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The News

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WEDNESDAY
20 December 2017

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Branxton Croquet Club & Little Athletics 2017 beneficiaries IGA Community Chest



Photo: At back - Tara Hamson, Sue Mitchell from Branxton IGA, Emily Garland, Lyn Unicomb from Branxton IGA, John Lamson (President Branxton Little Athletics) & Kristy Westwood. At front - Jake, Nate, Lola & Mason.

Branxton Croquet Club & Little Athletics are this year's beneficiaries of the Branxton IGA Community Chest. Each club received the funds last Thursday with representatives from both clubs on hand to thank local IGA proprietors Lyn & John Unicomb. The Croquet club received \$500 & Little Athletics just under \$1300. Lyn said that the money is raised in a number of ways but predominately through the purchase of products with an IGA Community Chest logo on the label or ticket. "When you purchase a product with the IGA Community Chest logo printed on the label a percentage is credited to that store's IGA Community Chest account. Australia wide it has



Photo: Sue Mitchell from Branxton IGA, Peter Ernst president Branxton Croquet Club, Patricia Ernst Captain Branxton Croquet Club, Lyn Unicomb from Branxton IGA & Christopher Robertson Secretary Branxton Croquet Club.

given away over \$80million since its inception," said Sue. John Lamson, President of Branxton Little Athletics said the windfall will be used to purchase much needed equipment. "It is much needed to help the club continue to grow. Thank you Branxton IGA," said John. The President of Branxton Croquet Club, Peter Ernst, attended the IGA community funding presentation along with Games Captain Patricia Ernst and Secretary Chris Robertson. Peter expressed his appreciation of the local support from Branxton IGA and owner Sue Unicomb in supporting local sport and in particular the croquet club with the donation of \$500. **CONT PAGE 5**

New Branxton Bus Terminus officially opened



Photo: Mayor Bob Pynsent & local Wyndham Street resident, Malcolm Winter, cut the ribbon to officially open the new facility.

THE corner of Dalwood Road & Wyndham drainage, roadworks & bus terminus project undertaken by Cessnock City Council with funding from the federal governments 'Roads to Recovery' has been substantially completed & functional.

Mayor Bob Pynsent. The project commenced mid 2017 & was scheduled for completion in September. Minor hold ups delayed the completion but the wait was certainly worth it with the entrance to the town very much enhanced.

Full completion will be when 5 new shelters are installed prior to the first term of school next year. The new shelters are being constructed in the same design as the current shelters which has caused the delay as they are bespoke and not off the shelf. The new shelters will be funded by the RMS Country Passenger Transport Infrastructure Grant. To mark the completion of the project a small ribbon cutting ceremony took place last week with 'across the road' resident Malcolm Winter cutting the ribbon in unison with Cessnock

The original intent was for the construction of drainage infrastructure & the re-alignment of the road to improve parking facilities & to help traffic movement. The design has provided improved safety for both vehicle users & pedestrians with formalised 'rear to kerb' parking and with a greater number of parking spots with allowance being made for drop off or 'Kiss and Ride'. The stormwater problem that saw stormwater being discharged in front of 8 Dalwood road has been fixed with the water now diverted via pipe work into a swale drain running adjacent to Maitland Road.

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Greta Medical Centre

29 High Street Greta NSW2334
Ph: 49387303 fax: 49387800

Dr. Iwan Jyoti, Dr. Maninder Deep, Dr. Ravneet Kaur,
Dr. Raviraj Stephen, and Dr. Indra Nanda
X-Mas and New Year Trading Hours

23/12/2017	Saturday	Open 8-4pm
24/12/2017	Sunday	Closed
25/12/2017	X-Mas day	Closed
26/12/2017	Boxing Day	Closed
27/12/2017	Wednesday	Open 8-3PM
28/12/2017	Thursday	Open 8-3PM
29/12/2017	Friday	Open 8-3PM
30/12/2017	Saturday	Closed
31/12/2017	Sunday	Closed
01/01/2018	Monday New Year day	Closed
02/01/2018	Tuesday	Normal Trading

Can you please ring

GP Access on 1300 130147 or

Maitland Hospital 550 High Street, Maitland - (02) 4939 2000 OR

In Emergency Please ring 000

Staff would like to wish you all a safe and Merry Christmas and Happy New Year



Merry Christmas & Happy New Year from
Good Practice (GP) Surgery

We are closed from 25/12/2017 (Monday) to 1/01/2018 (Monday).

We will be back on 02/01/2018 (Tuesday) - 8:00 am.

Our last working day for this year is 23/12/2017 (Saturday) from 8:00 am - 11:00 am.

For an emergency, please contact 000 or GP access on 1300 130 147.

Thank you

Staff
Good Practice (GP) Surgery

Suite 5 71 Maitland Street, Branxton, NSW 2335

To make appointments, please call 02 4939 3366. Online appointments available



Cessnock City Council Statutory Notices

Phone during working hours 4993 4100
After Hours Emergency 4940 7816

Address all communications to:- The General Manager,
PO Box 152, Cessnock 2325 NSW

SECTION 101 NOTICE, ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT, 1979, APPROVED DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS AND COMPLYING DEVELOPMENT CERTIFICATES

The public are hereby notified pursuant to Section 101 of the Environmental Planning Assessment Act, 1979 (as amended) that the following applications have been granted consent during the period from 1 November 2017 to 30 November 2017.

Locality	Reference	Decision Date	Property Address	Application Description
EAST BRANXTON	008/2017/00000594/001	28-Nov-2017	9 Wyndham ST	Demolition of Existing Shed & Construction of Storage Shed
NORTH ROTHBURY	008/2017/00000589/001	2-Nov-2017	25 Ellerton AV	Retaining Wall
NORTH ROTHBURY	008/2017/00000613/001	2-Nov-2017	17 Emerton RD	Single Storey Dwelling with Attached Garage
NORTH ROTHBURY	008/2017/00000616/001	2-Nov-2017	41 Tooze CCT	Single Storey Dwelling with Attached Garage & Associated Retaining Wall
NORTH ROTHBURY	008/2017/00000575/001	7-Nov-2017	61 Tooze CCT	Single Storey Dwelling with Attached Garage
NORTH ROTHBURY	008/2017/00000629/001	8-Nov-2017	14 Judge RD	Single Storey Dwelling with Attached Garage & Associated Retaining Walls
NORTH ROTHBURY	008/2017/00000635/001	9-Nov-2017	36 Bendeich DR	Single Storey Dwelling with Attached Garage & Associated Retaining Walls
NORTH ROTHBURY	008/2017/00000595/001	13-Nov-2017	4 Haverty AV	Single Storey Dwelling With Attached Garage
NORTH ROTHBURY	008/2017/00000587/001	15-Nov-2017	14 Bendeich DR	Single Storey Dwelling with Attached Garage
NORTH ROTHBURY	008/2017/00000598/001	16-Nov-2017	13 Ainsworth CR	Single Storey Dwelling with Attached Garage
NORTH ROTHBURY	008/2017/00000643/001	16-Nov-2017	3 Judge RD	Single Storey Dwelling with Attached Garage
NORTH ROTHBURY	008/2017/00000479/001	21-Nov-2017	28 Rothbury ST	Roofed Deck
NORTH ROTHBURY	008/2017/00000620/001	28-Nov-2017	8 Haverty AV	Garage
NORTH ROTHBURY	008/2017/00000641/001	29-Nov-2017	5 Abberton PWY	Swimming Pool
NULKABA	008/2017/00000452/001	8-Nov-2017	LOT 25 DP 1086947 Ironbark LANE	Single Storey Dwelling & Inground Pool
NULKABA	008/2016/00000820/001	23-Nov-2017	10 Fleming ST	Alterations & Additions to Existing Building for use as a Child Care Centre for Ninety Nine (99) Children
POKOLBIN	008/2017/00000633/001	6-Nov-2017	23 Barnhill PRIV	Single Storey Dwelling with Attached Garage
POKOLBIN	009/2017/00000219/001	13-Nov-2017	57 Ekerts RD	Internal Building Alterations to a Hotel & Guesthouse
POKOLBIN	008/2017/00000502/001	14-Nov-2017	2144 Broke RD	Sewage Pre-Treatment Facility & Sewer Pump Station
POKOLBIN	008/2017/00000581/001	21-Nov-2017	154 O'Connors RD	Demolition of Existing Shed & Construction of Games/Utilities Room
POKOLBIN	008/2017/00000663/001	28-Nov-2017	4 Mahogany PRIV	Ancillary to Existing Dwelling Single Storey Dwelling with Attached Garage

Copies of development consents are available at Council's Customer Service Centre for public inspection, free of charge, during the Council's ordinary office hours

PO BOX 152
CESSNOCK

Stephen Glen
General Manager

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR HOLIDAY ARRANGEMENTS 2017/18.

The following arrangements will apply over the holiday period.
Cessnock Council offices and facilities will be closed between Christmas and the New Year. In case of an emergency please phone 4993 4100.

Administration Centre, Vincent Street, Cessnock

Closed from 12.00pm, Friday 22 December 2017 until 9.00am Tuesday 2 January 2018.

Libraries at Cessnock and Kurri Kurri

Closed from 12.00pm, Friday 22 December 2017 until 9.00am until Tuesday 2 January 2017.

Swimming Pools at Cessnock and Branxton

Closed Christmas Day only. On all other Public Holidays, pools will be open from 7.00am to 6.00pm.

Kurri Kurri Aquatic Centre

Christmas Eve open 5.30am to 12 noon

Closed on Christmas Day.

Boxing Day open 10.00am to 4.00pm

Boxing Day Public Holiday 27 December open 10.00am to 4.00pm

New Year's Eve open 5.30am to 12 noon

New Year's Day open 10.00am to 4.00pm

Cessnock Waste & Re-use Centre

Closed Christmas Day only, otherwise normal operating hours apply 8.45am – 4.30pm daily.

Greta Transfer Station

Closed Christmas Day only. Open as normal thereafter.

Garbage Service/Recycling Service

There will be no residential waste or recycling collection on Christmas day Monday 25 December 2017. Collection operations will be one (1) day behind the usual arrangements, with Monday's collections being completed on Tuesday and Tuesday's on Wednesday, etc. resulting in Friday's collections being carried out on the Saturday. Collections will then be routine as usual thereafter.

Ranger Services

A Ranger will be on-call during the Christmas period. In an emergency please call the Police.

Cessnock Performing Arts Centre

Closed from 2.00pm, Friday 22 December 2017 until 9.00am on Monday 8 January 2018 Bookings still available on-line.

Hunter Valley Visitors Centre

Closed Christmas Day only, normal operating hours apply 9.00am – 5.00pm Monday-Saturday & 9.00am – 4.00pm Sundays.

Cessnock Airport

For all enquiries regarding Cessnock Airport please contact the Airport Operations Co-Ordinator on

0401 107 557.

Cessnock City Council wishes all in our community a safe and happy holiday season.

ADOPTION OF CESSNOCK SECTION 94A LEVY CONTRIBUTIONS PLAN 2017 AND REPEAL OF CAR PARKING IN THE CESSNOCK BUSINESS DISTRICT SECTION 94 CONTRIBUTIONS PLAN

At the Council Meeting of 13 December 2017, Council resolved to adopt the Cessnock Section 94A Levy Contributions Plan 2017 and repeal the Cessnock Central Business District Section 94 Contributions Plan.

Council advises that the Cessnock Section 94A Levy Contributions Plan 2017 becomes effective from 20 December 2017.

The Plan will collect contributions to assist in the future provision of public domain works in Cessnock, Kurri Kurri, Weston, Branxton and village centres, street tree planting, civil works under the Pathways Construction Program, public art and plan administration.

OUTDOOR SWIMMING POOL CARNIVALS

Council wishes to advise the community that on the days listed, swimming carnivals will be held at Branxton Swimming Pool and the pool will not be open for recreational swimming.

BRANXTON SWIMMING POOL

Date	Time
Friday 2 February 2018	9.00am – 2.00pm
Monday 5 February 2018	9.30am – 2.30pm
Friday 9 February 2018	9.00am – 2.00pm
Saturday 17 February 2018	1.00pm – 5.00pm

For further information please call Branxton Swimming Pool on telephone 4938 1450.

PO BOX 152
CESSNOCK 2325

STEPHEN GLEN
GENERAL MANAGER

FROM FRONT PAGE
New Branxton Bus Terminus officially opened

Mayor Pynsent said that he was very proud of the workmanship that went into the project & that the end product gives the local community a much valued & much safer local facility. An allocation of \$225,000 was made in the 2016/17 Cessnock City Council budget to commence the pathways component of the project while detailed design was undertaken for the road and drainage components. A further \$463,000 was allocated in the 2017/18 budget to complete the project. At this stage Council has expended approximately \$665,000 on the project and a \$350,700 Roads to Recovery grant forms part

of this total cost. Brett Wild, President of the Branxton Greta Business Chamber, said that he was very disappointed that the official opening went ahead unheralded but delighted with the end product. "Our new bus terminus was officially opened without any notice to many in the community especially concerned parents and the Branxton Business Chamber," said Brett. "The site is a terrific asset to the safety of our school children, however, my understanding is that, once again, Cessnock Council failed to accurately budget and the project went well over the allocated funds. Unfortunately, this will result in a project elsewhere in the LGA missing out," said Brett. "Additionally the business chamber has been talking to the RMS (the old RTA

which used to be the DMR) and Cessnock Council regards the movement of & placing parking restrictions on heavy vehicles on the site. Cessnock Council response to date is that it's a 'Heavy Vehicle Fatigue' issue. We as the business chamber find this an extraordinary position to take as surely the safety of children and those picking up children is more important than the parking of fuel tankers in such a location. I have last week re-raised the issue with the RMS in Newcastle. I feel that we should all register a complaint with Cessnock City Council as the safety of parents and children should be more important than a couple of fuel tankers, that at best even empty, will and can pose a substantial and unacceptable risk," said Brett.

Successful recipients announced for 2017 'Community Building Partnership' grant funding



Member for Cessnock Clayton Barr MP

The Electorate of Cessnock has secured grant funding of \$299,980 for a total of nineteen projects as part of the NSW Government's 2017 Community Building Partnership (CBP) program. The Community Building Partnership Program, first introduced by the Labor Government in 2009 has provided funding to hundreds of community groups, sporting clubs and councils across NSW to build or upgrade local facilities. The State Member for the

Electorate of Cessnock, Clayton Barr, MP, said he was pleased that the Cessnock Electorate has received this State Government funding. This grassroots funding will directly benefit our local communities and will deliver vital new infrastructure and help pay for much-needed improvements to local sports facilities, parks

and clubs. Mr Barr offered his congratulations to the recipients who were successful in their application and is pleased that this funding will help community groups and sporting organisations to make a positive difference in their local communities.

The successful Projects in the Cessnock Electorate for 2017 are:

• Belbird Preschool Inc.	Playground repairs	\$22,517.00
• Branxton Croquet Club	Upgrade of lawn	\$6,000.00
• Branxton Greta Amateur Swimming Club	Construction of shade structure and storage shed	\$21,000.00
• Cessnock City Council	Belbird Community Hall toilet upgrade and extension	\$11,275.00
• Cessnock District Hockey Association	Rehabilitate canteen facility	\$6,600.00
• Cessnock Minor Rugby League	Lighting upgrade at Mount View Park	\$20,000.00
• Cessnock PCYC	Outdoor community youth hub	\$16,079.00
• Edgeworth Senior Soccer Club Inc.	Lighting upgrade for Jack McLaughlan Oval	\$20,200.00
• Greta Rural Fire Brigade	Steel mesh lockers for structural firefighting uniforms	\$10,672.00
• Greta Tidy Towns Committee	Upgrade of entrance to Greta Cemetery	\$11,500.00
• Hope Valley Christian Church Inc	Purchase of a 16 seater bus	\$20,000.00
• Kurri Golf Club Ltd	Replacement of existing corrugated iron roofing	\$30,000.00
• Kurri Kurri Community Services Ltd	KRCC energy efficiency refurbishment	\$20,000.00
• Lake Macquarie Sustainable Neighbourhood Alliance Inc	Construction of a sheltered area for the Holmesville Community Garden meeting area	\$15,425.00
• Mai-Wel Ltd	Richmond Vale work skills project	\$3,606.00
• Mums' Cottage Inc	Painting and office fitout	\$4,510.00
• Sugarvalley Neighbourhood Centre	Defibrillator and electronic signage for Sugarvalley Neighbourhood Centre	\$11,444.00
• Towns With Heart Inc	Storage shed for Kurri Kurri Visitor Information Centre	\$25,652.00
• Weston Heritage & Tidy Town Committee	Purchase of ride on lawn mower	\$3,500.00



Signing of VPA will bring immediate benefits to the community with \$11 million payable over 15 years

Singleton Council and YanCoal have formalised a Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) associated with its Mount Thorley operations that will potentially deliver \$11 million to the community over the next 15 years.

The agreement was signed on Friday, with an up-front payment of \$2 million to be paid within 28 days.

The life of the agreement comprises \$6.6 million for a Bulga Community Project Fund to support the sustainability of the

Bulga village and surrounds, including the implementation of the Bulga Village Master Plan, and \$4.4 million for a Singleton Economic Development Fund to contribute to economic development initiatives within the Singleton local government area with a view to reinforcing the future sustainability of the local economy. In signing the agreement, YanCoal accepted Council's resolution to endorse the VPA when it was considered at an extraordinary meeting on 5 June 2017 with the removal of clause 5b that related to the possibility of the closure of Wallaby Scrub Road. Mark Ihlein, Council's Director Infrastructure and Planning, said the conclusion of the VPA opened up significant opportunities to benefit the people of Singleton and Bulga in particular. "The VPA is a formal arrangement to offset the impacts of the Mt Thorley-Warkworth westward expansion with a substantial investment in projects to benefit the Bulga community and the Singleton economy generally," he said. "With the agreement now in place, the community will see the benefits immediately with \$2 million to be paid within the first month of the life of the agreement and a further \$2 million in early 2018. "The VPA is a tremendous outcome for Singleton, representing about 1.5% of the capital investment of the mine expansion where previous negotiated VPAs have represented approximately 1% of capital investment. "After a long process to reach this point, Council will commence the establishment of the committee to oversee the funds in February 2018 and I'm confident the community will soon be celebrating the outcomes that will come as a result of this agreement."

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CHRISTMAS EVE OPEN 9am ~ 12noon

CHRISTMAS DAY CLOSED

BOXING DAY CLOSED

NEW YEARS DAY CLOSED

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Husband Creche

Is he getting under your feet
 Is he moaning about shopping
 Would your morning be stress free without him

Ladies we have the answer

The Branxton Greta Menshed is organising a husband crèche every Wednesday and Friday mornings.

Drop him off at our husband crèche. We'll take good care of him and he may even learn something

Just pay \$2.00 for his morning coffee
 'Branxton Greta Menshed' 49 Branxton Street
 Greta in the grounds of the old St Marys Primary School

How to dissect an argument

In last Saturday's Australian Newspaper Paul Keating wrote an article on the appeasement policy of the Menzies lead Government of 1940. He used the content of an interdepartmental memo from the then senior figure in the Department of Defence, Blundell White, to some other person, on his advice as to what the target figure for ground forces should be for the Australian Defence Force. The figure of, between 170,000 to 200,000 is mentioned, clearly totally inadequate for the eventual role it was to play.

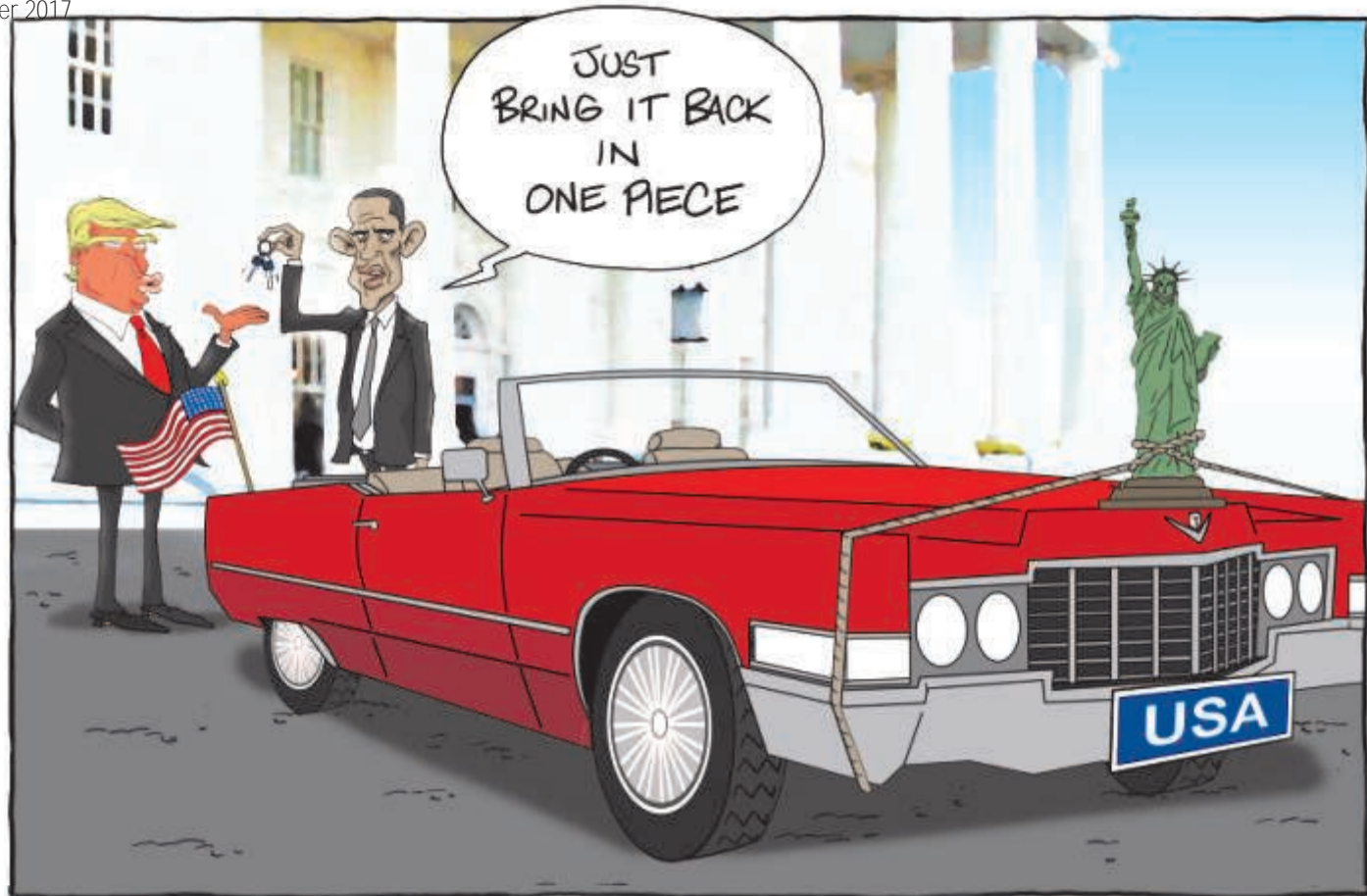
The gist of this point was that Menzies and his Cabinet accepted this advice despite the mounting tension in the South Pacific due to the Japanese threat. The idea being that Australia could not hope to defend itself from a Japanese thrust and the best we could hope for was to make some sort of treaty with Japan.

This is Paul Keating's documentary evidence that the Menzies Government were appeasers.

In 1939 – 1940 most of the people in Australia were of that opinion. They were all too familiar with the horror of modern warfare and if it could be avoided so let it be. The idea that, "The price of freedom is perpetual vigilance" and the maintenance of a credible Defence Force was not at that time fully appreciated, especially when you consider the ravages of the depression years, the horror of further wars and the fiscal restraints then felt necessary.

Now we know Paul Keating is a virulent Labor man, and good on him for that, and we know he is a great hater of everything Bob Menzies ever stood for. We will excuse him for that but he has used some pretty thin evidence to start his argument. That being, that the Menzies Government, were appeasers and cowards; his words. To accept his reference to certain official documentation as the basis for the contention that Menzies was the Appeaser and Curtain the Gutsy leader is a very big ask. The documentation does not say nor could it, what the Menzies Government thought at the time. I am no student of the various histories on the subject. What I do know is that the Menzies Government took control of income taxes from the States in order to better manage the finances of war preparation. That mobilization of the industrial effort of the country was well underway before Japan entered the war.

So you can see we have Paul Keating grasping at some obscure memo and then by extension damning the whole Menzies Cabinet as cowards. He then begs us to believe his point of view because of documented fact. Well there are many more documented facts which would refute his assertion. And remember his was not alive then. Now what he has done in his article is not clear thinking. He selects evidence and presents this as the whole story. It is not. He extends his argument to a fantastical conclusion. So what? You might say – this is what politicians do. Yes, that is what people do. Damn all teenagers because of a few delinquents. Damn all men because they have



hairly arms.

Damn all liberals, and in particular Tony Abbott, because you don't agree with them. That is your right, but be on guard for nonsense's and think through what you are being asked to believe.

May you have a wonderful Christmas and look forward to a great New Year. Steve Lind



with Mike Lowing

IT'S that time of the year again and many of us are looking forward to a well earned break.

Some of you are preparing to go away, others will stay at home, some only get the main days off (if that) and some will sit in front of the TV and watch the Aussies further embarrass the 'Poms' in the cricket. It being the last issue of The News prior to Christmas it would be remiss of me not to mention the enormous contribution the sporting club secretaries & publicity officers, of all our community organisations,

make to our publication. Club reports & results are critical to the dissemination of club news & individual achievements.

Thank you all.

Again, it would be remiss of me not to mention all our other contributors who diligently provide articles for our readers. To mention just a few; John S. Bryant, Mark Bercini, Andrew Marsh, Karen Quilty & Sarah-Jane Hazell, Lester Porter, Steve Lind, staff at our local polities offices, Cessnock City Council & Singleton Council media units, Judy Spillard (VIEW), Denise McGoldrick (CWA), admin staff at Kirrkton Public School & many others.

To all of you 'thank you'.

A very special mention to all our advertisers who have again made our

not enjoin other Christians to leave their churches, as the Archdeacon of Albury and the Hume suggested This is a strange position for an archdeacon to adopt and hardly one that is appropriate to his office.

Perhaps when the triumphalism dies down, those who care about national unity might remember that over one-third of Australians voted for traditional

marriage, not out of hate but out of conviction.

Vivienne Parsons, Thornleigh

Now that the country has finally made marriage equality a reality, can we reflect on the cost both financially to the taxpayer and emotionally on those people directly affected, by John Howard's ungracious decision to change the Marriage Act in the first place?

And Tony Abbott who as we all know, strongly supported the "no" vote, did not have the courage of his convictions in Parliament and abstained. What a wimp. Name & address given but not published at their request

publication possible this year.

Christmas is a time to reflect on the year gone by, to savour family gatherings & to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ and renew our sense of wonder in recalling the story of the first Christmas in Bethlehem 2017 years ago.

I welcome this opportunity to extend good wishes to all our readers for a happy & holy 'Holiday Season'. This is a special time of year for families and for communities. We enjoy the spirit of giving and sharing what we have. We take time to remember those who are alone or in need. We appreciate the everyday kindness that is a way of life in our community.

The staff and I extend our best wishes to you and your family for the holiday season. May you enjoy health and happiness, and may our good fortune continue to grow throughout 2018.

The NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) is urging residents and people travelling to stay up to date and keep safe this bush fire season.

With the onset of warmer weather and fire dangers set to rise, it's essential that everyone knows where to get important information and advice.

We're facing a very real risk of bush fires in the months ahead, so it's crucial that people remain vigilant, both where they live or where they may be visiting. Bush fires can pose incredible danger for anyone not prepared or unaware of their surroundings, for example families camping, people away on holidays or anyone travelling in unfamiliar areas.

People travelling this holiday period must know the Fire Danger Ratings for the area they are visiting, checking it daily.

Making a bush fire survival plan and discussing it with family is the first thing everyone should do.

Some days can be much more dangerous than others, so it is crucial that people to stay up to date and know how to access important information. This is particularly important on days of Total Fire Ban, where certain restrictions are in place.

Residents should check the NSW RFS website or the 'Fires Near Me' app for updates on fires, as well as listening to local radio for information.

I encourage everyone to follow the NSW RFS Facebook and Twitter accounts for real-time updates, information and warnings.

The Bush Fire Information Line is also an excellent source of information and can be reached at 1800 679 737.

These valuable resources have been developed to help people stay safe this bush fire season. So be vigilant...please.

The Branxton Greta Vineyards News will be having a short break over the Christmas and New Year period and will return early in the new year. The date of our first issue next year has, as we go to print, not been decided. It will most probably be the last week in January or the first week in February but it could be earlier. We will notify our advertisers early in the new year as to the date.

Cheers, Mike



It was inevitable It was evident for some time that the same-sex marriage bill would pass and that the churches would have to live with it. It has been a difficult time for Christians, many coping with different views within their

families and among friends. We do not hate gay people, some have family members who are gay, and most of us have friends who are. I would have thought that as Christians we should try to support each other, even when we disagree,

Emergency Phone Numbers

Dial 000

FOR FIRE, POLICE AND AMBULANCE ANY TIME, DAY OR NIGHT FOR 24-HOUR SERVICE It's a free call. Just tell the operator what you need-fire, police or ambulance. Then wait to be connected.

When reporting an emergency by calling 000, the telephone number & address you are calling from may be given to the emergency service so they can respond quickly. If you don't want the telephone number or address details passed on, you must call the emergency service direct.

ALL CALLS TO 000 ARE VOICE RECORDED

For non-life threatening calls.....

Police Assistance Line (PAL)..... 131 444

Police

Branxton..... 4938 1244
Lochinvar..... 4930 7209
Ambulance..... 131 233
NSW Fire Brigade
Branxton..... 4938 3396

Rural Fire Brigades

Belford..... 6574 7149
Broke..... 6579 1491
Greta..... 4015 0000
Bishops Bdg 4015 0000
Nth R'bury... 4015 0000
Rothbury.... 4015 0000
Pokolbin.... 4015 0000
Rothbury.... 4991 1733
Bishops Bdg 4015 0000
Nth R'bury... 4015 0000
Rothbury.... 4015 0000
Pokolbin.... 4015 0000
Rothbury.... 4991 1733
Scotts
Flat..... 6575 1200
Central
(Cessnock)... 4015 0000

Electricity

Energy Australia..... 131 388

Hospitals

Maitland... 4939 2000
Cessnock.. 4991 0555
Singleton.. 6572 2799
SES132 500
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Poisons Info 131 126
Hunter Water
1300 657 000
Ausgrid 131 388
Gas Emergencies . 131 909
Lifeline131 114
Mental Health Line
1800 011 511
Domestic Violence Support
4990 9609
Centrelink Self Service
136 240
Medicare132 011
Native Animal Rescue
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The Editor, The BGV News, 12 Clift Street, Branxton NSW 2335

or emailed to

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Greta Museum's

Old Style New Wares & Sweet Shop

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To a healthier life with Dr. Rod Woodhouse

(I was looking for a particular article last week & while searching I stumbled upon this article by Doc Roc that was published in 2001; 16 years ago. The only change is that Doc Rod is 16 years older. Ed)

I thought I'd jot down some thoughts on Christmas, as it is a complex thing.

There is no doubt that people do behave in a kinder, more friendly way this time of year. We spend more time with family and friends, we go to many more parties and dinners. Often, we get in touch with people we don't see the rest of the year, either by phone or card. There is also, of course, the matter of the buying and giving of presents. It is the time of year when most of the annual holidays are taken. Yes, it is a wonderful time.

However, there is a down side. It is the time of year when more people succumb to stress, when more psychological symptoms and mental breakdowns occur. The very things that make up Christmas are the things that are capable of causing this problem. There is more pressure with the increased social contact, the loss of sleep, the increased alcohol consumption, the financial pressure of the cost of presents and food – and the list goes on. I must mention a particular problem for this area – we must keep in mind those on shift work, and remember that it is hard enough to

maintain a social life the rest of the year let alone Christmas.

We all love our families, but there are always the un-favourite relatives (you know what they say, you can pick your friends, but you're stuck with your relatives). I am not trying to put anyone down, but it is a truth that needs to be kept in mind. I don't want to put a negative spin on Christmas, but it is important to remember these things so that you don't become a statistic, so you can get the full enjoyment out of it. I have to admit that I used to have a little of the "bah, humbug" about me in relation to Christmas, but it is amazing how age mellows some people (now you know why I came to the Hunter – I am like a good red wine: well-rounded, old, complex and expensive)!

I thought I would give you the benefit of the "wisdom" that I hope this newly-gained mellowness has given me. You will see, though, that it is not anything special – only common sense.

- Try to get enough sleep,
- Make sure you get enough time to yourself if you need to – "time out"
- If something is getting to you, or getting too much for you, TALK ABOUT IT. Don't bottle it up
- Try not to let things

- get out of control
- Don't fall into the trap of trying to compete with everyone– keep within your own limitations
- You can enjoy the food and drink without going to excess – try smaller portions. There are many of us who put on weight easily, and this adds to the psychological stress
- Remember that both the hot weather and the alcohol require you drink more WATER.

Despite all its problems, the festive season leaves most people feeling good, and that must be a good thing. Surely the most important message of the 25th of December, whether or not you are actually a practicing Christian, is that you should love people, understand them and be there for them when they need you, and all get along.

While I was writing this, I felt as if there was too much depression and negativity about it. The expression "Life wasn't meant to be easy" kept



coming into my mind. I have heard two versions of the completed version. One is "life was meant to be life". The other is "... but give me some time, and I'll teach you how to smell the roses." I definitely prefer the second, don't you?

As I have said before, this area of the world is something special. I wish for everyone to have a good time, and a complete and fulfilling life. Have a wonderful Christmas, and may each year be better than the year before.

Good health, Doc Rod



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FROM FRONT PAGE

Branxton Croquet Club & Little Athletics 2017 beneficiaries IGA Community Chest

"After discussions with the local NSW Fire Brigade and the Ambulance Service and the recommendation of those bodies the club intends to utilise the money for the purchase a defibrillator for the club," said Peter.

Branxton Croquet Club has been in Branxton since 2003 and were originally based at Miller Park. The club then moved to John Rose Avenue next to Branxton Oval in 2010 and the club has since developed two lawns and a clubhouse on the site.

"Most of the members are from our local community and we have a very friendly social atmosphere in the club. Membership is generally made up of retired people who like to meet socially and get a little light exercise walking around the lawns while having some fun and then enjoying a morning tea. The game of croquet is open to and the club welcomes all ages from school children upwards," said Peter.

No experience is needed to play croquet and the club has members available to provide coaching and guidance to new members. We play on Tuesdays and Saturdays and during summer we play between 8.00am 12 Noon.

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Sue Moore, Mayor Singleton Council



Member for Cessnock Clayton Barr MP

Raising the BARR COURAGE AND TRAGEDY BRINGS DOWN INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE

As we head toward Christmas, a particularly holy time in the Christian calendar, the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse is winding up. I am sure that we have all been shocked, saddened and left in despair at some of the stories that have finally come to light. Poor helpless children, for decades, abused by the very people, in institutions, that should have been there to care for them and to protect them. But as we now know, it was the monsters themselves that were trusted with the children, and those monsters imposed unspeakable harm on the innocent and the young.

This Christmas, take some time to reflect on the lives that were destroyed and lost. It wasn't just the victims; it was also their families and loved ones who have spent their entire lives wondering what they should have done differently, living a life of internal torment. Including the affected victims, families and other loved ones, there are tens of thousands of people affected. But first and foremost, so many of the victims have been unable to ever recover and build a fruitful life full of trust, love and hope. So many of the victims have taken their own lives, by their hand or by drug and substance abuse and they have not lived to see this momentous Royal Commission. We must never let anything like this happen again.

TEACHERS AND THEIR ENDLESS VOLUNTEERING

Quite possibly, most people would not realise that a school teacher gets no extra pay or reward (other than satisfaction) for taking on extra duties that are the fabric of our schools. As I sat through a number of wonderful school presentations over recent weeks, I was left to wonder about how many millions, yes millions, of hours school teachers donate to their students. A school teacher that takes a cricket team or netball team or some other sporting group, gets no extra pay – instead they get a whole bunch of additional responsibility and paperwork and many hours preparing for the day and many hours spent catching up on the missed teaching day. It is far far far easier to not take the team. Ditto a school teacher that prepares a school dance ensemble, or a school production or a school choir or a school musical group. Ditto a school teacher that takes away a school excursion or goes on a school camp. Ditto a school teacher that leads the debating team or runs art festivals.

All of the extra-curricular (not normal classroom work) activities that happen in our schools happens because school teachers donate their time and emotional energy – they do not get paid for this work. If you have been involved with a school recently, think about what that school spirit would be like if there were no school excursions, or camps, or choir, or musical group or sporting teams. Think about how less rounded our students would be if they were not exposed to a life that is much bigger than the classroom. And think about how many of our life pursuits, hobbies and interests are sparked not by what happens in the classroom, but rather by what happens in the rest of our life. It is our generous and energetic school teachers that make it all happen. And quite frankly, if they withdrew their generosity,

and worked only to the letter of their job requirement and what they get paid for, the Education system would fall over. Hoorah to our teachers and the school support staff in every school!

* * * * *

For enquiries regarding the State Government or its departments, or to put you in contact with someone who can, please contact my office. 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.

You also follow me on my Facebook page "www.facebook.com/claytonbarrmp", go to Twitter and search @claytonbarrmp or check out my website at www.claytonbarr.com.au

Cheers Clayton



JOEL FITZGIBBON MP Member for Hunter

This is my last column for the year and I thank Branxton Greta News for continuing to provide me with the opportunity to share my thoughts and information about what's happening in Canberra.

I also thank all those who have done good work in our community throughout the year, particularly those who did so on a voluntary basis. We have blessed with great community spirit in the Hunter and I'm grateful for it.

Each Christmas my team and I support a local charity and in 2017 we're proud to get behind the OzHarvest Christmas Appeal. The OzHarvest van visits the Hunter Valley twice a week to rescue quality, excess food from local supermarkets and restaurants and then delivers to local charities. My team and I are pleased to contribute 620 meals to people in need.

Another of OzHarvest's core areas of focus is reducing food waste, something that becomes particularly relevant around Christmas time. More than a third of household bin waste is food waste yet 60 per cent is avoidable. In Australia it is estimated food waste costs more than \$20 billion each year. One in five shopping bags becomes food waste. We want people this Christmas to think about food waste and how they can reduce it in their own homes. The easiest way to do that is to plan what you are going to eat, write a list and stick to the list. For more information or to donate, visit www.ozharvest.org.

My office will be closed from **1pm 22 December and will reopen on Monday 8 January.**

Christmas is a time to relax, reflect, and spend quality time with family and friends. But sadly for some people, the Christmas period can be a time of high stress. Many can experience anxiety and depression, particularly those who have divorced, have experienced a death in the family or find themselves socially isolated or disadvantaged. The Christmas period can also see a spike in alcohol related violence and family conflict.

I encourage anyone who is experiencing difficulty to call Lifeline on 131114 or 1800RESPECT for 24/7 support. I hope 2017 was kind to you and if not, that 2018 will be better. I wish all readers a safe, happy and restful Christmas. I thank in advance our emergency services personnel who will continue to keep us safe over the period when most of us will be taking a break. I fear our firefighters will be busy this summer and I also thank them in advance and ask them to keep safe. Merry Christmas. Cheers, Joel



Bob Pynsent, Mayor Cessnock City Council

Cessnock City Council has officially launched the Youth First Program Toolkit giving councils across Australia the tools to support young people to be job ready. The Cessnock City Youth First initiative was born following the Hunter Valley Youth Unemployment Symposium facilitated by Council that saw a region wide approach to tackling the critical issue of youth unemployment.

The ground-breaking pilot program enabled local young people to undertake a training program seeing them obtain relevant industry qualifications in retail and hospitality. We are extremely proud to share this toolkit with every council in Australia and hope other councils roll it out. The NSW Government's Department of Industry's Training Services and Office of Regional Development worked in partnership with Council to make the program a reality. Council also thanks Yancoal Astar Coal Operations who proudly supported the program.

You may have noticed our illegal dumping campaign that kicked off with some local buses featuring local faces. The message is 'you better not mess with Cessnock' urging people to report illegal dumping and to dispose of items correctly. The campaign has been launched following a grant received by the Environmental Protection Authority and will run over the next year in a bid to reduce the amount of illegal dumping occurring on a local level.

More than 3,000 people gathered at Cessnock Sportsground on Friday evening to sing in the festive season at the annual Carols in the Park event. We have been hosting this event for more than 10 years and it continues to get bigger and better each year. The performers and the band were outstanding. Tara Naysmith did a fantastic job as MC, Santa arrived in a helicopter and it was all topped off with a fantastic fireworks display! Thank you to everyone who was involved in making this event such a success including the team at the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre and other Council staff, the wonderful volunteers and our event sponsors.

A huge thank you to all the community members and staff who gave so generously to Council's Christmas Gift and Food Appeal. All donations were picked up by the Kurri Kurri Community Centre and Samaritans Information and Neighbourhood Centre (Cessnock).

As this is the last Mayoral Column of 2017 it is an opportunity to wish everyone a very merry Christmas and a happy new year. In my home, Christmas is a special time we share together, particularly now our sons no longer live with us. It is about families coming together and sharing. On behalf of Cessnock City Council I offer you best wishes for a very happy Christmas and a safe, healthy and prosperous new year. Cheers, Bob

P.S. Don't forget that entry to Branxton Pool is free every Sunday over the school holidays!!!



Clr Melanie Dagg - Cessnock City Councillor - Ward C

Can you believe we are a week out from Christmas? 2017 has been super busy and gone in a flash so I'm really looking forward to taking a break with my husband Josh and our girls.

It's also been a busy year for Council with many projects completed and a number currently underway. In addition to the ongoing maintenance of our local roads, bridges, parks and ovals, Council has continued its support of community and sporting groups through the Dollar 4 Dollars grants program. Preschools in Branxton and Greta have received support through the ongoing provision of premises and Greta Preschool received roof and gutter repairs at a cost of \$40,000. As part of Council's award-winning 2017 Youth Week program we ran the silent disco and family day at Greta Arts & Sports Centre, and CYCOS continue to run regular drop-in sessions most Friday nights at the Centre, providing a safe and fun space for the young people in our community. Additionally, this summer season saw the installation of new heat pumps in Branxton Pool at an approximate cost of \$70,000 and the introduction of free Sundays at the pool over the Christmas holidays. The first week was a huge success!

You will have noticed plenty of action on and around our roads with Elderslie Road, Branxton receiving minor rehabilitation work at a cost of \$135,000 together with a tidy-up of McMullins Road. \$665,000 has been spent on Dalwood Road, East Branxton as part of the Road Safety project to enhance the school bus interchange. Council has been lucky to have a great partner in the Branxton Greta Business Chamber who used their own resources to lobby for the \$50,000 grant to supply the bus shelters, which will be installed there in the coming weeks. Council also worked with the Chamber to make Branxton an RV Friendly Town, which is already seeing an increase of economic development into local businesses by visitors staying at the RV Park. There has also been plenty happening under our roads with the flood mitigation works for Whitburn Estate, Greta almost complete. This has been a big project which involved upgrading the culverts beneath the New England Highway at an approximate cost of \$1.8m, jointly funded 50/50 with RMS. Council funded a further \$720,000 in flood mitigation works on Hillview Road, East Branxton and is currently undertaking flood studies around Anvil Creek as well as in Thomas Street, North Rothbury.

Planning and consultation continues on the development of the Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan, and specifically the Miller Park Masterplan. Further strategic planning engagement will continue in the New Year, stemming from the adopted Branxton Sub-Regional Land Use Strategy and Branxton Town Centre Masterplan. This will guide the upgrade and development throughout the area and specifically Branxton's Maitland Street once the handover from RMS has taken place.

As this is my last column for the year, I'd like to take the opportunity to wish you a wonderful Christmas and hope it is a safe and happy time for you and your loved ones. Although I will be taking some time off, I will still be contactable over the break in the usual way. You can email me at melanie.dagg@cessnock.nsw.gov.au, phone 0409 404 898. Best wishes & Merry Christmas! Mel

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urination.

- Difficulty in having an erection.
- Painful ejaculation.

Blood in the urine or semen. If you suffer from these symptoms, it does not necessarily mean that you have Prostate Cancer. In many men the prostate gets larger with age due to a non-cancerous condition known as benign prostatic hyperplasia.

Treatment Options
Always consult your Doctor for diagnosis and advice. In no way is this information intended to replace the advice of a medical practitioner.

Screening for prostate cancer

Prostate Cancer screening tests include: digital rectal exam (a Doctor examines the prostate via the rectum to check for hard or lumpy areas) and a blood test for prostate-specific antigen (PSA). This involves taking a blood sample and measuring the levels of PSA in the blood. These levels may rise if the person has Prostate Cancer, benign prostatic hyperplasia or infection in the prostate. The American Cancer Society recommends that Doctors offer men over 50 years of age the option to be tested for early detection of Prostate Cancer. The Society also recommends that men at high risk (family history/race) should begin testing at age 45.

Diagnosis and Treatment

If you have symptoms or test results that suggest you may have Prostate Cancer, your Doctor will recommend further examinations and tests (such as a digital rectal exam, a urine test and a blood test to check for PSA). Your Doctor may order further procedures such as a transrectal ultrasound (where the probe is inserted into the rectum to produce pictures of the prostate area) or a cystoscopy (a procedure which involves looking into the urethra and bladder through a thin, lighted tube). If these tests suggest Prostate Cancer, a biopsy will be performed, where a sample

of tissue is taken from the prostate to be analysed. If Prostate Cancer is diagnosed, treatment will depend on the stage of the disease (e.g. is the cancer contained within the prostate or has it spread to other parts of the body) and the grade of the tumour (how abnormal the cells look and how likely they are to grow or spread). Treatment may involve surgery, radiation therapy and/or hormonal therapy or "watchful waiting", where the man's health is closely monitored and treatment is begun if symptoms occur or worsen.

Diet Hints

The European Prospective Investigation of Cancer (EPIC) is a long-term, large-scale study of the influence of diet on cancer in humans. The EPIC results recommend that people lose weight if overweight or obese and have a diet that is:

- * High in fruits and vegetables.
- * High in fibre.
- * Low in red or processed meats.
- * Low in saturated fat.

Evidence suggests that natural substances found in cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, and cabbage may lower overall cancer risk. Research now shows that eating one or more portions of broccoli every week has the potential to reduce the risk of Prostate Cancer, and the risk of localised cancer becoming more aggressive.

Pharmacist's Advice
Ask your Pharmacist for advice.

- Follow the Diet Hints.
- Try to stop smoking. Ask your Pharmacist for information and products to help you quit smoking.
- Try to minimise stress.
- Exercise regularly. Swimming and walking are two good examples.
- If the diet is inadequate, consider the supplements suggested in this topic.

Cheers, Lee

How to bake a ham



It isn't Christmas without a ham, and this is one addition to the table that everyone will love. Follow these simple steps to ensure success, no matter your kitchen skills or the time you have available.

Buy the right ham

When selecting your ham, choose a leg that has a thick layer of insulating fat to protect the meat during cooking. A typical 8 kg leg will feed 20 people with plenty of leftovers.

Remove the skin

Using your hands, gently peel back the skin from the leg to the shank being careful not to tear the fat. Using a sharp knife score the skin around the shank, remove the skin in a single piece and reserve. This way you can use it later on to store the ham and keep it moist.

Score the fat

Use a sharp knife to score the fat, taking care not to cut all the way through to the meat or it can dry out as it cooks. Score lines running diagonal to the leg about 4cm apart, then repeat the process by scoring it in the opposite direction. You should be left with a diamond pattern.

Add the cloves

Part of what makes the ham look so

beautiful is its blanket of studded cloves. Use a skewer to make a small hole in each diamond,

then place a clove in each hole. Don't worry about the cloves overpowering the ham as it cooks, as the flavouring is very subtle. To speed things up, you can score and stud the ham up to 24 hours ahead of time, just make sure you then re-cover the ham with the removed skin and keep it in the fridge until you're ready to cook it.

A dash of water

Place the ham on a wire rack inside a baking dish and pour 2 cm of water into the bottom of the dish. This little bit of water will stop the glaze from burning as it drips down the ham into the bottom of the pan.

Choose your glaze

There are a wide variety of glazes you can choose from, although the traditional mix is sugar, mustard and lime or lemon juice. This will add a

layer of flavour to contrast with the smokiness or the ham. There are a number of different glazes you can use EG.,

- Lime Glazed Ham
- Christmas Glazed Ham
- Honey Glazed Ham
- Whisky Glazed Ham
- Toni's Coca-Cola Christmas Ham
- Brush half of your choice of glaze over the ham

Into the oven

Cook the ham in a preheated 180°C oven for 20 minutes for each kilo, brushing frequently with the remaining glaze to build up layers of caramelised sugars. The final ham should be a deep golden colour. Serve ceremoniously in the middle of the table and slice into thin slices

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MERRY Christmas

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Report

roll them out across the state. "A reduction in domestic violence offences is encouraging and, while we remain cautiously optimistic, we

Police welcome BOCSAR statistics as crime continues to fall

NSW Police have welcomed a decrease in domestic violence offences according to the latest BOCSAR data.

The quarterly statistics released today (Thursday 7 December 2017), indicate a reduction of 3.5 per cent in the 24 months to September 2017.

NSW Police Commissioner Mick Fuller APM, said new strategies allow officers to place greater emphasis on perpetrators and hold them more accountable.

"For a long time, modern law enforcement has focused just on victims of domestic violence, which is entirely appropriate, but the perpetrators are the ones who need to be held to account," Commissioner Fuller said.

"Protection of victims is paramount and, I will continue working towards reducing domestic violence offences in NSW.

NSW Police has had success with initiatives like Suspect Target Management Plans, Domestic Violence High Risk Offender Teams, DVEC as well as changes to legislation to ensure a continued focus on disruption and prevention. "Programs like the Domestic Violence High Risk Offender Teams, which I launched across the metropolitan region in 2016, have allowed police to proactively target recidivist offenders.

"We have already seen the positive impacts these teams have had, which is why we are continuing to

know there is a great deal of work ahead of us to combat this insidious crime. Continuing to work with victims is a priority, but we also need to urge the community to come forward and help," Commissioner Fuller said. Statewide, there has been a reduction in the following major crime categories:

- Domestic violence related assault - down 3.5 per cent
- Break and enter - dwelling - down 7.8 per cent
- Break and enter - non-dwelling - down 5.8 per cent
- Steal from dwelling - down 5.7 per cent
- Steal from person - down 11.1 per cent
- Fraud - down 8.5 per cent
- Malicious damage to property - down 2.7 per cent

Possession of cocaine has increased by 41.2 per cent, with Sydney's inner city and Eastern Suburbs contributing significantly to the upward trend.

This can be attributed to the proactive work being conducted by police to target the supply and possession of these and other illicit drugs across NSW.

The Police Transport Public Safety Command are working to reduce transport regulatory offences, which include fare evasion, falsely buying concession tickets, and drinking alcohol on public transport.

The increased trend of 12.6 per cent can be attributed to proactive police work. Retail theft is the only major crime category to see an upward trend of 4.7 per cent which is possibly the result of greater reporting

of incidents. "With an overall decrease in crime statistics, it is reflective of the continued hard work and dedication of police in putting the community first," Commissioner Fuller said. **Man dies following single-vehicle crash near Maitland**

Monday, 11 December 2017 03:12:59 PM

An investigation is underway following the death of a man in a single-vehicle crash near Maitland.

Emergency services were called to Tocal Road, Mindaribba, about 15km north of Maitland, about 6am today (Monday 11 December 2017), following reports a Toyota Hilux had veered off the road and struck a tree.

The driver was treated by NSW Ambulance paramedics; however, the 46-year-old man died at the scene. Officers attached to Central Hunter Local Area Command established a crime scene and commenced inquiries into the circumstances surrounding the incident.

A report will be prepared for the Coroner.

42 drink-drivers caught in Hunter Region operations this weekend - Traffic & Highway Patrol

Monday, 11 December 2017 02:23:29 PM

Police charged 42 drink-drivers - including one drink-driver who allegedly led police on a pursuit with drugs in his car - during simultaneous drink-driving operations in the Hunter Region and surrounding areas this weekend.

The simultaneous three-day operations - targeting drink-driving, speeding and other traffic offences - began on Friday 7 December 2017 and ended on Sunday 10 December 2017.

Officers targeted major motorways, main roads and local streets in Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Central Hunter, Hunter Valley and surrounding areas, conducting random breath and random drug testing. The operation was conducted in order

to save more lives on Northern Region roads, after 112 people have died in crashes within the region already this year.

During the operation, a 24-year-old man allegedly led police on a pursuit after he failed to stop when he was detected travelling at 90km/h in a 60km/h zone on Fishery Point Road, Morisset.

He was later stopped and arrested. Following his arrest, officers allegedly located an amount of drugs believed to be cocaine on him. The drugs were seized and will undergo forensic examinations.

He was taken to Toronto Police Station where he returned a blood-alcohol reading of 0.153 and was charged with fail to stop police pursuit (Skye's Law), high-range drink-driving, drive with expired licence and possess prohibited drug. He had his licence suspended on the spot and was granted conditional bail to appear at Toronto Local Court on 19 December 2017.

Acting Superintendent Robert Toynton of the Traffic and Highway Patrol Command said the number of people caught drink-driving is disappointing.

"It is alarming to see that despite the obvious dangers of drink-driving, at least 42 people within the Hunter region, still made the decision to drink-and-drive. "All 42 of those drivers who made the decision to drink and drive will have to front court and explain why they chose to put themselves and others at risk on the roads through their selfish decisions.

"Drivers who choose to drink and drive are not only putting themselves at risk of being killed on the road, they are putting innocent road user's lives at risk. "There is simply no excuse for drinking and driving, and we make no apologies for catching people and putting them before the courts," Acting Superintendent Toynton said.

'Don't let safety take a backseat'

To make sure everyone arrives home safely these holidays, police are calling out for backseat drivers to do their part and speak up, in order to save lives.

The unorthodox approach follows an alarming increase in passenger deaths when compared to last year. We have already lost 367 lives on NSW roads this year. That is 367 families who are missing a loved one these holidays.

Tragically, 76 of the lives lost were passengers, who are often innocent victims to road trauma. This number is an increase of 24 passengers killed in crashes when compared to last year. Operation Safe Arrival (12.01am on Friday 15 December 2017), and will continue until 11.59pm on New Years Day (Monday 1 January 2018).

Double demerits will be in place between Friday 22 December 2017 and Monday 1 January 2018 for all speeding, mobile phone, seatbelt and motorcycle-helmet offences and officers will be out in large numbers during the operation enforcing all types of dangerous driving behaviours.

Deputy Commissioner Specialist Support, Catherine Burn, said passengers play a major role in keeping themselves, their drivers, and other road-users safe these holidays.

"In my view, one of the most tragic statistics is that 76 of the people who have died this year were passengers in vehicles. That is 24 more passengers who have died this year when compared to last year.

"This is an especially tragic statistic, because it shows that innocent people are dying on our roads because of the poor decisions of people behind the wheel. "During Operation Safe Arrival, we want everyone to remember not to let safety take a backseat. This means that we want drivers to think about the innocent passengers in their cars and

other cars before they make a stupid decision to speed, pick up a phone, drink and drive, or drive tired.

"It also means we want passengers to be a backseat driver. Passengers need to speak up if they see their driver speeding, using their phone, or drinking before driving. They also need to offer to drive if their driver is tired or has been driving for a long period of time.

"We had 16 people die during the same operation last year, and it's not good enough. The message is simple, everyone needs to do their part and look out for each other, so that everyone can arrive home safely," Deputy Commissioner Burn said. Minister for Police and Minister for Emergency Services Troy Grant said while December is typically a time for celebration, it is also a time when tragedies can happen.

"Our first responders do an incredible job, especially at this time of year when they sacrifice time with their own friends and loved ones to respond to all kinds of incidents. But they should not have to break the devastating news of a road fatality to any family member or loved one.

"Do not let careless behaviour ruin what should be a time for celebration and fun. Make this holiday period memorable for all the right reasons," Mr Grant said.

Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, Melinda Pavey said people across NSW should enjoy the holidays with road safety in mind at all times and urged both drivers and passengers to play their part in making sure everyone has a 'Safe Arrival' at their destination. "The Christmas and New Year holiday period is a wonderful time of the year when many families and friends get together to celebrate the festivities - often by commuting longer than usual distances on unfamiliar roads," Mrs

Pavey said. "But the silly season isn't an excuse to be silly. If you're too tired to drive, stop and have a nap, don't push on. Share the driving if you can. If you're planning to have a drink, make sure you have a Plan B and of course always wear a seatbelt - it could save your life.

"Road safety is a shared responsibility and we all have a part to play in preventing these crashes on our roads. If you see unsafe behaviour - and you can prevent it - please do something about it!" NSW Ambulance Chief Executive Dominic Morgan said paramedics approached the holiday season dreading the inevitable call to a road tragedy.

"Road accidents are among the worst jobs our paramedics get called out to.

"The injuries inflicted by high-speed crashes are particularly severe and often result in death or serious injury.

"Tragically, it's not uncommon for our paramedics to treat young children after a family road trip has gone horribly wrong.

"The best present you can give your family this Christmas is your safe arrival," Commissioner Morgan said.

Fire & Rescue NSW (FRNSW) Assistant Commissioner, Paul McGuiggan urged people to take extra care when driving to their holiday destination.

"This year alone FRNSW crews have attended more than 2,000 crashes on NSW roads where drivers or passengers were injured or needed to be extracted from vehicles," Assistant Commissioner McGuiggan said. "Some of these people have suffered horrific injuries and some have tragically died. Lives have been forever altered by crashes that could have been avoided. "Drive safely over the holidays, so we don't have to rescue you from a wreckage this Christmas."



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Saleyards Expressions of Interest process proceeds to next steps with close of submissions



An Expressions of Interest (EOI) process for the lease or sale of the Singleton Regional Livestock Market will progress to the next stage following the deadline for EOIs yesterday. Anthony Egan, Council's Director Community and Corporate, said he was pleased with the number of submissions received and Council staff would now commence an evaluation. A report is anticipated to be presented to Council's first meeting of 2018 on 19 February to decide the next steps. The options available to Council following evaluation of the EOIs are:

- Prepare a shortlist of registrants and invite tenders from those registrants;
 - Call for tenders from the market generally;
 - Enter into pre-contractual negotiations with one or more registrants;
 - Decide not to proceed further with the EOI process or any other process; or
 - Commence a new process for calling for EOIs on a similar or different basis to that outlined in the current EOI.
- Mr Egan said the purpose of the EOI was to gauge interest from specialists in livestock markets for the

lease or purchase of the facility, ensuring its continued operation in our local government area. "Council is 100 per cent committed to ensuring a livestock market continues

to operate in our local government area well into the future," he said. "However, the fact is the current operation and management of the facility is unsustainable, recording

a deficit in excess of \$250,000 in the previous financial year. "Council does not know how the future operation of the saleyards will look at this stage and it is

premature to speculate about the outcome of this EOI process. "But the EOIs we have received will present options for how the livestock market can continue to be an important

economic driver for Singleton, and help Council make an informed decision on how it would best serve stakeholders, including buyers and sellers, for years to come."

Lyn, John and Staff of Branxton IGA would like to wish all their valued customers a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy Safe New Year

Christmas Trading Hours

Saturday 23rd Dec	-	7am to 7pm
Sunday 24th Dec	-	7am to 6pm
Monday 25th Dec	CHRISTMAS	CLOSED
Tuesday 26th Dec	BOXING DAY	CLOSED
Wednesday 27th Dec	-	7am to 7pm
Thursday 28th Dec	-	7am to 7pm
Friday 29th Dec	-	7am to 7pm
Saturday 30th Dec	-	7am to 7pm
Sunday 31st Dec	-	7am to 6pm
Monday 1st Jan	NEW YEARS	CLOSED
Tuesday 2nd Jan	-	7am to 7pm

MERRY CHRISTMAS

How the locals like it



Year ends with no interest rate movement



The Reserve Bank of Australia has kept the status quo at its last board meeting of 2017, with interest rates remaining on hold at 1.50 per cent. REINSW President Leanne Pilkington said it is unlikely that we will see interest rate movement from the RBA in 2018. "The OECD has recently signalled that the winds of change in the Australian economy may be preparing to

blow, and that a rate rise may come sooner than previously thought. Even so, this would be 12 months away," Ms Pilkington said. "With the heat gone from the housing market, and with wages, unemployment and inflation steady, there's little impetus for the RBA to tinker with interest rates in the near term." Ms Pilkington said

property prices are likely to remain stable due to robust demand, though the number of foreign buyers may ease. "The supply cycle in many markets has peaked, so we see 2018 as a steady year categorised by absorption, with those projects that are underway and recently completed best positioned to absorb prevailing domestic demand," she said. The RBA will next meet on Tuesday, 6 February 2018.

Is there a loophole in the new strata laws?

A recent decision by the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal has sparked concern about a potential loophole in the new strata legislation that might allow unruly lot owners to ignore NCAT orders without penalty. The new strata legislation came into force on 30 November 2016.

As a result, the owners corporation sought an order to impose a pecuniary penalty for contravention of the adjudicator's order under the Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) (SSMA 2015), or (in the alternative) under the 1996 Act. The Tribunal decided to impose the penalty under section 202 of the 1996 Act having regard to the transitional provisions in the SSMA 2015 and section 30(1) of the Interpretation

Act 1987 (NSW). However, a key issue raised in the Tribunal's decision was that the penalty amount could not be recovered under section 248 of the SSMA 2015 because the owners did not have standing as an "authorised officer" to commence proceedings under section 77 of the Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2013 (CATA). An authorised officer who could commence proceedings is the Minister, or a person with the appropriate written consent per section 76 of the CATA. This had led to industry-wide speculation about a potential enforcement loophole in existing legislation.

Does this mean you can ignore an NCAT order to comply with a by-law?

No. For breaches that have occurred (or will occur) since commencement of the SSMA 2015 there is a new regime for by-law enforcement which involves a different protocol (initiated by the owners corporation) and penalties, which are recoverable as a judgment debt. For enforcement of by-law compliance orders made prior to the commencement of the SSMA 2015, it would seem the 1996 Act provisions will operate pursuant to the transitional provisions in the SSMA 2015 (as outlined in the Anderson Decision).

How does the new regime for by-law compliance work?

Under the new regime, by-law enforcement is initiated

by an owners corporation issuing a Notice to Comply (per section 146 of the SSMA 2015). If a person continues to breach a by-law breach after a Notice to Comply is issued, then the owners corporation may apply to NCAT (per section 147 of the SSMA 2015) to seek an order for the offending person to pay a penalty of up to \$1,100.

If there is a further by-law breach within 12 months after NCAT imposes an initial penalty, the owners corporation may make an application for the Tribunal to impose a further penalty of \$2,200. A penalty imposed under section 147 of the SSMA 2015 may be registered and enforced as a judgment debt (see section 78 of the CATA). We understand that the new regime was intended to streamline enforcement with a view to side stepping some of the complexities (and expense) around seeking orders to initiate an enforcement process.

So where to from here? Despite the new SSMA 2015 regime for by-law enforcement, industry concern remains for: The adequacy of the

mandated penalties contemplated in section 147 of the SSMA 2015 for extreme or prolonged breaches of a by-law (e.g. what if the benefit of the breach outweighs the maximum penalties contemplated in SSMA 2015?)

- Whether or not there are enforcement issues arising from the relatively narrow category of an "authorised officer" (per s77 of the CATA).

It has been reported in the media that NSW Fair Trading is considering whether statutory amendments may be warranted in 2018 in light of certain statements made in the Anderson Decision. However, it is unclear what form these amendments will take, or if any will be considered necessary. So for the moment, it's a case of "watch this space...", and be aware of the Anderson Decision and how it might impact you.

Make the most of your equity



By Tim McKibbin – REINSW CEO
One of the greatest

advantages of investing in property is its high leveraging potential, which means it allows you to borrow money to finance another investment. Accessing equity which you've built up in your property is often something people will do when they want to purchase a property they couldn't otherwise afford.

However, it is not as simple as it sounds and good "leveraging" has a lot to do with timing as property investment cycles are influenced by a range of variables. This means that experience and discipline are very important because there will be times when it is more sensible to retire debt. Although leveraging can be a very sound wealth creation strategy, everyone's financial circumstances are different, so make sure you seek out professional advice before putting your plans into action.

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incentive business products. This is an important visit for the Hunter

Valley, as incentive product buyers bring and attract large groups such as conferences, symposiums, and conventions; resulting in direct and in-direct economic benefits for the local community. The group are visiting Australia as part of the annual Dreamtime event hosted by Tourism Australia, which was held in Brisbane from Sunday 3 – Wednesday 6 December.

The group are finishing their Australian tour in the Hunter Valley, after visiting Queensland. The group was treated to a few quintessential Hunter Valley experiences including; lunch on the



with Jo Thomas, General Manager HVWTA

DREAMTIME COMES TO THE HUNTER VALLEY

Last week the Hunter Valley Wine Tourism & Association (HVWTA) is playing host to six qualified buyers from key Korean MICE markets, looking for



green Audrey Wilkinson, a helicopter ride overlooking Hunter Valley, Segway experience at Hunter Valley Resort, lunch at hatted Bistro Molines, tasting experience at Hungerford Hill, lessons with golf pro at Oaks Cypress Lakes Resort, and canapes at dusk on the lawn at Restaurant Botanica, only to name a few. The HVTWA work closely with Tourism Australia to strengthen the region's ties with increasing international visitation from these important incentives markets.

FREE Community Walking Group



The 'Walking Group' was established 5½ years ago in Branxton

WHERE: Miller Park Branxton
WHEN: Monday, Wednesday & Friday are the main walking days. 7am start; walk as little or as much as you like.

Beginners always welcome & it is FREE
On the first Thursday of the month we have a coffee morning after walking. We also enjoy social outings together.

For more information contact Sonnie on 0455 683 607

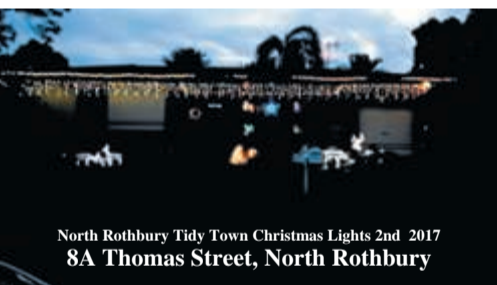
Find us on.. **North Rothbury Tidy Towns**
Caring for our environment
NEWS

NORTH ROTHBURY Tidy Towns again, this year, sponsored a 'Christmas Lights' competition. Entrants eligible included, of course, North Rothbury, Hanwood Estate & Katherines Landing Huntlee. The committee deputised two unbiased members of Tidy Towns as judges but looking at their judgement you may wonder about that as both reside in North Rothbury. The rules of the competition state that their decision is final & that appeals are not allowed. Last Friday evening our two unbiased deputised judges, Margaret Butler &

Robyn Talbot, took to the streets of North Rothbury, Hanwood Estate & Katherines Landing Huntlee and after many hours of deliberation declared that this years winner will be 21 Mayne Street, North Rothbury with runners up 8A Thomas Street (you guessed it) North Rothbury & 14 Mayne Street (you guessed it again) North Rothbury. As Robyn & Margaret said the winning home was outstanding. Congratulations to all. This year has been a good year for NRTT with the inaugural Twilight Markets a great success, an

application for funding a watering system at the park, a CCTV at the park & many 'tidy up' days. Again we wish to thank Branxton IGA, Branxton Pharmacy & Petersons Wines for their generous donation of the raffle prizes. Our next meeting will be on the 6th February 2018 at the park shelter, 6pm. All residents are welcome to attend & join NRTT. Have a Happy & Holy Christmas & a wonderful coming year.

North Rothbury Tidy Town Christmas Lights Winner 2017
21 Mayne Street, North Rothbury



North Rothbury Tidy Town Christmas Lights 2nd 2017
8A Thomas Street, North Rothbury



North Rothbury Tidy Town Christmas Lights 3rd 2017
14 Mayne Street, North Rothbury



Sue, representing Branxton IGA, holding an Appreciation Award given by NRTT for their generous support with our Twilight Market Raffle.

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Merry Christmas

Team Taylor would like to wish you & your family a wonderful Christmas & a very Happy New Year!!! We hope that you have a relaxing holiday & look forward to seeing you in 2018.



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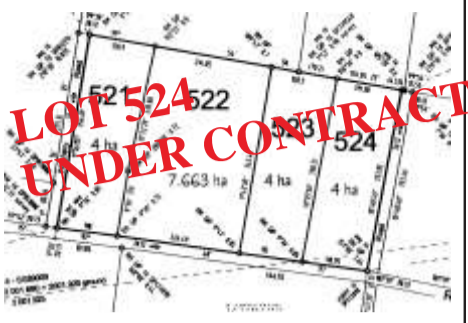
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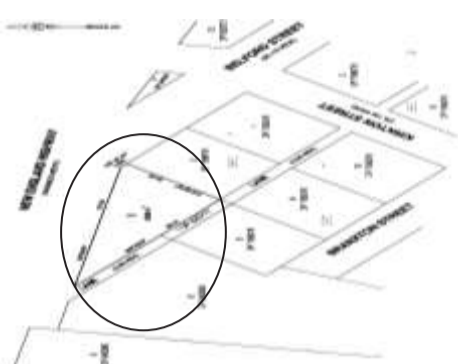


Lots 521, 523 & 524
Littlewood Road,

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4ha (10 acres) very private
bush blocks.
Fully Fenced & within
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Country

ASKING: \$420,000 each

BELFORD



Vacant Land
2559m²

Vacant Land with building
approved
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Well over half an acre of good
level block.

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BRANXTON



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This well established family home is located
in the central part of Branxton. The property
includes three (3) spacious bedrooms,
separate lounge room, open plan dining
area with slow combustion fire, neat
kitchen, good sized bathroom, side access
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This property has been very well main-
tained & is on 1011square metres; a quar-
ter acre block.

ASKING \$365,000

NORTH ROTHBURY



Vacant
Land
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Vacant Building Block
Fantastic visage
\$130,000 ONO

GLENDON BROOK RETREAT!

GLENDONBROOK ROAD, GLENDON BROOK
(Lot 61 DP 1100235)

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Features include:-

- 15Acres approx divided into 2 paddocks.
- Double frontage to Webbers Creek (permanent water supply).
- 90% flat country. Bitumen to front gate.
- Weekly rubbish service. 20 min to Singleton & Branxton & 15 min to Gresford.
- 800mm annual rainfall. Fully fenced 2 paddocks + barn area.
- 20% Kikuyu & 80% native grasses (paspalum, rye, couch etc.).
- 13.5m x 10.5m 'American Barn' with 3 equal 3.5m bays & a 3m x 10.5m workshop.
- 3xphase 100amp/phase underground power from front gate to barn.
- Barn has ample fluro lighting & GPO's, ceiling fans, instantaneous gas Hot Water Service, electric upright stove & oven, small kitchen with sink & microwave + pantry.
- Bathroom with shower, toilet (flush), laundry tub.
- Barn has council occupation certificate whilst building new house.
- Council approved in-situ water treatment plant (enviro-cycle).
- Phone cable installed underground to barn but not connected.
- DA approved new residence (Colonial style 4 bedroom with all plans & engineering certificates available).
- Honda pump on Webbers Creek with underground piping to barn.
- 2 x 30,000 litre fresh water tanks with pressure pump.
- 2 x horse stables with underground water from barn & horse proof yards attached.
- All weather gravel road from front gate to barn & Bushfire free.



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A very spacious five bedroom family home +
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The property is fenced into 3 paddocks with a
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There is also a triple lock-up garage.
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Out & About

with Mike Lowing

Branxton RV Park last week. It was the second visit by the Sydney Wanderers in less than a month. This visit saw 40 RV's enjoying 4 days of local & 'wine country' hospitality. Once again the local Branxton RSL Hall was given over for their use of the facility.



This years '2017 Community Christmas Spectacular' at the Branxton Golf Club was, once again, a spectacular success. Plenty of activities for the younger set, good weather & a fantastic fire works display.



As reported elsewhere in this edition the new bus terminus & associated drainage & road works on the corner of Dalwood Road & Wyndham Street were officially opened last week. To actually complete the project 5 new shelters are on there way. Fantastic



Merry Christmas and a **Happy New Year**

From Mike , Helen & staff at
The News

School Holiday Fun at your MUSEUM

BOYS & GIRLS!

Have you ever played marbles, like they did in the old days?
Have you ever made peg dolls from wooden clothes pegs, as children did in the past?
What about played hopscotch, or folded paper planes, or wrote a letter with quill and ink?

Come along to your local Cheta Museum at 96 High Street (the former Council Chambers) in the New Year for an assortment of activities and some OLD FASHIONED FUN

Open Weekdays and Saturdays 11am - 3pm
Phone Nettie on 0427677150 for enquiries



We cannot say farewell to 2017 without congratulating Noeleen Bendeich on her wonderful achievement for her handicraft at the Singleton Show in September. Noeleen achieved thirteen 1sts and four 2nds and received the title of Most Successful Exhibitor. Congratulations Noeleen. Noeleen and I had the

A teacher is explaining biology to her 4th grade students. "Human beings are the only animals that stutter," she said. A little girl raises her hand. "I had a kitty-cat who stuttered." The teacher, knowing how precious some of these stories could become, asked the girl to describe the incident. "Well," she began, "I was in the back yard with my kitty and the Rottweiler that lives next door got a running start and before we knew it, he jumped over the fence into our yard!" "That must've been scary," said the teacher. "I t sure was," said the little girl. "My kitty raised her back, went "Ffffff!, Ffffff!, Ffffff!, but before she could say another word (grownups will know what the pussy was trying to say) the Rottweiler ate her! The teacher had to leave the room.



Christmas lunch at The Royal Federal Hotel

pleasure of attending a "Meet and Greet" for the National CWA President, Mrs Dorothy Coombes, which was held at East Maitland on 31st October. Dorothy was a lovely, entertaining and

informative speaker and it was great to meet her. Thank you to East Maitland for hosting the day and for a lovely morning tea and lunch. Also, Thank You to Lyn Tunin from Gresford for kindly sending me

photos from the day, as I had forgotten my camera. Leanne and Marie have been very busy making toiletry bags and filling them with useful items for women in need. Thank you Leanne and Marie. As Christmas fast approaches, Branxton/Greta CWA members and families would like to wish all in the

community a safe, healthy and happy Christmas and our thoughts and prayers are with anyone who is in ill health or hospital at this time of year, or any time of year for that matter. We would also like to thank everyone in the community for their support over the past year and we look forward to another busy year next year. Special thanks to Mike Lowing, for all the newspaper coverage you have given us. We finished off 2017 by enjoying a lovely Christmas lunch with as many members and husbands who could attend at the Royal Federal Hotel and were joined by honorary member Helen Scott. Thank you to the Royal Federal for a lovely lunch to finish of a very busy year and look forward to catching up with everyone in 2018. Safe travels.

President and members Branxton/Greta CWA.



Photo Above: Dorothy Coombes, CWA National President & Noeleen Bendeich CWA Branxton Greta Patron & Treasurer



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Travellers are permitted to bring a small esky and refreshments on board.

Ticket Cost— \$110 per person
 Includes return private train travel to Tamworth Country Music Festival and a light breakfast. Tea & coffee will be served on both the forward and return rail journey.
The train departs from Telarah Station and drops you up at Tamworth on request.

Information & tickets can be obtained by telephoning
Doug Perry on 4933 12 70 or 0407 978 435
 or email doug.perry@bigpond.com

Profits from the day are to be distributed by the Rotary Club of Maitland to the "Ellen's Car Conversion Muscular Dystrophy Appeal"

CATHOLIC PARISH BRANXTON & SINGLETON

The Branxton and Singleton Catholic Parishes wish everyone a very happy and Holy Christmas

Christmas Eve Vigil Mass

- 6.30pm St Brigid's Church, Station St, Branxton
- 6.30pm St Patrick's Church, Queen St, Singleton

Christmas Eve Midnight Mass

- 12.00am St Patrick's Church, Queen St, Singleton

Christmas Day Mass

- 8.00am St Catherine's Church, Branxton St, Greta
- 10.00am St Patrick's Church, Queen St, Singleton

BRANXTON NEWSAGENCY

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We will be CLOSED Christmas Day

We wish all our valued clients a Merry Christmas & a Safe & Prosperous New Year.
 Sue, Dave & Staff

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JOEL FITZGIBBON MP FEDERAL MEMBER FOR HUNTER

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WISHING YOU A
MERRY CHRISTMAS
 AND
 A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR

3 Edward Street Cessnock. My office will be close from 1pm December 22 and will re-open January 8.

GRETA WORKERS CLUB
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4938 7325

MILLER PARK SPORTS CLUB
6 MAITLAND RD EAST BRANXTON
4938 1226

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OAKS RESTAURANT
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ALL NEW MENU
STEAKS & SCHNITTY'S
\$15.00

SUNDAY 24th DECEMBER
SEAFOOD RAFFLE

**MERRY
CHRISTMAS
AND
HAPPY NEW YEAR**



FRIDAY 22nd DECEMBER
THE TWANGSTERS

NEW YEARS EVE

**BRING IN THE NEW YEAR
WITH
"SOLID GOLD"**

MEMBER'S BADGE DRAW

WEDNESDAY
20th DECEMBER - \$3,100
SUNDAY
24th DECEMBER - \$1,100

MILLER PARK

MEMBERS BADGE DRAW
THURSDAY 21st DECEMBER
\$3,200
SUNDAY 24th DECEMBER
\$5,000
MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN

HAPPY HOUR
MILLER PARK WEDNESDAY
4.00 – 7.00pm
GRETA THURSDAY
4.00 – 6.00pm
\$3.40 a Schooner

THE PARK RESTAURANT

WEDNESDAY — SUNDAY
LUNCH & DINNER
GREAT FOOD



RAFFLES
FRIDAY
MEAT TRAYS
& HAMS
SUNDAY
SEAFOOD TRAYS



The 10 Best Books of 2017

The year's best books, selected by the editors of The New York Times Book Review.

Fiction

Autumn

By Ali Smith

The extraordinary friendship of an elderly songwriter and the precocious child of his single-parent neighbor is at the heart of this novel that darts back and forth through the decades, from the 1960s to the era of Brexit. The first in a projected four-volume series, it's a moving exploration of the intricacies of the imagination, a sly teasing-out of a host of big ideas and small revelations, all hovering around a timeless quandary: how to observe, how to be.

Fiction

Exit West

By Mohsin Hamid

A deceptively simple conceit turns a timely novel about a couple fleeing a civil war into a profound meditation on the psychology of exile. Magic doors separate the known calamities of the old world from the unknown perils of the new, as the migrants learn how to adjust to an improvisatory existence. Hamid has written a novel that fuses the real with the surreal — perhaps the most faithful way to convey the tremulous political fault lines of our interconnected planet.

Fiction

Pachinko

By Min Jin Lee

Lee's stunning novel, her second, chronicles four generations of an ethnic Korean family, first in Japanese-occupied Korea in the early 20th century, then in Japan itself from the years before World War II to the late 1980s. Exploring central concerns of identity, homeland and belonging, the book announces its ambitions right from the opening sentence: "History has failed us, but no matter." Lee suggests that behind the facades of wildly different people lie countless private desires, hopes and miseries, if we have the patience and compassion to look and listen.

Fiction

The Power

By Naomi Alderman

Alderman imagines our present moment — our history, our wars, our politics — complicated by the sudden manifestation of a lethal "electrostatic power" in women that upends gender dynamics across the globe. It's a riveting story, told in fittingly electric language, that explores how power corrupts everyone: those new to it and those resisting its loss. Provocatively, Alderman suggests that history's horrors are inescapable — that there will always be abuses of power, that the arc of the universe doesn't bend toward justice so much as inscribe a circle away from it. "Transfers of power, of course, are rarely smooth," one character observes.

Fiction

Sing, Unburied, Sing

By Jesmyn Ward

In her follow-up to "Salvage the Bones," Ward returns to the fictional town of Bois Sauvage, Miss., and the stories of ordinary people who would be easy to classify dismissively into categories like "rural poor," "drug-dependent," "products of the criminal justice system." Instead Ward gives us Jojo, a 13-year-old, and a road trip that he and his little sister take with his drug-addicted black mother to pick up their white father from

prison. And there is nothing small about their existences. Their story feels mythic, both encompassing the ghosts of the past and touching on all the racial and social dynamics of the South as they course through this one fractured family. Ward's greatest feat here is achieving a level of empathy that is all too often impossible to muster in real life, but that is genuine and inevitable in the hands of a writer of such lyric imagination.

Nonfiction

The Evolution of Beauty: How Darwin's Forgotten Theory of Mate Choice Shapes the Animal World — and Us

By Richard O. Prum

If a science book can be subversive and feminist and change the way we look at our own bodies — but also be mostly about birds — this is it. Prum, an ornithologist, mounts a defense of Darwin's second, largely overlooked theory of sexual selection. Darwin believed that, in addition to evolving to adapt to the environment, some other force must be at work shaping the species: the aesthetic mating choices made largely by the females. Prum wants subjectivity and the desire for beauty to be part of our understanding of how evolution works. It's a passionate plea that begins with birds and ends with humans and will help you finally understand, among other things, how in the world we have an animal like the peacock.

Nonfiction

Grant

By Ron Chernow

Even those who think they are familiar with Ulysses S. Grant's career will learn something from Chernow's fascinating and comprehensive biography, especially about Grant's often overlooked achievements as president. What is more, at a time of economic inequality reflecting the 19th century's Gilded Age and a renewed threat from white-supremacy groups, Chernow reminds us that Grant's courageous example is more valuable than ever, and in this sense, "Grant" is as much a mirror on our own time as a history lesson.

Nonfiction

Locking Up Our Own: Crime and Punishment in Black America

By James Forman Jr.

A former public defender in Washington, Forman has written a masterly account of how a generation of black officials, beginning in the 1970s, wrestled with recurring crises of violence and drug use in the nation's capital. What started out as an effort to assert the value of black lives turned into an embrace of tough-on-crime policies — with devastating consequences for the very communities those officials had promised to represent. Forman argues that dismantling the American system of mass incarceration will require a new understanding of justice, one that emphasizes accountability instead of vengeance.

Nonfiction

Prairie Fires: The American Dreams of Laura Ingalls Wilder

By Caroline Fraser

Fraser's biography of the author of "Little House on the Prairie" and other beloved books about her childhood during the era of westward migration captures the details of a life — and an improbable, iconic literary career — that has been expertly veiled by fiction. Exhaustively researched and passionately written, this book refreshes and revitalizes our understanding of Western American history, giving space to the stories of Native Americans displaced from the tribal lands by white settlers like the Ingalls family as well as to the travails of homesteaders, farmers and everyone else who rushed to the

West to extract its often elusive riches.

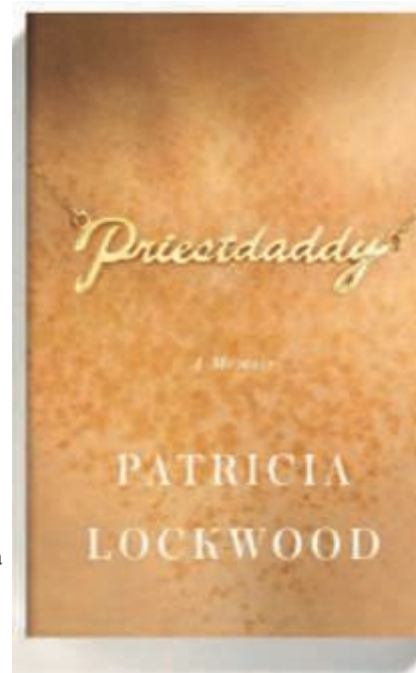
Ending with a savvy analysis of the 20th-century turn toward right-wing politics taken by Wilder and her daughter, Rose Wilder Lane, Fraser offers a remarkably wide-angle view of how national myths are shaped.

Nonfiction

Priestdaddy

By Patricia Lockwood

In this affectionate and very funny memoir, Lockwood weaves the story of her family — including her Roman Catholic priest father, who received a special dispensation from the Vatican — with her own coming-of-age, and the crisis that later led her and her husband to live temporarily under her parents' rectory roof. She also brings to bear her gifts as a poet, mixing the sacred and profane in a voice that's wonderfully grounded and authentic. This book proves Lockwood to be a formidably gifted writer who can do pretty much anything she pleases.

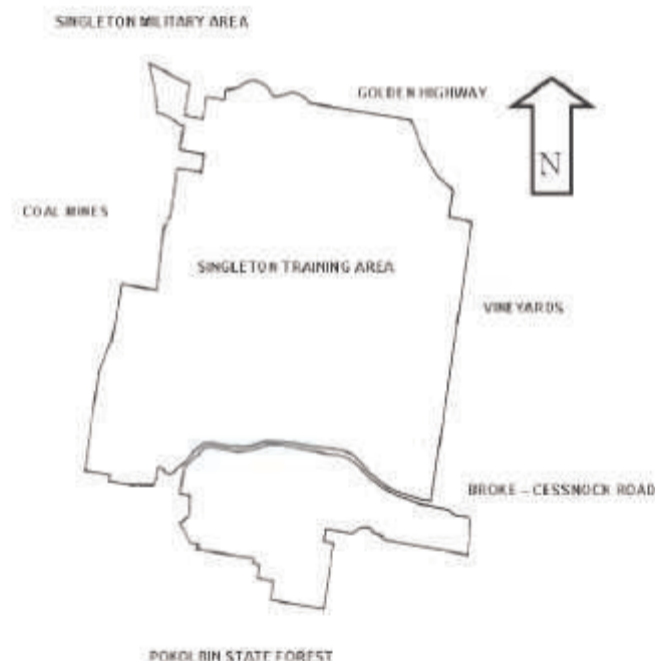


Australian Government

Department of Defence

DEFENCE FIELD FIRING RANGES

WARNING NOTICE



Residents of areas adjacent to Singleton Training Area are warned it is an Army Live Firing Range.

Singleton Training Area is described generally as the area bounded to the south by Pokolbin State Forest, to the east by commercial vineyards and to the west by a combination of rural developments and open cut coal mines. The northern boundary is defined by the Golden Highway which separates the range area from the Singleton Military Area.

Firing practices using live ammunition are conducted continuously on this training area. Low power laser range finders are also used.

Death or serious injury may result from being struck by a projectile. Eye damage may occur when viewing laser beams from within the training area boundary.

Unexploded ammunition is extremely DANGEROUS and should NOT be handled, but should be reported immediately to the nearest Police Station or Army unit. No reward will be paid for the reporting of ammunition which may be located on the training area.

Persons found trespassing on Army Training Areas will be prosecuted.

Enquiries regarding the Singleton Training Area should be directed to:

The Range Control Officer
Range Control,
Directorate of Operations and Training Area Management
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Singleton Training Area
Singleton NSW 2331.

1548LM

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Stop it or Cop it

In the lead-up to the busiest time of year on the State's roads, Parliamentary Secretary for the Hunter Scot MacDonald MLC is today urging motorists to re-think their on-road behaviour with the launch of the NSW Government's latest enforcement campaign:

Stop it ... or Cop it

Designed to deter motorists from taking risks and encourage them to take greater responsibility for their on-road behaviour, the new campaign comes as the State's largest high visibility road safety Police Operation: Safe Arrival, gets underway from midnight tonight.

Mr MacDonald said motorists are continuing to take risks, regardless of some of the longest and most intense high-visibility police operations NSW has ever seen.

"At a time when most of us look forward to enjoying time with friends and family, we need to prioritise safety, be vigilant, follow the road rules and drive to the conditions," Mr MacDonald said.

"While we don't want to have to charge people, if you choose to put yourself or others at risk by breaking the road rules or being reckless, you will face the penalties."

"Motorists using the M1 over the coming holidays also need to plan. The road

works and reduced speed zones will cause delays and frustration. Give yourself and your family extra time to get to your destination regardless of whether you are driving north or south."

Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, Melinda Pavey said people across NSW should enjoy the holidays but urged both drivers and passengers to play their part in making sure everyone has a 'Safe Arrival' at their destination. "The silly season isn't an excuse to be silly. If you're too tired to drive, stop and have a nap, share the driving, make sure you have a Plan B and always wear a seatbelt – it could save your life," Mrs Pavey said.

Minister for Police Troy Grant said motorists are continuing to take risks, regardless of some of the longest and most intense high-visibility police operations NSW has ever seen.

"There will be more police tackling risky behaviour on our roads this Christmas as part of Operation Safe Arrival and the message to motorists is clear - you're responsible for your own actions, you can either Stop it... Or cop it," Mr Grant said.

Operation Safe Arrival has begun and will run through until Monday 1st January 2018 (inclusive).

Local spirit of giving keeps destination campaign on track



The Hunter Valley Wine and Tourism Alliance (Alliance) thanked every business and resident who has made a pledge to get a major destination marketing campaign off the ground. The Alliance are planning a huge 2018 for the local tourism industry and will approach Destination NSW with an impressive \$300,000 in pledges, who will match the funding dollar for dollar and develop a major destination marketing campaign. Cessnock and Singleton Councils with Hunter Valley Wine Country tourism operators, businesses, chambers of commerce and individuals have overwhelmingly supported the campaign set to be worth around

\$600,000. With just \$15,000 remaining to reach the goal of \$300,000, the Alliance is calling on tourism operators to jump on this exciting bandwagon which promises to be an incredible boost to our region. Alliance member and local wine maker Brian McGuigan congratulated industry for getting behind the campaign that will no doubt generate an enormous increase in visitation to the region. "We've got an amazing product, in fact we are the NSW premier wine making region, on the door step of Sydney and we have potential that can be unlocked by the power of a destination marketing." "We're calling on anyone

who has an interest in boosting our region to come on board and make a pledge, together we can make 2018 a successful one and reap the benefits for years to come."

"Making a pledge is

not just for those directly involved in the tourism industry, we've even had a plumber throw his support behind the campaign who has the foresight to see that this type of marketing will have positive flow on effects to every business," added Brian.

The Alliance Campaign Working Group, led by Phil Hele will meet with Destination NSW today to discuss the campaign, its direction and the next stages in bringing the campaign to fruition.

For more information or to get involved in the campaign, contact Jo Thomas on 4990 0900 or to request a pledge form call 4993 6700.

Cessnock City Council thanks the community



Cessnock City Mayor, Councillor Bob Pynsent proudly presented donations from the Cessnock City Council Christmas Gift and Food Appeal 2017 to Kurri Kurri Community Centre and Samaritans Information and Neighbourhood Centre, Cessnock.

Mayor Pynsent thanked everyone in the community for their support and their spirit of giving.

"It is fantastic we can come together to give our much needed support to those more vulnerable residents and help put a smile on their face during the holiday period."

"Christmas is often a stressful time for families and a small donation of food or a gift can go a long way in relieving some of that stress."

Peter Woolven from Samaritans Information and

Neighbourhood Centre (Cessnock) said they are now sorting the donations and preparing for the toys to be delivered to the more than 100 local children.

"We have 102 local children registered for a gift and we will look forward to making the happy delivery to the families ahead of Christmas Day."

Cassie Russel from Kurri Kurri Community Centre thanked the community for their generous donations, especially at this time of year when many local families find it tough.

"These donations will be made available to those in the community who need it most and we'll be working hard in the lead up to Christmas to ensure local families are catered for."



Cooking/International Day at CWA

The CWA of Lower Belford held the first half of cooking schedule with some surprise members taking out first place.

Robin Renfrew took our first place in Fruit Cake, Edith Shearer first place in Sultana Cake and Meredith Hunter did extremely well with too many to name.

The surprise of the day was the overwhelming entries from Kirkton Public School in the Giant Chewy Anzac Cookie with a hint of cinnamon. There were twelve entries in total, but the presentation and taste of the first prize winners Gracie and Jaxson's cookies were hard to beat.

The second place winner was Kiara from North Rothbury and third place winner was Audrey from Kirkton. We are hoping they will try



again in the second half cooking schedule in 2018. To finish the day off the 'International Country of Study Nepal the Year 6 students from Kirkton Public School presented their finished posters.

Ethan's poster was outstanding and a special mention to Jordan for his work. The CWA would like to thank Kirkton Public School for their support of these events.

Daily Thoughts

I think the purpose of life is to be useful, to be responsible, to be honourable, to be compassionate. It is, after all: to matter, to count, to stand for something, to have made some difference that you lived at all. --Leo. C. Rosten

Intelligent is a term used to describe someone who agrees with you. --Unknown
Not every one of our desires can be immediately gratified. We've got to learn to wait patiently for our dreams to come true, especially on the path we've chosen. But while we wait, we need to prepare symbolically a place for our hopes and dreams.

--Sarah Ban Breathnach



and a



Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to one and all! Rest up, eat heartily and enjoy the company of the ones that you love.

The Cessnock Electorate Office will close at 5pm on Wednesday 20 December, 2017 and will re-open at 9am on Wednesday 10 January, 2018.

Here's where to find us should you need help in 2018: phone 4991-1466, email cessnock@parliament.nsw.gov.au or call into 118 Vincent Street (PO Box 242), Cessnock 2325.

You also follow me on my Facebook page "www.facebook.com/claytonbarrmp", go to Twitter and search @claytonbarrmp or check out my website at www.claytonbarr.com.au

CLAYTON BARR MP Member for Cessnock

click



Botnets of Things

The relentless push to add connectivity to home gadgets is creating dangerous side effects that figure to get even worse.

Botnets have existed for at least a decade. As early as 2000, hackers were breaking into computers over the Internet and controlling them en masse from centralized systems. Among other things, the hackers used the combined computing power of these botnets to launch distributed denial-of-service attacks, which flood websites with traffic to take them down.

But now the problem is getting worse, thanks to a flood of cheap webcams, digital video recorders, and other gadgets in the “Internet of things.” Because these devices typically have little or no security, hackers can take them over with little effort. And that makes it easier than ever to build huge botnets that take down much more than one site at a time. In October, a botnet made up of 100,000 compromised gadgets knocked an Internet infrastructure provider partially offline. Taking down that provider, Dyn, resulted in a cascade of effects that ultimately caused a long list of high-profile websites, including Twitter and Netflix, to temporarily disappear from the Internet.

More attacks are sure to follow: the botnet that attacked Dyn was created with publicly available malware called Mirai that largely automates the process of co-opting computers. The best defense would be for everything online to run only secure software, so botnets couldn't be created in the first place. This isn't going to happen anytime soon. Internet of things devices are not designed with security in mind and often have no way of being patched. The things that have become part of Mirai botnets, for example, will be vulnerable until their owners throw them away. Botnets will get larger and more powerful simply because the number of vulnerable devices will go up by orders of magnitude over the next few years.

What do hackers do with them? Many things. Botnets of Things Botnets are used to commit click fraud. Click fraud is a scheme to fool advertisers into thinking that people are clicking on, or viewing, their ads. There are lots of ways to commit click fraud, but the easiest is probably for the attacker to embed a Google ad in a Web page he owns. Google ads pay a site owner according to the number of people who click on them. The attacker instructs all the computers on his botnet to

repeatedly visit the Web page and click on the ad. Dot, dot, dot, PROFIT! If the botnet makers figure out more effective ways to siphon revenue from big companies online, we could see the whole advertising model of the Internet crumble.

Similarly, botnets can be used to evade spam filters, which work partly by knowing which computers are sending millions of e-mails. They can speed up password guessing to break into online accounts, mine bitcoins, and do anything else that requires a large network of computers. This is why botnets are big businesses. Criminal organizations rent time on them.

But the botnet activities that most often make headlines are denial-of-service attacks. Dyn seems to have been the victim of some angry hackers, but more financially motivated groups use these attacks as a form of extortion. Political groups use them to silence websites they don't like. Such attacks will certainly be a tactic in any future cyberwar.

What should be done to address this rising threat? Once you know a botnet exists, you can attack its command-and-control system. When botnets were rare, this tactic was effective. As they get more common, this piecemeal defense will become less so. You can also secure yourself against the effects of botnets. For example, several companies sell defenses against denial-of-service attacks. Their effectiveness varies, depending on the severity of the attack and the type of service.

But overall, the trends favour the attacker. Expect more attacks like the one against Dyn in the coming year. *Bruce Schneier, chief technology officer at IBM Resilient, is the author of 13 books on cryptography and data security.*

The Top 30 Innovations

The Wharton School of Business in the USA performed a survey to determine the top 30 innovations of the last 30 years. The list is presented below, with the innovations directly attributable to computer science in bold. These innovations are the technologies that computer scientists had a direct hand in developing. For the remaining innovations, computer scientists played an important support role, developing control software for technologies like mobile phones, DNA testing and sequencing, MRI, microprocessors, and robotic surgery. The majority of the provided list would not exist without computer scientists.

1. **Internet, broadband, WWW (browser and html)**
2. **PC/laptop computers**
3. Mobile phones
4. **Email**
5. DNA testing and sequencing/human genome mapping
6. Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)
7. Microprocessors
8. Fiber optics
9. **Office software (spreadsheets, word processors)**
10. Non-invasive laser/robotic surgery (laparoscopy)
11. **Open source software and services (e.g., Linux, Wikipedia)**
12. Light-emitting diodes
13. Liquid crystal display (LCD)
14. GPS systems
15. **Online shopping/ecommerce/auctions (e.g., eBay)**
16. **Media file compression (jpeg, mpeg, mp3)**
17. Microfinance
18. Photovoltaic Solar Energy
19. Large-scale wind turbines
20. **Social networking via the Internet**
21. **Graphic user interface (GUI)**
22. **Digital photography/videography**
23. RFID and applications (e.g., EZ Pass)
24. Genetically modified plants
25. Bio fuels
26. Bar codes and scanners
27. **ATMs**
28. Stents
29. SRAM flash memory
30. Anti-retroviral treatment for AIDS

New twist on the Microsoft Scam

I received this upsetting message from a reader. “Have you heard of a Microsoft scam that uses the iTunes cards for payment instead of credit cards or other means of payment. I think I was scammed by these people in the amount of \$1300. Ouch!”

Yes, I have heard of this iTunes gift card scam, though this is the first time I've heard of it used in conjunction with a Microsoft scam. I've heard it used as part of the “grandparents” scam where people are convinced a grandchild is in jail and needs either bail or a lawyer, who must be paid only with iTunes gift cards.

This is also used as part of ATO scams, fake lottery winnings, and just about any other type of scam you can imagine.

Why gift cards? Well, if you go out to the store and purchase iTunes cards, they are virtually untraceable once they are sent to the scammers. They can sell them off at a discount such as \$35 for a \$50 iTunes card and still make plenty of money.

There's one important rule to remember: You'll never be asked to pay for anything legitimate with gift cards. At no time, under no circumstance, will anyone who is telling you the truth ask you to pay for anything with gift cards. Got it? If they do, stop communicating with this person immediately. Legitimate companies don't mind leaving a record of transactions. They want one.

Another important rule to know: Microsoft will never contact you to tell you something is wrong with your computer. NEVER! Got it?

Canada to Google: filter your results

Canada's Supreme court says Google must stop showing search results featuring Datalink Technologies. And not just in Canada, but all over the world. The company has been accused by Equusteck Solutions of stealing their technology. They wanted Google to stop sending people to Datalink's pages.

Some might argue that this violates freedom of speech, but the Canadian court said, “This is not an order to remove speech that, on its face, engages freedom of expression values, it is an order to de-index websites that are in violation of several court orders.”

Google says they are reviewing the ruling before deciding what to do next.

Look out for fake comment links

Those nasty phishermen are at it again, trying to snare you with their phony links. Sometimes they send links to malicious sites in emails, normally pretending to be your bank or some other account. Here's another trick they love to use: They'll comment on a story and stick a link to where they want you to do in that comment. It used to be the comments were obviously spam because they were just a bunch of random words, but these days, it's a little more sophisticated.

MOVIE REVIEW

WONDER

Based on the New York Times bestseller, *Wonder* tells the inspiring and heartwarming story of August Pullman. Born with facial differences that, up until now, have prevented him from going to a mainstream school, Auggie becomes the most unlikely of heroes when he enters the local fifth grade. As his family, his new classmates, and the larger community all struggle to find their compassion and acceptance, Auggie's extraordinary journey will unite them all and prove you can't blend in when you were born to stand out.

Rating: PG (for thematic elements including bullying, and some mild language)

Genre: Drama

Directed By: Stephen Chbosky

Written By: Jack Thorne, Steven Conrad, Stephen Chbosky



Ten-year-old Auggie (Jacob Tremblay) has been born with severe facial disfigurements. As he stops home-schooling and starts at Beecher Prep, he and his family – mum Isabel (Julia Roberts), Dad (Nate) and Liv (Izabela Vidovic) – negotiate the pitfalls that this next step brings.

★★★★★

It's been a relatively low-key few years for Julia Roberts. She's made several films, some good (*August: Osage County*), some not so good (*Smurfs: The Lost Village*), but it feels a while since the last 'Julia Roberts Movie', the like of which dominated the box office in the '90s and noughties. Those glossy, hugely engaging studio pictures driven by strong female characters – and which, if we were lucky, would offer the bonus of one of her irrepressible bursts of laughter. A Julia Roberts Movie would, from *Steel Magnolias* to *Erin Brockovich*, have a big heart. In many of those respects, *Wonder* (adapted from R. J. Palacio's popular 2012 children's novel) is in the classic Roberts mould. She plays kids' book illustrator and part-time MA student Isabel, mum to teenager Olivia (Vidovic) and her little brother, sci-fi-obsessed Auggie (Tremblay) — the film opens with him bouncing in slow motion, clad in astronaut's suit

complete with enormous NASA helmet. Dad Nate, played by Owen Wilson, rounds out the family. The New York they live in, shot by *Forrest Gump* DP Don Burgess, could not be more charming — brownstone townhouses, turning autumnal leaves, bright yellow taxis. They even have an adorable dog. There is, however, a twist in their tale — Auggie has Treacher Collins Syndrome, resulting in conspicuous facial abnormalities. Suddenly the helmet — which, painfully self-conscious, he insists on wearing — makes all too much sense. This is Jacob Tremblay's film.

There's a danger with such material of descending into mawkishness, and while *Wonder* doesn't escape this entirely, at the helm is writer-director Stephen Chbosky, whose previous film was the sweet but by no means sentimental *The Perks Of Being A Wallflower*. As Auggie negotiates the pitfalls of school for the first time, with gentle wit Chbosky delicately adopts a pattern of light and dark that runs through the film, acknowledging that life is, and people are, a blend of the two.

The cast sell this well. Roberts is as watchable as ever, her ability to convey complex emotions with a brief look undiminished (and, yes, we get one trademark belly laugh!); Wilson is the fun dad we'd



all love to have and brings more depth to his role than is in the script. Their dialled-back performances ring with more truth for their understatement. But this is Jacob Tremblay's film. Having impressed in *Room*, the 11-year-old inhabits the role entirely, conveying his joys, disappointments, fears and hopes with just a glance from under heavy prosthetics, also handling his character's sporadic voiceover — a dangerous device that can stymie even the most seasoned actor — with assurance.

The chapter structure offering different characters' perspectives creates uneven pacing, some elements feeling rushed, and occasionally *Wonder*'s laudable messages can feel heavy-handed — a syrupy, manipulative musical score that wouldn't be out of place in a '90s weepie of the week seems a misstep. Yet its themes of compassion, acceptance and kindness ring loud and clear. It's a film with a big heart. It sometimes over-plays its hand but, anchored by a terrific Jacob Tremblay, *Wonder* is a warm persuasive argument for tolerance. And it's always great to have Julia Roberts back on the big screen.

PG

The comments will reflect the actual content of the article and promise to offer help of some kind. Note that they don't show you the actual address for the link. A personal actually commenting with a helpful link isn't likely to go to the trouble of masking it. Don't fall for it, you never know what's on the other end of those links.

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@holkey.net.au
All contributions welcome

..... enjoying the Hunter Wine lifestyle with Andrew Marsh



A few years ago I wrote to you from the far north coastal settlement of Byron Bay. I expressed at the time my deepest regret that ongoing development and so-called "progress" was destabilising this once quaint village into a commercial frenzy bordering on the absurd. Although my views remain in part, I again find myself in this part of the world and my love of the far north coast of NSW is unrelenting.

Blessed with beautiful weather, breathtaking countryside and an ambience which lured the counter culture of the 60's, the area in and around Byron Bay has been a home away from home for me from the age of about 10. The waves around the top part of the NSW Coast are generally fun for surfing although the reason for my trips to the area at this time of year centre around the spine chilling, barnacle ridden, right hand point break of Lennox Head. Lennox Head is similar to the infamous left hand break of "Uluwatu" in Indonesia (another home away from home) in the fact that you can see the swell lines moving in to the point as far as the eye can see – it is mind-blowing!

Holly and our gorgeous new addition, Poppy and I are staying at the exclusive Wategos Beach, located just beneath the lighthouse at Cape Byron. When I was a teenager, Wategos was a haven for die-hard surfers who would park their cars for the night and sleep. The sweet, salty air from the sea was masked by a thick cloud of marijuana smoke, which encapsulated the entire car park like an Indian village. There are still a few Kombi vans parked at night but it is now primarily a haven for the well-heeled, where baby boomers surf the small waves of Wategos on their long boards. It is still one of the most beautiful spots in the world and whether you're a 60's hippy or an 80's yuppie the coastline remains the same. If there is a heaven – this is it!

Yesterday, I played golf at Byron Bay Golf Club in the mid-week competition. One of the three chaps I played with lives in a house two doors along from our house in Wategos. It was completed about three years ago for a total cost of nearly seven million dollars. Another of the chaps lives next to the course and is a retired blind installer and the other was an ex-Nimbin hippy, whose claim to fame was the fact that he still has an outdoor toilet and grows his own vegetables. I love Australia!

What fascinates me is how many men have moustaches up here. I just thought I'd mention it rather than write a thesis on the subject but it's a little unnerving. What is a bit freaky, however, are these teenagers with these open holed earrings. Have you seen the ones I'm talking about? It is like a disc inserted in to the ear lobe about the size of a 10 cent coin. The lobe is stretched to accommodate this doughnut looking sleeper. It certainly takes the focus of the eyebrow, nose and lip rings which also feature on many of them. The other day I was checking the surf and one of these guys had actually removed his lobe rings or whatever you call them. Upon asking him how the holes in his ears would ever close up, he just shrugged and lifted his shirt to display a host of nipple rings and belly-button rings and about 20 small piercings through his back and shoulders. I smiled in disbelief. I know every generation has its quirks and we each deal with one another as best we can. Older generations look at younger generations and shake their heads, that's normal. Strike me down if I am a little old fashioned but what has happened to this generation, who insist upon stabbing large pieces of metal through their skin to the point where they are unrecognisable or stretching their ear lobes to make great big holes in their heads. They

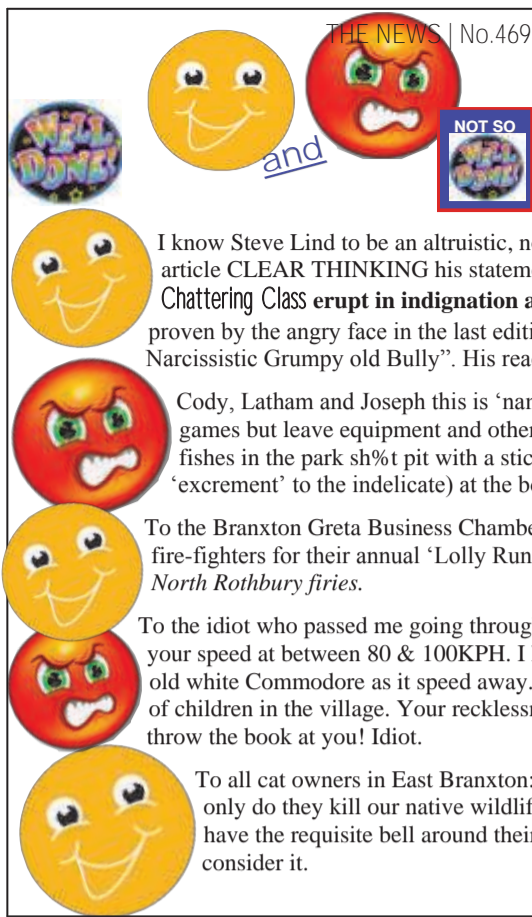
go to tell you that it's their way of "expressing themselves" yet you can't understand a bloody thing they're saying because they've got a tonne of metal pierced through their lips and tongue. I thought my generation was the last of the radicals but we pale in comparison. In my late teens, a group of us spent a lot of time around Byron Bay. We would surf all the way up the coast until we reached Byron and made camp here in Wategos. Every few days we would drive over to Nimbin or Mullumbimby. No prizes for guessing the nature of these trips. The surfing culture in Australia was still developing and a few "residue" activities were still a big part of the sport. The hippy communes of the surrounding areas, formed in the 60's and 70's, were an enticing option for my generation as the ambience of the place is such that you never want to leave. A boy a few years ahead of me at school, who was the son of a very prominent lawyer in Sydney, chose to "drop out" despite his parents best efforts to entice him back into mainstream society. A few days ago, Holly and I ran into him at the Byron Bay grower's market. He was wearing long pink tights, a skirt over the top and a head band. He was barely recognisable. I approached him, as we were quite friendly at school, to say hello and as soon as I introduced myself, he embraced me like a long, lost brother. After chatting for several minutes I realized he had no idea who I was and he kept asking me not to call him by his maiden name. He then produced a guitar and in childlike fashion struck the strings up and down, chanting something which resembled a mixture of Hare Krishna and Metallica. The counter culture lifestyle had robbed this extremely intelligent and able sportsman of his strengths. The idea of the hippy lifestyle was to embrace the natural elements that this area so plentifully contains. The true hippies still exist in the area and are one with the earth. The "drop outs" of a time gone by are unfortunate victims of a drug fuelled easy - way- out and whilst many of them have rectified to a reasonable extent back into society, a few missed the boat. My friend is one of them.

Byron Bay is a place where "free spirited" people come to. It's a modern kind of hippy meets beatnik meets Subway sandwiches (2 stores located in the main streets). Although a far cry from the Byron of yesteryear that I firstly saw, it is still a village atmosphere yet with no cause for a theme. It is alternate but not subsistent. The alternates drive away the "Hastings Street – Noosa" types yet encourage the trendy, Sydney, clique, beautiful people who feature in the Sunday social pages and whose names you can never pronounce.

I look at Byron Bay in the same way as I look at Pokolbin. Byron's beauty and ambience lies in its beaches, weather and countryside which will always remain. Pokolbin's lies in its vineyards and wines, against a picturesque backdrop of the Brokenback Mountain Range. Things change, new generations replace each other and developments and so-called progress will always be evolving but the natural elements and the heart and soul will never change.

Cheers, Andrew

P.S. Did you like that last paragraph? I think the sweet, salty sea breeze is doing me good. Oh...hold on, it might be that curious looking smoke wafting from the Kombi van parked just below... Peace man!



I know Steve Lind to be an altruistic, noble and mature man. A libertarian. In his article CLEAR THINKING his statement "when these views are questioned the Chattering Class erupt in indignation and revert to abuse or even violence," is proven by the angry face in the last edition of the News describing him as "a Narcissistic Grumpy old Bully". His reaction? Merriment. Gotcha!

Cody, Latham and Joseph this is 'name and shame'. By all means play your ball games but leave equipment and other children alone. And the little girl who fishes in the park sh%t pit with a stick in order to hoick faeces (that's 'excrement' to the indelicate) at the boys: you are a dirty girl.

To the Branxton Greta Business Chamber for providing the lollies to our local fire-fighters for their annual 'Lolly Runs'. *Thank you from the Branxton, Greta & North Rothbury fires.*

To the idiot who passed me going through North Rothbury last Friday. I estimated your speed at between 80 & 100KPH. I have your details, rego, & a video of your old white Commodore as it speed away. IT IS A 60KPH ZONE and there are a lot of children in the village. Your recklessness was total negligence & I hope they throw the book at you! Idiot.

To all cat owners in East Branxton: PLEASE lock your cats up at night. Not only do they kill our native wildlife but most, if not all, cats I have seen do not have the requisite bell around their neck. If you have an outdoors cat I would consider it.

Classified's Classified's

Cost:- For one-off domestic advertising The News will not charge you. Otherwise it is \$2/line.

Computer Tuition: From basics to highly skilled & learn all about ebay. P: 0429 381 908
Computer Services: Repairs, Sales & Service. Phone repairs. Comtronics P: 4991 1128
For Rent: Branxton RSL Hall, air conditioned. Short or long term. P: 0429 438 460
For Sale: 1993 Ford Laser. No rego. Good for spare parts \$100 Phone Neil 0422 874 634
For Sale: Electric cement mixer. Little used in good condition. \$290 ono P: 0421 102 711
Fitness Classes: 'Core & Strength'. Get fit. Classes are 6am and 10am Tuesday, 6am and 8am Thursday, at Miller Park Branxton \$12/class. Text/Phone Louise P: 0439 383 478
For Sale: Free range eggs. \$4/doz Greta 0412 976 809
HUGE GARAGE SALE: SATURDAY the 9th of December from 9am till 4pm. No EARLY BIRDS. Moving sale, heaps of bargains. Plants, garden statues, carpet tiles, and lots of odds and ends. 31 RUSTY LANE, Branxton. Come and bags bargain.
Microchipping: Cats and Dogs, all sizes and breeds, will come to you. \$20 per animal, please call Angela on 0431649947.
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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: HAVE UTE WILL CARRY. Need something moved? Phone Phil on 0447 381989
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 3753
Work Wanted: Piano teacher available to give lessons P: Phil Aughey on 0447 381 989
Work Wanted: Contract stock work with horses & dogs. Design & building wooden stock yards – rural fencing P Shaun: 0416 226 538
 GO TO FOR FURTHER DETAILS
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/>
For Sale: Buggy Trailer: Electric Brakes/New Led lights/ New wheel bearings/3 New tyres plus another spare rim .../ Internal measurements for buggy area are Width 2210mm Length 3640mm Drawbar 1450mm/Great to tow and light/ NSW rego \$2000.00 Ph 0447 179 556

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

Dates for your diary >

TUE 30/01 - Branxton Public School Students Year 1 to Year 6 return to school
 FRI 02/02 - Branxton Public School Kindergarten start school
 FRI 09/02 - Branxton Public School Swimming Carnival
 TUES 13/02 - B/G CWA Mtg. 9.30am, Old St Brigids School Staff Room, Station St, Branxton.
 02-04/03 NEWCASTLE SHOW
 TUES 13/03 - B/G CWA Mtg. 9.30am, Old St Brigids School Staff Room, Station St, Branxton.
 23/03-03/04 SYDNEY ROYAL EASTER SHOW
 FRI 30/03 - Good Friday
 SAT 31/03 - Easter Saturday
 SUN 01/04 - Easter Sunday
 MON 02/04 - Easter Monday
 TUES 10/04 - B/G CWA Mtg. 9.30am, Old St Brigids School Staff Room, Station St, Branxton
 TUES 08/05 - B/G CWA Mtg. 9.30am, Old St Brigids School Staff Room, Station St, Branxton
 TUES 15/05 - AUSTRALIA'S BIGGEST CANCER MORNING TEA - Venue etc TBC
 TUES 12/06 - B/G CWA Mtg. 9.30am, Old St Brigids School Staff Room, Station St., Branxton
 TUES 03/07 - B/G CWA ALL-IN-ONE DAY (Birthday, Handicraft, International, Ag/Env). Further Details TBA in 2018.
 TUES 14/08 - B/G CWA Mtg. 9.30am, Old St Brigids School Staff Room, Station St, Branxton

Dates for your diary >

TUES 11/09 - B/G CWA Mtg. 9.30am, Old St Brigids School Staff Room, Station St, Branxton
 TUES 09/10 - B/G CWA Mtg. 9.30am, Old St Brigids School Staff Room, Station St, Branxton
 TUES 13/11 - B/G CWA Mtg. 9.30am, Old St Brigids School Staff Room, Station St, Branxton
 TUES 11/12 - B/G CWA Mtg. 9.30am, Old St Brigids School Staff Room, Station St, Branxton

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR HOLIDAY ARRANGEMENTS 2017/18.
 Cessnock Council Administration Centre, Vincent Street, Cessnock Closed from 12.00pm, Friday 22 December 2017 until 9.00am Tuesday 2 January 2018. Swimming Pools at Cessnock and Branxton Closed Christmas Day only. On all other Public Holidays, pools will be open from 7.00am to 6.00pm.
 Greta Transfer Station Closed Christmas Day only. Open as normal thereafter. There will be no residential waste or recycling collection on Christmas day Monday 25 December 2017. Collection operations will be one (1) day behind the usual arrangements, with Monday's collections being completed on Tuesday and Tuesday's on Wednesday, etc. resulting in Friday's collections being carried out on the Saturday. Collections will then be routine as usual thereafter.



Branxton Public School

The Year 6 Dinner was a lovely evening of good food, fun dancing and lots of laughter. Heartfelt thanks to Mrs Goodyer for putting together the trip down memory lane for the students (and teachers). On the following day Year 6 enjoyed their day out at Stockton Beach, participating in a Surf Life Saving Education program. They had perfect weather and were commended on their perfect behaviour by the instructors. Congratulations Year 6 and best of luck for your next big adventure – high school!



@ School Leaders

Presentation Day was held in Week 10. Students, teachers and families celebrated another great year at Branxton Public School. School Leaders for 2018 were announced and proud parents pinned on their badges. Congratulations to Captains Hannah and Keenan, Vice Captains Chloe and Ella and SRC Presidents Zane and Jye. Thank you to our Learning Support Teacher Mrs Wicks, who coordinated the events.



@ Principal's Award Winners

The Sports Presentation was held later in the week, where age champions for the carnivals and other sporting awards were presented. House Captains were also announced. Well done to Wallaby Captains Hayden and Jake C., Eagle Captains Paige and Jake G., Hawk Captains Jena and Max and Kangaroo Captains Ella and Harry.

The Stage 2 Market Day was a huge success! Many happy shoppers leading to fantastic profits. Thank you to the parents and teachers who supported the students in this excellent learning experience. After 17 years of wiping tears, applying ice packs and band aids and countless other tasks at Branxton Public School, Mrs Murray has decided to retire. She will be missed but we wish her every happiness for the future. We also say farewell to Mrs Payne, Miss Hadden, Mrs Whiting and Mrs Gjura as they embark on new adventures in 2018. We look forward to Mrs Gjura visiting in the new year with her new baby! Our P&C ran the Maitland Bunnings BBQ on Sunday 10th December, raising \$1600. A fantastic effort! Thanks to all those who helped out at the BBQ or minded children so helpers could be there. Our last PBL Assembly for 2017 was held on the last day of the school year, with award recipients participating in water fun activities or art and craft. Students enjoyed getting a little wet and getting the teachers a



@ Mrs Murray



@ Water fun



@ Bunnings BBQ



@ Year 6 Surf Safe



@ Stage 2 Stall



@ Market Day

little wet too! Congratulations to Lily, Jensen, Mara and Blake who achieved their 3rd Principal's Award and were rewarded with a special lunch with Mrs Maier and a lovely book prize. 2017 has been another spectacular year at Branxton Public School and next year will be even better! On behalf of Branxton Public School I'd like to wish everyone a very happy Christmas and a safe, relaxing holiday with your families.

Dates for the Calendar

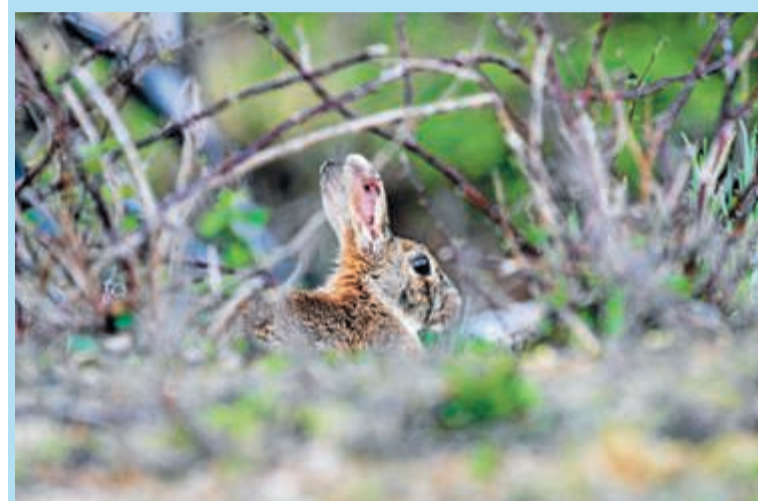
- Tuesday 30th January – Students Year 1 to Year 6 return to school
- Friday 2nd February – Kindergarten start school
- Friday 9th February – Swimming Carnival

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



PET RABBIT OWNERS URGED TO VACCINATE NOW

Hunter and Manning Great Lakes pet rabbit owners are being encouraged to vaccinate their animals before the planned release of calicivirus between late January and early February 2018. The virus will be released in known hotspots, as Hunter Local Land Services works with landholders to reduce populations of wild rabbits.



Calicivirus is used to control wild rabbits which are a declared pest animal in NSW as they cause major agricultural and environmental damage.

“The release of calicivirus in early 2018 is part of an integrated approach to the management of wild rabbits across our region,” said Luke Booth, Biosecurity Team Leader with Hunter Local Land Services.

“It’s important that people who own pet rabbits vaccinate for calicivirus now, to ensure that if their domestic rabbit comes in contact with the virus, they are immune.

“Calicivirus is mainly spread from rabbit to rabbit by contact in burrows and biting insects like mosquitoes.”

Owners of pet rabbits should consult their private vet and maintain a vaccination program to protect their rabbits.

To assist with reducing the impacts of wild rabbits, Hunter Local Land Services wants to hear from landholders concerned about rabbit numbers on their property to accurately map and target known hotspots across the region. Hunter Local Land Services is spending \$90,000 this year, working with landholders and local government to control wild rabbits.

“Calicivirus is a very effective control tool where there are susceptible populations of wild rabbits,” said Mr Booth.

“In cases where there are wild rabbits around urban areas, traditional control methods using poisons, fumigants or shooting is restricted, due to increased risks.

“We are urging landholders undertake control works including baiting, removing harbour and destroying burrows before and after the programmed calicivirus release to maximise its success.”

Releases are timed to obtain the most benefit when there is the highest likelihood of effective spread of the virus in the pest population.

In the Hunter Local Land Services region the most favourable time for calicivirus to be released is in summer.

Landholders can contact Hunter Local Land Services on 1300 795 299 to report rabbit activity in their area, or find out more about the calicivirus release.

BUSHFIRES

Bushfires are a common and natural occurrence in NSW and Australia in general. Planning for bushfires can save your life and/or the lives of your family and animals.

If you own or manage land, then you are legally responsible for minimising the risks. The *Rural Fires Act 1997* states that land managers and owners are responsible for carrying out hazard reduction to protect existing dwellings, major buildings and other assets susceptible to fire.

Bushfire Survival Plan

Being fully prepared for a bushfire can help you protect yourself, your family, your livestock and your property. It is recommended that you create a bushfire survival plan well before the fire season begins.

The NSW Rural Fire Service and the NSW State Emergency Services both offer clear instructions and information about the best way to create a plan. You can even download a MyFirePlan app from iTunes to help you be prepared.

Fire Bans and Permits

Knowing what the fire restrictions are in your region is essential. The NSW Rural Fire Service often adjusts these restrictions to accommodate the weather and environment.

Emergency contacts

For information about current fire emergencies call the Rural Fire Services hotline on 1800 679 737 or download the NSW Rural Fire Service Fires Near Me app for iTunes or Android.

How we can help

Local Land Services offer localised support to farmers and landholders to support prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. We are on hand to offer advice and up to date information. Call Local Land Services on 1300 795 299.

Detailed saleyard report



Australian cattle finish 2017 realigned to US market



Key points

- 2017 young cattle prices have been reflective of seasonal conditions
- Finished cattle have realigned with the US market
- Supplies are expected to increase in 2018 but will hinge on the Queensland wet season.

With less than one full week of saleyard trading left and most plant kill sheets booked out for the remainder the year, there will be little movement in the cattle market for the rest 2017.

So how did prices and supply track in 2017 and what will next year hold?

Production up on the back of rising carcass weights

Beef production has risen in 2017, largely due to a significant lift in carcass weights. In the first 10 months of the year, average male carcass weights were up 10kg year-on-year at a record 329kg, while females were up 7kg at 256kg.

Weights were underpinned by three consecutive quarters of over one million head of cattle on feed, and female slaughter remained in rebuild territory at around the 45% mark.

Beef production is forecast to finish this year at 2.16 million tonnes cwt, up 3% year-on-year.

Young cattle finish on a high

The Eastern Young Cattle Indicator (EYCI) enjoyed a 65.25¢ rally throughout October before stabilising in November. This was due to good falls across Queensland and northern NSW, driving strong restocker demand.

However, the strong finish to 2017 was not enough to offset the falls recorded mid-year, as dry conditions set in across most of the eastern states. This trend was the complete opposite to 2016, when a wet winter across much of the country sparked a solid rally in the EYCI before it was confronted with another failed Queensland wet season.

For now, restockers remain in the driver’s seat. At the close of Monday’s markets, the national restocker steer indicator tracked at a 63¢/kg live weight and 51¢/kg live weight premium to its processor and feeder counterparts, respectively.

Finished cattle realign to US

Finished cattle prices have largely eased in recent weeks as seasonal plant closures loomed, kill sheets filled up and the US imported beef market softened.

While the national heavy steer and medium cow indicators remain below where they tracked this time in 2016 and 2015, finished cattle prices are still historically high – above any level prior to mid-2015.

Furthermore, Australian cattle prices appear to have realigned themselves through 2017 to the historical ratio to the US market. The figure below illustrates the relative price difference between finished cattle in both countries in US\$ – Australia has returned to a 20% discount, after hitting a massive 57% discount in the grip of drought (and record US prices) and a historic premium when both indicators crossed over for the first time in 2016.

While Australia appears to be back in sync with the US, currency movements and the growth in Australian cattle prices over the past three years have made South America a more competitive supplier to the global market. Up until 2015, Australia tracked relatively closely to Brazil, Uruguay, Paraguay and Argentina. However, steers in Australia are now tracking close to a 50% premium to those in Brazil.

The US remains Australia’s principle competitor but Brazil and other South American producers are supplying increasing volumes into some Asian markets, namely China.

So what may 2018 hold for Australian cattle prices? One guide could be the US futures market, which has cattle prices next year pegged close to the spot market, albeit softer in the second half after the grilling season. If the US market can maintain gains from recent months, this will provide some support to Australian prices in 2018.

Supplies to rise but Queensland wet season will weigh in

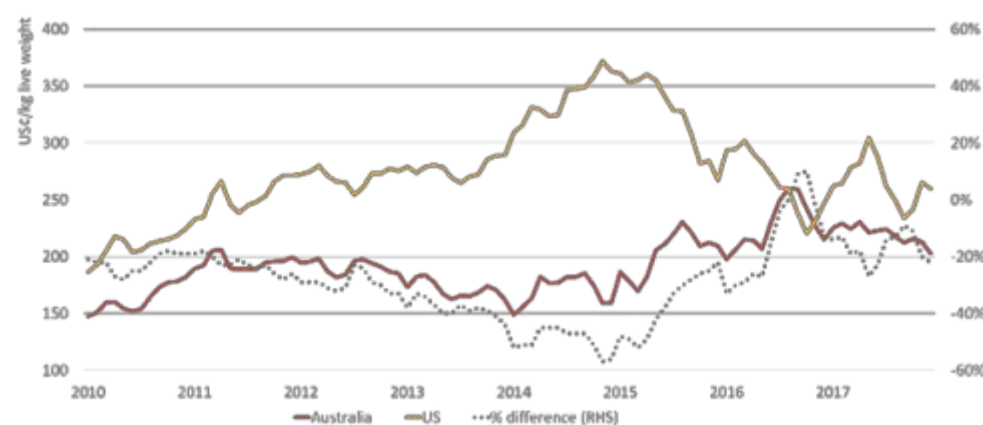
Slaughter cattle supplies are forecast to increase in 2018 – in fact, supplies have arguably improved since mid-2017.

Nevertheless, the amount of cattle that came through to slaughter between 2013 and 2015 will not occur for a number of years because the herd is not there to liquidate and numbers will continue to be limited by the ongoing rebuild. However, the success of the Queensland wet season will set the stage for the year ahead and will heavily influence

supply and price expectations. The state, which hosts about half the beef herd, has not had a substantial wet season since 2011–12 and will be thirsty for cattle if this summer is successful. While late in the year, the Bureau of Meteorology have recently declared a *La Niña* and the three-month rainfall outlook is largely neutral.

The Queensland restockers may enter the market in force in 2018 if feed supplies allow them; however, young cattle are already close to the historical maximum premium to finished cattle. A widespread break in Queensland may pull both young and finished cattle higher, again potentially placing Australia out of whack with global competitors. MLA releases its full cattle projections for 2018 in January – more news to follow in the new year.

Australian and US finished cattle



Source: MLA, USDA

SPORTS RESULTS



with Mark Bercini

Cricket Report – Week 10

Week 10 of district cricket saw wins to second grade, third grade blue and fourth grade, with first grade and third grade white going down.

First grade were humbled by 85 runs at the hands of equal leaders Supporters Club at Baddeley 1. Batting first Supporters made 7-196 from their forty overs. Former Supporters player Ryan Eagles was the pick of the Greta/Branxton attack with 3-18 off 4, with Martin Shearer (2-32 off 10) and skipper Brent Watson (2-49 off 10) picking up a brace of wickets each. Greta/Branxton were out of sorts in reply and were never really in the hunt. They were all out in the 29th over for 111. Eagles completed a fine all-round game with his team's top score of 33, while Nathan Holz (31) and Joey Butler (17) were the only

other batsmen to reach double figures in an otherwise dismal looking card.

Having to win every game from here on in to reach the semi-finals, second grade made a statement with a 105-run victory over Denman Hotel at Baddeley 3. Greta/Branxton made 9-201 batting first, with Anthony Brunson (43), Darren Thomson (34), Brett Bridge (28), Trent Fuller (26), Dave Condran (22), Dylan Lipscombe (16) and Nathan Velt (15) all cashing in. Denman Hotel were all out for 96 in reply, with Condran (3-18 off 6) and Mark Peace (2-24 off 6) the main de-

stroyers. In the third grade "grudge match" at Miller 2, Greta/Branxton Blue defeated Greta/Branxton White by 5 wickets. The Whites batted first and made 121, with Logan Millard a chip off the old block with a sturdy 34. Jamie McNamara and Neil Bird also timed the ball nicely for 30-apiece, while for The Blues it was Stephen Peel stealing the show with an unlikely 5-31 off 8.1. James Shoulder jnr (2-16 off 6) and Pat Nugent (2-15 off 6) supported well with a brace of wickets each. Greta/Branxton Blue achieved the target with three overs to spare after losing five wickets. Andrew Wright led the way at the top of the order with 46, Ben Lahey (17) and Craig Gillings (16) made starts, and it was only fitting that man-of-match Peel (14no) was there for the winning runs. Steve Daunt (2

Well done Lewis !

Greta/Branxton United Cricket Club U/12 player Lewis Jacobs had a representative debut to remember when his Cessnock team took on Singleton at Singleton's Cook Park on Sunday 10th December.

Cessnock won the match by 60 runs, with Lewis featuring prominently. Batting first Cessnock posted 8-122 from their forty overs, with Lewis top scoring with a well-made 35. Singleton were all out for just 62 in reply, with Lewis taking 5-18 off 4 to cap off a fine all round performance. Fittingly he was awarded player of the match.



© Greta/Branxton United Cricket Club U/12 player Lewis Jacobs

-14 off 6) and Will Young (2-26 off 7) were the wicket takers for Greta/Branxton White.

Fourth grade continued their fine season with a 29-run victory over Supporters Club in a high scoring affair at Miller 1. Batting first Greta/Branxton compiled a healthy 3-234, with James Thomson coming in at the fall of the first wicket and blasting 23 boundaries on his way to 111. Ben Ciba (51) notched a half century, with Anthony Lawrence (29) and Will Howden both contributing. Supporters made a fair fist of the run chase, but ran out of overs to finish 8-205. Lawrence (2-18 off 8) and veteran Phil Aughey (2-40 off 7) took a couple of wickets each, with man of the moment Thomson putting the icing on the cake of a memorable match with 2-39 off 7.

Cricket Report – Week 11

Just the two matches to complete the final round before Christmas, with first grade picking up a much-needed victory, and fourth grade going down soundly. Second and both third grade sides enjoyed an early break due to the differing draws.

First grade defeated Wine Country by three wickets at Miller 1. Wine Country batted first and made a healthy 9-187. Martin Shearer was the pick of the Greta/Branxton attack with 4-28 off 10. Nathan Holz also picked up 4-55 off 10, with Cliff Newling (1-11 off 3) the other wicket-taker. Greta/Branxton were in a spot of bother early at 3-36 in reply, but at drinks the match looked very evenly poised with the Blues 5-100. Demoting himself to number seven, stand-in skipper Barry Richards played a controlled innings to steer the home side to victory with an unbeaten

49. Greta/Branxton achieved the target in the 36th over after losing seven wickets. Making his first grade debut for the club after some strong performances in the lower grades, Brett Bridge became a cult hero with an unorthodox 35no that included lap sweeps and ramp shots. Greg Andrews (28), Joey Butler (19), Eddie Fisher (16) and Newling (14) all played a part in the important win.

Fourth grade went down by five wickets at the hands of Wine Country on Miller 2. Batting first Greta/Branxton were dismissed inside 33 overs for 114. Anthony Lawrence continued his excellent return season with the bat with 39, as did Logan Millard with 25, with Ben Ciba (13) and Reece Fletcher (12) making starts. Wine Country reached the target in the 27th over in reply, with Lawrence (2-37 off 6), Fletcher (1-13 off 6) and

Jayden Shoulders (1-4 off 1) taking the wickets.

Points Tables

First Grade Mulbring 59, Supporters 59, Greta/Branxton 50, Bellbird 43, Wine Country 43, Peden's Hotel 42.
Second Grade Bellbird 54, Supporters 54, Chelmsford Hotel 53, Denman Hotel 43, Mulbring 42, Greta/Branxton 41, Peden's Hotel 42, Wine Country 39.
Third Grade Bellbird 57, Greta/Branxton Blue 53#, Laguna 53, Greta/Branxton White 46, Denman Hotel 32#, Supporters 37#, Wine Country 35.
 # bye received, 0 points awarded.
Fourth Grade Wine Country 58, Mulbring 57, Greta/Branxton 53, Bellbird 46, Supporters 42, Peden's Hotel 38.
Club Championship Supporters 467.17, Bellbird 440.23, Greta/

Branxton 426.27, Mulbring 386.17, Wine Country 370.63, Peden's Hotel 346.90.

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SPORTS RESULTS GOLF

BRANXTON VETERAN GOLFERS

Results for 7-12-17
Stableford

Div 1 Winner I Harris 35 pts (SOD) R/u S Dunker 34 pts 3rd G Anderson 30 pts
Div 2 Winner J Atton 33 pts (c/b)
R/u S Condran 33 pts 3rd P Tracey 31pts
Ladies Winner T Martin 26 pts
R/u R Friis 25 pts
3rd J Harris 24 pts (c/b)
NTPs Ladies T Martin
Gents J Atton
Members draw - Not won
The day was fine, however the gusting winds made it a little uncomfortable for players participating in a round of golf. Despite this there were some good scores were recorded. Congratulations to Ivan Harris on winning his division and achieving the "Score of the Day". A well done to all other winners and placegetters.

Results for 14-12-17
Stableford

Div 1 Winner G Gazzard 37 pts (SOD) R/u K Anderson 30 pts (c/b) 3rd P Anderson 30 pts
Div 2 Winner G Scobie 34 pts
R/u J Atton 32 pts (c/b) 3rd P Kelly 32 pts.
Ladies Winner M Hunt 30 pts
R/u R Friis 28 pts
3rd J Harris 26 pts
NTPs Ladies R Friis
Gents G Gazzard
Members draw Not won
Well Summer certainly has arrived, with temperatures heading for 41 degrees C. Fortunately a fresh/gusty wind was blowing, which made playing conditions more comfortable for our happy band of golfers, who gathered together for a round of golf. Congratulations to Gary Gazzard on winning his division and achieving the "Score" of the Day). (Note: Gary confided that, because of the humour, support, guidance of his fellow group players, inspired him to play well, to achieve his good result.). And a well done to all other winners and placegetters.

LN Bootes

Hon Sec

BRANXTON GOLF CLUB

Saturday, 16 December 2011

Field: 43
Grades A ~ Gary Wilton 42
Grades A ~ Peter Wilton 40
Grades A ~ Michael Simpson 40
Grades B ~ Trent McGee 48
Grades B ~ Joseph Berez 38
Grades B ~ Gary Walsh 38
Grades C ~ Steven Primmer 40
Grades C ~ John Martin 40
Grades C ~ Col Hughes 39
Balls 13 Distributed down to score: 35
NTP 2/11 - M TRACEY 1.8M
4TH - G WALSH 2.20M
13TH - P WILTON 3.20M
9/18 - P WILTON 1.70M
Saturday's storms, rain and eventual hot weather didn't deter players from playing some outstanding golf to win their divisions. The round of the day, and probably the year, belonged to Trent McGee who recorded an unbelievable 48 pts to easily win B Grade, a score that is 12 shots better than his handicap. Joe Berez maintained his recent good form to finish runner up with 38 pts with Gary Walsh third with the same score. Local long time veteran, Gary Wilton, showed how it was done to win A Grade with an excellent 42 pts, a quality effort from a quality person and player. Peter Wilton finished runner up with a near par round of 40 pts with Michael Simpson returning to form with 40 pts as well. Steve Primmer won C Grade with 40 pts as well, just ahead of John Martin's 40 pts and Col Hughes with 39 pts. 35 pts was needed to win a ball. The shot of the day belonged to

Peter Wilton on the last hole, which finished only 1.7 m away. Peter also hit the best shot to the difficult 13th, finishing only 3.2 m away. Members are reminded to consider entering a new event, a Par 3 stableford, planned for Saturday 30th December. It should be a lot of fun with 18 holes arranged around the course to test everyone's iron play—no driving is needed. On behalf of all members of Braxton Golf Club, I wish everyone a safe and happy Christmas and an enjoyable New Year.

HUNTER VALLEY GOLF CLUB

Sunday 3rd December Troy Collison of the Scone GC has claimed the Weekly Challenge from Catherine Moore of Leura GC on countback after both had 42 points return.
Tuesday 5th December Bob Prentice received the judges nod after he and Ken Wright returned 40 points in the Tuesday Stableford with David Peel also surviving a countback for 3rd with 39 points. Ball winners were: Wayne Cowan 39, Eric Smith 38, Ray Hodson 37, Chris Ford 37, Graeme Flynn 37, Angello Wood 36, Wayne Barber 36, Geoff Sweetman 36, Ian Newell 36 and Ray Newton 36 c/b. Nearest-the-Pins went to David Peel (3rd & 10th) Steve Piggot (4th) Dale Macklinshaw (8th) and Ray Hodson (17th) **Wednesday 6th December** The Ladies 4 Person Dropout Ambrose has been won by the team of Dale Hamilton, Jenny Chambers, Kay Dunn & Brenda Mannix with 58 net from Melita Watson, Julie Van Den Berg, Jenelle Jurd and Jeanette Irwin with 60 2/8. Ball winners were: Sue Williams, Amy Reilly, Di Atton and Zelma Powell. The winners of the 'dress up' were: Dianne Oakes, Lorraine Clack, Lynette Russell and Robyn Dunlop with Pam Snaddon, Sue Peel, Kerrie-Anne Skinner and Kerry Choromanski the runner's up. The raffle was won by Sue Peel. Next week the Ladies will begin the Summer Stableford events.

Thursday 7th December The Vets visit to Cypress Lakes was very fruitful for Paul Smith who returned a staggering 45 individual points for a clear win to Mark Barrow 39 and Doug Wand 3rd with 37points. Ball winners were: Garry Marsden, Daryl Preston, Wayne Barber Rex Talbot, Michael Watson, Wayne Berry, Graeme Flynn, Ken Harris, David Peel, John Stewart, John Harrison, Keith Dunlop, Garry Hedges, Kevin Smith, Gerry Irwin, Greg Ireland, Peter Wilson, Ian Newell, Wayne Cowan, Ray Newton, Maurice Peters, Lorraine Clack and Robyn Dunlop. Nearest-the-Pins went to Rex Talbot (3rd) and Ken Harris (11th). The Vets wish to extend their thanks to the Cypress Lakes staff for their help in organizing the day. Next week the Vets will play 2 Person Stabrose with a 7:45 Shotgun Start.

Saturday 9th December Great scoring once again featured in this weeks Medley Stableford with a mild day and excellent condition on course aiding results. A Grade went to Nathan Nancarrow with 42 points from Wayne Barber on 39, B Grade to Steven Abel with the round of the day a super 44 points from Clark Sturman with 40 on countback and C Grade to Don Bradley with 41 points on countback to Kerrie-Anne Skinner. Ball winners were: Eric Paton v40, Colin Mills 40, Scott Jones 38, Paul Bullock 37, Matt Killick 37, Ken Harris 37, Kery Choromanski 37, Bruce Chambers 36, Angello Wood 36, David Peel 35, Ian Newell 35 and Ray Hodson 35 c/b. Nearest-the-Pins went to Lorraine Clack (3rd) Clark Sturman (4th) Julie Van Den Berg (8th) Paul Bullock (10th) and Matt Killick (17th). Next weeks event will be a 2 Person Ambrose.

Sunday 10th December Dylan Walsh produced a fine round of 42 points to claim the Weekly Challenge from the unlucky Brad Pringle who returned 41 points and his best for some time.
Tuesday 12th December Lindsay Self took this week's Tuesday Stableford with an excellent 44 point return from Heinz Kestermann on 40 and Steve Piggot continuing his great run of form 3rd with 38 on countback. Ball winners were: Gary Arnold 38, Michael Watson 37, Dale Macklinshaw 36, Tony Krishna Spm v36, Paul Smith 36, Rick Turchini 36, Geoff Sweetman 36, Ray Newton 35 and Lason Capararo v 35 c/b. Nearest-the-Pins went to Dale Macklinshaw (4th) Gary Thomas (8th) Steve Piggot (10th) and David Peel (17th).

Wednesday 13th December The Ladies Summer comp has begun with Dale Hamilton winning the day on countback to Jill Ramsden after both had 35 points. Ball winners

were: Amy Reilly 33, Mary Fortey 32 and Julie Van Den Berg 31. The Summer comp will continue in 2 weeks for the Ladies with the course closed for The Jack Newton Celebrity event.

Thursday 14th December John Harrison and Ray Boyd combined very well to win the Vets 2 person Stabrose event with 58 points from Geoff Sweetman and Heinz Kestermann with 55 on countback to John Stewart and Graeme Flynn. Ball winners were: Garry Marsden & Frank Bird 54, Steve Piggot & Peter Mathews 54, David Peel & Kevin Smith 53, Wayne Berry & Darrell Preston 53, Greg & Paul Ireland 52, Eric Smith & Rex Talbot 51, Dale & Jenny Macklinshaw 51, Wayne Barber & Peter Munro 51, Maurice Peters & Ian Newell 50, Ken Wright & Grahame Sheldon 50, Wayne Cowan & Garry Hedges 50, John Carmody & Ken Harris 48, Steve Piggot & Michael Watson 47, Ray Newton & Ray Hodson 45 and Lorraine Clack & Peter Wilson 45. Nearest-the-Pins went to Michael Watson (3rd & 8th) Steve Piggot (4th) Graeme Flynn (10th) and Ray Hodson (17th). Next week the Vets will play a Medley Stableford.

Saturday 16th December Stephen Marchant & Richard Bennett combined best to win the 2 Man Ambrose with 59.5 net from Paul Bullock & Ray Newton 59.75 and Steve Abel & Nick Wilson in 3rd place with 60.25. Ball winners were: Wayne Barber & Michael McNab 60.75, John Brown & Ken Smith 61.5, Adrian Kent & Steve Piggot 62, Matt Delforce & Todd Mitchell 62, Simon Nicho;son & Peter Dow 62.25 and Nick & N. Nancarrow

Do you REMEMBER when.....

February 2015 marked the beginning of a prosperous football (aka Soccer) career for a young local junior player by the name of Wil Pannowitz from North Rothbury. In September/October 2014 he attended & successfully trialed in Cessnock for the Hunter Hawks Representative squad. His background prior to this has been playing with Braxton-Greta FC from under 6 to under 9's in 2014. After training 3 days per week, for what has felt like an eternity for a 9 year old boy, he finally donned his new colours and ran onto a back field at the International Stadium in Coffs

Christmas Fitmas – Workouts to help you survive the Silly Season

Christmas in Australia is a great time to get out in the fresh air and enjoy the sunshine.

It is also a time when we tend to get together more often with our friends and family to eat, drink and be merry.

To help you avoid piling on the kilos over Christmas I have included two workouts here for you to do at home.

Workout Number 1 is an outdoor workout you can do with your family and friends (if they dare!). It is suitable for most levels of fitness, especially if you do the low impact version of each exercise.

Workout Number 2 is not for the faint hearted!! Do this on Christmas morning and your metabolism will be pumping all day. It does not require a lot of equipment and you can do it indoors or outdoors.

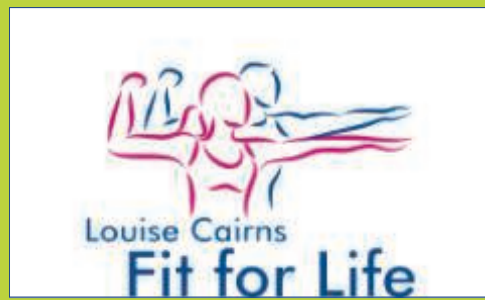
Workout Number 1

This is an AMRAP workout (As Many Rounds As Possible). Do a warm up then set your timer for 20 mins and see how many times you can get through the list of exercises doing 12 reps of each exercise (hold the "Chair Squat" or Wall Squat for 30 secs). **Chair Squats, Hops, Run, Inch worms, Squats, Triceps, Marching, Ab Crunches & Step Back Lunges**

Workout Number 2

<p>Chair Squats (Wall squats): Sit against a wall as though you are sitting in a straight backed chair. Hold for 30 seconds.</p>
<p>Hops - feet forced like a bunny. Then straight into the next exercise</p>
<p>Wall - like a renegade! About 20cm should do it</p>
<p>Inch worms From a standing position lean down and put your hands on the ground in front of you. Walk your hands out until you are in a plank position then walk your feet towards your hands. Stand up and repeat</p>
<p>Marching On a high knee march for twenty steps. Put your hands above your head for an extra challenge</p>
<p>Squats - there are four parts to this movement: Begin in a standing position Move into a squat position with your hands on the ground Kick your feet back into a plank position, while keeping your arms extended Immediately return (jump) your feet into squat position Stand up from the squat position There are 4x impact variations, for example instead of jumping back with both feet to a plank position you can step back one leg at a time, and either step or jump back to the squat position</p>
<p>Push Ups - Toss Get into plank position, with your hands under but slightly outside of your shoulders. Lower your body until your chest nearly touches the floor. As you lower yourself, tuck your elbows close to your body so that your upper arms form a 45 degree angle when your upper body is in the bottom position of the push up. Pause, then push back to the starting position. Keep your core engaged the entire time. Don't let your hips sag or push your back side in the air</p>
<p>Single/Step Back Lunges Keep your upper body straight, with your shoulders back and relaxed and step up. Pick a point to stare at in front of you so you don't keep looking down. Engage your core. Step forward with one leg, lowering your hips until both knees are bent at about a 90 degree angle. Make sure your front knee is directly above your ankle, in line with your toes, and not pushed out too far (and not past your toes). Make sure your back knee doesn't touch the floor. Lower yourself slowly and keep the weight in your heels as you push back up to the starting position. Swap legs and repeat on the other side. To do a backwards lunge, step two forward instead of backwards</p>
<p>Ice Skaters Leap side to side one leg at a time as though you are a speed skater</p>
<p>Triceps Overhead triceps extension. Stand with your feet slightly apart and your core engaged. Hold a weight over your head with both hands (you can use a weight in each hand if you want to), keeping your elbows pointed to the sky, raise and lower your hands Single arm triceps extension - Stand with one foot forward and one foot back, a hand on the floor that is forward and hold a weight in the other hand. Keeping your upper arm close to your body, extend your hand up and down. You can also do this by resting your knee on a bench or a chair Triceps dips - only do these if you have no shoulder problems</p>
<p>Squat/Jump Squats Engage your core. Stand with your feet shoulder width apart, about 10 centimetres in front of a bench or chair. Lower yourself as though you are going to sit down, but instead of sitting down, raise back up. Put your weight in your heels rather than your toes. Come back to standing then jump in the air (for a low impact version do not do the jump)</p>
<p>Crunches/Ab Crunches There are NO T studies. It is just a small crunch up into your abs. Laying on your back, knees up, feet on the ground in a table top position. To increase the degree of difficulty, hands behind your ears and elbows out to the sides, come up for a count of three then sink down again</p>
<p>Mountain Climbers Start in the plank position (hands on the ground). Pull one knee up and in toward your midsection. Try and touch your knee to your chest. Hold for a split second then return to the starting position and repeat with the other knee. You do not stand up in between leg movements. Continue to alternate to the required number of reps. For a low impact version step in and step out</p>
<p>Jumping Jacks Good old fashioned star jumps</p>
<p>V-Sit up Sit up in the sit up position, with your arms stretched out in front and your wrists level with your knees. Pull your upper body forward until your elbows are level with your knees, and then lean your upper body back towards the ground until your fingertips are level with your knees. Do not get all the way back to the ground. Repeat</p>
<p>Ski Jumps Jump side to side with your feet together as though you are being down-hogued in the snow</p>
<p>High Knee Run Run on the spot raising your knees as high as you can. For a low impact version march actively on the spot</p>

out her website at www.louisecairns.com.au



Exercise	Number
Burpees	1
Push Ups - Toes	2
Lunges	3
Ice Skaters	4
Triceps	5
Squat Jumps	6
Crunches	7
Mountain Climbers	8
Jumping Jacks	9
V-Sit up	10
Ski Jumps	11
High Knee Runs	12

This is an accumulator workout. In the first set Do Exercise 1 once. In the second set do Exercise 1 once, then do Exercise 2 twice. In the third set go back to the start and do Exercise 1 once, Exercise 2 twice, and Exercise 3 three times. Continue until you get to the twelfth set. In the Twelfth set you will one burpee, two push ups, three lunges, four ice skaters, 5 triceps extensions, six squat jumps, seven crunches etc all the way up to twelve high knee runs.

Exercise descriptions

You should only do these exercises if you are fit and well or if you have doctors' advice. Listen to your body – if something doesn't feel right, stop doing it!

What is happening at Louise Cairns Fit for Life?

We have finished our final 6 week challenge for 2017. Everyone taking part did a fitness assessment at the end. Congratulations to Anne Wild and Leigh Lovell for losing inches off their waists and hips! Amazing results in just 6 weeks! I am busy developing my next fitness program. It will be an on-line 12 week program to complement the face to face fitness classes at Miller Park.

About Louise

Louise Cairns is a Personal Trainer and Life Coach based in the Hunter Valley NSW. Louise runs regular Personal Training and small group fitness classes in Braxton, and Life Coaching sessions face to face, over the phone and via Skype or Facebook Messenger.

Find Louise on Facebook or check

Wil Pannowitz in rep squad

Harbour on Saturday 7th February 2015, for the first of his

team's 5 games over the weekend where he played representative teams from Newcastle - Emerging Jets, Mid-North Coast, Northern Inland NSW, & Far North Coast areas. The games started with a lot of nerves from the boys as it was the first time they had played together, but as the weekend progressed, they clearly started to gel as a formidable squad scoring a number of quality goals from excellent build up work. The last game saw Wil given few chances from midfield to make his mark on the scoresheet, frustratingly with no luck as some great keeping kept his shots out. But alas, mid-way through the last half of football for the day, Wil latched onto a great cross with a screaming header

leaving the keeper grasping at thin air as the net was lifted sending supporters into rapturous applause. The journey home from Coffs was a long arduous one, but a weekend had that would be remembered for years to come. Wil is the only player from Braxton-Greta club to make the U/10's squad which is a great achievement that his family are very proud of & wish him all the best for his aspiration to be the next Tim Cahill or Lionel Messi, a future Soccerroo?? Well done Wil.

■ Photo above: Will in his representative colours



BRANXTON GRETA VINEYARDS

The NEWS SPORT

Greyhound Racing...



Local Report

with Sam

DOUBLE DOBLE
Greta branch members Chris Kedwell and James Porter landed a double double at the

Gardens. **DOUBLE KARMA** who was bred and trained by Chris won on 18th November over 400 metres in 23.32 seconds and backed up the following week to win in the time of 23.17 seconds. **DOUBLE STITCHED** trained by James won in 22.94 seconds and backed up a few weeks later to win over 515 metres. Both attempted the treble last Friday at the Gardens, starting short priced favourites both went down in the last two races.

Local trainers to pick up a win in the last month were, Jenny Barnett with **GRID LOCK**, James Porter with **NINGHAN EXPRESS** and **NEW ENGLAND**, Lindsay Davis with **FREKEY** and **AUDI KEY**, Ian Darcy with **EZY MOVER**, Ken Cheetham with **MIDNITE PARTY** and **MAD ONES**, Chris Kedwell with **WYEMBAH CHARLIE** and Louise Mcgee with **REBE ROCKS**.

With the end of the year fast approaching the Greta GBOTA 2017 awards will come down to the wire in the following weeks. **CHUNKY BUT HUNKY**, **NEW ENGLAND**, **NINGHAN EXPRESS**, **RED ONES** and **SHAKES** are in a very tight fight for Greyhound of the Year whilst **MAD MANALISHI** and **SHE'S A HUMMIN** are locked together for Broodbitch of the Year.

The next meeting of the Greta GBOTA will be held on Sunday 7th January 2018, 7.30pm at **GRETA WORKERS CLUB**. It is important all members attend to discuss and confirm the 2017 Awards night.

WISHING ALL READERS A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A WINNING NEW YEAR. SEE YA AT THE TRACK, OR THE BAR

MIDNITE.

Colts Appoint 2018 1st Grade Coach

The Greta Branxton Colts have recently announced the appointment of their 1st Grade Coach for 2018 "Mick Deacon". Mick a former 1st Grader with the Colts back in '07, '08 & '10 retired from the real NRL this year as Captain of the premiership winning West Newcastle reserve grade side. Mick has racked up 250 real NRL games with Cessnock, Kurri & Wests throughout his career.

Club representative Andrews Hughes made the announcement on Saturday after having had ongoing talks with Mick over a period of some weeks. "He's a good fit for the club. He was a quality player when he played for our club & has proven he is a quality coach," Hughes said.

Reports are that Mick said that he was keen to come back to the club and work with the committee to develop the Juniors and rebuild the club. "I want to develop the kids, I have a three year plan for the club and it starts with its juniors. I remember what it was like a few years ago and hope to rebuild that Colts spirit again, to do that we need our Juniors to stay with the club," Deacon said.

A senior club representative reported that player negotiations are already in full swing. "Players have great respect for Mick that has been evident by the number of players ringing Mick about playing in his side. It won't be easy next year, but were on the correct path," he said.

In other major news the club can announce that "Greta Workers Club" have again come on board as the clubs major sponsor. 2018 will be 12 consecutive years as the major sponsor.



Photo above: Greta Workers Club President/Secretary Mr Phil Johnson & Andrew Hughes congratulating Mick on his appointment.

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