1.90				

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Ocean rhythms

by Steve Shearer

Summer ended with a bang with the appearance of TC Alfred in the Coral Sea in the last week of February. Alfie was slow moving and meandered in the Coral Sea for almost a fortnight before making landfall over Bribie Island on 8 March. We saw building swells as TC Alfred briefly attained Cat 4 status, although the direction and lack of quality sand overwhelmed local waves. Byron and the Gold Coast were the spots to be and local surfers represented by riding some huge blue tubes at Kirra as the swell built. We saw the cyclone do a u-turn and head back towards the coast with huge storm surf and gales all along the sub-tropical coasts of NSW and SEQLD.

Despite the battering our beaches have held up reasonably well. Lennox Main beach has been given a haircut and the large sand banks that had clogged up the Bream Hole and

Boat Channel have been scoured out, thankfully, allowing boats to use the channel and increasing habitat in the intertidal lagoon.

Our pointbreaks have been gutted but sand was crappy anyway so at least we can now rebuild off a fresh slate, just in time for autumn and winter. Sand transport usually starts to kick into gear as we move through April into May so lets hope for a repeat of last winter when shallow sand banks offered some insanely hollow sessions.

Fishing has also been given a reset by the flood associated with TC Alfred. Luckily areas upstream on the Richmond River escaped the catastrophic flooding we saw in 2022 and so far, no signs of any major fish kill have been observed. As water starts to clear up we should see signs of improving fishing across the entire spectrum of beaches, rocks and in the river - in that order. Jewfish will be around in the dirty water if you can find them and have the right gear for landing big fish off breakwalls. It's not fishing for the faint hearted. By the time water clears up we'll be in seasonal transition with tailor and bream starting to become more common, increasing in abundance through May.

That's all for this month, until next month tight lines and fishy fingers.





April Fools, a prankster's paradise

Every 1 April, the world turns into a playground of pranks, hoaxes, and belly laughs. Though its origins remain mysterious, some believe it began in 1582 when France switched from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar. Those who missed the memo and kept celebrating New Year's around 1 April were dubbed April fools and mocked with pranks. Others link the day to ancient Roman festivals like Hilaria, where people donned disguises and playfully mocked their peers, or even to the unpredictable weather of spring, when Mother Nature herself seems to be in on the joke.

By the 18th century, Britain had fully embraced the fun. Scotland even turned it into a two-day affair, featuring gowk hunts (wild goose chases) and Tailie Day, famous for pinning fake tails or kick me signs on unsuspecting backs. In France, prank victims earned the title poisson d'avril (April fish) and often found paper fish stuck to them as a sign of their gullibility.

Australia's greatest hoax

On the morning of 1 April, 1978, Sydneysiders were stunned to see a barge towing a giant iceberg into Sydney Harbor.

The mastermind behind this stunt was Dick Smith, a local businessman and adventurer, who had actually dreamed of towing an iceberg from Antarctica to Australia. He believed it could be a great way to provide fresh water to cities like Adelaide. However, most people told him it was a crazy idea. So, one of his staff members suggested, 'Why not just fake one for April Fool's Day?'

Smith loved the idea. He had been promoting his plan for months, claiming he would moor the iceberg near the Sydney Opera House, carve it into ice cubes, and sell them as Dicksicles, promising they would improve the flavor of any drink. Excited crowds gathered along the shore, and boaters were given free cubes - until the truth was revealed. As the iceberg (really made of firefighting foam and shaving cream) drifted past the Opera House, the rain washed away the foam, exposing the plastic sheets beneath. The iceberg continued to float proudly, with boaters still receiving cubes from the beer fridge. This turned out to be Australia's most famous April Fools' Day hoax. The stunt, dubbed the Dickenberg 1, had Sydneysiders baffled, and radio stations were flooded with calls asking about the strange sight in the harbour.

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Literary lovers

by Brenda Clarke



Book: *The Women*

Author: Kristin Hannah

It is always special when you find a book you just can't put down, and you feel you are living the story. A library patron told me about *The Women* by Kristin Hannah, and described it as the best book she has ever read. I added it to my bedside pile and finally picked it up last weekend. Over a few days I lived the story of Frankie, a young nurse who served in Vietnam. She starts out as a 21 year old from a conservative background, joining the Army to make her parents proud and to be with her beloved brother.

Sadly, her brother was killed in action but Frankie remains for two years. The story is about her loves, her losses, her amazing friendships with other nurses, and her growth as a nurse. She endures unspeakable trauma only to return home to a father who just recognises the service of his son, and a country who didn't acknowledge the service of women in Vietnam. The PTSD that so many of them had on their return, was highlighted in the book. Historical or war novels are not my usual genre, but this book was really neither. While the book is fiction, it has been well researched and beautifully written from Frankie's perspective. It does make the reader want to learn more about this part of history.

I couldn't help but think of my short

stint as a nurse. I loved the theory but the practical was something else. As an 18 year old from a conservative upbringing I couldn't wait to get away from the stress, the trauma, the sickness and death. I lasted four months and took the first job I found in the paper (turned out to be in a library). I can only imagine how Frankie must have felt coming from a similar background, but having no option except to stay and do her duty. When Frankie returns home, she is broken and lost, but gradually turns her life around to help others. This is an amazing book which made me think about a lot of things, it made me laugh and it made me cry. I can't wait to get my hands on another title by Kristin Hannah. She has written multiple novels, which can be found on the Richmond Tweed Library catalogue.

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On Menopause

by John Peacock

It's none of your business

I've been thinking a lot about overseas travel. I've been fortunate enough to see good parts of the World, but there are still lots to see, and travel is an absolute passion.

I'm not one of these journey- is -as- much -fun -as- the-destination people. I don't have much time for those people and can only assume they've chosen their destinations poorly. If the best part of your trip is getting there, you're in the wrong place. There is nothing romantic, exotic or exciting about being in an airport it took you three hours to drive to, three hours before your 14 hour flight. That's a lot of hours and beers are \$15. If I could avoid the journey part altogether, I'd be much happier.

The other thing I've learnt is that this body doesn't cope well in an economy class seat. This body also can't afford a business class seat. So there's the dilemma: broad shoulders, an abhorrence of strangers touching me combined with general intolerance. I can get into an economy seat but I can neither breathe nor turn, let alone open a packet of nuts. I also don't understand arm rest etiquette and become unreasonably agitated when the seat in front of me

reclines. Invariably I spill my dinner on my shirt as well, so when I'm walking around arrivals, I look altogether as though I just wandered in off the street.

I like to try and play for poor man's business class when you get a spare seat in the middle but invariably that just means there's a backpacker of some description sitting between me and my wife.

When I was younger I was better able to cope. I still wasn't loving the journey, like a freak, just better able to cope. Travelling as you get older changes though. What you look for in a holiday is different. It is not so much wine, women and song anymore as it is a drunk lady who hums a few bars.

I've also become a hotel guy. I used to enjoy staying with friends when I was travelling and I still love seeing my friends when I'm in their town, but these days I also prefer to sleep in a bed and not have to decipher the shower. The only flying I actually enjoy is launching myself at a hotel bed a couple of metres out to test the firmness of the mattress. You shouldn't have to blow anything up before you go to bed, least of all your mattress.



In Loving Memory

Stephen John Leslie

29 November 1968 - 19 February 2025

Late of Eltham.

Passed away unexpectedly aged 56 years.

Dearly loved Husband of Natalie.

Much loved Father of Jessica, Keira and Harry.

Cherished Son of John (dec'd) & Beryl.

Loved Brother of Julie-Anne, Kim, Paul and John (dec'd).

Stephen's family take comfort in knowing
that he was with the love of his life.

in his favourite place on earth in his final moments.
A man who taught his children everything it is to be alive.



Vagus Nerve and stress levels

by Grant Sinclair Principal Osteopath and Owner - Northern Rivers Health



Stress is a natural part of life, but when you've felt stressed for a prolonged period of time, it can take a toll on both your mental and physical health. One key player in your body's ability to manage stress is the vagus nerve, a long, complex nerve that runs from the brainstem down through the neck and into the chest and abdomen. The vagus nerve is part of the parasympathetic nervous system,

which controls the body's rest and digest response.

When the vagus nerve is functioning well, it helps regulate heart rate, digestion, breathing and mood by calming the body after stress. However, if the vagus nerve is not functioning effectively, the body can remain in a heightened state of stress, known as the fight or flight response. This can lead to symptoms like increased heart rate, shallow breathing, digestive issues, muscle tension, nausea and feelings of anxiety or overwhelm.

Some signs that your vagus nerve might not be functioning optimally may include headache or migraine, poor sleep, difficulty relaxing, digestive

discomfort and feeling easily stressed or anxious.

Stimulating the vagus nerve helps shift the body from fight or flight to rest and digest, encouraging relaxation and recovery. Techniques like deep breathing, humming (via activation of the vocal chords) and cold exposure can help improve vagal tone. Gentle manual therapy can also play a key role in supporting vagus nerve function. Osteopathy can help improve vagus nerve function. One way is by releasing tension in the neck, diaphragm, chest and abdomen where the vagus nerve passes. By improving mobility and reducing muscle tension, we can support the body's ability to regulate stress and restore balance, helping you feel more calm.

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Authorised by V Mencshelyi, National Party of Australia – NSW, Suite 3, Level 7, 50 Pitt Street, Sydney 2000





Frequent flyer programs: maximise your rewards

by Milt Barlow

Australian frequent flyer programs have become a cornerstone of consumer engagement, with millions of Australians actively participating to earn rewards and benefits. The loyalty programs of Qantas and Virgin Australia stand out as highly popular, offering members opportunities to accumulate points through flights, everyday spending, and partnerships with various businesses. Understanding how to best leverage these points can significantly enhance travel experiences and provide substantial value.

The popularity of loyalty in the skies

Loyalty programs are widespread in Australia, with a vast majority of consumers belonging to at least one. Supermarket programs lead in popularity, but airline frequent flyer programs like Qantas Frequent Flyer and Velocity Frequent Flyer hold significant appeal. Qantas Frequent Flyer boasts over 16.4 million members, while Velocity Frequent Flyer has reached a substantial 12 million members, making them key players in the Australian loyalty landscape. This high level of engagement underscores the value Australians place on travel-related rewards and the effectiveness of these programs in fostering customer loyalty.

Flights vs shopping: where your points go further

When it comes to redeeming frequent flyer points, members often face a choice between using them for shopping or flights. While the allure of immediate gratification through merchandise or gift cards is understandable, the true value of frequent flyer points is typically realised when redeemed for flights and upgrades. Experts consistently recommend prioritising flight redemptions, especially for long-haul travel and premium cabin upgrades, as this often yields a significantly higher return per point.

For example, Qantas Economy Classic Reward flights can offer a value of around two cents per point, while Business Classic Rewards can reach approximately eight cents. Similarly, Velocity economy reward flights range from one to two cents per point, and business reward flights can be worth two to four cents. In contrast, non-flight redemptions generally provide less than one cent per point for both programs. Upgrading a paid flight with points can also present an excellent value proposition, allowing travellers to experience premium cabins without the full cost.

Strategic international redemptions

To maximise the value of your Qantas and Virgin points for international travel, understanding their partner airline networks is crucial.

Qantas Frequent Flyer: As part of the oneworld Alliance and with numerous other partnerships, Qantas offers access to over 1,300 destinations worldwide. For long-haul economy flights, particularly to Europe and North America, exploring

partners like Finnair (no carrier charges), Japan Airlines (consistent reward seat releases), and China Airlines can be beneficial. Emirates, a non-oneworld partner, offers extensive routes but may have higher redemption rates and surcharges, which are set to increase from August 2025. Searching for reward seats on partner airline websites like British Airways Executive Club and American Airlines AAdvantage can sometimes yield better results than the Qantas website.

Velocity Frequent Flyer: While not part of an alliance, Velocity partners with airlines like Singapore Airlines, United Airlines, Air Canada, Qatar Airways, and Etihad Airways. Singapore Airlines is a particularly valuable partner, with the option to transfer Velocity Points to their KrisFlyer program for potentially wider reward seat availability, including First Class Suites. United Airlines and Air Canada provide access to North America, while Qatar Airways offers routes to Europe and the Middle East. Be aware of recent changes to Qantas and Virgin redemption points calculators.

Decoding point value

The value of a single frequent flyer point is not fixed and depends on how it's used. As previously mentioned, flight redemptions generally offer the best value. Aiming for a redemption value of at least \$20 for every 1,000 points (two cents per point) is a good benchmark. Redemptions for shopping or using points to offset cash fares typically provide lower value.

The journey to Los Angeles: a domestic flight tally

For Qantas Frequent Flyer members, a one-way economy flight from Australia to Los Angeles typically requires around 41,900 points. Assuming an average earning rate of 1,000 points per domestic economy flight, approximately 42 such flights would be needed to accrue enough points. Velocity Frequent Flyer members would generally need about 44,800 points for a similar flight, often on partner United Airlines. With an estimated earning rate of 800 points per domestic economy flight, around 56 flights would be required. These figures are estimates and can vary based on fare class, distance, and promotions.

Conclusion: fly smarter, not just more

Maximising the benefits of Australian frequent flyer programs involves a strategic approach to earning and redeeming points. Prioritising flight redemptions, especially for upgrades and international travel, generally offers the best value. By understanding the partner airline networks, staying informed about program changes, and diversifying earning strategies, members can effectively leverage their points to unlock rewarding travel experiences.



Lennox Head Public School



Swimming Carnival

On 12 February LHPS travelled to Ballina Memorial Pool for their school swimming carnival. The four school houses competed in a relay for fun at the end of the day, with Henderson winning the junior relay and Gibbon winning the senior relay. Forty-seven people made it through to the District carnival, with 18 of them coming out on top to go to Zone. By Zara

Resilience Project

This year students have started the Resilience Project. The Resilience Project is a wellbeing program that teaches children about positive mental health strategies. This project focuses on the three key ways to provoke positive emotions. They are Gratitude, Empathy, and Mindfulness (GEM). Studies have shown that doing these three things keeps you happy, and doing them now will help prevent mental illness in the future. By Emma

PSSA Cricket

From 17 - 20 February, Zara went to the PSSA State Girls Cricket Carnival in Tuggerah. Her team played five games in total against Sydney North, Sydney East, Sydney Invitational, Polding and South Coast. They won one game which was against Polding. By Ava

Meet the Teacher night

On 26 February, LHPS held our Meet the Teacher night. Parents had the opportunity to come and meet their child's teacher. The teachers discussed what they would be teaching the students during the year. By Ella

Debating

This year, students in Yr6 had the opportunity to join the school debating team. On 18 February, Yr6 students got to go to Kingscliff Public School for a debating workshop. They learned how to debate and all the rules that follow. We even got to do a practice debate. Debating starts in Term 2 - good luck debaters. By Emily

BCHS visit

In Term 1, Stages 2 and 3 had a brilliant visit from Ballina Coast High School. They talked about the school and all the wonderful classes they offered. Four girls from Ballina Coast High came as well. By Anna



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Holy Family Catholic School

by Murray Deeps



Vegetable and Herb Garden

Holy Family School's vegetable and herb garden, under the guidance and enthusiasm of Mrs Jenny Melville and Ruth Hillier, is thriving. Students, teachers and staff cultivate a bounty of fresh produce, from crisp lettuce and juicy tomatoes to fragrant herbs like rosemary and basil. More

than just a garden, it's a living classroom where students learn about gardening, nutrition, and sustainability. The harvest enriches staff and school lunches and provides hands-on learning experiences. This collaborative effort is a source of pride and a blessing for the entire school community.

Ninja Warrior Course

Thanks to the creativity and vision of Mr Adam Sullivan and the skilful workmanship of Mr Abe Crawford, Holy Family School boasts a fantastic Ninja Warrior course, which is a hub of excitement and physical activity. With a variety of obstacles, from rope swings to monkey bars and balls of different sizes, this dynamic course challenges students encouraging them to develop strength, agility, and coordination. More than just fun and games, the Ninja Course fosters problem-solving skills, resilience, and a healthy competitive spirit. It's a place where kids can push their limits, build confidence, and cheer each other on, making it a truly valuable addition to the School's facilities and a favourite amongst the students.

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Ballina Coast High

by Belinda Parkes



We're almost through the first term of 2025 already. Time really does fly when you are having fun.

Our Yr7 students are well and truly settled into High School enjoying their new friendships and the variety of subjects and opportunities available to them, while our senior students are relishing the diversity of pathways on offer.

Some of our seniors worked diligently towards their ATAR, and were inspired while on excursion to Sydney; while others are working on gaining qualifications at TAFE, giving them a head-start for future employment in animal care, beauty, droning, automotives and health.

Our inaugural Big Picture program students are loving having a non-traditional learning structure where they can build knowledge through off-site and on-site experiences and tailor their learning to meet their individual passions and interests.

It's also been an exciting year for our talented music, art and drama students who now have access to additional specialist coaching and performance experiences thanks to our new extra-curricular Targeted Arts Program. You'll be able to see some of these talents in our annual MADD production coming up later in the year. Planning is already well underway with auditions held over the past couple of weeks to help us uncover the many different skills and talents of Ballina Coast High School's students. Follow our Facebook and Instagram accounts for updates so you don't miss out on your tickets.





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Worried about climate change and the housing crisis? You're not alone. Labor have approved 32 new coal and gas projects, while Dutton distracts with nuclear. **We can't keep voting for the same two parties and expecting different results.**

With your vote, I can keep Dutton out and get Labor to act. I'll fight to:

-  **Build more public housing**, stop unlimited rent and mortgage rises
-  **Stop new coal and gas projects**, protect the environment
-  **Put dental and mental health into Medicare**, make GP visits free
-  **Make billionaires and big corporations pay their fair share** of tax



mandy4richmond.com

Authorised by A. Croft for The Greens NSW. 19a/1 Hordern Place Camperdown NSW 2050.

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Rotary 
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Ballina Lifestyle


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RSL

FRIDAY 25 APRIL 2025

0530hrs	Dawn Service
0600hrs	Ballina RSL Breakfast Following the dawn service, you can join us for our \$5 plated breakfast at the Ballina RSL Club.
1030hrs	ANZAC March Commences The March will proceed down River Street, Ballina starting at the Courthouse and finishing at the RSL and Memorial Park.
1100hrs	ANZAC Day Service The main service will be held at Memorial Park adjacent to the Ballina RSL Club.
1200hrs	Ballina RSL Lunch Join us for lunch at the conclusion of the ANZAC Day service at The Ballina RSL Club.
1300hrs	Brownie's Two-Up Join us on Level 1 at the ballina RSL Club.

2025 Anzac Day Poppy Project - Ballina NSW



As ANZAC Day approaches, join us in honouring our veterans through the annual Poppy Project, presented by the Rotary Satellite Club of Ballina Lifestyle, Ballina RSL Sub-Branch, and Ballina RSL.

Starting March 25, purchase a \$5 poppy at the Ballina RSL Sub-Branch or throughout the Club and pin it to the ANZAC letter structure in our foyer. This poignant memorial will be displayed by the river during ANZAC Day Services, symbolizing our collective remembrance.

We also encourage local businesses to either allow a participating school to decorate their shopfronts with an ANZAC theme or design their own display, enhancing the town's commemorative atmosphere. The most creative display will be recognized on ANZAC Day.

Proceeds from poppy sales support the War Widows Program, aiding families of service members.

For more details or to participate, visit the Ballina RSL or Ballina RSL Sub-Branch websites. This ANZAC Day, let's wear our poppies with pride and remember the sacrifices made for our freedom.

Easter fun for kids: activities to enjoy over the break

The Easter school holiday break runs from Friday 18 April, to Monday 21 April. To keep the kids entertained, explore a range of activities, including outdoor nature cycling, engaging puppet shows, and creative craft sessions. There's something for everyone in the region.



Australia's top ventriloquist, Natalie May, is coming to Ballina for a free holiday show. Join her and her hilarious little friends as they entertain the audience.

When: Tuesday 15 April 15 at 4pm

Where: Ballina RSL



These school holidays, let your children become Wildlife Guardians. They'll spend a day behind the scenes at the Wildlife Sanctuary with the keepers, learning about conservation and how to care for our amazing wildlife.

Book: byronbaywildlifesanctuary.com.au/wildlife-guardians



Participants can create their own dream catcher to ensure sweet dreams at this special free Library activity. All materials will be provided.

When: Wednesday, 16 April, at 10:30 AM

Where: Lennox Head Library



Get the kids outdoors for a day of adventure on the Northern Rivers Rail Trail. The northern section spans 24 kilometres from Murwillumbah to Crabbes Creek and the southern section stretches 29.7 kilometres from Casino to Lismore. Add an egg hunt to make it even more fun

For more information **visit:** northernriversrailtrail.com.au



Think twice about asbestos

by Karen Rudkin, NE Waste

It's easy to forget that asbestos is still present in millions of Australian properties, but it's a fact, that if a house was built or renovated before 1990, there's a good chance it has asbestos and it lurks in more places than you'd think. It's often found in wet areas including bathrooms, laundries and kitchens and is common in cement sheeting used for walls, ceilings and roofs and in thousands of other building products including vinyl flooring, adhesives, paints, textured coatings and insulation.

Asbestos can be easily disturbed when doing renovations, home improvements or regular maintenance. Sadly, every year in Australia, an estimated 4,000 people die from asbestos-related diseases because of past exposure to asbestos.

To keep yourself and your family safe around asbestos, take simple steps.

1. Get in the know – plan ahead before starting any renovations and find out where asbestos is likely to be in your home.

2. Take it slow – to avoid damaging or disturbing asbestos materials.
3. Get a pro - know your limits. Contact a licensed asbestos professional for advice on where it's located, and on how to manage or remove it.

As part of a regional program aimed at reducing the unsafe removal of asbestos by home renovators, residents are eligible for subsidised household asbestos testing kits. Please visit ballina.nsw.gov.au/asbestos

Beyond plastic

by MP Tamara Smith

Plastic - it seems that it's never going away – either as a subject to worry about, or as a substance that's going to hang around for thousands of years, meanwhile choking our marine life, waterways and oceans, and even our own bodies. The figures on the prevalence of plastic pollution are disturbing: tiny particles of the stuff have found their way into the 11km-deep Mariana Trench, to the top of Mount Everest. Microplastics measuring less than 5mm across have been found in human lungs, placenta tissue, breast milk and human blood.

The goal is not to be perfect – we are humans facing a lot

of existential threats, but it is possible to limit our personal use and exposure to plastic, and as everyone who bothers to pick up plastic litter at the beach knows, every effort makes a difference. Say no to disposable plastic cutlery, plastic straws, and other single-use plastics; avoid products with excess or unnecessary plastic packaging; make it a non-negotiable to carry water bottles, shopping bags, keep cups and travel cutlery. An alternative approach we can promote is the 'borrow system', which allows people to borrow reusable items rather than purchase single use. I hope to see Ballina and Byron Shires free from single use plastic.

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Let's go FOGO

by Jeanie McKillop, NE Waste



There's quite a lot happening in the organic waste sector at the moment with NSW becoming the first state to mandate food organics and garden organics (FOGO) recycling. *The Protection of the Environment Legislation Amendment (FOGO Recycling) Bill 2024* mandates source-separated collection of

food organics and garden organics waste from households by July 2030, and from businesses and institutions in stages from July 2026.

Residents having a FOGO bin is not a new thing to us in the Northern Rivers but it is new to many residents in the metropolitan areas and across the State, so this is a massive change, and a difficult one to implement. However, taking organics out of our landfills is one of the best instruments that the waste industry has to tackle climate change as food waste alone contributes most of the 11 million tonnes of greenhouse gases released from landfill each year. That is equivalent to the annual emissions of about three million cars, so legislating to remove it from the landfill stream is very welcome news.

It is a change for our many businesses. Fortunately, the 2026 introduction is for very large businesses and institutions such as supermarkets, hospitals, large pubs, clubs and aged care facilities – many of whom are already prepared or have plans in place to divert their organics. Other businesses will come on line in years to come with a staged implementation, as infrastructure is built to cater for the increase in material and to allow small business to adapt.

Large supermarkets will also be required to report on the amounts and types of surplus food donated to charities like OzHarvest, Second Bite and Foodbank – encouraging them to keep donating food and not send it to the FOGO facility.

The mandates are projected to divert up to one million tonnes of organic waste from landfill each year. This material will be recycled and transformed into high-quality compost for parks, sporting fields, and agriculture, promoting healthier soils and sustainable food production.

One of the challenges facing our region is finding facilities that are not already at capacity to take the extra FOGO – there were three in the Northern Rivers but with the loss of Lismore's in the floods we have two operating – situated at Grafton and Tweed. Fortunately, Ballina Council has secured a place for our FOGO at the SoilCo facility in the Tweed.

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Landcare: Winter Sun and Winter Senna

by S Web, Lennox Landcare



Have you been for a walk up to the Point lately? Yes? How brilliant is the display of vibrant yellow flowers all over the northern side of the headland. At this time of year those flowers light up the coastal reserve like wattles light up a dull winter woodland. And no, it's not a wattle. And no, it's not a native either. It's called Winter senna and it comes from South America. Bitou Bush and Singapore Daisy are also in flower and - 'dang it' - they're all weeds.

Winter senna is also known as cassia, climbing cassia or the less than enticing moniker, arsenic bush. Birds and insects however love the abundant flower display despite Winter senna being one of our more intrusive weed species. Those bright yellow flowers can be seen throughout the year but are prolific through March and April, hence its other common name, Easter senna. The plants produce a fruit that is actually a 10-20 cm long bean pod containing 20-40 seeds. Birds and other animals spread the seed and those that aren't eaten drop to the ground and readily germinate so it spreads very quickly and easily.

Winter senna is a garden escapee and is regarded as an environmental weed in NSW and Qld. It's found in warmer coastal districts in disturbed

forests and along roadsides. It's very important not to dump your garden waste in coastal reserves as this is another way senna and other weed species invade our bushland. Please use your green recycling bin for any cuttings or seedpods from senna or other garden plants. Council will compost it all for us.

Winter senna is a very hardy plant and will re-shoot from any root-stock left in the ground after removal or pruning so don't be surprised if your hard work is rewarded by a flush of new growth. And a word of caution; Winter senna and its cousin Smooth senna can be easily confused with a similar native species, *Senna acclinis* (Brush or Rainforest senna).

Visit: lennoxheadlandcare.org



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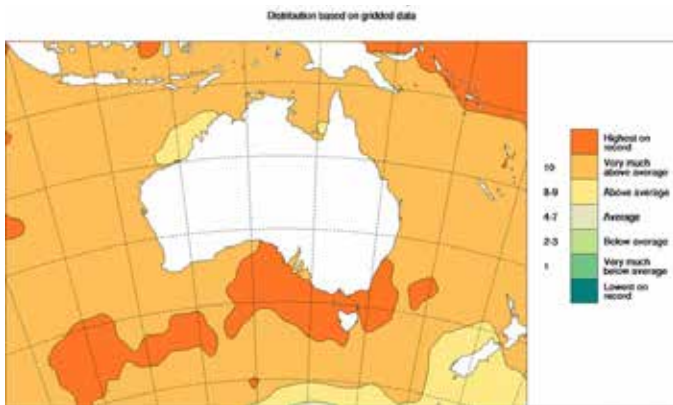
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Environment matters

by Lisa King, Environmental Scientist



Hottest Ocean Surface on Record

The Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) Annual Climate Statement for 2024 (bom.gov.au/climate/current/annual/aus/#tabs=Key-points) was released in February 2025 and found annual sea surface temperatures for the Australian region for 2024 were the warmest on record, and were 0.89 degrees Celsius (°C) above the 1961–1990 average. The statement also found that global sea surface temperatures in 2024 were the warmest on record.

Oceans cover more than 70% of the Earth's surface, and their warming is gravely concerning. It causes sea levels to rise, coral to bleach and earth's ice sheets to melt faster. The statement found that, similar to 2023, Antarctic sea-ice extent was very much below average or close to record low levels for much of the year.

Hotter oceans also make weather on land more extreme and damage the marine life that underpins vital ocean ecosystems. Frequent slow-moving high pressure systems in the Great Australian Bight and Tasman Sea were a major feature of atmospheric circulation in the Australian region

in 2024. In addition, Australia's national, area-averaged rainfall total was 596 millimetres in 2024, 28 per cent above the 1961–1990 average of 466 millimetres. 2024 was the wettest year since 2011 and Australia's eighth-wettest recorded year.

Greenhouse gas emissions are heating the earth's atmosphere, and, according to NASA, oceans absorb 90% of this heat. Warmer ocean temperatures lead to less nutrients in surface waters, which in turn leads to fewer fish. Warmer water can also cause species to move elsewhere. This threatens the food security and livelihoods of millions of people around the world. In January, it was reported that tens of thousands of fish died off northwestern Australia due to a large and prolonged marine heatwave.

As long as humans keep burning fossil fuels and pumping greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, the oceans will keep warming. According to the statement, concentrations of all major long-lived greenhouse gases in the atmosphere increased last year, including carbon dioxide and methane. Prolonged ocean warming is driving changes in weather patterns and more frequent and intense marine heatwaves. This threatens ecosystems and human livelihoods. To protect our oceans and our way of life, we must transition to clean energy sources and cut carbon emissions.

At the same time, we must urgently expand our scientific understanding of the oceans, to establish crucial baseline data for measuring climate change impacts. The time to act is now: to reduce emissions, support ocean research and help safeguard the future of our blue planet.

Source: 'It's official: Australia's ocean surface was the hottest on record in 2024', *The Conversation*, 6 February 2025

Source: BoM 2025

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MEMBER FOR BALLINA

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Approved by Tamara Smith MP, Member for Ballina. Funded using parliamentary allowances.



Pets of the month

Names: Ruby and Rita

Breed: Jack x Pug (Jug)

Age: Six and four

Owner's name: Tom

Favourite food: Chicken

Favourite thing to do: Chase lizards and fetch ball

What is the best memory involving your pets?

Both girls in the garden about to pounce on what I thought was a tiger snake. After I dived to save them from imminent attack, I realised it was only a bluey.

If they were not a pet, what would they be?

Rita – a princess in a castle, Ruby – a bouncer at a local RSL.

*Want to see your pet as our next pet of the month?
Email your answers to the above questions plus your
favourite photo of your pet.*

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Worms

by Evan Kosack, Lennox Head Vet Clinic

Yes, not a charming subject, but one that is important and generally poorly understood by the general public. Why are vets so obsessed with your pets' worms? Well it's a couple of factors. One is the deleterious effect internal parasites like various worms can have on your pets' health. Two is the significant risk many of these internal parasites can pose to humans, especially the young and the immunocompromised. Parasitic diseases spreading from an animal host to humans are called Zoonoses, and some can be very severe. So what are the main worms that can be found lurking in our pets?

Roundworms Found in dogs and cats, these spaghetti-like worms are transmitted primarily through ingestion of faeces-contaminated soil. Puppies and kittens can also be infected through the mother's milk or across the placenta before they even hit the ground.

Hookworms Found in dogs and cats, these guys are much smaller than roundworm but can still be a serious health risk. They are also picked up by ingesting larvae in contaminated soil, penetration of the skin by larvae, ingesting infected prey, migration to pups across the placenta or through the mother's milk.

Whipworm Mainly a dog parasite, this little guy is also picked up from contaminated soil.

All of these worms can cause severe disease either by directly interfering with digestion (leading to diarrhoea, malnutrition, vomiting etc), by damaging other organs as they migrate through the body, or by chronic blood loss. They can also predispose the host to other diseases such as Parvo-Virus. Not infrequently a host may die as a result of all this, especially young puppies and kittens.

Other worms that commonly infect our pets are tapeworms and heartworm. There are a couple of tapeworm species that are common in this area (and one very nasty one called Hydatid tapeworm, that isn't an issue except in some outback areas where dogs may eat contaminated offal). These are the tapes to keep in mind.

Flea Tapeworm: Seen in dogs and cats (although there's a couple of different species) these guys are transmitted by ingesting fleas. Pets infested by fleas are a big risk.

Gecko Tapeworm, or Zipper tapeworm, or Spirometra: This tapeworm is transmitted by the ingestion of rodents, reptiles, frogs or birds. Hunting animals are therefore most likely to be affected. Cats are by far the main culprits here, hence most infections are seen in cats.

Tapeworm are also a cause of disease in pets, primarily through the effects on the digestive tract and gastrointestinal irritation. A two metre tapeworm hanging out the backside of a pet also poses some aesthetic challenges, to put it lightly.

Another worm worth mentioning that mainly, but not exclusively, affects dogs is **Heartworm**. Heartworm is spread by mosquito bites and over time causes a medley of catastrophic changes to the heart of the host, resulting in eventual death through heart failure, blood clots or severe lung damage. Treatment is difficult, prolonged and hazardous. Prevention is easy.

So, what to do? Firstly, ask your vet about the best ongoing regime of medication to prevent these parasites overwhelming your pet. Any pet that walks on the ground, sniffs the soil, or goes where there are mosquitoes is vulnerable, so all pets should be on an effective preventative at the right dose and frequency. Anti-parasitic medication these days is effective, safe and simple to use. Special attention should be paid to pregnant pets and newborns. As well as good preventive medication, all pet faeces should be picked up and disposed off ASAP. This is one reason (besides the obvious) that dog poo-bags are essential, since many parasites mature in the soil after a week or two, and then become a risk for humans. It's also not a bad idea to get your pets stool-sample examined once a year by your vet, even if you are using preventive treatments, since mistakes can occur and parasites sometimes develop resistance.

Hopefully that helps decipher some confusion. For more information ask at your local Lennox Head Vet Clinic.



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All Girls Surfriders

by Maz Penetcost and Fabiann Robazza

The All Girls Surfriders had difficult but contestable conditions to start their 2025 season, with 1.5m + solid sets and numerous sand banks that caused backwash waves as the tide dropped. In our favour, the wind was light off shore, the sun was shining and we had 71 frothing surfer girls aged from 8 through to 76 compete across seven divisions.

The Open girls started the day off with a difficult paddle out the back through a sucky sandbar and solid sets. These conditions didn't deter their commitment, as girls demonstrated critical takeoffs, speedy drops and slashing cutbacks. The inside sections were mostly washy reforms and tricky close outs but all other divisions made the most of what was on offer.

Congratulations to all the contestants for surfing and to those girls that made the finals. We hope to see more settled

conditions for the next round. Till then keep those paddle arms strong and find some waves.

Results

Junior Beginner: 1st - Charlotte A. 2nd - Helena D. 3rd - Sofia B.

Senior Beginner: 1st - Susan P. 2nd - Asha B. 3rd - Fiona B.

Junior Intermediate :1st - Luca D. 2nd - Zia F. 3rd - Niamh S.

Senior Intermediate: 1st - Aurora V. 2nd - Fabiann R.
3rd - Anita B.

Wahines: 1st - Natalia E. 2nd - Cory W. 3rd - Max P.

Opens: 1st - Charlie H. 2nd - Emma C. 3rd - Clare D.

Longboards: 1st - Mel M. 2nd - Alexis Z. 3rd - Emma C.

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Surf star Cleo Beesley Triumphs in U12s



Pictured: Cleo Beesley by Oasis Media.

Cleo Beesley made waves at the Reflections Cadet Cup, taking home the win in the U12 Girls division amid challenging conditions at Rainbow Beach, Bonny Hills, on the Mid North Coast. Her remarkable performance not only earned her top honours but also showcased her exceptional understanding of the ocean and her resilience in tough surf.

Eighty-five of the most talented young surfers from across New South Wales competed in this prestigious event, a 5500-rated competition on Surfing Australia's National Series calendar. The Reflections Cadet Cup, held on 2 March, a collaboration between Reflections (the largest holiday group in New South Wales) and Surfest (Australia's biggest surfing festival), attracted some of the country's brightest young surfing talent.

Despite facing a challenging north-east swell and winds brought on by Tropical Cyclone Alfred further north, Cleo and her fellow competitors pushed through the rough conditions, impressing judges and lifeguards with their skill and surf awareness. 'It gives you so much faith in what they are doing with their parents and surf club said Surfest director Warren Smith.

The weekend was a true showcase of the talent and potential of Australia's next generation of surfers, and Cleo Beesley's victory is just one of many reasons to be excited for the future of the sport.

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Lennox Longboarders

by Wayne Booth



The deferred club round, postponed due to Cyclone Alfred the previous week, took place on Sunday 16 March, a stunning Sunday morning at Lennox Main Beach. The day started with a spectacular sunrise, a small but manageable swell, an incoming tide,

and favorable winds. Despite subpar water quality, the event proceeded with enthusiasm, bringing 24 club members to the beach.

The highlight of the day was the Firsts Final, showcasing exceptional longboarding despite deteriorating wave conditions toward the end. Newcomer Aden Corbett delivered an impressive performance, claiming victory over Chris Cain and Gary Burden. Each rider demonstrated unique longboarding styles, mastering the challenging small surf conditions.

We extend our gratitude to our club sponsors for their continued support and their generous vouchers.

Results

1sts - 1. Aden Corbett. 2. Chris Cain. 3. Gary Burden. Gary Crawley.

2nds - 1. Eleanor McCready. 2. Kurt Hardy. 3. India Brown. 4. Greg Gover.

3rds - 1. Andrew Thomas. 2. Grant Ryan. 3. Jesse Munro

4ths - 1. John Eddy. 2. Jemma Osmond. 3. Randall Evans

5ths - 1. Michael Bell. 2. Terry Kay. 3. Wayne Booth. 4. Liz Crowther

6ths - 1. Craig Lette. 2. Alby Cain. 3. Bella Hardy.

Next Scheduled Club Round, Sunday 13 April. Email - club@lennoxlongboarders.org

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Le-Ba Boardriders

by Le-Ba Comittee



Our second Club round of the year was held at pumping Lennox Point and was a special round (Dosko's Day) organised in memory of Dan 'Dosko' Hosking. We had over 100 Big Le-Ba registrations on the day with first heats kicking

off at 8am and not wrapping up until 4pm. Due to the huge numbers, we had two banks on the go and six person heats for the majority of this round and it was a massive effort from all the organisers, judges, and crew helping to set up to keep it all running smoothly. A big high tide and east swell made getting out and coming in from the rocks hectic but not even our youngest Cadets division had a single scratch on them, showing the level of confidence and competence our junior surfers have around the ocean in challenging situations like this.

The level of surfing throughout the day was once again mind-blowing. It was a special treat to have current Championship Tour surfer Connor O'Leary compete in the Opens division for the day where he was pushed hard in his heats up against some young up and comers and other vastly experienced shredders. Connor ultimately took the win in an epic final, putting on a clinic in the backhand attack top to bottom on-rail surfing that he is known for, and to the delight of all the frothing groms cheering on perched up on the rocks.

Once we had wrapped up at the Point, it was straight to the Bowlo for the raffle that was organised in memory of Dosko to support the great work that The Healthy Minds Club are doing in our area to help support men's mental health. Thank you to our sponsors especially Club Lennox Sports and all the businesses who donated prizes and people who bought raffle tickets. A big shout out to El Presidente Harry Fettell for the huge amount of work that went in to organising this event. It was a fitting tribute to Dosko and another great example of how our Club brings the whole community together to foster social connection and support important causes that impact us all.

Big Le-Ba March (Dosko's Day) results

Cadets: 1st Otto De Stefani, 2nd Levi Spyker, 3rd Sunny Mackinnon, 4th Sunny Markham-Lee, 5th Tasman Foster

Juniors: 1st Ashton Crowley, 2nd Shannon Harrison, 3rd Calvin Greely, 4th Owen Kilby, 5th Oscar Loudon, 6th Ocea Curtis

Opens: 1st Connor O'Leary, 2nd Jack Murray, 3rd Mikey McDonagh, 4th Harry O'Brien, 5th Noah Conney, 6th Kye Healey

Masters: 1st Rusty Baker, 2nd Hayden Brian, 3rd Sandro Neto, 4th Jonny Hanley, 5th Bryce Davidson

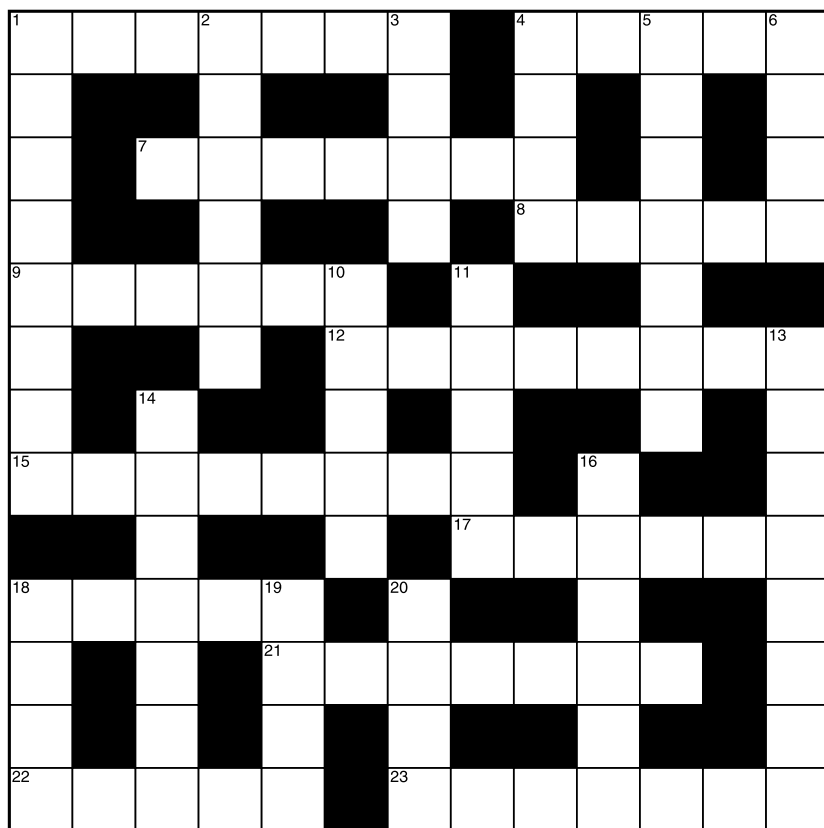
Legends: 1st Cameron Lindsay, 2nd Dino De Stefani, 3rd Darren Ford, 4th Kevin Greely, 5th Mark Walshaw, 6th Hugh Monk

Reggies: 1st Tully Wiley, 2nd Jackson Connellan, 3rd Beau Glindeman, 4th Taylor Hession, 5th Hayden Briggs, 6th Dyl Steele





April crossword



ACROSS

1. Transylvania is there
4. Made slip-up
7. Baby fierce cat (4,3)
8. Steam burn
9. Consumer pressure
12. Adopted (policy)

15. Water removal system
17. Radio interference
18. Embroidery expert
21. Anchorage native
22. Alter (text)
23. Fling, shipboard

DOWN

1. Rectified
2. Dog or horse
3. London's Marble ...
4. Recedes
5. Recurrence of illness
6. ... Sea Scrolls
10. Exclude

11. Fencing swords
13. Divulge
14. Awry
16. Type of cigar
18. Benefit (of)
19. South African currency
20. Scalp growth

March solutions

T	I	F	F	S		A	K	S		E
E			R		U	N	Z	I	P	E
D	R	E	A	D		O		O		R
I			Y	O	U	N	G	S	T	E
U		P		U				K		A
M	E	A	T	B	A	L	L		A	D
		P		T		E		M		I
C	H	E	R		S	T	R	A	I	N
H		R		A				I		G
E	S	C	A	L	A	T	I	N	G	
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This month

By Milt Barlow

At the movies

Reflecting the quiet US season prior to the big summer releases, April is a bit lackluster for blockbusters but still has some interesting viewing.

Opening 10 April is critically acclaimed *Small Things Like These*, an historical drama starring the wonderful Cillian Murphy (*Peaky Blinders*). Set in 1985, this confronting film has Murphy playing a devoted father who discovers disturbing secrets being kept by the local convent, along the way discovering some shocking truths of his own. It's riveting, although at times confronting, cinema.

Fans of Neil Young will not want to miss *Neil Young Coastal* (17 April), a fascinating behind-the-scenes documentary following Young's recent solo tour. Directed by his wife,

Daryl Hannah, the film captures this legendary performer for his first shows post COVID. It's a great nostalgic trip.

Also opening 17 April is *The Penguin Lessons*. If you're looking for something light and easy to put a smile on your face, then this is it. Starring Steve Coogan (*The Reckoning*), it follows the story of a British teacher who takes up a job in Argentina and finds his life transformed when he rescues an orphaned penguin from the beach. No Oscar winner but it's cute.

And it must be the month for music nostalgia as 24 April sees the release of *Pink Floyd At Pompei*. This original 1972 concert film has been completely remastered in 4K. The band performs a typical live set from the era but there is no audience apart from the basic film crew. It was shot in the ancient Roman amphitheatre in Pompei, Italy.

On the couch

My favourite watch over the past month would have to be *Fargo* Season 5 (Stan). I missed this on its 2023 release, so with nothing much to watch this month, it was a great catch up. I've always been a *Fargo* fan with its quirky storylines, great cast and superb direction, and this season doesn't disappoint. Midwestern housewife Dorothy 'Dot' Lyon (*Juno Temple*) faces a never-ending series of life threatening dramas as North Dakota Sheriff Roy Tillman (Jon Hamm) and his loyal but out-of-control son, Gator (Joe Keery), set out to track her down. Endless mayhem ensues along the way. A word of warning - this, like all *Fargos*, is not for the faint hearted. The other great watch is the second sequel to *Yellowstone* - *1923* (Apple TV+). With Helen Mirren and Harrison Ford continuing their roles, it's great.

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April horoscopes by Patsy Bennett - patsybennett.com

Aries

The recent eclipse season kick-started a fresh chapter in your personal life if you were born in March, and a fresh work or health schedule if you were born in April. Your home life and creativity will also be a focus in April, and your usual zest and vitality will return – all a reason to be positive.

Taurus

If you experienced an intense March, you'll be pleased to hear that in April, as long as you are careful with communications until the 8th, interactions can become less stressful. You'll enjoy a trip or get-together around Easter and an increasing sense of progress.

Gemini

Your long-term domestic and career direction will benefit from fresh initiative, which will help you to improve finances, so be sure to be proactive and bold with your projects. But if you found communications challenging in March, be careful this month; be clear and avoid over analysis.

Cancer

April is a good month for negotiations, travel and adventure. Just ensure you base your decisions on facts and not suppositions. Mars continues to provide you with the energy you need to succeed in your career and love life but if you're finding life stressful, it's time to find ways to unwind.

Leo

Mars enters Leo on the 18th, providing a boost in energy and even an ideal development for some. Be prepared to take the initiative, especially with passion projects and your personal life. Be patient with communications and strategic with finances to stimulate positive long-term outcomes.

Virgo

This month will be excellent for revitalising your health as your efforts are likely to succeed. The full moon on the 13th will spotlight which aspect of your health will benefit from most focus. The end of April brings the chance to anchor your projects, but be careful with talks towards the 27th.

Libra

This is a romantic month, so be sure to take advantage of this phase. However, you must avoid seeing someone idealistically, as this could bring disappointment. Be realistic. It's a busy time, so find ways to be practical with scheduling to avoid frustration, delays and misunderstandings.

Scorpio

A fresh chapter in a key personal or business relationship will proceed, but you must be careful this month, as otherwise a rash word spoken out of turn could cause unnecessary ripples. Adventure beckons towards the end of the month, and a fun venture could materialise.

Sagittarius

You may enjoy a memorable upturn in domestic matters so be sure to take the initiative. Your career and finances could progress, but you must avoid being idealistic and gambling, both financially and emotionally. Mid-month, travel and fun ventures will appeal, so plan ahead.

Capricorn

Where do you mostly derive a sense of purpose and direction? You'll gain the opportunity to invest in activities that lead to a feeling of achievement, but you must avoid simply making changes now due to boredom or frustration. You may be drawn to a new social or work circle as you grow.

Aquarius


You'll be attracted to something new in April. However, if delays arise, be patient and diligent as you'll see progress by the end of the month. In the meantime, avoid pressuring yourself or others to achieve a set outcome; you may be more pleased by an unexpected path that opens as a result.

Pisces

You'll notice a shift in your focus so be prepared to leave behind aspects of your past that no longer resonate. For some, there will be a degree of frustration, so pace yourself where needed. The new moon on the 27th will help you to anchor ventures that require financial or personal attention.



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