

FREE | December 2024 - January 2025

## Happy holidays



**Christmas Eve Carnival**  
A short history

**Stamp of approval**  
Meet Joan Leeds

**A feast to behold**  
Recipes, books, drinks

# Merry Christmas Bangalow

from Albo & Justine

## Albo & Justine's list for Bangalow

**COMPLETED!**

The new Beacon Laundry

**COMPLETED!**

Rifle Range Rd Upgrade

**IN PROGRESS!**

Mobile tower upgrade  
for better connectivity

*Pictured: Justine Elliot and Anthony Albanese open Bangalow's Beacon Laundry, a social enterprise project that received funding from the Albanese Labor Government.*

**Justine delivers!**

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# HERALD

The Bangalow

## From the Editor

As another year comes to a close, I marvel at how quickly time flies. Surely, time speeds up as you get older?

The end of the year is always a natural moment for reflection. This year has brought tremendous changes in the wider world and significant events closer to home. Amid it all, there's much to be thankful for, and heading into a new year with renewed optimism feels just right.

This publication would not be possible without our incredible team, many of whom are volunteers. Writers, photographers, proofreaders, the distribution team, and the management committee - so many moving parts work in harmony to bring each edition to life. My heartfelt thanks go to Gaby Borgardt, our designer, whose patience and creativity are an inspiration each month. She is a delight to work with. A huge thanks to Pippa Vickery, who essentially bankrolls the magazine by managing relationships with our advertisers and the wider business community. Her community spirit and sharp sense of humour are invaluable.

Special thanks to Lyn McCarthy for her extraordinary dedication to documenting our people and events, providing imagery that truly captures the essence of our community.

To you, our readers - thank you! Whether you engage with the Herald in print, online, or through social media, your support means the world to us. I'd like to acknowledge those who take the time to share feedback, offer constructive comments, or send us praise. Your responses make our mission to connect the community even more tangible.

Finally, I deeply appreciate all the community members who have shared their stories in our pages over the past year. Your experiences, anecdotes, and insights bring depth and colour to our village life - thank you for your generosity.

Gratitude is a mindset that takes practice, but its benefits to our wellbeing are immeasurable. Wishing you a harmonious festive season and a new year filled with peace and abundance.

*Sally Schofield*

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

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## End of an era for one *Herald* volunteer

Thank you, Judy Baker Photo supplied

**Judy Baker recently announced her retirement from her diverse volunteer roles at *The Bangalow Herald*. Christobel Munson looks back at her long involvement with the *Herald*, and before that, *Bangalow's Heartbeat*.**

Judy Baker and husband Brian Sundstrom moved to Bangalow village from Armidale in

2005. Their new neighbour, Colin Cook, was editor and instigator of *Bangalow's Heartbeat*. On discovering that Judy had been working at the University of New England in Armidale, Colin immediately dragooned her into "offering" her services to the magazine - then, a simple photocopy on green paper publication. Despite the fact that Judy had been working as a microbiologist (with a PhD on "Detecting toxicity in blue-green algae") Colin's response was: "Well, you must be able to write. You can write for *Bangalow's Heartbeat*!" Soon, Judy was writing a regular column called

Nature Notes. In it, she described the life and times of insects, plants, slugs, possums, or whatever she chose - the perfect writing outlet for a biologist. Then, when Colin saw Judy had a camera, she immediately became the staff photographer, a role she enjoyed for many years. From 2006, she was also the photographer for the Bangalow Garden Club.

On moving to Bangalow and immersing herself in her new roles, Judy says: "Joining the *Heartbeat* team gave me a great introduction to the community. Being sent to interview locals and take photos let me meet people from all walks of life, and I soon felt part of the town. I'd recommend it to newcomers to get involved. It's a great way to find new friends and interests."

Apart from writing and photography, Judy handled aspects of the distribution of *Heartbeat*, and later *The Bangalow Herald*, making sure to mail copies to Byron Shire councillors, local and NSW State Library, and readers who had moved away from town but wanted to keep in touch. Brian, too, was involved with distribution around town and other nearby village outlets.

For many years, Judy and Brian worked as auditors for the Northern Rivers Farmers Markets. In that role, they inspected the farms of more than 70 stallholders to verify that they grew their produce locally, on their own farms, and that they grew enough produce to be able to stock their stalls.

Reflecting on the time she spent working with Judy, Stephanie King, former editor of both *The Bangalow Herald* and *Bangalow's Heartbeat*, recalls: "Judy and Brian must be among the longest-serving contributors to the magazine, and have dedicated themselves to its wellbeing.

"Among many other offerings, the couple used to host the monthly magazine team meetings in town - and they were always welcoming with refreshments. Some of Judy's contributions to the magazine were mundane, most of it more complex, all of it a huge and important part of the process. Obviously, Judy's photographic talent contributed a great deal. I was always surprised, on turning up to report on an event, to find her taking pictures and getting the mood.

"A personal favourite memory is when she ran a free compost-making class. All us ex-city girl folk (like me) arrived for a beautifully prepared mulching lesson. All the ingredients in neat piles, ready to go. Learned a lot!

"In the end, it was Judy's willingness and generosity that were her outstanding qualities. It's only when you look back that you realise how giving and thoughtful someone has been."

Finding a replacement for Judy's numerous, diverse skills will be a hard task.

**WE ARE  
MOVING!**



You will find us at

**PICCABEEN PARK  
FROM DEC 7**



# 'Twas the night before Christmas

Anything goes at Christmas in 2479 Photo Bangalow Museum

**The Christmas Eve Carnival is as Bangalow as the Billycarts. But did you know it's been going for more than twice as long? No wonder we're feeling a little sad that our beloved community event has undergone some big changes, writes Georgia Fox.**

Stretching back to at least 1957, the Christmas Eve Carnival has provided a wonderful opportunity for our region to come together for as long as most can remember. Friends and relatives back in town... neighbourly catch-ups... rural families getting off the farm... it's one of the many things that has always made Bangalow such a special community to be part of.

In the early days, the celebrations were centred around the northern end of Station Street, with events like wheelbarrow and three-legged races being run, and flying swings and a merry-go-round set up between the RSL Hall and the Uniting Church. A miniature train ride took kids on a loop around the vacant block where the burger shop now stands.

The Pacific Highway barreling through town

didn't stop the festivities from spilling onto the main street. Stalls with chocolate wheels and stuffed animals for sale were set up on footpaths, raising money for local causes like maintaining the old weir pool. Shops stayed open late, and for many families, the evening would end with Midnight Mass at St Kevin's.

The main event was the arrival of Santa Claus in 'Genevieve', the old fire engine, throwing handfuls of lollies and giving out ice cream cups to the kids. "It was the best night of the year," says Maralyn Hanigan, who began attending the Carnival in 1959.

Fast-forward to 1980 when fundraising efforts for the sports fields were in full swing, (and without a professional team of traffic controllers in sight) the town diverted half the highway for Santa to make a particularly grand entrance down Byron Street on a camel. Former policeman, Brian Shultz, remembers the late Brian Richards at one end of town and one of the Snow boys at the other, directing northbound trucks and cars up Deacon Street and southbound down the southern side of Byron Street, the men accompanied by kids shaking donation buckets at drivers for their inconvenience.

Following the 1994 bypass, the Chamber of Commerce took the reins and grew it into the

town-stopping event we enjoyed for nearly 30 years. Bangalow Lights Up saw retailers vying for Best Decorated Shopfront amidst a sea of colourful festoon lights strung from building to building. An ever-increasing array of street performers, food stalls, and amusement rides in the school grounds delighted visitors each year. The RSL Hall came to life as Santa's Grotto, with Col Draper doing the honours.

No one could have anticipated the 2019 Carnival would be the last as we knew it. Not only did 2020 see large gatherings suspended due to the pandemic, but somewhere in all this, our Chamber of Commerce disbanded, leaving the event without funding or insurance.

Come 2021, off the back of a couple of tough years but with restrictions lifted, the threat of another Christmas without a celebration loomed. The Bangalow Lions stepped up at short notice and put on a community get-together in the Showgrounds in early December. Unfortunately, it had to be called off halfway through as severe weather approached.

In 2022, with the very real prospect of the town losing this long-held Christmas Eve tradition, the Bangalow Lions took on the huge responsibility of the Carnival. They decided to make the Showgrounds its new home for



**Bring back the Conga Line Photo Bangalow Museum**

several reasons – the convenience of the Lions Bar (the takings of which allow them to raise the necessary funds), adequate toilets and parking, the suitability for Santa's lap of honour on a fire engine, and lots of space in the beautiful green heart of our village for people to spread out on rugs, catch up, and let the kids do their thing.

But the main reason for the change of venue, Lions President Greg Nash explains, is that shutting Byron Street in the modern risk-management world in which Bangalow now exists is an Everest-like expedition involving months of preparations with multiple agencies, mountains of paperwork, and exorbitant costs. It is one the Lions already undertake once a year on our behalf, putting on the Billycarts. At Christmas, the added demands of working late into the night packing up on Christmas Eve and returning early Christmas morning to clean the street are too much to ask of the small team of volunteers during important family time. No question, it was a tall order for the Chamber of Commerce as well. But for the Lions, it is in addition to the Herculean effort that is the Billycarts and fresh off the back of their large role in the Show, a mere five weeks beforehand – all on just 25 members.

Following their first foray into organising and hosting the 'new' Christmas Eve Carnival in 2022, the town's Facebook page lit up with people lamenting why things had to change and sharing their feelings on the situation.

Taking feedback on board, the Lions pressed ahead with planning the 2023 Carnival, only to have to pull the pin at the last minute due to a giant summer deluge. The weather passed, and it ended up being quite a lovely afternoon, which again lit the Facebook page up with disappointment and frustration.

To say these first few years of the Christmas Eve Carnival in the Showgrounds have had a rough start is putting it mildly, and understandably adds to the longing and nostalgia the community feels for the way it used to be.

But luckily for us, the Lions are persevering, and weather permitting, the Carnival will kick off at 4pm with children's entertainment, street performers and food trucks. Santa is scheduled to arrive at 5pm with free ice blocks and lollipops, and fireworks are set to start at 8pm.

Gold coin donation on entry, or \$5 parking via Market Street.

The council's new single-use plastic rules will be in effect, so remember to bring your water bottle. There will be refilling stations but no water for sale. And don't forget your rug!

Dogs on leads are welcome, keeping in mind the 8pm fireworks. Also a reminder to get those four-legged friends back at home sorted beforehand if they're not a fan.

If we embrace the new Carnival and help it find its feet – whether by getting involved or simply attending – our iconic and historic Christmas gathering has every chance of thriving into the future, continuing to reflect the vibrancy and warmth of our incredible community.

You don't need to be a member of the Lions to help out – just get in contact with Nashy on 0418 440 545.

# The Bangalow Christmas Eve Carnival

**Tuesday  
24 December  
4pm – 8pm**

**Bangalow Showgrounds**

Enter via Main Gates with gold coin donation. Parking also available \$5.



**There's something for everyone!**

A visit from Santa

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# Markets on the move

Market manager **Kylie McGregor** with long-time stall holders, **Heather Armstrong** and **Anthony Hotson** Photo **Lyn McCarthy** – Niche Pictures

You've heard the rumours. It's true. From Saturday 7 December, the Bangalow Farmers Markets will be operating out of Piccabeen Park, not in the carpark behind the pub.

After months of waiting while the Development Application wended its way through Council corridors, permission was finally granted for the markets to start at Piccabeen Park on a "temporary trial" which ends in October 2026. If the trial is "deemed successful", then the Farmers Market may be included in Council's Sustainable Markets operations.

For the last nine years, Kylie McGregor has been the Bangalow Market's onsite manager, while her husband Tom Carey performs the same duties at the Byron Bay Farmers Market. With a background in journalism and marketing, Kylie manages the market's admin, marketing, social media and advertising. A committee of members runs an umbrella not-for-profit organisation, Byron Farmers Market Inc, which operates both the Byron Bay and Bangalow markets. Belinda Fortune is its president.

Each Saturday, stalls start setting up between 5.30-6am, for a 7am start and close at 11am. Currently, the Bangalow markets have around 30 stalls, which fluctuates according to the season. "While the majority of our farmers and stallholders are perennial," Kylie explains, "we have a handful who have shorter seasons, so they only attend when their crops are in season."

Initially, the move to Piccabeen Park was triggered by a social media post from a main street business on a Bangalow Community Facebook page. It asked the community what it thought of making the move to the park. Most responses were in favour of the move. At the same time, the pub had advised the market operators that renovations would be taking place at some point, which would require them to move offsite. Once the idea of moving to the park was proposed to stallholders, they voted unanimously to relocate permanently.

The market stalls will start at the Deacon Street entrance to Piccabeen Park and run along both sides of the road known unofficially as 'Wetlands Way', ending at the amenities block. A distinct advantage to the new location is the fact that there's carparking conveniently located behind the museum. It has capacity for up to 43 cars (with supervision). No doubt this will be a relief to anyone trying to find a park along the main street on Saturday mornings.

Overhanging trees will provide more shade for the stalls and stallholders, and there's an adjoining grassed area for customers alongside. "There's also the opportunity to expand our offering to include breakfast and drink stalls," adds Kylie.

"We have been incredibly grateful to Tom and Cathryn Mooney for allowing us to run the market in the pub carpark for the past 20 years. When the market was first started

all those years ago, there was quite a bit of opposition to it. But it was the Mooneys who supported us and offered the market a venue in which to operate. Their generosity is greatly appreciated. It will be sad to leave, but this is a chance to evolve the market into a new era. While it has been great to call the pub home for so many years, the bitumen is extremely hot over the warmer months. I think everyone is looking forward to having a little respite from the heat as we head into summer. And a new home feels timely.

"We are hoping this new environment will be more enticing for people to not only come to do their weekly grocery shop, but to spend some time – having breakfast, listening to the live music and just hanging out. Plus, there are two playgrounds for the kids, and it's a dog-friendly zone, so dogs on leads will be welcome. It just feels like a well-rounded offering for our community."

The Bangalow Historical Society is planning to offer scones, jam and cream on the lawns outside the museum on some Saturday mornings, and is hopeful the presence of the markets, next to the museum and the weekly Library Bus, will create the perfect Saturday morning vibe for the town.

The mood among farmers is optimistic. Anthony Hotson, who has been selling the range of Rainforest Foods he grows and packages since the very first farmers markets in the Byron Shire, confirms the obvious: "Over the years, the markets have



**Georgie Powell, from Mt Chowan Organics** Photo Lyn McCarthy - Niche Pictures

become more professional, more diverse, and we now offer a more comprehensive range of produce,” he said. “It is precarious, with the weather, but this is a beautiful market community here. It’s always been good for the farmers. Not as many markets have lasted as long as us. We really appreciate what Tom and Cathryn Mooney have done, giving us the opportunity to be here behind the Bangalow Hotel, but it’s time to move on.”

Heather Armstrong’s stall offering juicy Coopers Shoot Tomatoes, has also been operating at the Bangalow markets from Day One, as has David Trevor-Jones, from Hayters Hill Farm. Georgie Powell, from Mt Chowan Organics, has been coming to the markets since she was a child. Her father, Lance, was one of the original stallholders; now Georgia runs the stall.

**Christobel Munson**

*The Bangalow Herald* asked Kylie McGregor what she buys from the markets to cook herself.

“It depends on the season! I always buy the staples, like leafy greens, potatoes, tomatoes, herbs and garlic and then it changes with what’s available. In the warmer months I reach for more salad options with lettuces, rocket, radicchio, red onions, radishes and avos – all topped with olive oil and sprouts.

In the colder months I love slow cooking beef and whatever vegies are available – eggplant, tomatoes, zucchini, silverbeet, carrots and squash. To me, it’s always about keeping it simple. When the produce is as great as we have, you don’t need to do much to it.

At the moment, my go-to lunch or snack is locally-made rice crackers with avo, tomato, cheese and basil – all from our farmers. And when the berries, pawpaw and dragonfruit are in season, I’m in heaven. It’s really just about making the most of and appreciating what’s in season.”

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Local larder for those in need Photo supplied

## Bangalow Community Pantry

A new food resource has just opened at the Bangalow Men's Shed. The Bangalow Community Pantry will provide obligation-free food for people in need. With the strain on many families due to cost-of-living pressures directly affecting household budgets, this is an important asset for our community.

The pantry is a Men's Shed initiative and is supported by Bangalow Lions, the CWA, and the three churches (Catholic, Anglican, and Uniting), who keep the larder stocked. This has been a joint enterprise involving many, including Bunnings Byron Bay, which supplied the materials for the larder, and Bangalow Foodworks, which has been a generous benefactor.

The larder is available for anyone who needs supplies at any time, day or night. For security, it is lit at night and has a camera nearby. It is stocked with non-perishable foods and other household products. There is absolutely no obligation on anyone accessing the pantry and no limit on what can be taken.

All items are sourced in Bangalow, mostly from Foodworks and the General Store. The project is run in tandem with the food voucher scheme that has been operating for about six months from the Men's Shed.

**Murray Hand**

## Byron Bay Chamber of Commerce wins 'Outstanding Local Chamber' Award

The Byron Bay Chamber of Commerce (BBCC) has achieved a significant milestone, progressing from their win at the Northern Rivers Business Awards to taking home the title of 'Outstanding Local Chamber' at the NSW Business Awards. Out of 218 local Chambers across New South Wales, BBCC was selected as one of only 10 finalists before achieving this top honour. President of BBCC President is Bangalow resident Matt Williamson. "As you know it's been a number of years now since the Bangalow Chamber has been active and we, at the Byron Chamber have tried to fill that gap," says Matt. "Earlier in the year we hosted an information night and discussion at the pub on the problem of telecommunications in Bangalow. We had a great turnout, and lots of lively discussion together with some senior representation from Telstra and NBN," he says. "My own business is located opposite the pub in Bangalow and I speak to local business owners all the time, and at the Byron Chamber we make every effort to represent all of Byron, members and non-members, across all issues. I would encourage anyone who has an interest to just drop by my office and say g'day," says Matt.

Get in touch [info@byronbaychamber.com](mailto:info@byronbaychamber.com)

## Changes for Bangalow Health and Wellbeing in 2025

For the past 20 years, I've had the privilege of providing women's health services to Bangalow and its surrounds, initially as Women's Health and Wellbeing. Over the last three years, I've focused on menopause management due to the overwhelming demand.

In 2025, The Menopause Practice will be moving to 16 Old Pacific Hwy, Newrybar - just a stone's throw from Bangalow. I'll be joined by Dr Jemma Buultjens and Dr Kate Allan, both of whom have a special interest in menopause and women's health.

Our phone number 02 6687 2337, email [hello@bangalowhealthandwellbeing.com.au](mailto:hello@bangalowhealthandwellbeing.com.au), and website [bangalowhealthandwellbeing.com.au](http://bangalowhealthandwellbeing.com.au) will remain the same.

From January 2025, all booked appointments will take place in Newrybar, and we'll continue to send appointment reminders as usual.

This move will allow us to dedicate our efforts to menopause management, offer more appointment availability, and gradually expand the women's health services we provide.

Sadly, we'll be closing the practice at 88 Byron St, Bangalow, on 19 December 2024.

It's been an absolute privilege to work in this beautiful space with such skilled and caring health practitioners over the past eight years—and in Bangalow for the past 20 years. I also want to reassure you that all of the current practitioners will be continuing their work. You'll find their updated contact details on our website, or you can contact them directly.

From all of us at Bangalow Health and Wellbeing, we wish you a joyful holiday season and an exciting New Year.

**Dr Jane Reffell**  
Bangalow Health and Wellbeing

# Bangalow MEDICAL CENTRE



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Kristy, Joan and Charlotte, happy at work Photo Lyn McCarthy Niche Pictures

# Stamp of approval

**Sally Schofield** chatted with **Joan Leeds**, licensee of the local post office, to find out the secrets of her success and tips for wrapping packages in the lead-up to Christmas.

"If you're not happy in your work, then it trickles down to everyone," says Joan Leeds,

who, along with daughter Kristy, took over the Bangalow Post Office in early 2023. "I love it when people say, 'Oh, the girls in the post office are so lovely and happy.'"

In a world where postal services seemed destined to diminish, the Bangalow Post Office is flourishing. With front street access, parcel lockers, and hopes for a third terminal at the service desk, business is booming, and customers are beaming. In fact, a post

on the *Bangalow Herald* Facebook page acknowledging Joan and her work reached over 3,000 people, and the praise for Joan and her team flowed in.

Joan is happy the Post Office building is a thriving hub, with people sipping coffee and working in the sunshine around the adjacent park. The Post Office Wi-Fi password is the worst-kept secret in all of Bangalow, but Joan doesn't mind. She's passionate about



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Experience, Expertise, Integrity



**The original Bangalow Post Office** Photo from the archives of Jan Hulbert

supporting local business and economic growth in regional areas, so is delighted to offer everything from post, parcel lockers, banking, and business services to the community. “We’re social animals, whether you like it or not, and we like to feel like we’re part of something.”

As a customer, one of the things that frustrated Joan most about post offices was the queue. Not at her place. Things move swiftly and efficiently, but with a sense of warmth and humour that can’t help but put a smile on customers’ faces.

“People like to be seen, people like to be acknowledged as well, and it’s not that hard to do even in a small way,” she says. “You can’t do this job if you don’t like people. I’m social, I’m out there. I really enjoy having a chat,” she says. “You’ve got to enjoy what you do.”

Joan’s advice for breaking the ice is to get involved. “Not long after we arrived, I went down and helped out painting the stands at the Showgrounds,” she says. “Not long after, Bangalow Museum invited me to a launch event, which was lovely,” she says. “This town gives you a big warm hug if you’re prepared to be part of it,” says Joan.

With many years of experience in a range of industries—including starting her career as a psychiatric nurse, owning two news agencies, and working in local economic development on the Mid

North Coast—Joan has customer service down to a fine art. The Post Office seems to be thriving with the perfect mix of services, customer care, and a good dose of small-town friendliness.

“I’m gifted with a good memory for faces and names, so I’m lucky that way,” she says. “After I’ve delivered your parcel a couple of times, I know who you are, and you’ve probably told me a bit about what’s in your parcel. And it doesn’t hurt to say g’day, does it?” she adds, noting that even customers using the self-service parcel lockers in the back of the building will pop in just to say hello and get a dose of Joan’s trademark bawdy banter.

With Christmas coming, Joan has this sage advice about packaging. “One of the things people need to be reminded is: if you’re going to send something fragile, movement is your enemy. You cannot afford to have the contents moving around in the box. You cannot afford to have empty space in the box above or around your item as it could get squashed, which can lead to breakage.” If in doubt, ask the friendly team’s advice on how to best wrap your package to ensure it gets

to the recipient in one piece.

Joan also cautions against using whiteboard marker to address packages. “If it gets wet, it smudges, and the parcel eventually gets sent to the Dead Letter Office (Ed.—yes, it really exists). I’ve got a parcel there in a prepaid satchel that’s been put into the red post box, but it has no details of the sender or receiver on it.”

Speaking of packages, Joan confesses to some lively exchanges with local celeb Liam Hemsworth. “He used to come in, and we’d rev each other up,” she says. The star uses a *nom de plume* for some deliveries, which initially caused confusion for the staff. “Liam got his items, and then he said to me, ‘No, there’s one more. I’ve got a big package,’” says Joan, eyebrows raised in mock shock. “I let one of the other girls go and get his big package, which he signed for, and as he was walking out, I called out, ‘Don’t come in here talking about your bloody big package!’ And I thought he was going to choke! I said, ‘I’m a 66-year-old woman and I can only take so much excitement, mate.’ After that, when he came in, he’d always wait for me to serve him,” she laughs.

Bangalow was a new start for Joan, who is blessed with boundless enthusiasm, a sunny disposition, and a wicked sense of humour. “I was married for 45 years, and I’m now divorced,” she says. “I walked away with nothing but my Super, which I used to buy an income [the Post Office]. And this,” Joan cackles heartily as she holds up her middle finger, now embellished with a sizable piece of bling, in an impressive one-finger salute to her ex-husband.

With a solid business, a happy team, and the town behind her, it sounds like Joan got the last laugh.



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# HSC Class of 2024

For many local teens, the end of high school marks both a relief and an exciting next step into the future. After years of hard work, the HSC is finally over, paving the way for new opportunities and challenges. **The Bangalow Herald** spoke to one local high achiever, **Roi Chong**, about his journey through high school and his plans for the future.

Year 12 students (and their families!) can breathe a sigh of relief, with the HSC over for another year. As part of our ongoing series celebrating local achievements, the *Herald* spoke with recent graduate and Bangalow resident, Roi Chong.

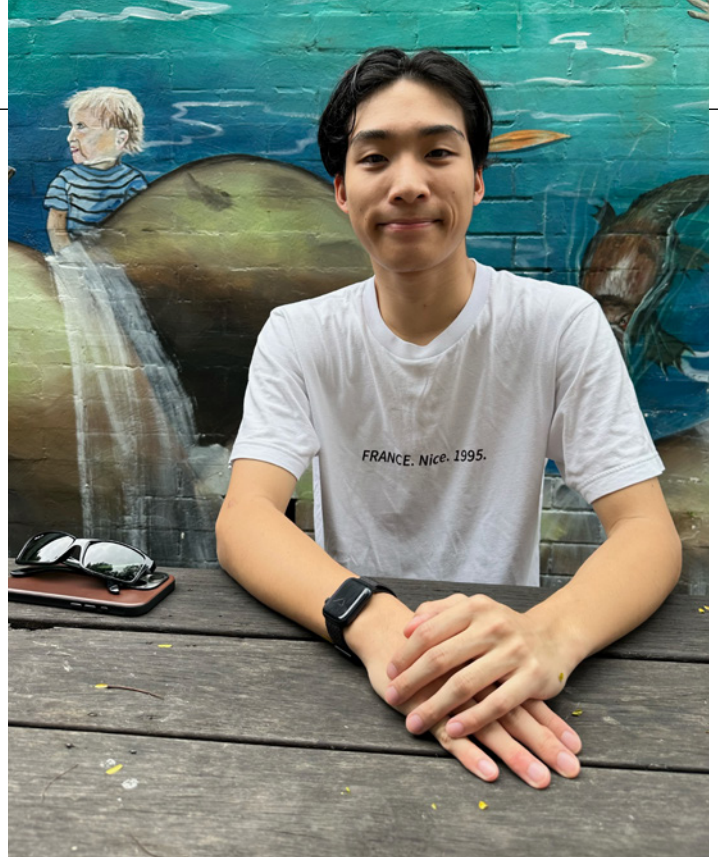
Roi is one of approximately 80,000 students in NSW to have completed their HSC exams in November—with a particularly gruelling lineup of subjects, including Advanced Mathematics, Mathematics Extension, Chemistry, Advanced English, and Music.

Asked how tough he found the HSC, he was philosophical, saying, “It depends on what your view of doing well is. For me, my goal was always an ATAR of 90+, and with that comes a lot of work. Every course is very intensive, and even the ‘easy’ ones do require a lot of work.”

In addition to this challenging academic schedule, Roi also managed to win Best Debater of 2024 in the HICES (Heads of Independent Co-Educational Schools) Open Division, a competition involving “around 300 students from 62 schools,” he explains.

Roi has lived in Bangalow since his family relocated from Melbourne when he was 10 months old, attending Bangalow Primary from Kindergarten through to Year Six, before moving to Emmanuel Anglican College in Ballina for high school.

In keeping with the family tradition of working within the health sphere (his father, Jit, is a pharmacist and mother, Karen, a hospital



**Bangalow’s Roi Chong hopes to become a paramedic**  
Photo Georgia Fox


administrator), Roi plans on becoming a paramedic. Keen to continue straight onto university, he is hoping to be accepted into Monash’s three year Bachelor of Paramedicine, and has already been offered a place in their on-campus accommodation.

An accomplished pianist, Roi found his HSC Music studies a “good switch for mental wellbeing” against the demands of his other more academically intensive subjects. He jumped straight onto the piano after the HSC finished, “just because it’s so fun to do,” and hopes to continue his tuition in Melbourne.

No schoolies for Roi—instead, a weekend away with mates up in Noosa and enjoying the summer hanging out with friends before everyone disperses early next year. He is excited about the change of pace that awaits him in Melbourne and is enjoying a well-earned reprieve before the hard work starts again. “It felt so good that first day when I got to sleep in and had nothing else I had to do,” he laughs.

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# Bangalow Junior Cricket

With the weather warming up, the first month of the cricket season has seen some hotly contested games across all junior and senior grades.

Friday afternoons on Shultz Oval have been busy with our Blast program for our little cricketers. Girls and boys aged from five to 10 are learning the basics to begin their journey as future cricket players.

Our four junior teams have all started the season strongly, with Under 16 and Under 14 both sitting in the top half of the ladder. We have also had eight of our junior players selected for the Ballina District representative teams, with a couple going on to represent the Far North Coast. (Picture supplied)

Our senior grades are also travelling nicely with some stand-out performances from Dean Bohn (103 runs), Brett Macphail (113 runs), and a match-winning partnership of 72 in third grade between Panda and Aidan from our Under 16 team. Also from our Under 16 team, Arlo and Jimmy made their second-grade debuts this season, joining Ant, Jammo, Connor Reds, and Hazza—who are all under 19—in piling on the runs against Casino in round 5 for an impressive win.

The other big news for the club and community was securing a government and Cricket NSW grant to replace our well-used cricket nets. The committee, led by Anthony Maxwell, Millsy, Crackers, Reds, and new team member Danielle Atkinson, has been working



The Bangalow Cricket Juniors Photo supplied

for years to secure funding, and their hard work has finally brought the club a much-needed reward.

Planning is now underway for three new lanes with full synthetic covering and soft netting to comply with Cricket Australia standards. The nets will be relocated so that balls are hit out into the field instead of into the creek or onto the path used by joggers, walkers, and parents with prams.

With our little village growing, the club, now the largest in the shire and punching well above its weight, will ensure everyone benefits from this positive outcome.

So, come down to Shultz Oval on Saturdays to watch our national sport and support our juniors in the morning and senior grades in the afternoon.

Let's go, Bangalow.

**Nick Edge**

## Impressive run for EPS relay team

Eureka Public School (EPS) is celebrating sending a school team to the State Athletics Championships held in Sydney a few weeks ago. The team composed of Tully, Cyan, Jackson and Mason qualified for the finals in the Small Schools category of the Nigel Bagley Relay. While they finished in eight place, they were just one second off the winning time.

This is a fantastic achievement for EPS which currently has 34 children enrolled across K to 6. Another amazing dimension to this story is the community support that was mustered to fund the kids and families to get to Sydney. Fundraisers at the Eureka Hall, contributions from the EPS P&C and some handsome donations from community members saw over \$3000 raised to offset the travel costs.

Well done to the athletes of EPS, Eureka Hall committee and community members for making this happen!

**Damion Cavanagh**

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**THE GREENS**

# Catering for Christmas with the Library of Stuff



From left: Sydney Linnell (an American student studying abroad), Sasha Mainsbridge (centre) and regular maintenance crew member, Will Stanton Photos Christobel Munson

Come the “season to be jolly”, do you start to feel overwhelmed and anxious at the very idea? Do you have a panic attack at the thought of all those presents you feel obliged to acquire? The mountains of extra food to buy, cook and serve that seem to be compulsory? The friends and family who land on your doorstep “just for a few nights” in the middle of your peaceful summer holiday, just because your house is in the cool-and-groovy Byron Shire. Bored kids moping about the house with “nothing to do”, through what feels like endless weeks of holidays...

Well, in the Byron Shire – we have options. You may – or may not – have heard about ‘share libraries’. In Australia, they’ve existed since 2012, largely known initially as ‘tool libraries’. The Library of Stuff (LoS), situated in Mullumbimby, opened in the garage of Sasha Mainsbridge in 2017, originally to supply catering needs for events held by local non-profit organisations. Bangalow Land and Rivercare, for instance, borrowed bamboo plates, bowls and cutlery for an event in Piccabeen Park. Since then, it’s grown hugely. Currently, the number of items available to borrow at the LoS is 1,242. The number of loans made since April 2019 is 20,058. Last year, the Byron Shire’s only such library lent out 4,934 items, the highest number out of 12 libraries around Australia, according to A LOT – the Australian Library of Things Network, in its first survey of Australian share libraries. But what on earth is a share library, and what’s in it for me – especially with Christmas coming?

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Board games galore, no time to be bored

Check out the inventory on their website: [libraryofstuff.org.au](http://libraryofstuff.org.au), which explains that items are sorted into categories, including camping; events (catering and non-catering items); indoor and outdoor games; kitchen appliances; sporting equipment; and, importantly, tools, both DIY and gardening. So – here’s a hypothetical: rellies are landing next week. A range of camping mattresses, stretchers (very popular at Blues Fest), and swags are available, plus tents. They can camp in the backyard. The forecast is for rain – it is summer in Northern NSW, after all. There are 119 indoor games to choose from, including card games, jigsaw puzzles and board games. (That also means you don’t have to shell out for games which, as it turns out, their kids don’t actually like.) You’ve only recently moved, and your kitchen equipment is minimal? You can borrow a double electric cooktop, a pizza maker, a fondue set, a camp kitchen, a food processor or a large champagne bucket, in case the rellies have brought champagne for you as a thank you. It is possible.

Before they come, you’ll need to tidy up the backyard. Dad or big brother can borrow

some gardening tools: a hedge trimmer, a large cordless blower, even a telescopic pruning pole. He’ll only need these tools once; he’s unlikely to make it a regular job, so no need to buy these expensive items upfront.

Come Christmas Day, you’ll need extra everything: bowls, wine glasses, cloth napkins (a very popular item), a blender, a food processor, or even a mega rice cooker. So what’s the deal, you ask? “The Library of Stuff exists to support people, groups and businesses who are passionate about radically reducing our environmental footprints by choosing to share rather than buy,” the website explains. It’s an unfunded community service with 100 members – a mix of individuals and non-profit organisations – which, since 1 July 2024, has been structured as a non-profit members’ co-operative. It costs \$1 a week, plus five hours of your time per month. Membership provides access to the extensive inventory, from which you can borrow items for typically seven to 14 days. Sasha Mainsbridge explains how it works. “It really is a mindset shift! Instead of worrying about the ills of hyper-consumption, this initiative gives locals the opportunity to reduce

their impact, at Christmas and beyond.” The library is open on Tuesday mornings from 8-10 am and Thursdays 3-5 pm. On Saturday mornings, working groups gather to repair and care for the inventory and decide what items to put on the wishlist.

“Membership of the Library has always been open to Bangalow residents but we acknowledge the inconvenience. We have had promising discussions with the Bangalow Men’s Shed based on the idea of it becoming a satellite centre – but this would require a significant increase in members from Bangalow to make this possible. For instance, the Library could open specifically for a pick-up and delivery day just for Bangalow. We’d love to see if there’s interest from the Bangalow community.

“The Library of Stuff is made up of a growing group of passionate conservationists, who see it as an antidote to toxic consumption,” adds Sasha. “With a generous team of willing hands and big brains, we believe our share library will grow to become a major contributor to the health and wellbeing of our community at large.”

**Christobel Munson**

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# Orange is the new black

**Sally Schofield spoke to Bangalow's Andrea Smyth about the glamour of life on super yachts and the grit of volunteering for the NSW SES.**

Super yachts and St Tropez are a long way away from the State Emergency Services (SES), but that's that scenic route taken by Bangalow hair and makeup artist, Andrea Smyth in her life's adventure.

Born in the fishing village of Bangor, Northern Ireland, her family immigrated to South Africa when Andrea was three, ironically to escape The Troubles of Northern Ireland, only to land in the middle of another site of civil unrest, the Apartheid regime of South Africa.

There, in her teens, Andrea pursued a career in hairdressing, training under the country's most respected snipper. "At 70, he's still regarded as top of his game," she says.

But while the glamour of hair and makeup was alluring, the call to adventure was strong, and at 21, Andrea packed a bag and set off to see the world. A five-day gig doing hair and makeup on a cruise liner turned into three years meandering around the Indian Ocean on an Italian cruise liner, the MSC, visiting exotic locations such as Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles and Zanzibar. The ship's home



Andrea in 'Storm Carrot' mode Photo supplied

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**The Christina O super yacht Photo Stef Bravin - Propriété de Morley Yachts**



**Onboard the Christina O cruising the Caribbean Photo supplied**

port was Durban, which was handy as her parents lived nearby, so Andrea would visit them between cruises. She eventually moved on to the Purser's Desk, "basically the complaints department," putting her people skills to good use and picking up some basic phrases in a variety of languages.

As her skills and love for life on the sea grew, Andrea set her sights on the luxury of the superyacht world. The style and opulence of the marinas of the South of France were particularly appealing. "Yep, that super yacht with a helicopter looks pretty good. This is the life for me."

Andrea finessed her resume – "it was all bullshit" – and sent it off to a high-end super yacht crew recruitment agency, who advised her: "If they offer you the job, take it. It will change your life."

Landing back in Belfast, Andrea was, of all things, washing her hair when the phone call came a couple of days later. "I had an earful of suds but could just make out it was the Captain calling to offer me a job." But there was a catch. They were leaving the next day. Ever ready, Andy replied, "That's OK, I haven't even unpacked my backpack yet," she laughs.

She flew back to the South of France and found herself her first placement on one of the world's most extravagant super yachts, The Christina O, once owned by Greek billionaire Aristotle Onassis. The 99-metre-long motor yacht features lavish interiors, including a solid lapis lazuli fireplace, and a mosaic-tiled swimming pool that converts to a dancefloor.

Andrea spent close to 20 years living the life of Riley on the floating palaces of the rich and famous, eventually making Bangalow her home base in 2003 while continuing to crew on superyachts. "I went from yacht to yacht to country to country out of America and the Caribbean. We used to call the Mediterranean 'the milk run', because we'd always go from Saint Tropez to Nice to Monaco to France."

Shipboard life gave her a fix of glitz but also the comfort of a regimented structure, which was perfect for someone who had once dreamt of being in the military. "You knew what time dinner was. You knew you had to have your laundry in by a certain time. We trained in firefighting, we trained in sea survival, crisis control, first aid and more. It's called an STCW95 certification. Because you're basically on your own out in the middle of the ocean and you need to know how to look after yourself, your crew and guests in an emergency."

This culture of preparedness was imprinted on Andrea. The global pandemic and extreme weather events, culminating in the 2022 flood left her, like many of us, feeling ill-equipped to offer real assistance. Frustrated, she decided to join the NSW SES and train to assist the community in a crisis.

NSW SES is a volunteer-based organisation that works with communities to prepare and respond to severe weather events. There are over 10,000 highly trained volunteer members in NSW, and training can be held weekly or as required depending on the role you've signed up for. Training ranges from basic induction through to the most intense tasks for those who, like action woman Andrea, want to be on the frontline. "We have to be prepared to swim in our uniform to save somebody's life. I mean, you're not going to get changed into your swimmers if you're rescuing somebody!"

But it's not all mud and adrenaline. "The beauty of the NSW SES is that it doesn't matter if you don't want to be in the floodwater or on the boats, there are so many other jobs that are so important to make the whole operation work. Phones, organising where to send teams, even the simplest thing of making us a cup of tea when we're freezing cold, wet and tired. A good cup of tea can be a lifesaver."

Find out more about volunteering with the NSW SES [ses.nsw.gov.au/get-involved/volunteer](https://ses.nsw.gov.au/get-involved/volunteer)



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# Arts in the company of friends

## You've no doubt seen their listings on our What's On page every month, but what exactly is ArtsNational?

In the Northern Rivers, the ArtsNational society serves the local community, connecting people through a shared interest in the arts. It is one of 36 not-for-profit, volunteer-run societies across Australia, previously known as ADFAS. The former acronym obscured the simple premise of the society – the enjoyment of art in the company of friends – and a recent re-brand has made the organisation's purpose clearer.

Committee member Susan Anderson suggests, "Our varied program of highly illustrated talks brings new insights to the lives and works of old favourites, while sometimes our interest is piqued by artists, landscapes, and people we've previously not known or ever thought about. ArtsNational brings people together to experience a variety of views on artists and their work."

In 2000, local identities Shirley Nelson and Nan Pulsford noticed arts societies affiliated with the UK-based National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies spreading throughout Australia. Eager to bring the initiative to their own community, they established a society in Byron Bay, with Shirley as chair and Nan as secretary.

The first event, titled The Lost Gardens of Heligan, was a great success and drew an enthusiastic response. However, sustaining high attendance proved challenging, and there were fears that the society might not survive.

Nevertheless, this inaugural group persisted, determined to ensure that the local community would have a place to gather for stimulating talks in a friendly social setting. The association's long name was soon abbreviated, and ADFAS Byron and Districts Inc. was established, with the A&I Hall as its home venue.

Thanks to the vision and dedication of Shirley, Nan, and the volunteers who have led the society over the past 24 years, it has hosted over 200 renowned experts from the UK and Australia, covering various fields within the arts.

In 2023, a rebranding effort by the overarching association in Australia led to the adoption of the simpler, more recognisable name ArtsNational, giving rise to ArtsNational Northern Rivers.

It is now a welcoming community for both long-time and newer residents from Bangalow, Mullumbimby, Ocean Shores, Lennox Head, Clunes, Ballina, Alstonville, and Lismore. The monthly events offer newcomers an opportunity to meet and socialise in a convivial setting.

Like similar societies, ArtsNational Northern Rivers faced significant challenges due to the Covid pandemic. Unlike some, however, this society survived. In early 2021, members gathered in a safely distanced A&I Hall to experience a virtual presentation. Using a mobile phone as a hotspot, the society Zoomed a presenter who was locked down in Central London. Despite the pre-dawn hour in the UK, British and Indian historian John Stevens delivered an impressive one-hour exposé on the Architecture of Mughal India—a memorable experience for attendees. During the strictest restrictions, the society continued to provide members with virtual lectures by international and Australian presenters to enjoy from home.

Although the pandemic impacted membership numbers, the current committee has kept the society alive, just as its founders did in the beginning. However, attracting new and younger members is crucial to sustaining ArtsNational Northern Rivers as a vibrant social group within an increasingly digital world.

Committee member Tom Trembath explains, "We serve complimentary drinks before the one-hour talk and again over supper. This surprises many guests, but it is very well received, as it provides an opportunity to get acquainted, exchange ideas with each other, and ask further questions of the presenter."



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Annie Abbink, Susan Conrad, and Stephen Fongue Photo supplied



Beth Grange, Diana Brewer, Sheryl Wright Photo supplied

Committee members Marion Pescud and Erica Light select the topics for the monthly talks. All presenters are chosen from a registered list of UK and Australian experts based on their credentials, expertise, and reputation. Erica explains, "Once we know who our presenters are, the committee selects one of their topics on offer. We take this task seriously, using a set of selection criteria and trusting our decisions have the greatest appeal."

"Some stand-out topics have been Caravaggio, the Mitford Sisters, war artists Ben Quilty and George Gittoes, Norman Rockwell, crime in the cinema, the world of Grayson Perry, and most recently, Georgia O'Keeffe's Ground Breaking Vision."

As a preview of the upcoming year, 2025 will feature topics including Hans Feibusch, the Bronte Sisters, Agatha Christie's life, the art of Japanese gardens, Frieda Kahlo, the

Rijksmuseum, Bridget Riley's abstract art, and Constable's role in modern art.

Beyond the talks, the society offers home-hosting for visiting experts, an arrangement managed by committee member Chris Chaseling. This long-standing practice has led to lasting friendships among hosts and guests alike.

At the end of each year, the committee faces the uncertainty of securing sufficient membership to fund the upcoming year's accommodation, transport, contracted presentation fees, and some local Young Arts initiatives.

"I'd like to offer my sincere thanks to the dedicated committee members, society members, and friends of ArtsNational for their ongoing support," says Chair, Dianne Stuart.

**The Bangalow Herald**

Membership for 2025 is now open. The monthly program on Monday evenings at 6pm in the A&I Hall is free for members. Non-members are welcome. \$25 per event, with bookings available in advance on TryBooking or cash and card payments accepted at the door.

Annual membership for 2025 - \$155 per person, or \$270 per couple. For more information, contact the committee at [northernrivers@artsnational.au](mailto:northernrivers@artsnational.au)

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Isobel Kingswell, *Crossing*, 2024, oil on linen, 76 x 61 cm, image courtesy the artist.

### ‘Merge’ an exhibition by Isobel Kingswell

Brisbane-based emerging artist Isobel Kingswell re-imagines the natural environment as an overlapping, intersecting, and forceful phenomenon in her landscape works. Captured through the richness of oil paints, the artist uses exaggerated colour, pattern, and visible delight. ‘Merge’ is a series of semi-abstracted landscape paintings that examine the structure of the natural world and remind us of our vital connection to it.

**Lone Goat Gallery, 28 Lawson St, Byron Bay until 11 January 2025**  
[lonegoatgallery.com/exhibitions/merge](http://lonegoatgallery.com/exhibitions/merge)

### ‘Rooted’ - Lae Oldmeadow

Drawing inspiration from the natural world, outsider artist Lae Oldmeadow showcases his sculptural works in the exhibition ‘Rooted’. Known for his use of organic materials like Hoop Pine bark and coir thread, Oldmeadow’s pieces celebrate the miraculous textures and patterns found in nature. This retrospective includes highlights from Oldmeadow’s three-decade career alongside new hanging sculptures that reinterpret his lifelong fascination with native fibres.

**Roxy Gallery, 131 Summerland Way, Kyogle 12 December - 12 January 2025**

### Jim Moginie - Album Launch: *Everything’s Gonna Be Fine*

Jim Moginie, guitarist from Midnight Oil, takes the stage to launch his latest album, *Everything’s Gonna Be Fine*. This intimate performance, focused on piano-driven storytelling, offers fans a chance to connect with Moginie’s new material in a close, reflective setting.

**Byron Theatre, 69 Jonson St, Byron Bay Sunday 15 December**

### The Necks - Live in Concert

The Necks, a renowned trio famous for their genre-blending improvisational soundscapes, will take audiences on an immersive musical adventure, offering a concert experience like no other.

**Byron Theatre, 69 Jonson St, Byron Bay Friday 24 January 2025**

### Byron Speakeasy - Jazz Club Sessions

Kicking off 2025, the Byron Speakeasy will be set up in jazz club mode, featuring the soulful vocals of Abby Dobson from Leonardo’s Bride, roots music icon Jeff Lang, Prinnie Stevens, special guests, and more. In an intimate, atmospheric setting, these performances promise standout nights filled with heartfelt music and memorable moments.

**Byron Theatre, 69 Jonson St, Byron Bay Thursday 4 January to Wednesday 10 January**

### ‘String Theory’ by Liv Enqvist


Liv Enqvist, a Swedish-born artist based on Bundjalung Country in Northern NSW, creates hand embroidery on textiles. Her word-based artworks explore the connection between our inner and outer worlds, using meditative stitching as a marker of time and the relationship between humans and nature. ‘String Theory’ explores the concept of particles connected by vibrating strings, weaving an invisible web of connection throughout the universe.

**Lone Goat Gallery, 28 Lawson St, Byron Bay Friday 17 January, 6-8pm (opening event), continuing until 15 February 2025**

[lonegoatgallery.com/exhibitions/string-theory](http://lonegoatgallery.com/exhibitions/string-theory)

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# Lily-of-the-valley

*Pieris japonica*, sometimes called lily-of-the-valley shrub, is a delightful ornamental originally from Japan, eastern China, and Taiwan.

It naturally grows on the edges of forests in deep, humus-rich, acidic soils, where it thrives in dappled shade and full morning sunshine.

Part of the large *Ericaceae* family, which also includes the heaths, it is a slow-growing specimen plant that rewards us with masses of racemes of white, waxy, bell-shaped flowers that are delicately fragrant and bee-attracting over a long period - usually from late winter into early summer. The flowers are followed by blackish berries that, like the flowering stems, look wonderful in floral arrangements and are sought by good florists.

Thinking about their natural habitat, it is obvious where they will thrive, and they have adapted to warmer areas as long as they are sheltered from big, hot winds and full sun in our hotter months.

The foliage is lovely; the large, new, elliptical or oval-shaped leaves are bronze, turning to deep, glossy emerald green, and if you are prepared to wait, the bush will reach approximately one metre tall and wide but probably won't flower for five years!

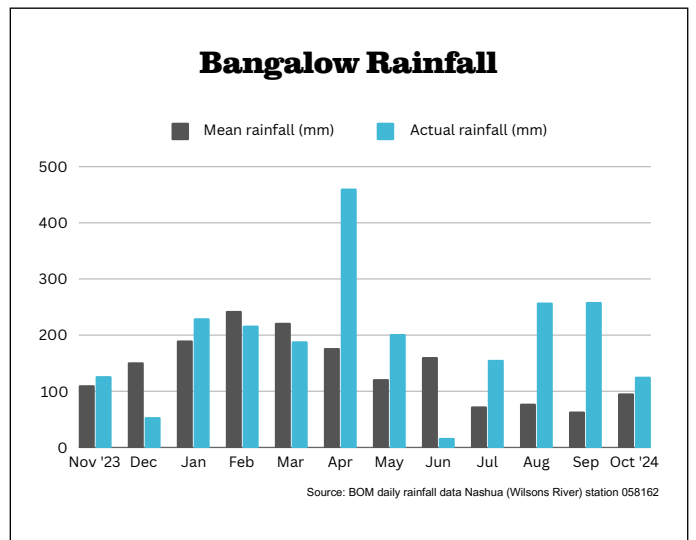
It is worth noting that *Pieris japonica* resembles North American *Leucothoe*, also known as doghobble. This is not usually grown in Australia and has narrow, willow-like leaves. It is extremely toxic to humans and dogs if ingested. Good labelling is very important when purchasing from reputable nurseries!

If you have a *Pieris* or know of one, propagation from softwood cuttings is done in early summer, or from hardwood cuttings in late summer for best results, but it is slow...

Selecting the right location determines success, as does planting. *Pieris* are shallow-rooted but shouldn't be planted deeply as root rot can be an issue, and disturbance of the shallow roots should be minimised by good mulching, with slow-release fertilisers added in spring. Obviously, they need the same nutrient boost as azaleas and camellias.

If the soil is too alkaline or poorly drained, these shrubs will not thrive, and foliage might yellow and small branches die, to alert you to their deteriorating condition. They can reward us with their beauty in the right spot, and I had previously thought that they were not suitable for our climate but only grew "down south," so am pleased to find they are a little bit adaptable with careful placement.

Carole Gamble



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# Making preparations



**Trisha Bleakley (left) and Ruth Kirby practising with their CB radios at Heritage House, and seeking more radio operators in the 2479 area. Photo supplied**

the surrounding 2479 area.

And so, the Bangalow Resilience Network (BRN) began.

The BRN has identified key natural disaster events to which the Bangalow area is vulnerable: heatwaves, bushfires, major storm events, and flooding in the surrounding areas.

During a heatwave, the best advice is to stay indoors in air-conditioning or with indoor fans, to keep well-hydrated throughout the day and avoid alcohol or caffeinated drinks, to wear loose, comfortable clothing, and to use damp cloths to cool down. In severe heatwaves, seek out

public air-conditioned “heat havens,” such as the Bangalow Men’s Shed or the Bowling Club.

In making preparations, the BRN has now linked in with the Byron Shire Red Cross, Mullumbimby SES, and Byron Shire Council’s Local Emergency Management Committee. Their current priority is to build on Shire-wide resilience networks that have been created since 2022 with local Bangalow organisations and to be ready to act.

There are now also resilience groups in Federal and Coorabell that have connected with Bangalow to share ideas, such as checking in with friends and neighbours during disaster events. All these groups are establishing local protocols for a disaster response, with a strong focus on getting to know the people in your street and being aware of different people’s strengths and vulnerabilities when making an emergency action plan.

Thanks to generous donations from the Bangalow CWA, Bowling Club, Lions Club, and Op Shop, the BRN has obtained 30 CB radios that can be used if the region’s telecommunication network fails. CB radios work along a “line-of-sight” operation at a distance up to five kilometres, and so far, a little over half these radios have been allocated to households around the 2479 region.

A trial took place on 8 September to assess their range, and while it had some great success, it also identified areas of limited coverage where a greater density of radio operators is needed in an area with so many hills, as well as the need to expand the reach of the communication network—particularly in the areas of Nashua and Brooklet.

Anyone interested in joining the 2479 CB radio network or becoming involved with the BRN can connect with the group through their Facebook page (just search “Bangalow Resilience Network”) or by coming along to the next meeting at Bangalow’s Heritage House on Wednesday 4 December from 5pm.

For any further details, please contact Ruth Winton-Brown on 0413 261 011.

**Tim Winton Brown**

In the aftermath of the 2022 flooding that inundated the entire North Coast region, Bangalow emerged as a hub for community services, as an ad hoc collection of dedicated individuals did what they could to provide assistance to those in need throughout the region.

Some of those Bangalow residents then realised the need to plan for the next natural disaster, to build on the work and lessons learned, and to prepare for likely future events that may impact residents of Bangalow and

## Best wishes for the festive season and a terrific 2025



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# Rally for the forest

**Carole Gamble reports on the national native forest rallies held in November.**

On 3 November, the Bob Brown Foundation organised 11 rallies around the nation, raising support for our endangered native forests. I attended the rally at Mullumbimby.

Our forests have been decimated by clearing, bushfires, and forestry, and their importance to our land's health, biodiversity, and climate change mitigation cannot be overstated. Birds, reptiles, mammals, and small creatures—as well as our beloved endangered koalas—are losing their habitat, and many are endangered or have become extinct. Forests are irreplaceable carbon banks and release megatonnes of greenhouse gases when logged and burnt.

There are more than enough plantations to meet our ongoing needs. Contrary to popular belief, the timber industry is not a huge employer, and this movement is not new. Employers and employees have been aware for decades that it was not sustainable and would eventually be banned—hopefully before all of Australia's native forests are gone.

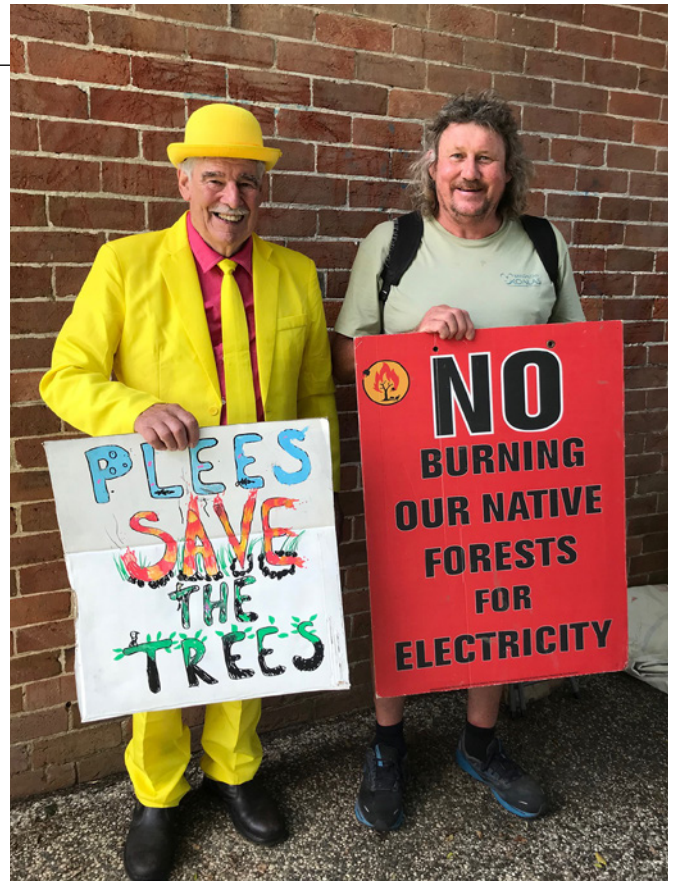
Western Australia has already banned native forest logging, and Victoria is about to follow. However, New South Wales, despite an election promise by the current government, is yet to act and continues not only to allow logging but also to subsidise it.

The rally attracted over 700 people to the Memorial Hall in Mullumbimby, many of whom are passionate activists, but also including people from all walks of life from around the Northern Rivers.

Speakers included David Heilpern, Mandy Nolan - Richmond Greens Federal candidate - and several other highly qualified speakers, equally passionate about the ecological impacts of continued logging.

Several of our Byron Shire Councillors attended, along with a good number of our local First Nations people, as well as representatives from the Save Wallum group, Iron Gate protesters, and many other community groups who give their time and energy to causes dear to their hearts.

The need for effective legislation at Federal and State levels is long overdue, and the organisers of the rallies are calling on everyone to contact their local members (our Federal member did not attend the rally) at both State and Federal levels. They also urge people to sign petitions prepared by the Bob Brown



Rallying for the trees Photo Carole Gamble

Foundation and MLA Sue Higginson on their websites and to encourage family and friends to do the same.

We, and our beautiful forests, are running out of time, and we remember the promises of action made at both of our last elections.

The rally was invigorating, giving us hope that people power is, once again, an effective strategy for positive change.

It was also fun, with local choirs and musicians raising their voices as we paraded down Burringbar Street together, feeling strong!



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# Rum and Craisin Ice Cream Puddings

Need some dessert ideas for the coming festive season? These little ice cream balls piled high on a platter would make a refreshing alternative to traditional fare.



**INGREDIENTS**

- 1 litre of good vanilla ice cream, softened
- 1/2 tsp nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 100 grams craisins or sweetened dried cranberries or dried cherries, soaked in 1 tablespoon of rum or brandy
- 75 grams hazelnuts or pistachios, chopped roughly
- 200 grams white chocolate, chopped
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- Decorations as you choose

**METHOD**

1. Stir cinnamon, nutmeg, craisins, and hazelnuts into softened vanilla ice cream. Place back in freezer to set, at least four hours or overnight.
2. Scoop balls in a rough, round pudding shape using an ice cream scoop. Dip the scoop in warm water between each ball for easier handling.
3. Place the balls on a baking tray lined with greaseproof paper and return to the freezer.
4. In a microwave or a small saucepan, melt chocolate with vegetable oil until smooth. Drizzle or spoon over frozen balls. Add a cherry or craisin on top with a fresh holly leaf if you have some, or perhaps a frozen raspberry.

*Recipe and illustration Lyn Hand*

## Sixpence none the richer

The tradition of placing coins in a boiled Christmas pudding is a European custom that dates back centuries. Originating in the United Kingdom during Victorian times, this practice was first associated with plum pudding, which despite the name, does not contain any actual plums.

The preparation of plum pudding,

known as 'Stir-up Sunday' (usually the last Sunday before Advent) is another tradition in which families gather to mix the pudding, each taking a turn and making a wish. The chief baker would then slip small silver coins, typically sixpences, into the pudding mixture before it was steamed.

The pudding was often doused with

brandy and set alight, carried to the dining table as a dramatic finale to the Christmas meal. As the pudding was sliced and served, each person would eagerly anticipate finding a hidden coin in their serve. Finding a coin was believed to bring good fortune, and the lucky finder could expect wealth or blessings in the new year.

**BANGALOW MARKET** 4th Sunday of each month

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As the holiday season approaches, there's no better time to explore wines that bring intrigue and joy to your festive table. Often overlooked or misunderstood, these unique wines are perfect for elevating celebrations, offering delightful surprises for seasoned wine lovers and curious newcomers alike. Imagine the crisp elegance of Villa Blanche Picpoul de Pinet, embodying the Mediterranean coast's essence with its citrus-laced freshness. Or the vibrant yet balanced charm of Nespolino Pinot Blanc, hailing from Italy's Emilia-Romagna region, with notes of green apple and white peach. For those drawn to aromatic complexity, Unico Zelo Pollen, an Australian Gewurztraminer, bursts with floral and honeyed accents. Rounding out the line-up, Jericho Fume Blanc adds modern flair to Sauvignon Blanc, with zesty grapefruit and a subtle smoky finish. These wines, each with distinct profiles, are companions for your holiday table, inspiring conversation and toast-worthy moments. Let's dive in!

We begin in France with Villa Blanche Picpoul de Pinet, a wine that epitomises the Mediterranean's winemaking tradition. Made from the Picpoul grape, this pale straw-coloured beauty bursts with citrus, white flowers, and a whisper of sea salt, evoking the nearby coast. On the palate, its zesty lemon and green apple flavours are lifted by refreshing acidity. Perfectly suited for seafood—especially oysters and shellfish—this wine's sun-soaked origins deliver a taste that's both fresh and quintessentially coastal, making it an ideal choice for warm days and gourmet gatherings.

Next, we travel to Italy to savour Nespolino Pinot Blanc, an expression of Emilia-Romagna's diverse winemaking heritage. This wine captivates with its bright, refreshing profile and balance of crisp acidity and subtle fruit notes. Aromas of green apple, white peach,



Cheers to the end of the year Photo Zan Lazarevic

# Don't let me be misunderstood

and delicate florals entice the nose, while layers of citrus and a touch of minerality unfold on the palate. Whether paired with seafood, fresh salads, or antipasto, Nespolino's approachable elegance ensures it appeals to seasoned enthusiasts and casual wine lovers alike.

Closer to home, the Clare Valley brings us Unico Zelo's Pollen, an aromatic white celebrating Australia's innovative viticulture. Crafted from Gewurztraminer, Pollen thrives under warm, sunlit skies, showcasing notes of white blossoms, ripe stone fruits, and a hint of honey. Balanced by crisp acidity, it's a versatile choice for spicy duck, chilli crab, poultry, or vegetable-based dishes. This wine reflects Unico Zelo's commitment to sustainability and minimal intervention, capturing the essence of Australia's bold winemaking landscape.

Finally, we return to the Adelaide Hills for Jericho Fume Blanc, a fresh take on traditional Sauvignon Blanc. Combining vibrant citrus notes with a smoky finish, this wine balances

zesty grapefruit and passionfruit with a hint of mineral. The grapes, grown in sun-drenched vineyards cooled by evening breezes, produce a wine that is crisp, complex, and perfect as an aperitif or alongside fresh seafood. Jericho Fume Blanc honours the roots of Sauvignon Blanc while introducing a modern twist, making it a standout for the season.

As we embrace the festive season, it's a time to celebrate connections with family and friends. Just as these wines deserve a closer look, so too do the people around us—each with their unique stories. Raise a glass to love, laughter, and the moments that make life rich. Cheers to a holiday brimming with warmth, togetherness, and more than a pinch of groovy! Here's to staying uniquely you and celebrating each toast-worthy moment this holiday season—cheers!

**Dave Cribbin**



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# The Coast Road

by Alan Murrin

I had a review written and ready to share with you, but then I started reading this book and thought to myself, "If anyone is looking for a good book to read or gift over the holiday season, then this is it!"

Set in 1994 Ireland, the story follows the lives of three Irish women, all trapped, for various reasons, in their marriages. The subject matter is particularly relevant because in November 1995, the people of Ireland voted in a referendum to remove the constitutional prohibition on divorce (after a number of failures, I might add).

The lives and circumstances of these three women are very different. They're not friends, but their lives are about to collide with tragic consequences.

Set in Ardglass, a small fishing village, this is a town where everyone knows everyone's business. Dolores is married to Donal and has just discovered she is pregnant with their fourth child. When Colette Crowley comes knocking at the door, asking if she might rent their summer cottage, Dolores agrees – the money will come in handy with a fourth child on the way.

Colette Crowley has set all the tongues wagging by returning to Ardglass. The last everyone knew of her was that she had left her husband and was living with a married man in Dublin. But she has been pining for her three boys and is hoping to convince her husband to allow her to see them. Colette has established a solid reputation as a writer, and when she decides to hold some classes, it is here that she first gets to know Izzy. Izzy has a very comfortable life and is married to the local MP, James. However, she is furious with James for refusing to secure a lease on a local shop, which would allow her to re-establish the flower shop she was running prior to marrying him.

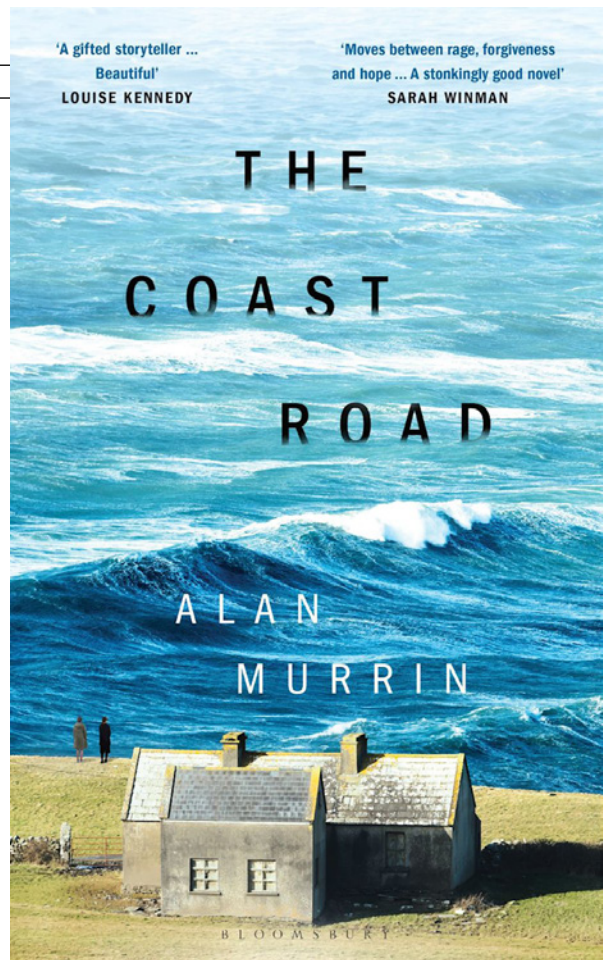
I read recently that Gillian Anderson (The X-Files) is going to co-produce a TV series based on this book. Murrin has done a fine job describing the characters, creating a rich and enjoyable read – it's sure to be a great series.

Wishing you, *The Bangalow Herald* readers, a safe and enjoyable summer of reading.

Goodreads rating 4 stars

Published by Bloomsbury

Carolyn Adams



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# Australian Summer Reads

**With summer upon us, it's time to dive into some of the most exciting new Australian books. From gripping mysteries to moving explorations of love and loss, this year's selection showcases the depth and creativity of our nation's authors. Here's our pick of 10 standout titles.**

***9The End and Everything Before It*** – Finegan Kruckemeyer

A dazzling debut from one of Australia's most celebrated playwrights, this kaleidoscopic novel explores how love and loss shape a community, weaving together poignant stories with exceptional skill.

***Murder in Punch Lane*** – Jane Sullivan

Set in 19th-century Melbourne and inspired by real events, this gripping crime novel uncovers the sins and secrets of the city's underbelly. Dark, atmospheric, and utterly compelling.

***The Honeyeater*** – Jessie Tu

The follow-up to her acclaimed bestseller *A Lonely Girl is a Dangerous Thing*, Jessie Tu's new novel is a wildly inventive look at relationships, personal growth, and the complexities of human connection.

***The Creeper*** – Margaret Hickey

A chilling mystery from the award-winning author of *Cutters End*. Hickey's latest is filled with intrigue and atmospheric tension, making it a must-read for fans of Australian crime fiction.

***Outrider*** – Jack Dunne

Set in a post-conflict Australia occupied by foreign forces, this thrilling novel follows an elite soldier in the Resistance as he embarks on a dangerous mission to secure freedom for himself and his son.

***The Belburd*** – Nardi Simpson

From the author of *Song of the Crocodile* comes a lyrical and masterfully woven novel about women, creation, and belonging. Simpson captures the precious fragility of life with striking beauty.

***Wing*** – Nikki Gemmell

Described as *Lord of the Flies* meets *Picnic at Hanging Rock* with a dash of *Promising Young Woman*, this explosive literary thriller is a contemporary classic in the making.

***The Deal*** – Alex Miller

Two-time Miles Franklin Award winner Alex Miller returns with a powerful exploration of human relationships and moral dilemmas. Insightful and thought-provoking, *The Deal* is a deeply affecting read.

***The Burrow*** – Melanie Cheng

Victorian Premier's Literary Award-winner Melanie Cheng delivers an unforgettable novel that delves into personal and societal issues with grace and compassion. A true literary masterpiece.

***The Whale's Last Song*** – Joanne Fedler

This tender and lyrical fable about love, connection, and the beauty of life is both heartwarming and profound. A captivating story for readers of all ages.

Whether you're lounging by the pool, relaxing at the beach, or soaking up the summer sun in your backyard, these Australian titles are perfect companions for the holiday season. Happy reading!



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We asked some well-loved local chefs to share some delicious Christmas recipes for you to try at home.

# Curried Prawn Croissant

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 eschalot, finely chopped
- ¼ bunch chives, finely chopped
- 2 tsp mild curry powder
- Juice of ½ a lemon
- 1 cup of mayonnaise
- 20 medium-sized, cooked king prawns (heads and tails removed, deveined, and chopped)
- ¼ Iceberg lettuce, trimmed, leaves separated
- 6 large croissants, split horizontally
- Fresh coriander leaves and crispy shallots, to garnish



## TO MAKE

- Place the eschalot, chives, curry powder, lemon juice and mayonnaise in a large bowl. Add the prawns and stir well to combine.
- Season to taste.
- Slice the lettuce leaves in half and divide among the halved croissants. Fill each croissant with as much of the prawn and mayonnaise mixture as you like.
- Top with coriander and crispy shallots to serve.

*Matt Stone (Ciao Mate / You Beauty)*



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Photo supplied

# Christmas Roast Duck

## INGREDIENTS

### ROAST DUCK

- 3 sprigs fresh rosemary or thyme (sage works as a substitute)
- 1 nutmeg (for grating) or powdered
- 2 oranges or blood oranges, zested and halved
- 2 x 2kg whole ducks (neck and giblets reserved for gravy)
- 1 head garlic (cloves unpeeled and cracked)
- 3 red onions, 3 carrots, and a few stalks of celery (roughly chopped)
- 5cm piece of ginger (sliced)
- ½ cinnamon stick
- 2 bay leaves

### DUCK FAT ROAST POTATOES

- 2kg Sebago or Dutch cream potatoes
- Duck fat from roasting tray (or butter)
- 2 tbsp plain flour
- 1 litre water or organic chicken stock

## TO MAKE

### 1. Prep the Ducks

- Pick the leaves from one sprig of rosemary or thyme and zest the oranges. Grate half the nutmeg (or use powdered). Chop these ingredients with a pinch of sea salt.
- Rub the mixture all over the ducks, inside and out. Stuff the ducks with remaining herbs, orange halves, and garlic cloves. Cover and refrigerate for a few hours or overnight if possible.

### 2. Prepare for Roasting

- Preheat the oven to 180°C. Arrange shelves on the middle and bottom levels.
- Place onions, celery, carrots, ginger, cinnamon, bay leaves, and the chopped duck neck and giblets in a deep roasting tray.

### 3. Roast the Ducks

- Place the ducks breast-side up on the oven's middle rack, directly above the roasting tray to catch the dripping fat. Roast for 1 hour.

### 4. Duck Fat Potatoes

- While the ducks roast, parboil peeled and cut potatoes for 5–10 minutes. Drain in a colander and shake gently to roughen their edges.
- After the ducks have roasted for an hour, remove the tray with the vegetables and replace it with an empty tray. Transfer the parboiled potatoes into the new tray, drizzle with duck fat, season, and roast beneath the ducks for the final hour.

### 5. Make the Gravy

- Spoon excess fat from the veggie tray into a bowl. Transfer the roasted veg, duck bits, and juices to a large saucepan. Add boiling water to deglaze the roasting tray and pour the liquid into the saucepan. Add one litre of water or chicken stock. Simmer on medium heat, skimming fat as needed.
- In another pan, melt two tbsp of duck fat or butter. Add flour, whisk to a paste, and slowly stir in the contents of the saucepan along with the wine or port. Bring to the boil and simmer for 30 minutes.

### 6. Rest the Ducks

- After two hours of total cooking, remove the ducks from the oven. Place on a plate, cover loosely with foil, and rest for 15 minutes.

### 7. Finish the Gravy

- Strain the gravy through a sieve, pressing to extract maximum flavour. Keep warm until serving.

### 8. Serve:

- For a family-friendly approach, pull the duck meat from the bones with tongs and serve on a platter. Let everyone enjoy the crispy skin! Pair with the roast potatoes and gravy.

### Notes:

- Short on time? Skip the potatoes, though they're highly recommended!
- Duck fat tip: Save any leftover fat for future recipes—it's gold for roasting vegetables.

*Sam Campbell (Woods / Tuckshop)*

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# Honey Macadamia Semifreddo

## TO MAKE

### Praline

- In a dry saucepan, melt sugar over a medium heat without stirring (this is dry caramel).
- Spread macadamias on a baking sheet lined with baking paper.
- Once the caramel turns amber in colour, carefully pour it over the macadamia nuts.
- Let the caramel cool completely, then cover with a clean tea towel and break it into pieces by gently tapping with a rolling pin. Set praline aside.

### Semifreddo base

- In a saucepan, combine the caster sugar, glucose, and honey.
- Heat gently until the mixture reaches 116°C (use a candy thermometer).
- Meanwhile, whisk the egg whites in a large bowl until soft peaks form.
- Once the sugar mixture reaches 116°C, slowly pour it into the whisked egg whites while continuing to whisk.
- Keep beating until the mixture cools to room temperature.
- Gently fold the whipped cream into the cooled meringue mixture
- until combined.
- Add the broken praline pieces and fold until evenly mixed.
- Pour the mixture into lined and chilled terrine moulds.
- Freeze for at least 4-6 hours, or until firm.
- To serve, slice the semifreddo into individual serves and top with fresh seasonal fruit.

This recipe serves about 12-16 people, depending on portion size.

*Alanna Sapwell-Stone (The Eltham)*

## INGREDIENTS

### Semifreddo base

- 150 grams caster sugar
- 90 grams glucose syrup
- 225 grams honey
- 450 grams egg whites (about 12 large eggs)
- 1.2 litres thickened cream, whipped

### For praline

- 1 kilo sugar
- 500 grams macadamia nuts



## Christmas with the Two Tims from Bang Burger Bar

“Like most chefs, as Christmas rolls around, the last thing we want to be doing is spending the day in a hot kitchen. I like to keep it simple. I buy a packet of lamingtons, a Swiss roll, lots of fresh berries, make some Chantilly cream, and I design it on a plate to look like a Christmas wreath. Kids love helping me decorate it, garnishing with raspberry glaze and fresh mint. It looks great on a table, and it’s always a hit,” says Timmy Drew.

“In recent years Christmas has been spent with my wife’s family, a little way down the coast. After the initial pressy opening craziness of the morning it calms down into breakfast which is where my wife and I come in with Danishes, cheesy croissants and poached eggs with some nice, toasted sourdough. Though if I’m being honest I mostly get kicked out of the kitchen with a comment of ‘you cook every day, let us cook for you’,” says Tim Jung.



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# The Porks: the best worst team in Summer 6s



Bringing home the bacon Photo Maralyn Hannigan

**Going the whole hog in this year’s Summer 6s is the best worst team in Bangalow, writes Bruno ‘The Sultan’ Cavalieri.**

As the 2024 season of Summer 6s approached, talk of getting the ‘The Porks’ team back together was a bit slower than usual. A classic Porks’ BBQ did the trick bringing the fellas back after a longer-than-usual layoff due to family, work, and other commitments. Our last run was in 2022, and the shortened 2023 season, thanks to the field lights setup, gave us a good reason not to play... But at the BBQ, we voted to enter the comp once again, inspired by our friendship and the genuine lack of skills that we’ve proudly displayed over a decade.

Our playing style hasn’t changed much: sometimes, we manage a couple of silky passes and even score. Mostly, though, we scramble defensively, leaving our poor goalie stranded. Seeing the other team score isn’t problem for us. Our desire to ‘hit the deck’ and ‘truffle’ (our victory move after scoring a goal) might be the real glue that holds us together as mates on and off the field.

### Game 1: The Porks vs The Grubs

Donning the pink jersey, shorts, and socks, we kicked off the season on 17 October, playing some talented 17-year-olds—some of them sons of our mates from rival teams like the Zeps. A couple were even former students of mine whom I’d helped get their P-plates. But there was no mercy. They flogged us 9-3, but it wasn’t the nine goals we cared about but the three celebratory ‘truffles’ after scoring a trifecta of great goals. The young blokes weren’t happy, but they only fielded five players—not the full six. But you can only play the team put out in front of you.

### Game 2: The Porks vs The Puppies

Next up, we had to contend with the aptly named Puppies, skillful 15-year-olds led by a talented gent just a few years younger than us. It was a tight contest, ending 4-3 in their favour. Well played to them, and three more goals for us to celebrate with mates. A beer and a yarn afterwards at our sponsored venue, The Bowlo, is part and parcel of why the Summer 6’s comp is just so good for everyone to get involved.

### Game 3: The Porks vs Old Dogs

Facing the ‘Old Dogs,’ whose average age was about 44, gave us a good laugh since most of our team is in their 50s. The Zeps and

the Wood Ducks are of a similar vintage and even have some players older than us. But nevertheless the ‘Old Dogs’ were very good players and gave us a hiding 11-3. All our games were played in very good spirit which is important too... It’s no fun when there’s constant unnecessary argy-bargy.

### Game 4: The Porks vs 55th Street

Another game, another sound defeat—8-2 this time. We felt let down after having scored three goals in each of our first three matches. ‘Streaky Bacon’ was again our goal scoring machine blasting both goals into the net, and standing well clear in our Golden Boot/Trotter list with eight out of 11 season goals scored thus far. ‘Streaky’, the 17-year-old son of ‘Pigfoot’ (Terry Brown), has been playing with us a few years. We’ve taught him plenty. Not much of it useful but at least he knows the way to score goals.

### Looking ahead

As I write this, we are heading into Game 5, no doubt another great game... The game they call the World Game, the Beautiful Game – though probably not the way we play it. But it’s fun, gets us old blokes active and keeps the friendships intact. Porks for life!

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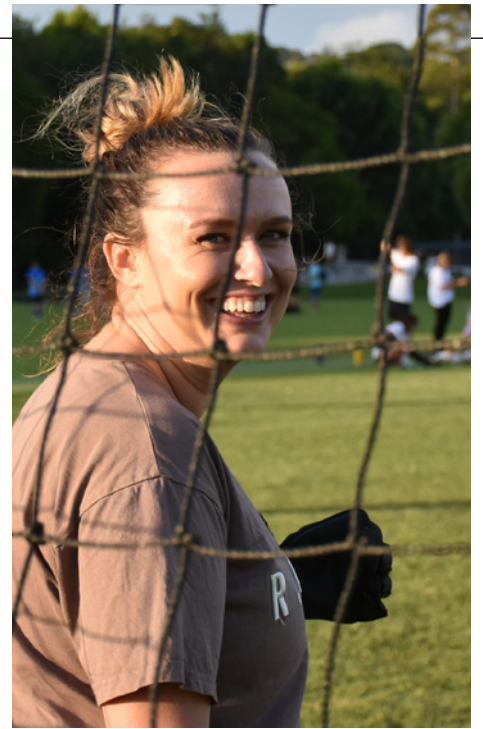


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## Kicks and giggles

On for young and old(er), the Bangalow Summer 6s comp is a highlight of the local sporting calendar. Six-a-side teams of varying ages and skill levels battle it out on a Thursday evening under the newly installed new lights at the Bangalow Sportsfields.



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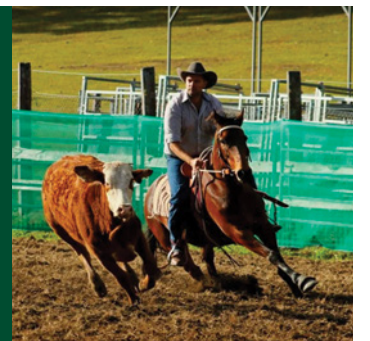
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## LOCAL WILDLIFE

### Major milestone unlocked for Bangalow Koalas



Bangalow's Koala Queen, Linda Sparrow Photo supplied

In one of its final plantings of 2024, Bangalow Koalas recently celebrated getting its 400,000th tree in the ground, bringing the local and mighty environmental organisation one step closer to its '500,000 trees by 2025' mission.

"Habitat saves koalas and it's planting trees that creates habitat," says Bangalow Koalas president Linda Sparrow. "Seeing that 400,000th tree go into the ground, on a property in Knockrow, was such a milestone and one that we share with everyone who's helped us achieve what we have to date, since we got serious about our mission in 2019.

"But we still have a lot of fundraising work to do in 2025 if we want to celebrate planting that 500,000th tree by the year's end as we continue to fortify the wildlife corridor we're creating to help save the Northern Rivers' koalas, which were listed as endangered in 2022."

This Christmas, why not consider adopting a tree for the koalas? For just \$15, Bangalow Koalas will plant and maintain one tree for three years, giving it the very best chance of becoming vital koala habitat in years to come.

Head to [bangalowkoalas.com.au/donate](http://bangalowkoalas.com.au/donate) to adopt a tree – or three!

**Karen Fittall**  
Bangalow Koalas

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### Call for Friends of the Koala volunteers

Have you ever wondered what is involved in the day-to-day care of our beautiful koalas while they are being rehabilitated in preparation for a hopeful return to the wild.

Have you ever said to yourself - "one day, when I have time, I will volunteer to help the local koala wildlife?" Well, the time is right and the koalas need you.

We are looking for volunteers for our Lismore hospital. Full on-the-job training is provided by likeminded caring wildlife carers. Shifts are once a week or fortnight from 12.30-4pm, on a Friday, Tuesday or Sunday afternoon.

If this sounds like you, please visit [friendsofthekoala.org](http://friendsofthekoala.org) and complete the Volunteer expression of interest, or alternatively contact me on 0428 872154, happy to answer any questions.

**Dale Viola**  
Friends of the Koala

# Sharing is Caring

Images of Christmas so often involve happy families around tables laden with food and sharing presents, joy, and company. It is a time of giving and sharing.

Each year, CWA members donate vouchers to organisations assisting people who are struggling to make Christmas a time of celebration. This year, however, with the cost-of-living crisis, there is an increased number of families and individuals, both young and old, who are struggling to put food on tables week by week, let alone make Christmas special. If finances are tight, it can be a challenging, stressful, and isolating time.

Given the increase in the number of people in vulnerable circumstances in our community, we are asking you, the community, to help us make a difference to someone this Christmas. Let's work together to ensure as many as possible have a chance to enjoy this special time of year.

Our primary organisations for distributing the vouchers we collect are the local Grandcarers Project and the North Coast Brighter Futures Project.

The Grandcarers Project seeks to address the disadvantage experienced by grandparents when taking on a full-time carer role for their grandchildren. Grandcaring is frequently based on an informal agreement. This cohort is often older, often on fixed incomes, and often the grandchildren will have special needs. Some will need to exit the workforce to take on the carer responsibilities, which increases mental and financial stress. The loss of social networks enhances the likelihood of social isolation.

The Brighter Futures Project is a voluntary program that delivers targeted early intervention services to families with children aged under nine years where the children are at risk. Currently, the program is supporting over 120 families (usually single parent and headed by women). The precarious financial circumstances of these families mean vouchers are invaluable.

You can help us bring hope and joy to the festive season for families who are struggling. Your vouchers (for example, Kmart, Big W, and supermarkets) or cash can be dropped in to CWA rooms by 10 December.

Let's all spread the joy this festive season. Sharing is caring.

**Bangalow CWA**

## CHRISTMAS SERVICES

### Anglican Parish of Byron

**Sunday 8 December, 11am**

St Columba, Ewingsdale

**Tuesday 10 December, 6pm**

'Lessons and Carols'

All Souls', Ashton St Bangalow

**Christmas Eve, Tuesday 24 December, 6pm**

'Family Christmas Extravaganza'

All Souls', Ashton St Bangalow

**Christmas Day Wednesday, 25 December**

7.30am St Thomas', Brunswick Heads

9am St Martin's, Mullumbimby

9am St Paul's, Byron Bay

### Bangalow Uniting Church

Christmas Day Service, Wednesday 25 December, 8.30am

An all ages appropriate Christmas morning gathering to celebrate Jesus' birth and sing some well loved carols.

All are welcome, simply come along.

**Bangalow Uniting Church, Station Street, Bangalow**

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# Blokes get together to support mental health

The waves of loud laughter and blokey banter pouring out of the Bangalow Bowlo one lunchtime last month were all in a good cause – to raise awareness of the grim state of mental health in our region, particularly in relation to men.

The all-male 130-strong crowd had been drawn to the three-course lunch event by the promise of hearing three rugby league icons tell stories of their long and illustrious careers on the field.

Balmain Tigers second-row forward Paul Sironen, North Sydney Bears and Manly-Warringah Sea Eagles prop forward Don McKinnon and 2024 Hall of Fame referee Bill Harrigan had been invited to speak by event organisers the Bangalow Men's Shed, Bangalow Lions and NSW Police as part of an ongoing programme called Talk to Your Mates.

The trio of league larrikins were as entertaining as the game's fans in the audience could have hoped – funny, mocking, proud-daddish, vulnerable at times, at others, hilariously indiscreet.

Harrigan revealed himself to be a natural performer possessed with great comic timing and a talent for impersonation, springing to his feet to act out match scenarios and sometimes controversial refereeing decisions he made during his record-breaking career (21 State of Origin games and 10 Grand finals). Being eye-balled by a hulking and angry Gordon Tallis as he dismissed him from the field was one tense moment he brought to life.

The three guests are all ex-police officers and have seen everything in their time – including the results of a tsunami of untreated mental health problems engulfing Australian communities.

Introducing the day, Regional Crime Manager Detective Inspector Craig Erickson provided some alarming statistics, and some insights into the devastating impact of suicides upon families, their community, and not least upon the wellbeing of first responders.

In the first six months of 2024 there were 467 suicides recorded in NSW – 359, or nearly 77% of them men. In the last financial year, NSW police had attended almost 70,000 mental health related incidents across the state, 2664 of them locally.

"It's dire, a massive health issue," said the 31-year police veteran. He had a sobering message for the gathering: "As blokes, we don't



League legends Don McKinnon, Bill Harrigan and Paul Sironen at the Bowlo Photo Digby Hildreth

get together and talk to each other about how we feel." But men need to 'own' the reality of their situation, to raise their awareness around poor mental health, and to reduce the stigma; learn to recognise the symptoms, reach out to mates before anxiety and sleep disorders worsen into physical illnesses, he said.

Bangalow Men's Shed president David Noakes said Det. Insp. Erickson's words and troubling memories of being a young front-line police officer dealing with suicide had touched many attendees. "People were sharing their stories afterwards – younger men and some in their 70s and 80s. Some men had revealed things that had affected their mental wellbeing for decades."

But it is not just men that the lunch and other Men's Shed programmes are designed to help, Mr Noakes said. Funds raised at this and future events will go towards boosting young people's mental health, and supporting homeless women in the area.

Digby Hildreth



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	Thurs	Yogalates	9.30 to 11.00am
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	Sat	Yogalates	8.15 to 9.30am

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AA (6pm Tues)	Karen Mc	0403 735 678
ArtsNational	Dianne	0412 370 372
Al-Anon (2pm Fri)		1300 252 666
Bangalow Koalas	Linda	0411 491 991
Bridge Club	Brian	0429 311 830
Community Children's Centre	Kerry	6687 1552
Co-dependents Anonymous	Gye	0421 583 321
CWA (Wed)	Georgja	cwasecbangalow@gmail.com
Garden Club (1st Wed)	Diana	0418 288 428
George the snake man	George	0407 965 092
Historical Society/Museum	Trisha	0429 882 525
Kindred Women Together	Janice	0401 026 359
Koala rescue line (24 hr)		6622 1233
Land & Rivercare (8.30am Sat)	Noelene	0431 200 638
Lions Club (6pm 2nd/4th Tues)	Nashy	0418 440 545
Men's Shed	John	0427 130 177
Op Shop (M-F 10am-2pm, Sat 9.30am-12.30pm)		6687 2228
Piccabeen Park	Lynn	0429 644 659
Park Trust Committee	Shane	0475 732 551
Police – DCI Matt Kehoe	Fax: 6629 7501	6629 7500
Pool Trust	Jo	6687 1297
Community Association	Ian	0414 959 936
Poultry Club	Hector	6687 1322
Quilters (2nd/4th Thur)	Karen	0413 621 224
Red Cross (1st Fri)	Liz	0409 832 001
Show Society	Anne	6687 1033
Sport		
Bowls men (1pm Wed & Sat)	Gerry	6687 1142
Bowls women (9.30am Wed)	Frances	6687 1339
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Karate self-defence	Jean	0458 245 123
Netball (3.30pm Wed)	Ellie	0429 855 399
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Heritage House	Trisha	0429 882 525
Lions Club Kiosk	Nashy	0418 440 545
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## WHAT'S ON

**There's plenty of holiday fun and entertainment around 2479 this month. For events in neighbouring towns, see Arts and About.**

### Shire Choir at the Bangalow Hotel

**When** Thursday 5 December, 7pm

**Where** Bangalow Hotel

**Tickets** \$15/\$20 via [shirechoir.eventbrite.com](http://shirechoir.eventbrite.com)

**Contact** [facebook.com/shirechoir](http://facebook.com/shirechoir)

Back where it all began, Shire Choir is finishing off the year with a bang at the Bangalow Hotel. Join us for this one-night-only singing session. No experience required—just buy a ticket and come along. Learn a classic pop/rock song in three parts, led by Melia Naughton and accompanied by the Birrell Bros band. A feel-good, audience-powered choir for everyone.

### NRAS Animal Adoption Day

**When** Saturday 7 December, 10am-1pm

**Where** NRAS Shelter, 61 Piper Drive, Ballina

**Contact** [manager@nras.org.au](mailto:manager@nras.org.au) |  
 Phone 6681 1860

**Tickets** Free

Puppies and kittens aren't just for Christmas - they are for life. Please adopt, don't shop. Northern Rivers Animal Services welcomes residents from Bangalow and the wider Northern Rivers area to its monthly cat and dog Adoption Day, held on the first Saturday of every month. All animals offered for adoption have been vet-checked and are desexed, vaccinated, microchipped, and treated for parasites. Come along and maybe meet your new best friend.

### Bangalow Fair Trade Market

**When** Saturday 7 December, 8am-1pm

**Where** Outside at Bangalow Uniting Church, Station St

**Contact** Corinne Nash 0413 086 054

**Tickets** Free

Annual Fair Trade market with ethical and sustainable homewares, gifts, clothing, jewellery, bags, decorations, and loads more! Barista Fair Trade coffee, tea, and homemade eats will also be on sale. As a bonus, three choirs will be performing (all free), so come along and enjoy Fair Trade shopping with entertainment from Raise the Roof, Wolfsong, and All in a Chord choirs.

### Childrens' Christmas Crafternoon

**When** Tuesday 10 December, 3.15pm

**Where** Bangalow Uniting Church

**Tickets** A donation towards cost would be appreciated

**Contact** [facebook.com/BangalowByronBayUnitingChurch](http://facebook.com/BangalowByronBayUnitingChurch)

A fun afternoon straight after school for all kids aged 4-12 years. Encompassing games, a story, songs, and lots of Christmas craft plus afternoon tea, children can come and stay whilst you relax, or you can stay too. Parental permission form is required on arrival, please.

### Bangalow Community Association (BCA) AGM

**When** Tuesday 10 December, 7pm

**Where** Mens Shed, off Station St carpark, Bangalow

**Contact** 0414 959 936

All 2479 postcode dwellers are invited to attend and discuss currently active Bangalow development and infrastructure matters. Informed feedback from an engaged and collaborative community helps to achieve significantly better outcomes for our village, so please come along and become involved as a BCA member.

### Coorabell Summer Art Show

**When** Opening Night Friday 13 December, from 5.30pm

Saturday 14 December and  
 Sunday 15 December, 10am-4pm

**Where** Coorabell Hall

**Tickets** Gold coin donation

**Contact** [coorabellhallarts@gmail.com](mailto:coorabellhallarts@gmail.com)

Celebrate the festive season with art at the Coorabell Summer Art Show! Enjoy works from eight Byron-based artists, including Nadine Abensur, Cheryl Bailey, and Sharon Whittle. Art lovers can find unique local gifts and join a vibrant evening filled with creativity. The work of local artists makes an ideal Christmas gift!

### Newrybar Christmas Market

**When** Wednesday 18 December, 3-8pm

**Where** Newrybar Community Hall, 15 Old Pacific Hwy, Newrybar

**Tickets** Free entry

**Contact** [newrybarhall.com](http://newrybarhall.com)  
 Instagram @newrybarhall

Join us for the annual Newrybar Christmas Markets featuring local makers, food stalls, and holiday cheer. A special visit from Santa and carols by the 'Christmas Belles' will bring festive joy, while local shops stay open late for last-minute Christmas shopping.

## CWA Christmas Cake Stall

**When** Saturday 21 December, 8am-12pm  
**Where** CWA Rooms, 31 Byron St, Bangalow

Don't miss the last cake stall for the year. Need a last-minute gift, something special when friends drop in, or just Christmas goodies to share with the family? Our tables will be groaning with Christmas treats. Be early to avoid disappointment. We'll see you again in February.

## Outdoor Carols

**When** Sunday 22 December, 5pm  
**Where** Bangalow Uniting Church, Station St

**Tickets** Free

**Contact** facebook.com/  
 BangalowByronBayUnitingChurch

A relaxed community event where we sing carols and get into the Christmas spirit. Bring a picnic, bring a chair or a blanket. Starts at 5pm. All are welcome to join in the music. Kids can take part in activities or just hang out.

## Bangalow Christmas Eve Carnival

**When** Tuesday 24 December, 4-8pm

**Where** Bangalow Showground

**Tickets** Gold coin donation.  
 Parking at Showground \$5

**Contact** Nashy 0418 440 545  
 alfred.lodge@bigpond.com

Celebrate at Bangalow's beloved Xmas Eve Carnival! This family-friendly event features street performers, children's entertainment, food vans, Santa with ice blocks and lollipops, Lions Club BBQ, and an 8pm fireworks finale. Bring a picnic blanket and holiday spirit!

## Bangalow Markets

**When** Tuesday 24 December, 8am-2.30pm

**Where** Bangalow Showground

A fabulous 'shop local' Christmas Eve experience, Bangalow Markets are known far and wide as of the best markets in all the land. Plenty of parking (\$2 charity donation), and a reminder to please keep your pets at home.



**Bangalow Farmers Markets on the move**  
 Photo Lyn McCarthy Niche Pictures



A summer Christmas Photo Ivan Diaz

## Wildlife Guardians Kids Day Program

**When** Various dates during NSW School Holidays, 9am-3.30pm

**Where** Byron Bay Wildlife Sanctuary

**Tickets** \$80

**Contact** byronbaywildlifesanctuary.com.au

Enrol your child as a Wildlife Guardian! This hands-on, educational day at Byron Bay Wildlife Sanctuary includes animal care, conservation activities, reptile talks, private encounters, and enrichment sessions. Children will enjoy sanctuary tours, mini golf, and water splash park fun. Includes morning tea, lunch, and an ice cream. Book early as spots are limited. A great Christmas gift idea for kids aged eight to 12.

## History of the Markets Exhibition

**When** Wednesdays to Saturdays, 10am-2pm

**Where** Bangalow Museum, corner Deacon & Ashton Sts

To celebrate the relocation of the Bangalow Farmers Markets to Piccabeen Park in early December, the Historical Society will be running an exhibition on the history of the Markets since it began nearly 20 years ago. There will be profiles of those farmers who have been selling their produce at the markets since it began, as well as an overview of the rocky start to the markets in Bangalow. When the idea of holding weekly farmers markets in Bangalow was first proposed, for instance, the president of the Bangalow Chamber of Commerce (no longer living in Bangalow), said: "We love the idea of the farmers markets but why don't they do it in Brunswick Heads"! Entry by donation.

## Diary

### November 2024

5	Shire Choir at the Bangalow Hotel
7	NRAS Animal Adoption Day Bangalow Fair Trade Market
10	Childrens' Christmas Crafternoon Bangalow Community Association (BCA) AGM
13-15	Coorabell Summer Art Show
18	Newrybar Christmas Market
22	Outdoor Carols
24	Bangalow Christmas Eve Carnival Bangalow Markets

### February edition deadlines

What's On 13 January

Copy 13 January

Advertising 13 January



Dave taking the sash with past winner Rebecca Sargeant Photo supplied

**Bangalow's Dave Copeland took out the red ribbon in the Open division of the Bangalow Show Written Word competition and the coveted sash for the Bush Poetry prize, sponsored by *The Bangalow Herald*, with his poem 'Crossing Over'.**

## Crossing Over

Every year as I age and my game has slowed,  
I ask if there's a God, and has she ever showed?  
I wonder where I come from? Am I related to a toad?  
What's the point of my existence 'cause I really wish I knowed.  
But there's only one question makes my head explode  
and it's..... why did the chicken cross the road?

What's over there on the other side?  
Does something exist that I haven't yet spied?  
Can they go it alone? Do they need a guide?  
Would I take the risk? I just can't decide.

So I perched on the kerb with a view to observe.  
It was on a straight stretch past a nasty curve.  
Would they run right across or weave and swerve?  
Does it come down to cunning or holding your nerve?

A Silkie named Sue was the first I spied  
who tried to cross to the other side.  
She was crushed by a semi and as she died  
cried "I want to be Kentucky Fried!"

Next came a Bantam by the name of Brenda,  
she was sure she'd make it but her chances were slender.  
She misjudged a Merc. She bounced off the fender  
and ended her life as an Oven-Baked Tender.

Sylvie the Sussex was the next that tried.  
She realised as she ran there was nowhere to hide.  
She took off swiftly.....on her second last stride  
ended up Schnitzelled with a Coleslaw Side.

Isa Brown Ida had a cunning plan.....  
she hit the ground running as fast as you can.  
A courier crunched her as she rapidly ran.  
Her life was ended by a Coq au Van.

Freda the Frizzle was the next to scurry,  
She shot off fast in a feathery flurry.  
Her road sense, though, was a bit of a worry.....  
Freda went well in a Green Chicken Curry.

Two pullets pulled up. They'd started to bicker  
over who could get to the other side quicker.  
It turns out, though, and here comes the kicker.....  
they both ended up in my Chili Chicken Tikka.

Finally friends (and I say this with dread)  
why did the chicken cross the Rhode Island Red?  
Her start was slow and she ended up dead  
with Lettuce and Mayo on Gluten-Free Bread.

There's no more chickens. There's none left to greet.  
There's no more chickens left to try and cross the street.  
It's kind of like a smorgasbord I've had so much to eat  
and geez it's made me realise that I really love my meat.

Tall chooks, short chooks, fat ones and thinner,  
those that are practised and absolute beginners.  
Not one chicken crossed, not one winning grinner.  
Just this winner winner and my many chicken dinners.