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# The News

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WEDNESDAY  
21 March 2018

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Cessnock City Council  
**NOTICES**  
Members Say

Greyhound Racing...  
Local Report  
with Sam Bunny

2017/18  
Champs

## Not a rubbish dump!



How would you like to wake up and find this outside your front or back door every morning??? This is the sight that Branxton Op Shop volunteers see each day before they can enter the door and before they even start to empty the bin provided for "drop offs". "Every householder is supplied with two bins; general garbage which is emptied weekly and recycled which is collected each fortnight," said a volunteer spokesperson. "Please use your own garbage bins for items we cannot use. "If the goods you are dumping are dirty, greasy, paint stained or torn, we cannot use them. If toys are broken or damaged, or missing parts, we cannot use them. If you smoke we cannot use the clothes as the cigarette odour cannot be got rid of. "Please respect the job we are doing; we are trying to help the community and we are volunteers; we are not paid."



2017/18  
Champs  
Full Report  
Back Page



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**DOGS**

*2018 Pricing schedule as of 1<sup>st</sup> February (daily price from)*

Small dogs	\$20.00
Small dog deluxe	\$27.00
Medium dog	\$23.00
Large dogs	\$27.00
Extra Large	\$30.00

**CATS**


*2018 Pricing schedule as of 1<sup>st</sup> February (daily price)*

**\$16.00**

Purr cat, purr day



**P: 49307612**



**P: 49309094**





## 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 February 2018 to 28 February 2018.

Locality	Reference	Decision Date	Property Address	Application Description
BRANXTON	008/2017/00000532/001	1-Feb-2018	1 Russell ST	Use of Existing Deck incorporation Rectification Works & Proposed Awning
BRANXTON	008/2017/00000701/001	13-Feb-2018	37 Fleet ST	Completion of Existing Alterations & Additions to Dwelling from Lock Up Stage to Final
EAST BRANXTON	008/2018/0000060/001	26-Feb-2018	13 Dalwood RD	Garage
NORTH ROTHBURY	008/2018/0000019/001	7-Feb-2018	57 Tooze CCT	Single Storey Dwelling with Attached Garage
NORTH ROTHBURY	008/2018/0000031/001	12-Feb-2018	15 Judge RD	Single Storey Dwelling with Attached Garage
NORTH ROTHBURY	008/2018/0000034/001	12-Feb-2018	17 Judge RD	Single Storey Dwelling with Attached Garage
NORTH ROTHBURY	008/2018/0000054/001	13-Feb-2018	23 Emerton RD	Single Storey Dwelling with Attached Garage & Associated Retaining Walls
NORTH ROTHBURY	008/2017/00000739/001	14-Feb-2018	1 Wicks ENT	Two (2) Storey Dwelling Attached Garage & Associated Retaining Walls
NORTH ROTHBURY	008/2018/0000048/001	21-Feb-2018	38 McGann DR	Retaining wall
NORTH ROTHBURY	008/2018/0000059/001	22-Feb-2018	13 Ellerton AV	Retaining Wall
NORTH ROTHBURY	008/2017/00000734/001	28-Feb-2018	18 Abberton PWY	Retaining Walls
NORTH ROTHBURY	008/2018/0000044/001	28-Feb-2018	35 Tooze CCT	Single Storey Dwelling with Attached Garage
NORTH ROTHBURY	008/2018/0000065/001	28-Feb-2018	11 Abberton PWY	Single Storey Dwelling with Attached Garage & Associated Retaining Wall
NORTH ROTHBURY	009/2018/0000036/001	28-Feb-2018	9 Judge RD	Single Storey Dwelling
POKOLBIN	008/2017/00000760/001	2-Feb-2018	10 Hillii Lane PRIV	Single Storey Dwelling with Attached Garage
POKOLBIN	008/2017/00000288/001	6-Feb-2018	64 Pokolbin Mountains RD	Construction of Two (2) Storey Dwelling
POKOLBIN	008/2018/0000053/001	14-Feb-2018	68 Casuarina DR	Single Storey Dwelling with Attached Garage
POKOLBIN	008/2017/00000752/001	16-Feb-2018	2457 Broke RD	Construct New Amenities Building & Use of Existing Outdoor Deck Area in Association with Existing Cellar Door

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

P.O. BOX 152  
CESSNOCK

STEPHEN GLEN  
GENERAL MANAGER

### EASTER HOLIDAY ARRANGEMENTS 2018

**Council's Administration Office, Vincent Street, Cessnock** - Closed Good Friday 30 March to Easter Monday 2 April, inclusive, re-opening Tuesday 3 April at 9.00 am.  
**Cessnock & Kurri Kurri Libraries** - Cessnock and Kurri Kurri Libraries will close at 5.00pm on Thursday 29 March.  
Closed Good Friday 30 March to Monday 2 April, inclusive, re-opening Tuesday 3 April at 9.00am.  
**Ranger Services** - A Council Ranger will be on-call for the Easter period, normal services will return on Tuesday 3 April. In an emergency please call the Police.  
**Cessnock Performing Arts Centre** - Closing at 5.00pm on Thursday 29 March and will re-open at 9.00am on Tuesday 3 April.  
**Cessnock & Branxton Swimming Pools** - Cessnock & Branxton Pools will close on Thursday 29 March and will re-open on Saturday 29 September 2018.  
**Kurri Kurri Aquatic Centre** - Kurri Kurri Aquatic Centre closed Good Friday 30 March only. Open Easter Weekend 10.00am – 4.00pm.  
**Waste and Recycling Collection**  
**NO waste collection on Good Friday 30 March, collections normally made on that day will be collected on Easter Saturday 31 March.**  
**Recycling and Green Waste collection as normal on Good Friday.**  
**Normal Waste, Recycling and Green Waste collections on Easter Monday.**  
**Waste and Reuse Centre** - Closed on Good Friday 30 March, otherwise open as normal during Easter.  
**Greta Transfer Station** - Closed on Good Friday 30 March only. Open as normal Easter weekend.  
**Cessnock Airport** - For all enquiries regarding Cessnock Airport please contact Mr Brad Benson during normal business hours on 0401 107 557.  
**Visitors Information Centre** - Open from 9.00am to 4.00pm on Public Holidays. Easter Saturday hours are 9.00am to 5.00pm.  
Councillors and Staff would like to take this opportunity to wish residents a safe and happy Easter Holiday

### PUBLIC EXHIBITION CESSNOCK SKATEPARK CONCEPT DESIGN

At its meeting of 7 March 2018, Council resolved to place on Public Exhibition the Cessnock Skatepark Concept Design.  
**The Public Exhibition period will be from Monday 12 March 2018 to Friday 13 April 2018.** The documents can be viewed at the following locations:  
Council's Administration Building (Customer Service Section);  
Cessnock Public Library;  
Branxton Post Office;

Kurri Kurri Public Library;  
Council's website at [www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au](http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au)  
Written submissions should be addressed to the General Manager and will be accepted up until **4.00 pm Friday 13 April 2018** via email [recreation@cessnock.nsw.gov.au](mailto:recreation@cessnock.nsw.gov.au) or post.

PO BOX 152  
CESSNOCK 2325

STEPHEN GLEN  
GENERAL MANAGER

### Residents reminded about high fronted roof gutters

Cessnock City Council is reminding local residents of the importance to ensure roof gutters and stormwater management systems are designed and installed by a licenced professional. The incorrect design and installation of high fronted roof gutters and stormwater management systems have the potential to result in roofwater back-flowing into the roof or wall cavity during high rainfall events. Water entering the building can cause damage to the building structure, as well as wall, ceiling and floor linings. Build-up of mould can also occur which has the potential to cause health problems for the occupants of the affected building. Due to the water usually entering concealed parts of the building, any damage may not be evident for a long period of time which by then becomes a costly exercise to repair. The requirements for the installation of high fronted gutters and associated stormwater management systems are regulated by the Building Code of Australia and related Australian Standards. Using a licenced professional who is appropriately skilled and experienced in undertaking roof plumbing is your best option to ensuring compliance with the Building Code of Australia. You can find out more about high front gutters via Council's fact sheet which can be found at [www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/planning-and-development/develop/factsheets](http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/planning-and-development/develop/factsheets) or from the Fair Trading NSW website <http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au>.





# Renew Energy and Electrical

## GREEN – CLEAN – RENEWABLE – RELIABLE

by Mary Scully



manager. The goal at Renew Energy & Electrical is to provide customers with expert knowledge, advice and quality products. They pride themselves on delivering high quality workmanship and first class customer service. From the initial consultation through to the design, installation and handover, Marc and Alana keep the customers informed of their progress and resolve any problems that may emerge promptly and efficiently. As an independently owned and

operated company, they tailor their solutions to the needs and budgets of individual customers. Utilising the latest technology and products they enable customers to maximise the creation and storage of readily available energy cheaply and efficiently. My husband and I recently commissioned Renew Energy & Electrical to install a solar system as our bills were, like most, out of control. From start to finish the process was flawless. They are true professionals and it was a pleasure dealing with them.

However, great though these guys were, nothing compared to getting our first all-solar bill for our heaviest usage period we can remember. This was our recent bill for December January and February. It was \$1000 less than the same period last year and our lowest bill since 1990. We were overjoyed. Reviews on the Renew & Electrical website are also testimony to the integrity of the company. With two young boys Jack and Flynn, Alana and Marc are active members of the community and

proud sponsors of The Greta and Branxton Colts. We congratulate Marc and Alana for getting their business up and running so promptly and we wish them continued success with the unfolding technology and ever growing demand for dedicated providers of renewable energy.

For a free quote visit [renewelectrical.com.au](http://renewelectrical.com.au)  
 Email: [admin@renewelectrical.com.au](mailto:admin@renewelectrical.com.au)  
 or call on 0423 310 406

Marc and Alana Driver have been residents of Branxton for about nine years and are into their second year as owner operators of Renew Energy & Electrical, specialising in solar energy, battery storage systems and level 2ASP

electrical services. Marc has over 18 years experience as an electrician across the domestic, commercial high voltage and industrial sector. Alana, an efficient and multi-skilled nurse, is now also an invaluable liaison officer and business



### Garden Organics 1st birthday celebrations continue

In a continuation of our celebration of the one year anniversary of the Garden Organics service, Singleton Council is giving away another load of compost next week to our ratepayers. Council's waste team gave away 1,000 native plant seedlings and 200 bags of compost in less than an hour on Sunday, and next week's giveaway is in direct response to Singleton's enthusiasm for green living. Council's hugely popular compost bins will also be available again for the sale price of \$20. Acting Director Planning and Infrastructure Services Group, Mary-Anne Crawford said Council was thrilled with the response from the community. "We opted to do our giveaway at the Sunday Market's in order to make it as accessible as possible for residents, and we were absolutely blown away with everyone's enthusiasm," she said. "For those missed out on the weekend, please stop by Council's administration building next Wednesday between 10am and 12pm to collect a free bag of compost. We only have limited supply – so don't forget the early bird catches the worm!" Singleton teamed up with Maitland and Cessnock councils and Solo Resource Recovery to introduce the green bin service in March last year. Since then, Singleton has collected 2,400 tonnes of organics waste that otherwise would have gone to landfill. The compost giveaway will be available from Council's Administration building on Wednesday 21 March from 10am to 12pm. 130 bags of compost will be available.

Advertisement

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### Financial incentives for downsizers

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# STEVES RANT

## FOR WHOM SHOULD WE VOTE AT ELECTION TIME?

Well some of us are rusted on to a particular Party or have a set point of view which we either inherited from our parents or we developed over time from our life experience. What I would like to suggest to you is that we take the same attitude to the elections as we might to the purchase of a house or a car. Since there is no immediate cost involved in voting we do not have to skimp on our choice.

So how do we decide on which house or car to buy? Kick the tyres, bang on the walls and count the number of bedrooms, and bathrooms and how difficult it might be to keep the things clean and tidy. What might the resale value be?

OK, so we need to measure each Party or candidate against a checklist. Ignoring preconceived ideas or deep rooted prejudices we may then make an informed choice about who we vote for.

In this, we supposed there exists candidates and parties worth voting for. Otherwise it is a vote for the least bad option or casting a blank voting slip. This

option you can take if in your opinion there is no candidate or Party worth the trouble.

What to be included on our own check lists; TAXES: We are obliged to pay taxes. It has been ever thus. But we do not have to pay any more than the basic minimum. If a Party or Candidate is promising to spend more on non capital expenses, such as more public servants, more compensation for whatever for whomever then that's a fail

**LAWS AND REGULATIONS:** The Candidate or Party who promises to rescind ten existing laws and regulations for every new one that is introduced should get your vote. We are over regulated and remember all of this stuff produces more bureaucrats. **EXAMINE THE RECENT HISTORY:** Does it give you confidence in their ability to form Government in its own right and are they competent to be in Government.

These are just suggestions for people to think about. But when you are asked to vote do so with the best information you can get and balance this against



your own prejudices. Remember the only person in the voting booth with you is your values & I hope these are not those espoused by the ABC and other so called by 'City Intelligencia', and popular media.

As one time the leader of the British Labour Party, Tony Benn had said .... "there are three types of political Leaders ... Straight Men, Fixers or Maddies".

Phillip Adams gives examples of Maddies as Ronald Reagan, (Republican President for 8 years) Margaret Thatcher (Conservative Leader of Britain), Paul Keating (Labour Prime Minister of Australia) and Jeff Kennett (Liberal leader of Victoria who lifted the State from

bankruptcy). These were people who got things done. Cheers, Steve



with Mike Lowing

I went for a quick drive this morning (last Sunday) through the proposed commercial area at Huntlee. (I don't think you are supposed to go on-site so please don't say a word!) I was aware that a new pre-school was on the build so wanted to see the size of the new facility. It is large

and well advanced with a set date for opening this May; that may be a little premature as they are currently doing the frame work.

I came into the office to get more details from their web site but to no avail. You can enrol on their site & it gives a good blurb on their expected modus operandi when in full steam; little else.

The operators are Huntlee ELC (meaning early learning centre) & they do look to be good operators, going on their web-site. I was reminded of a study that Cessnock council undertook many years ago which I did read. I found it and had another read to refresh my fading memory. It was titled 'Early childhood care and pre

**school services: an analysis of current and future service needs within the Cessnock local government area draft discussion paper (2013).**

The reason I remembered it was not so much about preschools but the population increase predictions and one that stuck in my mind was that the Huntlee, Branxton, North Rothbury & Greta locale will be larger than Cessnock by about 2030 (actually 2031).

I read it again and my memory was correct. Anyway, back to preschooling. As the study states preschooling is a vital community asset with 0-4-year olds expected to increase from 8.8% of the population to close to 10%

in the coming years. Our society is based now on both parents working which doesn't help our want of better natural population growth; one for mum, one for dad & one for the country as Peter Costello asked.

As with nursing homes preschools are an integral part of our culture; lets get them right.

A little note to Cessnock Council; take you eyes off Huntlee's Sec 94 contributions to finance the proposed new aquatic in Cessnock.

Our local area needs first shot! Cheers, Mike



If you get a good wife, you'll become happy; if you get a bad one, you'll become a philosopher. - Socrates

I was married by a judge. I should have asked for a jury. - Groucho Marx

My wife has a slight impediment in her speech. Every now and then she stops to breathe. - Jimmy Durante

I have never hated a man enough to give his diamonds back. - Zsa Zsa Gabor

Only Irish coffee provides in a single glass all four essential food groups: alcohol, caffeine, sugar and fat. - Alex Levine

My luck is so bad that if I bought a cemetery, people would stop dying. - Rodney Dangerfield

Until I was thirteen, I thought my name was SHUT UP. - Joe Namath

I don't feel old. I don't feel anything until noon. Then it's time for my nap. - Bob Hope

Sometimes, when I look at my children, I say to myself, 'Lillian, you should have remained a virgin.' - Lillian Carter (mother of Jimmy Carter)

I had a rose named after me and I was very flattered. But I was not pleased to read the description in the catalogue: - 'No good in a bed, but fine against a wall.' - Eleanor Roosevelt



Congratulations

Congratulation's 'Wynndham Ridge Estate' subdivision in Greta.

Wonderful layout. For instance, on my drive around it last Saturday I found the roads nice and wide; Cars were parked on both sides of the road and still had enough room to pass.

The estate still gives you the feeling you are in the bush away from the noise and traffic; lovely ambience.

**But where did our waking track to the river go? I couldn't find it**

Val Randal, Greta NSW

Fix our traffic problems

I have accused the NSW and

Commonwealth Governments of ignoring the infrastructure needs of the Hunter region.

Speaking in the Parliament last week I highlighted four projects desperately in need of support:

- the Glendale Interchange in Lake Macquarie
- the Singleton by-pass
- the Muswellbrook by-pass
- the proposed "Cessnock Ring Road" and the need for a link between Cessnock and the Hunter Expressway.

I pointed out that the Glendale Interchange enjoyed the unanimous support of the Hunter region's eleven Councils and would provide enormous traffic flow and economic benefits.

I also noted the Muswellbrook by-pass had been stopped in its tracks when Tony Abbott became Prime Minister and had remained stalled ever since.



**The Editor, The BGV News, 12 Clift Street, Branxton NSW 2335**

or  
emailed to  
**thenews@hotkey.net.au**

## Emergency Phone Numbers

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FOR FIRE, POLICE AND AMBULANCE ANY TIME, DAY OR NIGHT FOR 24-HOUR SERVICE

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### 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  
**SES** .....132 500  
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1800 333 000  
Poisons Info ..... 131 126  
Hunter Water  
1300 657 000  
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Gas Emergencies . 131 909  
Lifeline .....131 114  
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Medicare ..... 132 011  
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# Lake and Valley Optical open Optometry practice in Branxton



⊖ Lake and Valley Optical they are at 5/71 Maitland Street, Branxton (in the Branxton Commercial Centre next Branxton House Motel)



⊖ Wayne Puxty & Amy Marciniak standing in front of their glasses frame display



⊖ The latest in eye-care technology

**Lake and Valley Optical** has opened for business in Branxton. Previously in Singleton Amy Marciniak, proprietors Wayne & Tania Puxty and their two Optometrist, Russell & Shaun, have moved AIE Optical to Branxton and have renamed it to better reflect who and what they are. With another store in Speers Point they wanted a name that described what and where they are to their customers. So Lake and Valley Optical was an obvious choice. Amy has been manager of the store in Singleton for the past 5-6 years and says she is excited about the move to Branxton and is looking forward to seeing all the existing customers from Singleton and also helping all the new customers with their glasses. What do Lake and Valley Optical offer? As your local Optometrist they pride themselves on offering you the latest options in frame styles and lens technology. "There are always new options becoming available, so we make sure we know what they are and how they will benefit our customers", says Amy. As qualified Optical Dispensers, the front-line staff have completed years of study to understand how your eyewear needs to be so it works just right for you. The combined experience of Amy, Tania and Wayne adds up

to an amazing 68 years and as Wayne said, "there is no knowledge like experience" and "as a team we all have strengths to complement each other". The Optometrists.... yes, there are two & have a combined experience of over 38 years in the optical industry. Russell has worked for AIE Optical over the past 5 years and has helped maintain the eye health and vision of many hundreds of their customers while in Singleton. He specialises in cataracts and glaucoma and says the name change "brings a new life to the business" and hopes the "new location will better serve the local community and surrounding blooming areas". The other Optometrist, Shaun, has relocated from the northern suburbs of Sydney up to Newcastle and The Hunter Valley. Shaun is a specialist in behavioural optometry and paediatrics and is very well known in the industry. Behavioural optometry aims to determine if there is a visual problem limiting the education or performance outcomes by conducting comprehensive assessments of the eyes, their movement and any limitations in the


way they work. Needless to say children are the main focus of Shaun's appointments at Lake and Valley Optical. Lake and Valley Optical also have eyewear to suit all needs. Whether you want fashion frames from Rayban, Guess, Esprit, Kore, Elle, CAT, Empire New York .... eyewear with no gap from your health fund .... sports eyewear for soccer, football, basketball, swimming or diving; it's all there. They also specialise in certified safety eyewear for home and work and supply many different companies throughout Australia with their prescription safety eyewear.

Most of us wear sunglasses and there also is a great range in store from Elle, Esprit, Rayban, Liive, Bill Bass, Dirty Dog and Ugly Fish. So, if you want eyecare and eyewear from experienced Optometrists and Optical Dispensers locally, Lake and Valley Optical they are at 5/71 Maitland Street, Branxton (Branxton Commercial Centre next Branxton House Motel) from 9.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday and 9.00am to 12.00pm on Saturday mornings. They also service, repair and adjust your eyewear for the best fit. President of the Branxton Greta Business Chamber, Brett Wild,

said that the business community welcomed the commercial commitment that Tania & Wayne have made to

our local area &, on behalf of the local business community, welcomed them with open arms.





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⊖ If you need sunglasses Lake & Valley Optical have a very large selection to choose from.



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Member for Cessnock  
Clayton Barr MP

product. The truth is that some people have the ability to do this, and others don't. It is fair to say that you have to have a fair bit of self-confidence, as well as a willingness for confrontation and conflict, to be a good negotiator. Meanwhile without a maximum price in place, the cost of power is skyrocketing and I am sure we are all feeling it – even those that negotiated a big discount for themselves. Getting a 10% discount on electricity prices that have gone up by 30% doesn't make you better off. 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](mailto: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](http://www.facebook.com/claytonbarrmp)", go to Twitter and search @claytonbarrmp or check out my website at [www.claytonbarr.com.au](http://www.claytonbarr.com.au) Cheers Clayton



Sue Moore, Mayor Singleton Council

In the age of modern telecommunications when people all over the world can be connected regardless of geography, it's interesting that demand for traditional transport options has kept pace with demand for faster internet speeds. Singleton Railway Station opened in 1863, the same year construction began on the first US transcontinental railroad and the year Henry Ford was born. Yet as the New England Highway put Singleton on the map as a motor transport gateway in NSW, passenger railway services steadily dwindled. It might be easy to blame the fall in the number of trains on insufficient passenger numbers and our greater dependency on cars. But we only need to look at the light rail revival in both Sydney and Newcastle to see that people want more options for getting around quickly and easily, regardless of distance, in the same way they want to be able to share information on the latest iPhone. And, in the same way as cities and towns have grown and flourished for hundreds of years, ease of transport remains vital to the economic and social wellbeing of urban centres

and the people who live in them. That is particularly true for regional areas, and I would argue that Singleton is an exceptional case. There is no doubt the Hunter Expressway relaunched the motor gateway for Singleton, and more work needs to be done to make a New England Highway bypass for Singleton a reality. But as our economy diversifies and people swap long commutes for our country lifestyle, more passenger rail services must also be part of the future for Singleton, as they have been in the past. Council has long supported the Two More Trains for Singleton group and its concerns about inadequate train services connecting Singleton with Newcastle and Sydney. The General Manager and I met with representatives from the group again recently to continue the conversation and as a result, I have written to the Minister for Transport, Andrew Constance, requesting a meeting to discuss opportunities and limits to providing more passenger trains between Singleton and Maitland. Council got the message loud and clear through our community strategic process last year that transport services were a major issue for our community. I am committed to ensuring that that message is not only delivered, but heard on Macquarie Street. Cheers, Sue



JOEL FITZGIBBON MP  
Member for Hunter

Donald Trump has put "free-trade" back on everyone's mind. Free trade is international trading free of tariff barriers. A tariff is a tax on imports. It is paid by you and I every time we buy an imported good which attracts a tariff. Businesses pay too if they use an input to production which is subject to a tariff. That will be Donald Trump's first problem, the cost of producing goods in America is about to rise. Over time tariffs became common in most countries. They are a tax on all of us designed mainly to protect the local manufacturing sector in particular. In Australia families received help to pay the higher costs they faced – on everything from cars to shoes – by higher wages set by a national tribunal. The higher wages were affordable thanks to our great terms-of-trade and the income we received from our rural exports – back then we lived "off the sheep's

back". It was all going pretty well until the world changed and our terms-of-trade deteriorated. As a small trading nation we then realised that to remain a wealthy country we would need to be competitive and taxes on imports were only making us uncompetitive. So we moved with the rest of the world in an attempt to ensure everyone lowered their tariff walls. Unfortunately that push was only partly successful and remains incomplete. That's why there has been so much emphasis on so-called "free-trade agreements" between individual countries. They are a second-best result and their benefits are too often overstated. As are the things we give up. There is an old saying – "when the US sneezes, Australia catches a cold". It traditionally referred to the result of a down-turn in the US economy. Today it applies equally to the actions of Donald Trump. The President appears to have exempted Australia from his tariffs on steel and aluminium. The conditions attached are still unknown. But if there is a "global trade war" – one in which countries retaliate by imposing new tariffs of their own – Australia will still suffer. Trump's actions are a symptom of collective failure. Policy makers around the world have not been able to create the "level playing field" so many aspired to. As a result, too many feel they are on wrong side of the restructure. It is those people Trump is hoping to appeal to. The US economy remains the world's largest. It can survive a trade war because it has more than 300 million domestic consumers. Australia is tiny in comparison and by necessity, we are export focused. Our position is not as strong as that of the US and an exemption from their new tariffs will not be enough to keep the cold medicine in the cupboard if cool heads don't prevail. Cheers, Joel



Bob Pynsent, Mayor Cessnock City Council

### Behind the Mayors Desk



Over the next few months it is a very busy and exciting time in our community. We have launched the Seniors Week 2018 Program which is running from Tuesday 3 April until Tuesday 17 April. There are over 40 activities and events on offer for our seniors community to enjoy. The program showcases the large number of active groups and organisations in our community that offer opportunities to join in social, physical, arts and cultural activities, from singing and playing music to gardening or studying local and family history. Programs can be picked up at Council's Customer Service Centre, Cessnock and Kurri Kurri Libraries and participating venues. The program is also available online at [www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/seniorsfestival](http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/seniorsfestival). National Youth Week 2018 is just around the corner and the program has officially been launched. Well over 1000 young people are expected to take part in the 25 events with a huge variety of activities programmed for our young people. It all kicks off on 6 April, running up until the 22 April. Congratulations to the young people who have worked so hard on putting some of these events together. It is fantastic to hear how enthusiastic our young people are about celebrating their generation as a community. To find out more visit the Cessnock Facebook page or visit [www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/community/events-ceremonies/youth-week](http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/community/events-ceremonies/youth-week). Our community is also buzzing with excitement as Kurri Kurri Nostalgia Festival is happening this weekend. This unique event includes market stalls, free live music, best dressed competitions and more. Well done to the organisers for putting together the Festival. Get your hands on a program today at [www.kurrikurrinostalgiafestival.com.au/](http://www.kurrikurrinostalgiafestival.com.au/). Last week the Local Government NSW Tourism Conference was held in Parkes. The conference was a wonderful opportunity to hear from industry experts and peers to find out how they are managing their tourism industries. Some of the topics included accommodation to communication, business events, local events, online information, new ideas and technology. Our local government area is no doubt an exceptional product. This conference reinforced all levels of government and industry need to work together to continue to grow

and develop tourism for Hunter Valley Wine Country. Cheers, Bob



Clr Melanie Dagg - Cessnock City Councillor - Ward C

### Waste Management Centre and Illegal Dumping

Illegal dumping has been a thorn in the side of this community for a long while, but particularly over the holiday period. Cleaning up illegal dumping is a waste of Council's time and resources and ultimately places greater pressure on the budget, which is of no benefit to anyone. Cessnock LGA's residents dump the greatest amount of waste, on average per person, compared to all other Hunter council areas and unfortunately we have a number of illegal dumping hotspots. Council's new Waste Management Centre has proven challenging for some people, in that they can no longer just empty the trailer into the "dump", however its absolutely necessary that we manage the community's waste in an effective way recycling what we can and thereby reducing the amount of landfill we accumulate. This reduces the amount of fees we as a Council pay to the State Government and EPA, which has a flow-on effect to the services we can provide to the community and the cost-effectiveness of those services. We live in a beautiful part of the world and should take pride on our community and environment. If we all work together to dispose of waste in a responsible way, it's a win-win for us all. You can do so by reporting anyone who dumps illegally, whether its in the bush, on the side of the road, or on the doorstep of the local op-shop. You can do so by calling our RID Squad on 131 555 or [ridonline.epa.nsw.gov.au](http://ridonline.epa.nsw.gov.au) On the spot fines can be up to \$4000 for individuals or up to \$8000 for companies. If you are required to attend Local Court the penalty may be up to \$110,000! Repeat offenders may also face a jail sentence. Cheers, Melanie

**Cessnock Pool**  
At our most recent meeting Council dealt with the strategic direction of Cessnock Pool. I've written about the pool in this column before, and I acknowledge there are strongly held opinions on all sides of the issue. However, the present Council decided that in the current economic climate and with the uncertainties surrounding funding of the project, it

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would be irresponsible to promise a new gold-plated pool when it wasn't practically possible to actually deliver it. We had three options before us, which were:  
Option A – continue to operate Cessnock Pool as is. It has been established that Cessnock Pool no longer adequately services the population and is in need of costly upgrades and maintenance to keep it at its current operational level. Increasing patronage to the pool will help stem its annual losses of around \$450,000, however visitation has been stagnant and without any real investment in upgrades this option is not financially sustainable over the medium to long term.  
Option B – upgrade Cessnock Pool at its current location. Upgrades at the current location would aim to improve the capacity of Cessnock Pool. Works may include upgrading the program pool, installing a splash pad and possibly upgrading the change rooms and amenities. The site is landlocked by roads and private properties, which limits the ability to expand the facilities without the cost of acquiring those properties. However, this option would result in a more diverse offering of aquatic experiences, which would encourage more people to visit.  
Option C – relocate Cessnock Pool to Turner Park, Aberdare. Relocating Cessnock Pool to Turner Park would aim to meet the aquatic needs of current and future populations and address the limitations on the current location. This option will be constructed in two stages and includes both indoor and outdoor facilities. There is, however, a significant capital outlay required for this option which will require the investigations of various funding sources including general revenue, development contributions, loans, grants and reserves. Ultimately, Council decided to adopt Option C (relocate to Turner Park) as its long term strategic direction and endorsed Option B (upgrade at current location) in the interim. This decision will ensure that residents are provided with a modern facility that meets their needs, whilst planning for future population growth and importantly, sets in place a plan to fund both of these options so that the Cessnock community is guaranteed the infrastructure it deserves. Cheers, Melanie



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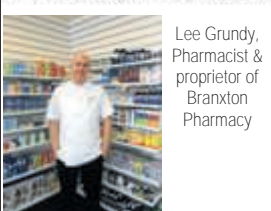
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### Ross River virus disease

#### Identification of Ross River virus disease ~ Clinical features

Pyrexia and other constitutional symptoms are usually slight. A rash can occur up to 2 weeks before or after other symptoms. It can be absent in about one-third of cases. The rash is variable in distribution, character and duration, and may be associated with buccal and palatal enantheams (spots on mucous membranes). Rheumatic symptoms are present in most patients, except for the few who present with rash alone. Rheumatic symptoms consist of arthritis or arthralgia, primarily affecting the wrist, knee, ankle and small joints of the extremities. Prolonged symptoms are common. In some cases, there may be remissions and exacerbations of decreasing intensity for years. Cervical lymphadenopathy occurs frequently, and paraesthesiae and tenderness of the palms and soles are present in a small percentage of cases. Arboviruses are viruses that are spread by the bite of arthropods, particularly mosquitoes. They are divided into alphaviruses and flaviviruses. Four infective alphaviruses are Ross River, Barmah Forest, Sindbis and Chikungunya viruses. These all have the capacity to cause a similar disease in humans, character-



ised by fever, joint involvement and a rash. Molecular studies of epidemiologically distinct isolates of Ross River and Sindbis viruses have shown differences in isolates from different areas (distinct topotypes). This may explain varying disease patterns that sometimes occur in certain geographic locations, and the differing transmissibility of some strains by different vector mosquitoes. Infection is subclinical in up to 60 per cent of cases. Clinical features of infection are rare before puberty, after which the disease has a similar pattern at all ages. The disease can cause incapacity and inability to work for 2-3 months. About one-quarter of patients have rheumatic symptoms that persist for a year or more. RRV is the commonest and most widespread arboviral disease in Australia. In Australia, the five-year (2005-09) average number of notifications was 4,781. Major outbreaks have occurred in all parts of Australia, primarily from January to May each year. RRV disease has been detected and possibly transmitted to humans in most major metropolitan areas of Australia, including Perth, Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne. RRV disease is considered endemic throughout most parts of Victoria, particularly around inland waterways and coastal regions, but not in metropolitan Melbourne.

Epidemics usually follow heavy rains, or high tides that inundate salt marshes or coastal wetlands. Following increased Victorian rainfall and floods, there were about 400 notified cases in 2010, compared with 80 in 2009. Reservoir of Ross River virus The virus is maintained in a primary mosquito-mammal cycle involving macropods (particularly the western grey kangaroo), and possibly other marsupials and wild rodents. A human-mosquito cycle may occur in explosive outbreaks. Horses can act as amplifier hosts, and appear to develop joint and nervous system disease after infection with



RRV. Fruit bats might act as vertebrate hosts in some areas. Vertical transmission in desiccation-resistant eggs of *Ochlerotatus* spp. mosquitoes may be a mechanism to enable the virus to persist in the environment for long periods. This could explain the rapid appearance of cases of RRV disease after heavy rains. RRV is endemic throughout Australia, Papua New Guinea, adjacent Indonesia and Solomon Islands. Cheers, Lee



Denise Hungerford and Val Randall

What a coincidence! Branxton VIEW Club's last meeting fell on the same day as International Women's Day. We celebrated by having two wonderful local ladies in attendance - Pam MacDonald OAM and Val Randall. Pam MacDonald was recently awarded OAM for her outstanding volunteer work over many years in the community. Pam also decided to join our happy band of Smith Family volunteers today. Welcome to Branxton VIEW Club, Pam and may

you have many fun filled friendly times with us. Congratulations on your well deserved award. Val Randall from Greta was our special guest speaker and did not disappoint with her many memories of her life in Greta and her Army life in many countries. What a marvellous memory you have, Val. I would be able to fill two pages with the reminiscences you shared with us, however, I will endeavour to highlight some of your memories. Val grew up in Greta with

her dad working in the mines and said they had a wonderful life. She remembers wonderful dances at Elderslie Hall where she said the Jones boys, especially Clary were great dancers, and that the best suppers were provided at Elderslie. When Val finished school she worked in the mills until she turned 18 years and then fulfilled her wish to join the Army. Thus began a new life, new friends and many transfers to various bases during her training years. Val became a Corporal and was in charge of the female officers mess. She fell in love with her husband to be who was an Army officer. Over many years there were postings to New Guinea, Germany and England along with two year postings Kapooka, Holsworthy, and Portsea - all so different in climate to Greta. During this time in England Val attended a royal garden party where the Queen Mother and Princess Margaret were in attendance. Val recalls visiting Belsen concentration camp in Germany with the family in the seventies and remembers a strange feeling when within the gates there were no birds to be seen, no sounds to be heard-just huge mounds of dirt. In later years Val became a Councillor with Cessnock City Council and was foundation President for Branxton Greta Meals on

Wheels, and involved with Greta Tidy Towns and Landcare. Val has also written a book on the local history of Greta. Denise thanked Val for sharing her memories with us - a most interesting and entertaining talk. Have you seen the Smith Family adds on television depicting disadvantaged school children? Our VIEW club sponsors four of these children through the Smith Family Learning for Life program. Your support at our fund raising functions helps us to continue to do this. Everyone is most welcome to attend our meetings and join in the fun and friendship. Just phone our Secretary, Bethany on 0419 429 364 for further information. Thinking caps on ladies for our next meeting to be held at Greta Workers Club on the 12th April-10.30 am for 11 am start. In August our VIEW Club will be celebrating our 30th Birthday so we need lots of ideas to make this a sensational event! Everyone should have something to contribute to this meeting. Dear Beryl, we are thinking of you and trusting that each day you will grow stronger-we send you our love and best wishes. Enjoy the beautiful Autumn weather and don't forget to reset your clocks on Sunday 1st April - daylight saving over again - for awhile. Peace and love to everyone Judy Spillard

A MAFIA Godfather finds out that his bookkeeper has cheated him for ten million bucks. This bookkeeper is deaf. It was considered an occupational benefit, and why he got the job in the first place, since it was assumed that a deaf bookkeeper would not be able to hear anything he'd ever have to testify about in court. When the Godfather goes to shakedown the bookkeeper about his missing \$10 million bucks, he brings along his attorney, who knows sign language. The Godfather asks the

bookkeeper: "Where is the 10 million bucks you embezzled from me?" The attorney, using sign language, asks the bookkeeper where the 10 million dollars is hidden. The bookkeeper signs back: "I don't know what you are talking about." The attorney tells the Godfather: "He says he doesn't know what you're talking about." That's when the Godfather pulls out a 9 mm pistol, puts it to the bookkeeper's temple, cocks it, and says: "Ask him again!" The attorney signs to the underling: "He'll kill you

for sure if you don't tell him!" The bookkeeper signs back: "OK! You win! The money is in a brown briefcase buried behind the shed in my cousin Enzo's backyard in Queens!" The Godfather asks the attorney: "Well, what'd he say?" The attorney replies: "He says you don't have the guts to pull the trigger."



### Roast pork with pickled onion salad

occasionally. Place in the fridge to chill.

**Step 2** Meanwhile, position a rack in centre of oven. Preheat oven to 150°C (130°C

fan-forced). Place pork in a flameproof roasting pan. Season well with salt. Roast pork for 1 hour 10 mins or until an instant-read thermometer inserted into centre of pork registers 45°C.

**Step 3** Remove pork from oven. Increase oven temperature to 250°C (230°C fan-forced). Return pork to oven. Roast for 35-40 mins or until skin is crisp and crackling and an instant-read thermometer inserted into the centre of the pork registers 60°C and juices run clear. Transfer to a carving board and set aside for 15 mins to rest.

**Step 4** While the pork is resting, heat the roasting pan over medium heat on a stovetop burner. Add the apple juice. Stir, scraping any browned bits on the base of the pan. Carefully strain into a jug and stand for 5 mins. Skim off any fat that rises to the surface. Transfer apple juice mixture to a saucepan over medium heat. Bring to a simmer. Cook for 5 mins



or until liquid has reduced to 3/4 cup (185ml). Stir in butter and season with salt and pepper. Keep sauce warm.

#### Step 5

•Very thinly slice the fennel, apple, and celery (use a mandolin or vegetable slicer if you have one). Transfer into a large bowl. Drain the pickling liquid from the onion mixture. Toss the onion, parsley, lemon zest, 2 tablespoons lemon juice and oil with fennel mixture in the bowl to combine. Season with salt and pepper.

#### Step 6

•Arrange salad over a serving platter. Using a serrated knife, slice pork into 2cm-thick slices and arrange over the salad. Serve with the sauce.





## Report

cent.  
Drug offences such as cocaine possession and the dealing and trafficking of cocaine, predominately a crime detected in

### BOCSAR statistics show crime rates falling as police focus on prevention

Wednesday, 14 March 2018

Proactive policing is having a significant impact on crime reduction according to the latest quarterly data from the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR).

NSW Police Commissioner Mick Fuller APM, said the figures reflect the hard work of officers with four of the major crime categories falling and the other 12 remaining stable. "We are continuing to focus on preventing and disrupting crime and as a result we are seeing a positive effect in reducing the fear of crime and increasing personal safety and security," Commissioner Fuller said.

"High-visibility and mobile policing operations targeting anti-social behaviour, alcohol-related violence, and drug possession and supply are having a significant impact in most parts of the state. In the last 24 months to December 2017, there has been a reduction in the following major crime categories across the state:

- Break and enter (dwelling) – down 6.5 per cent
- Break and enter (non-dwelling) – down 9.8 per cent
- Steal from person – down 8.3 per cent
- Fraud – down 4.8 per

Sydney's inner city and Eastern Suburbs, have increased by 43.4 per cent and 64 per cent respectively.

Commissioner Fuller said this can be attributed to increased operational activity targeting drug possession and supply.

"We have regular drug operations, including the use of drug detection dogs, throughout the CBD, suburbs and regional centres targeting illicit drug possession and distribution," Commissioner Fuller said.

The increase in transport offences – specifically in the North West and South/South West sectors – is reflective of greater proactivity by the Police Transport and Public Safety Command.

Steal from retail store (up 3.9 per cent) was the only major crime category to increase statewide, while in the Greater Sydney area there was an increase in sexual assault.

Meanwhile, long-term trends in violent and property crime show four crime categories – robbery, motor vehicle theft, break and enter, and murder – are now at their lowest recorded levels in 25 years across NSW.

"It is encouraging to see an overall decrease in crime statistics which correlates with increased proactive policing," Commissioner Fuller said.

### Police alarmed at behaviour of provisional drivers during recent Operation Lochness

Sunday, 18 March 2018

Police are alarmed at the

behaviour of drivers, particularly those carrying provisional licences, who continue to endanger the lives of others, despite the warnings and obvious risk to road users during Operation Lochness. Operation Lochness was between 12.01am on Friday 16 March 2018 and 11.59pm on Saturday 17 March 2018. Relevant incidents included;

- A 31-year-old provisional P2 licence holder has had his licence suspended after he was allegedly detected travelling 117km/h in an 80km/h zone on the Pacific Highway at Wahroonga about 10.30pm on Friday. He was issued an infringement for exceed speed limit over 30km/h and fined \$884 and five demerit points. At the time of the offence the man had two children in the vehicle.
- A 20-year-old provisional P2 licence holder has had his licence suspended after he was allegedly detected travelling 107km/h in a 70km/h zone. Officers stopped the Grey Mazda 3 about 10.45pm on Friday, which was travelling north on Pennant Hills Road, Pennant Hills. The man was issued an infringement notice for exceed speed limit over 30km/h and fined \$884 and five demerit points.
- A 31-year-old provisional P2 licence holder has had his licence suspended after he was allegedly detected travelling 110km/h in a 70km/h zone on Victoria Road, West Ryde. Officers stopped the red Daihatsu Charade about 9.15pm on Friday and the man was issued an infringement notice for exceed speed limit over 30km/h. He was also fined \$884 and five demerit points.
- A 30-year-old provisional P2 licence holder has had his licence suspended after he was

allegedly detected travelling 125km/h in a 100km/h zone on the M2 Motorway at Macquarie Park. The Ford Falcon utility was stopped by police a short distance away at the Pennant Hills Road exit, about 1.30am on Saturday. Police will further allege the vehicle was detected reaching 165km/h in a 100km/h zone. The man, from Dural, returned a positive roadside breath test and was arrested. He returned a breath analysis reading of 0.096 and was issued with a Field Court Attendance Notice (FCAN) for mid-range PCA, drive while suspended and exceed speed limit over 45km/h.

Officers see the risks on our roads every day, where drivers who speed, drink or drug drive, not wear a seat belt or proper helmet, drive fatigued or are distracted by a mobile phone, are the ones who continue to put themselves, their passengers and other road users at risk of a serious injury or fatal crash.

Police would like to remind the public that road safety is a shared responsibility and anyone with information regarding unsafe behaviour is urged to contact police or Crime Stoppers.

### Driver stopped after filming crash scene on mobile phone – western NSW

Wednesday, 07 March 2018

Police have been left extremely disappointed after a driver was stopped after he was allegedly seen filming a crash scene on his mobile phone as he drove past in the state's west. About 3.30pm yesterday (Tuesday 6 March 2018), emergency services responded to a crash on the Barrier Highway, 41km east of Cobar, in which a Toyota Hilux towing a caravan had lost control and tipped.

The driver, a 64-year-old woman, and passenger, a 66-year-old man, were both trapped for some time before being taken to Cobar Airport then airlifted to hospital. The woman, who was taken to North Shore Hospital, suffered suspected broken bones while the man, who was taken to Orange Base Hospital, suffered minor injuries.

There were diversions in place for a number of hours due to the crash blocking the highway.

While managing traffic, police observed a man driving past while allegedly holding his mobile phone on the steering wheel to film the crash scene. The 55-year-old man was stopped by officers and issued an infringement notice for using his mobile phone while

driving. Inspector Steven Munn from Darling River said messages on the dangers of using mobile phones while driving are clearly not getting through to some people.

"Here we have a serious crash where people are trapped and injured, and then we have a person idiotically filming the incident on their mobile phone as they drive past," Inspector Munn said.

"I'd like to say it's unbelievable, but sadly, over 29 years in the police, I can tell you it is not uncommon to see drivers using phones, driving too fast or watching emergency services rather than paying attention to their driving at crash sites.

"Police, Ambulance and volunteers from the SES and RFS were at this scene with an important job to do – we are trying to help those in the crash, we're trying to keep the traffic moving and we're trying to keep everyone else safe.

"Instead we're having to chase after someone who thinks it's okay to break the law and put his life and the lives of others in danger by using his mobile phone while driving. This is completely unacceptable."

Meanwhile, investigations into yesterday's crash are continuing. While the cause of this crash is yet to be determined police would like to remind drivers who are towing to be aware of the gross vehicle mass of their vehicle and trailer to ensure they are not overloaded.

### Vandals stoop to new low

Cessnock City Council expressed its utter disappointment following an incident in Kearsley last Monday night where three recently planted Crepe Myrtle trees were run down by a vehicle.


The new trees, at \$600 each, were chosen as they were mature, would take quickly, grow successfully and fit in with the other Crepe Myrtles flowering across the region.

The planting of these trees forms part of a larger project to install new information bays and signage in prominent locations across the region.

In Kearsley, the location of the new information bay is Jeffery Park, which will also include a new carpark, turf, signage and fencing around the popular playground.

Three more trees were due to be planted on the other side of the driveway, but now these will be used to replace the ones that were destroyed, ultimately reducing the beauty of the site.

Council staff will also install tree guards to protect the new trees at a cost of \$1,500, which will also come out of the budget for the project.



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## What does it mean to be nominated as an Executor.



When someone makes a Will they nominate an executor, they may nominate one person or a number of people to act together. You may have been told by a relative or close friend that you have been nominated as an executor in their Will but you may not be sure what it entails. The role of an executor is to administer the estate of a deceased person in accordance with their Will. An executor must comply with various laws and rules that govern the administration of deceased estates and trusts. The responsibilities of an executor may include locating the original Will, making funeral arrange-

ments, notifying relevant authorities, making a list of assets and debts, making sure all property is insured, applying to the Supreme Court for a grant of Probate, securing assets, paying debts, lodging tax returns for the deceased and their estate, establishing any trusts created in the Will and distributing the estate in accordance with the Will. This is a guide only and not an exhaustive list, the steps involved will vary depending on the nature of the estate. A key part of the administration of an estate is to obtain a grant of Probate; this is an order from the Supreme Court of NSW that confirms a Will is valid and that any executors have the right to administer the estate. The time taken to administer an estate will depend on the complexity of the estate, the minimum time to finalize an estate is 6 months from the date of death and most estates are usually finalized within one year. However, if the Will

establishes a trust then the person nominated as executor will often have to take on the role of trustee. A Will may create a trust if the deceased gifts all or part of their estate to a beneficiary who is a minor such as a child or grandchild. In these circumstances the role of trustee may involve preserving and managing estate assets until the beneficiary reaches their majority. The age that a beneficiary reaches their majority depends on the terms of the Will, for example the will maker may have specified the age of majority as 18 or 25 years. If you are nominated as executor you can engage a solicitor to guide you through your role and this is usually paid for by the deceased's estate. A solicitor can assist by setting out your rights and responsibilities, helping you to apply for probate and assisting you with the administration of the estate to ensure it is carried out in the correct way.



with Michael Jenness from....

..... direct from the farm to the plate



OX Heart Tomatoes

Welcome to our second edition of the fresh produce report from Wollombi Road Providore. With Autumn now upon us, we see the end of all the late season stone fruit, however our Plums, Nectarines and Peaches are still continuing to have a sweet and juicy taste right through March.

Autumn brings with it the arrival of new season apples; Red Delicious and Royal Gala are crisp, crunchy and juicy with



Red Delicious Apples now in season

flavour that develops as the cooler climate arrives. Shephard Avocados are in full season supply now. Their super creamy and sweet flavour pairs with our OX Heart tomatoes, served on our locally made sourdough or crackers. Simple and Delicious..... For some Exotic fruit, in store today are Mangosteems, sourced from the tropical far north Queensland. They offer a refreshing burst of sweetness, remove the outer casing and discover the tasty pearl white flesh, readily available in March and early April. Grapes are a juicy favourite, green seedless and crimson are super sweet eating currently. Our favourite is local Black Muscat, perfect with local Binnoire cheese. Also try our fresh vine dried sultanas or currents and

fresh Hunter Valley figs as an Autumn treat. Local Baby Bok Choy grown & picked daily at Kulnura by Richmond & Lis's farming team. Chop them up in a stir fry and add a crispy capsicum grown organically by Chris at Congewai. Add local zucchinis and eggplant, broccoli and corn with an Asian style sauce.. Or stir in a new product; our sweet chilli sauce made by Rozzi a local chef. Yellow Button Squash is in full season with a great flavour currently. Grown by a small hobby farmer at Kulnura, Rosalie picks them small in size to make a crisp addition to stir fry. Boil or bake them they are a versatile vegetable. Remember ... "fresh is the best for your health"

Cheers Michael



If you are in business in the local area and have not as yet joined please contact Brett Wild on **0488 255 666**. He will make you very welcome



## Housing finance continues to decline



The January 2018 housing finance figures released last week by the Australian Bureau of Statistics show that lending for housing continues to decline across the board, according to the Real Estate Institute of Australia (REIA). "Overall the figures for January 2018 show in trend terms that the number of owner-occupied finance commitments decreased by 0.7 per cent – not only the fourth consecutive month of decreases but also the largest

of the four decreases," REIA President Malcolm Gunning said. "If refinancing is excluded, in trend terms, the number of owner-occupied finance commitments decreased by 1.2 per cent – the fifth consecutive month of decreases and again the largest of the five. Mr Gunning said in trend terms decreases were recorded in all states and territories except Queensland, where lending

increased by 0.1 per cent. The largest decrease of 1.6 per cent was in Western Australia while the ACT was flat. "The value of investment housing commitments decreased by 0.3 per cent in January in trend terms following falls in the previous twelve months," he said. "In trend terms, the number of established dwellings purchase commitments decreased by 0.7 per cent while the purchase of new dwellings decreased by 1.4 per cent new dwelling construction remained flat." Mr Gunning said the proportion of first home buyers, as part of the total owner-occupied housing finance commitments, increased marginally to 18.0 per cent in January compared to 17.9 per cent in the previous month. "The number of loans to first home buyers, however, fell by 14.0 per cent compared to December 2017. "The continued decline in housing finance explains why banks are competing for market share by reducing interest rates including those for first home buyers and investors," concluded Mr Gunning.

## Clamping down on tax evasion

Purchasers will have to withhold GST on the purchase price of new

residential premises and new residential subdivisions, and remit it directly to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO), as part of settlement from 1 July 2018. The government has introduced legislation as part of its aim to strengthen compliance with GST law in the property development sector. The Minister for Revenue and Financial Services, the Hon Kelly O'Dwyer MP, said this measure will address tax evasion through phoenixing arrangements, where developers collect GST from their customers but dissolve their company to avoid paying it to the ATO. "Currently, developers can have up to three months to remit GST after the sale of newly constructed residential premises and new subdivisions, allowing dishonest developers time to phoenix and avoid their GST obligations. "This measure clamps down on dishonest developers and levels the playing field for developers who pay the right amount of tax." The measure has a two-year transitional arrangement to provide certainty for existing contracts. Contracts entered into before 1 July 2018 will not be affected as long as the transaction settles before 1 July 2020.



## Game changing reforms pass



A Bill that will lift education standards across the property services industry was passed last week and is expected to come into effect from 1 July 2018. REINSW CEO Tim McKibbin described the passing of the Bill as a landmark day for the real estate profession. He said: "Our persistence and determination paid dividends yesterday with the Upper House. "The REINSW has been doggedly lobbying Government for these changes for over 10 years, which are one of the first steps on our path to professionalism. We never lost focus or contemplated giving up, and today and into the future we will all enjoy the benefits of our success. "The passing of the Property, Stock and Business Agents Amendment (Property Industry Reform) Bill 2017 through the NSW

Legislative Council will see education standards increase across the entire spectrum of the profession. "It is a generational change that will see agents deliver a higher quality standard of service, which is a win for the consumer, market and agents. "The Bill elevates best business practices and procedures into the legislation." The Bill will now be sent to the Governor of NSW for his assent and the reforms are expected to be implemented on 1 July 2018.

## Interest rates going nowhere

Interest rates appear to be going nowhere with the Reserve Bank of Australia deciding to keep interest rates on hold at 1.50 per cent at the March board meeting REINSW President Leanne Pilkington said the current interest rate remains appropriate. "The fact that the banks themselves are applying tighter lending criteria to their customers demonstrates the potential impact a rate rise too soon may have. "It's a precarious position requiring a steady environment in the near term and under the current conditions we don't expect any movement until 2019," Ms Pilkington said. The RBA will next meet on

Tuesday, 3 April 2018

## Property prices on the rise

Property prices ended 2017 on a high with the weighted average median price of the eight capital cities up 1.0 per cent to \$769,501, according to the latest research from the Real Estate Institute of Australia. REIA Real Estate Market Facts for the December quarter 2017 showed prices increasing in all capital cities except for Canberra down 2.7 per cent. "The weighted average median price for other dwellings increased 0.6 per cent to \$590,455 over the quarter, with prices increasing in all capital cities except for Sydney down 0.4 per cent and Darwin sliding 7.4 per cent," REIA President Malcolm Gunning said. "Hobart had the largest increase in the median price for both houses at 5.2 per cent and for other dwellings at 4.8 per cent," he said. Over the quarter, median rents for three-bedroom houses increased or remained steady in all capital cities, with Hobart at 2.7 per cent having the largest increase. Median rents for two-bedroom other dwellings were variable among the capital cities. The median rent increased in Hobart at 3.2 per cent .....

CONT NEXT PAGE



347,621 motor vehicle owners across the Hunter will be able to access their CTP Green Slip refund from last Monday. The NSW State Government last year overhauled the old CTP Green Slip Scheme to create a more affordable, lower cost scheme. In addition to lower premiums in 2018, the Government is providing partial refunds to the owners of vehicles across the state with insurance

premiums calculated based on the cost of the old scheme. Refund amounts will differ between motorists depending on when they renewed their Green Slip. The closer to 1 December 2017 a motorist paid their premium, the larger the refund. Minister for Finance, Services and Property Victor Dominello said that, as a result of the Government's reforms, over \$2.1 million will be

returned to local vehicle owners. The average refund is \$39. "The new CTP scheme is delivering a big win for motorists through lower premiums, greater protections for those injured on the road and refunds on premiums paid during 2017," Mr Dominello said. Parliamentary Secretary for Hunter Scot MacDonald MLC said that the new CTP scheme is delivering significant savings for motorists.

People with a MyServiceNSW email account can expect to receive an email advising them if they are entitled to a refund. The refund will be processed through their MyServiceNSW account and paid into a bank account of their choice. Vehicle owners who do not have a MyServiceNSW account can check online if they are eligible for a refund (www.service.nsw.gov.au/greensliprefund) or by

visiting their local Service NSW Centre before creating an account. Refunds will continue to be available in the coming days and weeks and are available until 30 September 2018. To register for your Green Slip refund visit [www.service.nsw.gov.au/greensliprefund](http://www.service.nsw.gov.au/greensliprefund) or for further information on the new scheme visit [www.sira.nsw.gov.au](http://www.sira.nsw.gov.au)

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## Stockland Green Hills redevelopment to open this Thursday



The fourth & last stage of the Stockland Green Hills redevelopment will open officially this Thursday 22nd March. Having spent just over \$400million on the redevelopment it certainly 'puts paid' to the current adage that the retail physical market is and will shrink. The redevelopment has more than doubled the size of the centre from around 33,000 square metres to around 72,000 square metres. The centre has also increased the availability of parking by creating approximately 1,500 new car parking bays – to take the total number to more than 3,100 spaces. It has also incorporated the latest Free Park Assist guidance system to make it fast and easy for customers to find a vacant parking space. Additionally, the majority of car parking spaces will be undercover. Upgrades have been undertaken to the surrounding road network including two intersections

on the New England Highway and traffic light intersections into the shopping centre. This will improve pedestrian and vehicle access and safety with improved access to both the New England Highway and Hunter Expressway. The redevelopment has been undertaken in a series of managed stages, with the overall project completed over a 27-month period. A list of shops will give you an indication of the magnitude of the redevelopment:-  
**Majors**  
 Best & Less, Big W, Coles, David Jones, Harris Scarfe, H&M, Target, Woolworths  
**Banks and ATMS**  
 ANZ, Commonwealth, Greater, Hunter United, Maitland Mutual, NAB, Newcastle Permanent, Rediteller, St George, Westpac  
**Auto services**  
 Jax tyres, Woolworths Petrol  
**Books, DVDs, electronics, gaming and music**

Camera House, Casey's Toys, EB Games/Zing Pop Culture, Harry Hartog, JB Hi-Fi, Sanity Music, The Game Shop  
**Mobiles and Communications**  
 Mobile Experts, Mobile Repair Central, Telstra, The Mobile Company, PTC Mobile Accessories and Repairs, Vodafone, Yes Optus,  
**Discount Variety**  
 Dollar King, Hot Bargain, The Reject Shop  
**Entertainment**  
 Chipmunks Playland and Cafe (opening soon), Timezone, Hoyts (opening in June)  
**Fashion accessories**  
 Lovisa, NYS Collection Eyewear, Strandbags, Sunglass Hut  
**Fashion**  
 Ally Fashion, BCL Babies, BeMe, Bonds, Bras N Things, Carla Swimwear, City Beach, Colette by Colette Hayman, Connor, Decjuba, Dotti, Ed Harry, Edge, Gazman, Ghanda, Jacqui E, Jay Jays, Jeans West, Johnny Big, Joy, Just Jeans, Kathmandu, Lorna Jane, Lowes, Millers Fash-

ion Club, Ozmosis, Portmans, Privvy, Rockmans, Rockwear, Seed Heritage, Sportsgirl, Suzanne Grae, Tarocash, Taking Shape, Tigerlily, Tree Of Life, Universal Store, Urban Sport, W-Lane, YD  
**Footwear**  
 Footlocker, In Sport, Mathers, Midas, Novo Shoes, Platypus Shoes, Queen of Sole, Skechers, Spendless Shoes, The Athlete's Foot, Williams The Shoemen  
**Fresh Food**  
 Bakers Delight, Costis Seafood Market Cafe, Joe's Meat Market, Kwon Mart  
**Hair and Beauty**  
 Australian Skin Clinics, Barber Industries, Beautiful Hair, Chops Hair Bar, Christiane's Hair Design, Endota Spa, Hermosa, Honey Ink, iBrow Station, Just Cuts, Just Lashes, Kingsmen Hair, L'Amour Nails, Laser Clinics Australia, Lotus Nails Beauty and Makeup, Mecca Maxima, Neo nails, Pearl Nails, Price Attack, Priceline, Star Nail & Beauty, The Body Shop, The Laser Lounge, The Shaver Shop, Traditional Medicine  
**Health and Pharmacy**  
 Australian Sports Nutrition, Bay Audio, Blooms The Chemist, Lee Massage and Acupuncture, Magic Care Massage, NIB, Protein Express, Zen Healing Massage, Zion medical Centre  
**Homewares, gifts and stationary**  
 Adairs, Australian Geographic, Bed Bath N' Table, Build a Bear,

Cobblers Key, Green Hills Newsagency, Habitania, Hot Tobacconist and Gifts, House, Ishka, Mister Minit, My House, Riot Art and Craft, Smiggle  
**Jewellery**  
 Angus and Coote, Goldmark, Heirloom Jewellers, Michael Hill, Pandora, Prouds The Jewellers, Secrets Shhh, Simon Curwood Jewellers, Swarovski  
**Liquor**  
 BWS, Dan Murphy's Optometrists Eyecare Plus Green Hills, Level 28, OPSM, Specsavers  
**Services**  
 Green Hills Alterations  
**Takeaway food and cafes**  
 Baker's Cottage, Boost Juice, Burger Urge, Chatime, Cino's, Coffee Emporium, Coffee Guru, Crafty Cuts, Darrell Lea, Dumpling Flavour, Donut King, Gloria Jeans Coffee, Guzman Y Gomez, Hong Kong Chef, Hudsons Coffee, KFC, Kinn Thai Restaurant, Le Wrap, Lee's Kitchen McDonald's, Muffin break, Namaste Indian, Nathan's Famous, Oliver Brown (opening soon), Pizza Hut (opening soon), Roll's, Rashays, Soul Origin, Sunshine Kebabs, Sushi Gogoro, Sushi Hub, Table 21, Tella Balls Dessert Bar, TGI Fridays, The Green Room, Tokyo Sushi, Top Juice, Toto Sushi, Wok N' Roll  
**Travel**  
 Cruise Travel Centre, Escape Travel, Flight Centre, Helloworld

### 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**

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 67 High St Greta, NSW  
 Call 0419 222 445

FROM PREVIOUS PAGE  
 Property prices on the rise remained steady in Melbourne and Brisbane but decreased in Sydney, Adelaide, Perth, Darwin and Canberra. Perth had the largest decrease at 4.7 per cent. "The weighted average vacancy rate for the eight capital cities remained steady on 2.8 per cent during the December quarter 2017," Mr Gunning said. "Vacancy rates decreased in most capital cities including Melbourne, Perth, Canberra, Hobart and Darwin, with the largest decreases of 0.6 percentage points in Canberra and Darwin. "Vacancy rates increased in Sydney and Brisbane, while only Perth and Darwin had vacancy rates above the industry benchmark of 3.0 per cent," Mr Gunning concluded.



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# For Sale

## NORTH ROTHBURY

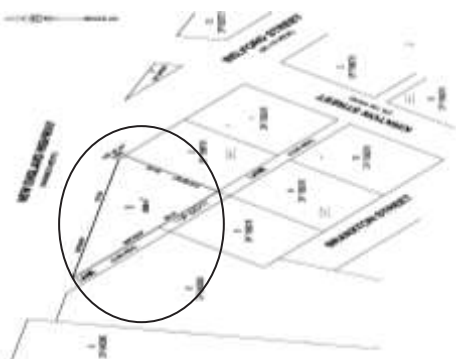


**Lots 521, 523 & 524**  
Littlewood Road,

Vacant blocks  
4ha (10 acres) very private  
bush blocks.  
Fully Fenced & within  
minutes to Hunter Wine  
Country

ASKING: \$420,000 each

## BELFORD



**Vacant Land**  
**2559m<sup>2</sup>**

Vacant Land with building  
approved  
Lot 1 DP 1205549  
Well over half an acre of good  
level block.

ASKING \$160,000 ONO

## FERNHILL ROAD, DALWOOD



**14.7HA Vacant**  
**land on Fernhill**  
**Road, Dalwood**  
**NSW 2335**  
**Sec A**  
**Lots 12 & 19.**

ASKING \$400,000

## NORTH ROTHBURY



**Vacant**  
**Land**  
**809m<sup>2</sup>**

Vacant Building Block  
Fantastic visage  
\$130,000 ONO

## Branxton



**OPEN HOUSE**  
Sat. 24 March 2018  
12noon ~ 12:30  
28 Rusty Lane, Branxton

### A Great Retreat

13.29 Hectares/32.83 Acres

An ideal property for those who want to escape the 'hustle & bustle' of city life. The property, a tad over 32 acres (31.22 acres/12.634 Hectares), is just 15 minutes to the centre of Hunter Wine Country which offers all you need in entertainment, the best in Australian wines, many 'hated' restaurants & a selection of great golf courses. The property is nicely secluded with great bush ambiance and only minutes to Branxton. If your enjoyment is of an equine nature then this property is just for you; stables, round yard & makings of a good arena. The large family home has 4 good sized bedrooms with an ensuite off the main bedroom. There is a spacious lounge-room with a split system air conditioning unit & a cosy slow combustion fire. Floorboards accentuate the feel of country living. Two large Queensland rooms at the rear, 'wrap-a-round' verandah & a large in-ground pool make the home ideal for entertainment. There are 3 dams, a large machinery shed plus a large freestanding garage. The land abuts the very popular 'Dalwood Acres' small acreage development & if the area continues its rapid expansion the property would invariably come under consideration for further development.

We are asking for 'expressions of interest'.

## Glendon Brook

(Lot 61 DP  
1100235)  
6.217HA

### 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 fluoro 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.

MAKE AN OFFER



## East Branxton



### Your own little 'Hobby Farm'

A very spacious five bedroom family home + large office; main bedroom with en-suite & walk-in robe. All other bedrooms have good built-ins + fans. There are two large living areas plus a large, under cover, entertainment area. The property is fenced into 3 paddocks with a good garden shed & dog yard. There is also a triple lock-up garage. All the benefits of urban living with the benefit of a large semi-rural lot.

(Reduced to) ASKING \$640,000 ONO

**We have had an extraordinary number of enquiries  
for, residential homes & home units; also rental properties.  
If you can help please call Helen on 4938 3300**





## New rules for parked trailer advertisements and signage



In late 2017 policy amendments were made to improve road safety and reduce driver distraction through the *State Environmental Planning Policy No. 64 – Advertising and Signage (Amendment No 3)* and updated *Transport Corridor Outdoor Advertising and Signage Guidelines (November 2017)*. The changes have the effect of:

- Banning advertisements on parked trailers on roads, road shoulders, footpaths and nature strips, excluding advertising associated with the primary use of the trailer, e.g. tradies trailer, and public authorities;

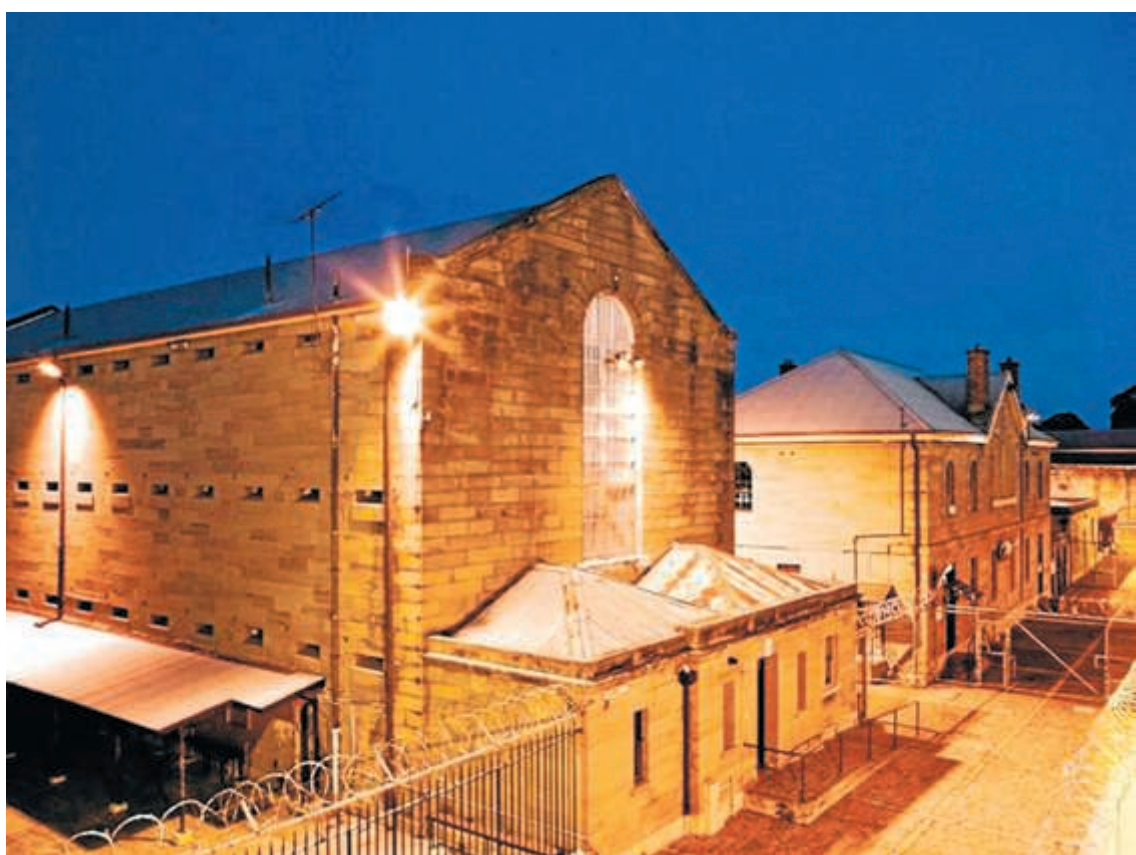
- Requiring consent for displaying signage on trailers parked on private land in view from roads, road shoulders, footpaths and nature strips; and
- Allowing advertising in transport corridors permissible with consent from the Planning Minister or delegate, across NSW. The change to ban trailer advertising came into effect on 1 March 2018. All other changes came into effect on 29 November 2017. The updates apply to all advertising signage that can be seen from a public place or public reserve, except signage that is exempt development. The amendments requires development consent for

the display of signage on a trailer where displayed on private land that is visible from a road or road-related area.

Individuals failing to comply can be fined \$1500 and businesses doing the wrong thing could attract a \$3000 fine. The new penalty notice offences have been introduced through the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation (Penalty Notices for Parked Trailer Advertisements) Regulation 2017*.

For more information phone 1300 305 695 or visit [www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Policy-and-Legislation/Advertising-and-Signage-SEPP](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Policy-and-Legislation/Advertising-and-Signage-SEPP).

## IF YOU HAVE A MAITLAND GAOL STORY PLEASE SHARE IT



As part of the '20 Years On' commemoration of Maitland Gaol closing in 1998, a new oral history project is launching, aimed at people who may have a story to tell about the Gaol. Over the centuries, the passing down of stories from one generation to the next has been key to the preservation of history and the idea of this oral history project is to capture a whole range of stories before they become lost, which could happen much sooner than you would think. Throughout the 20 years the Gaol has been closed and while operating as a cultural tourism facility, the importance of working with and recording people's histories has been

recognised as a critical feature of the site, with this not being the first time that oral history has been commissioned for the Gaol. The aim in this instance however, is also to widen the scope from just a focus on operational stories to more personal stories about the Gaol. Maitland Gaol Service Delivery Officer Zoe Whiting says, 'Following on from the great success of the Gaol open day back at the end of January, we are now encouraging the community to come and share their experiences of the Gaol over time. Maybe you lived nearby, went to Maitland Grossmann High (or Maitland Girls before that) and remember the escape drills,

or worked either at the Gaol, or for a company that had some linkage, or of course you may have experienced a stint on the wrong side of the gates. 'Although the project is mainly targeting people who can provide first hand accounts of their interaction with the Gaol when it operated, you might be a child or grandchild of someone who shared a good story with you and we want to capture that as well.' The success of the Maitland Gaol audio tours can, in part, be put down to the information gained from people who were actually on site or who have had an intimate understanding of the site and its operation and history. 'The

development of these tours would be that much harder without those authentic real life stories and that is why we are seeking assistance from the public to keep new stories rolling in', said Ms Whiting. The project will be ongoing, and members of the public can find more information by going to [maitlandgaol.com.au/oral-history-project](http://maitlandgaol.com.au/oral-history-project), by calling the Gaol on 4936 6842 or by calling in to the Gaol and picking up a registration form. Contributing to the project will help to preserve the history of Maitland Gaol and who knows, your story may help provide content and information for future tours and programs.

## Singleton Council's commitment to risk management recognised with seat at Statewide table

In a further demonstration of Singleton Council's reinvigorated approach to risk management, General Manager Jason Linnane has been appointed to the Board of Management of Statewide Mutual.

Australia's largest local government self-insurance pool with 118 member councils, including Singleton, and works with NSW Councils to help reduce their exposure to risk. Mr Linnane will replace long-serving member and

Lake Macquarie City Council General Manager Brian Bell on the Board. Also the sponsoring General Manager for Hunter Councils Risk Management Team, Mr Linnane's appointment is recognition of his commitment, under-

standing and support of the value of sound risk management practices to an organisation's success. Mr Linnane said Singleton Council had undertaken significant work in the risk management environment in the past two years and his inclusion on the Board of Management was a reflection of Council's Integrated Risk Management team and the broader organisation. 'I'm really excited to represent our local government area and the Hunter

Region on the board of the Mutual. It's a terrific opportunity," he said. "But more than that, I am very proud of the work we've been doing at Singleton Council over the past two years. "Risk management requires input from every member of our staff and the results we're seeing right across our organisation are testament to a lot of hard work. "We are fortunate to have what I consider as the best Integrated Risk



Management team in local government and I have no doubt we will continue to grow to be an industry leader in the risk management space."

Photo: Jason Linnane and Council's Integrated Risk Management team is attached. (L-R) Mark Burgess, Dimity Maher, General Manager Jason Linnane, Jenny Rudder and Manager Integrated Risk Deborah McDonald.

## Michael Robotham event cancelled

The Newcastle Writers' Festival has announced best-selling crime fiction author Michael Robotham has had to withdraw for personal reasons from this year's events in Newcastle and Cessnock.

Here in Cessnock, *Secrets and Lies: an evening with Michael Robotham* was due to be held at the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre on Saturday 7 April 2018 and has been hugely popular in the community.

Newcastle Writers' Festival Director, Rosemarie Milsom said, 'While it was disappointing news for his many fans, there is a possibility Robotham will revisit the region after the release of his new book at the end of June.'

For those who have purchased tickets, the team at the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre will be in touch shortly to arrange refunds and apologise for any inconvenience caused.

# WANTED

**RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES TO LEASE**

There is a strong demand for residential rental accommodation in the local area & our office needs more properties to sate the current demand. If you are contemplating renting your property please contact either Helen or Mike on **4938 3300**

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# Celebrate your generation Youth Week 2018



The program for National Youth Week 2018 has been launched and our local young people are keen to get involved in the more than 25 events on offer. Youth Week kicks off on 6 April and runs up until the 22 April, with well over 1000 young people expected to take part in events being held across the Cessnock Local Government Area. Over the past few months Cessnock's Youth Week Organising Committee has been working hard to organise events and activities that will excite and engage all young people. Young people have played a huge role in making the program so fantastic. Cessnock Youth Entertainment Committee members, Lachy Campbell and Michael Sim are launching their event 'Thrift Shop Kahoot'. Lachy said he got involved after his band Interlude played at last year's YouthFest. "When I saw the amount of young people running events I wanted to be involved." The program is jam-packed with great events so no matter what a young person is interested in they'll find something that sparks their

interest. Meraki will give young people the chance to share their creative talents at an open mic night and there is also Take the Stage for those who like performing. The Harry Potter Escape Room and the Thrift Shop Kahoot are exciting new activities. For those who enjoy hands on activities think about signing up to the DIY Bunning's Workshop or the Maintain Your Ride Workshop. YouthFest, now in its fourteenth year, is of course expected to attract large crowds, the FREE event includes live music and a bike, skate and scooter competition. Cessnock Youth Entertainment Committee's Georgia Cunningham has been involved with YouthFest for a couple of years and said it's a great event. "YouthFest is a celebration of young people, run by young people and is always such a fun time." Youth Week 2018 is proud to offer an inclusive program with 26 of the 27 events accessible. YouthFest is not 100% accessible but will have accessible toilets, parking and the Including YOU tent. Pick up a program today at Cessnock City Council or like the CYCOS Facebook

## HEARD IT THROUGH the GRAPEVINE



with Jo Thomas, General Manager HVWTA

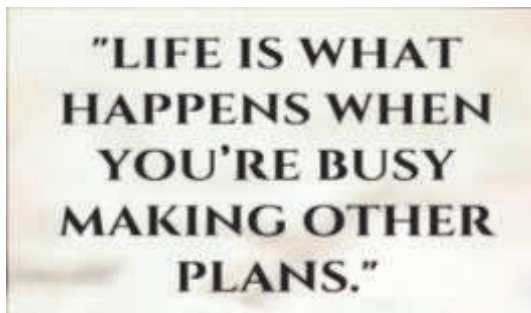
## Concerns Raised by the HVWTA on the National Alcohol Strategy

The Consultation Draft National Alcohol Strategy (NAS) raises serious concerns for the alcohol sector as a whole. Whilst the Hunter Valley Wine & Tourism Association (HVWTA) supports the use of evidence-based policy measures to address medical and social problems emanating from excessive alcohol consumption the HVWTA is concerned that the NAS it is not a targeted approach to solving these problems. The NAS focuses on population wide measures including increases in taxation, restricting availability and implementing bans on advertising, with an aim to decrease overall alcohol consumption and seemingly panders to populist sentiments that demonise alcohol consumption. Changes to the NAS is a key focus for the HVWTA, and over the coming months will work

with other regional and state organisations on this, including pregnancy warning and energy labelling initiatives being proposed by Government/s. We will also endeavour to draft a response and raise the concerns we have on the NAS on behalf of HVWTA members. The Winemaker's Federation of Australia, the Alcohol Beverages Association, Wine Industry Suppliers Australia and other State wine industry groups all share concerns at the content of this draft strategy. For more information on the NAS call the HVWTA on 02 4990 0940.

page for more details. A program is also available on the Cessnock City Council website at .....

[www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/community/events-ceremonies/youth-week](http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/community/events-ceremonies/youth-week)





### Celebrate All Life's Special Occasions

**New Studio Open!**  
67 High St Greta, NSW

**Picotee Floral Design** is a flower studio located in the Greta the heart of the Hunter Valley. We provide the highest quality flowers - selected with care, thoughtfully arranged, beautifully presented and delivered to your home or business. With over 12 years Floristry Industry experience here in the Hunter. **Studio hours: Thurs - Sat 8am - 4pm, Sun 8am - 1pm & all other times by appointment**

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## Have you forgotten to claim your share dividends from NIB?

Approximately \$2.5million in dividends are close to being given to their own charity, the nib Foundation.



The NIB health insurer changed its constitution to allow the uncollected moneys to go to a charity instead of it being sent to the Office of State Revenue.

The average unclaimed moneys is \$257 and there are about 9000 of them with a reported 1400 in the Hunter. If shareholders don't claim what is theirs before August 31, 2018, the monies will be transferred to the foundation.

It was reported in the Newcastle Herald that NIB managing director Mark Fitzgibbon saying the funds had remained unclaimed for a period of five years or more, despite nib's best efforts to contact shareholders and pay them.

"We've worked hard to reconnect these shareholders with their unclaimed dividends, including by mail, via advertising in national newspapers, social media campaigns, and if they are a nib policyholder, reminding them when they contact us for a claim or query that they have outstanding dividends," Mr Fitzgibbon said.

"We don't want our shareholders to miss out on what's owing to them, which is why we're encouraging anyone who has owned NIB shares to contact us to check if they have dividends that can be claimed," he said.

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## Friend O' Mine

by Norm Cruickshank '00

OLD salty village squatting within its silent raw and unspoiled moodiness, weeded muddy banks on mangrove forestall halls, a cave of rivery unknown plenty, gifting from out a many million seas of change the bargains of a virginally untouched place, a plundered generous captured prize where adventurous hands will open wide the doors of jewelled sanctums and hungrily feast upon such wealth.

These watery lands by their very nature sustained the lot of all for a century or more as they spent her fortune and sullied much. Benefiting dependant farmer crop and cow, traveller on his river road to newer lands, not least that simple village swimming hole on summer days when children touched her heart to learn and live by.

Standing in the shade of her tree-ed and unparklined shores, renewal moments of a spiritual calm did lessen stress of any long-some day. Watery soft sand between small toes then laughing as a child filled flooding moments of a slower peaceful youth.

ping shallows, her mystic foolish fish and crab at play, immersed so much in the sweetest cool of a wet welcoming cloak. Whatever the attractions that tie all to her elemental mother's apron strings, one simple answer could be the psyche of that blissful watery womb from whence we all did spring.

Her shores need of themselves an unkempt grace, a wildly smelling earthiness, a place of weed and mud, a living unfettered moody crucible of crab and fish and searching bird battling life in some responsive learning curve, staying unplanned in its own disordered way, where every nook and crannied hidey hole is undisturbed by the ever ordering hands of a high minded spit and polished dressed facade of those hell bent on change.

The peace of these waters remain life's comfort zone, protect them, for there are those who will think otherwise.

To you ... my friend  
I am a river .. at your door  
a world all mine ... in sometime calmer moments ... being still or silent as ... a ghostly mist who ebbs ... and flows ... while others breathe ... and fossick wilder minds ... on weedy flat and muddy mangrove virgin lands such gifts of here ... and now are not alone ... for you but truly those ... who follow when these moments ... spent with life ... has once more been and gone  
norm cruickshank ©



# WANTED

**Croquet players wanted** to join friendly, established club at 8 John Rose Avenue, Branxton. Come and try for free, no experience or equipment needed. You'll have lots of fun!

Phone Carole on 0249387234 or call at grounds between 9am and 12am on Tuesday or Saturday.



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**MILLER PARK SPORTS CLUB**  
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**ENTERTAINMENT**  
**FRIDAY 23rd MARCH**  
**THE HOPS**  
**THURSDAY 29th MARCH**  
**SOLID GOLD**

## **RAFFLES**

*SUNDAY 25th MARCH*  
***EASTER EGGS***  
*THURSDAY 29th MARCH*  
***SEAFOOD TRAYS***

### **MEMBER'S BADGE DRAW**

**WEDNESDAY**  
21st MARCH - \$1,300  
**SUNDAY**  
25th MARCH - \$2,400

## **MILLER PARK**

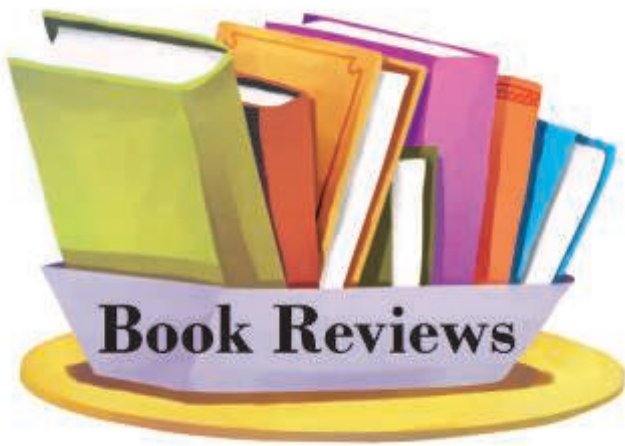
**MEMBERS BADGE DRAW**  
**THURSDAY 22nd MARCH**  
**\$500 (\$4,300 was Won)**  
**SUNDAY 25th MARCH**  
**\$5,000**  
**MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN**

**SEAFOOD**  
**RAFFLE**  
**THURSDAY**  
**29th MARCH**

**HAPPY HOUR**  
**MILLER PARK WEDNESDAY**  
4.00 – 7.00pm  
**GRETA THURSDAY**  
4.00 – 6.00pm  
**\$3.60 a Schooner**

**BLANCHIE'S KITCHEN**  
**NEW CATERING AT**  
**MILLER PARK**  
**CHEF: MATHEW BLANCH**  
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## Longlist for the 2018 Australian Book Industry Awards announced

The Australian Publishers Association has announced the longlist for 2018 Australian Book Industry Awards (ABIAs). The list was voted for by the ABIA Academy, a group of publishers, booksellers, agents, media and industry representatives. A shortlist will be released on April 19 with the winners announced on May 3.

### ABIA LONGLIST 2018

#### Biography Book of the Year

- *A Writing Life: Helen Garner and Her Work*, Bernadette Brennan (Text Publishing, Text Publishing)
- *Danger Music*, Eddie Ayres (Allen & Unwin, Allen & Unwin)
- *The Enigmatic Mr Deakin*, Judith Brett (Text Publishing, Text Publishing)
- *Tracker*, Alexis Wright (Giramondo Publishing, Giramondo Publishing Company)
- *Unbreakable*, Jelena Dokic and Jess Halloran (Ebury Australia, Penguin Random House Australia)
- *Unmasked*, Turia Pitt (Ebury Australia, Penguin Random House Australia)
- *Wednesdays with Bob*, Derek Rielly and Bob Hawke (Macmillan Australia, Pan Macmillan Australia,)
- *Working Class Man*, Jimmy Barnes (HarperCollins Publishers, HarperCollins Publishers)

#### General Fiction Book of the Year

- *Force of Nature*, Jane Harper (Macmillan Australia, Pan Macmillan Australia)
- *On the Java Ridge*, Jock Serong (Text Publishing, Text Publishing)
- *The Dark Lake*, Sarah Bailey (Allen & Unwin, Allen & Unwin)
- *The Girl from Munich*, Tania Blanchard (Simon & Schuster Australia, Simon & Schuster Australia)
- *The Inaugural Meeting Of The Fairvale Ladies Book Club*, Sophie Green (Hachette, Hachette Australia)
- *The Secrets She Keeps*, Michael Robotham (Hachette, Hachette Australia)
- *The Tea Gardens*, Fiona McIntosh (Michael Joseph Australia, Penguin Random House Australia)
- *The Trip of A Lifetime*, Monica McInerney (Michael Joseph Australia, Penguin Random House Australia)

#### General Non-fiction Book of the Year

- *Anaesthesia: The Gift of Oblivion and the Mystery of Consciousness*, Kate Cole-Adams (Text Publishing, Text Publishing)
- *Being 14*, Madonna King (Hachette, Hachette Australia)
- *Depends What You Mean By Extremist*, John Safran (Hamish Hamilton Australia, Penguin Random House Australia)
- *First, We Make The Beast Beautiful*, Sarah Wilson

(Macmillan Australia, Pan Macmillan Australia)

- *Not Just Lucky*, Jamila Rizvi (Viking Australia, Penguin Random House Australia)
- *Saga Land*, Richard Fidler and Kári Gíslason (ABC Books, HarperCollins Publishers)
- *Taming Toxic People*, David Gillespie (Macmillan Australia, Pan Macmillan Australia)
- *The Harbour: A City's Heart, A Country's Soul*, Scott Bevan (Simon & Schuster Australia, Simon & Schuster Australia)
- *The Trauma Cleaner: One Woman's Extraordinary Life in Death, Decay & Disaster*, Sarah Krasnostein (Text Publishing, Text Publishing)
- *Illustrated Book of the Year*
- *Basics to Brilliance Kids*, Donna Hay (Fourth Estate, HarperCollins Publishers)
- *Cornersmith: Salads and Pickles*, Alex Elliott-Howery and Sabine Spindler (Murdoch Books, Murdoch Books)
- *Hummus and Co*, Michael Rantissi and Kristy Frawley (Murdoch Books, Murdoch Books)
- *Maggie's Recipe for Life*, Maggie Beer and Professor Ralph Martins (A Julie Gibbs Book for Simon & Schuster Australia, Simon & Schuster Australia)
- *Native: Art and Design with Australian Plants*, Kate Herd and Jela Ivankovic-Waters (Thames & Hudson Australia, Thames & Hudson Australia)
- *Ostro*, Julia Busuttil Nishimura (Plum, Pan Macmillan Australia)
- *Paris: Through a Fashion Eye*, Megan Hess (Hardie Grant Books, Hardie Grant Publishing)
- *The Vegetable*, Caroline Griffiths and Vicki Valsamis (Smith Street Books, Smith Street Books)

#### International Book of the Year

- *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine*, Gail Honeyman (HarperCollins Publishers, HarperCollins Publishers)
- *Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls*, Elena Favilli and Francesca Cavallo (Particular Books -UK Juvenile, Penguin Random House Australia)
- *Here We Are: Notes For Living On Planet Earth*, Oliver Jeffers (HarperCollins Publishers, HarperCollins Publishers)
- *Home Fire*, Kamila Shamsie (Bloomsbury Circus, Bloomsbury Publishing)
- *La Belle Sauvage: The Book of Dust Volume One*, Philip Pullman (David Fickling Books, Penguin Random House Australia)
- *Lincoln in the Bardo*, George Saunders (Bloomsbury Publishing, Bloomsbury Publishing)
- *Mythos*, Stephen Fry (Michael Joseph – UK, Penguin Random House Australia)
- *The Sun and her Flowers*, Rupri Kaur (Simon & Schuster UK, Simon & Schuster UK)

#### Literary Fiction Book of the Year

- *A Long Way Home*, Peter Carey (Hamish Hamilton Australia, Penguin Random House Australia)
- *Australia Day*, Melanie Cheng (Text Publishing, Text Publishing)
- *First Person*, Richard Flanagan (Knopf Australia, Penguin Random House Australia)
- *See What I Have Done*, Sarah Schmidt (Hachette, Hachette Australia)
- *Taboo*, Kim Scott (Picador Australia, Pan Macmillan Australia)
- *The Choke*, Sofie Laguna (Allen & Unwin, Allen & Unwin)
- *The Life to Come*, Michelle de Kretser (Allen & Unwin, Allen & Unwin)
- *Wimmera*, Mark Brandi (Hachette, Hachette Australia)

#### Small Publishers' Adult Book of the Year

- *Atlantic Black*, A. S. Patric (Transit Lounge, Transit Lounge)
- *Call of the Reed Warbler – A New Agriculture – A New Earth*, Charles Massy (The University of Queensland Press, The University of Queensland Press)
- *Cardinal*, Louise Milligan (Melbourne University Press, Melbourne University Press)
- *Journeys into the Wild: The Photography of Peter Dombrovskis*, Introduction & Commentary by Bob Brown (NLA Publishing, National Library of Australia)
- *The Australian Bird Guide*, Peter Menkhorst, Danny Rogers, Rohan Clarke, Jeff Davies, Peter Marsack and Kim Franklin (CSIRO Publishing, CSIRO Publishing)
- *The Restorer*, Michael Sala (Text Publishing, Text Publishing)
- *Museum of Words*, Georgia Blain (Scribe Publications, Scribe Publications)
- *Mirror Sydney*, Vanessa Berry (Giramondo Publishing, Giramondo Publishing Company)

#### Small Publishers' Children's Book of the Year


- *At the Beach I See*, Kamsani Bin Salleh (Magabala Books, Magabala Books)
- *At the Zoo I See*, Joshua Button and Robyn Wells (Magabala Books, Magabala Books)
- *Big Fella Rain*, Beryl Webber and illustrated by Fern Martins (Magabala Books, Magabala Books)
- *Hello, Melbourne!*, Megan McKean (Thames & Hudson Australia, Thames & Hudson Australia)
- *It's OK to Feel the Way You Do*, Josh Langley (Big Sky Publishing, Big Sky Publishing)
- *The Elephant*, Peter Carnavas (The University of Queensland Press, The University of Queensland Press)
- *Slow Down, World*, Tai Snaith (Thames & Hudson Australia, Thames & Hudson Australia)
- *Under the Love Umbrella*, Davina Bell and Allison Colpoys (Scribble Kids' Books, Scribe Publications)
- **The Matt Richell Award for New Writer of the Year**
- *Australia Day*, Melanie Cheng (Text Publishing, Text Publishing)

- *Nevermoor*, Jessica Townsend (Lothian Children's Books, Hachette Australia)
- *See What I Have Done*, Sarah Schmidt (Hachette, Hachette Australia)
- *Terra Nullius*, Claire G Coleman (Hachette, Hachette Australia)
- *The Inaugural Meeting Of The Fairvale Ladies Book Club*, Sophie Green (Hachette, Hachette Australia)
- *The Girl from Munich*, Tania Blanchard (Simon & Schuster Australia, Simon & Schuster Australia)
- *The Last Man in Europe: A Novel*, Dennis Glover (Black Inc., Black Inc. Books)
- *The Trauma Cleaner: One Woman's Extraordinary Life in Death, Decay & Disaster*, Sarah Krasnostein (Text Publishing, Text Publishing)
- *Wimmera*, Mark Brandi (Hachette, Hachette Australia)

#### Book of the Year for Older Children (ages 13+)

- *Beautiful Mess*, Claire Christian (Text Publishing, Text Publishing)
- *Begin, End, Begin: A #LoveOzYA Anthology*, Amie Kaufman, Melissa Keil, Will Kostakis, Ellie Marney, Jaclyn Moriarty, Michael Pryor, Alice Pung, Gabrielle Tozer, Lili Wilkinson and Danielle Binks (HarperCollins Publishers, HarperCollins Publishers)
- *Frogkisser!*, Garth Nix (Allen & Unwin, Allen & Unwin)
- *My Life as a Hashtag*, Gabrielle Williams (Allen & Unwin, Allen & Unwin)
- *Take Three Girls*, Simmone Howell, Cath Crowley and Fiona Wood (Pan Australia, Pan Macmillan Australia)
- *Tales From a Tall Forest*, Shaun Micallef and illustrated by Jonathan Bentley (Hardie Grant Egmont, Hardie Grant Egmont)
- *The Silent Invasion*, James Bradley (Pan Australia, Pan Macmillan Australia)
- *Untidy Towns*, Kate O'Donnell (The University of Queensland Press, The University of Queensland Press).

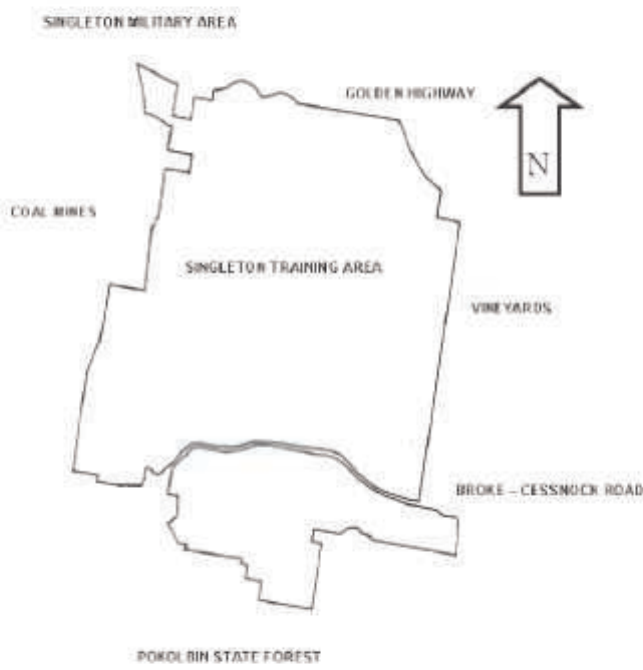
(Ed. Note ~ For those aficionado's of the written word there is plenty to read. A word of warning; the list is alphabetic not the judges preference)



**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  
Range Road  
Singleton Training Area  
Singleton NSW 2331.

1548LM



**Open 7 days**  
**8am - 8pm**  
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202 Wollombi Road, Cessnock  
(opposite ALDI)



# Scoot, skate or ride? Check out the Skatepark design!



Young people and residents using local skate facilities are being urged to provide their feedback on the draft Cessnock Skatepark Concept Design that is on public exhibition. The draft design was produced after listening to school students, industry professionals and other interested community members at various community engagement workshops in 2017. Cessnock City Mayor, Councillor Bob Pynsent said it was great to get ideas from

interested community members to help inform the design and now they have another chance to be involved in the project. "The ideas and discussions during the workshops held last year were brilliant, in particular from those young people who use skatepark facilities frequently." "It's important Council continue to plan for the future and ensure we invest in recreational facilities that meet the needs and desires of our

residents." The design includes a large flow style bowl, street style course, assorted seating ledges, a viewing deck and a barbeque area. Mount View Park on Mount View Road has been earmarked as a site for the proposed facility. The design went on exhibition on Monday 12 March and will remain on exhibition until Friday 13 April.



Earl and Bubba are quietly sitting in a boat fishing, Chewing tobacco and drinking beer when suddenly Bubba says, "Think I'm gonna divorce the wife - she ain't spoke to me in over 2 months." Earl spits overboard, takes a long, slow sip of beer and says ..... "Better think it over ....women like that are hard to find."

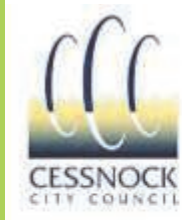


## Pets and Patrols with Ranger Kurt

Easter is almost here and while I'm sure many are looking forward to chowing down on chocolate it's important to remember that chocolate is toxic to dogs and in some cases, fatal. Chocolate is toxic as it contains the compound theobromine which is a chemical similar to caffeine and is used medicinally as a diuretic, heart stimulant, blood vessel dilator and smooth muscle relaxant. Dogs can't metabolise theobromine like humans can and the highest levels of compound can be found in dark chocolate, cocoa powder and baking chocolate. The toxic effects vary depending on the dog's size, type and the amount of chocolate eaten, but may result in severe clinical signs if not treated early. Consumption can lead to an increased heart rate, seizures, abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhoea and in worse cases can also result in death. Dogs are natural scavengers, so keep this in mind when preparing your Easter egg hunt for the kids. Some helpful tips is to use larger eggs and place them up higher so they're out of your dog's reach. The importance of desexing your pet is something we'd also like to raise this month and if you find that it's something you can't afford, there are other avenues you can take. Cessnock Council has had a long standing partnership with Hunter Animal Watch who work to reduce the number of unwanted pets in our area by offering financial assistance to people on low incomes to desex their pets. In January and February this year, Hunter Animal Watch helped 179 dog and cat owners across the Hunter to desex their pet which is a fantastic achievement. If you are a pensioner or unemployed and would like assistance with the cost of desexing your pet, we encourage you to call Hunter Animal Watch on 024961 6133. Alternatively, you can visit [www.hunteranimalrescue.com.au](http://www.hunteranimalrescue.com.au) to find out more information. We'd also like to advise that there are new rules in place for parked trailer advertisements and signage to improve road safety and reduce driver distraction. The changes have the effect of:

- Banning advertisements on parked trailers on roads, road shoulders, footpaths and nature strips, excluding advertising associated with the primary use of the trailer, e.g. tradies trailer, and public authorities;
- Requiring consent for displaying signage on trailers parked on private land in view from roads, road shoulders, footpaths and nature strips; and

Allowing advertising in transport corridors permissible with consent from the Planning Minister or delegate, across NSW. The change to ban trailer advertising came into effect on 1 March 2018. Individuals failing to comply can be fined \$1500 and businesses doing the wrong thing could attract a \$3000 fine.



You can contact Council on 02 4993 4100 or [www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au](http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au)



# Branxton Golf Club



[branxtongolfclub@westnet.com.au](mailto:branxtongolfclub@westnet.com.au) Phone 0249 381 421

## Chicken Schnitzels

**\$6.00 Members**  
**\$8.00 non Members**  
**Saturday & Sunday Night**  
**Conditions apply**

## Friday Raffles

**Meat, Seafood, Fruit & Vegies trays**  
**47 Schoolers to be won In the Schooner Draw**

## MONSTER EASTER RAFFLE

FRIDAY 23RD MARCH  
TICKETS ON SALE 6.30PM



Easter Eggs  
Seafood Trays  
Meat Trays

Members Draw Friday \$1300 as at 16/3/2018

## Happy Hour

**\$3.50**



Schooners

Friday 3.00pm-5.00pm

## AGM

**Wednesday**  
**11/4/2018**  
**6.00pm**

All welcome



# click



## Blackberry modified to 'help drug cartels'

Dave Lee North America technology reporter

The chief executive of a company that created highly-secure smartphones allegedly used by some of the world's most notorious criminals has been indicted. Canadian-based Phantom Secure made "tens of millions of dollars" selling the modified Blackberry devices for use by the likes of the Sinaloa Cartel, investigators said. The charges marked the first time US authorities have targeted a company for knowingly making encrypted technology for criminals. The Department of Justice arrested Vincent Ramos in Seattle last week. He was indicted last Thursday along with four associates. The BBC has been unable to reach Phantom Secure. They are charged with racketeering and conspiracy to aid the distribution of drugs. Both crimes have a maximum penalty of life in prison. Mr Ramos is the only one of the group currently in custody. "This organisation Phantom Secure was designed to facilitate international drug trafficking all throughout the entire world," US attorney Adam Braverman told the BBC. "These traffickers, including members of the Sinaloa Cartel, would use these fully-encrypted devices to facilitate their drug trafficking activities in order to avoid law enforcement scrutiny." **'Handful of other organisations'** Blackberry did not respond to requests for comment last Thursday - and investigators would not say whether the firm had worked with them on this case. Mr Braverman said Blackberry was not alone in having its handsets altered for illegal purposes. "Our understanding is there are a handful of other organisations that exist like this. The FBI, and our office, will continue investigating not only Phantom Secure but any other company that provides this kind of communication device to criminal organisations."

He added that while almost every smartphone on the market offers hard-to-crack encryption - as well as apps from Facebook, Google and Apple - Phantom Secure should be held culpable for what the users of its services were doing. "The difference is this company was specifically designed to aid international drug trafficking organisations," he said. "The only way that you're able to actually utilize one of these devices and obtain one of these devices is if somebody else vouched for you." Phantom Secure sold devices on a subscription basis at a cost of \$2,000-\$3,000 for around six months of use. In order to become a customer, an existing user must vouch for the new person. That system, authorities said, was a way of preventing law enforcement from getting hold of the devices. Agents estimated as many as 20,000 Phantom Secure-modified handsets are in use around the world. Communications through the phones are automatically routed to servers in Panama and Hong Kong, according to court documents, making data more difficult to trace. Phantom Secure could also remove key functionality from the devices to lock them down, such as voice communication, microphone, GPS, camera, internet and messaging apps, leaving just the text functionality. Law enforcement authorities have repeatedly been frustrated by encryption technology making it harder to access communications between suspects. In 2016, Apple refused to provide a tool that would allow the FBI to unlock an iPhone belonging to Syed Farook, a man involved in a mass shooting that resulted in the death of 14 people. Last Thursday, a spokesman for the FBI reiterated the agency's concern about criminals being able to "go dark" and hide behind these sophisticated technologies. Privacy and open rights activists argue that removing or just weakening encryption would put everyone at risk of data theft and surveillance - not just criminals.



## Ransomware 'here to stay', warns Google study

By Mark Ward Technology correspondent, BBC News in Las Vegas

Cyber-thieves have made at least \$25m (£19m) from ransomware in the last two years, suggests research by Google. The search giant created thousands of virtual victims of ransomware to expose the payment ecosystem surrounding the malware type. Most of the money was made in 2016 as gangs realised how lucrative it was, revealed a talk at Black Hat. Two types of ransomware made most of the money, it said, but other variants are starting to emerge. **Track and trace** "It's become a very, very profitable market and is here to stay," said Elie Bursztein from Google who, along with colleagues Kylie McRoberts and Luca Invernizzi, carried out the research. Ransomware is malicious software that infects a machine and then encrypts or scrambles files so they can no longer be used or read. The files are only decrypted when a victim pays a ransom. Payments typically have to be made using the Bitcoin virtual currency. Mr Bursztein said Google used several different methods to work out how much cash was flowing towards ransomware creators. As well as drawing on reports from people who had paid a ransom, it sought out the files used to infect machines and then ran those on lots of virtual machines to generate "synthetic victims", he said. It then monitored the network traffic generated by these victims to work out to where money would be transferred. The data gathered in this stage was also used to find more variants of ransomware and the 300,000 files it found broke down into 34 of them, he said. The most popular strains were the Locky and Cerber families, added Mr Bursztein. Payment analysis of the Bitcoin blockchain, which logs all transactions made using the e-currency, revealed that those two strains also made the most money over the last year, he said, with Locky collecting about \$7.8m (£5.9m) and Cerber \$6.9m (£5.2m).

The research project also revealed where the cash flowed and accumulated in the Bitcoin network and where it was converted back into cash. More than 95% of Bitcoin payments for ransomware were cashed out via Russia's BTC-e exchange, found Google. On 26 July, one of the founders of BTC-e, Alexander Vinnik, was arrested by Greek police on money laundering charges. The police were acting on a US warrant and his extradition to America is being sought. The gangs behind the ransomware explosion were not likely to stop soon, said Mr Bursztein, although established strains are facing competition from newer ones. "Ransomware is a fast-moving market," he said. "There's aggressive competition coming from variants such as SamSam and Spora." Novel variants were expanding quickly and many were encouraging fast expansion by paying affiliates more if they placed the malware on to large numbers of machines. The ransomware as a service model was already proving popular, he warned. "It's no longer a game reserved for tech-savvy criminals," he said. "It's for almost anyone."

**TAKE SOME GOOD ADVICE**

**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. 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.**

# MOVIE REVIEW

## The Death of Stalin

**The Death of Stalin film review: masterful political satire is one for the ages**  
By Luke Buckmaster

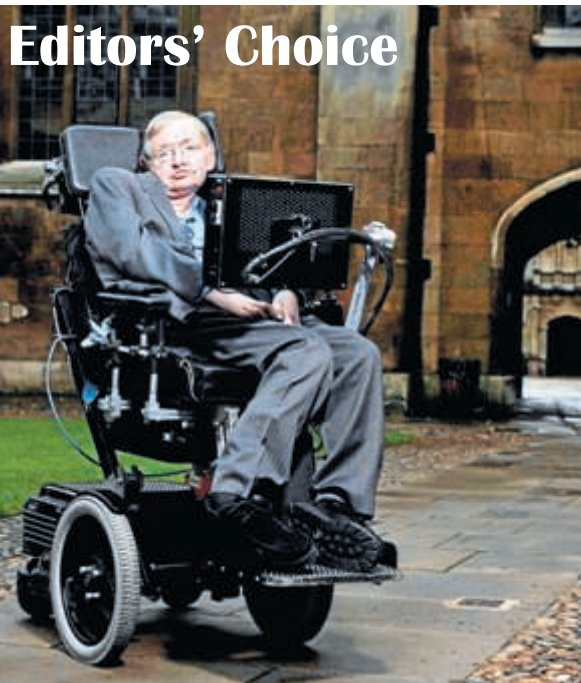
Armando Iannucci's new, ferociously sharp and funny tragicomedy explores power-grabbing among top level Russian ministers, in the aftermath of the titular event. *The Death of Stalin* has drawn many responses along the lines of 'a film for our times' and 'particularly relevant given today's headlines'. The implication being that Iannucci, creator of *The Thick of It* and *Veep*, and director of 2009's brilliant *In the Loop*, masterfully read the zeitgeist and conjured a farce appropriate for the era of Trump and a newly meddling, Putin-led Kremlin. The key to Iannucci's success (other than the obvious: bone-dry wit and volleys of caustic one-liners) is the same reason his work will remain relevant long into the future. The writer/director is, perhaps ironically - given the bare-faced cynicism that permeates most of his work - a bit of a humanist. Or at least a person whose focus lies with people struggling to make it through the day, determined to do the best they can. This attitude, prevalent throughout his work, is the reason his approach, while unquestionably British in sensibility, is pliable and universal. The monstrously entertaining spin doctor Malcolm Tucker (from *The Thick of It* and *In the Loop*) is the extremity of this 'struggle through the day' narrative. He's always in a maelstrom, always in crisis management mode, always fighting fire with fire, and despite the chest-thumping and sharp tongue, always struggling. Most of Iannucci's other characters are reasonable, or reasonable-ish people, corroded and corrupted by a terrible system, where arguably the most terrible thing is that these people they have allowed themselves to be corrupted in the first place; to allow they values to be so compromised. That system has never been more shocking, or more brutally farcical than in *The Death of Stalin*. This semi-historical film begins at an orchestral performance, where a radio producer (Paddy Considine) is terrified to hear - directly from the man himself - that Stalin wants to



listen to a recording of the performance that just took place. Small problem: it wasn't recorded. And, having just finished, half of the audience have left. The producer scrambles to his feet, running into the room screaming, crying out to lock the doors and declaring a state of "musical emergency." A new conductor is needed, so they grab the "finest and nearest" (emphasis on that last word) who is in his pajamas. Bodies are also required to fill the room, for the acoustics, so they visit people's homes and drag out common folk - who assume they are being taken to the gulag. It is a terrific opening, layered and and farcical, scene-setting from a left-of-centre place: far from the top echelons of power, and quite a way from the bottom. The focus, when it comes to panic and paranoia, is among a clique of government officials who are not so much relieved by the loss of their leader as thoroughly displaced by it. These absurdly self-conscious people have learned to watch their tongues. Communist Party secretary Nikita Khrushchev (Steve Buscemi) even gets his wife to write down everything he says, as well as how the dictator responds (including which of his jokes get the best laughs) so he can study the notes and alter his behaviour. When Joseph Stalin (Adrian McLoughlin) drops to the floor in his dacha, early in the piece, the simple act of getting a doctor isn't simple at all, given the dictator has thrown all the good ones in jail. When the possibility of getting a "bad doctor" is nervously floated, the question is asked: "What if he recovers and finds out?" To which Krushchev responds: "If he recovers, then we got a good doctor." This kind of droll to-and-fro permeates the script

(co-written by Iannucci, David Schneider and Ian Martin) in various contexts and in varying degrees. Iannucci keeps attention tightly focused around the politicians, which protects the film from racial caricature (it is ultimately about power and absurdity, not Russians) and from punching down. The top brass include a theoretically next in line deputy, the nervous and needy Georgy Malenkov (Jeffrey Tambor), the brutal and scheming enforcer Laventri Beria (Simon Russell Beale) and loyalist Vyacheslav Molotov (Michael Palin). Occasionally there are visions of common people, to remind us of the dangers of top level bureaucracy; the terrible things that filter down to the bottom. Without this, the behaviour of the primary characters might have existed in a harmless vacuum: a sand-box of snarky wordplay, devoid of real-world repercussions. Nothing, of course, could have been further from the truth. Eventually, without giving anything anyway, the clique - or at least components of it - self-combust, as the politics and power-grabbing become increasingly brutal. The choice, as one character puts it, lies between death and revenge. What a film. What an achievement. The drama is farcical and the comedy hurts. The writing and direction radiate white hot intensity, and the performances sizzle. In its ferocious grasp of absurdity, its story of petulant fiends with dangerous powers, and its stage-like focus on scenes and set pieces, *The Death of Stalin* evokes some of cinema's finest political satire - including a certain film about a doctor called Strangelove, directed by Stanley Kubrick. Iannucci has created one for the ages.





**Stephen Hawking**  
8/1/1942 ~ 14/3/2018

Stephen Hawking, the British theoretical physicist who found a link between gravity and quantum theory, and who declared that black holes aren't really black at all, has died.

"He was a great scientist and an extraordinary man whose work and legacy will live on for many years," Hawking's children Lucy, Robert, and Tim said in a statement. "His courage and persistence with his brilliance and humour inspired people across the world."

"He once said: 'It would not be much of a universe if it wasn't home to the people you love.' We will miss him for ever."

Hawking was 76 years old, more than 50 years older than the age doctors told him he could expect to reach after being diagnosed in 1963 with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), also called Lou Gehrig's disease.

"Few, if any, have done more to deepen our knowledge of gravity, space, and time," said British astrophysicist Martin Rees. In a reminiscence to mark the occasion of his Cambridge University colleague's improbable 70th birthday, he recalled a young man who was unsteady on his feet and spoke with great difficulty. No one expected him to live long enough to earn his Ph.D.

Although his degenerative disease progressively crippled him and robbed him of speech, Hawking did more than survive. He became "arguably the most famous scientist in the world," Rees said, "acclaimed for his brilliant research, for his best-selling books [about space, time, and the cosmos], and, above all, for his astonishing triumph over adversity."

Hawking's scientific claim to fame was his revelation that the universe began in a singularity, an infinitely dense point of space-time. Working with mathematical physicist Roger Penrose, he would show that Einstein's General Theory of Relativity "implied space and time would have a beginning in the big bang and an end in black holes," according to Hawking's website, and that "the way the universe began was completely determined by the laws of science."

In the early 1970s, he was the first to show that radiation escapes from black holes and that the holes aren't completely black. His theory explaining what came to be called Hawking radiation made him a scientific superstar.

It was, said Declan Fahy, an American University communications professor who studies scientists as celebrities and public intellectuals, "a signature contribution to cosmology [just] as the field became the most exciting place in physics."

Years later, Hawking would say that black holes do not have "event horizons," or points of no return, and that one of space's most mysterious objects may need rethinking.

## Stephen Hawking Theoretical physicist

Stephen William Hawking CH CBE FRS FRSA was an English theoretical physicist, cosmologist, author, and Director of Research at the Centre for Theoretical Cosmology within the University of Cambridge. Born: 8 January 1942, Oxford, United Kingdom

**Died:** 14 March 2018, Cambridge, United Kingdom  
**Spouse:** Elaine Mason (m. 1995–2006), Jane Hawking (m. 1965–1995)

**Children:** Lucy Hawking, Robert Hawking, Timothy Hawking

**Quotes:-**

"Intelligence is the ability to adapt to change"

"The greatest enemy of knowledge is not ignorance, it is the illusion of knowledge"

"I have noticed even people who claim everything is predestined, and that we can do nothing to change it, look before they cross the road"

## I was a student of Stephen Hawking's – here's what he taught me

Marika Taylor ~ Professor in Theoretical Physics, University of Southampton

Like many students of my generation, Stephen Hawking had already had enormous influence on me long before we ever met. When I was hesitating about my A-level choices, it was his book A Brief History of Time that convinced me to continue with physical sciences. In 1994, Hawking and mathemati-

cal physicist Roger Penrose gave a series of inspiring lectures about cosmology in Cambridge. As a direct result, I chose courses on black holes and relativity for my fourth year of study at the University of Cambridge. I first saw Hawking when I was an undergraduate. At that time he was living in an apartment building just behind my student house. He was already so famous that friends would come to my room just to watch him leaving and entering his apartment. But as an undergraduate I never tried to talk with him, feeling much too junior and intimidated.

After I finished my fourth year, I was invited in to talk to Hawking, who was already using a speech synthesizer, about options for my PhD. I was quite nervous when I first met him, but he jumped straight into physics and soon we were discussing black holes. I became a student at the time of the "Second String Theory Revolution" in theoretical physics. Hawking had not worked actively in string theory, but he was very keen to understand the new ideas.

Following that meeting, he sent me off to read all the papers that Edward Witten, a famous string theorist, had written that year. My task was to come back and summarise them for him – the student teaching the master. It's difficult to describe how hard this task actually was: Hawking expected me to jump straight to the frontier of string theory as a starting graduate student. He also chose the title for my PhD thesis: "Problems in M-theory", which I worked on from 1995 to 1998.

I can only hope that my explanations of string theory were helpful. Hawking went back and forth on his views on M-theory, but eventually ended up thinking that it may be our best bet for a theory of everything. No hand-holding

PhD students were enormously important to Hawking. In the early phase of his illness, his students helped take care of him. By the time I became his student he needed round-the-clock nursing. At this point, his students were no longer involved in his physical care, but remained essential to his research. Theoretical physics begins with ideas and concepts, but these then evolve into explicit detailed calculations. Hawking had a remarkable ability to do complex calculations in his head, but he still relied on collaborators to develop and complete his research projects.

Theoretical physicists typically give early PhD students "safe" research projects, and guide them through the calculations required. As the students develop, the projects become more ambitious and risky and students are expected to work independently.

However, PhD students working with Hawking did not have the luxury of this gentle introduction – he needed us to work on his own high-risk, high-gain projects.

Hawking's communication via his speech synthesizer was necessarily concise and he simply could not provide detailed guidance about calculations, making it extremely challenging to work with him. But it was also stimulating, forcing students to be creative and independent. He did give praise when he thought it was due. He once sent me away with a very hard problem – finding exact rotating black hole solutions of Einstein's equations with a cosmological constant – and was stunned when I came back a few days later with the solution. I can't even remember exactly what he said but I will never forget his enormous smile.

Hawking was a determined and stubborn person. On many occasions he got through serious medical issues with sheer determination. This same determination could make him very difficult to work. But it could also push research projects forward: Hawking would refuse to give up on seemingly unsolvable problems.

In fact, never giving up is the main thing Hawking has taught me – to keep attacking problems from different directions, to reach for the hardest problems and find a way to solve them. It's immensely important as a scientist, but also in other aspects of life. Pithy one-liners

Hawking was devoted to his family. His eyes would light up when one of his children came to visit or when he proudly showed us pictures of his first grandchild. In many respects, Hawking treated his PhD students and collaborators as a second family. However busy he was, he always made time for us, often making dignitaries wait outside his office while he talked physics with a student. He would eat lunch with us several times per week, and funded a weekly lunch for the wider group to bring everyone together.

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You can e-mail, fax or simply drop your ☺WD or ☹NSWD into our office:- 12 Clift Street, Branxton or Fax: 4938 3301 or E-mail: [thenews@hotmail.net.au](mailto:thenews@hotmail.net.au)  
*All contributions welcome*

and

NOT SO

**TO** the lovely lady who came around to the North Rothbury Rural Fire Service shed in Rothbury Street & made a substantial donation ~ thank you Marion. It has been a good week as Karen Chandler also donated some 'welfare' for our trucks. Many thanks to you both; The NRRFS

**A BIG** thank you to all those volunteer 'firies' who were on standby last Sunday in the 'big hot'. As they said bush fires are more likely to spread and cause damage on days when the weather is very hot, dry and windy with last Sunday being a classic example. This was written last Sunday and when I called into the North Rothbury station all hands were out in their truck doing a patrol; a very proactive procedure. Thank you all (Ed.).

I would gently remind the lady who pulled a hard face at the young mother who proudly brought her rather active baby son to church last week to remember the words .... "suffer the little children to come unto me".

To Cessnock City Council who put me on hold when I called last week to report rubbish and a dead kangaroo on Wine Country Drive. After three minutes on-hold on a mobile phone waiting to be put through I conceded defeat. The rubbish and dead roo were still there the next day. What about a toll free number for council or at least a council where customer service is part of everyone's job(?)

## Classified's

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

<p><b>Computer Tuition:</b> From basics to highly skilled &amp; learn all about ebay. P: 0429 381 908</p> <p><b>Computer Services:</b> Repairs, Sales &amp; Service. Phone repairs. Comtronics P: 4991 1128</p> <p><b>For Rent:</b> Branxton RSL Hall, air conditioned. Short or long term. P: 0429 438 460</p> <p><b>For Sale:</b> 1993 Ford Laser. No rego. Good for spare parts \$100 Phone Neil 0422 874 634</p> <p><b>For Sale:</b> Palomo town gas heater as new \$400.00. 0407 383026</p> <p><b>Fitness Classes: 'Core &amp; 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</b></p> <p><b>For Sale:</b> Free range eggs. \$4/doz Greta 0412 976 809</p> <p><b>Microchipping:</b> Cats and Dogs, all sizes and breeds, will come to you. \$20 per animal, please call Angela on 0431649947.</p> <p><b>Mobile Travel Agent :</b> 20 yrs experience. Will come to you for expert holiday planning. Obligation free appointments. P: 1300 365 68 (ext 595) M: 0404 831 867 W: <a href="http://www.mtatravel.com.au/stenton">www.mtatravel.com.au/stenton</a> E: <a href="mailto:stenton@mtatravel.com.au">stenton@mtatravel.com.au</a></p> <p><b>Riding Lessons:</b> agjstment, horses trained. <a href="http://www.byalee.net">www.byalee.net</a> 0407 453 494</p> <p><b>Share accommodation:</b> Close to transport &amp; shops, quiet street Branxton; off street parking. \$150p/w includes power &amp; water P: 0423 288 067</p> <p><b>Share House:</b> Fully furnished, double bedroom, Built-ins, ceiling fan, Air Con, very quiet. \$165/week. P: 0413 896 866</p> <p><b>Wanted:</b> high quality mechanical wrist watches &amp; clocks. Keen collector. Willing to pay good prices. Prefer Rolex, Omega, Oris &amp; Tag. P: 0414 757 826</p> <p><b>Wanted:</b> all kinds of Honda mini bikes qa50 z50a z50j1 z50jz ct70 st70 &amp; atc70. Contact Drew 0435814841</p> <p><b>Work Wanted:</b> HAVE UTE WILL CARRY. Need something moved? Phone Phil on 0447 381989</p> <p><b>Work Wanted:</b> Need an extra hand? I do all maintenance, labouring, construction, asbestos &amp; have working with children</p>	<p>licence. P (Pat) 0414 278 292</p> <p><b>Work Wanted:</b> Lawn Mowing; best rates – large or small area. P: 0459 123 397</p> <p><b>Work Wanted:</b> Lawns mowed, rubbish removal &amp; slashing. Also 'Bobcat' work, trenching &amp; post hole boring &amp; general maintenance &amp; handyman work. Phone Steve on 4938 3601</p> <p><b>Work Wanted:</b> HORSE CLIPPING - PERFORMANCE READY. Hunter Valley &amp; Central Coast. Phone Caron 0416 128 701</p> <p><b>Work Wanted:</b> Lawns properties, mowing, trimming, removals, maintenance. Paul 0478103814 or 49987567</p> <p><b>Work Wanted:</b> Sick of cleaning, cooking dinner, washing. Call me! Taking bookings now. Professional and reliable service. Sue 0497257081</p> <p><b>Work Wanted:</b> Rural Fencing (TW &amp; A Hollingshed) P: 4998 1583 or Trevor on 0429 320 787 for quotes.</p> <p><b>Work Wanted:</b> experienced baby sitter looking for work. Very reliable P: 0458 606 804</p> <p><b>Work Wanted:</b> Lawn &amp; Garden Maintenance, P: 4938 3153</p> <p><b>Work Wanted:</b> Piano teacher available to give lessons P: Phil Aughey on 0447 381 989</p> <p><b>Work Wanted:</b> Contract stock work with horses &amp; dogs. Design &amp; building wooden stock yards – rural fencing P Shaun: 0416 226 538</p> <p>GO TO FOR FURTHER DETAILS .....</p> <p><a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/">https://www.facebook.com/groups/</a></p> <p><b>For Sale:</b> 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</p>
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### The "For your Diary" section of The News is a FREE community service.

<p><b>Dates for your diary &gt;</b></p> <p>23/03-03/04 SYDNEY ROYAL EASTER SHOW  <b>THUR 29/03</b> ~ Branxton Public School Easter Hat Parade  <b>FRI 30/03</b> ~ Good Friday  <b>SAT 31/03</b> ~ Easter Saturday  <b>SUN 01/04</b> ~ Easter Sunday  <b>MON 02/04</b> ~ Easter Monday  <b>TUE 3 April</b> ~ Branxton Lions Club monthly meeting 4pm Branxton Golf Club  <b>TUES 10/04</b> ~ B/G CWA Mtg. 9.30am, Old St Brigids School Staff Room, Station St, Branxton  <b>WED 11/04</b> ~ Branxton Public School—School photos  <b>Fri Apl 13</b> ~ Last day of Term 1  <b>TUES 08/05</b> ~ B/G CWA Mtg. 9.30am, Old St Brigids School Staff Room, Station St, Branxton  <b>TUES 15/05</b> ~ AUSTRALIA'S BIGGEST CANCER MORNING TEA – Venue etc TBC  <b>TUES 12/06</b> ~ B/G CWA Mtg. 9.30am, Old St Brigids School Staff Room, Station St., Branxton  <b>TUES 03/07</b> ~ B/G CWA ALL-IN-ONE DAY (Birthday, Handicraft, International, Ag/Env). Further Details TBA in 2018.  <b>TUES 14/08</b> ~ B/G CWA Mtg. 9.30am, Old St Brigids School Staff Room, Station St, Branxton  <b>TUES 11/09</b> ~ B/G CWA Mtg. 9.30am, Old St Brigids School Staff Room, Station St, Branxton  <b>TUES 09/10</b> ~ B/G CWA Mtg. 9.30am, Old St Brigids School Staff Room, Station St, Branxton  <b>TUES 13/11</b> ~ B/G CWA Mtg. 9.30am, Old St Brigids School</p>	<p><b>Dates for your diary &gt;</b></p> <p>Staff Room, Station St, Branxton  <b>TUES 11/12</b> ~ B/G CWA Mtg. 9.30am, Old St Brigids School Staff Room, Station St, Branxton  <b>New concert dates to add to your calendar</b>  <b>OPERA IN THE VINEYARDS</b> at Hope Estate, 6th October 2018  <b>JAZZ IN THE VINES</b> at Hope Estate, 24th November 2018  <b>SHANIA TWAIN 'Now Tour'</b> at Hope Estate, 8th December 2018  <b>Other dates to remember</b>          10th Mar - A DAY ON THE GREEN, James Blunt          10th Mar - HOT DUB WINE MACHINE          24th Mar - CROSSROADS COUNTRY IN THE VINES          21st &amp; 22nd Sept - WOLLUMBI MUSIC FESTIVAL          6th Oct - OPERA IN THE VINEYARDS          24th Nov - JAZZ IN THE VINES          8th Dec - SHANIA TWAIN 'NOW TOUR'</p>
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**BRANXTON & VINE-YARDS REAL ESTATE**

12 Clift Street  
**BRANXTON NSW 2335**  
**P: 4938 3300**





## Kirkton Public School News



Taylor represented our school at Horse Sports recently at Blandford PS. He had a great day! Taylor won the 10 years boy rider, the 10 years boy pony club mount and received three 4th place ribbons in other events. At the end of the day, Taylor was presented with the 10 years boy rider encouragement award. Wow!



## Branxton Public School

Our PBL Assembly in Week 10 will be a little different. Whilst we really enjoy celebrating the achievements of our students and seeing them smiling happily as they receive their awards, we have decided to trial two PBL Award Assemblies in Week 10 (Friday 6th April). We will have a K-2 Assembly starting at 9:20am and that will be followed by a 3-6 Assembly starting around 9:50am. Parents are welcome to attend one or both of these assemblies. We will need to be flexible with the starting time for the Primary Assembly and we appreciate your cooperation with this.

Students and staff enjoyed the Circus Challenge show last week. Some students and staff were invited to perform some of the tricks with amazing results. Check out the videos on our Facebook site to see some of our talented students as well as Mr Brecard and Mr Tattis showing their moves. All students participated in learning to juggle silks as a finale.

We helped to Clean Up Australia by cleaning our school with the help of Mrs Heinzl and helpers from McDonalds. They provided bags to collect our rubbish and then presented the school with a cricket helmet and netballs to assist in our sporting programs. Thank you.

The garden in front of the Kindergarten rooms will be receiving a makeover very soon. Mr Cousins has already started preparing the area and we have had generous donations from PRD Nationwide Real Estate and McDonalds to make it a very special place for our students to enjoy. Rutherford THS teachers and students will also be involved in creating a colourful and inviting area.

PRD Nationwide Real Estate also sponsored a colouring competition with gift card prizes to the winners. Well done students and thank you PRD Nationwide.

Amy from Variety has been visiting our school to present a program called Just Like You to all students from Year 1 to Year 6. The program is designed to educate school students on the acceptance and inclusion



Young Leaders Day



PRD Colouring winners

of people living with a disability. The program helps them learn that people with disability are the same as everyone else – they are “Just Like You”.

The boy’s cricket team played against Greta recently and although they gave their personal best, they lost the match. All players should be proud of themselves as they played a great match and for many players, this was their first serious game.

The student leadership team, along with Mrs Mungoven, attended a Leadership Day at Rutherford Technology High School and were a credit to our school. They shared their ideas and feedback with confidence and were respectful to the other school teams there. They were also able to work closely with RTHS School Captain Clare Faustini (formally of BPS) to formulate their ideas.

### Dates for the Calendar

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> March – P&C Annual General Meeting 6pm in the Library, followed by usual meeting

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> March – Easter Hat Parade

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> April – School Photos

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> April – last day of Term 1

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



Just like you



Mrs Heinzl with donated items



Circus Challenge

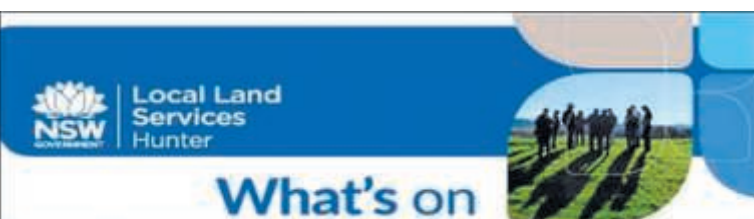


Plate spinning



Juggling





## BIOSECURITY TEAM HELPING LANDHOLDERS CONTROL PESTS IN DRY TIMES

Hunter Local Land Services biosecurity team is currently working around the clock to assist landholders to control pest species on their property.

While our staff recognise feeding and watering livestock is the critical priority across the region this summer, the ongoing dry conditions also pose an optimal time for controlling pest species.

Biosecurity team leader Luke Booth said pigs and wild dogs especially are moving further afield to find food and water supplies.

“The only upside to drought conditions like we are seeing in parts of the Hunter Valley is the increased effectiveness of pest animal control programs,” said Luke Booth.

“As water runs out in the rougher timbered country, pest animals are moving out into more open country.

“This means landholders can conduct baiting programs in smaller areas, but still have a lot of success, because many pests are particularly susceptible under these conditions.”

Landholders considering joining a control program are being urged to contact Hunter Local Land Services biosecurity team.

Our biosecurity officers can discuss tailored support for your property.

“We are rolling out programs across the Upper Hunter continuously at the moment, to meet the increased demand for pest control assistance,” said Mr Booth.

“With limited feed and water supplies available we want to help landholders make sure their stock are not competing with, or being impacted by pest species, such as feral pigs, wild dogs and foxes.”

Landholders are also being urged to report sightings to their local biosecurity officer, or via the FeralScan App or website on <https://www.feralscan.org.au/>. FeralScan is a citizen surveillance program that helps map pest species activity and is a free resource for the community.

## HUNTER LLS SALUTES LOCAL RUBBISH WARRIORS

With Tangaroa Blue Foundation this week revealing the details of 10 million items littering our waterways and coast, Hunter Local Land Services wants to pay tribute to the volunteers committed to cleaning up our region.

4381 volunteers and partners from the Hunter region have taken part in Tangaroa Blue Foundation’s Australian first study revealing the types of rubbish in our waterways and coasts.

The volunteers worked with community groups and partner organisations across the country to collect and record more than 10 million plastic fragments, cigarette butts and plastic lids & bottle caps from local waterways. “Hunter volunteers contributed essential data to this Australian first study into the origin of rubbish in our oceans and waterways,” said Brian Hughes, Hunter Local Land Services Estuary and Marine Officer.

“More than 33 kilometres of recreational fishing line was collected in our region alone – that’s an alarming statistic for those that use and love our waterways and ocean.”

“Hunter volunteers also found more than 27,000 cigarette butts, and more than 16,000 beer cans and alcohol bottles, which is proof some people still aren’t considering the environmental consequences of their littering seriously.”

The study added 10 million items of rubbish to the Australian Marine Debris Initiative (AMDI) Database in a bid to help save our oceans from plastic and debris.

“By understanding where this rubbish is coming from we can work to stop it at the source before it enters the environment,” said Brian Hughes from Hunter Local Land Services.

“The removal and prevention of marine debris remains one of the major environmental issues worldwide, and together, we are making significant headway.

“By identifying the type of rubbish, we have been able to support new initiatives like the NSW container deposit scheme, as well as local projects like the Browns Creek Source Reduction project in Taree.” said Mr Hughes.

## Australian Thoroughbred

Brian Russell Bloodstock Media Service

**Neville Begg, the breeder and owner, under Neville Begg and Partners Syndicate (Mgrs: NC and Mrs YJ Begg), of his son Grahame Begg’s trained Written By, the winner under skilled piloting from the barrier 18 of jockey Jordan Childs of the 2018 edition of the \$1.5million Blue Diamond (1200m, Caulfield), Melbourne’s premier juvenile race, has been engaged in racing for at least 73 years and is one**

**of Australia’s most respected horsemen.**

Inducted into Australia’s Thoroughbred Hall of Fame in 2016, the now 87-years old Neville Begg started his racing life in 1945 when he became a stable boy with iconic Randwick trainer Maurice McCarten. Neville went on to be McCarten’s stable foreman for ten years, helping to condition the top performers Todman (in 1957 won the first Golden Slipper), Delta (won

Melbourne Cup, Cox Plate, Victoria Derby), Noholme (Cox Plate), Deep River (AJC Derby), Columnist (Caulfield Cup), Farnworth (AJC Champagne Stakes, second in the Slipper) and Wenona Girl (a Queen of racing, 27 wins), to mention a few.

Begg became a trainer at Randwick in his own right in 1967 and was quickly established as one of Australia’s best, preparing so many winners he was runner up in the Sydney Premiership to the legendary Tommy Smith nine times.

Ending his training career with a stint in Hong Kong, Begg is credited with

winners of 139 stakes races, 39 of them Group1 events. Included among his top performers were Australian Horse of the Year Emancipation (28 starts, 19 wins, 6 Group1), Divide and Rule (five lengths winner of the AJC Derby, also won Doomben Cup), Dark Eclipse (Golden Slipper), Dalmacia (Epsom), November Rain (VRC, AJC and QTC Oaks) and Heat of the Moment (Chipping Norton, George Ryder, Wakeful).

After Neville Begg left Randwick in 1990, his son Grahame took over the stables and met with early Group1 success. In his first ten years he won Group1 races with Eye of the Sky, Telesto, Fraternity, Bononova, Eye of the Sky, Whisked and Mahaya. He also won the Hong Kong International Bowl twice with Australian Monopolize and looked after Written By’s sire and dam.

Five years ago, Grahame took a break from training, but then returned under two

years ago, relocating to Pinecliff, a private training facility near Mount Eliza on the Mornington Peninsula in Victoria. It is here that he prepares Written By.

This colt, now a multi-million sire prospect, has raced three times and won brilliantly in each outing. He made his debut at Sandown on December 2, succeeded in a Blue Diamond Prelude at Caulfield on February 10 and then captured the Blue Diamond Stakes by 2.5 lengths – favourite..

A brother to a yearling colt, Written By is the best of the four winners, all her named foals, from Yau Chin, a mare Neville Begg purchased at the Scone Yearling Sale in 2007 for only \$3,000. She raced ten times for one win, a smart effort over 1200m at Newcastle, and four seconds, including three appearances in Sydney. At three, they were her first three outings and on each occasion she was very narrowly beaten.

Yau Chin is by the

## Saleyard report - cattle

### Singleton Report date 14/3/18

Numbers doubled with the bulk entering the younger categories. Quality was fair, however there were percentages of mixed breeds this week. Cows were mixed, with plainer pens along with prime conditioned heavy weights in the offering. Ample numbers of the prime younger cattle suitable for the butchers were also penned. The usual buying orders competed. Vealer steers to the restockers averaged firm for the lighter end to top at 366c/kg. The over 200kg pens averaged cheaper, however breed and quality did contribute as the better lines of Angus reached 356c/kg, which was marginally cheaper, week-on-week. The same weight heifer portion to the restockers averaged 4c cheaper at 289c, with the better pens topping at 312c/kg. Yearling steers to feed and restocker orders ranged from 240c to 290c/kg, again breed and quality contributed to most price variations. The yearling heifers sold at similar prices compared to recent markets, with the best to the restockers making up to 300c/kg. The prime conditioned high yielding younger cattle to the butchers reached 360c/kg. Cows sold to solid competition, with the plainer pens to the processors maintaining firm prices, from 138c to 200c/kg. The better conditioned heavy weights increased 12c, making from 210c to 225c/kg.

### Score Report date 13/3/18

Consignments increased as the quality improved to be fair to good. There was a better run of prime cows suitable for the processors, with pens of plain cows also offered. Young cattle were well supplied and the usual buyers competed. The heavier calves weighing over 80kg decreased 5c, to make from 258c to 416c/kg. The over 200kg vealer steers returned to the paddock 7c easier from 280c to 344c/kg. The same weight heifer portion for extra finish eased 11c to make from 280c to 308c/kg. The yearling steers to feed and restocker orders remained firm from 298c to 305c, this was attained for the medium weights, with the lighter end topping at 332c/kg. The yearling heifers also maintained firm prices, with breed and quality in places contributing to some price variations. The prime conditioned younger cattle to the butchers topped at 330c/kg. Grown steers to lot feeders sold to solid competition and trended dearer, with prices from 230c to 291c/kg, depending on age. The plainer cows to the processors remained firm from 140c to 188c, with those to the restockers improving up to 20c to reach 216c/kg. The prime heavy weight cows gained 12c from 210c to 224c/kg. The best heavy weight bull topped at 245c/kg.

### TRLX Tamworth Report date 12/3/18

With an improvement in the market the previous week along with little or no rain forecast there was an increase of over 1,000 head. Young cattle were well supplied along with a very large penning of cows. Again there were some very good quality weaners and yearlings suitable to restock and feedlot orders, while limited numbers were purchased by the trade. There was a reduced supply of good quality heavy grown steers, while there was a great deal of variation in both condition and weight in the cows. All the usual buyers were in attendance. Despite the increased supply the market held up well for good quality cattle in most categories with demand high from all sectors. Once again northern feedlotters and processors were keen to procure numbers. Heavy weaner steers over 280kg remained firm with little but quality related price change. The heifer portion sold on a firm to slightly dearer market trend with some of the heavier weights showing the best improvement. Medium and heavy yearling feeder steers saw a firm to dearer market trend with odd sales in the heavy weights up to 10c/kg dearer. There was little change in the market for yearling heifers to restock and feed. Heavy trade heifers sold to a dearer trend, up to 12c/kg. The quality of the heavy grown steers on offer was a major factor in the cheaper prices recorded for those over 500kg to process, they were down as much as 20c/kg. The heavy feeder steers saw a firm to dearer market trend. The large penning of cows saw the well finished heavy weights remain firm, while the plainer condition light and medium weights sold to a cheaper trend. The numbers of well finished cows relieved pressure on some processors having to purchase plainer condition cows to fulfil number requirements.

## Detailed saleyard report



### ‘Written By’ won The Pago Pago Stakes last Saturday



A great partnership: Grahame Begg, the trainer of the Blue Diamond winner Written By and his father Neville Begg, the colt’s breeder/owner.

Coolmore shuttled Barathea (Ire) sire Tobougg (Ire), a champion European 2YO, and from Tilla’s Daughter, a minor winner by Umatilla and out of Dilemma, an unraced mare by Golden Slipper winner Rory’s Jester.

The next dam, Moral, was a Godswalk (USA) half-sister to four stakes winners bred under Lionel Israel’s stewardship at Segenhoe Stud, now Vinery, Scone. One of them was Pins, a Snippets colt who won the Australian Guineas and who is a first class sire in New Zealand.

The family brought much success to Segenhoe, including their dam, No

Finer, being a sister by Kaoru Star to stakes winners Marceau, Zasu and Joy Love. They were from Humour, an unraced Pirate King (GB) mare who was named Australian Broodmare of the Year.

Fortuitously for the Begg, the colt which was to become Written By failed to make a reserve of \$200,000 when offered at the 2017 Inglis Melbourne Premier Yearling Sale. Reared on Peter Stewart and Brigid Woodford-Smith’s prominent Huntworth Stud near Cootamundra NSW, he was submitted at the sale through Basinghall Farm, Nagambie, Victoria.



# Aberglasslyn travel agent cruises to national glory



could ever need with a program offering the opportunity to explore a new destination every single day. It's just perfect for the whole family. "And the best thing about a cruise holiday - you only ever have to unpack your bags just once."

☰ Sarah is pictured receiving her Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) Australasia's 'Home-Based/Mobile Agent of the year' award from Director of Sales - Australia & New Zealand for Holland America Line & Seabourn, Tony Archbold.

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Aberglasslyn mother of two and long-time travel agent, Sarah Fenton has beaten off strong opposition to take out one of Australia's most prestigious travel industry accolades – the Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) Australasia's 'Home-Based/Mobile Agent of the year' award. Sarah, who juggles a busy life as a full-time mum while at the same time running her own business as an MTA – Mobile Travel Agents Member, received the award at a glittering function held in The Star Sydney last week. CLIA is the world's largest cruise organisation, composed of more than 60 of the world's major cruise lines, and serves as a non-governmental consultative body to the International Maritime Organization (IMO), an agency of the United Nations. Sarah's award is viewed as one of the most esteemed on the Australian travel industry scene and she joins a small but very select group of people who have won the award before her.

Now recognised as a major player on the national cruise scene, Sarah is also well known on the local cruise scene. And when she's not busy looking after her clients, she can be seen acting as a guide for the hundreds of cruise passengers calling into Port of Newcastle every year who take advantage of the opportunity to explore the Hunter Region on organised shore excursions while in town. While she has more than 20 years travel experience under her belt, Sarah joined MTA in 2016, lured by the national travel agency group's ability to allow its Members to manage busy family lives while still being able to hold down a career based in their own homes, an option too good to refuse for this busy Mum. And her tip for the perfect holiday – a cruise of course. "I love a cruise holiday," she says. "You can't beat a floating resort offering all the facilities and activities you

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# SPORTS RESULTS GOLF

## Results 15-3-18 Stableford Pairs Aggregate

1st S Condran/B Ward 62 pts  
 2nd P Tracey/E Munzenberger 60 pts  
 3rd A Hackett/G Gazzard 59 pts (c/b)  
 4th B Hain/R Yandle 59 pts (c/b)  
 5th R Moylan/T Martin 59 pts  
 NTPs Ladies M Hunt  
 Gents G Scobie

Members draw \_ Not won  
 Autumn seems to have arrived, bringing with it a warm day with, scattered cloud and a light breeze, with the threat of much higher temperatures. Luckily our group of happy golfers had finished the round before the increased heat arrived. A tightly contested event, saw congratulations go to Steve Condran and Barney Ward on winning the event. A well done to all placegetters.  
*LN Bootes, Hon Sec*

**Branxton Lady Golfers**  
**21 Feb ~ 18 hole stableford**  
 Winner with 38 points Carol Miller  
 Runner up with 34 points Kasey Heuston  
 NTP Kerrie O'Connell  
**28 Feb ~ 18 hole stableford**  
 Winner with 30 points Ruth McCarthy

Runner up with 29 points Caren Caldwell  
 NTP Caren Caldwell  
**7th March ~ Monthly medal round**  
 Winner with 71 nett Trish McMillan  
 Runner up with 75 nett Caren Caldwell  
 Putts  
 27 Caren Caldwell  
 28 Trish McMillan

## Branxton Golf Club Saturday, 10 March 2018 SATURDAY COMP STABLEFORD

Field: 50  
 Grades A Lee Heuston 39  
 Grades A Troy Mc Caw 38  
 Grades A Ian Barnes 37  
 Grades B David Kinch 38  
 Grades B Tony Seamer 37  
 Grades B John Martin 35  
 Grades C Michael Carling 39  
 Grades C Mick Martin 37  
 Grades C Darren Mathers 37  
 NTP 2/11 A 2nd Jacob Stewart 165cm  
 NTP 4 A 4th Troy Mc Caw 102cm  
 NTP 9/18 A 9th William Kennedy 308cm  
 NTP 13 Martin 470cm  
 Balls 15 Distributed down to score: 33  
 Lee Heuston continues to impress, winning Saturday's A Grade Stableford Competition with an impressive 39 pts, just

ahead of Troy McCaw with a pleasing 38 pts and Ian Barnes, returning to form with his 37 pts. David Kinch, enjoying a little time back in B Grade, showed some improved form in winning with his 38 pts, just ahead of Tony Seamer with 37 pts and John Martin's 35 pts. Michael Carling won C Grade with the Day's equal best stableford score of 39 pts, with Mick Martin and Darren Mathers sharing the spoils with their 37 pts. The shot of the day belonged to Troy McCaw with his 102 cms shot at the 4th hole. 33 pts was needed to win a ball. On Sunday, the Hunter River District Golf Association Pennants continued. The A Grade team defeated Muswellbrook 3-2 at Cessnock to continue their impressive efforts this year.

The undefeated B Grade team won again against Hunter Valley at Muswellbrook, the C Grade team won an important game 2-1 against fellow potential finalists Cessnock at Singleton, which now puts them into 2nd spot with one game to go. The Seniors finally had another win, defeating Hunter Valley 3-0 at Maitland.

## Use it or Lose It

"If you want to retire happy, great health is important. The foundation for all happiness lies in health. Physical, mental, or spiritual health - you must use it or lose it!"  
 - Ernie J Zelinski

"Use it or Lose It". How many times have you heard that popular saying? But as we get older applying this cliché to our health and fitness seems to get harder and harder. Is this an inevitable part of the ageing process? Or is it all in our head and "it gets harder as you get older" is just a saying to make us feel better for doing less than we used to? As I have gotten older (I'll be forty nine this year) I have pondered this question a lot. My weight (and my fitness) have gone up and down over the years, and each time I have gotten fed up enough to do something about it, it just seems harder, and it takes a little longer to see results. Perhaps it is because as I get older I forget how hard it was last time. Or maybe it is because as we get older we have so many more responsibilities and activities vying for our attention? Or maybe it really IS harder. Just like younger adults, there is a wide range of health and fitness in people over 40 years of age. You may have been exercising regularly for many years and because of this your health may be excellent. Other people the same age may have quite low levels of fitness. Either way, the effects on health which result from a low level of mobility or fitness in the over 40's are very similar to the effects on other (younger) age groups. These include postural challenges brought on by tight muscles, poor balance from a lack of core stability, heart problems or high blood pressure, and diabetes.

As with all age groups, one of the easiest ways to address or prevent these health conditions is with regular exercise, including cardio exercise (which raises your heart rate) and resistance training (for example strength exercises using light weights). But even if you have been exercising your whole life, as you get older there are definite physical changes in your body which increase the challenge of maintaining your fitness.

Changes to your lungs and the muscles around your lungs means it takes more effort to breathe in and out, and your respiration rate increases as you get older, affecting the amount of air which moves in and out of your lungs when you exercise. This in turn affects the amount of oxygen available to go into your blood stream and to your muscles.

Another effect of getting older is a reduction in blood flow and along with it a decreased ability to dissipate heat via sweat as blood flow to your working muscles is reduced. Your metabolic rate also changes as muscle mass decreases so yes, you may be putting on body fat even if your diet hasn't changed!

These challenges are all in addition to the more commonly known health conditions such as osteoarthritis (where the cartilage in your joints breaks down), osteoporosis, and rheumatoid arthritis (inflammation of the joints). Your muscle tone also changes (affecting the stability of your joints), and reflexes and movement can become slower due to natural changes in your nervous system.

I can now hear you all asking "well, what's the point??" Aging is inevitable, so if a gradual deterioration in muscle tone, joint movement and flexibility is inevitable, why should I bother exercising?

The answer is that exercising regularly can help counteract the natural effects of ageing. Exercise can prevent physical setbacks, and improve your mental health as well. In fact, it can be argued that exercise becomes MORE important as you get older.

Keeping your muscles strong helps your joints,

Exercising your heart and lungs decreases your risk of cardio pulmonary disease, and

There are many studies which show that regular exercise can reduce your blood glucose levels and minimise your risk of diabetes.

Load bearing exercises and even some high impact exercise can help improve bone density which in turn lowers your risk of fractures.

Staying (or becoming) active as you get older can also be a great social outlet.

You are not imagining it when you think that exercising is getting harder as you get older, even if you have always been reasonably active. The most important thing to remember is to take into consideration the physical changes occurring in your body as you get older, and that you really do have to "use it or lose it".

More information is available on the Victorian government website <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/ageing-muscles-bones-and-joints>

### What else is happening at Louise Cairns Fit for Life?

There are less than 10 weeks now until the Ultra Trail Australia event in the Blue Mountains, I will be participating in the 50km event.

I have started a "Mums and Bubs" class on Tuesdays and Thursdays, parents with children are welcome to come along, and I specifically include pelvic floor exercises as well as core stability.

6am classes are continuing on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. Keep an eye out for my Easter special!

### About Louise

Louise Cairns is a Personal Trainer and Motivational Coach who has lived in Branxton for over 20 years. Louise runs her own Fitness and Coaching business, Louise Cairns Fit for Life. You can find out more at [www.louisecairns.com.au](http://www.louisecairns.com.au)



## PUBS PITCH IN

Maitland Greyhounds conducted at meeting on Thursday with the support of a few Hunter hotels, Commercial at Morpeth, Pedens at Cessnock, Neath, Kearsley and Tattersals at Greta. The opening event was the Country Hotels Maiden which was taken out by **SECRET OF OURS** for trainer Darren Sultana. The Tattersals Hotel Greta stakes was won by **BIG RED OPAL** with **BUNDAH** trained at Branxton by Susan Smith finishing 2nd. The main event on the program was the Country Hotels Challenge Final over 400m and was won by **FANTASTIC JETT** in the very slick time of 22.48s. Alan Syphers the trainer of **FANTASTIC JETT** travelled 250km from Curlewis for the final with his black dog by **GOODESY** landing his 3rd straight win after winning his maiden at Gunnedah and his heat at Maitland. Publican of the Tattersals Hotel Greta Mick Finch was on hand at the meeting with a few of his local drinkers Reg, Hodgley, The Principal and Elvis to make the presentations to the winning connections of the Country Hotels Maiden and Challenge. The boys had a good afternoon at the track.

"I can recommend an afternoon at Maitland Greyhounds to people of all ages, it's a lot of fun and the kids love watching their favourite colour rug go around," said Elvis. Maitland Greyhounds race every Thursday afternoon at the Showground.

## EASTER BUNNY ARRIVES EARLY

A few local GBOTA. members got their chocolates early this year with six landing winners in recent weeks. Stephen Keith kicked off the month with **LAGOON BONNIE** winning at The Gardens whilst Lindsay Davis with **AUDI KEY**, Chris Kedwell with **MR HONEYBADGER** and James Porter with **ROCKSTAR ROY** were also successful at The Gardens. Lindsay also picked up the chocolates at Wentworth Park with **ZINKEY** winning in consecutive weeks. The black bitch, by **KEYBOW**, took her record to 7 wins with prizemoney in excess of \$26,000.

Bradley Sabotic got a double with **ROSE OF MIDNIGHT** winning in consecutive meetings at Maitland whilst Graeme Barnett got the cash with **TOUCHE**. Greta trainer James Porter had a quiet start to the month with only a couple of winners, **BOWLS AND HOLES** at Richmond and **ROCKSTAR ROY** at The Gardens.

Last Saturday night at The Gardens saw a clash of three members from the GBOTA Greta branch in race 4 over the 515m. Graeme Barnett with **SAHALEE** in box 8, Chris Kedwell with **MAX VELLA** in box 6 and Bradley Sabotic with **MIDNIGHT ON FIRE** in box 4. **SAHALEE** started \$1.80 favourite and lead out of the first turn with **MAX VELLA** \$6.50 hot on its tail and **MIDNIGHT ON FIRE** \$19.00 running sixth. Across the finish line it was **8-6-4** with those members smart enough to box the trifecta picking up the chocolates.. Unfortunately, I wasn't one of them.

## GBOTA GRETA BRANCH

The next meeting will be held at the GRETA WORKERS CLUB on Sunday 8th April, 7pm. The meeting has been moved from the first Sunday because of Easter. Last month's meeting was well attended by members and a healthy number of visitors. New members and visitors are always warmly welcome. Members are reminded to hand their points to Garry Kedwell each month. Last month's leading greyhound was **BOWLS AND HOLES** for James Porter and leading broodbitch was Bradley Sabotic's **KEIRA'S CHARM** with her **BARCIA BALE** litter going great guns. SEE YA AT THE TRACK, OR THE BAR, MIDNITE



Photo above: one of the Major Sponsors Mick Finch (third from left) of Tatts Hotel Greta presents the Country Hotel Challenge winners trophy to Allan Syphers with his winning dog Fantastic Jett

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# BRANXTON GRETA VINEYARDS

## The News **SPORT**

### Greta Branxton Senior Cricket win two 2017-18 season titles

with Mark Bercini



Greta/Branxton Second Grade Premiers - Back Row L-R Ryan Eagles, Darren Thomson, Chris Redmond, Jesse Minchin, Brett Bridge, Pat Andrews. Front Row L-R Anthony Brunson, Dylan Lipscombe, Peter MacKenzie (c), Trent Fuller, Andrew Bercini, Mark Peace.

On Saturday 10th March the Cessnock District Cricket competition concluded, with Greta/Branxton winning premierships in second and fourth grade, with third grade unfortunately going down in the decider. Second grade broke a 24-year drought in winning their fourth ever title since the club entered the Cessnock competition in the 1988-89 season. They last tasted success in the 1993-94 season.

Finishing the regular season in fourth place, Greta/Branxton really gained some momentum at the back half of the season, then really firmed in the betting after knocking off minor premiers Bellbird in the semi-final the previous week. Their opponent for the decider played at Mulbring was third-placed Chelmsford Hotel who upset Supporters Club in the other semi-final. Skipper Peter MacKenzie

won the toss and elected to bat in good conditions, but the Blues found themselves in a spot of bother at 4-52 just after the 20 over drinks interval. Then the turning point of the match came, and it was like waking a sleeping giant as association leading run-scorer Brett Bridge strolled to the crease and blasted an unbeaten 89 which included six boundaries and four maximums, much to the delight of the healthy contingent of Blues

supporters that made the trek out to the foot of the watagan mountains. Greta/Branxton managed to bat out the mandatory forty overs to finish with a competitive 9-180. Andrew Bercini was next best with 12, with Dylan Lipscombe (11), Anthony Brunson (11), Pat Andrews (10) and MacKenzie (10) all making starts. The Chelmsford run chase started out fairly steadily courtesy of some tidy line and length bowling from Blues openers Darren Thomson and Mark Peace, and at the halfway drinks break the match still appeared to be in the balance with Chelly at 4-82. Then whatever was in the pure Branxton water at the interval seemed to work wonders, with Bercini ripping through the middle order to swing the ascendancy back in the Blues' favour. At 9-114 in the 30th over and with the crowd waiting in anticipation for the final moment, it was only fitting that Bercini, who had almost single handedly guided his side to victory in the semi-final, knocked over the final Chelmsford Hotel batsman for an emphatic 64-run victory. He finished with 4-17 off 6.4, with Thomson (3-21 off 8), Peace (1-29 off 6), Jesse Minchin (1-22 off 5) and Ryan Eagles (1-11 off 3) sharing the remaining wickets. John Williamson's



edited version "Greta/Branxton Blue" was sung loudly and proudly as the second grade champions walked off the field to thank their loyal supporters. It was a great relief for MacKenzie and vice-captain Trent Fuller who had failed in the 4-5 previous attempts to win the shield since 1993-94. Skipper MacKenzie later summed up the victory by saying "A week before Christmas I told my blokes we needed to win every game from here on in, and we did, job done! There is so much I can say, but what I will say it is a credit to the depth of our club and its administration that we are able to achieve what we did as a club, in all grades. On a personal note I was always going to give the captaincy away after this year, and to get that result will live with me as one of my best moments in my 40 years as a cricketer." Third grade unfortunately saved their worst batting performance of the year for the big day. Having disposed of opponents Laguna fairly comfortably in their previous two meetings this

season, Greta/Branxton were out of sorts, batting first at the picturesque Miller 1 venue to be skittled for just 57 although facing 30 overs. Skipper Sean Wright made 17, with opener Ben Lahey 15 the only other batsman to reach double figures. Laguna took their time achieving the target, reaching it in the 22nd over after losing just the two wickets. These belonged to Jason Varley (1-16 off 8) and Pat Nugent (1-8 off 2). Fourth grade also picked up their fourth association title, their third in the past six years in what has been a great era. Opponents and minor premiers Wine Country won the toss and decided to bat at Allandale Oval. This proved to be a blessing in disguise for Greta/Branxton, as the Blues' seamers ripped through the Wine Country line up to roll them for just 72 inside 29 overs. Sam Hines was the best of the Greta/Branxton attack with 4-16 off 4, and was well supported by Anthony Lawrence (3-23 off 10), Ben Ciba (2-18 off 9) and

Reece Fletcher (1-18 off 6) who all bowled outstandingly economical spells. Greta/Branxton cruised to victory in style, reaching the target in the 14th over after losing just the one wicket. After taking three catches behind the sticks earlier in the day, in-form Logan Millard capped a fine season and game with an unbeaten 35, assisted by Stewart Ison (26no) who was also there for the winning runs. Taking over the reins as skipper mid-season, Sam Dagg summed up the victory by saying "It was a great effort in the field by all players to set up an easy chase for the batters and it is great to see the young talent coming through at the club." The Club's presentation night will be held at the Royal Federal Hotel this coming Saturday night 24th March, commencing at 6:30pm. Photo above: Greta/Branxton Fourth Grade Premiers - Back Row L-R Anthony Lawrence, Stewart Ison, David Wright, Logan Millard, Ben Ciba, Sam Hines, Blake Shoulders. Front Row L-R Pat Smith, James Thomson, Sam Dagg (c), Cooper Wilton, Reece Fletcher.