

HERALD

The Bangalow

FREE | February 2025

Go you good thing!



Community pantry
packed with goodness

I like to move it, move it
with Philip Channells

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Authorised J Elliot, ALP, Tweed Heads South



HERALD

The Bangalow

From the Editor

In a world where headlines and social media feeds overflow with conflict and division, it takes courage to sift through the negativity to find a kernel of hope.

I'm always on the lookout for examples of goodness around us – people living their best lives, giving back and leaving an impression with their positivity and enthusiasm.

We had such an overwhelming response to our cover story on Joan Leeds from the Bangalow Post Office (December 2024/ January 2025 edition). It was heartwarming to see how many of you connected with Joan's story, and her experience of being embraced by our community. Joan's commitment to a happy workplace is so refreshing, and her spirit of positive service is contagious.

Complimenting people, respecting their time, acknowledging their effort, these are all small but very powerful ways we can inspire others.

This month's edition features a range of stories on people who are also following their passion and making a difference. Whether they are arts practitioners, environmental activists, or instrumental in providing resources to the community, they are connected by their selflessness in support of others.

In our increasingly individualistic world, it takes a maverick to swim against the tide of self-interest - to recognise that satisfaction and peace comes not from personal gain, but from engaging with, and inspiring, others. The subjects of these stories are community champions who understand that small acts of kindness create ripples that extend far beyond the initial gesture.

As you read through these stories of local changemakers, I invite you to reflect on the everyday heroes in your own life, and celebrate their contributions. But perhaps most importantly, take a leaf out of their book. Sometimes the most revolutionary act is simply choosing to see - and share - the good that surrounds us.

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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bangalowfilmfestival.com.au



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LIVING LOCAL

Save the dates

With hot cross buns already for sale in the shops, we thought there was no better time than today to share some dates for the most anticipated community events of the year.

ANZAC Day - Friday 25 April, 10.20am

Bangalow Main Street and RSL Hall

Contact Jason Wadsworth at events@bangalowrsl.com.au

Join us on Anzac Day in Bangalow to honour the bravery and sacrifice of our servicemen and women. The event begins with a commemorative march down the main street, concluding at the Bangalow RSL Sub Branch Hall, where a service will be held to reflect and pay tribute.

Billycart Derby - Sunday 18 May

Bangalow Main Street

Contact Nashy at Bangalow Lions Club on 0418 440 545 or alfred.lodge@bigpond.com

There are lots of surprise entrants this year, so mark this date in your diary and come along for a fantastic old-fashioned family day. The Bangalow community always turns out in full force for this fun-filled event. Entry is \$25 per race. For more details on cart specifications, terms, conditions and rules, visit bangalowbillycart.com.au.

Byron Writers Festival - Friday 8 to Sunday 10 August

Bangalow Showgrounds

Contact byronwritersfestival.com

Dates have been announced for one of the country's most renowned literary events held right here in our backyard. The festival experience is designed for discovery and delight. Enjoy world-class authors in conversation, food stalls, coffee carts, bars, artisan markets, a sculpture walk and the festival bookshop. Meet your favourite writers and have your books signed after sessions. Keep an eye on the website for more details.

Bangalow Show - Friday 14 and Saturday 15 November

Bangalow Showgrounds

Contact bangalowshow.com.au

Fun for the whole family, the Bangalow Show is a true celebration of regional and community life. Whether you're there to enter events, be entertained, enjoy delicious food or soak up the vibrant fairground atmosphere, this event is not to be missed. See who takes the cake in the cookery pavilion, check out the prize-winning cows or marvel at the wit of the Bush Poets. Save these dates for our annual agricultural show this November.



Coming soon: a revamped Op Shop Photo Megan Lee

Op Shop set to expand

The Bangalow Op Shop adjacent to the Anglican Church in Ashton Street is increasing in size, offering more space for everyone.

“For a very long time we have wanted to expand, both for the safety of volunteers, who have to sort tons of donations each year, and for the convenience of our customers,” says Op Shop manager, Nan Dwyer. This includes the many ‘small patrons’ who play and read in the shop’s designated play corner.

The shop will be reconfigured to include more hanging space and more shelves that the current layout offers. “At last, construction of the extension is underway, and with it, the disruption that inevitably goes with any building job,” says Nan.

Building work has meant that the shop has been opened reduced hours, or sometimes not at all. It is hoped that the community can be patient with the changes – and importantly, with staff – while this essential work is undertaken.

Post-Christmas is time for an important reminder to the community that the Op Shop is not an alternative to the tip. “We are still taking donations but are being more choosy when people arrive with a mountain of dirty, wet clothes,” says Nan.

The cost of disposing of unsaleable donations is a serious concern for the charity. Skip fees continue to be the highest outgoing cost for the organisation, eating into the funds raised to support individuals and community services in our area.

“As you know, we are much more than a shopping outlet but help support numerous charities each year as well as offering help to the many customers who rely on us to help them out in any hardship or crisis situation.”

Building work is scheduled to be finished by the end of March, so please be mindful of this when visiting the store. Perhaps call in ahead of time to determine if your donations are needed. And please don’t dump stuff in the Op Shop grounds after hours – a sure sign that the quality of your donation is questionable.

Bangalow Herald



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Liv Enqvist, *I hope this helps 2024*, hand embroidery on fabric, 140 x 200cm, courtesy the artist

The Alternative Comics Workshop, 14 February

Celebrate Library Lover's Day at Byron Bay Library with a creative twist! Local artist and comic creator Holly English will lead *The Alternative Comics Workshop*, a free session perfect for anyone wanting to explore self-expression through comics. No prior experience or drawing skills are necessary - participants will leave with their own comic book and a newfound appreciation for this storytelling medium.

The event features a break for refreshments, including strawberries, chocolates, and beverages, alongside a curated display of graphic novels available to borrow.

Holly English is an artist and storyteller based in Byron Bay. Her accolades include nine comic books, a forthcoming graphic novel, and recognition from the Australian Comics Award and the Broken Pencil Zine Awards. She also performed her Byron Bay comic at *Sydney's Read to Me*, which aired on FBI Radio's *All The Best*.

This is a unique chance for adults to discover the beauty and humour in their own stories, with Holly encouraging all attendees to embrace the "mess of life" through their art.

Friday 14 February, 2-5pm

Byron Bay Library, 223 Jonson Street, Byron Bay

Free admission but bookings essential
6685 8540

String Theory until 15 February

Northern Rivers artist Liv Enqvist brings the scientific concept of String Theory to life through her captivating art. This theory, which posits that all particles are connected by vibrating strings forming an invisible web, mirrors the interconnectedness of small communities. Liv's exhibition highlights the shared rhythms that bind people, such as light and dark, and the cyclical nature of giving and receiving.

Textiles serve as an apt metaphor for these connections, interwoven with stories and cultural identities. Featuring materials like vintage fabrics from Stockholm and silk from Lyon, the exhibition pays homage to the tactile narratives that accompany humanity through life. Liv's work is rooted in her background in art, design, and global studies, with a focus on celebrating the threads connecting people and the universe. Visitors are invited to reflect on their place within this intricate, universal web.

**Wednesday to Saturday, 10am-4pm
Until 15 February**

**Lone Goat Gallery
28 Lawson Street, Byron Bay**

Free admission

"Liv's exhibition highlights the shared rhythms that bind people"

Bangalow Film Festival, 6-15 March

The Bangalow Film Festival returns with an impressive line-up of 24 critically acclaimed international and Australian films, exclusive events, and special guests. From glitzy premieres to thought-provoking documentaries, the festival offers a cinematic feast for film enthusiasts.

The festival kicks off with the Australian premiere of *Milano – The Inside Story of Italian Fashion*, a dazzling exploration of Italian haute couture. Guests are encouraged to embrace their inner fashionista and enjoy aperitifs before the screening.

Program highlights include *The Tracker*, a classic Australian film, with director Rolf De Heer and actors Gary Sweet and Damon Gameau attending a Q&A at the film festival. *Andamooka* follows a heartfelt story about self-discovery, with a discussion led by director Mara Jean Quinn and actor Aaron Pedersen, while *I Am The River, The River Is Me* is a stunning canoe journey down New Zealand's Whanganui River, a natural entity recognised as a legal person.

Queens of Concrete is a seven-year chronicle of three teenage skateboarders aiming for Olympic history, featuring a Q&A with director Eliza Cox. *Maya and the Wave* documents Maya Gabeira, the first woman to break records in the world of big wave surfing. Special events include filmmaker lunch, and panels presented in collaboration with Byron Writers Festival and Screenworks bring additional depth to the programme.

6-15 March

A&I Hall, 3 Station Street, Bangalow

Tickets on sale from 5 February at bangalowfilmfestival.com.au

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Conservation or Enshittification?

Since plans to upgrade the Bangalow Pub have been made available, it seems like the general sentiment regarding this proposition can be accurately described as ‘enshittification’. ‘Enshittification’, the *Macquarie* Dictionary Word of the Year for 2024, appeared in our lexicon with perfect timing to trigger an appropriate response to the questionable strategy of pub patronage intensification. ‘Enshittification’ describes the deterioration of a product or service by the pursuit of profit. For the Bangalow pub specifically, poor public outcomes will be produced from a dominant focus on personal prosperity with minimal consideration of adverse social consequences and community amenity. Key reasons for community concerns and constructive suggestions follow:

The Bangalow Hotel is an imposing property that anchors the western village entry. The structure warrants a design that embraces heritage conservation and is consistent with the existing streetscape while improving hotel functionality. The Bangalow village is fortunate to be endowed with a concentrated offering of distinctive heritage items, and the epicentre of this experience is in Byron Street where our heritage pub plays an important role.

Maintenance and conservation of this property is well overdue. This work should not be replaced with intensification plans that destroy the intrinsic heritage value of the existing building with a design that overwhelms the original pub in terms of bulk and scale, and that has no relationship with nearby heritage properties.

The proposed eastern addition, with its crowded split level dining space, is disconnected from the pleasant streetscape symmetry of nearby properties and continues to be dominated by intrusive footpath columns. Detailed design guidelines ensuring the harmonious and sensitive design of facades in the Byron Street precinct have been ignored and lack of consultation with a heritage architect is obvious.

Throughout the community, there is justifiable scepticism about the viability and size of the proposed undercover beer garden with the proposal stating a seating capacity of some 440 patrons. This is the ultimate expression of ‘patronage intensification’ and would completely eliminate any chance of the charming intimacy possible from a beautifully restored heritage pub.



Development plans to eliminate historic features
Photo Lyn McCarthy Niche Pictures

There have been some suggestions, however, that a repurposed undercover area could provide a more suitable location for pokies given that the owners are resolute about their intention to maintain authorised gaming machine entitlements. Many agree that this would offer a more suitable option than the current plan of placing pokies in the ground level community event room adjacent to the pub main entrance. For many pub patrons this room holds numerous memories of past community and music events, and the fervent hope is that such use will continue in a space that provides ready street access. Reserving this primary space for pokies has little support from the community. The proposed poker machine area requires a screened western wall, which creates a sense of exclusion, and is also an aesthetically unacceptable outcome in a heritage precinct.

New government policies have now been introduced to encourage

Byron FARMERS MARKET
* SINCE 2002 *

REAL FARMERS, REAL FOOD

Bangalow FARMERS MARKET
* SINCE 2004 *

BYRON BAY
Thursdays 7-11am
Butler St Reserve

BANGALOW
Saturdays 7-11am
Piccabeen Park

more music venues throughout NSW. The Northern Rivers area is primed for reinvigoration with the pub as an obvious candidate for music in a pleasant, restored art deco entertainment room. The music doesn't need to be loud; a relaxed and softer genre would be greatly appreciated and raise no complaints as a value-add to the overall pub experience. Partitioning this room for the sole use of gambling destroys its community value as a multi-purpose entertainment space.

The intensification plans for the site also drive an unreasonably high number of onsite parking spaces that cannot be fully accommodated within the existing property boundaries, and will therefore require the use of a Voluntary Planning Agreement. Resulting funds are rarely applied in Bangalow due to a lack of defined peripheral parking areas. Reducing the intensification of the proposal would avoid this issue and also remove any potential traffic congestion problems, already an ongoing concern in Bangalow, particularly at the western village entry near the hotel.

Demolition and reconfiguration of the existing main bar area has received much negative comment, with rebuilding and restoration being the preferred option. The re-creation of a more inviting street level bar space would be supported by patrons, have general appeal, and contribute to an activated streetscape. Extensive internal changes planned for this area of the pub are also considered excessive, resulting in the loss of most heritage elements in favour of a stark contemporary façade that is out of keeping with the rest of the main street.

Other submissions responding to the DA regard the present alfresco pub dining area as a popular adjunct to restaurant dining, and the 'ladies' lounge' bar with its fireplace as an extremely inviting winter space that should be retained. There is also advice that some upper storey space should be reserved for much needed worker accommodation, consistent with the prevailing shop-top theme in the Byron Street precinct.

The Bangalow pub is considered an integral element of the Bangalow heritage experience and is well placed to provide a welcome refuge from the big city sprawling beer barn idea abundantly available elsewhere. Rural pub investment is typically based on the premise that financial viability is ensured by solid demand from the local community rather than relying on tourists. Leveraging existing attributes and restoring heritage ambience is a no brainer for the Bangalow pub and a design reset therefore highly recommended.

Ian Holmes

Bangalow Community Association

LOCAL NEWS

54th Coorabell Hall Flower Show

Come and be immersed and dazzled by the fabulous display of dahlias by Coorabell's grand champion dahlia growers, Stephen and Bruce Wedd. There will be other local flower growers displaying their wonderful flowers, plus pizza, sausage sizzle, ice-cream, coffee, chai and cakes.

There will be local Hula dancers, Mana Aloha Hula, who led by local legend Lillith Rochas, will do a Hawaiian Hula display on Sunday afternoon. After this, the dahlias will be distributed. On both Saturday afternoon and Sunday, you can have a flower crown made for you by our team of volunteers. A lovely weekend of flowers. See you there.

Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 March
coorabellhall.net

Lissa Coote, Coorabell Hall



Cervical Screening and Self Collection

All cervical screening participants now have the choice of self-collecting their own screening test swab sample, or having their GP complete the screening swab.

Cervical Screening could save your life. About 800 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer in Australia each year, and about 70% of these cases occur in women who have never screened or were not up-to date with their screening. Having regular screening tests is the best way to protect yourself.

You should speak to your doctor about whether self-collecting is the right option for you. Please phone the Bangalow Medical Centre on 6687 1079 to make an appointment.

Sharon Rudgley, Practice Manager



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Bangalow Community Pantry Opens

Kindness is in full swing in Bangalow, with the town's key charities and churches joining forces to help those doing it tough in our community, led by the Bangalow Mens Shed. Georgia Fox spoke with organisers David Noakes, Louise Anderson, and Rev. Rosie Wynter about this initiative that's been five years in the making - and whose arrival couldn't be more timely.

When former Byron Anglican Parish Community Priest, Rev. Rosie Wynter, moved into the Ashton Street Rectory in 2020, she was struck by the number of people she observed sleeping rough in cars in the neighbouring Piccabeen Park carpark. Particularly how many of them were mothers with children and older women - some of whom ended up on the ABC documentary on the subject, "Under Cover". Settling into her ministry at All Souls' Church, she also found herself frequently providing pastoral care to

local residents quietly doing it tough behind the veneer of the town's increasingly affluent reputation.

"You know there's homelessness in Byron because it's a transient population," Rev. Rosie explains, "but we assume in these more sort of 'upper echelon' areas that no one's struggling, but it's just not true. People are struggling everywhere. You never know what goes on behind closed doors."

With our nearest neighbourhood centres in Byron and Mullumbimby, it became clear the lack of resources in the 2479 area for people experiencing hardship needed addressing. Rev. Rosie took a proposal to the Parish to create a drop-in centre in Ashton Street that, amongst a raft of comprehensive social services, included a community pantry. She planned to appeal to businesses for donations, as well as encourage locals to purchase a few extra cans or packets of something during their grocery shop, which she saw as an important opportunity for families to gently introduce the notion to children who have never had to go without, that not everyone is quite so fortunate.

Sharing her dream with Bangalow Men's Shed President, David Noakes, in late 2020, she found an equally passionate ally. To get



Former Bangalow Community priest, Rosie Wynter Photo Lyn McCarthy Niche Pictures

the ball rolling while the bureaucratic wheels slowly turned on the drop-in centre, she and David, both members of the Bangalow Lions, secured generous funding from the Club to develop a scheme distributing vouchers to be redeemed for groceries at Foodworks. The demand was far greater than anticipated, and as word spread, the amount of people knocking on Rev. Rosie's door in need of help increased.

By late 2023, with plans still tied up in red tape and the voucher program exhausted, Rev. Rosie's tenure in Bangalow was up. "Heartbroken" to be leaving the area before her vision was able to come to fruition, David vowed to continue the fight, bringing the project under the auspices of the Men's Shed and working closely with Clare Hopkins. They (along with Brent, Andrea, Neil, Ruth, Kerry and Lorraine), launched the H.I.Y.A. 2479 (Help in Your Area) initiative in April 2024, reinstating an expanded grocery and fuel voucher program, jointly funded by the Men's Shed, Lions, and CWA, and supported by all four churches.

Around this time, fellow Men's Shed member, Louise Anderson, who works in social services and has experience with community pantries in Sydney, joined David and Clare

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David Noakes and Louise Anderson unveil the new community pantry Photo Georgia Fox

in the planning team. Instead of a cache of basic non-perishables to be distributed at a drop-in centre opening a few hours a day, a few days a week, a literal outdoor pantry was devised that would enable 24/7 access, that as well as catering to people not able to attend during designated operating hours, allows discreet and autonomous access for those who may find asking for help just too uncomfortable.

A collective donated effort between Bunnings Byron Bay and local builders Pepe Munir and Shane Dettman, and Parallel Power electricians, saw the standalone structure established at the far (creek) end of the Men's Shed carpark, becoming operational in December 2024. It was painted by 'Miller', and is currently awaiting a trompe-l'oeil rainforest mural by local artist Ian Ritchie, which will see it blend further into its bush setting.

The Pantry's motto, "Take as much as you

need, give if you can," perfectly sums up the project's ethos... and there are so many ways to give if you are in a position to do so. You can drop basic non-perishable pantry goods, including baby food and toiletries, into the allocated box located on the verandah of the Men's Shed, or in one of the many boxes that will be popping up around town over coming months. You can help raise funds by purchasing plants from the trays in the carpark using their honour system, or use the payment box to simply donate cash. Or you can donate your skills or time - even an hour here or there can make a real difference and help lighten the load for the team.

While it might fly largely under the radar down the shopping strip of Bangalow, Rosie, David and Louise have seen with their own eyes the cumulative impact the last five years is having with the underlying housing situation, the pandemic, the floods, and now the cost of

living crisis. "It's obviously not just Bangalow, but that's what we're focused on," says David.

Louise explains the power of the combination of H.I.Y.A. 2479 and the Pantry, with the fuel vouchers allowing people to get to jobs and appointments, the grocery vouchers providing fresh produce, and now the Community Pantry for staples and toiletries. "The emotional comfort that comes from knowing there are anonymous people in my community that actually care, sees self-esteem and mental health skyrocket... we know it's helping people."

Rev. Rosie is looking forward to an upcoming trip to Bangalow to see the Pantry in action, along with the H.I.Y.A. 2479 mornings - both a legacy of her love for the community and compassion for its often invisible members. She is thrilled that through David and the team's continuing efforts, that something tangible is being provided for the community.

If you would like to become involved or donate in any way, please contact David at bangalowcommunitypantry@gmail.com (donations over \$500 are tax deductible).

The Bangalow Men's Shed is located at the corner of Deacon and Station Streets, offering obligation-free H.I.Y.A. 2479 vouchers between 7-9am each Monday and Friday, with no registration required or questions asked. You can help yourself to the Community Pantry anytime of the day or night, which can be found at the creek-end of the carpark, by the far gate, with sensor lighting and CCTV monitoring to ensure users' safety. The plant payment/donation box is a white pole at the opposite end of the carpark closest to the shops, and basic pantry/toiletry items are gratefully received via the donations box on the Men's Shed verandah.



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Experience, Expertise, Integrity



Philip Channells in action Photo Maurizio Viani

This charming man

Choreographer, dancer, theatre maker, and MOVE IT Heartthrob, Rosebank's Philip Channells is preparing for his latest creative venture - an exciting new workshop with the Queensland Ballet. It's a perfect example of how the Hinterland-based founder of Dance Integrated Australia creates opportunities and shapes narratives through creative thinking and collaboration.

During a recent spur of the moment trip to Brisbane to take in a ballet matinee, Philip, the ever provocative and proactive hustler, messaged one of the executives of the Queensland Ballet – a friend of a friend, to

say hello. "He popped down to meet me in the foyer on his way out and we had a good old chat," says Philip, whose charisma and ability to connect with just about anyone have scaffolded an impressive global career. By the end of the meeting, the pair were laughing together and farewelled each other hugging like old friends, with the promise of keeping the conversation about a proposed event going. "That's my strategy: No-one likes a bore, just be charming, and the next thing you know, you've got a gig."

This spontaneous meeting would soon evolve into something extraordinary. The conversation

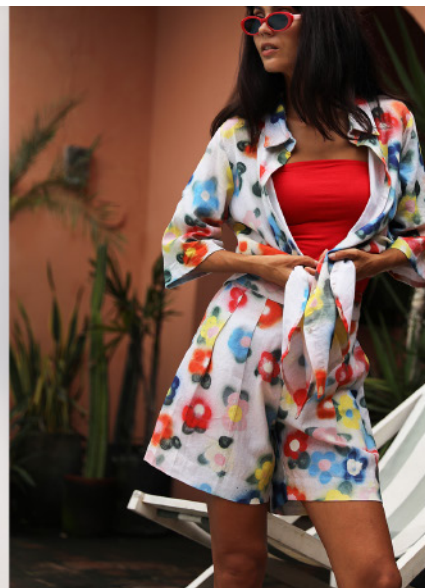
led to the creation of Inspire Movement // Build Unique Expression (IM//BUE), a dynamic, intergenerational workshop for adult dancers scheduled for February 5-6 at the Thomas Dixon Centre, the home of Queensland Ballet. The event invites participants to collaborate and devise original choreography that reflects their personal stories.

"I'm very interested in intergenerational work and what we can learn from each other," says Philip. "It's always been part of my interests to work with people from different backgrounds. When you surround yourself with exceptional artists and mix people who not necessarily have had any performance training, it is much more exciting because the outcome is that you get wildly different variations of the same response." This speaks to Philip's own early experiences as an untrained outsider, which he shares were sometimes exclusionary and unwelcoming.

Philip's journey into dance, coupled with his unrelenting drive to create spaces of inclusion, has not only shaped his career but also had a transformative impact on the Northern Rivers arts scene. Since settling back in the region in 2013, Philip has been a vital force in fostering collaboration and innovation. Programs such as 'Pitch Lab' (a project of Sydney-based company, Dance Makers Collective) and PH(R) ASE show his commitment to empowering diverse voices and enabling others to step into creative leadership roles.

"Living in the Northern Rivers has deepened my commitment to community-driven work," says Philip. "Throughout my career, the arts have always been about more than individual achievement - they're about bringing people together, weaving stories, and responding to the times we're living in. This region amplifies that beautifully."

Philip's love of dancing took shape on dark



NEW ARRIVALS

FRANK & DOLLYS | DESIGNED IN BANGALOW | SHOP 1, 32-34 BYRON ST - NEXT DOOR TO SPARROW



The Move It crew busting a move Photo Lyn McCarthy Niche Pictures

nightclub dancefloors in the late 1980s. One part camp kitsch and nine parts sinewy showman in short shorts, it's perhaps no surprise to learn he was a runway model in his early career. But by the late 1990s, Philip sought to solidify his natural talent in movement with a grounding in theory and technique. He had his sights set on studying dance at the Conservatorium in Lismore. "I had done a class at Sydney Dance Studios called 'Free and Wild' led by the late Janice Claxton. It was so much fun. After the class, I went up to the teacher afterwards and said: 'I'm thinking about applying to study dance at the Con in Lismore, what do you think?' And she said: 'You can shake your sugar, honey. Go for it!'" That was all the encouragement Philip needed to apply.

Fate, however, had other plans. Just 10 days before the auditions, he was involved in a serious, life-changing car accident. "I said to the surgeon who had to fix me up: 'Whatever

you do, just make sure I can dance.' And he said: 'Don't worry, you'll be dancing with the Australian Ballet.' And then I went under and when I woke up, I thought: 'Oh, I've really done it this time.'" The accident had left Philip unable to walk, let alone dance.

"It was a bit like giving a child a lollipop, then taking it out of his mouth saying, no, you can't have that. That kid will scream and kick and pull your hair out and do anything to get that lollipop back. So that's what I did. I just used that desire to dance to rehabilitate and to learn to walk again."

Part of his rehab was joining a men-only dance class in Bellingen, comprised of an extremely diverse cross section of the community, from a nightclub owner to an electrician and a builder. "The class structure was quite free. They had music and the teacher would give us a theme to explore, and after dancing, we'd sit down and discuss what we observed in watching and what we

observed in the doing as well." A lasting memory from the class is the cathartic confession of a classmate, who sobbed openly: "All I've ever wanted to do is dance." It was through participation in this group that the power of dance to transform and heal began to crystallise for Philip. And as predicted by the surgeon years earlier, he did go on to perform with the Australian Ballet as the horse's head in Don Quixote.

Today, this unintended healing ethos is a sparkling thread that runs through Philip's classes and art practice. He is passionate about dispelling stereotypes about who can dance, how performance should be created and who gets to tell stories.

"The Northern Rivers is such a creative melting pot," he reflects. "For me, it's not just about making work here; it's about contributing to a larger conversation about who gets to participate in the arts and whose stories we choose to tell.

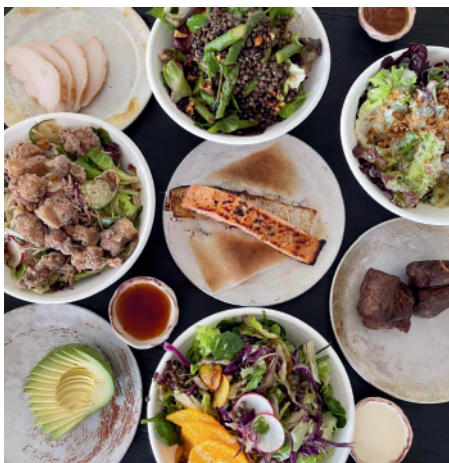
"I love the work that I do because I get to connect with real people. I love stories and I love storytelling. When I'm in that place where we are generating ideas and generating movement, generating visual landscape, knowing that an audience is going to see it, I think: 'Oh my God, I'm just in heaven. Nothing else matters. This is how I want to live my life - being the conduit for these stories to be told. If I could do this every day, then I'd die a happy man."

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Community workshop at Newrybar Hall Photo Ballina Shire Council

Streetscape Masterplan for Newrybar

Decades ago, I used to go to the Newrybar Produce Store to buy hay for our horse. The main street was very sleepy - probably not too different to 1881 when the village was established.

Since then, a lot has happened. Harvest opened its doors in 2007, the Tintenbar-Ewingsdale section of the M1 opened to traffic in 2015, the hinterland gentrified and grew wealthy, and the district became famous for niche primary industries and good produce.

Whilst businesses have boomed, the main street has struggled with the impacts of becoming an internationally renowned food and shopping destination.

In October 2024, Ballina Shire Council began the preparation of a Newrybar Streetscape Masterplan. "We understand the community value the quiet rural atmosphere and heritage beauty of Newrybar and want to retain this amenity, but there are some improvements that could be made," said Council's Landscape Architect Ms Sheryn Da-Re. "We need residents and business operators to share their ideas, whether it's opportunities to increase shade and amenity,

improve road safety, support events, activations, public art or green spaces."

The community consultation process ran through October and November 2024. It included two community workshops, individual consultations with business owners, a session with senior students at Newrybar Public School, a pop-up information stall at the hall, an online survey and an interactive online map.

As well as unpacking local identity and existing perceptions, the community was invited to share their ideas and aspirations for the future.

Five design values emerged from the various community discussions:

- Fostering a connected community
- Honouring the Big Scrub and connecting to Country
- Retaining an authentic village charm
- Home grown produce and flavours
- Creating memorable artisanal experiences.

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Study Area for Newrybar Streetscape Masterplan Photo Ballina Shire Council

The Council project team also shared some high-level preliminary design ideas they had developed in response to the consultation sessions. Fernleigh resident Jo Palser attended the second community workshop. Ideas she heard emerge from the wide-ranging discussion included changes to traffic flow and traffic calming, parking, footpaths, landscaping, renewal of some public spaces, and the reserve at the northern entrance to the village.

Design ideas are being further considered and will be presented to Ballina Shire Council for endorsement for further public consultation in March 2025.

Jenny Bird and Jo Palser

Heritage

Over the summer, two development applications (DAs) to Byron Shire Council went on public exhibition for sites within the Bangalow Heritage Conservation Area (HCA). One proposes changes and additions to the Bangalow Hotel on the main street. The other is a proposal to remove and relocate a heritage residential dwelling at 7 Leslie Street and replace it with two two-storey residences, each with four bedrooms, two bathrooms, and a swimming pool. Whilst the opportunity to provide feedback on both these DAs is now closed, they are both worth considering in relation to the heritage fabric of the Bangalow HCA.

Draft Community Strategic Plan 2025

Council has extended the public exhibition period for this important Draft Plan and is keen to receive as much feedback from the community as possible. The Plan has been developed from extensive community consultation (over 800 participants) that reviewed the previous plan. The new draft seeks to represent the community's aspirations for the Shire and serve as a guide to Council over the next 10 years.

Five key themes emerged from the community consultation and inform this draft: a high value placed on nature and wildlife; a strong sense of community; the importance of inclusion; housing affordability; and keeping up with the demand for and condition of infrastructure.

Submit your feedback by 9 February 2025 at byron.nsw.gov.au/Council/Report-Requests-Feedback/Your-Say/Community-Plan

Place Planning Collective

Late last year, Council nominated (after an EOI process) the following people to represent Bangalow on the Place Planning Collective: Lauren Julian, Ian Holmes, and Thalia Rose Ward, with Steven Green as the backup representative.

Byron Street Shared Path

Council has endorsed the detailed design for the footpath extension project along Byron Street from the school to the eastern side of Byron Creek. Council submitted a grant application for \$866,073 for this project in November 2024 under the Get NSW Active programme. Announcements for this grant will be made in May 2025 at the earliest.

This project has been in the pipeline since 2021 and has undergone considerable consultation with Council's Heritage Advisor and relevant community groups in Bangalow, including Bangalow Public School, Bangalow Community Association, Bangalow Land and Rivercare, Bangalow Lions Club, Feros Village, and individual wheelchair users.

Tennis Courts

Bangalow Bowling Club has transferred the land of the tennis courts (part 9 in DP 748099) to Council, and it has been classified as 'community land' under the Local Government Act.

Jenny Bird



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Clunes-based author Sonya Voumard Photo Hugh Stewart

The shaking world of a movement disorder

I wrote my latest book *Tremor, A movement disorder in a disordered world* after my partner and I moved to the Northern Rivers in 2021 for a slower paced life than inner-city Sydney throws at you. Our tree-change was, in part, because I had been (finally) diagnosed with Dystonia, a neurological condition that had caused me to have bodily tremors from a young age – and which had been getting progressively worse. More than 870,000 Australians suffer from some kind of tremor, the physical and psychological effects of which can be debilitating.

I was in my late 50s when this key story about my life became known to me. Dystonia is a movement disorder with myriad manifestations including tremors of the limbs and spasms of the body, including the neck and head, among other effects. I'd developed the early symptoms of it aged 13, after my father's sudden death. I'd thought my condition was something called essential tremor, which is the most common of the movement disorders. And when painful spasms in my neck struck during my time as a political correspondent in Canberra in the early 1990s, I had no reason to connect them to the existing tremors in my hand.

Those with Dystonia live within a body that doesn't work as it should. For me, it means being hampered when performing simple tasks like drinking and eating because my hands shake when I lift a cup or a knife and fork. At other times my head shakes and my neck twists painfully to one side. In social situations, I mask these difficulties to avoid the attention that they attract. This can make me seem secretive, as if I have a hidden agenda.

Six months after my father died in 1975, Australia's Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam was sacked. While I was not entirely sure what that meant, the world seemed a little crazier for it. I was in Year Eight, failing at the

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finer points of needlework and later home economics classes at school. My now-single mother lost in grief, a child stalked by negative thoughts, a family in turmoil. At about this time, I noticed that my left hand had begun to shake like my father's hands had. Also around this time, a Dystonia Medical Research Foundation, was established in the United States. I recently learned from its website that only 200 accounts of the condition had been published back then. Doctors were beginning to link it '...to a cluster of nerves in the brain called the basal ganglia'. Before that, people with dystonia had often been diagnosed with psychiatric illnesses.

What is it about shaking that's so disempowering? Is it because fear, rage, cold and fever are among its many negative causes? Shaking can also make you look weak, sick, nervous, addicted, not in control, lacking in confidence. Disabled. Until well into adulthood, I'd not thought of myself as living with disability. When I was young, I would have cringed at the phrase being applied to me, no matter how politely. Now I toss it back and forth in my head but can't quite own it. I feel like a fake. The neurologist, Dr Stephen Tisch, who eventually diagnosed my condition, was sympathetic about the disorder's impact on my life and that of others who have it. Helping people deal with it is his life's work. But he had little time for people who, in his words, 'wallow in their disability'.

After a five-month wait for an appointment, he confirmed I have a 'yes, yes' head tremor. Better than a 'no, no' one, he added, and laughed. His point, I soon understood, was a serious one.

People with a 'no-no' head tremor are perceived by others to be saying 'no' when they are not. Body language can signal so many things. And though dystonic body language must seem like gibberish to others, it's also often imbued with faulty meanings. I know that much.

So, Dr Tisch put the name to the 'movement disorder' I've been aware of in myself for almost as long as I can remember. Movement disorder—until that day, I'd called it my shaking. And suddenly, something that until then had felt half-delusional, half undeniable, was defined, made official. I'm not mad, I thought. My brain really has sent my body misleading messages that cause parts of my body to shake or spasm in ways I can't predict or control. And I've worn myself out fighting them for decades. I shed tears of relief as well as grief. My condition has a name, a history, a cohort of specialists. It may not make me neurodiverse... but it sure doesn't sound neurotypical.

Sonya Voumard

This is an edited excerpt from *Tremor, a movement disorder in a disordered world* published by Finlay Lloyd. Available at The Book Room At Byron, the book won the nonfiction category of Finlay Lloyd's 20/40 Prize for 2024.



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Keith the Koala in action Photo supplied

The *Bangalow Herald* caught up with emerging comedian Keith the Koala before his big gig at the Seriously Funny fundraiser for Bangalow Koalas at the A&I Hall in February.

Herald: We heard your gig at the last comedy night went down well - were you nervous about performing for the first time, especially on the lineup with some local comedy greats including Mandy Nolan and

Keith: I was really nervous to begin with, then I necked half a eucalyptus lolly and half an hour later, I was up for anything.

Herald: Before that night, had you ever considered doing stand-up?

Keith: No, I'm more of a 'sitter downer' type koala, so standing up at all, let alone in front of 300 people, was never really a consideration.

Herald: So was comedy something you've always wanted to do and now are finally getting around to it? Or did you just fall into it?

Keith: Have you met Linda from Bangalow Koalas? I didn't fall into koala comedy. I was pushed.

Herald: Yes, she's very persuasive. And passionate about koalas. Why do you care so much about koalas, and why should we?

Keith: I care about koalas because I am one, so I figure it's in my best interest. And you should all care about koalas because we are cute. Also, no one likes a person who doesn't like koalas.

Herald: This is true. Koalas have a pretty cruisy life, except when they try to cross the road, or developers bulldoze their houses. What do you think is the hardest thing about being a koala?

Keith: I'd say the hardest thing about being a koala is handling just how damn cute you are. I think I mentioned that? It's a big burden to bear sometimes.

Herald: So, how do you prepare for a gig like Seriously Funny?

Keith: I like to sleep about 18-22 hours before hand. Often, I need to drop a big scat before I go on stage. I don't want any extra baggage up there.

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Johnson's grass tree

Johnson's grass tree (*Xanthorrhoeae Australia*) is a unique and iconic ancient plant still found in all states of Australia in the wild. In many areas, it is now protected, and it is illegal to remove it from its natural habitat. However, with permits and the correct applications to governing bodies, it can sometimes be transplanted. A number of specialist horticultural companies supply mature specimens to landscapers, but they must be labelled and have ID to avoid large fines.

In our area, they can be seen in the bush, where they look their best. If you buy one, they are fantastic specimen plants for garden placement or very large pots.

There are 66 species that have been recorded, and they are members of the *monocotyledon* family. This means the embryonic seed has only one leaf, unlike most common plants. They are neither grasses nor trees, and were previously commonly known as 'black boys' because to early European settlers, they resembled Aboriginal men poised with spears in the dense bush.

They are extremely slow-growing, taking 10 years or more to develop the distinctive trunk. This trunk is formed by the bases of dead, thin, leathery leaves that become glued together by naturally occurring resin. These resemble scales and protect the plant during bushfires. Fire actually stimulates rapid, lush growth and flower spike production within weeks. Like tree ferns, grass trees provide a welcome splash of green in totally devastated bushfire areas.

The flower spikes are covered in tiny creamy flowers arranged in a spiral. They are full of nectar for birds, butterflies, and small mammals, which are often desperate for food in blackened landscapes. These animals help spread seeds and aid regeneration.

If you buy or obtain a legally certified grass tree, great care must be taken during transplanting or when planting a potted specimen. The fibrous root system is always in a symbiotic relationship with mycorrhiza, which is vital for assisting water and nutrient absorption and loosening the surrounding soil. As much as possible, the surrounding soil must accompany the plant to its new location. Minimising disturbance will maximise the plant's chances of thriving.

They require good drainage as waterlogging will kill them. If relocating to a large pot, mix the surrounding soil or garden soil with a high-quality native potting mix. Consistent watering and a drenching of Seasol after transference will minimise stress. Since they generally grow in nutrient-poor soil, no fertiliser should be used.



Xanthorrhoeae Australia Photo Carole Gamble

If you are lucky enough to already have a grass tree, no pruning is required. If you want to remove the skirt of dead leaves, this won't harm your plant and can give it a different look. Grass trees can take decades to flower and live for up to 600 years.

The photo was taken in Tyalgum in a garden where the grass tree occurs naturally. It was retained when the house was built and has become a magnet for plant enthusiasts with cameras.

Carole Gamble

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Climate Change, Resilience, and the Future

Our world is on fire Photo Matthew Palmer

The catastrophic floods of 2022 were a wake-up call for our region. While Bangalow wasn't as severely impacted as some of our neighbouring towns, we saw firsthand how devastating the floods were for many. For many of us, it underscored a sobering truth: climate change is no longer a distant threat. It's already here—and it's reshaping our world in real-time.

This reality is at the heart of an upcoming community conversation, Climate Change and Our Region's Future, hosted this month by the Bangalow Country Women's Association (CWA). Here, Dr Joëlle Gergis, a leading climate scientist and lead author for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), will share her insights on the global and local impacts of climate change—and offer solutions for building resilience in our communities.

Dr Gergis has spent 30 years studying climate science, but it was her personal experience in the Northern Rivers that truly brought the issue home. "Watching rainforests burn in the Nightcap and Lamington National Parks during the Black Summer fires of 2019–2020 was the turning point for me," she recalls. "I was working on the UN climate report at the time and knew that what we were witnessing in Australia was a clear sign of how quickly our climate can change. Things really hit home when I had family displaced by the devastating floods in 2022. Driving through town after the floods broke my heart. Since then, I've been doing everything I can to warn the public."

Her deep connection to the region makes her message even more powerful. The Northern Rivers, with its delicate ecosystems, is already feeling the effects of more frequent and intense weather events—floods, fires, and storms.

These are not isolated incidents; they are part of a larger, global pattern. As Dr Gergis points out, the situation is becoming increasingly urgent.

The IPCC reports, to which Dr Gergis has contributed as a lead author, are the world's most authoritative sources on climate change. These reports synthesise decades of research from thousands of scientists globally and provide the data used by governments to shape policy and international climate treaties.

As a lead author, Dr Gergis plays a key role in distilling this complex scientific data into accessible insights. This careful, collaborative process ensures that the findings are both accurate and actionable. As she says:

"The most important thing you can do is vote for political leaders that are genuinely committed to addressing climate change. That means stopping fossil fuel production and the



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Dr Joëlle Gergis, a leading climate scientist Photo supplied

subsidies that are blocking the clean energy transition. We also need policies to protect our native forests, which store carbon and protect biodiversity.”

These actions, both large and small, can help shift the course of the climate crisis – and Dr Gergis’ work is a reminder of just how critical it is to act now.

Despite the overwhelming scale of the climate crisis, Dr Gergis remains hopeful about local action. She believes we each have a role to play, whether through voting for climate-conscious leaders, supporting renewable energy initiatives, or making sustainable choices in our own lives. “The next best thing to do is try and install solar power on your home or business. Not only does it save you money, but you become a part of the renewable energy revolution that’s sweeping the world. I’m amazed how good it made me feel!”

Dr Gergis’ message is clear: even small steps can contribute to a broader shift. The more we embrace renewable energy and advocate for systemic change, the more we’ll build momentum toward a sustainable future.

As we mark the five-year anniversary of the Black Summer bushfires, the scars from those fires remain. The fires were a grim reminder of the escalating risks posed by a changing climate. The impacts of climate change, though, are not confined to Australia. As Dr Gergis points out, the entire globe is experiencing similar challenges.

As this article goes to print, Dr Gergis is also working on a piece for The Saturday Paper about the ongoing wildfires in Los Angeles—a devastating example of the far-reaching consequences of climate change.

In times of crisis, local communities often provide the first line of support. When the 2022 floods ravaged nearby

towns, Bangalow, though not as severely impacted, mobilised in remarkable ways. Our town’s response was a powerful reminder that resilience is not just about rebuilding homes and infrastructure—it’s about strengthening the social fabric that holds us together.

This is where organisations like the Bangalow CWA play a vital role. While the CWA is known for its afternoon teas and community events, its real strength lies in its ability to unite people during times of need. Bangalow Branch President, Ruth Kirby, reflects on how the CWA adapted after the 2022 floods.

“The floods were a real wake-up call for us in the CWA,” she says. “Yes, we could donate money, make meals, and offer cuppas and kindness—but we sort of felt at a loss, that we were in a silo. Since then, we’ve been making a real effort to link up with community groups like the Men’s Shed and Lions, to combine

our efforts. We’re now part of a grassroots resilience movement across the Northern Rivers.”

For Ruth, the CWA’s efforts are about more than immediate relief—they’re about fostering long-term resilience and compassion. The group’s focus on building a compassionate, connected community ensures that we are better equipped to face future challenges together.

“The real strength of groups like ours is the ability to unite people in times of need. Beyond the famous scones and afternoon teas, it’s about building a compassionate, resilient community that can face difficult times together and come out stronger.”

Dr Gergis is hopeful about what we can accomplish if we continue to push for change. “What gives me hope is that there’s a new generation of leadership emerging, from all sides of politics, that really wants to make a difference on this issue,” she says. “We’re building a critical mass that will push us toward an environmentally sustainable society. As we saw during the floods, local communities have a crucial role to play in disaster recovery and resilience building. There will be dark days ahead, but we’re always stronger when we face challenges together.”

Zoë Tuckwell

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A new room with a view

Checking out the new Tweed Valley Hospital Photo Christobel Munson

Unexpectedly, staff writer Christobel Munson, woke at 4am one January day in need of urgent medical help. Now living alone, she called 000. This is her account of what happened next.

Within 10 minutes, the ambulance arrived. I had already dressed, got together an overnight bag, and was waiting out the front, clutching

my painful abdomen. Two capable young women packed me into their ambulance, and immediately hooked me up to a cannula, which stayed put for the next four or five days.

Arriving at Byron Bay Hospital around 9am, the young doctor on duty, eager and helpful, observed my situation throughout the day. Over many hours, pain relief was provided,

various samples taken, and finally, a couple of MRI scans.

There was nothing to do but observe the bustling everyday activity of the Emergency room. A three-year-old girl had badly cut herself running into a glass wall. Her entire holidaying family seemed to converge on the other side of my curtain, discussing the situation in detail. Finally – thankfully! – she was stitched up and they all left.

Throughout the day, the mood among the staff was quietly efficient. Dramas were dealt with without fuss. I never felt neglected, despite being in what felt like a pretty full house.

The results of the second MRI catapulted my doctor into action. As I am of ‘a certain age’, I could see he was conflicted. Should he touch my arm as he passed on the sobering news? Or would I take offence? In the end, he explained that I’d need to be transferred immediately to Tweed Valley Hospital for an operation not possible in Byron.

As it happened, the same pair of ambos (in the middle of a 12-hour shift, operating throughout the Northern Rivers) happened to be passing the hospital entrance when the call went out to transport me up the coast. Once again, they packed me into their ambulance, and we burned up the highway to Tweed Valley Hospital. Phase Two began.

On arrival, one of the very few medical men I encountered in the next five days, carefully – and succinctly - explained what was to happen next. I was about to have an operation to see what was happening in my bowel. Theatre was prepped and waiting for me to arrive by trolley. There were various options: some more complex than others. None of them sounded all that much fun – but by far the most revolting and agonising step was inserting a plastic tube into my nostril and down my throat. It remained there, uncomfortably, for more than 24 hours.

Once the trolley slid into the theatre, I met the head anaesthetist, a firmly spoken woman, and the operating surgeon, another extremely capable-seeming woman. Glancing around the operating room I saw about 19 others – all women, quietly competent, and ready for this next case. Me. It must have been about 8pm. The lights went out.

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When I came to, I found my body was studded with cords, clips and pipes, plus sticky tape and tubes. A lovely Brazilian orderly, Bruno, had trolley duty, paired with a French nurse, Sarah, from Toulouse. We tried out our French on each other as they shunted me from the recovery room to my home for the coming days. The mood was fun and lighthearted, especially as my initial pain ceased during the operation. (Later I learned that the gas used to inflate my abdomen had untwisted my blocked bowel, so no further surgery had been required).

The first day or two after theatre was not all that much fun. The horrible nasal tube irritated. Observations ('obs') were taken at frequent intervals. Nurses – all female - came and went in shifts, always courteously introducing themselves at each new shift. Having last been in hospital for more than 24 hours only when I gave birth some decades past, I had no idea what to expect, so was agog pretty much most of the time, just watching the passing parade.

I noted the 'mood' of the staff, though 'mood' isn't quiet the word I'd like to use. It was the atmosphere created by the most efficient team of workers I think I have ever observed, in any working environment, anywhere in the

world. The pace was relentless. The demand for careful attention was high. Every single encounter I observed – from every extremely capable nurse who came to my bed to check my blood pressure and temperature, to the team of doctors doing their morning rounds, to the person who'd check my choices for the next meal, to the cleaners – every single person was on high alert, and performing at maximum capacity, with unceasing, caring, unwavering focused attention.

Several times I heard people whistling or singing as they bustled up and down the corridors. In the middle of one night, I overheard an intense and serious discussion, apparently between department heads. One required a particular item; the other had control of a finite budget. I don't recall the details but was mightily impressed at the manner in which each one clearly presented her case, until a workable outcome was reached. All in about 10 minutes.

Over the days, I counted at least 12 different nationalities working together harmoniously, a tribute to our multicultural society.

Once the horrible nasal tube was removed and I was encouraged to go wandering, I did. I needed to 'reboot my internal organs' if I was going to be allowed to go home. One morning

as I was wandering around the corridors, I saw two of the younger nurses, actually skipping down the corridor at the start of the shift, telling each other what a great day it was going to be. At 3am, a nurse taking my obs, who was wearing-in a new pair of shoes, was worried that she still had to write up 20 obs in the two remaining hours on her shift. Out of nowhere, she added: "I love my job"!

This is a spectacular new hospital. Every window in every corridor has stunning views: Mount Warning one way; Tweed Heads and the ocean another. Fields of sunflowers in one direction; banana plantations in the other. From the upper levels, newly planted gardens have been planted to please the eye viewed from above.

Once there was finally 'movement at the station', it was time to leave. Another friendly orderly took me by wheelchair to the Transit Lounge on the ground floor, with priority parking right outside. This huge, airy space accommodates dozens of exiting patients, enjoying sandwiches and drinks, while awaiting their leaving medications and discharge paperwork. Family and friends don't have to battle their way up to your room in one of the many towers to collect you. A thoughtful design feature.

While I only saw the parts of the hospital which related to my situation, the features and design of the building was impressive, and the vibe pleasant throughout. But most importantly the unbelievable quality of the staff at every level – but in particular the tremendous nursing staff. If they want a 15% raise in salary, in my opinion, they're worth every cent!

No one wants to be in hospital, but if it has to happen, it's assuring to know that such skilled staff and facilities are available to us.

Tweed Valley Hospital:

nswlhd.health.nsw.gov.au/hospitals/tweed-valley-hospital

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Some People Want to Shoot Me

by Wayne Bergmann and Madelaine Dickie

I missed the Wayne Bergmann events at the 2024 Byron Bay Writers Festival but purchased a copy of this book because I liked the cover.

Co-written with Madelaine Dickie, this book is all about Wayne, a proud Nyikina man from WA. He's a man who knows a lot about his origins and, despite his strong stewardship in the corporate world, he is also deeply connected to his cultural world.

From humble and harsh beginnings, this extremely wise and intelligent man, through circumstances explained in the book, leaves school at the age of 16 unable to read and write.

Wayne's stepfather instills in him a fantastic work ethic, but it's back-breaking work on country. His stepfather doesn't mind living rough and can survive on the sniff of an oily rag! Wayne is expected to be able to do the same.

He eventually qualifies as a boilermaker and, through a series of serendipitous events and his sheer determination, he qualifies as a lawyer.

Wayne serves as CEO of the Kimberley Land Council for a number of years during the period of the controversial James Price Point (JPP) gas hub negotiations with the WA government. This was a really interesting, multi-faceted story for me—a process that divides the community and involves months and months of discussion, negotiation, collaboration and representation of the many cultural groups of the Kimberley.

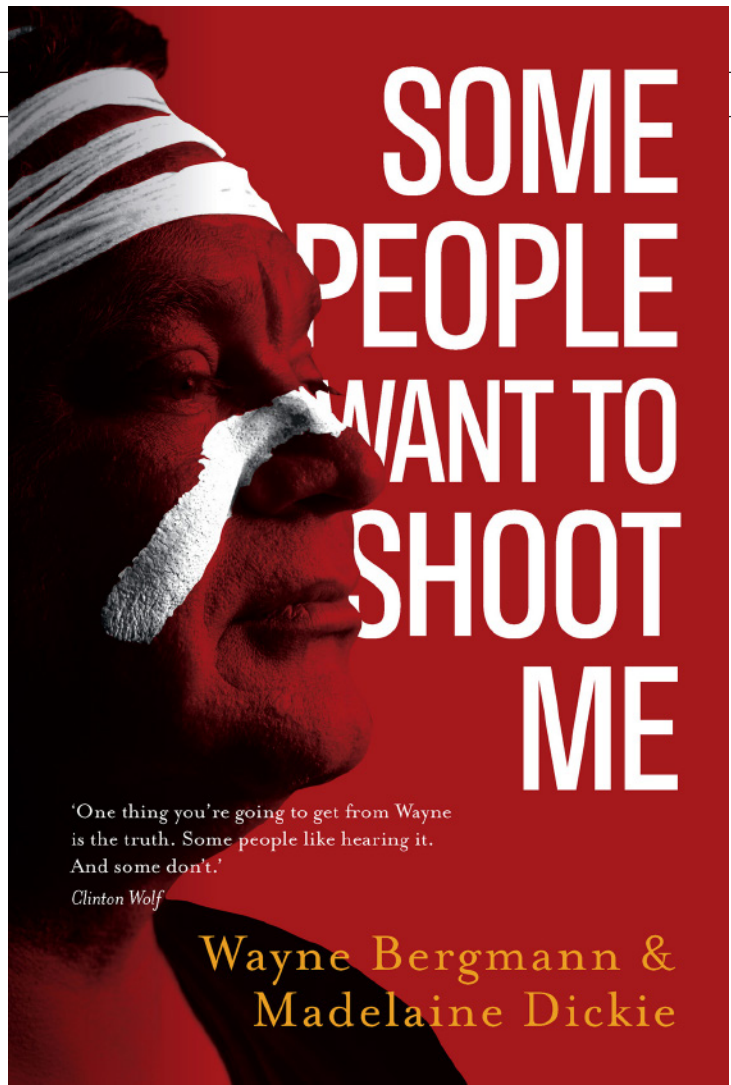
The JPP gas facility did not proceed. There was an enormous amount of opposition and lobbying by environmental groups and some traditional custodians and local communities.

JPP negotiations led to death threats for Wayne and his family. Reading this book had a big impact on my thinking, and it remained with me long after I had finished reading. It certainly provided a different perspective, one that I had never considered.

I like the quote from Ciaran O'Faircheallaigh: "This memoir offers unique and fascinating insights into how cultural knowledge and authority, combined with a deep understanding of corporations and governments, can advance the interests of Aboriginal Australia." Well written and very engaging.

Good Reads rating: 4.58 stars - Published by Fremantle Press

Carolyn Adams



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Watermelon Granita

This recipe has just three ingredients. A delicious and simple way to cool off this summer. Its tangy sweetness makes it a perfect after school treat.

INGREDIENTS

- 6 cups of watermelon, diced (see Note)
- 1 large lemon or lime, juiced
- 1/3 cup of sugar or honey

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a saucepan, place the sugar and half a cup of water. Heat to dissolve. Take off heat and add juice of lemon or lime. Set aside.
2. In a blender, blitz the watermelon until pureed.
3. Push through a sieve so just the juice remains.
4. Pour the juice into a container (use a large plastic one), add the cooled sugar syrup and juice.
5. Place in freezer and regularly scrape the granita with a fork so that it crumbles. Keep in the freezer overnight or up to four hours and then scrape.

This is great for the unbearably hot summer months.

I have made this recipe with a spiced sugar syrup. Add star anise and a few cardamom pods and a stick of cinnamon to the syrup as it dissolves for a Middle Eastern twist.

Note: You may find a ripe, juicy melon doesn't need any sugar at all. Try the fruit before you start.

Lyn Hand



Illustration Lyn Hand

Watermelon, a quintessential summer fruit, is beloved for its sweet, refreshing taste and vibrant appearance. This hydrating treat is composed of over 90% water, it serves as a natural thirst-quencher in our hot summers, while also delivering essential vitamins and minerals.

Rich in vitamin C and lycopene, watermelon supports skin health and provides antioxidant benefits. Its natural sugars offer a quick energy boost, making it ideal for outdoor activities. Whether sliced into wedges, blended into smoothies, or added to salads, watermelon is incredibly versatile. Pair it with feta cheese, mint, or lime juice for a sophisticated twist on a classic favourite side dish.

Australia boasts an abundant supply of watermelons, particularly during the peak season from December to May, as the fruit thrives in warm, sunny climates. When choosing a melon, look for one with uniform shape, a creamy yellow spot where it rested on the ground, and a hollow sound when tapped—these are signs of ripeness.

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bangalowhistorical2479@gmail.com
 socials: [bangalow heritage house](#)
www.bangalowhistoricalsociety.org.au



Supermarket vortex

Dr Airdre Grant muses on the magic of the mundane on a recent visit to consumer cornucopia, the supermarket.

The supermarket is a magical place. It's a common ground that belongs to everyone and to no one. Floating along under annoying cheerful piped music, we skirt around each other, quietly going about our business, surreptitiously checking out the contents of other shopping trolleys (that's a lot of soft drinks/chocolate/toilet paper), avoiding aisles where children are having a meltdown, calmly looking for our Weeties and milk. Generally trying to stay on task and not be seduced by brightly labelled BARGAINS.

Overall, the aim is to get in, shop and get out. Then go home and enjoy the sensation of a well-stocked kitchen, for a little while at least.

Or so I thought. According to some reports, Gen Z are trading in their dating apps and clubs to look for love in the supermarket.

There's a song or two about supermarket love. I even came across a handy guide on how to flirt in that neon-lit environment. I guess you are more likely to go to your local supermarket on a regular basis, which opens the possibility of romantic encounters in the frozen foods section, but sadly it has never happened to me. No meaningful looks over a packet of frozen peas, no gallantry or handsome flourish from somebody opening those freezer doors for me. No slight hand to hand contact over a packet of frozen dim sims, alas.

But there does exist the possibility of other random encounters.

I was contemplating the range of dishwasher tablets and thinking: 'Do the eco ones really work? Does saving the planet align with clean or slightly grubby dishes?' As I pondered this important decision, a neighbour I know by sight, (we are on nodding terms), stopped near me. I looked up.

Happy New Year, said I.

Have you cut your hair? she replied. Or do

you just walk in and out of the shower? Are you less irritable than you were 10 days ago? It might rain. Those tablets are no good. Waste of money. Too much hoo-ha about eco this and that, and saving the planet. I mean really. Nothing a bit of elbow grease wouldn't solve. My aunt, the one with sciatica, is coming to stay and is bringing her dog. I don't like dogs, but what can you do? It's family after all. She had a hard life, her husband left her, and she went straight to the drink. She suffers terribly with that sciatica, maybe that's why she drinks. Families, eh? Anyway, must be getting on. Happy New Year.

And with that she walked away. I looked at the eco tablets. I was very tempted to try them out. I, for one, have bought into the hoo-ha about saving the planet. But she has disturbed my dishwasher tablet-gazing stupor.

My simple trip to the supermarket did not bring me romance but, instead, opened a vortex of unanswered questions: What sort of dog is it? Do I need to brush my hair? Is Auntie getting treatment for her sciatica? Is the eco life worth the effort? What happened 10 days ago?



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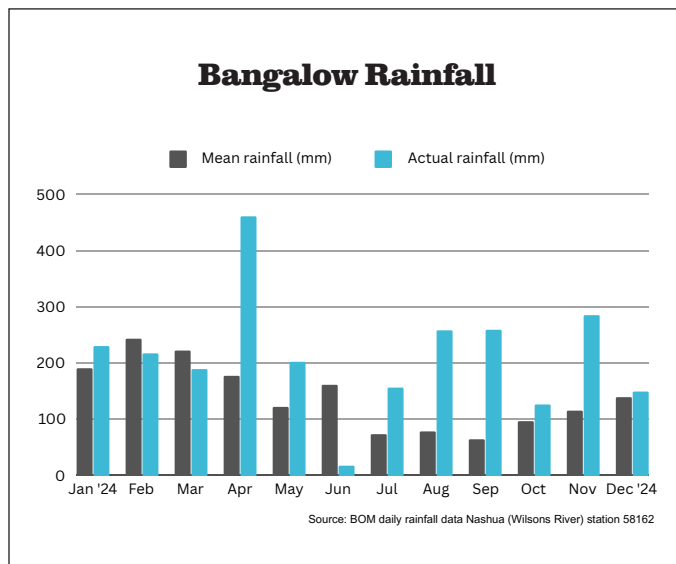
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Community		
AA (6pm Tues)	Karen Mc	0403 735 678
ArtsNational	Dianne	0412 370 372
Al-Anon (2pm Fri)		1300 252 666
Bangalow Koalas	Linda	0411 491 991
Bridge Club	Brian	0429 311 830
Community Children's Centre	Kerry	6687 1552
Co-dependents Anonymous	Gye	0421 583 321
CWA (Wed)	Georgina	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
Cricket	Anthony	0429 306 529
Karate self-defence	Jean	0458 245 123
Netball (3.30pm Wed)	Ellie	0429 855 399
Pony Club	Rebecca	0410 706 959
Rugby Union (Rebels)	Dave	0412 080 614
Soccer (Bluedogs)		0434 559 700
Tennis court hire	Bernie	0433 970 800
Venues		
A&I Hall	Belinda	0499 392 812
All Souls' Anglican Hall		6684 3552
Bowling Club	Chris	6687 2741
Coorabell Hall		coorabellhall@gmail.com
Heritage House	Trisha	0429 882 525
Lions Club Kiosk	Nashy	0418 440 545
Moller Pavilion		6687 1035
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WHAT'S ON

February is full of fantastic things to do in and around 2479.

NRAS Animal Adoption Day

When Saturday 1 February, 10am-1pm

Where NRAS Shelter, 61 Piper Drive, Ballina

Contact manager@nras.org.au | 6681 1860

Info nras.org.au

Northern Rivers Animal Services invites residents from Bangalow and the broader Northern Rivers region to its monthly cat and dog Adoption Day, held on the first Saturday of each month. You might just find your new best friend!

Bangalow Garden Club

When Wednesday 5 February at 1.30pm

Where Moller Pavilion, Bangalow Showground

Contact bangalowgardenclub.com,
bangalowgardenclub@outlook.com,
Diana Harden 0418 288 428

Tickets Yearly membership \$25

We look forward to seeing you at our first meeting of 2025. This month our guest speaker will be Nicki Walker from NE Waste, who will be talking to us about composting. New members are welcome. For those new to the area or gardening, join us to learn about gardening in the sub-tropics. Meetings include "flower of the month," where members share flowers from their gardens, Q&A, guest speakers, and a lively plant auction. After the meeting, enjoy a delicious afternoon tea provided by members.

Kindred Women Together – Thursday Night Gatherings

When Thursday 6 February, and every first Thursday of the month, 5.30–7.30pm

Where Bangalow Hotel

Contact kindredwomentogether.com

Come along to our monthly get-togethers where we have a laugh, a drink, and some food while meeting other women in our community. New women are always welcome. Please RSVP on the website to ensure we book enough space.

Seriously Funny Comedy Fundraiser

When Thursday 6 February, 7pm

Where A&I Hall, Bangalow

Contact tinyurl.com/seriously-funny

Kick off the year with a night of laughter, headlined by the hilarious Jimeoin and Mandy Nolan. Joining them are comedian Harley Breen and Bangalow Koala's mascot, Keith the Koala. Enjoy comedy, an auction, and delicious curries from the Singh family, with the bar manned by the Bangalow Lions Club. All funds go towards saving koalas, with a goal of planting 500,000 trees by 2025.

The Vampires, ARIA Award-Winning Jazz Band

When 8 February, doors from 7pm, show at 7.30pm

Where Coorabell Hall

Contact events.humanitix.com/the-vampires-with-special-guest-tainui-richmond

The Vampires have established themselves as a formidable force around the world. Critics have hailed their music as "phenomenal" (Downbeat), "a masterpiece" (The Australian), "seductive" (Jazzwise), and "a relaxed sound journey" (Jazzthetik, DE). Melding saxophone and trumpet, intricate melodies, and expansive groove soundscapes into their music, they effortlessly capture the essence of their genre-hopping ethos into an immersive musical experience. Check them out at Coorabell Hall.

Connecting Generations Summer Event

When Sunday 9 February, 2.30pm–5pm

Where Bangalow Heritage House & Museum

Contact Ruth Winton-Brown
0413 261 011 or
ruth@reclaimingjoy.com

Join a fun-filled event connecting young families with older community members. Enjoy activities like nature-based art and craft, face painting, games such as a slip and slide, live music, and dancing. It's a wonderful way to foster intergenerational bonds in a relaxed and lively setting.

Bangalow Business Networking – Coffee Meet-Up

When Wednesday 12 February, 9.30–11am

Where Woods at Bangalow

Contact 0412 475 543

Tickets byrionandbeyondnetworking.com.au

"If you think the Business Breakfasts are lovely and relaxed, try the informal Coffee Meetups." This session's topic How to handle a crisis in an organisation. Come along for casual conversation, networking, and support among



The Vampires Photo supplied

local businesspeople.

Climate Change and Our Region's Future

When Wednesday 12 February, 5–6.30pm
Where Heritage House, Bangalow
Contact zoegameau@gmail.com
Tickets Free but registration required via Humanitix

CWA is hosting Dr Jøelle Gerri, a leading climate scientist, to discuss the challenges presented by climate change and how we, as a community, can build resilience. This is a fabulous opportunity to hear from one of the scientists providing governments with the data and insights that shape climate policy. Seats will be limited, so don't hesitate to book yours.

Bangalow Show Society's Pig on the Spit

When Saturday 15 February, 5pm
Where Moller Pavilion, Bangalow Showground
Contact Facebook @Bangalow Show Society bangalowshow.com.au
Tickets \$25 adult, \$15 child (5–15yrs) – available at 123tix.com.au

After a hiatus, the Bangalow A&I Society is excited to bring back the annual Pig on the Spit social. Grab your friends and come along for an evening of great food and good company. Enjoy two courses—spit-roasted meats, fabulous salads, and delicious desserts (vegetarian option available). A \$500 prize pack donated by Pony Rider will be raffled on the night. Dinner tickets available online—no door sales. Contact Sharon Rudgeley 0427 668 716, Donna Jenner 0438 871 698, Denise Woolsley 0412 787 252, Simone Strøet 0422 242 064, or Sandra Harding

0427 872 023.

CWA Cake and Produce Stall

When Saturday 22 February, 8am–12pm
Where CWA Rooms, Byron St, Bangalow
Contact cwasecbangalow@gmail.com

We're back! February will be our first monthly cake stall for the year and is sure to be a bumper one. Whether for school lunchboxes, morning tea treats, or visiting guests, there'll be lots to choose from. We're looking forward to your support again through 2025.

Majelen and Tessa Devine in Concert

When Sunday 2 March, 3pm
Where PEARCES CREEK HALL
Contact events.humanitix.com/majelen-re4hbnms or PEARCES CREEK HALL 0458 801 941

Tickets \$20

Join Majelen on her first headline Australian tour with special guest Tessa Devine. Majelen, her wife Courtney, and the divine Tessa Devine will be travelling down the East Coast of Australia in their vans, performing acoustic brilliance and epic vocal lushness to touch your soul and tickle your ears.

Shire Choir

When Thursday 6 March, 7-10pm
Where The Bangalow Hotel
Contact shirechoir.com.au facebook.com/theshirechoir
Tickets \$20/\$15 shirechoir.eventbrite.com

Shire Choir is back and ready to ROCK! But we can't do it without you. We need all voices, great and small - yes, even yours. Led by Melia Naughton and accompanied by Jamie Birrell, learn a classic pop/rock song in parts, and then sing your heart out.

Diary

February 2025

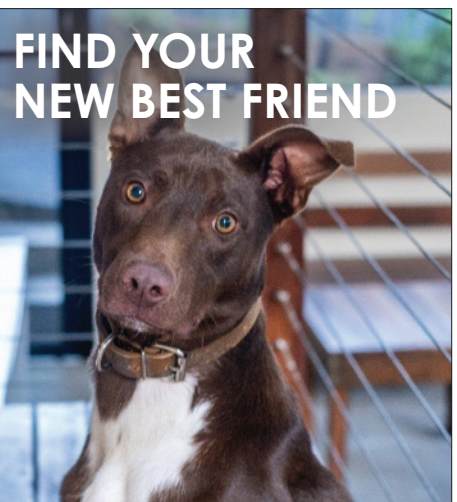
1	NRAS Animal Adoption Day
5	Bangalow Garden Club
6	Kindred Women Together – Thursday Night Gatherings Seriously Funny
8	The Vampires
9	Connecting Generations Summer Event
12	Bangalow Business Networking – Coffee Meet-Up Climate Change and Our Region's Future
15	Pig on the Spit
22	CWA Cake and Produce Stall

March 2025

2	Majelen and Tessa Devine
6	Shire Choir

March edition deadlines

What's On 13 February
Copy 13 February
Advertising 13 February



ADOPTION DAY
 1st Saturday of each month
 10am – 1pm
 61 Piper Dr, Ballina

Around the wicket

With the incredible Test series between Australia and India behind us, it was back to the local scene for our Bangalow cricketers.

The last round before Christmas saw all three senior teams complete a clean sweep of wins, keeping our sides in good positions for the second half of the season.

Second Grade: Anthony McPhail is having an incredible season with the bat (averaging 56), while Jammo Hinds has taken 14 wickets with an average of 13.

Third Grade: Dan Bensley scored his maiden century for the club and is also batting superbly. Hamish Redden took an amazing 6/18 in seven brutal overs against Lennox Head, guiding us to a big win.

Fourth Grade: Crackers carried his bat in a huge win over Byron, finishing with a solid 80 not out. Our big-hitting all-rounder Ben Hills is bowling like a demon with an average of 11.

We also welcomed a couple of new players to the club, Jack and Robbie, who performed solidly on debut.

Our junior teams are on school holidays and return in early February, but January is when the representative teams play.

Arlo Wooldridge from our Under-16s Bangalow team was selected in the North Coast Bradman Cup side that played in the state carnival down in Albury. Arlo opened the bowling for the North Coast team and bowled incredibly well, taking wickets and keeping the runs down. Being selected for this team is a huge achievement, with many Australian Test cricketers having played in this carnival as juniors. The experience and exposure he gained from the tournament will serve him well on his cricket journey.

Bangalow also had five boys from our Under-12 team who played in the Lismore carnival representing Far North Coast. There were 16 teams in the carnival, including some very strong sides from Sydney. The boys all performed well, with Otis Kerr taking seven wickets at an average of 10 for the carnival. In an entertaining last over against Lake Macquarie, Spike Stubbings took three wickets in a team double hat-trick.

Again, the experience of playing these teams will prove invaluable for their future and that of our club.

Hope to see you all down at Shultz Oval on Saturdays.

Let's go, Bangalow!

Nick Court



Hamish Redden and Dan Bensley Photo Nick Court