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WEDNESDAY
1 March 2017

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Local School News

Hunter Domestic Violence Support & Advisory Services opens the 'Doo Stop Op Shop'

Hunter Domestic Violence Support & Advisory Services Inc, a voluntary help group, has opened the Doo Stop Op Shop located at 75 Maitland Road, Branxton. Chairperson and Manager Paula Mudd said the reason behind opening the Op Shop was to generate money so they can keep "Jodie's Place' Women's & Children's Refuge and

HDVSAS Outreach Centre operating and not always rely on the public purse. "The Cessnock, Branxton, Kurri Kurri, Weston and surrounding areas have overwhelmed us with their generosity; it's a community that we are so proud to be part of and it's a community that are really the owners of our organisation," said Paula. "The local refuge at North

Rothbury was named after Jodie Jard who was sadly murdered due to an act of domestic violence on the 16th November 2011 in Bellbird." "We approached Mr. And Mrs Jard for their permission to name the refuge after Jodie, in fact we hang a photo of Jodie with a small explanation of why we named the refuge after her, and where

domestic violence can turn deadly if women stay in a violent relationship," said Paula. "Each culture has its sayings and songs about the importance of home, and the comfort and security to be found there. Yet for many women, home is a place of pain and humiliation ... violence against women by their male partners is common, wide-spread and far-reaching in its impact," said Paula. "For too long hidden behind closed doors and avoided in public discourse, such violence can no longer be denied as part of everyday life for millions of women." The refuge house, a spacious secluded property, can accommodate 11




■ The new Doo Stop Op Shop at 75 Maitland Road, Branxton has been opened to help fund a local domestic violence refuge Jodie's House at North Rothbury

people at any one time across its four bedrooms. "The refuge would not be possibly without the gratuitous help of the management at Huntlee Property Group." "I would like to publicly thank them from the Hunter Domestic Violence Support & Advisory Services volunteers & from the women who have been given refuge & shelter since we opened in 2013," said Paula.

Refuge staff at Jodie's Place provide women with one-on-one support, refer them to agencies, medical assistance, help to apply for apprehended violence orders and offer to enrol them in a nine week domestic violence education and recovery program called Phoenix. "We run a Phoenix Group workshop which is designed to support, empower and strengthen women effected by domes-

tic violence. Workshops are run on Tuesday mornings." "We also run a creative therapy group (craft) on a Tuesday," said Paula. If anyone is living in or has left a domestic violence situation please call 4990 9609, if it's an emergency dial 000 and ask for the police.

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Rutherford

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all details page 12

Hooking into the record books

SINGLETON has successfully applied to contest a Guinness World Record in none other than crocheting.

The record attempt will be a huge event for Singleton and is open to everyone of any or little crocheting skills on Sunday, 30 April 2017.

People from near and far are encouraged to participate in the record attempt regardless of crocheting skills. We don't need pros, we just need numbers!

It has been three months since the application was first made and Singleton Destash and Crafty Swappers coordinator Tracey Franks said it has been a tough secret to keep. "We have been quietly talking about it but when I found out the application was approved today, I nearly burst," Tracey said.

The plan is to break the record for the most people crocheting simultaneously in the one venue.

The current record is 485 people achieved in an event organised by the American University of Nigeria in Yola, Nigeria, set in 2015.

Tracey is confident this number can be surpassed and now she can promote the record attempt, members of the group will be visiting schools, aged care homes and everywhere in between to make sure people who want to take part, can.

Alternatively, you can join Singleton Destash and Craft Swappers regular meetings at Singleton library every Thursday morning from 10am and Tuesday nights from 5pm to 7pm.

The event will be one of the first events of Singleton Festival 2017, the program of which is growing by the day.

"There have been some really different events this time round and we strongly urge people, restaurants, pubs, organisations and clubs who want to promote their event within the festival period from April 29 to May 14, to contact the Visitor Information and Enterprise Centre on 6571 5888 by February 23 to ensure they are included in the program currently being finalized," said Singleton Festival chairperson Danny Thompson.

Mr Thompson said he was delighted the World Record attempt was part of the program.

"This is something everyone can be involved in, and will be a real boost for the town when, not if, it is achieved, something the town can have a laugh about and be very proud," he said.

■ Photo above: Inspiration behind Singleton's attempt at the Guinness World Record are Singleton crafters (back l-r) Anne Stokes, Kathy Moore, Tracey Franks, Lynn Brosi, Bronwyn Farnworth, Daphne Barber, Claire Paul, Allison Pay, (front) Ruth Harris, Jean Millar and Bina Shah.



What: Guinness World Record Attempt

- Most people crocheting in one place at same time
- 500 people required to break record

Why: Crochet continuous for fifteen minutes

When: 30 April 2017 – Registration 10am for 11am start

Where: Civic Centre, Queen Street Singleton

Who: Everyone who can crochet for 15 minutes

Other: Great fun day with entertainment for all

Food and drinks available for purchase.

Lessons available at Singleton Library

Contact: Tracy Franks 0427 769 522

See RITA Planning for more information



BRANXTON GRETA BUSINESS CHAMBER

NETWORKING BREAKFAST

GUEST SPEAKER
ELIZABETH PALMER
 Community Development Manager
HUNTLEE

9th May 2017
BRANXTON GOLF CLUB
 7am - 8.30am



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 5th May 2017

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Cessnock City Council puts their hand up for Canberra Departments

Cessnock City Council is urging the Federal Government to consider relocating Commonwealth offices to the Cessnock Local Government Area (LGA). This comes as a Senate enquiry is underway into the relocation of Corporate Commonwealth Entities to regional areas. The inquiry will investigate the operation, effectiveness and consequences of such a

relocation, as well as the economic, environmental and capability implications. Cessnock City Mayor, Councillor Bob Pynsent said decentralisation of such agencies is a real opportunity for the Cessnock LGA. "Kurri Kurri and Cessnock are perfectly positioned for the relocation of a government department, our proximity to Newcastle and Sydney

makes us a great potential site". "This is an economic opportunity for our community that would generate jobs and growth. A key priority for our community as we deal with high unemployment rates especially among young people". "The benefits will disseminate throughout our community with more employment opportunities and discretionary spending

increasing", Cr Pynsent said. A Mayoral Minute adopted by Council last night will see Council make a submission to the Senate enquiry. The submission will outline the economic benefits and the regional development opportunities that would result from a department relocating to the region, as well as the cost saving benefit to the Federal Government.



POLICE Report

Stolen Vehicle – East Branxton

Time, date & Location: 8pm 3.3.17 to 12.10am 4.3.17
 Outside Poplar Level Tce East Branxton
 VOI: BJE16W
 2009 black Toyota Hilux
 The PR parked the VOI outside the above location prior to attending the Royal Hotel, Branxton with friends. When he returned the VOI was gone. Unknown persons have stolen the above vehicle.

Steal from MV – Greta:

Between 20:30 on Sunday 12 March 2017 and 05:45 on Monday 13 March 2017 vehicle 2011 WHITE NISSAN NAVARA UTILITY was parked and secured at the stated location being Branxton st, Greta. Person/s unknown have gained entry to the tool box on the rear tray of the vehicle by jemmyming the lock by unknown means. Property stolen from the vehicle included a drill and assorted tools.

Disqualified Driver – North Rothbury:

The accused in the matter is a male, aged 37 from Mannering Park. The accused is currently endorsed as a disqualified driver, relating to his New South Wales (NSW) Class C Red P2 Provisional Licence. The accused was disqualified from 5th December 2016 until 5th December 2017 relating to a matter before Wyong Local Court. About 12:20 on Friday 10th March, Police have observed a White Ford Courier Crewcab Utility travelling in a westerly direction along Wine Country Drive North Rothbury. Police have at this time stopped the vehicle for a breath test. Police have approached the vehicle and observed that the accused was the only occupant of the vehicle and he was seated in the driver's seat. Police have conducted a check of the accused drivers licence, which has indicated that he was disqualified between the above stated dates.

Police have returned to the vehicle and stated to the accused that his drivers licence was endorsed disqualified. Due to the accused being disqualified, he was issued Field Court Attendance Notice for the offence of drive whilst disqualified - 1st offence. He is to appear at Singleton Local Court on the 30th March 2017.



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HEARD IT THROUGH the GRAPEVINE



with Jo Thomas, General Manager HWWTA

Hunter Valley Winners in the prestigious 2016 QANTAS Australian Tourism Awards



Margan Restaurant

Winners were announced at the 2016 Qantas Australian Tourism Awards on Friday 24th February in Darwin with Margan Wines & Restaurant winning Gold for Excellence in Food Tourism. The QANTAS Australian Tourism Awards are the tourism industry's peak Awards –

recognising and promoting excellence in tourism. For both the industry and the consumer an Australian Tourism Award is recognised a mark of excellence in Australian Tourism. A wide and diverse range of tourism businesses enter their state and territory Tourism Awards and over 200 reach the prestigious status of becoming national finalists. This is Margan Wines third Gold at the Australian Tourism Awards having previously won Tourism Restaurants and Catering Services in 2012, and Food Tourism in 2014.

2017 Hunter Valley Wine & Food Festival

The Hunter Valley Wine & Food Festival is back and it's bigger than ever spanning two months to include some of our favourite returning events and some great new additions. The festival showcases the region's unforgettable wine and food culture with more than 70 epicurean events and activities during May and June in 2017, so you're sure to find something to suit your palate. You can get up close and personal with winemakers at a masterclass, vertical tasting or vineyard tour, unearth hidden gems on a wine and food trail, and take part in hands-on cooking classes or just sprawl beside an open fire with a

glass of red and a cheese plate. Plus, Chefs Plate lunches offers foodies the chance to enjoy a set price lunch with a glass of wine at some of the region's top restaurants. Treat yourself to a country getaway like no other this May and June, when the region celebrates its exceptional wine and food culture in series of themes activities and events. Take part in one of the signature events, wine and dine with famous local winemakers and chefs, take part in hands-on cooking classes, vertical tastings and vineyard tours, or enjoy a set-price lunch with a glass of wine at some of the outstanding restaurants. With accommodation and experience packages for every budget, Hunter Valley Wine & Food Festival is the perfect time and place for a winter getaway. Some of the must-do events include: Meet the Growers in Broke Fordwich, Burning of the Barrel at Glandore Estate Wines, Pie & Wine Pairing Experience in Lovedale, Lovedale Long Lunch, Cheese Lovers Festival at Sebel Kirkton Park, Whispering Brook Long Lunch, Meet the Farmer Dinner at Margan Wines, Wine & Food Film Festival in Around Hermitage, Hunter Valley Wine Festival at Crowne Plaza and the Wine Makers Series at Hunter Valley Resort.

Cheers, Jo

What's Happening & other matters

with Mike Lowing

Cessnock Council LGA can give good value

There is a question needing an answer: what is 'it' really worth? A watch, house, car or a can of coke. Well, obviously, the coke can is an easy one to figure out; \$2 & readily available at any vending machine. Slightly less at Coles, as you would expect. But what would you pay for the same can of coke, 10km up in the air, flying to Brisbane on a low-cost domestic carrier? I reckon \$5 would be a good deal. Of course, you don't have to be an economist to figure out that the very same can of coke would be worth \$100 if you happened to find yourself six hundred kilometres west of Burke, in 48C heat, with no water. Assuming, of course, that

you had that much cash on hand. My message is simple ... a) having too much cash on hand makes people do crazy things and pay crazy prices and b) the value of 'it' is ridiculously circumstantial: it really could be anything. Which is in striking contrast to the 'official definition of value' which says that "the value of an object is what a knowledgeable buyer would pay for a knowledgeable seller". The problem with this piece of wisdom is that knowledgeable buyers and knowledgeable sellers avoid each other like the plague, and almost every transaction under the sun is always circumstantial and skewed one way or another, even for something as straight forward as a can of coke. Now imagine how difficult it is to work out the price tag for a house - or a piece of art which becomes available only once in your lifetime - especially at a time when there is no

shortage of buyers loaded with cash. If you mingle in collector circles, the first thing you get accustomed to hearing is that all-time favourite cliché ~ "twenty years ago the precious 'it' was selling for half of today's price". Which is probably true. But the same 'it' was almost equally unaffordable 20 years ago as it is today so there is little to whine about. You are probably asking where I'm going with this as I do rave on a tad? The answer is housing affordability ~ what is the value of a median priced home in the Sydney basin? They tell me it is close to a \$1million. In my mind it does not represent value. The reason is lack of supply for the huge workforce based in and around Sydney which is pushing up prices exponentially.



Cessnock Council is currently urging the Federal Government to consider relocating Commonwealth offices to the Cessnock Local Government Area (LGA). This comes as a Senate enquiry is underway into the relocation of Corporate

Commonwealth Entities to regional areas. The median price of housing in our paddock is in the mid \$300K which is affordable & represents value. I congratulate Cessnock Council for their pro-active initiative.

Historically decentralisation did not work 30 odd years ago because housing was affordable in the Sydney basin & the workforce wanted to stay by the sea. All the right scenarios are now in place for it to work as housing affordability & value is the key.

Council we felt that some of the money from that contribution should be utilized in our local area. Our other argument was that all other Council Pools in our electorate had "heating facilities" in place and so we believed that our pool should also have the same facility. The solar heating already in place certainly keeps the water temperature at a good level but is generally not very effective at the start of the swim season in October. This was very obvious to the pool users in the season just finishing, the unusually cool start to spring saw most season pass holders waiting at least six weeks before they could use their Council Pool Pass. The good news received last week of the heat pump installation is a direct result of our elected Councillors working well for the local community. After many hours of research and then putting "our case forward" at the Council meeting we have seen this outstanding ... CONT NEXT PAGE



HUNTER PERFECT PLACE TO LEAD NATIONAL GAS ECONOMY

I feel that the Hunter region should lead a new national gas economy. Four years of policy confusion has put Australia on the brink of an energy crisis. Our energy future will be dominated by renewable and storage technologies. But the lengthy transition period will be underpinned by gas. We have an abundance of gas and need to get it to market. We have the wit to ship Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) from the Indian Ocean to Asia but not the wit to ship it to the eastern seaboard.

Government must provide the policy guidance needed to bring gas to eastern state markets and there could be no better place to build an LNG receiver terminal than Newcastle. Gas coming to Newcastle can fire new gas-fired generators in the buffer zones of our current coal-fired generators, each of which are coming to the end of their commercial lives. We have the land, we have the skilled workforce, we have the transmission lines. Gas into Newcastle can also be used to deliver affordable and reliable energy to our manufacturing sector.

It's a plan for jobs, a plan for economic growth and a plan for a cleaner future. Let's get on with it. *Joel Fitzgibbon MP, Member for Hunter*

Will you be joining us this year?

The Singleton Volunteer Support Group for the Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service is once again be running a bus to the 2017 Upper Hunter Wine & Food Affair. After 13 years, the Upper Hunter Wine & Food Affair continues to deliver outstanding wines, yummy foods and great entertainment, so we're sure you will have a great time we you join us this year. All proceeds raised will benefit the Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service. The cost is \$30 per person (covers transport only) &

Event Entry Fee: Adults \$10, Kids \$5. (includes unlimited all day ride pass), Official event WINE GLASS with tasting tokens \$5.

Our pick-up locations are Maitland, Greta, Branxton, Singleton & Singleton Heights (Times confirmed closer to event). You can contact me for bookings at dannyeather@gmail.com *Danny Eather for The Singleton Volunteer Support Group for the Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service*

Cessnock Prostate Cancer Support Group
Cessnock Prostate Cancer Support Groups next meeting 23rd March 3pm -4:30pm at Cessnock Leagues Club. Guest speaker is Doctor

Mahesh Kumar from Newcastle Calvary Mater Hospital. Topic: Recent advances in Lung Cancer treatment. All welcome - Cost - FREE. Tea and coffee provided. Contact ~ Barry or Rose. 49904554 - 0439404554. *Barry Preston, Chairman Cessnock Prostate Cancer Support Group*


Grow Group
Grow Groups are small friendly groups formed to learn how to overcome anxiety, depression, loneliness & to improve mental health. One of these groups meets every Thursday 10:30am at the Rutherford Community Centre. Grow Groups are confidential, free & open to all; you can bring a support

person if you wish. To learn more you can call 1800 558 268 or Rosalind 0413 896 866 or go to our web site www.grow.org.au. *Rosalind for Grow Group Rutherford*

Thank you Clr's Dagg & Sander
Can we on behalf of the Branxton Greta Pool Users Group publicly thank Councillor Melanie Dagg & Councillor Anne Sander. Several months ago our User Group requested a meeting with the Ward C Councillors, both of the ladies mentioned above took time out to attend our meeting at the local Council Pool. The object of the meeting was to "put our case forward for the installation of a "heat pump" at the local Council Pool. Given that we were aware that Huntlee had made a VPA Contribution to

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Branxton..... 4938 3396		Singleton... 6572 2799
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Broke..... 6579 1491		1800 333 000
Greta..... 4015 0000		Poisons Info 131 126
Bishops Bdg 4015 0000		Hunter Water
Nth R'bury... 4015 0000		1300 657 000
Rothbury... 4015 0000		Ausgrid 131 388
Pokolbin... 4015 0000		Gas Emergencies . 131 909
Rothbury... 4991 1733		Lifeline.....131 114
Bishops Bdg 4015 0000		Mental Health Line
Nth R'bury... 4015 0000		1800 011 511
Rothbury... 4015 0000		Domestic Violence Support
Pokolbin... 4015 0000		4990 9609
Rothbury... 4991 1733		Centrelink Self Service
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FROM PREVIOUS PAGE
Thank you Clr's Dagg & Sander

..... result (especially given that Council Management team had made recommendations that the heat pump NOT be installed... see below). The motion put forward by Councillor Dagg and seconded by Councillor Sander was carried as a unanimous vote by Councillors. The installation of the heat pump should be finalized in readiness for the re-opening of the pool in October. Hopefully residents will

now have a heated pool from day one. Pool attendances has been steadily growing and one could hope that with the new pump in place the number of pool users will continue to increase. Apart from the many health benefits gained by regular swimming/aqua aerobics etc the pool has become a great social meeting place for many newcomers to the town. One only has to see the number of schools (both locally and from further afield) using the pool on a regular basis to realize that it is a much

needed facility and one that we should all be proud of. Below are reports taken from Cessnock Council website. Again, our thanks to the Councillors for hearing us out and supporting us, as well as a special thank you

to Councillor Sander who apparently put in a huge number of hours researching all the facts and figures prior to the Council Meeting on 1st March 2017. I guess the above result reinforces the fact that "people power" can

sometimes get a result. Unless we residents highlight our concerns to our Council Representatives we will get nowhere. Regards
Di Macfarlane & Val Randall, Branxton & Greta



0467 314 211
Address
47A Branxton Street,
GRETA NSW 2334
Email:
bgshed@gmail.com or
kevinbell.2@bigpond.com

Contacts:
President Kevin Bell
P: 4938 6089 or

All welcome.

WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE NO. W14/2017
SUBJECT:BRANXTON POOL HEATING UPGRADE
MOTION Moved:Councillor Dagg Seconded:Councillor Sander
129
RESOLVED
1. That Council install gas heat pumps at Branxton Greta Memorial Baths and fund operational costs to the value of \$18,000.
2. That the capital cost of the purchase and installation be taken from the Huntlee VPA Contribution.
3. That a report come back at the end of 2017/18 period outlining costs.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Works and Infrastructure Report No W14/2017
SUBJECT:BRANXTON POOL HEATING UPGRADE SUMMARY
The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an estimate of the capital and operating costs, as well as possible funding sources, to provide heat pumps for the Branxton Pool.
RECOMMENDATION
That Council does not install heat pumps at Branxton Pool due to adverse impacts on future operational, maintenance and capital replacement budgets.

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MYSTERIOUS MURDER

Prizes for the Best Dressed 1920's Outfit

The year is 1920. The small village is abuzz, as celebrities gather for the much talked about "Celebration Dinner". The dinner is to mark 100 years of successful trade for a local vineyard. What lies in store?? for those gathering at

Camp Clarrie Vineyard

If you believe you are a "Super Sleuth" then don your "glad rags" and put your sleuthing skills to good use!!

Gather a few friends (group bookings welcome) and test your skills!! Guests not included in group bookings will be allocated a group on the night.

DATE:	Saturday 1st April 2017
TIME:	6pm (pre-dinner drink & interrogate the Cast)
VENUE:	Camp Clarrie Vineyard (follow signs)
ADDRESS:	317 Elderslie Road, Branxton

Bar facilities WILL operate (**No** BYO)

TICKET COST - \$70 PER PERSON

Ticket Cost includes: complimentary "bubbles" or juice upon arrival; pre dinner nibbles; a two course buffet dinner; entertainment by well-known singer, "**Chezz McGee**" and the chance to assist in solving a murder!!!!

Methods of Payment: Cash, Credit Card or Direct Deposit will secure a ticket. Ticket Numbers are limited so do not delay in purchasing your ticket

Telephone: Diane or Peter
0249383491 or 0407383491
or email
dipete6@bigpond.com
to obtain more information.

Profits from the evening will be distributed by The Rotary Club of Maitland to both Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation & Cancer Council (NSW)

BRANXTON, GRETA VINEYARD NEWS

Special Edition Proprietor Mr Mike Moonie Edition 288

POLICE NEWS - Local Police Office, Senior Sergeant Reyn is currently investigating allegations that a North Rothbury resident is in fact using another alias. Police will continue to investigate, but word has it that Betty Bigbumps (well known to the Police) is residing in our locality.

Sgt Reyn did press the point home to our Editor Mike Moonie, that he has been having some difficulty in locating Betty Bigbumps. This is mainly due to the fact that he is rarely working out of the Police Station here in Branxton. Police are seeking your help in locating the said "Betty Bigbumps".

Information recently received by the Police is that Betty is a keen "Pole Dancer". If you happen to come across any Pole Dancers in the neighborhood, you might like to pass this information on to Sergeant Reyn.

Branxton, Greta & North Rothbury are abuzz!!!

Our paper has been informed that several well-known Sydney personalities are to visit the Branxton area. Bigus Butt, Ben Biceps & Lucky Draw, major shareholders in the local Camp Clarrie Vineyard will be joining other VIP guests at a Celebration Dinner. Bigus, Ben and Lucky are extremely busy at the moment, but when contacted by our Editor they did say that they would hopefully have their Mardi Gras float ready for the big parade and would therefore be free to attend this most important dinner.

Thinking of Buying Property???

Contact Margie Moonie on 42 998288

CAMP CLARRIE'S VINEYARD

One of Branxton's very successful businesses has just made the decision to expand. **Camp Clarrie Vineyard**, found in the foothills of the Sandhills has just recently opened a "camp facility" for those who wish to enjoy a few wines, relax and experience the *wild side* of the Hunter Valley. For further enquiries contact **Haddie Drinx** at Branxton Travel.

BREAKING NEWS - It is with much regret that BGVN has to report that crime is on the increase in our local communities. Inspector Plonk (well known for his alcoholic tendencies) has recently been informed that two very dubious characters have been collecting money for the Branxton Main Street Beautification (BMSB). When The News contacted BMSB and they were able to confirm that no-one outside of their committee had been given authorisation to collect money on their behalf. Detective Plonk appears to be thrilled to have something to investigate.

If you want more information on any of the stories contained in this 288th edition of the BGVN, then you most definitely should purchase a ticket for the upcoming "Murder Mystery" to be held on Saturday 1st April 2017 at Camp Clarrie Vineyard. Telephone Diane at 0249383491 for ticket sale enquiries.

Now if you believe any of the news presented here in this 288th edition, than you are a bigger April Fool than was first thought. **Cheers Mike**



Bob Pynsent, Mayor Cessnock City Council



Member for Cessnock Clayton Barr MP

Raising the BARR – A NEW FEE ADDED TO COUNCIL RATES TO BE USED TO FUND EMERGENCY SERVICES

Last week in Parliament the Government sought to change the way that we fund Emergency Services in NSW. In this conversation, the Emergency Services are limited to 3 services: Fire and Rescue NSW (FRNSW), Rural Fire Services (RFS) and State Emergency Services (SES). Under the new model, that the Government want to introduce, the responsibility will be shifted from insurance policies, across to Council rates. I will explain.

Currently, for households and businesses that take out insurance, a levy is added to fund these 3 emergency services. For an average household, it will mean approx. \$150 p.a. added on to their insurance policy. An average business will pay approx. \$300 p.a. Also, for car owners with an insurance policy, a small charge of less than 1% is also charged against your policy to fund these same 3 emergency services.

It is a fact that about 95% of households have building insurance and about 64% of households have contents insurance. The Government have called those that don't have insurance "shirkers". However, it is my experience that insurance is a very difficult decision for people who by and large want to have insurance but sometimes, just cannot afford it. And yes, we sometimes hear stories about people that experience fire or flood and lose everything – and they had no insurance. These are always sad stories to hear and process. So, the Government have proposed to catch up with the "shirkers" by changing from the insurance policy charge model, across to the new model which will be a charge on the Council rates. Under the Council rates model, no household will be able to opt in or opt out. Councils will be left to do the work of the State Government and collect the fee, and undoubtedly the abuse and anger of residents that will see a sudden rise in their rates. The net result will be that insurance policies are expected to fall by \$47 and Council rates are expected to rise by \$185. Seems like a good deal for the insurance companies and big business, but a bad deal for those on the breadline.

* * * * *

My office can be contacted by phoning 4991-1466, by email to cessnock@parliament.nsw.gov.au or call into 118 Vincent Street (PO Box 242), Cessnock 2325.

Cheers Clayton



Clr Melanie Dagg - Cessnock City Councillor - Ward C

Well last meeting was a real success for our community after Council voted

unanimously to install a gas heat pump in our pool. I spoke in the Chamber about why this infrastructure is important, allowing the community the ability to use the pool from the very first day of the pool season to the last, regardless of the temperature outside. Kurri Kurri and Cessnock Pools are able to be controlled in this way so it's only fair ours is treated the same. This project was a joint effort by myself, the Pool User Group and Clr Sander and I'm really proud to see it get up, particularly considering the opposition we initially faced.

On the 28th February I attended a meeting as member of Hunter Water's Consultative Committee. It was interesting hearing Hunter Water speak of their own strategic planning for the region and was quite an eye-opener for me in terms of the issues they have to deal with and the complexities of those issues as well as ensuring the organisation continues to change to meet the growing needs of the Hunter. I was able to speak with HW's officers regarding North Rothbury's sewer connection in which they reconfirmed their commitment to the project and indicated they would like to meet with Council to provide an update and a brief on the issue. I will keep the community up to date on any progress we make on this matter.

At next week's meeting Council will be considering, amongst other things, a planning proposal for the old bowling club site on Aberdare Road, opportunities to improve Council's framework regarding illegal signage and streamline the approvals process, and a City wide amendment to our Local Environment Plan which aims to tidy up anomalies and issues with some zonings in terms of land use planning.

As always, if you require assistance with any Council-related matter, please contact me by email melanie.dagg@cessnock.nsw.gov.au or phone 0409 404 898.

Cheers, Melanie



Sue Moore, Mayor Singleton Council

I'd like to firstly congratulate the Singleton community for another great event in celebration of Seniors Week on Friday 3 March. More than 300 people across all age groups turned out at the Civic Centre for a celebration of life, taking some time out to chat with friends, enjoy some local live entertainment and share a meal together. The day was a lovely reminder that we all need to take time out for ourselves every so often to rest, relax and recharge – no matter what age we are.

I sincerely hope all those who came along enjoyed the day out and took away some information and inspiration to take up some of the many opportunities on offer from local service groups.

There's also a great opportunity on offer to those in our community who might be a little younger as they embark on their tertiary education journey towards achieving their career ambitions. The 2017 Singleton Mayoral Scholarship is now open to support local students of all ages to exceed in their studies, and I encourage Branxton students to apply for one of four major scholarships of \$2,000 or 12 minor scholarships of \$500 each. Applicants must be residents of the Singleton local government area who are studying or intending to study in 2017 in one of the scholarship categories. The scholarships can be put towards education fees, tools, text books, transport or housing costs.

I'm so proud to support our local students' community contributions and

academic achievements through the scholarship program. Since our very first round of the scholarships in 2009, Council and local businesses have given away more than \$130,000. More information about scholarship categories and application forms are available on the Council website at www.singleton.nsw.gov.au/scholarship Applications close on 31 March 2017. Branxton residents would have also noticed the start of the new green bin collection this week.

With the new green-lidded bins rolled out to urban households (those receiving the weekly red bin collection service), you cannot start placing your bin on the kerbside on the opposite week to your yellow-lidded bin collection. Use it for your grass clippings, small branches, leaves and prunings and help reduce our carbon footprint.

Rural households (those receiving the fortnightly red bin collection) will not have received a bin unless you requested one. The on-demand rural greenbin collection service will occur every fortnight on the regular red bin collection day.

If you have not received your new green-lidded bin and are interested in the service, please call our Council Customer Service team on (02) 65787290.

Cheers, Sue



MICHAEL JOHNSEN MP Member for Upper Hunter

State Matters Funding Available for Local War Memorials

I am pleased to announce the first round of 2017 funding for the Community War Memorials Fund (CWMF) is now open.

The CWMF is designed to protect and repair our local war memorials, which preserves the Anzac legacy in the Upper Hunter Electorate.

I urge our local Councils to apply for the fund, which provides the opportunity for all NSW communities to access up to \$10,000.

Ensuring our local war memorials remain in great condition is an essential part of honouring Australian service men and women who sacrificed so much for our nation, but also ensuring that the service of so many local men and women is properly honoured and remembered by our communities.

The CWMF ensures communities have the opportunity to protect and conserve war memorials, which is why I believe this is such an important initiative.

Funding applications can be made by veterans groups, community organisations and councils until Anzac Day and I sincerely encourage all communities who require funds for restoration to apply.

Applications will be assessed by the State War Memorial Committee, which is made up of NSW RSL, Public Works Advisory, NSW Office of Environment and Heritage and Veterans' Affairs.

For more information, including application forms, <http://veterans.nsw.gov.au/heritage/community-war-memorials-fund/>

Transparency, Certainty and Fairness for NSW Retail Businesses
The Nationals in Government are committed to ensuring retail businesses in rural and regional NSW can achieve their potential, and for the first time in more than a decade, significant changes have been made to the *NSW Retail Leases Act*, creating stronger and fairer

relationships between tenants and landlords in the retail industry. The ability for a tenant to strike a fair agreement with a landlord is the cornerstone of any successful retail business. With retail subject to such rapid change it's critical we make sure legislation is refreshed to remain relevant, the NSW Government has been working hard to ensure the changes to the Act were the most progressive, wide-ranging and balanced in Australia.

In NSW alone, there are up to 44,500 retail businesses which employ about 390,000 people, generating \$36 billion in annual sales which make a huge contribution to our local communities and the economy.

The updated Act is designed to bring the greatest transparency, certainty and fairness between our retail businesses and landlords.

The new amendments will deliver:

- Increased transparency and certainty about lease deals during negotiations;
- Improved protections including the return of bank guarantees and registration of leases;
- Simplifying the process of transferring a retail lease.

Contact: My Email address; upperhunter@parliament.nsw.gov.au, phone numbers; 6543 1065, Fax 6543 1416; postal address P.O. Box 493, Muswellbrook 2333.

Cheers, Michael



Clr John Fagg - Cessnock City Councillor - Ward C

Thank you to the Branxton Greta Vineyard News for providing this opportunity to keep residents up to date with news and events happening here in Ward C and across the Cessnock Local Government Area.

I was greatly honoured to be elected to Council in September and am excited to be part of helping shape our community for the future.

At the next Council meeting I have put forward a motion seeking support for a promotional exhibition stand for our Local Government Area at the 2018 Sydney Royal Easter Show.

This would be an ideal opportunity to provide a glimpse of the many attractions and experiences available in the Cessnock areas as well as showcasing the benefits of living and working in our region.

Having a stand in the Home, Garden and Lifestyle Hall at the Royal Easter Show enables exposure to 700,000 visitors over 14 days.

For those of you familiar with the layout of exhibition area at the show, the Home, Garden and Lifestyle Hall is the first you encounter after moving through the main Woolworths Dome.

If Council resolves to move ahead with the stand, funding for the project could be allocated from the tourism initiative budget.

Credit for the establishment of Council's tourism funding must go to my Liberals for Cessnock colleague, Councillor Rod Doherty, whose motion in March 2016 highlighted this industry as the primary economic generator in our region and saw \$100,000 allocated to help promote the area.

Cr Doherty, along with myself and our Ward D representative Cr Paul Dunn, firmly believe in the need for Council to provide all assistance possible in attracting visitors to our region

CONT PAGE 8

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State Member for the Electorate of Cessnock, Clayton Barr, MP is pleased to announce that Mrs Kylie Gray of Weston as the 2017 Local Woman of the Year for the Cessnock Electorate. Mrs Gray's nomination recognises her outstanding achievements through many years of hard work and dedication. "It's the hard work of community heroes like Kylie that serves as an inspiration to women across our community and New South Wales," Mr Barr said. Kylie Gray is currently the District Manager of Cessnock Girl Guides and has mentored many young ladies in the Cessnock community. Kylie joined Brownies when she was seven and has been a youth member for 10 years and a leader for 28+ years, receiving many Special Achievement Awards for her efforts. Kylie has organised and participated in numerous community events and fundraisers. "It is truly a privilege to be able to acknowledge Kylie's hard work and her success," Mr Barr said.



Chicken pot pie

Serves: 6
Time to make: 50 mins (Hands-on time: 15 mins, Cooking time: 35 mins)
Total cost: \$20.10 / \$3.35 per serve (at time of publication)



Ingredients

1 portion Roast chicken base (about 1 1/2 cups meat) ~ 1 portion Tomato, mushroom and capsicum sauce ~ 200g frozen spinach, thawed, squeezed of excess water ~ 1/4 cup pine nuts ~ 6 filo pastry sheets ~ Olive-oil spray ~ 1 portion Roast potato base, to serve ~ 1 portion Coleslaw, to serve ~ 6 tablespoons Coleslaw dressing, to serve

Instructions

- Step 1** Preheat oven to 190°C. Make pie filling: Set a large saucepan over medium heat. Add roast chicken, tomato sauce, spinach and pine nuts with 1/2 cup water. Heat pie filling through.
- Step 2** Transfer pie filling to a large ovenproof dish. Put stack of filo sheets on a clean work surface.
- Step 3** Spray top sheet with a light coating of olive oil, then lightly scrunch; arrange over pie filling. Spray and scrunch remaining filo sheets to cover pie filling.
- Step 4** Put potatoes in a baking dish; cover with foil. Bake potatoes and pie for 20 minutes, or until pastry is golden and potatoes are hot.
- Step 5** Meanwhile, toss coleslaw with dressing in a small bowl. Serve pie with roast potatoes and coleslaw.

FROM PAGE 6

Members say ...

with the potential financial benefits to far outweigh the cost of promotion. We understand that many businesses are struggling through tough times and that unemployment is a major issue across our region. Residents are invited to like and follow our Facebook page – Liberals for Cessnock - to stay up to date with the latest news and events across the Cessnock LGA. We also provide a rundown of the major agenda items up for discussion at each Council meeting as well as alerting the public to development applications of interest. The three Liberals for Cessnock councillors also maintain individual Facebook pages with information aimed towards their particular wards. Ward D residents should search 'Cr Rod Doherty', those in Ward A can search 'Cr Paul Dunn' and my page is located by searching 'Cr John Fagg' Council meetings are held on the first and third Wednesdays of the month commencing at 6.30pm at 62 -78 Vincent St, Cessnock. The meetings are open for the public to attend and I



JOEL FITZGIBBON MP
 Member for Hunter

The biggest issue to emerge amongst many during the Parliament's last tumultuous sitting week was the Fair Work Commission's decision to cut penalty rates. The Fair Work Commission replaced the former Industrial Relations Commission. It was established by the Rudd Government as part of a program to modernise our workplace relations system-to make too make laws more uniform across the country and to update and reduce the number of awards. It continues to hear industrial disputes and sets award and minimal rates. It

encourage you to come along to see the important local issues being discussed. I am also more than happy to follow up any Council-related issues you may be having. Please contact me via john.fagg@cessnock.nsw.gov.au Cheers, John

does so independently of the Government. The Rudd legislation allowed interested parties to make applications for variations. That's exactly what happened with penalty rates; an employer body asked the Commission to review penalty rates with a view to reducing them. Rudd was right to give groups the right to make submissions directly to an independent body, in order to put forward arguments about how things might be done better, given changing circumstances in the economy. But the Commission was wrong to agree to the request to reduce penalty rates without compensation and no one in the Rudd Government ever imagined it would. Worse, the arguments the Commission put forward did little to back its own case. Suggestions the changes would create new employment opportunities were weak and during Senate Estimates, no expert was prepared to argue the case. Not even the Prime Minister was prepared to defend the Commission's decision, arguing only that it should stand because we should always respect the decision of the "independent umpire". This is a silly argument for him to mount in the absence of a willingness to also argue the decision was the right one.



Husband takes the wife to a disco.
 There's a guy on the dance floor giving it loads - break dancing, moon walking, back flips, the works.
 The wife turns to her husband and says: "See that guy? 25 years ago he proposed to me and I turned him down." Husband says: "Looks like he's still celebrating"!!!

The Government has the power to override the decision and it should use it. Taking money away from low-income earners is simply wrong. People earning a low wage live from pay-day to pay-day. Their budgets are tight and a hefty reduction in the wage can be devastating. It can also lead to homelessness and helplessness. Despite not defending the decision, the Prime Minister tried to argue the Labor Party has been complicit in penalty rate deductions in many industries. That is mischievous. The Labor Party proudly introduced more flexibility into the industrial relations system by allowing workers to collectively trade-off some benefits in order to secure other benefits. These "Enterprise Bargaining Agreements" allow both employers and workers to come out winners. Cutting the penalty rates of workers who rely on the award rate without off-setting the cut with some other benefit is a completely different matter. The Fair Work Commission's decision was unfair and the Prime Minister must both recognise that and fix the problem. Cheers, Joel

PHARMACY ADVISOR



Lee Grundy, Pharmacist & proprietor of Branxton Pharmacy

Boils and skin infections

A boil is an infection of the skin, usually caused by *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteria (commonly known as golden staph). Many healthy people carry these bacteria on their skin or in their nose, but do not get infections. Boils occur when bacteria get through broken skin and causes tender, swollen sores, which are full of pus. Other skin infections such as impetigo may be caused by staph bacteria. Impetigo, commonly known as school sores (as they affect school-age children), are small blisters or flat crusty sores on the skin. When the blisters rupture they release a yellow fluid and develop honey-coloured crusts. How are they spread? Boils and other skin infections are spread between people by:

- Squeezing, scratching or through contact with an infected area
- Using unwashed clothes, towels, or bed sheets that have been used by a person with a skin infection
- Using grooming items (e.g. nail scissors, tweezers, and razors) that have been used by a

person with a skin infection **Not washing hands carefully** How can you stop the spread?
 • Hand washing is important to prevent the spread of boils and skin infections. You should thoroughly wash all parts of your hands with soap and running water for 10-15 seconds

- Before and after touching/dressing an infected area before handling or eating food
- After going to the toilet
- After blowing your nose



- Drainage of skin boils or abscesses should only be performed by a doctor or trained nurse or health worker
 - In some circumstances infections may require treatment with antibiotics
 - After touching or handling unwashed clothing or linen
 - Keep cuts, scrapes, and boils clean and covered to avoid infection
 - Don't share personal items such as clothes, towels, or bed sheets (if you share a bed with someone, keep sores or wounds covered overnight) or grooming items such as nail scissors, tweezers, razors and toothbrushes
- Wash bed linen and clothing regularly**
 How are they diagnosed? Most skin infections are diagnosed on the basis of their appearance and the presence of any related symptoms (eg fever). Your

doctor may take swabs or samples from boils, wounds, or other sites of infection to identify the bacteria responsible. Some infections may be caused by bacteria that are resistant to some antibiotics. How are they treated? Keep boils or other skin infections clean and covered

- Bathe the boil or sore with soap and water or a salt water mixture
- Apply a hot compress to encourage the boil to come to a head

Keep boils and other skin infections covered and change regularly
 Do not squeeze boils

Cheers, Lee

Newcastle Fringe

The 2017 Newcastle Fringe will be conducted from the 22nd to the 26th March. There will be 21 different shows over 5 days at 7 venues in the CBD of Newcastle, including theatre, music, circus, comedy, cabaret and children's theatre. There are 6 acts from overseas, interstate as well as local Newcastle performers. A Fringe festival presents shows that do not necessarily conform to any set for-

mat. It is a place where artists can present something completely different. Instigated last year by Branxton writer and performer, Phillip Aughey, with great success, this year's Newcastle Fringe promises to be even better. For further information – www.newcastlefringe.com.au or on Facebook @ Newcastle Fringe. This is a great new festival for Newcastle with a show for every taste in entertainment.

Mattress Muster leads recycling initiative

Maitland Council will hold a Mattress Muster on Saturday 25 March from 8.30am to 12.00pm at the Council Depot Carpark on Metford Road, East Maitland. Each household in the Maitland local government area has the opportunity to recycle up to four mattresses as part of the Muster. Cot mattresses, innerspring mattresses and ensemble bases will be accepted, however a mattress with an ensemble

base will be counted as two items. Council's Waste Services Coordinator Elfi Blackburn says, 'By participating in this Mattress Muster you will ensure that components of your old mattresses are recycled instead of being disposed of to landfill.' As a result of six mattress musters since October 2014, Council has received in excess of 3000 mattresses. 'This is an opportunity for residents to do their bit for the environment by simply recycling something they might not use anymore anyway, all free of charge,' said Ms Blackburn. To participate in this recycling initiative, proof of residence in the Maitland local government area will be required at the time of drop off. Mattress Muster is just one initiative Council is involved with which assists with recycling across the city. Residents can also take advantage of the Fridge Buyback



scheme, which involves organising for your second working fridge or freezer to be picked up by professionals, degassed and recycled, for free. Depending on circumstances, residents might also get a \$25 rebate for organising to have the fridge or freezer picked up.

Call 1800 708 401 to book or go to fridgebuyback.com.au for more information. Locals are also able to drop off a range of items for recycling free at Mount Vincent Waste Management Facility including old vehicle batteries, scrap metal, used

engine oil, gas bottles and other general recyclables. Residents can also drop off household batteries and printer cartridges free of charge at Council's Administration Building at 280 High Street.

■ Photo above: Recycling mattresses



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August and May 2016. The RBA will next meet on Tuesday, 4 April 2017.

Is rental bidding legal?

The legislation does not prohibit rental bidding in New South Wales, or the Australian Capital Territory, Tasmania, Western Australia, Northern Territory and South Australia. Although rental bidding is not specifically outlawed in most Australian States, it may come under the auspices of section 18 of the Australian Consumer Law.

Section 18 says that a person must not, in trade or commerce, engage in conduct that is misleading or deceptive or is likely to mislead or deceive. Therefore although rental bidding is not illegal in NSW, it may be seen as unethical and its opponents might argue that it contravenes the prescribed rules of conduct for real estate agents as set out in Schedule 1 to the *Property, Stock and Business Agents Regulation 2003* and, in particular, Rule 3 which provides as follows:

1. An agent must act honestly, fairly and professionally with all parties in a transaction.
2. An agent must not mislead or deceive any parties in negotiations or a transaction.

However, the rules of

conduct do not apply to landlords so this argument would only be relevant if agents engaged in the practice of rental bidding. In summary, rental bidding is not illegal in NSW but may be seen as unethical and, therefore, may come under attack under the auspices of the prescribed rules of conduct or even federal law's misleading and deceptive conduct.

REINSW's view on rental bidding

REINSW believes it is best to apply both the common sense rule and helicopter view in determining if such practices in your business are worth pursuing.

Does it make sense, is it necessary and how would the consumer view it from an ethical perspective? REINSW President John Cunningham said: "It is always up for interpretation particularly when Australian Consumer Law is concerned.

"Interestingly most rental bidding is instigated by tenants desperate to secure a home to live in so agents need to know how to deal with this situation with care.

"Ensure that you record every communication and confirm everything in writing along with a total level of transparency in all you do.

"You need to look at your internal procedures and policies to see if this methodology fits and whether you are willing to

take the legal risks especially if you are proactively instigating the process.

"Do you have the necessary pre-frames in place so that there is no confusion in the execution of this practice from a consumer perspective?"

"The last consideration is whether it is worth the grief it may create. Auction sales are clear cut and covered by state legislation so there is very little confusion for consumers, so be wary of activities that require a legal interpretation that is not specific."



Victoria takes a lead on stamp duty

A decision by the Victorian Government to abolish stamp duty for first homebuyers for purchases below \$600,000 should propel the New South Government to also meaningfully tackle housing affordability. REINSW President John Cunningham said premier Gladys Berejiklian must put meaning behind her assertion that housing affordability is the number one priority for her government.

"Victoria has acted," Mr

Cunningham said. "It is time for NSW to step up and take a stand.

"NSW is now living in the shadow of our southern counterparts. We will lose our best and brightest if we do not match or better what Victoria has pledged to introduce.

"The clock is ticking and the government must act now before it is too late." Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews announced today that purchasers of properties between \$600,000 and \$750,000 will also receive a stamp duty concession applied on a sliding scale.

In addition, the Victorian government will establish HomesVic a \$50 million program to co-purchase 400 homes taking an equity share of up to 25 per cent. Eligible applicants will include couples earning up to \$95,000 and singles earning \$75,000.

Regional Victoria was also given a boost on Friday with the announcement of a doubling of the first homeowners grant for regional Victoria. First homebuyers building new homes in regional Victoria will be entitled to \$20,000 as of July 1 this year, up from \$10,000 for new homes valued up to \$750,000.

"NSW wound up its regional homebuyers schemes in March 2015. This must also be put back on the agenda," Mr Cunningham said.

Strata loose-fill asbestos deadline

Last year NSW Fair Trading offered free sample testing to eligible homeowners in identified NSW local government areas. Pre-registered strata schemes have until 31 March 2017 to email the approved owners corporation special resolution form to NSW Fair Trading (Asbestos.Enquiry@Finance.nsw.gov.au) for their free testing to go ahead.

If an accredited laboratory testing facility confirms that a property contains loose-fill asbestos insulation, owners will be contacted to arrange for the next phases of the program and may be eligible for the Voluntary Purchase and Demolition Program. NSW Fair Trading say that before exercising their votes at the general meeting, lot owners should be aware of the implications of the strata scheme being found to contain loose-fill asbestos insulation. Strata schemes which did not register prior to the registration deadline can arrange for a Licensed Asbestos Assessor to conduct a sample test at their own expense if they are concerned it may contain loose-fill asbestos. SafeWork NSW provides a search page for asbestos and demolition licence holders, including licensed asbestos assessors



RBA continues wait and see approach

The Reserve Bank of Australia has decided to keep interest rates on hold at the record low of 1.50 per cent for a sixth meeting in a row.

REINSW President John Cunningham said the RBA is taking a wait and see approach. He said: "The decision by the RBA to keep interest rates steady at its March 2017 board

meeting came largely as expected.

"All eyes are on international interest rate movements and it is unlikely that the RBA will act until at least May.

"It is time for those who are purchasing property and existing mortgage holders to carefully review their financial position as future interest rate rises should be factored into their commitment," Mr Cunningham said.

The RBA cut interest rates in by 25 basis points in

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2/72A Maitland Street, Branxton NSW 2335

Fitzgibbon says residents don't want governments second-rate NBN

Federal Member for Hunter Joel Fitzgibbon says many of his local Hunter constituents do not want the National Broadband Network (NBN). Mr Fitzgibbon told the Parliament this week many residents are hearing of the horrors being experienced by friends and family who have Malcolm Turnbull's fibre-to-the-node NBN and are either having "drop-out" problems with both the internet and their land lines, or find the new system slower than their old ADSL2 service.

"We know only too well about the digital divide between our capital cities and those of us who live in rural and regional Australia. There is a very significant divide of disadvantage in the regions," Mr Fitzgibbon told the Parliament. "In my own electorate, we also have a digital divide locally. The divide between those who have the Prime Minister's inferior fibre-to-the-node NBN and those who fear now getting fibre-to-the-node NBN. "Those who have it in my electorate,

particularly those living around the western side of Lake Macquarie, hate it. It is slower than their old ADSL2 service, but worse, it keeps dropping out. Worse again, their landlines keep dropping out." Mr Fitzgibbon highlighted the significant NBN downfalls through the case of a constituent who lives in Edgeworth who has been in touch with his office in an effort to solve ongoing issues with his NBN and landline connection. "Take Barney from Edgeworth. I will only use his first

name. On a daily basis Barney loses his landline. He talks to my office about how frustrating it is to attempt to talk to Telstra about the problem. He does not have any criticism of the staff at Telstra, but it is clear to Barney that they are just not capable of fixing his problem because of this hopeless NBN introduced and given to us by this Prime Minister," Mr Fitzgibbon said.



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Singleton Shire donate umbrella to Branxton PreSchool

The generosity of Singleton Shire Council shows no bounds, or should that be boundaries.

Last week the Mayor/President of Singleton Shire Council, Daniel Golenia, very generously presented a large umbrella to the Branxton PreSchool. So that the preschoolers could be well reminded of this magnanimous gesture the umbrella was decorated with, no you guessed wrong, it wasn't the Thomas the Tank Engine, it was the name of the donor, Singleton Shire Council.

local sign writers it has been ascertained that the cost of the printing on the umbrella would have been about the same as the cost of the umbrella! Great gesture Singleton Shire Council but wouldn't two umbrellas have been more welcomed that one with its glaring reminder. Further, if you are going to make more incursions into the Cessnock City Council Local Government area could you fill the pot holes in West Street near the Preschool!!

After making exhaustive enquiries with Thanks!



improve research and data collection to gain a better understanding of the problem. "Properly understanding a problem is always a first

step in any effort to address it," he added. "Done well, the recommendation to provide Councils with "tools" for managing flying fox

colonies may be useful." The full report can be found at www.aph.gov.au/environment/completed_inquiries

Flying fox committee reports to parliament

The Parliamentary Committee inquiring into the impact of flying foxes on urban communities tabled its report in the Federal Parliament today. The inquiry was initiated last year by Federal Member for Hunter Joel Fitzgibbon in response to the severe impacts flying fox colonies were having on Hunter communities. "Unsurprisingly, the

Committee agreed with experts who said flying foxes play an important role in our ecology as seed dispersers and pollinators for a wide range of native fauna," Mr Fitzgibbon said. "But Committee members also recognised the extent of the problem for local communities and for local Councils. It has put forward a number of recommendations which

address the complex and confusing web of regulations which make it so hard to deal with the problem. "The key initiative designed to deal with the complexities created by the multiple and overlapping roles of the three tiers of government is the recommendation for the establishment a "flying fox working group" within the

Council of Australian Government (COAG) framework. "While forming another committee is not always my first choice, I hope governments embrace the recommendation. It can only help and it would be of particular assistance to our local Councils." The Committee also wants the Government to provide additional funding to

Grapest 5km run set for May 6



<http://www.centaurooutdoorevents.com.au/index> for all details

You would think that drinking wine & exercise would be mutual exclusive but the Grapest 5km Run

combines the two. Set to be staged on the 6th May at Domaine de Binet in the vineyards "The

Grapest 5k Run... sip happens" is a 5km or 10km off road run, featuring a "1km wine walk" and is part

of a series of events to be held in some of the most scenic and stunning vineyards in Australia! The run course incorporates running through the vines and the all the surrounding areas each vineyard has to offer. It is just long enough to get the heart rate up if that's your thing, short enough to suit the more laid-back adventurer, and just right for EVERYONE! Whether you're a running enthusiast, a lover of fine wines, or just love a great night out, the Grapest 5k Run is a race like no other. Whatever you prefer, you will never have another experience like the Grapest 5k Run! And THEN let's party.

THE VALLEY OF PURSLEY
BRANXTON GRETA LOCHINVAR

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Greta Workers Club
7.00pm (start)
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Tues 8th Aug & Tues 10th Oct
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Supper provided

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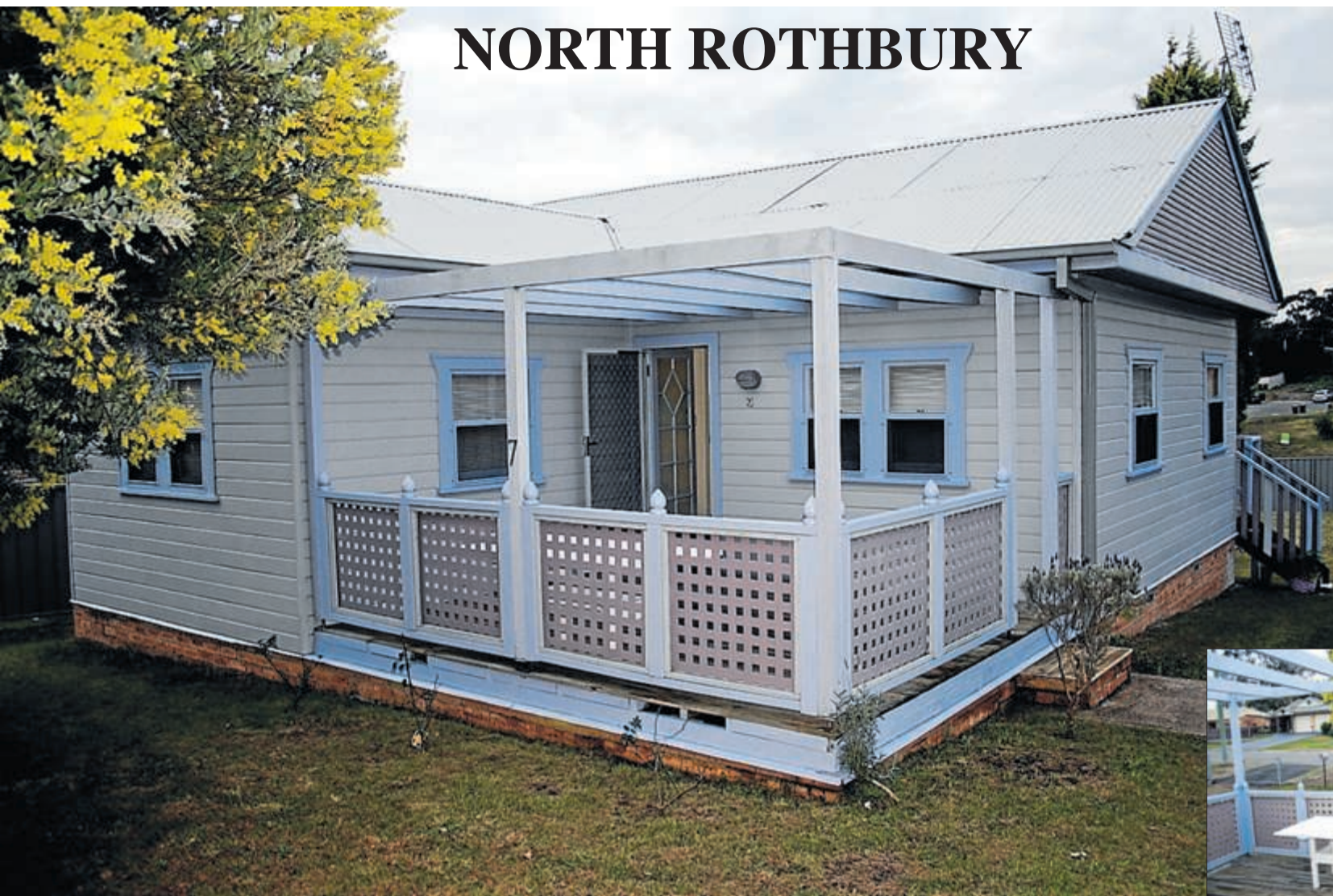
Junior Guides 7-10yrs Tuesdays 5-6:30pm
Guides 11-14yrs Monday 6-8pm
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Contact: Chris Bray (District manager) 0418230305
Or christinebray@hotmail.com for more details.

For Sale

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NORTH ROTHBURY



“Jewel box”

This wonderfully fully renovated weatherboard cottage is set on a very large fenced block in the small hamlet of North Rothbury. Features include:- new bathroom, renovated kitchen, new decking front & back (both covered from summer evenings westerly sun), very large block, original floor boards renovated to near perfection, 2 bedrooms, 4 minutes to Hunter wineries & restaurants & 2 minutes to Huntlee New Town proposed commercial centre & other facilities. The home has a number of decor/design features that make this cottage a unique experience.

\$295,000



For Sale

BRANXTON & VINEYARDS REAL ESTATE

P: 4938 3300

RUTHERFORD

New on Market



Almost Brand New

This deceptively large family home in Rutherford features four bedrooms, media room, main bedroom with ensuite and walk in wardrobe. Beautiful quality kitchen with stone bench tops, outdoor entertainment area, double garage, garden shed & split air con. All this on a quality fenced block.

ASKING \$450,000 (Open to All reasonable Offers)



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For Sale

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FOR LEASE

Commercial property in Maitland Street, Branxton

Rent by Negotiation

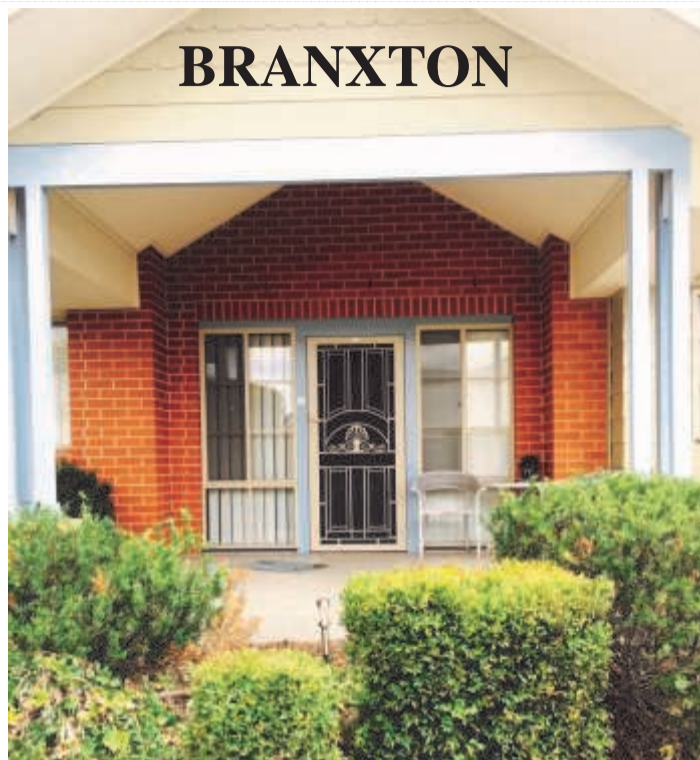


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Asking \$370,000



BRANXTON

Senior Living

This heritage designed 2 bedroom strata unit has an ensuite to the main bedroom, a lock-up garage & your own private courtyard. It is totally landscaped & also feature security gating. The site surrounds Branxton Medical Centre, is a 2 minute walk to the main shopping & amenities area, is just 5 minutes drive to the famous Hunter Valley Wineries, resorts & golf courses.

\$315,000



GRETA

Oldie but a Goodie

First home or astute investor

An older style 3 bedroom, separate lounge & good sized 'eat-in' kitchen, cottage on a fully fenced block. Excellent buy for a first home, astute investor or someone looking to enter the real estate market.

ASKING \$275,000



GRETA

For the astute investor

Approx. 2000sm (half an acre)

58 High Street, Greta

An older style 3 bedroom cottage is situated on this large, approx half acre, block. This is one for the savvy investor/developer or renovator.

ASKING \$472,000 (Open to All reasonable Offers)



Just listed

BRANXTON

Low maintenance living

Spacious two bedroom home with large living areas; all tiled. Split air con, internal access garage & auto roller door.

Modern kitchen with ample bench space.

Lovely courtyard for entertaining.

Asking \$290,000



Just listed

BRANXTON

Modern 3 bedroom Townhouse

Modern three bedroom townhouse of brick & tile construction. Split air con.

Ensuite to main bedroom. Open plan living with modern kitchen, separate lounge room. Double lock-up garage with internal access. Private & secure back yard

Asking \$320,000



BRANXTON

Potential! Potential

Two large bedrooms plus large 'sleep-out'. Separate lounge, bathroom, Kitchen. Good sized fenced yard plus separate garage.

One to do up at the expected price

Expressions of Interest



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“Branxton Gardens” Senior Living, Branxton ~ Recent sales

SOLD **SOLD** **SOLD** **SOLD**

UNIT 2 **UNIT 10** **UNIT 12** **UNIT 18**

BRANXTON & VINEYARDS REAL ESTATE

P: 4938 3300

'Shoon's Angels' claim Ten Over title



The Greta/Branxton Ten Over Competition was held on Sunday 12th March, with the Shane Nevin led "Shoon's Angels" taking out the honors and their second career title on the day. Re-scheduled from a fortnight before when it was washed out, the competition was narrowed down

to just 7 teams playing on Miller Park 1 & 2. The business end of the day saw the Greg "Shorty" Andrews led "Kox XI" account for "The Expendables" in one semi-final, while in the other semi "Shoon's Angels" defeated "Blue Balls." With a small but vocal crowd on hand to witness

the final at Miller 1, Shoon's Angels batted first and posted 3-96, with Dave Delforce (30), Rob Delforce (22) and Jackson Bell (29no) providing the majority of the runs. Kox XI always seemed behind the eight-ball in reply, and eventually ran out of overs to finish on 6-80, with Bellbird duo Ben

Fairlie (24) and Nic Siers (16) amongst the runs. Former club president Joshua Dagg described the victory as the greatest upset he had ever seen in 10 over comp history, but it probably wasn't the only rash statement he made over the course of what was a weekend to forget for him.

■ Above: Winners

As Time Goes By

ISSUE No. 9 THE NEWS Thursday 18th December 1997

Remembering the Miller Park Balls



The Miller Park Bowling and Recreational Club has just celebrated its 50th anniversary since its formation in 1947 and we have been fortunate to receive some early photos of activities at the club in those early years. Pictured above are, left, Miss Joy Goodwin and Miss Jacqueline Saxby at a Ball held on 4th September, 1948, just less than a year since the club was formed.

Things were a bit different in those days. The Miller Park Club was the only club in existence between Maitland and Singleton. In 1948, for example, the mines at Greta were still in operation and the building that was to eventually become the Greta Workers Club was still in use as a mine office. The Miller Park Club offered a variety of sport and entertainment including 2 tennis courts, 1 bowling green and Vigero fields. Vigero is a sport that has all but disappeared now but it was popular in years gone by. Vigero was a game mainly played by women and it was a little like cricket with a major exception being the fact that if you hit the ball, you had to run. It was fast moving and fun without a lot of the defensive play that occurs in cricket.

Life at the club was also made more exciting by the fact that there were dances every two weeks with Devers band from Branxton playing often.

The club was also a place of romance too. Shown below are two young people, Miss Jacqueline Saxby and Mr. Lenard Charnock, who attended the same ball in 1948. At the time of the photo Jacqueline was just 17 years old and Lenard was 19 years old.

Jacqueline and Lenard were married in 1951 and they have lived at Greta ever since then. They often attended social and sporting events at the club when younger.



Dollars and sense at your Library

Cessnock City Library is hosting two free seminars to help people understand financial planning. Cessnock City Mayor, Councillor Bob Pynsent said the seminars are all about learning how to plan your financial future.

"The Department of Human Services seminars will provide independent and practical information to help people take control of their finances".

"No products, strategies or plans are sold or recommended at the seminars, the information is intended to help people understand their options, prepare for retirement and navigate the superannuation maze".

"It's great to have the Department of Human Services providing this information as a neutral and trusted source," Cr Pynsent said.

Where: Cessnock Library | 65-67 Vincent St, Cessnock

When: Tuesday 21 March 2017, 10.30-11.30am | Understanding Your Pension

Tuesday 21 March 2017, 5.30-6.30pm | Retirement Income Streams

These seminars are presented by the Department of Human Services Financial Information Service and offer independent and unbiased information about retirement income streams and understanding your pension.

Future seminars are planned in the coming months. Bookings are essential and can be made via:

Email: fis.seminar.bookings@humanservices.gov.au

Phone: call the FIS seminar booking line on 136 357, from 8am to 5pm.



NEW \$300 million Regional Growth – Environment and Tourism Fund Announced

The Hunter Valley welcomes the recent announcement by Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional NSW, John Barilaro announcing the NSW Government's new \$300 million Regional Growth - Environment and Tourism Fund (RGETF). Established under the NSW Government's Rebuilding NSW Program, the Regional Growth – Environment and Tourism Fund (RGETF) aims to increase tourist visitation by investing in regional environment and tourism infrastructure, particularly focusing on assets that will grow and further diversify NSW regional economies. The NSW Government have committed \$300 million to the RGETF, with up to \$100 million available in the first round of funding. Expressions of Interest (EOIs) for funding have been invited from government, local councils, Aboriginal Land Councils and other Aboriginal groups, community groups and non-government organisations that have eligible environment and tourism infrastructure projects in regional local government areas that have the potential to create new jobs and regional growth from increased tourist visitation.

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St Brigid's Markets @ Branxton
9.00am to 1.00pm
Dates for 2017

Sun - 19th Feb	Sun - 18th Jun	Sun - 15th Oct
Sun - 19th Mar	Sun - 16th July	Sun - 19th Nov
No Market for April	Sun - 20th Aug	Sun - 17th Dec
Sun - 21st May	Sun - 17th Sep	

Helen 0427 047 024
www.facebook.com/stbrigidsmarkets

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GRETA WORKERS

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COMMENCING
WEDNESDAY
22nd MARCH
“ALL NEW MENU”
ALL NEW MENU

FRIDAY 17th MARCH
“SEARCH PARTY”
FRIDAY 24th MARCH
“SECRET SOCIETY”

RAFFLES
FRIDAY
SELLING
6.00pm
DRAWING 7.30pm
SUNDAY
SELLING 11.00am
DRAWING 12.00Noon



MEMBERS BADGE DRAW
WEDNESDAY
15th MARCH
\$3,800
SUNDAY
19th MARCH
\$3,100
MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN

“THE PARK”
RESTAURANT
WEDNESDAY —
SUNDAY
LUNCH & DINNER
CLUB PRICES

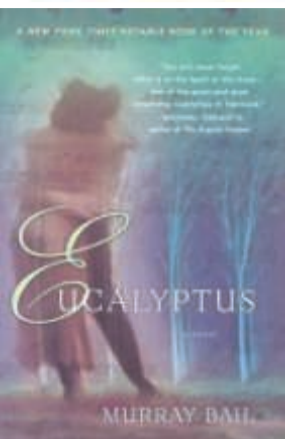
MEMBERS BADGE DRAW
THURSDAY 16th MARCH
\$3,700
SUNDAY 19th MARCH
\$5,000 (MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN)

RAFFLES
FRIDAY
SELLING 6.00pm
DRAWING 7.00pm
SUNDAY
SELLING 5.00pm
DRAWING 6.00pm



HAPPY HOUR
GRETA WEDNESDAY
MILLER PARK THURSDAY
4.00—6.00pm
\$3.40 a Schooner

MILLER PARK



Eucalyptus

by Murray Bail

REVIEW by
MICHAEL
UPCHURCH

Eucalyptus is an Australian classic novel the Miles Franklin Award. It has been classified as one of 50 Australian 'must read' novels (Ed.)

Consider the following itinerary: (1) a Mustache Museum in Prague; (2) a Museo de Piernas (Museum of Legs) in Quito; (3) a Museum of Atheism and a "Center of Gravity" in cold-war Moscow. These are just a few of the attractions in Murray Bail's kaleidoscopic 1980 novel, "Homesickness," in which 13 Australians circumnavigate the globe on an endless package tour. The book revealed Bail as a prickly and extravagant comedian, and its portrait of a young country trying overearnestly to connect with its Old World heritage was as

poignant as it was humorous. One character's expression of relief while driving through a stretch of Andean farmland said it all: "This is like a museum of crops and trees. We can sit back and enjoy ourselves."

Well, yes and no. In Bail's magical new novel, "Eucalyptus," the setting again is "virtually an outdoor museum of trees," offering readers ample opportunity to enjoy its creator's offbeat talents. But for the book's heroine, trapped in a nuptial arrangement straight out of a fairy-tale nightmare, any pleasure in her plight is out of the question.

The place is a riverside homestead, tricked out with a princess's tower, in New South Wales. The time -- although it hardly matters in this timeless tale -- is several decades after World War II. And the main characters are a widower named Holland and his daughter, Ellen, whose "speckled beauty" turns the heads of all who meet her. Holland is a controlling father, down to the last detail: "Almost unconsciously, he supervised her movements; it felt like the bestowing of protection." At times, his attentions skirt the edges of taboo: "He had always bought all Ellen's clothes, including underclothes. There was always something he felt she should be wearing." The only thing on which he lavishes more attention is his collection of eucalyptus trees. There are hundreds of them, including many rare species, planted and nurtured on his homestead over the course of his daughter's girlhood. These twin obsessions converge when Ellen, approaching marriageable age, is besieged by suitors, and Holland alights on a method of selecting a husband from among them: "It was simple enough. The man who correctly named every eucalypt on the property would win the hand of his daughter." Ellen, unfazed, continues with her daydreaming, skinny-dipping and idle wandering. After all, "anyone succeeding would have to be like her father, only more so," and it's difficult to believe that such a man exists. But when a certain Mr. Cave comes along -- tall, tidy, eucalyptus-obsessed and, to Ellen, lacking any appealing qualities -- she realizes she may have misjudged her situation. What Mr. Cave doesn't know is that

he has a rival of sorts: a stranger who has appeared in the homestead's eucalyptus groves. With no declared or easily discernible purpose, this young man enchants Ellen with his "circuitous storytelling manner." Each of his tales carries erotic undertones -- and all make oblique reference to particular species of eucalyptuses. The ensuing competition between the stranger's seductive tale-spinning and Mr. Cave's bloodless taxonomic imperative is teased out to the last pages of the novel in a fable that illuminates two vying and mutually inhospitable approaches to life.

A battle between orderly encyclopedist and visionary storyteller seems to rage within Bail as well. Early on in the book, in one of his numerous asides, he comments on mankind's "long and distinguished history" of attempting to humanize nature by labeling its parts -- an organizational impulse that is almost a reflex reaction in Bail's own writing. It is the storyteller in him, however, who describes the motivating force behind this impulse: "The oldest fear, the fear of the infinite." When Ellen's secret visitor appears with his seemingly inexhaustible repertory of tales, there's a suggestion that he may have found the more inventive way of absorbing and savouring nature's overwhelming variety.

"Eucalyptus," like "Homesickness," is a one-of-a-kind book, and from its start Bail makes clear what modern fictional accouterments he does not intend to provide the reader. Meticulous character analysis, for one: "A kind of applied psychology has taken over storytelling," he complains, "coating it and obscuring the core." In a genial swipe at the Outback's hold on the Australian literary imagination, he also announces that "strenuous efforts will be made to avoid the rusty traps set by ideas of a National Landscape."

That said, Bail proceeds to render his Outback landscape incandescently, if idiosyncratically ("All around, the earth had a geological camel-look"). As for his supposedly unpsychological tale, it positively bristles with psychosexual tension as it addresses the human urges to manipulate, possess and surrender -- in other words, the whole imbroglio of Love with a capital "L," whether it's carnal or parental. Even the news that Mr. Cave is drawn to the world of trees because it's "psychology-free" tells us exactly why he is psychologically unsuited to Holland's wayward daughter. Ellen certainly understands the implications of her father's close monitoring: "Her father had warned her



Career

He is most well known for *Eucalyptus* which won the Miles Franklin Award in 1999. His other work includes the novels *Homesickness*, which was a joint winner of The Age Book of the Year in 1980, and *Holden's Performance*, another award-winner. Reviewers recently compared Bail's *Notebooks 1970-2003* with Proust, Gide and Valery's. "The Pages" [2008] was shortlisted for the Miles Franklin Award. His latest novel, *The Voyage*, was released in November 2012. Laurie Clancy suggests that Bail is, with Peter Carey and Frank Moorhouse, one of the chief innovators in Australian short story writing, and that he was part of its revival in the 1970s. He notes that Bail is particularly interested in the relationship between language and reality and that this is evident in his early short stories. He says "the stories display the strange mixture of surrealist fantasy and broad satire of Australian mores that characterizes all of Bail's work". After early success with short fiction, Bail turned to the novel as a form commensurate with his vision of life's complexity, which emerges in all its perplexing intricacy in *Homesickness*. This first novel describes the unscripted, global travels of a group of Australian tourists to diverse museums, real and imaginary. His next book, *Holden's Performance*, dealt more overtly with issues of national identity and the diverse forces that shape individual character, while his later novels explored related issues in terms of key binary: in *Eucalyptus* these are empirical knowledge and imagination, in *The Pages* psychology and philosophy. Bail prides himself, rightly, on being a novelist of ideas, who is determined to be audacious in his creations and to challenge reader expectations and complacency.

The standard study of his work is Michael Ackland's *The Experimental Fiction of Murray Bail* (2012).

Personal life

Bail is the second of four children. His father worked in the tramways. He attended Norwood Technical High School. He worked in advertising agencies in Adelaide and Melbourne. He and his first wife moved to India in 1968, where he worked in an advertising agency in Bombay. He contracted amoebic dysentery on his travels, and ended up in the Hospital for Tropical Diseases in London. There he decided the novel he had written in India was worthless, so he threw it in the garbage. He remained in London for five years, the first year on the dole, before returning to Australia in 1975. He has been married and divorced twice. He was first married in 1965, and divorced in 1988. His second wife was fellow writer Helen Garner, whom he married in 1992.

about men. Did that include fathers?" As for Holland, his reaction to Mr. Cave -- the man trying to take his place in Ellen's life -- is a consummate study in paternal ambivalence. It's a blessing, perhaps, that Ellen has kept the existence of Mr. Cave's rival a secret from her father. None of this would work if Ellen's stranger didn't have all the storytelling skills that Bail attributes to him. Each of his yarns entices from its first line. "Off the coast of Victoria," one begins, "was a wife of a lighthouse keeper who became addicted to kite-flying." Another starts off: "In one of the harborside haciendas in Vaucluse lived a small bright-eyed woman in gold sandals who had been married and divorced so many times she had trouble remembering her current name." Who wouldn't want to know more?

Many of these "tales" are mere fragments featuring a woman caught in a web of some kind. And all of them come to an abrupt halt just as they're about to furnish glimmers of how their hapless heroines obtain their desire. Little wonder that Ellen is mesmerized by them. "Eucalyptus" offers plenty of ancillary attractions beyond its central narrative. Bail's prose, with its eliding syntax, is as distinctive as Henry Green's, and his Australian vocabulary can induce a severe case of slang envy. Why can't we have words like "shonky"? (O.E.D. definition: "Unreliable, dishonest.") Bail's description can be peerless (an East European administration is referred to as "government by cement"), while the enthusiasm with which he cites the names of eucalyptus trees ("Pumpkin Gum, Yellow Jacket,

Barber's Gum, Kakadu Woollybutt, Manna Gum, Gympie Messmate, Bastard Tallowood") can be contagious. It merely adds another level of delight to the book when its crazedly copious eucalyptus lore is undercut by Ellen's utter weariness at the thought of another tree: "I'm not interested in any of them!" There is antic humour, too, in the way Bail flaunts his authorial omniscience as he slips in an aside on a photographer who has met the courtship conditions perfectly but isn't even aware of the contest, or another about a botanist who unwittingly tramples the last remaining specimen of a eucalyptus species he is seeking. As striking are Bail's digressions on such matters as the affinity ("similar shape, similar function") of paddocks and paragraphs:

"A paddock has an alteration in the fencing for the point of entry, just as a paragraph has an indentation to encourage entry." In short, it's a pleasure simply to be immersed in Bail's caprice-prone mind. And given that he writes so sparingly (just three novels, one story collection and two books of nonfiction over the last 23 years), it's a pleasure that comes all too rarely. "Beware," Ellen's father warns her, "beware of any man who deliberately tells a story." "Eucalyptus," with its pixilated wit and technical wizardry, is storytelling as "deliberate" as it comes. But the only warning readers need is that it leaves you hungering for more -- far more -- of its author's strange and spry imaginings.



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daily thoughts

"Go to Heaven for the climate, Hell for the company". **Mark Twain**

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Hunter Mayors support Scot MacDonald

Chair of the Hunter Joint Organisation of Councils, Cessnock City Mayor, Councillor Bob Pynsent is urging the New South Wales Government to return Scot MacDonald MLC to the position of Parliamentary Secretary for the Hunter.

This follows Liberal MLC Catherine Cusack announcing her resignation from the role yesterday. Councillor Bob Pynsent said the NSW government must take a common sense approach when appointing a new representative for the region.

“Scot MacDonald MLC has held this role previously and is the obvious choice to return to the position”.

“Hunter communities have built a relationship with Scot Macdonald since his appointment to the role in 2015 arming him with valuable local knowledge,

Cr Pynsent said. Muswellbrook Shire Mayor, Councillor Martin Rush said he also shares concerns around appointing a representative with limited local knowledge.

“Returning Scot MacDonald to the chair will ensure we can get back to getting the job done for our community, as he already has a strong understanding of the challenges unique to our area”, Cr Rush said. Former Chair of the Hunter Joint Organisation of Councils, Maitland City Mayor, Peter Blackmore also supported Scot



MacDonald returning to the position.

“During my tenure as Chair of the Hunter Joint Organisation of Council’s Scot MacDonald supported us magnificently”, said Cr Blackmore.

Newcastle Lord Mayor, Councillor Nuatali Nelmes expressed her disappointment at the resignation.

■ Photo: Scot MacDonald MLC

Remembering Jascha: Cessnock’s own musical maestro



Back Row : W. H. Taylor, A. McAlpine, W. ... J. Gopinko, M. ... J. ...
3rd Row : H. Askew, R. Royston, R. J. Pilger (Sec.), J. Lorriman, ...
2nd Row : G. Nicholls, ... D. Anderson, Miss J. Johnson, Geo. Nicholls (Conductor), Colin ...
R. Nicholls
Front Row : A. ... W. ... W. ... W. ...



In 1915 Jascha Gopinko, a Russian Jewish immigrant, arrived in Kurri Kurri. While he worked as a

miner, his real talent lay as a musician and a naturally gifted music teacher. He amassed hundreds of students on the coalfields,

specialising in teaching the mandolin, violin and cello. Jascha Gopinko’s largely forgotten story has inspired an exhibition ‘Remembering Jascha’ which will be held in the Cessnock Library foyer between 20-28 March. Jascha’s love of music greatly enriched our local community. He founded the Kurri Kurri Mandolin Orchestra, the Kurri Kurri District Orchestra and the Cessnock Symphony Orchestra. Jascha moved to Sydney in 1936,

but for years returned on weekends to Maitland and Cessnock where he continued to inspire local students. Some of these went on to great acclaim and professional careers, including celebrated violinist and Sydney Symphony Orchestra Concertmaster Ernest Llewellyn. The exhibition has been timed to coincide with Harmony Day, a celebration of our cultural diversity and a day of respect for everyone who calls Australia home.

■ Photo at left: Jascha Gopinko

Have an idea to bring local heritage to life?

Cessnock City Council is urging residents, community groups and organisations to consider applying for grants offered under the NSW Government’s Heritage Near Me Incentives program. Cessnock City Mayor, Councillor Bob Pynsent said a range of grants are available under the program coordinated by the Office of Environment and Heritage.

“Last year Council and the Branxton Greta Business Chamber were lucky enough to secure a grant under this initiative. Once again I encourage residents, organisations and community groups to consider putting in an application. We are fortunate to live and work in one of most heritage rich areas of Australia, Heritage Near Me is all about protecting, sharing and celebrating our local heritage”, Cr Pynsent said.

Owners and managers of local heritage items in particular are urged to consider applying for a grant as there are a number of funding streams available.

The three grant stream opportunities are: Heritage Activation Grants, Heritage Green Energy Grants & Local Heritage Strategic Projects Grants.



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Seafood Raffle

Trivia





Myths About Mac Malware

There are many reasons why people choose Macs instead of other devices, and one of these reasons is security. It's widely assumed by many Apple fans that Macs are safer than Windows PCs. Macs are also considered to be more stable and less prone to crashing. However, no device is perfect. It's true that Mac has many advantages, but when it comes to malware, no device is ever truly safe.

With Mac computers accounting for nearly 10% of all PCs in use today and the popularity of the Apple iOS operating system for mobile devices, it's no surprise they are becoming an increasingly popular target for crooks.

There are a lot of myths about Mac's operating system. Since security is typically the number one concern for most computer users, we thought we'd give you a rundown of the five biggest myths you about Mac malware.

1. Mac Is A Secure OS

While viruses are a prime concern for most Windows users, most Mac users probably don't even think about how to remove a virus from Mac because they believe its operating system (OS) is the most secure of all operating systems. Unfortunately, there is no such thing as a perfectly secured OS. All operating systems have similar vulnerabilities.

Mac OS needs to get updated regularly in order to increase its protection against viruses and malicious software. (yep, just like Windows) Also, just like Windows, Apple does not support for some versions of its operating systems. Instead of a big announcement like the one for Windows XP, Apple is usually pretty quiet about discontinuing support.

2. Mac Is Not Targeted by Hackers

Many people believe that Windows is the favourite target of all hackers, and this is why many users choose to shift to Mac in order to get rid of hackers. Again, simply not true. Hackers look for vulnerabilities in all systems. There are more Windows attacks because there are more Windows users.

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Cyber-criminals are also aware that Mac users think their devices are safer and may be less likely to have virus protection

3. Mac's Built-In Programs Are Enough to Prevent Malware

Mac OS comes with built-in protection like XProtect, Gatekeeper, and an Application Firewall.

These programs are intended to boost security and protection against malware infections. However, just because a Mac has these programs doesn't mean it safe from all malware attack. Never forget that even Apple's developers were attacked by an OSX/Pint-sized virus, and all the above software programs were unable to stop it. So it's a good idea to consider third-party security programs as well. (again, just as with Windows.)

This doesn't mean Mac's built-in security programs are useless. Actually, they are very effective compared to other similar built-in protection programs found in other operating systems. The bottom line is that these programs are not enough.

5. Mac Is Virus Free

For a very long time, many people believed that Mac was virus free. (You'll also hear people say the same thing about Linux OS) Perhaps, they were referring to Windows viruses. Windows viruses cannot penetrate Mac, but that doesn't mean Mac is free from any virus. Macs have been the targets of viruses and worms since the 1990s and a worm specifically targeting OS X was first found in 2006.

Using a Mac can reduce the probability of a malware attack, but all devices from Windows PCs to Macs, to Linux desktops to Android phones, are vulnerable to attack. That's why users must always keep their devices updated, be cautious of where they go online, and use virus protection.

Google Fonts

Welcome to Google Fonts! This is an initiative to bring a robust set of open fonts to increase the potential for good design across the web.

When you arrive at the site, you'll find a page full of fonts. What I really like is that you can type on any of the font tiles and see how the font will look for what you want to say. You can also then apply your phrase across all the fonts. Then all you have to do is scroll down the page and find the font that best suits your design needs.

Once you find a font that meets your needs, you have several options for how you'll use it. I suggest starting by clicking

the red + in the top right corner of the font tile. This will add it to a tray at the bottom of the page. Click on the tray and you'll see that you have options for embedding the font in your HTML code or the CSS code for your style sheet. You also have the option to customize the font if you click Customize. This lets you select the style of the font (bold, italic, and font weight) for your embed. You can also use the red down arrow in the tray to download the file and install it on your local system.

This is a really great collection of open fonts! Check it out today!

<https://fonts.google.com/>

First Braille Smart Watch Ready For Pre-Order

The world's first Braille smart watch, the Dot Watch, is now available for pre-order. Dot offer a Braille watch face that visually impaired users can read with a touch of their fingers. It works with both iOS and Android smartphones via a Bluetooth connection. It can receive texts and alerts from any app or service that the watch face will then translate into Braille dots on the watch face.



The developers say that technology for the blind hasn't kept up with latest innovations and that most Braille devices are clunky and expensive. The watch will retail for \$290 in the United States.

Google Shuts Down Spaces App

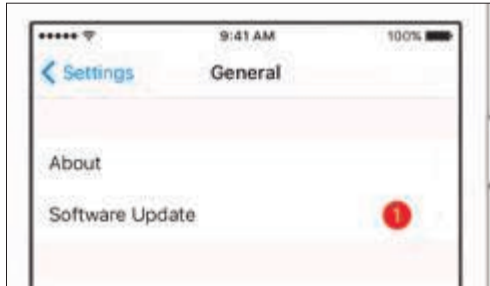
The folks at Google are in a bit of spring cleaning mood. They've decided to shut down the Spaces app, which was designed to work as sort of a small group social media platform.

The app never really caught on and the company said that while they learned a lot about how people come together, it was time to take that knowledge and apply it other products and shut Spaces down. The app has moved into a read-only mode and will shut down on April 17th.

Apple: Update Your iPhone 6 Now!

Apple says that they've solved the iPhone battery bug that's been shutting down the iPhone 6, 6s, and 6s Plus. Users report that their phones are going dead around the time the battery hits the 30% mark.

Apple says you can find the cure by updating to iOS 10.2.1. The company says the update has resulted in a nearly 80% drop in complaints about the shutdown problem.



So, if your iPhone has been bugged by this bug, it's time to update. Just head over to your general iPhone settings and check for the option to update the software. Before updating, make sure you have your phone backed up.

Smartphone Tip: This Thing Is A Calculator, Too!

This is going to seem like old news to anyone who has used a smartphone for any period of time, but there are still a lot of folks out there who are new to these amazing devices. So, I thought I'd pass along this handy bit of information about your phone. Did you know it's also a handy pocket calculator?

It may already be displayed on your home screen, but if it's not front and centre, you'll find it among your apps. Tap it and a familiar calculator screen will open.

If you don't want to bother opening the app, you can also use either Google Voice or Siri and just ask them the math problem? Just say "Hey Google, what's 15% of \$32.50?" or "Siri, what's 175 times 12?" Your digital assistant will do the work for you.

MOVIE REVIEW

LOGAN

In the near future, a weary Logan cares for an ailing Professor X in a hide out on the Mexican border. But Logan's attempts to hide from the world and his legacy are up-ended when a young mutant arrives, being pursued by dark forces.

Consumer Advice ~ Strong bloody violence

Director ~ James Mangold

Main Cast ~ Hugh Jackman, Patrick Stewart, Doris Morgado, Boyd Holbrook

Genre ~ Action, Science Fiction

Running Time 137 MIN

Release Date 02 March 201



Forget Batman vs. Superman or Captain America vs. Iron Man.

In James Mangold's moving tribute to X-Men's Wolverine, "Logan," it's all Logan vs. Logan.

He strips away the spandex, the posse and the chaos, distilling the story down to the essence of the man, Logan, also known as Wolverine, also known as James Howlett. What's left is the agony and the ecstasy of mutanthood, which star Hugh Jackman expresses as physical and mental torture.

Logan's greatest opponent is, and always has been, himself.

In this near-distant future of 2029, Logan shuns his mutant abilities. He drives a limo, racked with a hacking cough and a craving for liquor. He seems to be disintegrating before our eyes;

he's grizzled and mangy claws don't unfurl like

they used to. He mostly uses them for fending off hubcap bandits anyway. He toils alongside Caliban (Stephen Merchant) at a secretive Mexican camp to care for Charles Xavier (Patrick Stewart), whom they're keeping drugged up to keep his apocalyptic seizures at bay. It's not much of a life, or a legacy.

But this film almost isn't just about Logan, it's also

about Laura, a character who first began popping up in comic books in 2004. Played by newcomer Dafne Keen in her first film role, Laura boasts similar talents and characteristics to Logan, and the two share a feral rage when provoked.

She's smuggled out of a Mexican genetic engineering facility, and Logan's been entrusted with delivering her to safety in North Dakota. And so begins a long, strange, dark and violent trip for Logan, Laura and Charles.

Mangold pulls no razor-sharp punches in "Logan" – the film is horrifyingly, grotesquely violent, as Logan and Laura fight to evade the clutches of bounty hunter Pierce (Boyd Holbrook) and Dr. Rice (Richard E. Grant), who wants to contain mutants and develop their bodies into weapons. In Laura, Logan finds a part of himself worth fighting for, and do they ever, particularly in one brilliant sequence paying homage to "Mad Max: Fury Road."

Jackman, a gifted physical actor, demonstrates tremendous range and gives the performance of his life as the deteriorating Logan. It's a big performance, raw and compelling as hell, and his finest, most emotional work. It's also refreshing to see an unleashed Stew-

art. And Keen is a wonder, a tremendous discovery. Step aside,

Eleven, there's a new tough girl in town.

About halfway through "Logan," Mangold, who wrote the script with Scott Frank and Michael Green, pulls the rug out from under us, with a shockingly dark twist. This is after we've

become accustomed to the sight of a tiny girl ferociously slice and

dice a baker's dozen of assassins, but it's still an emotional bomb

blast. It's manipulative, but after that, we know all bets are off. No one

is safe in "Logan."

There are repeated references to the classic Western "Shane," about

a good gunfighter protecting the vulnerable. It's an apt comparison,

if heavy-handed, but damn if it isn't effective,

employing poignant words from the movie to do the impossible:

wring tears. Mangold turns the lens inward in the introspective "Logan," subjecting

this character and his legacy to an onscreen vivisection. The themes

of otherness and corporate exploitation could have been pushed further for more impact.

But Mangold never strays from Jackman, who is explosive and mesmerizing in the role

he made iconic. 3.5/5



Wines & Vines

'Let us celebrate the occasion with wine and sweet words' **Plautus**

..... enjoying the Hunter Wine lifestyle with Andrew Marsh of Marsh Estate Winery, Pokolbin



My grandfather is an encyclopaedia of sayings. 'Words of Wisdom', he calls them. Many of them border upon superstition, yet I grew up hearing them and still remember a few.

'Never eat pies on a Monday!' he would say. He would then explain that Monday's pies were the ones they couldn't sell at the footy on Saturday. Fair enough! But what about 'Cut your hair on Good Friday to prevent headaches in the year to come' or 'Tying a knot in your handkerchief wards off evil'. Hhhmmmm!

How about 'It is bad luck to let a fire go out on New Year's Eve'? Your house is on fire and the fire brigade turn up and instead of doing your damndest to put out the flames, there you are feeding it with firewood! That makes sense! Everyone knows the old bad luck superstitions about never opening an umbrella indoors or walking under a ladder. What about the belief that if pepper is spilt you will have a serious argument with a friend or starting a cruise on a Friday is bad luck. These last two came from my beautiful, adoring, patient and understanding wife, Holly. Not long ago, Holly showed me a new pair of shoes she had purchased (e-bay victim) for our daughter, Poppy. I picked them up from the floor and made some complimentary comment and placed them on the breakfast table.

"What are you doing?" she yelled. I jumped.

"What do you mean, what am I doing?"

"You can't put new shoes on a table" she exclaimed, "It's bad luck!"

"They're not dirty, they're brand new", I pleaded. I suddenly caught wind of the fact that placing new shoes on a table is bad luck. That makes sense!

Let's turn this around a little. How about good luck? A four-leaf clover, yes. Avoiding cracks along a sidewalk, yes, good one. A ladybug landing on you, uh-ha. What about a piece of coal that has fallen in your path? Actually, come to think of it, this one probably originated in the Hunter Valley. If a piece of coal fell in front of you in the middle of Sydney, good luck would be the last thing on your mind. How about 'A naked woman on board a boat is said to calm the seas'. Well, the seas may be calmed, but I don't know about the boat. Here's one for golfers. 'Golfers can have a successful day on the course if they start their round with odd numbered clubs and don't use balls with numbers higher than four.' That's where I've been going wrong! I know several winemakers who will only rack their wines (move their wines whilst working on them) at the time of the new moon.....true story! I can just imagine winery owners asking their highly paid winemakers (cough, cough) what they are up to in the winery at present. "Oh, nothing much We can't do anything until the beginning of the new moon." Hhhhhmmmm!

"Where the mistress is the master, the parsley grows faster". Well, there's your excuse for an affair. "I'm sorry I've been having an affair darling but the parsley just wasn't growing quickly enough!"

"If a single woman sleeps with a piece of wedding cake under her pillow, she will dream of her future husband." All I can say is that if her future husband ever shoved a piece of cake under his pillow before going to sleep, she'd call a padded ambulance, wouldn't she? What about 'The spouse who goes to sleep first on the wedding day, will be the first to die.'"

"Psssss.....are you asleep yet?"

"No."

"Well, hurry up!"

Actually, I can't think back to my own wedding. Does passing out qualify as sleeping?

'To cut bread in an uneven manner is a sign that you have been telling lies.' Thank God for sliced bread. 'If soot burns in a ring at the back of the grate, pleasure and happiness are on their way to you.' Now there's something to look for next time you're cleaning the fireplace.

Spilling wine is an auspicious omen, if it is done accidentally, while to drop a glass of wine and break the glass is a token of a happy marriage and enduring affection. So I am assuming that my falling asleep against a wall at the Royal Hotel in Paddington one night and dropping a full glass of wine, smashing everywhere, actually has a more positive ending than being escorted from the premises and thrown into the street. I like that one.

'If thirteen people sit to dine, the last to rise will meet with ill fortune'. Hey, that's happened to me before it's called 'washing-up'.

'If you sweep the floor out the door after dark, it will bring a stranger to visit.' Can the stranger be long and slender, clad only in lingerie and not speak English?

'A watermelon will grow in your stomach if you swallow a watermelon seed.' And I thought it was just the beer and chocolate! 'All wishes on shooting stars come true.'

Well, why is my hair still falling out? 'Rosemary planted by the doorstep will keep witches away.' Keep that one in mind.

'Unless you were born in October, it is unlucky to wear opals'- sorry darling!

'Mandrake is thought to have aphrodisiac properties'. Found a supplement for the opals, sweetheart!

'A knife as a gift from a lover means the love will soon end.' surprise, surprise! 'If you secretly put your toe nail clippings in a glass of lemonade and make someone drink it, then that person is supposed to fall in love with you.'

'Forget the cheesy pick-up lines, all you need is a pair of nail scissors and a Seven-Up!'

'If a bat gets in your hair, you are possessed by the devil.' no problems here then!

'A bird in the house is a sign of death.' Yes, for the bird! 'If a robin flies into a room through a window, death will shortly follow.' Same fate!

'Any man who eats roasted owl will be obedient and a slave to his wife.' Have you ever heard of anyone eating roasted owl? No! That's why!

'Those born on Christmas Day will never encounter a ghost, nor will they have anything to fear from spirits. They are also protected against death by drowning or hanging.'

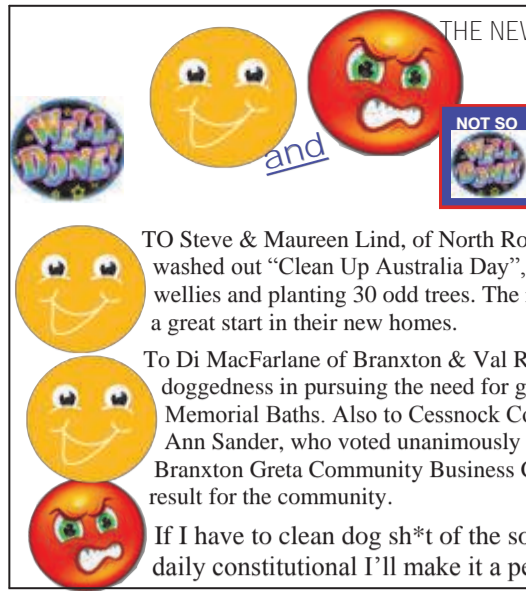
All I ever hear from people born on Christmas Day is that they get ripped off in the present department by the donors saying "This is for your birthday **and** Christmas!" No more sympathy for you guys!

Another one for some Christmas cheer is 'If you tie a sprig of holly to each leg of your bedside before you go to bed and eat a roasted apple, your future partner in marriage will come and speak to you in your dreams.' I did this once and it worked. She told me to stop peeing on the toilet seat!

Although my grandfather has a million and one of these superstitions or 'Words of Wisdom', he always finishes with this one "If you believe in superstitions, they will follow you around forever". Each to their own.

I'd better go now, not that I have a lot to do. I can't do any winemaking as I have to wait for the new moon to rack anything. What I can do however, is go and sweep the floor all the way out the door; take the roasted owl I was so looking forward to out of the oven and throw it away; clip my toe-nails and put them into a glass of lemonade and wait for something to happen. Ten minutes later I hope to be in a compromising position with a lingerie clad stranger, when suddenly there's a knock at the door. It's my mother-in-law! I suddenly realise....I forgot to plant the f***ing rosemary by the doorstep!

Cheers, Andrew



TO Steve & Maureen Lind, of North Rothbury, and their band of helpers who, on a washed out "Clean Up Australia Day", weren't deterred donning gumboots & wellies and planting 30 odd trees. The rain on the day gave the newly planted trees a great start in their new homes.

To Di MacFarlane of Branxton & Val Randall of Greta for their initiative & doggedness in pursuing the need for gas heater pumps at Branxton Greta Memorial Baths. Also to Cessnock Councillors, especially Clr's Melanie Dagg & Ann Sander, who voted unanimously to have the heater pumps installed. Also, the Branxton Greta Community Business Chamber for backing the proposal. A great result for the community.

If I have to clean dog sh*t of the soles of my shoes once more after my daily constitutional I'll make it a personal vendetta to catch the mongrels!

THE NEWS No.449 WED 15 March 2017 19
 You can e-mail, fax or simply drop your @WD or @NSWD into our office:- 12 Cliff Street, Branxton or Fax: 4938 3301 or E-mail: thenews@hotmail.net.au
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For Sale: Free range eggs. \$4/doz Greta 0412 976 809
For Sale: 3.5m Alum boat (reg). 9.9 Mercury outboard, trailer (reg). \$1500 ONO P: 0428 364 797
Garage Sale: Saturday 18th & Sunday 19th March 8am-2pm at 138 Hanwood Rd Branxton.
Guitar Lessons: Branxton. Limited places available. Please inquire soon. P 4938-3380 or 0409-038-271.
Microchipping: Cats and Dogs, all sizes and breeds, will come to you. \$20 per animal, please call Angela on 0431649947.
Fitness Classes: 'Core & Strength'. Get fit for summer. Classes are 6am and 10am Tuesday, 6am and 8am Thursday, at Miller Park Branxton \$12/class. Text/Phone Louise P: 0439 383 478
Riding Lessons: agistment, horses trained. www.byalee.net 0407 453 494
Share accommodation: Close to transport & shops, quiet street Branxton: off street parking. \$150p/w includes power & water P: 0423 288 067
Share House: Fully furnished, double bedroom, Built-ins, ceiling fan, Air Con, very quiet. \$165/week. P: 0413 896 866
Wanted: high quality mechanical wrist watches & clocks. Keen collector. Willing to pay good prices. Prefer Rolex, Omega, Oris & Tag. P: 0414 757 826
Wanted: all kinds of Honda mini bikes qa50 z50a z50j1 z50jz ct70 st70 & atc70. Contact Drew 0435814841
Work Wanted: Need an extra hand? I do all maintenance, labouring, construction, asbestos & have working with children licence. P (Pat) 0414 278 292
Work Wanted: Lawn Mowing: best rates - large or small area. P: 0459 123 397
Work Wanted: Lawns mowed, rubbish removal & slashing. Also 'Bobcat' work, trenching & post hole boring & general maintenance & handyman work. Phone Steve on 4938 3601
Work Wanted: HORSE CLIPPING - PERFORMANCE READY.

Hunter Valley & Central Coast. Phone Caron 0416 128 701
Work Wanted: Lawns properties, mowing, trimming, removals, maintenance. Paul 0478103814 or 49987567
Work Wanted: Sick of cleaning, cooking dinner, washing. Call me! Taking bookings now. Professional and reliable service. Sue 0497257081
Work Wanted: Rural Fencing (TW & A Hollingshed) P: 4998 1583 or Trevor on 0429 320 787 for quotes.
Work Wanted: experienced baby sitter looking for work. Very reliable P: 0458 606 804
Work Wanted: Lawn & Garden Maintenance, P: 4938 3153
Work Wanted: Piano teacher available to give lessons P: Phil Aughey on 0447 381 989
Work Wanted: Let me clean your home. Great references & rates (min 3 hours) P: 4990 2936
Work Wanted: Contract stock work with horses & dogs. Design & building wooden stock yards - rural fencing P Shaun: 0416 226 538

The pick of
 GO TO FOR FURTHER DETAILS
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 Caravan Pop top Jayco Designer Dual Axel 1992 model, Clean and tidy, 18" foot dual axle, Full gas oven and 4 burners, Lounge and a second lounge that makes double bed, Rollout awning (2yo) full annex and fly screen, Lots of cupboards - Tate 1100kg. GVM 1535. 12 months rego. Any questions call 0457363654



\$10,500

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The "For your Diary" section of The News is a FREE community service.

Dates for your diary >

Dates for your diary >

Sun 19 Mar 2017 ~ St Brigid's Markets 9am ~ 1pm
 Thur 23 March ~ Cessnock Prostate Cancer Support Groups next meeting. 3pm -4:30pm at Cessnock Leagues Club. Guest speaker is Doctor Mahesh Kumar from Newcastle Calvary Mater Hospital. Topic: Recent advances in Lung Cancer treatment. All welcome- Cost- FREE. Tea and coffee provided. Contact: Barry or Rose. 49904554 - 0439404554.
 Sat 25 Mar 2017 - Damien Leith 10th Anniversary Tour @ Cessnock Performing Arts Centre Cessnock
 Mon 27 Mar - Branxton Public School P&C Annual General Meeting 6pm in the Library
 Mon 3 Apr 2017 - The World of Musicals @ Cessnock Performing Arts Centre Cessnock ... The new musical gala with an international cast brings London's 'West End' and New York's 'Broadway' to Australia
 Wed 5 Apr 2017 - Branxton Public School Easter Hat Parade and Book Fair
 Thur 6 Apr 2017 - Branxton Public School - School photo day
 Fri 7 Apr 2017 - Branxton Public PBL Assembly 9:20am
 7-9 April 2017 - A Little Bit of Italy in Broke
 TUES 11/04 - B/G CWA Staff Room, old St Brigid's School, Station St, Branxton
 TUES 09/05 - B/G CWA Staff Room, old St Brigid's School, Station St, Branxton
 Fri 19 May 2017 - The Australian Bee Gees Show. The Saturday Night Fever 40th Anniversary tour: The Australian Bee Gees Show are digging out their flares and dusting off their platform shoes in preparation for the Australian leg of their 2017 world tour - so let the party begin! Cessnock Performing ARTS Centre

Sun 21 May 2017 ~ St Brigid's Markets 9am ~ 1pm
 TUES 13/06 - B/G CWA Staff Room, old St Brigid's School, Station St, Branxton
 Sun 21 Jun 2017 ~ St Brigid's Markets 9am ~ 1pm
 TUES 11/07 - B/G CWA Staff Room, old St Brigid's School, Station St, Branxton
 Sun 16 Jul 2017 ~ St Brigid's Markets 9am ~ 1pm
 Tue 8 Aug 2017 ~ "Night Time Bingo" at Greta Workers Club 7pm start
 TUES 08/08 - B/G CWA Staff Room, old St Brigid's School, Station St, Branxton
 Sun 20 Aug 2017 ~ St Brigid's Markets 9am ~ 1pm
 TUES 12/09 - B/G CWA Staff Room, old St Brigid's School, Station St, Branxton
 Sun 17 Sep 2017 ~ St Brigid's Markets 9am ~ 1pm
 Tue 10 Oct 2017 ~ "Night Time Bingo" at Greta Workers Club 7pm start
 TUES 10/10 - B/G CWA Staff Room, old St Brigid's School, Station St, Branxton
 Sun 15 Oct 2017 ~ St Brigid's Markets 9am ~ 1pm
 TUES 14/11 - B/G CWA Staff Room, old St Brigid's School, Station St, Branxton
 Sun 19 Nov 2017 ~ St Brigid's Markets 9am ~ 1pm
 TUES 12/12 - B/G CWA Staff Room, old St Brigid's School, Station St, Branxton
 Sun 17 Dec 2017 ~ St Brigid's Markets 9am ~ 1pm
 Hunter Valley Vineyards Concerts
 April 1st Cyndi Lauper & Blondie
 April 8th Barry Gibb
 21 October 2017 Opera in the Vineyards



Branxton Public School

Branxton Public School News

Our PBL Assembly was held on Friday of Week 6 with many students receiving their Bronze and even Silver Awards. It was wonderful to see so many parents and family members there to share the special event. After lunch the award recipients participated in sport activities, arty crafty fun, disco dance partying or quiet games. Great fun!

Grace, Harry and Dalton attended the Hunter AFL trials at Maitland in Week 7. All had a fantastic day with Dalton successfully making the Hunter team. Well done.

Local historian Melita Watson recently visited Stage 2 as part of their History unit. She is a wealth of information and we were lucky to have such an expert about Branxton share some of her knowledge with the students. They also participated in a walk around Branxton in Week 7, viewing the town of Branxton in a whole new way. They may be able to teach their parents a few new things about Branxton town and its buildings.



■ Grace, Harry & Dalton

On Friday of Week 7 we held Clean Up Australia Day at our school. All students were involved in cleaning all areas of rubbish. The students then used their mathematical knowledge to examine the data and discover the times of the day that are more challenging with regards to looking after our school environment. The students then received a certificate and surprise from Mrs Heinzel and her McDonalds helpers. Many thanks to McDonalds for sponsoring and supporting our school with this activity.



■ PBL Assembly



■ Students receiving surprise after cleaning from McDonalds helper

Dates for the Calendar

- Monday 27th March - P&C Annual General Meeting 6pm in the Library
- Wednesday 5th April – Easter Hat Parade and Book Fair
- Thursday 6th April – School Photo Day

At Branxton Public School students, staff and community are Respectful, Responsible and achieve their Personal Best.



■ PBL Rewards Day



Kirkton Public School News

Assembly Awards 1st March

The recipients of awards are:
K/1/2: Eva * *Excellent work in sounds and reading*

- Andre * *Excellent fine motor skills*
- Jaxson * *Fantastic progress and effort in reading*
- Wyatt * *Great recall of number facts*
- Zara * *Being a great role model*
- Year 3/4/5/6: Ethan St * *For taking the initiative and organising the gardening group & highly commended at Cattle Judging*
- Brayden * *For making the effort to work well in class*
- Jordan * *Always trying his best*
- Audrey * *Winning first place at Cattle Judging*
- Raoul * *Fantastic Writing*
- Millie * *Always finishing set tasks*
- Swae * *Finishing her work with a smile*
- Drew * *Excellent reading*

Welcome Disco ~ The P&C will host a Welcome Disco on Friday 17th March commencing at 6:30pm. Everyone is encouraged to come along and join in the fun. A DJ will provide the music, Hot food and drinks will be available to purchase on the night.

Funky Hair Day ~ Kirkton Public School will participate in the Leukaemia Foundation's Funky Hair Day on Friday 17th march.

Harmony Day ~ Kirkton Public School will host a "Harmony Day" BBQ on Tuesday 21st March.



Greta Public School

It has been a busy start to the term at Greta and our term 1 programs are well and truly



GPS zone swimming team.



Calming our bodies during mindfulness exercises.



up and running. We held our school swimming carnival at Branxton pool recently and sent a team of students to the zone carnival in Maitland. Each class is involved in a drumming program every week, and we have just started mindfulness training in the school in which all students participate in exercises focusing on maintaining calm and control and becoming more resilient.

■ Photo at Left: Getting the rhythm right in our drumming program



Upcoming events

Cattle weaning and disease management workshop - 16 March, Scone
African Love and Coolatai Grass management field day - 20 March, Glendon Brook
Floodplain farming evening - 22 March, Millers Forest
Managing our creeks workshop - 30 March, Murrurundi
Whole farm planning workshop (part 2) - 30-31 March, Manning and Great Lakes district
Throsby Creek Action Station - 2 April, Newcastle
Ewe management workshop - 6 April, Merriwa
Soil health field day - 12 April, Scone
Community planting day - 19 April, Ash Island
Thinning your forest for production or conservation - 22 April, Main Creek

Have your say on weed management in the Hunter

The draft Hunter Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan 2017-2022 is currently on public exhibition for community feedback.

The plan will guide resource allocation and investment in the region over the next five years, as part of a new approach to weed management across the state.

The consultation period is an opportunity for farmers, organisations and interested community members to provide feedback on the management of weeds in our region and across the state.

The draft Hunter Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan will be on public exhibition until 8 March 2017. Submissions can be made online, or by attending one of three drop-in consultation sessions being held during the exhibition period:

Maitland: Friday 17 February, 10am - 1pm Maitland Town Hall, High St
 Taree: Monday 20 February, 10am - 1pm Hunter Local Land Services office, 98 Victoria St

Scone: Tuesday 21 February, 10am - 1pm Upper Hunter Shire Council, 135 Liverpool St

The plan outlines strategies and actions to achieve improved weed management and lists the priority weeds for the region. It has been developed collaboratively with Hunter Local Land Services and the Hunter Regional Weeds Committee, which includes representatives from major stakeholder groups. Weeds are managed under the Biosecurity Act 2015, which adopts the concept of a general biosecurity duty. It means that anyone who is aware of a potential risk should take all reasonable and practical measures to minimise or eliminate that risk. The plan is a direct response to this legislative reform. The primary outcome of the weed reform process will be the integration of weed management efforts across the state. For the first time in NSW, there will be a set of agreed priorities and actions which apply across both public and private land. Increased collaboration in the management of weeds will improve biosecurity outcomes and increase agricultural productivity. Copies of the plan are available on the Local Land Services Open website at open.lis.nsw.gov.au or from any Hunter Local Land Services office.

Blood On The Track

Formerly Racing & Breeding Brian Russell
 Bloodstock Media Service



Winx from the paddocks that produced Ajax's sire

ONE of greatest shocks in the history of Australian racing was the defeat in a three starter Rawson Stakes over 1800m at Rosehill on March 25 1939 of the Widden Stud produced Ajax at 40 to 1 on. Chasing his nineteenth successive win, the handsome chestnut son of supersire Heroic and the imported Medmenham finished second, frazzled after being niggled at for much of the trip by Muswellbrook bred and owned Allunga and

overpowered close to the line by Spear Chief, a Queensland champion who a few weeks later won the Brisbane Cup for the second successive year.

The defeat in the Rawson cost Ajax 23 wins in succession as he won his next four outings. As it was his 18 straight wins prior to the loss constituted a record for successive wins in quality Australian racing that stood for over seventy years, obliterated in 2009-13 by Black Caviar, the Victorian bred unbeaten mercurial female sprinter who blitzed her way to 25 straight wins.

The Victorian bred 1915 foaled gelding Gloaming won 19 races in succession at metropolitan level, but most of them were in New Zealand. Also a NSW produced performer, the Ingham brothers bred Luncheon (GB) colt Picnic in the Park, won 21 lower grade races in succession, including two in the one day, in Queensland in just over six months in 1984-85. At his 20th win, one at Townsville, many bookmakers showed his price at 80-1 on.

At this time, Ajax holds the Australian record for the most successive wins by a male and for a NSW bred performer of either sex in first class racing.

His NSW record, however, is under threat from Winx, the Chris Waller trained, Hugh Bowman guided mare with a motor that shames Porche, who, despite a sodden track, throttled to her 15th successive win at Randwick on Saturday February 25

It was her 19th win from 25 outings and lifted her earnings to over \$9.8million, contributions including victories in nine Group 1s. They have

been two wins each in the Chipping Norton and Cox Plate and one each in Doncaster, George Ryder, George Main, Caulfield Stakes and Queensland Oaks.

Winx was accoladed Australia's Horse of the Year for 2015-16, the Leading Older Female and their second best racehorse of either sex in the World Rankings for 2016 and currently lays claim to being the best in the world.

She was bred by Sydney businessman John Camilleri under Fairway Thoroughbreds using Darley's very good shuttle sire Street Cry (Ire) (by the Mr. Prospector sire Machiavelian) and Vegas Showgirl (NZ), a brilliant race filly by the Success Express (USA) sire Al Akbar, and was foaled and reared on Coolmore at Jerrys Plains. They sold her at the Magic Millions yearling sale at the Gold Coast to her part owner Peter Tighe's Magic Bloodstock Racing for \$230,000.

Now residing on behalf of Camilleri at the new Segenhoe stud farm along the Hunter River near Scone, Vegas Showgirl did not have a foal in 2015 but produced a filly by Snitzel last August

and went to Exceed and Excel at nearby Darley.

Winx grew up in the same paddocks that produced Ajax's sire Heroic, but at that time the stud was owned by the Moses brothers, Bill and Fred, and operated under the name of Arrowfield. Like his son Ajax and Winx, a Cox Plate winner, Heroic went on to be seven times Australian Champion Sire from use at Tarwyn Park, Bylong Valley.

A winner of 21 races, at least ten of which were at Group 1 level, in a 52 start career, Heroic is one of two performers who grew up on the Jerrys Plains property when it was in Moses ownership who now adorn the Australian Hall of Fame. The other is Poseidon, a winner of 19 of 33 outings, including as a 3-year-old, the AJC Derby, Victoria Derby, VRC and AJC St Legers, The Melbourne Cup and Caulfield Cup again at four.

Ajax is also in the Hall of Fame, one which, assuredly, has niche awaiting Winx.

HALF-SISTER TO WINX: Miss Atom Bomb, an Encosta de Lago half-sister to Winx and the first foal out of Vegas Showgirl, did not race, but is breeding for Mr. P

Board, Victoria. Her first foal is a yearling filly by Sepoy.

TEN STAKES WINNERS: *Winx was one of ten stakes winners across Australasia on February 25 who were graduates of Magic Millions sales. The others included Black Heart Bart (Group 1 Futurity Caulfield), Stratum Star (Group 2 winner Caulfield), Farson (Group 2 Autumn Classic Caulfield), One More Honey (Group 2 Sweet Embrace Randwick) and Gold Fever (Group 2 Breeders' Stakes in New Zealand).*

Two days of yearlings at Scone in May

A POPULAR feature of Australia's thoroughbred sales for seventy years has been the annual Scone Sale, one originally a mixed collection, but for over the past thirty years conducted primarily as the Inglis Hunter Valley Breeders Yearling Sale and held in May on the last day of the town's annual Horse Festival.

It is a sale which has gone from strength to strength in quality with the concentration of Hunter Valley breeding into major

operations and the much bigger books put to top sires. The 2016 Sale catalogue of 206 lots included yearlings by I Am Invincible, Manantra Rain, Foxwedge, Unce Mo (USA), Star Witness, So You Think, All America, Casino Prince, All Too Hard, Bel Esprit, Choisir, Mossman, Piarro and High Chaparral (Ire), to mention a few.

The demand for use of the Scone market by breeders has got so strong, Inglis are extending the 2017 Sale to two days, Sunday and Monday May 14 and 15, and are cataloguing 300 lots. Lots 1-200 will be selected and presented on day one and the other 100 on the Monday. They will be followed by a selection of weanlings and mixed bloodstock.

All 300 yearlings will be eligible for the \$5million Inglis Race Series including the \$100,000 Scone Inglis Challenge for 2-year-olds. This race is one of the eight \$100,000 events (seven stakes) at the '\$2million' Scone Cup Carnival on the Friday and Saturday on the eve of the Sale.

Local Real Estate
4938 3300

Detailed saleyard report



Saleyard report - cattle

Singleton report date 8/3/17

Yarding 720 ~ **Change -335** (Comparison Date 1/3/17)

Numbers slipped, as good rainfall was recorded around the supply area, with the quality in the penning very mixed. There was a limited supply of prime younger cattle, with the bulk in the penning suitable for restocker and lot feeder orders. The heavier cattle suitable for the export orders were scarce in the pens. The usual orders competed, with quality the main driver regarding price variations. The lighter vealer steers to the restockers lifted 4c to average 392c after reaching 417c/kg. The medium weights averaged firm making from 310c to 399c/kg. The vealer heifer struggled in the competition and slipped 8c, with the over 200kg pens ranging from 297c to 338c/kg. Yearling steers lifted 3c to 8c, with the best to the lot feeders topping at 358c/kg. The yearling heifers to the restockers averaged close to firm, as the majority sold around the 288c/kg range. Prime young cattle to the butchers reached 370c/kg. The bulk of the older steers sold to lot feeder orders, making from 270c to 280c, with the better finished pens suitable for the exporters reaching 270c/kg. Cows sold close to firm, as the better finished heavy weights topped at 222c/kg. Restockers paid up to 246c/kg to secure their selection of the plainer lighter end. The best heavy weight bull reached 225c/kg.

Scone report date 7/3/17

Yarding 1512 ~ **Change -312** (Comparison Date 28/2/17)

With rainfall recorded around the supply area, numbers slipped and quality improved compared to the last market. The bulk in the penning entered the younger categories, as the cow numbers were lower, week-on-week. The usual buyers competed in a mainly stronger market. The lighter vealer steers to the restockers recorded solid gains, with quality contributing in places, as prices ranged from 370c to 444c/kg. The over 200kg pens remained firm at 328c to 400c, as the heavier end also experienced quality related price improvements to reach 380c/kg. Vealer heifers lifted 9c, with the medium weights to the restockers and backgrounders making from 320c to 365c/kg. Yearling steers were 2c to 11c dearer and more in places depending on weight, with the medium weights to the lot feeders selling from 305c to 366c/kg. The yearling heifers improved 8c, with those sold to the lot feeders reaching 325c/kg. The prime conditioned younger cattle to the butchers reached 350c/kg. There were not enough grown steers and heifers to quote. The cows sold 1c to 3c either side of firm, with the plainer light weights making from 140c to 214c, as the better covered heavy weights ranged from 212c to 230c/kg. The best heavy weight bull topped at 260c/kg.

TRLX Tamworth report date 6/3/17

Yarding 1769 ~ **Change 189** (Comparison Date 27/2/17)

There was a further increase in the numbers. Quality was very mixed with vealers and yearlings well supplied. Cows made up the bulk of the heavy cattle section. There were some good lines of young cattle available to restockers and feedlotter, both good and plain quality. The usual processors were in attendance along with a little extra competition for heavy cattle. Restockers and feedlotter were well catered for and were prepared to pay premiums for the better quality lots. A lift in quality saw the heavy weight vealer steers to restock dearer. The light and medium weights sold to a cheaper trend. Trends were similar for the heifer portion with price premiums for the high quality lots. There was not a lot of change in the market trend for yearling steers to restock and feed. Some of the plainer quality light weights attracting discounts. Medium weight yearling heifers to restock and feed sold to a slightly cheaper trend with some of the fall breed related. Heavy weight heifers to feed were dearer, again quality related. There were very few young cattle suitable to the trade. There was little change in the market trend for heavy grown steers, some weight for age price improvement. Well finished grown heifers saw a firm to dearer market trend. Solid demand saw the cow market remain firm with an odd dearer sale. There were quite a few light weight yearling bulls penned with most returning to finishing paddocks. The heavy bulls remained firm.

SPORTS RESULTS



Branxton Veteran Golfers

Results 2-3-17 Stableford

Div 1 Winner I Harris 34 pts (SOD) R/u T Seamer 31 pts 3rd R Hebbe 30 pts
 Div 2 Winner P Anderson 33 pts R/u S Dunker 30 pts 3rd P Tracey 29 pts
 Ladies Winner M Hunt 25 pts R McCarthy 23 pts (c/b) 3rd N Craig 23 pts

NTPs Ladies M Hunt Gents G Gazzard
 Members draw - Not won
 A pleasantly warm overcast Autumn day, for the 35 players who had gathered for a round of golf, presented itself for the comfort of all participants. Congratulations to Ivan Harris on winning his division and achieving the "Score of the Day" and a well done to all other winners and placegetters.

Branxton Veteran Golfers Results 9-3-17 Stableford

Div 1 Winner R Hebbe 30 pts R/u L Hunt 29 pts (c/b) 3rd G Wilton 29 pts
 Div 2 Winner P Anderson 30 pts (c/b) (SOD) R/u S Condran 30 pts 3rd L Bootes 29 pts
 Ladies Winner M Hunt 29 pts R/u R McCarthy 28 pts 3rd F Oakes 24 pts (c/b)
 NTPs Ladies S Williams Gents B Payton
 Members draw - Not won
 A larger number, than usual, of players assembled, on a mild overcast day to enjoy fellowship and a round of golf. The "Score of the Day" was achieved by Paul Anderson, who also won his division. Congratulations Paul and a well done to all other winners and placegetters.

Branxton Lady Golfers
 Last week Branxton Ladies played in the first round of the District Pennants. Branxton played

Muswellbrook at the Hunter Valley Golf Course. After some strongly fought matches the result was a square with three wins and three loses. Well done Caren Caldwell, Ruth McCarthy and Jan Scobie. Next week will see Branxton play Singleton at Singleton.
 On Friday, Branxton will be the best attended club, with 12 competitors, at the HRDGA Club Visit Day to be held at Dungog. Good golfing to those attending. Last week at home the first round of the monthly medal was played. This is a scratch event.
 Winner: Kerrie O'Connell with 68 nett
 Runner up: Nikki Craig with 78 nett.
 Least Putts: Tracey Miller 30 putts.
 Nearest to the pin: Jan Scobie.

Results this week. Ladies played first round of the Pauline Thomas Memorial Event. This is a Stableford game format.
 Winner : Kerrie O'Connell 34 point
 Runner-up: Trish McMillan 32 points
 Nearest to the pin: Kerrie O'Connell
Hunter Valley Golf Club Results
Sunday 26th February
 Scott Conti has won the Weekly Challenge with a solid 40 point round from Nathan Lawrence who carded 37 points.
Tuesday 28th February
 Grahame Sheldon continued his fine form to claim the Tuesday Stableford with 43 points from playing partner Brad Bell who impressed with his 42 point round also, 3rd went to Michael Young with a solid 41 points. Ball

winners were: Ray Hodson 39, David Peel 36, Mark Fullbrook 35, Ken Scott-MacKenzie 35, Lidsay Self 34 and Wayne Kearney 34 c/b
Wednesday 1st March
 Normal Ladies competition resumed this week with a 2 Person Ambrose where Melita Watson and Julie Van Den Berg combined very well to win the event with 65 net from Sue Williams and Leesa Robinson on 69 net surviving a countback to Jill Slatter and Robyn Dunlop in 3rd place. Ball winners were: Dale Hamilton and Brenda Mannix 73, Kerrie-Anne Skinner and Isabel Skeates 74 and Lorraine Clack and Dianne Oakes 74. Ladies golf will resume on the 15th March as the course is booked out next week.
Thursday 2nd March
 Garry Hedges has won the Vets Stableford with an outstanding 45 point round from Garry Clarke 43 and Garry Marsden taking the minor placing with 42 points. Ball comp nor Nearest-the-Pin details

available at this time. Next week the Vets will play Par.
Saturday 4th March
 Overnight and early morning rain depleted the Saturday field somewhat with those who competed handed in good scores from the Blue Tees. A Grade went to Justin Preece with 36 points from Tom Blomley on 35, B Grade to Michael Booth on 39 points from Peter Puerta 38 and C Grade to Jeff Shanahan with 39 from John Barbour with 37 points. Ball winners were: Hieu Le 36, Ben Pickering 35, Adrian Kent 35, Michael Tsakissiris 34, Paul Bullock 34, Steve Piggot 34, Brad Burgess 34, Dale Macklinshaw 34, Shawn Parish 33, John Parish 33, Ray Hodson 33 and Jaye Stevens 32 c/b. Nearest-the-Pins went to Sam Cashman (3rd) Peter Puerta (4th) Steve Piggot (8th) Jaye Stevens (10th) and Ray Hodson (17th). Next weeks event will be the Monthly Medal Stroke round and Golf NSW Weekend Medal Rd 1 for Ladies.

Hungry

WHAT'S ON



2 for 1 PIZZA's



STEAK STAMPEDE



PASTA NIGHT

SPECIAL PASTA DISHES ALL DAY



SCHNITZEL NIGHT



Dine in Only

50 MAITLAND RD BRANXTON P:49381335



Come to the Friends of the Greta Museum group

Benefits

- * Take pleasure knowing that you are helping Greta retain its rich history.
- * Socialise, start or join discussions on how to improve the attraction, and widen the coverage of the museum. Get help with your own research projects.
- * Revive an old craft - it's also a chance to use and share your talents.
- * Receive a 25% discount off everything for sale in the museum.
- * Light refreshments are provided at each meeting (last Wednesday of the month 11am - 1pm, no school holiday meetings.)

Cost is just \$2 per meeting, no joining fee.

Just call in, or contact Neridah on 0427657150, or email gretahistoricalmuseum@gmail.com.

Museum opens Wednesdays & Saturdays 11am-3pm, 96 High Street, Greta (in former Council Chambers).

Greta Museum's
Old Style New Wares & Sweet Shop
 SALE now on -
50% off all sweets in the shop
 Great for gifts or just to indulge
 Open most Wednesdays & Saturdays
 96 High Street, Greta

NORTH ROTHBURY
Tidy Towns
 Caring for our environment
 Visit us on Facebook

SPORTS RESULTS

Hunter Valley Golf Club Sunday 5th March

The Weekly Challenge has gone to Andrew Zok with a very good 40 points from Simon Clegg who returned 39 points.

Tuesday 7th March Troy Kear has won the Tuesday Stableford with 39 points from Garry Hedges with 37 on countback to Grahame Sheldon also on countback.

Ball winners were: Ken Springbett 37, Rick Turnchini 37, Geoff Sweetman 37, John Stewart 37, Kane Goodchild 36, Gary Arnold 35, Anthony Bower 35, Greg Amlah 35 and Lindsay Self 35 c/b. Nearest-the-pins went to Wade Attewell (3rd) Grahame Sheldon (4th) and Troy Kear (17th)

Wednesday 8th March

No Ladies Golf this week, golf will resume on Wednesday 15th March with the 1st Stroke Round of Golf NSW Medal and putting .

Thursday 9th March

The Vets Par round has been won by inform Garry Hedges with +4 from Darrell Preston +3 with Steve Rawlings surviving a countback on +2 for 3rd spot. Ball winners were: John Stewart +2, Kevin Smith +1, Ray Hodson +1, Ken Harris +1, John Harrison +1, Garry Marsden 0, Andrew Hamilton 0, David Peel 0 and Anthony Neale 0. Next week the Vets will play a 2BBB.

Saturday 11th March

Royal Sydney GC member Simon Baggott has won the A grade section of the Monthly Stroke round with a fine 66 net from Angello Korlevic on 70 net, B Grade and Medal winner was Adam Fisher with a great 64 net from Jaye Stevens 70 and C Grade to Peter Dow with 73 net from Jeff Shanahan with 76 on countback. Ball winners were: John Wallace v73, John Furlong v73, Michael Booth 74, John Brown 74, Bruce Chambers 75, Troy Wallis 75, Kevin Smith 77 and Grahame Sheldon 77. Nearest-the-Pins went to Angello Korlevic (3rd) David Peel (4th) Jaye Stevens (8th) and Grahame Sheldon (17th). Next Saturday's event will be a Medley Stableford.

BRANXTON GOLF CLUB –SAT 11TH MARCH STABLEFORD

A GRADE WINNER Rodney Wilton 39 pts
A GRADE RUNNER UP Troy McCaw 38 pts
A GRADE THIRD Michael Simpson 36 pts
B GRADE WINNER Robert Hale 44 pts c/b
B GRADE RUNNER UP Paul Bush 44 pts
B GRADE THIRD Neil Jordan 42 pts
C GRADE WINNER Rodney Moylan 36 pts
C GRADE RUNNER UP John Martin 33 pts
C GRADE THIRD Lennard

Porter 32 pts
BALL COMP 32 pts
NTP
R Hale 126 cm
Lenny Porter 89 cm
R Caldwell 164 cm
R Wilton 143 cm

Rod Wilton returned to form to win A Grade on Saturday with a well compiled 39 pts. Rod has been a talented golfer for many years who is capable of producing low rounds on a consistent basis. Troy McCaw finished runner up with his 38 pts, a round which included an eagle on the 7th hole. From all reports he sank a 30 foot putt—or was it a 60 foot putt? so from the evidence given we will say he sank a 45 foot putt to record his eagle wand win the eagles nest of 12 balls. Michael Simpson continues to impress finishing third with his 36 pts. Robert Hale produced one of his best rounds yet, a round of which he is quite capable being a former C Grade Club Champion, winning B Grade with an excellent 44 pts, defeating the unlucky Paul Bush who also had 44 pts—it's hard to believe you can't win with 44 pts! Neil Jordan, a former regular A Grader, is starting to play very consistently, finishing third with 42 pts. In C Grade local veteran Rod Moylan showed them how it is done by winning with his 36 pts. John Martin finished runner up with 33 pts with local legend, Lennie Porter, third with his 32 pts, which included the shot of the day on the 4th, which finished only 89 cms away. 32 pts was needed to win a ball. On Sunday the Branxton Pennants teams produced some stunning results. B Grade continued their undefeated season winning 2-1 against Dungog at Maitland. C Grade defeated Maitland 2-1 at Maitland, meaning they finished second and will now play the final against Hunter Valley at Maitland next Sunday. The Seniors have made a stunning come back to finish second in their group, after defeating Murrurundi 2.5-1.5 at Branxton. They will now play the semi-final against Aberdeen next Sunday at a venue yet to be decided.

Is organisation getting in your way?

“Out of clutter, find simplicity” – Albert Einstein

Do you often find yourself rushing around, late for work or an appointment, trying to find your car keys, or stopping to hang one more load of washing on the line? What does it feel like when you can't find what you are looking for? And what happens as a result? Do you feel like you are out of control? Do you shout at the kids, or your partner? Maybe the kids miss the school bus and you drive like a mad person to get to the next bus stop, or otherwise drive them all the way to school? If it is in the morning, maybe it sets you up to be running late for the rest of the day? Whatever the consequences, being disorganised is not fun. At best it can be embarrassing or leave you feeling stressed, at worst it can be expensive, with items which have been lost having to be replaced (I'm thinking now of my car key and garage door zapper which have been MIA for about four weeks).

One of the things I have struggled with working from home is having a routine and being organised. When I worked full time, I had a set amount of time before work to ride horses, hang the washing out, have breakfast, etc. When I got home in the afternoon, there were a couple of hours to get all the chores done before dinner and bedtime. Every minute was accounted for. Work had its own routine, with regular times for meetings and lunch breaks. Now, working from home, it is tempting to do things when I feel like it, rather than having a strict routine. I have found though that being organised and having a schedule is more important than ever, as it is this routine that frees me up to spend time on the things that are important.

One of the biggest blockers to getting anything done, including exercise, is lack of organisation. Not being able to find your socks when you want to go for a walk can result in precious minutes being lost and the window of opportunity closing. Having to help your kids find their clean school clothes five minutes before they have to leave for the bus can end in tears (and not just for the kids). Checking a few emails before you leave work at the end of the day can result in you being late home for dinner. And the list goes on!

One way to become more organised is to delegate – you don't have to be responsible for everything on your own! And this applies equally if you are a stay at home mum, working from home, or working full time away from the home. If you have children, having a roster for them to get the clothes off the line, empty the dishwasher and fold their own clothes and putting them away where they belong can help immensely. Discuss it with them, and explain your expectations, then make sure it is done! It may not be perfect to start with. You may find your egg whisk in with the pots and pans, or the clothes might be a bit crumpled, but it's not the end of the world – resist the urge to do it yourself or to redo what someone else has done.

Another way to be more organised is to shorten your “to do” list by saying “No”. Will saying “yes” to joining that committee, or writing that newsletter, mean you won't be at home to help with homework? Or does it mean that you have to give up joining a group that will actually help you reach your goal of running 5km without stopping. Sometimes we say “yes” to things because we think we should, or because “we've always done it”, or because we don't want to let other people down. But next time you are about to say “yes” to something, think carefully about what you will be missing as a result. Plan ahead. Cooking meals in advance means that when you get home from mid week meetings or late night dance classes you can have a healthy dinner on the table in a few minutes rather than stopping for expensive take away on the way home. And taking a few minutes to make your lunch and lay your clothes out the night before means you can be organised in the morning, ready to go for a run or head out the door to work, feeling calm and collected!

Declutter. Trying to find the shoes you like to wear in amongst a cupboard full of shoes you haven't worn in years can be frustrating. The same when trying to find that bill you need to pay NOW while digging through a pile of old notes from school. Many bills these days come via email, but they can still get lost in our inbox. Create a filing system within your email program, and set reminders for when bills are due. Better still, pay them straight away and file the receipts where they belong. When decluttering, I also try and follow the “Marie Kondo” method – this involves getting rid of the things which “do not bring you joy” before you decide where to keep the things that are left. It can be hard sometimes, but once you get used to it, removing things from your home can be quite addictive and liberating.

Lower your standards! Yes, you heard me. One of the best pieces of advice I ever received was to stop ironing! Most of my clothes don't need ironing (I make sure I buy low maintenance clothing, or hang it up as soon as it comes off the line), but I used to spend a huge amount of time ironing my son's t-shirts, and my husband's work clothes, until I realised most of the t-shirts were only being worn after school when jumping on the trampoline, and my husband told me he didn't really need his hi-vis stuff ironed. It took me a little longer to stop ironing the pillow cases and tea towels, lol, but even that has stopped now as I realise there are more important things to do! It means I can spend less time ironing and more time putting things away where they belong!

Have a diary or planner that everyone in your family has access to. Many of my reminders are in my phone, or in my email program, but not everyone has access to that. I don't want to be the sole person responsible for knowing when something is happening or needs to be done, so I still have a calendar hanging on the wall in the kitchen (this year it is a nice one from Floriade – thanks mum and dad!). On the calendar we can all write appointments and other commitments, especially the ones which are bit out of the ordinary (eg scout camps or drama auditions). For really important events which involve people outside our home, I set up an event in Outlook (or my Google calendar) and “invite” other family members or friends, so they know it is happening. There are lots of others ways to keep track of appointments, the important thing is to find the system that works for you.

Finally, don't put off until tomorrow what you can do today. How many times have you been driving home only to see the low fuel light come on in your car? And how many times have you thought “it's too hot to stop” or “the kids are tired/hot/hungry, I'll fill up tomorrow”, only to be running late the next morning and forced to stop when you really don't have time to.

Getting organised sounds really boring, but being able to find things when you need them, getting to appointments on time and having time to do the things you really want to do, without the stress, is priceless.

What else is happening at “Fit for Life”?

I am busy planning my 10 week “Health and Fitness Challenge” which will kick off towards the end of March. If you would like more information please contact me. We are getting ready for my annual ski trip to Japan. We are going a bit later than usual as my son broke his arm just before Christmas and we had to wait until he could snowboard again!

I am ramping up my training for the UTA50 in May. For those who don't know this is a trail running event in the Blue Mountains. This is my fourth time running in this event and I am hoping for a PB.

Louise Cairns Fit for Life: Louise Cairns is a Personal Trainer and Motivational Life Coach based in Branxton. Louise retired from a twenty year management career with the Australian Government to set up her own Fitness and Coaching business, Louise Cairns Fit for Life. Louise runs regular fitness classes at Lochinvar and Branxton, as well as PT sessions in Branxton and Kurri Kurri. Louise also helps people set and achieve their own goals at work and home. You can find out more at www.louisecairns.com.au



Cricket Report – Semi Finals

Semi Finals of district cricket last Saturday saw second grade and fourth grade Blue win through to their respective grand finals, with first, third and fourth grade White unfortunately bowing out of the premiership race. First grade's horror semi-final record against Bellbird continued at Carmichael 1, with Greta/Branxton falling to their eighth consecutive semi-final loss to their arch rivals since coming into the competition back in 1988.



with Mark Bercini

Brent Watson lost yet another toss and Bellbird elected to bat. Watson threw the new ball to 18-year-old rookie Bryce Element (1-29 off 6) who struck immediately by dismissing the dangerous Rob Drage who was caught by Nathan Holz at long on. Greta/Branxton took wickets at regular intervals to restrict the home side to 173 in what were fairly favourable batting conditions despite the slow outfield on the eastern side of the ground. Craig Brook came back from a horror first three overs to claim a well-deserved 5-56 off 10, with Marty Shearer (2-16 off 7), Watson (1-33 off 9) and Ben Braiding (1-32 off 5) taking the other wickets.

Greta/Branxton got off to a horror start by losing association leading run-scorer Josh Dagg for 3 when he spooned what he thought was an over-the-waist high full toss to second slip. Dagg appealed for a no-ball to be called but was unsuccessful and he wasn't shy about letting all the punters know about it back at the Royal Federal Hotel later on that night either. However Barry Richards (41) and Mark Bercini (41) got the run chase back on track, taking the total up to 71 before Richards danced down the pitch to the spinner and was stumped. This started a major collapse, with the next 3 wickets falling cheaply, and at the 20 over drinks break Greta/Branxton went from a comfortable position to now see themselves in a very evenly poised contest at 5-90. Skipper Watson came to the crease and wacked a quick 17, but when he holed out to long off, and Bercini's old legs saw him run out short of his ground shortly after, Greta/Branxton were then faced with an almighty task of pulling off an unlikely victory. Brook came in at number 11 and cleared the fence twice before being unlucky the third time and he was out for 12 to end proceedings. Greta/Branxton were all out in the 33rd over for a disappointing 135 to conclude what was a promising season.

Second grade won through to the decider with an emphatic 105-run thrashing of Mulbring at Miller 1. Batting first Greta/Branxton posted 170, with the big game experience of Darren Holz (81) and Trent Fuller (58no) sharing in a 135-run fourth wicket partnership after being in a spot of bother early at 3-18. Mulbring were skittled for 65 in reply, with Mark Peace once again the shining light with 5-10 off 4.5. Mick Regan was equally impressive with 4-14 off 4, with Alex Waking taking 1-25 off 4.

They will now face off against Supporters who upset minor premiers Bellbird in the other semi-final. This will be played at Carmichael 1. Greta/Branxton have not won the second grade title since 1993-94, having competed in and lost 6 Grand finals since, hence they are more than overdue to break this trend.

Third grade saved unfortunately their worst performance of the season for the wrong day, going down by 8 wickets at the hands of Denman Hotel at Miller 2. Sent in to bat Greta/Branxton were ousted for just 43, with Adam Holmberg the only willowman in double figures with 11. Denman Hotel achieved the target in the 13th over in reply after losing just the 2 wickets. These belonged to Holmberg (1-15 off 4) and Ayden Wilkinson (1-15 off 6).

The fourth grade local derby semi-final between Greta/Branxton Blue and Greta/Branxton White at Baddeley 1 was won by the Blue team by 25 runs. Sent in to bat the Blues managed just 112, with Corey Stephenson continuing his real purple patch with the bat with 30. Mitch Bird (17), Will Regan (15), Neil Bird (14no) and Conner Thomson (12) all made starts, while for the Whites Jesse Minchin ripped through the top order to bag 5-22 off 10. Ben Hogan (3-22 off 9), Dan Minchin (1-23 off 9) and Jason Varley (1-40 off 10) took the remaining wickets. The Whites were all out for 87 inside 30 overs, with Dave Seabrook leading the way with 21. Sam Hines (19), Jesse Minchin (17), and Sam Dagg (12) were the other batsmen to make starts, meanwhile Corey Stephenson capped a fine all round game for the Blues with 4-18 off 6. Skipper Steve Daunt cleaned up the tail to finish with 4-9 off 4.3, with Conner Thomson (2-25 off 5) taking the remaining wickets. Fourth grade Blue will now face off with Paxton in the grand final to be played at Baddeley 1 again.

Cheers, Mark

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BRANXTON GRETA VINEYARDS

The News **SPORT**

Branxton's Josh Tracey takes home 2017 Branxton Open Trophy

Category	Name	Score
BRANXTON OPEN SCRATCH WINNER	JOSH TRACEY	65
A GRADE SCRATCH RUNNER UP	MARK HALE	67
B GRADE SCRATCH WINNER	JOSH WILLARD	74
B GRADE SCRATCH RUNNER UP	JOHN BURGESS	83
C GRADE SCRATCH WINNER	KEVIN WALTON	93
C GRADE SCRATCH RUNNER UP	JOHN PARR	93 C/B
A GRADE STABLEFORD WINNER	TOM FOSTER	40pts
A GRADE STABLEFORD RUNNER UP	STEVE KEARNEY	40pts
B GRADE STABLEFORD WINNER	DAN ROGERS	41pts
B GRADE STABLEFORD RUNNER UP	GARY WALSH	40pts
C GRADE STABLEFORD WINNER	PETER COX	37pts
C GRADE STABLEFORD RUNNER UP	LEE JACKSON	35pts
NEAREST THE PINS		
A GRADE	TOM FOSTER	197ctu
B GRADE	GARRY WALSH	
C GRADE	DOUG MUNCASTER	
LONGEST DRIVES		
A GRADE	J TRACEY	
B GRADE	L HUNT	
C GRADE	P BUGUTU	



■ Branxton's Josh Tracey takes home 2017 Branxton Open Trophy

Saturday's Branxton Open saw a huge field enjoy the excellent conditions after the recent hot weather and following rain this week. The cream certainly rose to the top with local protégé, Joshua Tracey producing one of the

rounds of his life, recording a 5 under 65 to defeat the very talented, 15 times club champion, Mark Hale who also played great golf, having a 67, 3 under par. It's not often that a local Open event can be one with such low scores. The great scores continued into B

Grade with Josh Willard winning the scratch event with an amazing 74 off the stick, a wonderful score from this 17 marker. John Burgess finished runner up, 9 strokes back with a very creditable 83. Kevin Walton won C Grade with his 93, just ahead of John Parr with the same score. The stableford winners all played well ahead of their handicaps, indicating that there was some real quality golf played throughout the day. 60 players figured in the ball competition. On Monday afternoon, the Corporate Golf Ambrose Competition has been occurring over the last 5 weeks, with 7 teams enjoying this 9 hole, team's event. Some excellent prizes have been on offer, with the overall winning team decided on Monday—that being Valley Brakes and Clutch. The 3 top teams were rewarded with some games of golf at The Vintage, Hunter Valley Golf Course and Cypress Lakes. It has been an excel-

Ball Competition to 60 players		
K HOWARD	N ROBINSON	E BARRETT
S HANKS	M MACKENZIE	E GARLAND
M SIMPSON	E NEALE	R MOYLAN
T PARTRIDGE	D HOLLIS	D MUNCASTER
R HEBBE	M TRACEY	M JOHANSON
C ZAWIRSKI	J STIG	D TURNER
K MOUNSER	J BEREZA	R YANDLE
M CARLING	C JOHANSON	M LUTOVAC
I BARNES	G WILTON	T MCCAWE
R CALDWELL	S ROBINSON	M CROSSLEY
P BUGUTU	J MARTIN	R TURNBULL
C HUGHES	K MILLAR	L HUNT
D KINCH	M MADDOCK	M BETTINZOLI
C NORMAN	G BOLES	D MATT
D GILROY	R WILTON	L HEUSTON
P BUSH	L PORTER	T ZAWIRSKI
D HODGES	B BENDEICH	M MOYLAN
B ROE	B MILLAR	R HALE
R WATSON	R MILLER	I WOLFERSTAN
K MATHER	A CAMPBELL	
	J GRAY	



lent concept, thoroughly enjoyed by all players. On Sunday, the Hunter Valley Pennants Competition continued with the talented A Grade team defeating The Vintage 3-2 at Maitland (they just missed making the final on percentage); The B Grade team continued their undefeated season, defeating

Kurri 3-0 at Kurri, C Grade kept their hopes alive with a 2-1 victory over Kurri at Branxton and the Seniors finally had a win, defeating Cypress Lakes, 2-1 at Murrurundi (They have only lost once but have had 3 draws.)

■ Photo above: Cameron Johanson hitting off the 15th




Summer is here ~ It's time to clean out that dam!



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