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WEDNESDAY
19 February 2020

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STEVE'S RANT

Members Well Done say... Not So Well Done



School NEWS

Branxton IGA & Liquor "Community Chest" \$2012 to Branxton Greta Meals-on-Wheels

BRANXTON IGA has been very pleased to make a much appreciated donation to the Branxton Greta Meals-on-Wheels through its IGA Community Chest program.

Last week Chris Kedwell, manager of Branxton Greta Meals-on-Wheels accepted a cheque for \$2012.11 on behalf of Branxton Greta Meals-on-Wheels. "We are delighted to receive this donation & wish to thank the Branxton IGA for their support. The money will be put to very good use," said Chris. The Community Chest program operates 52 weeks a year in all IGA supermarkets in Australia, where a percentage of sales is given back to

the community when customers purchase a product bearing the IGA Community Chest logo. "These generous donations are possible because of the support from our customers. By shopping at our supermarket, our customers have helped the local community, and we thank them for assisting us in achieving this milestone," said Branxton IGA proprietor Lyn Unicomb. The IGA Community Chest Trust Fund has helped to support local communities for over 30 years. In 2019 they supported more than 1,600 local community groups, schools and sporting clubs as well as local and national charities. A total of \$3.5m of donations were



Photo Above (L-R): Manager Branxton IGA & Liquor Sue Mitchell, Branxton Greta Meals-on-Wheels Manager Christine Kedwell & proprietor of Branxton IGA & Liquor Lyn Unicomb

made, bringing total donations since inception of the fund to approximately \$85m. "Any time you purchase any IGA product, a percentage is automatically credited to our Community Chest account. The same applies to products bearing a Community Chest ticket. So every time you shop and purchase any of these items you are helping your community," said Lyn. "Branxton IGA prides itself on being a part of our community, and what better way to be a part of our community than by providing local organisations with much needed funds," said Lyn.

"The IGA Community Chest is an integral part of the philosophy and values on which IGA supermarkets operate and we are passionate about making a difference. The funds are raised in each store locally and then spent locally with beneficiaries decided by local store owners and customers throughout the year," said a spokesperson for IGA. IGA Community Chest and associated programs have raised over \$85 million for local community groups, not-for-profit organisations, charities and other worthy causes. This money has assisted over 7,000 worthwhile causes.

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USE OF COUNCIL'S RECREATION FACILITIES 2020 WINTER SEASON

Applications for the use of Council's recreation facilities by personal trainers, educational institutes, sporting organisations and community groups during the Winter Sporting Season (4 April 2020 to 13 September 2020) are now open. Applications should be submitted to Council by 21 February 2020. Application forms are available via Council's website or from Council's Administration Building, Vincent Street, Cessnock.

Permission must be obtained from Council before organised sporting activities can take place.

Enquiries should be made to Council's Recreation and Community Facilities Liaison Officer, Kate Hicks on 4993 4234

EOI 1920-68 SELECTION & ORGANISATION OF FOOD VENDORS FOR COUNCIL'S PUBLIC EVENTS

INVITATION: Council invites any person willing to fulfil the requirements of the following EOI to submit by the deadline.

OBTAIN DOCUMENTS AT: <https://www.vendorpanel.com.au/Publictenders.aspx>

TENDER: EOI-Q1920-68 - Selection & Organisation of Food Vendors for Council's Public Events.

DEADLINE TO SUBMIT: 5.00pm, Friday 6 March 2020.

PURPOSE OF CONTRACT: Cessnock Council is seeking Expressions of Interest (EOI's) from organisations or individuals to assist in selection and organisation of the Food Vendor component of Council's main outdoor events such as Spring Awakening, Carols, Australia Day

PUBLIC EXHIBITION FEES AND CHARGES OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

At the Ordinary Meeting of Cessnock City Council on 11 December 2019, Council resolved to place on Public Exhibition - Fees and Charges Open Space and Recreation.

The public exhibition period will be from 22 January 2020 to 21 February 2020. 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

Written submissions should be addressed to the General Manager and will be accepted up until 5.00pm 21 February 2020 via email recreation@cessnock.nsw.gov.au or post. Any enquiries should be directed to Council's Open Space & Community Facilities team on 4993 4162.

PUBLIC EXHIBITION DRAFT TRAIL STRATEGY

At the Ordinary Meeting of Cessnock City Council on 11 December 2019, Council resolved to place on Public Exhibition the Draft Trail Strategy.

The term 'Trail' for the purpose of the strategy includes sealed and unsealed pathways which are publicly accessible for recreation. The purpose of the Draft Trails Strategy is to provide a vision for our Trails network and to provide a consistent policy framework to guide development and management of Trails across the LGA.

The Public Exhibition period will commence on 28 January 2020 and will conclude on 28 February 2020. The documents can be viewed at the following locations:

- Council's Administration Building (Customer Relations Section)
- Cessnock Public Library
- Branxton Post Office
- Kurri Kurri Public Library
- Council's website at www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au

Written submissions should be addressed to the General Manager and will be accepted up until 5.00pm on 28 February 2020 via email recreation@cessnock.nsw.gov.au or post.

Any enquiries should be directed to Council's Principal Recreation and Community Facilities Planner, Kate Harris on 4993 4238.

SECTION 356 RATE SUBSIDY

Cessnock City Council may provide financial support of up to 50% in the form of a Rates Subsidy to Not-for-profit community organisations to support the provision of a range of activities or services.

In accordance with Council's Rates Subsidy Policy, to be eligible for a Rates Subsidy you must meet the principles and complete Council's Rate Subsidy application with all supporting documentation prior to 31 March 2020.

All applicants must contact Council's Team Leader Revenue on 4993 4150 prior to lodging an application.

Cessnock City Council drives home the Hunter Valley as a golfing destination!



Cessnock City Council has launched a new initiative reinforcing the Hunter Valley as a great golfing capital of Australia.

Council has partnered Cypress Lakes Golf and Country Club, Hunter Valley Golf Club (Crowne Plaza), The Vintage Golf Club, Kurri Golf Club and Branxton Golf Club to launch a booklet promoting the region's golfing assets.

Council's Acting Economic Development Manager, Rhiannon Stevens said it's fantastic to officially launch the brochure at the Hunter Valley Visitor Information Centre.

"We're showcasing the Hunter Valley to many of NSW's amateur and elite golfers, to bolster the region's reputation as a prime location to visit and enjoy our golf courses. Sydney golfers can travel just two hours and play some of the best courses in Australia."

"Both The Vintage and Cypress Lakes have been judged by Australian Golf Digest among the top 100 courses in Australia, and all of our courses are unique, picturesque, beautifully presented and have challenging aspects."

This builds on Council's partnership with Golf NSW, established last year, negotiating to host a NSW Open Golf Championship Regional Qualifying tournament over the next three years.

Tourism in the Hunter Valley continues to be an economic

powerhouse, which welcomes around 1.5 million visitors every year. Tourism is modelled to be the largest employing sector in Cessnock Local Government Area, with 15.2% of the local workforce.

Ms Stevens said there are more opportunities to build on the Hunter Valley's reputation as a destination for events and other diverse experiences such as golf, which complement food and wine.

Cypress Lakes Director of Sales and Marketing Paul Cutler agreed the Hunter Valley was unique, with several high class golf courses in a small area.

"The Hunter Valley is a fairly compressed destination in terms of size yet it holds so many top class golf courses. I've worked in many regions across the world involved in tourism, and golf is an integral part of what makes the Hunter Valley and NSW a top international tourism region."

Ms Stevens said there is a real need at the moment to reinvigorate visitation to the region and highlight how diverse the Hunter Valley's is in its offering of experiences.

"We want to reinforce the Hunter Valley is open for business, and we're looking forward to welcoming new and return visitors. Most of the region hasn't been impacted by fires but operators are still feeling the pinch. It's more important than ever we support businesses. We can all support recovery by going out for a special breakfast, teeing off at our golf clubs, and tasting some local wines this weekend," she said.

The brochure will be available through the Hunter Valley Visitor Information Centre, distributed through NSW accredited visitor centres, and at:

- Hunter Valley Golf Club
- Cypress Lakes Golf & Country Club
- The Vintage Golf Club
- Branxton Golf Club
- Kurri Golf Club

Residents and businesses are encouraged to share the brochure to help promote the region. The brochure can be downloaded online from www.huntervalleyvisitorcentre.com.au. For more information please contact Acting Economic Development Manager, Rhiannon Stevens on (02) 4993 4257.



NSW Bushfire Customer Care Service

Assistance & personal support – For people impacted by bushfire, the NSW Bushfire Customer Care

Service will help you navigate the support and financial assistance that's available across all levels of government. Service NSW is providing one-on-one support for people and businesses, available over the phone or in-person.

Call 13 77 88

Or visit www.service.nsw.gov.au for locations of Service NSW, and Mobile Service Centres. People are encouraged to register online at Register Find Reunite.



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The Drover Moves On

By Mary Scully

After more than 25 years of camp oven cooking, Clarry Jones from the Drovers Camp Restaurant has decided to call it a day.

Though Clarry still enjoyed the restaurant and entertaining the many busloads of visitors, he and Kathy felt the time had come to move on to other ventures. The restaurant will be refurbished over the next six months and will then be available for hire for private functions & the amphitheatre, under new management, will become the venue for Concerts by the Creek.

So, just a quick overview of the Drovers Camp's history for those of you who are new to the area.

When Clarry retired from the mining industry 30 years ago, he saw a unique opportunity when the old bath house at the Rothbury mine became redundant. Clarry and many friends spent five years dismantling and rebuilding it on an idyllic spot on his Elderslie Road property.

The site was perfect and the Drovers Camp Restaurant

was born. Those early years were hard work and Clarry and Kathy hosted successful charity auctions, weddings and other functions in the restaurant.

In 2007 he commissioned a local tradesman to craft a stunning country stage in the natural amphitheatre down by the creek.

There followed many and varied events.

There was bush poetry, sheep shearing demonstrations, young entertainers made their debuts and much more.

However after a few years of great shows, but with poor attendance, Clarry put it on the back burner.

The same people returned time and time again but getting new patrons remained problematic.

He blames his lack of media skills and promotional know how for the disappointing attendance.

As Clarry says ... "a concert sign on a bit of corrugated iron on the front gate didn't quite do it". But all of this is about to change since Clarry has

handed over the reins to



Clarry Jones, pictured above, from the Drovers Camp Restaurant has decided to call it a day

Lyn Bowtell and her partner Damon Morton. They are now the events managers for Concerts by the Creek.

Clarry is buoyed by the decision and has no doubt that, under their guidance, the venue will gain the success it deserves.

Lyn Bowtell needs no introduction to music fans. She is a wonderful lady with a magical voice and

the proud winner of nine golden guitars. Both Lyn and Damon are no strangers to The Drovers Camp having entertained at both the restaurant and the amphitheatre in the past. Damon is recognised as one of the best sound technicians in the industry and regularly tours with John Williamson, Beccy Cole and Troy Cassar-Daley. He also has experi-

ence at running music festivals, which augers well for *Concerts by the Creek*. It is anticipated that there will be three to four concerts annually. Concerts by the Creek will have its inaugural show on Sunday 26th April from 3pm to 8pm. Gates will open at 2pm. It promises to be a great event featuring Lyn Bowtell, Tanya Kernaghan, Judah



Kelly, Bob Corbett and Trinity Woodhouse. For further information regarding bookings etc check out: The Drovers Camp, Concerts by the Creek online.

The Branxton Lions Club will be running their much appreciated BBQ stall at the Concert by the Creek events.

This club is a great asset to our community, raising funds for worthwhile projects.

Clarry wishes to acknowledge Lukecass Events for organising Country at the Camp. The annual weekend-long event held in November has been

extremely successful since its inception in 2015.

Clarry has had to apply for an amended DA to cater for 600 patrons. There is also a DA pending for 900 patrons. So well done Luke and Cass. Your efforts are greatly appreciated. This event should also continue to grow.

Hopefully, Clarry will still occasionally make cameo appearances playing the didgeridoo, reciting poetry or performing his inimitable Johnny Cash renditions. *We wish Lyn and Damon every success with the new venture and Kathy and Clarry a happy semi-retirement.*



IMPORTANT NOTICE TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

AS of Monday 17th February 2020 Branxton IGA

will be selling a much wider range of Newspapers & Popular Magazines.



Branxton IGA has also made application to NSW Lotteries to have all their services (Lotto, Lottery tickets & other) transferred to Branxton IGA

Supermarket & Liquor.

This process could be lengthy & as at today's date we do not have confirmation of a starting date.

John, Lyn & staff are grateful to be able to provide his continued service to our community.



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STEVE'S RANT

Green grass!

What a sight for sore eyes. Green grass and green gardens for the first time in ten long months. Never mind that most of the green stuff is weeds. One of these, Purslane (*Portulaca Oleracea*) which is everywhere, is edible. ... try it in a salad or only by itself with olive oil, vinegar and pepper and salt to taste. The mystery is, from where did the seeds for this plant come?

I have never seen it in such profusion, and in the past have mown it into submission.

Many of the other weeds are not so friendly as purslane. Our old enemy *alligator weed* is back with a vengeance, and there are other weeds which produce very unpleasant prickly seeds, such as four-cornered jacks and bindy type prickly seeds that are not friendly to bare feet. Keep an eye out for these to avoid galloping infestations and try to destroy them before they set seeds.

So, why is green so pleasing to the eye? Two reasons; the first is cultural in that it signifies, new growth and excellent conditions for farm productivity and our gardens. The second reason is that the colour green is in the middle of the visible light spectrum, and is supposedly most restful to the eye.

We look forward to spring and the growing season, for the same reason. A lift in

our spirits and a glad to be alive feeling.

With that in mind we should be further tempted to give whatever we can afford in kind or cash for the families devastated by the summer fire season and the drought that still cripples many farmers.

Which brings me to the nub of this Rant; there is a perception that Governments can fix everything and "THEY OUGHTA DO IT." Well yes, to a degree, "THEY" can help but we should not wait around for it. Do not be put off by bureaucratic claptrap about not being permitted to do stuff on our properties. Just get on with it and tell the bureaucrats to sort it out later. That is what happens in an emergency.

The bean counters have years to sort their budgets out.

Farmers need to feed stock (if there are any left), and we need to house families now.

When hiring plant to clean up, put it to use clearing the bush away from buildings and fence lines.

As the Tee-shirts say 'JUST DO IT' and then help the neighbours.

In the matter of future preparedness for any one of the natural hazards we have always faced, drought, fires, floods, and wind-storms, not to mention earthquakes, as advised in this column before, different stages of protection are needed.

1. The means and

route for evacuation from the danger area

2. A runaway bag and stock of essential items, particularly freshwater.

3. Insurance against loss of property and loss of income, if it is affordable, and keeping an assessment of risk up to date.

Not something to put off to another day. Please do not take chances on the future for it is sure to surprise.

Cheers... Steve.



with **Mike Lowing**
I haven't left much space but two things I'd like to mention.

Firstly, the 19th Annual Coalfields Classic Motor Cycle Show is to be held on the 15th March at Tatt's Hotel Greta. Entries start at 9:30am & the day officially commences at 10am. Trophies will be awarded at 12:30pm.

Looking back I think I have been to most of the 18 previously held & each one a great day out. Plenty of catering for the hungry.

See you there. Secondly, I stumbled on a Japanese vocalist while wasting time browsing; Kyu Sakamoto singing "I look up when I walk" 1968. Sold over 13million copies! He has the most amazing voice. He's no longer having been killed in a plane crash in 1985.

Have a listen <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rbTsG9jrJsU>

Cheers, Mike



Rant

In Steve's last Rant about climate change (Feb 2 2020) he says clouds are the greatest source of heat retention.

He cites the example of clouds at night retaining the heat. But won't the same clouds during the day make things cooler than they would have been? Or has there been on average a greater proportion of clouds at night compared to day over the last 20 to 30 years, and if so why? I am reminded of the following from Joni Mitchell's song:

*Bows and flows of angel hair
And ice cream castles in the air
And feathered canyons everywhere
I've looked at clouds that way
But now they only block the sun
They rain and snow on everyone
So many things I would have done
but clouds got in my way
I've looked at clouds from both sides now
From up and down and still somehow
It's cloud illusions I recall
I really don't know clouds at all*
Allan Thomas Lochinvar
"renewables are cheaper"?
News from Japan this week

should put paid to the dreams of "cheap renewable energy" powering our future prosperity. Japan will build up to 22 new coal-fired plants in the next 5 years to ensure reliable and cheap electricity. They must have missed the "renewables are cheaper" memo. Why didn't they follow the advice of transition advocates and simply read a 200 page book, or "get politicians, unions, scientists and industry together to devise a plan"? Perhaps achieving a fundamental shift in how industry is powered is not so simple, and the renewable technology not quite as promising or cheap as people would like to believe?

Scott Hillard, New Lambton

King Coal
Much has been said about the so-called coal-fired power plants mooted for construction in Japan. There have long been reports that Japan may invest in high efficiency

low emission coal (HELE) but the decision has been fraught with concerns over fugitive emissions, the cost and time frame for construction, and the probability that such generators will be stranded assets by the time of commissioning. Last night I heard from Martijn Wilder, chair of The Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA), that the Japanese plants will be equally capable of using hydrogen as the energy source as well as coal. Mr Wilder said that this presents an opportunity for Australia to transition from coal to hydrogen exports.

There are several companies planning to establish hydrogen production facilities including AGL, which plans to produce hydrogen from coal generation, and Mike Cannon-Brookes' plan to build a 10-gigawatt solar farm near Tennant Creek along with 22 gigawatt hours of battery storage to produce hydrogen entirely

from renewable energy. Lovers of King Coal are claiming the Japanese plans as a victory of coal over renewable energy, but they don't acknowledge the real agenda: the global effort to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions. Japan will take all the hydrogen Australia can produce and this will boost our economy, GDP and employment as coal slowly diminishes as a tradeable commodity. There is no victory, though. There is just reality. Anthropogenic global warming is factual and our efforts can make a massive

difference to global warming.
Scott Bell-Ellercamp, Clarence Town
A risky option
The Morrison government needs to come clean on nuclear plans for Newcastle-Hunter region. I'm very concerned that the government has appointed longstanding climate action critic and nuclear advocate Keith Pitt to be the influential Resources and Water Minister. With the Newcastle-Hunter region often being touted as a potential location for a nuclear power plant, our community has a lot at

stake. My concerns are compounded by the fact that a Liberal-controlled parliamentary committee gave the green light to nuclear power only two months ago. Even if we managed to sort out all the profound issues with nuclear power, we're still left with the unavoidably reality that it's more expensive than renewables. It's time for the Morrison government to come clean with Australians about what its really got planned for nuclear energy and which communities are in its crosshairs.

Sharon Claydon, Federal Member for Newcastle

Submit a letter to the editor

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

or emailed to thenews@hotkey.net.au

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Cessnock City Council's committed to financial sustainability



Cessnock City Council is committed to continuous improvement and ensuring the best value for money for rate payers, with a number of projects progressing well under the Financial Sustainability Initiative.

The long running initiative is aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness

of Council's operations through identifying projects that focus on four key objectives; being to reduce costs, increase revenues, improve value-for-money and strengthen Council's governance framework. Since the start of the program in 2015 Council has made some huge savings. Council's Director of

Works and Infrastructure, Justin Fitzpatrick-Barr said this initiative has brought about significant changes in the way we operate, allowing Council to achieve more within existing budget allocations. "It's about continuously examining the way we do things and looking for potential opportunities to bring about positive change. The results have been outstanding." "Through this initiative Council reduced its annual NSW State Waste Levy liability at the Cessnock Waste Management Centre by \$2.4 million in the 2019 financial year. Council identified an opportunity to make operational changes that would increase recycling and divert material

from landfill. This lowered the amount of waste going into landfill, all of which attracts the Waste Levy."

"This project has been a huge success, not only has it lowered the NSW State Waste Levy cost, it has lowered the local impact on our environment and afforded valuable employment opportunities" Another highlight includes changing the way we manage our plant and fleet. After implementing findings following a review of an existing process Council has realised cost savings in the order of \$310,000 per annum in relation to the hiring of heavy plant and equipment. This project has also provided two new full time positions within Council. A number of projects are currently being progressed under this initiative and Council looks forward to sharing the results with the community. The implementation of these projects is currently being managed and monitored through Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.

New river and rainfall gauges providing Wollombi with vital data

The first data has been recorded via the new rainfall and river gauges installed in Wollombi Brook catchment. The gauges form part of the \$240,000 Wollombi Flood Warning System project funded under NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment's Floodplain Management Program.

The flood warning system when finalised will provide flood warning alerts to residents about minor, moderate and major flood risks at Wollombi.

While the warning system is not yet finalised, the data from the rainfall gauges is being recorded and is accessible online to keep residents informed about catchment rainfall and water levels at Laguna, Millfield and Wollombi. Singleton Council is jointly funding operation and maintenance costs for the benefit of residents at Bulga



and Broke. Cessnock City Council's Infrastructure Manager, Katrina Kerr said this is great progress and will enable residents to be more informed.

"This information enables residents to make decisions during a storm event to stay safe. Previously this information was not available and it's fantastic we can now provide accurate data to the community in the upper Wollombi Brook and Congwai Creek catchments." "Once the Flood Warning System is completed, the system will provide timely flood warnings for emergency services, the local community and visitors not only to Wollombi but provide more accurate flood warnings for communities in the lower reaches of the Brook in Bulga and Broke." Singleton Council's Director Planning and Infrastructure Services Group, Mark Ihlein said the system would be vital to

residents on the Singleton side of the border who were susceptible to flooding. "While conditions may be dry, we've seen only over the weekend how quickly torrential rain events can occur and the potential flood risks for residents," he said.

"Singleton has been very happy to work in partnership with our neighbours at Cessnock on this important project for the safety of our communities." This project is an action out of Council's Wollombi Valley Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan 2012. In 2016 Council received a NSW Floodplain Management grant for the design of a flood warning system for the benefit of Wollombi and upstream catchments. Singleton Council is jointly funding operation and maintenance costs.

Residents can track the levels via visiting www.bom.gov.au/nsw/flood/greatersydney.shtml

■ Photo above: The beautiful Wollombi Brook

Free mattress drop-off on again

Cessnock City Council is pleased to announce that the hugely popular free mattress drop-off day will take place on Saturday 22 February 2020 from 8am to 12pm. Cessnock residents can dispose of up to four mattresses or bases, completely free of charge

at the Council Works Depot carpark at 2082 Old Maitland Rd.

Cessnock City Mayor, Councillor Bob Pynsent said it's a popular initiative.

"We see many residents taking advantage of this day. It's good for our residents who get to rid themselves of an unwanted mattress and great for our environment where 75% of the materials will be recycled."

This event is for Cessnock City Council residents only and proof of address is required.

Mattress drop-offs must also be made using a vehicle as there will be no pedestrian access. If you're unable to attend the drop-off day, mattresses can be taken to the Cessnock Waste Management Centre for disposal for a fee of \$33.

For more information, please visit

www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/environment/waste/other_waste.



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REFLECTIONS

"This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!"

Peter, James and John are used to journeying with Jesus. He is their teacher, their friend and companion. He has called them to follow him and they have done so. Jesus often taught large crowds or his group of disciples. This journey is one for Peter, James, John and Jesus. This is an intimate group ... and the revelation that they witness on the mountaintop was definitely an intimate one. Jesus is transfigured, he becomes radiant in glory ... and is joined by Moses and Elijah.

Peter, not understanding completely the events that are unfolding says to Jesus 'Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three dwellings here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' [Matthew 17.4]

I wonder whether, even today, if we understand the things that took place on that mountaintop ... or in fact if we understand the things that take place in our own mountaintop experiences?

Often our experiences of being closest to God are described as mountaintop experiences. These are the times that we feel most secure in our relationship with God, where our lives in this world are touched by God and we can feel his presence with us. Sometimes at these times we listen well and at other times we do not understand the experiences, particularly when we are in the middle of the experience.

The next part of the experience for Peter, James and John is that they hear a voice from a cloud declaring "This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!" [Matthew 17.5]

When we hear these words from Jesus today, spoken to us in the gospel, are we able to follow God's command. These words were spoken to Peter, James and John on a mountaintop, but they are as relevant for us today as when they were spoken on the mountaintop. So, do we listen to Jesus when speaks to us? when he prompts us? Do we take the time to really listen, to understand what we hear and the way that Jesus calls us?

Jesus invites us into relationship with him so that we might know the fullness of God's love and God tells us to listen to Jesus. In this coming week, may we all be more aware of God speaking to us and may we be more willing to listen to Jesus. May the things we hear bless us and draw us closer to God's heart.

Every blessing, Reverend Nicole

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Members say



Bob Pynsent, Mayor Cessnock City Council

Our community is currently in the middle of celebrating Seniors Festival 2020. It has been a busy and wonderful time since the festival kicked off on 12 February with the Kiray Putjung Aboriginal Corporation Elders Afternoon Tea. I have also had the pleasure of attending the Cessnock Men's Shed and Garden Open Day and the Cessnock Seniors Choir's Travlin' Along, Singin' a Song performance at the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre. Enjoying these local events, with local people is one of the reasons I look forward to this Festival every year. Our residents are warm, willing to connect and we have some great organisations providing opportunity for connections between residents.

The Festival runs until the 26 February, if you are a senior and yet to be involved, view the program and make a plan to participate. You will meet some lovely people and may even discover a new activity to enjoy all year round. Some upcoming highlights include the Abermain Concert, happening tomorrow and the Wine Country Music Association Concert on 24 February at the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre. To find out more visit www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/SeniorsFestival.

As a Council we are continually looking for opportunities to improve and provide better value for our rate payers. Since 2015 Council has been progressing a number of projects under the Financial Sustainability Initiative. The initiative is aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of Council's operations through identifying projects that focus on four key objectives; being to reduce costs, increase revenues, improve value-for-money and strengthen Council's governance framework. There have been some fantastic outcomes under this initiative, including reducing Council's annual NSW State Waste Levy liability at the Cessnock Waste Management Centre by \$2.4 million in the 2019 financial year. This was achieved through implementing operational changes increasing recycling, consequently diverting material from landfill. As a result the amount of waste

going into landfill was lowered, all of such waste attracting the waste levy. It is vital this commitment to continuous improvement remains a key part of what we do here at Cessnock City Council. Staff should be proud of their work as they carry out these financial sustainability focused projects.

A reminder to everyone studying this year that the 2020 Mayoral Scholarship program is open. Students currently enrolled at TAFE or University are encouraged to apply now. The program offers students who are residents of the Cessnock Local Government Area the chance to apply for a range of scholarships, valued at \$2,500 each. Each scholarship is generously sponsored by a local club or business who is wanting to assist local people to reach their full potential.

Applications close on Monday 2 March 2020. For more information visit <http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/council/mayor/scholarships>.

Cheers, Bob



Sue Moore, Mayor Singleton Council

At a time when extreme weather conditions – with extreme consequences from droughts to fires to floods – has shifted the focus of global debate to the consequences of climate change, so too have water and energy resources come under greater scrutiny. We're learning hard lessons that turning on the tap is far from a basic human right, and there's more to the supply of energy than flicking a switch. What we're learning is that we need to be conscious of the way we use water and energy not only for the future of the planet, but to ensure supplies to support our way of life now.

The provision of energy is a particularly poignant topic for our region, as the literal powerhouse for the State of NSW encompassing coal and power generation. But the energy landscape as we know it in our own backyard is on the cusp of major change, not least with the planned closure of the Liddell power station and as a growing attraction for renewables, including plans for a 72-turbine wind farm straddling the Singleton, Muswellbrook and Upper Hunter local government areas.

Of course, there are a number of viewpoints and valid arguments for and against both prospects, and the reality is there will be impacts on our economy. But of most concern is the impact on people.

This week I've been in Victoria with my colleagues from the Liddell Closure Advisory Committee, meeting with community leaders in the Latrobe Valley about their experience of the closure of the Hazelwood Power Station in 2017. There are good news stories to come out of Latrobe, but the people we spoke to were also very honest about the impacts of the loss of hundreds of jobs and the work needed to shift not only the economy, but the region's sense of its own identity. It's a reflection that is also relevant for our community, particularly as we launch into the development of a new Community Strategic Plan and encourage people to envision what they want for the future of towns such as Branxton and Singleton, and the wider local government area.

Never before have the decisions we make in our own homes, and at the local government level, had such potential for global impact. And never before has an industry faced such a tidal wave of transformation and transition as the energy sector is confronting now. Whatever one's personal views on climate change, what is required is government action to support the communities that have supported the prosperity of millions of people for decades, as we face our own – and one of the world's – greatest challenges.

Cheers, Sue



Clr Melanie Dagg - Deputy Mayor & Cessnock City Councillor representing Ward 'C'

The best aspect of our community was on display at this year's Australia Day Awards at the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre - our people. It made me so proud to be part of a community that contributes so much to help and support others, something I feel was best displayed by all the nominees and the twenty recipients of the awards.

Like our 'Citizen of the Year' Melissa Gontier for her outstanding contribution to our community by supporting disadvantaged locals through

her passionate work with 'Hunter Hands of Hope'. Or our 'Senior Citizen of the Year' Ted Jackson and our 'Young Citizen of the Year' Chelsea Webb with her leadership through various youth initiatives. They, along with all nominees and recipients, are truly the best representation of so many others in our amazing community that continue to go above and beyond to make our home the great place it is to live, work and play.

Congratulations to each and every one of them, but most of all - thank you from one very grateful local.

What matters most to me, is what matters most to you - it's a principle that I am not just personally committed to, it's most importantly a vital fundamental when determining issues that can reshape our ever-growing city.

One of those matters is the draft 'Cessnock City Wide Local Infrastructure Plan' that was resolved to be put on public exhibition for 28 days to ensure you can have your say. In short, the draft plan was developed in consultation with Council's Development 'Contributions Steering Group' with representatives from key areas of infrastructure, open space, community facilities, cultural engagement and finance to ensure council is best facilitating infrastructure funds prudently, but most importantly to me, consistent with our communities' needs and expectations. You can have your say by following the links on Council's web page.

Back to school of course means our kids and students return for another year, but it also means the end of holidays and return of sanity for Mums and Dads. My poor attempts at humour aside, I can't help but reflect on the holiday season and the tragic circumstances that seemed to just continually evolve from bad to worse with every hourly news break. When I reflect, I can't help but think of our local families who were affected, but also the families and loved ones of the 33 people who tragically lost their lives, 25 of them here in NSW.

The fires saw 2,500 homes lost and thousands damaged - however, nearly 15,000 homes were saved and it is a credit to those who sacrificed their time and fought to save those homes. Almost 5.5 million hectares was burnt in New South Wales alone, and approximately one billion wildlife lost, with some species pushed dangerously close to extinction. More than 277,000 firefighters were deployed around the State at varying times to defend and protect communities, including our own local volunteers going wherever needed to help others during their time of crisis. I can't thank them enough.

If you have any council-related issues with which you require assistance, please call or email me and I will take the matter up on your behalf.

Cheers, Melanie



JOEL FITZGIBBON MP
Member for Hunter

HEARING YOUR VOICE

As you might imagine, my office receives an incredible amount of phone calls, email messages and letters each week. In addition to local traffic much of it comes from keyboard warriors across the nation pushing their pet policy agenda. Technology has made it easy to do so: they simply submit their name and postcode on the advocacy group's website and the group pressing the issue sends their letter to your local MP. They even write it for you.

The great bulk of correspondence to my office comes from local people with local problems and the most common issues are visas, telecommunications, taxation, family law, and Centrelink problems. But lately, the two issues which keep us busiest are aged care and NDIS issues. This is in part why I hold regular forums for seniors and NDIS. We are blessed to have many quality not-for-profit local aged care providers. But they can only be as good as they are resourced by government and clearly in recent years, that resourcing has not been sufficient. The Productivity Commission tells us that seniors looking for a place in an aged care facility are now waiting nine months or more for a place. That's a 300 per cent increase on the average 40-day wait in 2013. The situation is no better for those hoping to remain in their own home with the assistance of Government-funded Aged Care Packages. Tragically, in the past two years 30,000 elderly Australians died while waiting for a package. In November, the aged care royal commission's interim report described the aged care system in Australia as a "shocking tale of neglect". It called for urgent action including more home care packages to reduce the 120,000-long waiting list, an urgent response to the significant overreliance on chemical restraints in aged care homes, and the removal of young people with disability from aged care facilities.

There can be no higher responsibility for government than the proper care of our elderly and the disabled. The NDIS remains a wonderful project offering greater levels of support, flexibility and independence than did the old state-based system. Transitioning hundreds of thousands of people across from the old system while accommodating new entrants was always going to be difficult. But to become one of the main reasons for complaint to the offices of

MPs is a disappointing achievement for any government.

Experience tells me that for every person frustrated enough to contact my office, there are another three reluctant to do so. If you have a problem you believe I may be able to help with, please do not hesitate to make contact. We not only want to assist where we can, but your representations help me keep my finger on the pulse of the problems.

I welcome the NSW Government's back-down on its decision to refuse Veterans and War Widows access to its Regional Seniors Travel Card. Well done to Clayton Barr and others who have been pressing the case on behalf of those who have served and their families.

Cheers, Joel



MICHAEL JOHNSEN MP
Member for Upper Hunter

State Matters UPPER HUNTER CONTRIBUTES AS RETURN AND EARN REACHES THREE BILLION CONTAINERS

Return and Earn has now soared past 3 billion containers returned state wide just a month after the second anniversary of the initiative. People of Upper Hunter should be commended for their ongoing commitment to reducing litter and contributing locally to the 3 billion containers. The growth of the scheme has been phenomenal and highlights a fundamental change in people's thinking and behaviour around litter. Return and Earn has been very successful in our Upper Hunter electorate with more than 34.8 million containers returned helping to contribute to the 3 billion now collected.

Summer is peak season for return and earners cashing in their containers and helping the environment and the recent holiday period was particularly impressive for returned containers. Statewide between 21 December 2019 and 13 January 2020, there were 10 days with more than 7 million drink containers returned a day, including four days with over 8 million containers returned.

The scheme has highlighted



so many positives across communities and every bottle returned is a win for the environment.

Until 23 February, recyclers in NSW can donate to [Bottles for the Bush](http://BottlesfortheBush.com), on all reverse vending machines with 10 cents from each container going towards helping farmers and rural families impacted by the drought and the recent bushfire devastation. This option is part of a nationwide appeal that has raised more than \$430,000 so far with more than \$360,000 coming through NSW's Return and Earn scheme. Return and Earn includes around 640 return points across NSW including reverse vending machines, staffed automated depots and over the counter sites. For more information about Return and Earn, visit www.returnandearn.org.au

I am aware that in certain areas of the Upper Hunter would benefit from a Vending Machine and I am currently lobbying for these machines to be established.

WWII MEMORIALS RESTORED FOR 75th ANNIVERSARY

War memorials across NSW have secured vital funding for restoration works ahead of this year's 75th anniversary of the end of World War Two. More than \$120,000 in grants have been awarded for war memorial conservation projects, under the NSW Government's Community War Memorials Fund. Our war memorials are precious monuments we need to cherish and protect as they give us a place to reflect and pay our respects to those brave soldiers who fought for the freedom we enjoy today. World War Two memorials are significant in this round of grants because this year we will be remembering 75 years since Victory in the Pacific was declared, effectively ending the war.

Round 2 of the Community War Memorials Fund is now open and closes 25 April 2020

Cheers, Michael

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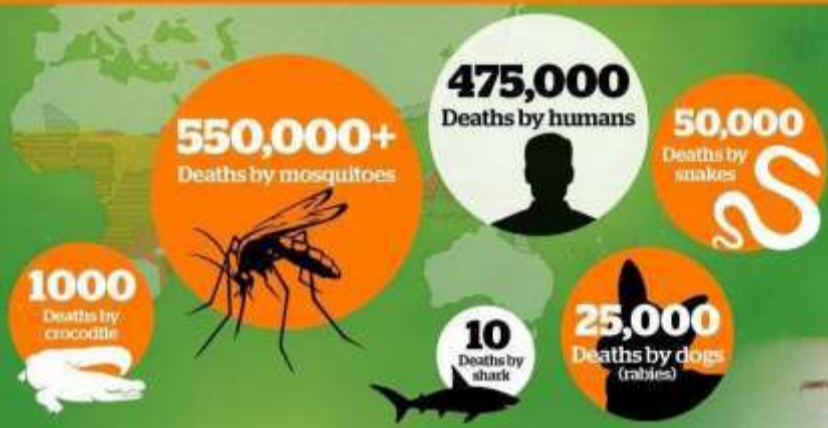
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Pharmacist Advice & Medical Advice

Ross River Virus

Wine of the times: Mosquitoes are responsible for more human deaths than any other animal



Ross River fever is caused by a viral infection, transmitted through mosquito bites. Symptoms include fever, rash, and joint pains. Prevention relies on avoiding mosquito bites. What is Ross River fever?

Ross River fever is caused by infection with Ross River virus, one of a group of viruses called arboviruses (or arthropod-borne viruses), which are spread by the bite of infected mosquitoes. **What are the symptoms?** Many people who are infected with the virus will never develop symptoms.

- Some people will have flu-like symptoms that include fever, chills, headache and aches and pains in the muscles and joints.
- Some joints can become swollen, and joint stiffness may be particularly noticeable in the morning.
- Sometimes a rash occurs on the body, arms or legs. The rash usually disappears after 7 to 10 days.
- A general feeling of being unwell, tired or weak may also occur at times during the illness.
- Symptoms usually develop about 7-10 days

after being bitten by an infected mosquito. **The majority of people recover completely in a few weeks. Others may experience symptoms such as joint pain and tiredness for many months. How is the virus spread?** The virus is spread by certain types of female mosquitoes.

- Female mosquitoes feed on animals and people. If they feed on the blood of an infected animal, the mosquito may become infected. The virus then multiplies within the mosquito and is passed to other animals or people when the mosquito feeds again.

- The number of infections tends to peak in the summer and autumn months. **The virus is not spread directly from one person to another. Who is at risk?** People who are in contact with known mosquito habitats and who live in warm, humid climates near bodies of water will be most at risk of infection. Ross River virus infections are the most common mosquito-borne infection in Australia, and infections occurs in many rural areas in NSW. Infections are uncommon in major cities and towns. Outbreaks can occur when local conditions of rainfall,

tides and temperature promote mosquito breeding. **How is it prevented?** There is currently no vaccine against Ross River virus. To protect against mosquitoes and reduce the risk of diseases they transmit:

- cover-up with a loose-fitting long sleeved shirt and long pants when outside
- apply mosquito repellent to exposed skin
- take special care during peak mosquito biting hours, especially around dawn and dusk
- remove potential mosquito breeding sites from around the home and screen windows and doors
- take extra precautions when travelling or camping in areas with a higher risk of mosquito-borne diseases.

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How is it diagnosed? Ross River virus infection is diagnosed by detection of antibodies against the virus in the blood. It usually requires comparison of a blood test taken early in the illness and with another sample taken two weeks later to confirm the infection.

How is it treated? There is no specific treatment for Ross River virus infection. Your doctor will be able to advise you on medications that will help ease the discomfort of the symptoms.

What is the public health response? Laboratories are required to notify cases of Ross River, and other mosquito-borne disease to the public health unit. Public health staff monitor the geographic spread of Ross River virus infections and provide information about avoiding mosquito-borne diseases.

Complaints Handling Policy adopted at Cessnock City Council

A Complaints Handling Policy has been adopted by Cessnock City Council to increase community understanding of how Council handles complaints and to improve customer experience.

Council's General Manager, Lotta Jackson said the adoption of the Policy is positive for both the community and staff, with it allowing for better transparency. "We now have a centralised document outlining Council's commitment to effectively and proactively managing complaints. We want our residents to have clear guidance and timeframes for a response when making a complaint." "We're committed to continuous improvement and will continue to look for opportunities to create efficiencies for our community." Under the Policy customers who aren't satisfied with the outcome of an enquiry have other avenues to seek further action from Council. This may include Council's response

being reviewed internally ensuring all the required steps have been satisfied in assessing and addressing the complaint. A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to or about Council, Council services, Council staff or the handling of a complaint where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required. The Policy promotes a high standard of customer service in all areas of Council's operations. It recognises the importance of the feedback provided by the community. Key areas covered in the Policy include



responsiveness, making a complaint, and roles and responsibilities. The Policy aligns with the NSW Ombudsman's Complaints Management Framework and Effective Complaint Handling Guidelines, as well as the Office of Local Government Managing Complaints about Local Councils Policy and Procedures for Management Complaints about Local Councils.

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Ingredients
 3 (about 250g each) Breast Fillets, halved horizontally
 100g butter, chopped
 2 garlic cloves, crushed
 1/4 cup (50g) drained baby capers
 3 lemons, zested, juiced
 1 tomato, finely chopped
 1 red onion, finely chopped
 1/3 cup pimento-stuffed olives, thinly sliced
 50g fetta, crumbled
 1/2 cup flat-leaf parsley

Method
Step 1
 Place 1 piece of chicken between 2 sheets of plastic wrap. Use a meat mallet or rolling pin to gently pound until 1.5cm thick. Repeat with the remaining chicken. Season well.
Step 2
 Heat a large flameproof roasting pan over high heat. Melt 20g of the butter in the pan. Add the chicken to the pan and cook for 2 mins each side or until the chicken is golden brown and just cooked through. Transfer to a large heatproof plate and cover with foil. Reduce heat to medium.
Step 3
 Place remaining butter in the pan and cook,

Italian-style lemon chicken



stirring, for 2-3 mins or until the butter melts and is golden brown. Add the garlic and capers to the pan and cook for 1 min or until the capers are crisp. Add the lemon zest and lemon juice and stir to combine. Return the chicken and any juices to the pan. Cook, turning occasionally, for 2 mins or until the chicken is cooked through and the sauce thickens slightly.

Step 4
 Meanwhile, place the tomato, onion, olive and fetta in a bowl and gently toss to combine.
Step 5
 Sprinkle the chicken with the tomato mixture and parsley and serve immediately.

Nutrition 1256 kJ Energy, 18g Fat Total, 11g Saturated Fat, 2g Fibre, 31g Protein, 511mg Sodium, 2g Carbs (sugar), 2g Carbs (total)



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COURT ORDER COMPELS GOOGLE TO REVEAL ANONYMOUS CRITIC

The Australian Federal Court has ordered Google to identify an anonymous user who gave a negative review to a Melbourne dental surgeon Dr Matthew Kabbabe.

Dr Kabbabe says a reviewer's comment posted about three months ago urged others to "stay away" from his practice, which significantly damaged his business. He states that it is unfair that people are allowed to anonymously attack honest, hard-working small businesses and claims the reputation of this practice has suffered.

Google refused a request from Dr Kabbabe in November to take down the negative review and a request earlier this month to identify the user with Google telling him it did not have any means to investigate where and when the ID was created. Dr Kabbabe then launched court proceedings to reveal the identity of the unknown customer operating under the

pseudonym "CBsm 23". The order by Justice Bernard Murphy of the Federal Court requires Google to turn over any identifying details including location metadata and IP addresses for the user who posted under the name "CBsm 23." It also has to provide information about other Google accounts originating from the same IP address during the same time span. In



giving this order Justice Murphy noted the dentist relies on the internet to generate business. Dr Kabbabe wants to use any information gathered to pursue legal action and sue "CBsm 23" for defamation. Ordinarily the process of serving an international company like Google would take several months

because, under an international treaty known as the Hague Service Convention, the documents would first have to be lodged and processed in two countries both Australia and the United States. The legal decision is significant because Legal counsel acting for Dr Kabbabe, Mr Stanarevic, found a legal loophole which allows Google to be served directly by

international registered post which will considerably speed up the process. Mr Stanarevic is hopeful the ruling will set a precedent which will empower other Australian small businesses. Google is yet to reply to queries about the ruling. The firm has previously been reluctant to remove bad reviews, but has done so in several instances following court orders. Last year, it told Australian law reform experts that defamation cases over online reviews could lead to the suppression of consumer rights and free speech.

The Army & Migrant Camp anniversary year is nearly over but Greta Museum will continue to open and exhibit Army & Migrant Camp photos and memorabilia.

We also have some local family and coal mining histories and many other interesting images and artefacts from the local area's past.

So call in, any Wednesday or Saturday 11am – 3pm, to see Greta Museum, in the former Greta Council Chambers at 96 High Street, Greta.



available, 90 per cent of homebuyers don't look into the history or likelihood of sinkholes. Alarming, almost 80 per cent of homebuyers don't checkout a neighbourhood's crime rates, 47 per cent don't find out if the property they're interested in is in a fire zone, and almost 37 per cent don't consult flood maps to see if their potential home has been, or could be, affected. Surprisingly, 26 per cent of homebuyers reported they had discovered issues with their home post-purchase. But after the widespread bushfires this summer, 62 per cent of conveyancers and legal professionals believe buyers will now be more thorough with their pre-purchase checks. **A dodgy deal** Rachael and Michael Snape narrowly missed buying a

"As a result, we decided not to go ahead with the purchase and conducted the same independent checks when we bought our current property," she added. **Top 10 "to do" list for due diligence** GlobalX and the Real Estate Institute of Australia (REIA) have teamed up to create a top 10 hit list of topics buyers should discuss with their conveyancer or legal representative.

1. Building inspections
2. Pest inspections
3. Council development plans
4. Planning approvals
5. Road and infrastructure plans
6. Valuations
7. Flood maps
8. Fire zones
9. Public transport
10. Nearby schools



How could the virus impact the Australian economy and property market?

twofold. The first is the impact generally on pricing and the second is the impact on foreign demand, in particular from China. If a SARS-type economic impact occurs, then the impact on pricing will be quite minimal. It is unlikely that one quarter of economic decline in China, followed by a big jump would result in a substantial loss of employment in Australia.

If the impact was more severe and Australia's unemployment rate started to rise rapidly, then this would be bad news for households and bad news for prices. The impact of the virus on Chinese interests in Australian property is uncertain. The SARS-type response is unlikely to lead to a big jump in Chinese demand for property – search activity from China on realestate.com.au showed a big pick up in November and December last year but January was again down. It is hard to tell whether the virus drove this, or perhaps the Chinese lost a bit of interest in Australia for other reasons. If it gets worse, Chinese buyers' interest in Australia could pick up further, but the Chinese Government may shut

down a flow of funds to overseas if the economy is doing poorly. **Investor demand** Investor interest is seeing strong growth. For example email enquiries from investors at domain.com.au have increased 19% this January compared to January last year. The states seeing the biggest jumps have been ACT, WA and Tasmania. For WA, this is particularly good news given how tough conditions have been there for some time. It is, however, coming from a very low base and we still see first home buyer enquiry eclipse this group. At a suburb level, the unit market is dominated by high volume apartment locations – Melbourne CBD, Gold Coast and Brisbane CBD. The email enquiry number for houses is also dominated by high development areas such as Werribee and Point Cook. The most surprising entry is Orange, NSW.

Clearance rates There were 355 auctions in Melbourne and 316 in Sydney on the weekend of 8th February 2020. These numbers are roughly similar to the same time last year. Clearance rates hit 76% in both Melbourne and Sydney, which is consistent with strong market conditions.



A home may look fine on the surface, but you need to make sure you've checked everything is above board before taking the plunge.

creek down the road flooded before? Have there been any sinkholes in the area, particularly after heavy rainfall? Is the council planning road widening? Is there a Proposed Planning Permit registered with the local council for a multi-story commercial office or a doubling of a neighbour's house size? What are the crime rates in the area?" "Thorough due diligence should absolutely include research into things that are likely to impact liveability and resale value, including area development applications, government infrastructure plans like roads and public transport, and flight paths," he added. The survey of Australian conveyancing and legal professionals found that despite checks being

property lemon in Brisbane's Graceville in 2017, so know the importance of doing independent checks. Knowing that Graceville is flood-prone, and was heavily affected by the 2011 Brisbane floods, the couple asked about any previous water damage. "We were informed that the property was completely flooded in 2011, but the extent of the enduring structural damage was omitted in the building and pest inspection that was provided to us by the seller," Mrs Snape said. "Building and pest reports cost upwards of \$500 so it was tempting to accept the seller's report to save that money – however, we decided to have an independent report conducted," she said.

Will the Coronavirus impact on Australia's economy?

By Nerida Conisbee **Brexit and the US/China trade war are now far closer to being resolved, which is good news for global economic stability.**

However, seemingly as soon as this has been resolved, the coronavirus is set to be declared a pandemic due to the ease at which it appears to be spreading worldwide. If it can't be contained quickly, then the impact on economic growth could be very bad news. If we look at the impact of SARS in 2004, the virus led to a drop in GDP for a quarter but then the next quarter, economic growth accelerated as the Chinese Government pushed forward a stimulus program to get the economy moving again. Perhaps this will happen again and if so, it is unlikely to have too much of an impact on Australia. The impacts on the property market are

Major risk Australian first-home buyers are taking: doing their due diligence

By Kirsten Craze **Buyers are being asked to expect the unexpected after a new study has shown that an alarming number of purchasers aren't doing their house hunting homework.**

Whether it's risk of a natural disaster, or the more likely event of building defects, a new GlobalX survey found that nearly half of Australia's homebuyers are failing to do complete due diligence when buying a property. Due diligence when buying real estate is simply the process of properly evaluating a property before buying – a straightforward, yet serious step Aussies are choosing to

skip. GlobalX CEO Peter Maloney said that most buyers are aware of the building and pest inspection reports they should do, but he suggested their due diligence should go much further "A surprising number of people seem unaware that information related to issues including fire zones, sink holes and crime are readily available, and conveyancers are reporting that people rarely do these checks," he said. "It's common sense to gather as much information as is available. Has the

Tickets on sale for Singleton's night of nights 200 years in the making

With commemorations honouring the bicentenary of the Singleton area set to kick off next month, residents and guests are invited to the Singleton Soiree event to be held on 14 March at the Singleton Civic Centre as tickets are still on sale.

Mayor of Singleton, Cr Sue Moore said the Singleton Soiree was an old-time glamour event 200 years in the making, honouring Singleton's past and celebrating its future. "The Singleton Soiree will see guests take a walk back in history with old-time glamour and music for a cocktail party commemorating Singleton's past and present," she said.

"We are really excited to have ABC personality and Singleton son Craig Hamilton on MC duty from 6pm to 11pm, and entertainment including pop jazz nostalgia band, The Roslyns, bush poetry readings plus mouth-watering canapés and dessert by Mama's Kitchen.

"The Soiree is a great occasion to dress up, enjoy a fantastic night out and celebrate what makes Singleton the best place to live, work and visit. "It's also an affordable night out with tickets just \$35 each from Council's Administration Building or Visitor Information Centre, or purchased online." Cr Moore said while the Soiree

was for adults only, there were a wide range of events on the Bicentenary event program to suit the whole family showcasing all there was to love about the Singleton local government area.

"The bicentennial may mark the anniversary since John Howe and his exploration party arrived at Whittingham on 15 March 1820, but this commemoration is about more than the European settlement of the Singleton local government area," she said. "It's about our connections — with the land, and with each other, and an acknowledgement of the richness of our community.

"And while the focus of the Bicentenary will be the weekend of 13-15 March, with the free community street party (Singleton Homecoming), followed by a free family afternoon on the Civic Green (Singleton Day Out), a wide range of community groups, businesses, organisations and individuals have come together to produce a wide variety of events for everyone.

"From Devonshire tea at the 110-year-old Glendon Hall and vintage tennis through to tours of global industries and botanic gardens of rare dry plant species, Back to Singleton 2020 is a great occasion for residents to reflect on what they love about home, for previous residents to come back and retrace old footsteps and for people who've never experienced our area to start their adventure.

"I hope everyone will make plans to attend one, if not many of the exciting events on the program."

The Singleton Soiree will take place at the Singleton Civic Centre on 14 March 2020 from 6 – 11pm.

Tickets cost \$35 per head and can be purchased via www.stickytickets.com.au/pz250 , or at Singleton Council's Administration Building or Visitor Information Centre.

Back to Singleton 2020 is a whole-of-community commemoration focusing on the history of St Patricks Plains as well as what we love about living, working and playing in Singleton. The complete program of events can be viewed online.

www.singleton.nsw.gov.au

Some interesting trivia

St Pauls Branxton Northumberland UK & the Battle of Flodden

The Battle of Flodden took place on 9th September 1513 on the ground just south of the church. A large Scottish army, led by King James IV, fought the English army led by the Earl of Surrey in the absence of Henry VIII who was abroad fighting the French.

The outcome was a decisive win for the English. The bodies of the slain King James IV and many nobles were brought to the church. The King's body lay in the chancel overnight.

Surrey's army lost 1,500 men killed in battle. There were various conflicting accounts of the Scottish loss. A contemporary account produced in French for the Royal Postmaster of England, in the immediate aftermath of the battle, states that about 10,000 Scots were killed, a claim repeated by Henry VIII on 16 September while he was still uncertain of the death of James IV. William Knight sent the news from Lille to Rome on 20 September, claiming 12,000 Scots had died, with fewer than 500 English casualties. Italian newsletters put the Scottish losses at 18,000 or 20,000 and the English at 5,000. Brian Tuke, the English Clerk of the Signet, sent a newsletter stating 10,000 Scots killed and 10,000 escaped the field. Tuke reckoned the total Scottish invasion force to have been 60,000 and the English army at 40,000. George Buchanan wrote in his *History of Scotland* (published in 1582) that, according to the lists that were compiled throughout the counties of Scotland, there were about 5,000 killed. A plaque on the monument to the 2nd Duke of Norfolk (as the Earl of Surrey became in 1514) at Thetford put the figure at 17,000. Edward Hall, thirty years after, wrote in his *Chronicle* that "12,000 at the least of the best gentlemen and flower of Scotland" were slain.

Flodden was the last battle fought between the English and the Scots and led, eventually, to the Union of the Crowns in 1603.



North Rothbury

The poem below was penned by a cousin of John Butler from North Rothbury, the Rev Dan Armstrong. It was first published in The News about 16 years ago.

His description of North Rothbury for he as a child is a little bit of history as the school & the pit are no longer.

I met the Rev. Dan on the 15th December last year as he attended the 90th Anniversary Rothbury Riot re-enactment.

The Rev. Dan was just a baby when the LockOut/Riot occurred and he & family lived across the road to the pit entry gates.

As stated on the day he was the only attendee who was there on the actual Riot day on the 16th December 1929, albeit 1 years of age. Dan eventually went on to be a distinguished ordained Methodist minister & an evangelist.



TO GRAN AND GRANDMA

ROTHBURY.

Upon the hill where the green tea trees grow,
Where the blade grass and cactus are your natural foe,
Where the jackass and meat ant both battle the snake
And the sun beating down makes the earth crack and bake
Where the tumble down homes seem to blend with the earth
Rothbury dear Rothbury, the place of my birth.

I remember the school standing firm and aloof
With the sun wiggling over the walls and the roof
I remember the old salty hole where we played
And hunted for frogs with a jam tin and spade,
Fish for the crayfish with string and some meat
And make sucking sounds in the mud with our feet.

Then the air would be torn by the pit whistles blast
And we'd swing on the pit gate and watch them file past
The miners with tucker tins slung by their sides
And I'd rush to my dad for a pick-a-back ride
Skip along by his side and carry his can
Saying, "I'll be a miner when I am a man."

Upon the hill all of life was at rest
The jackass was quiet, the ants in their nest
A house here and there showed a window of light
That looked like a tear in the blanket of night
Rothbury lay sleeping as through her I crept
And the sigh of the breeze was hot breath as she slept.

Dan Armstrong

Patricia Ann Stephen
Late of Lismore
Formerly of Branxton

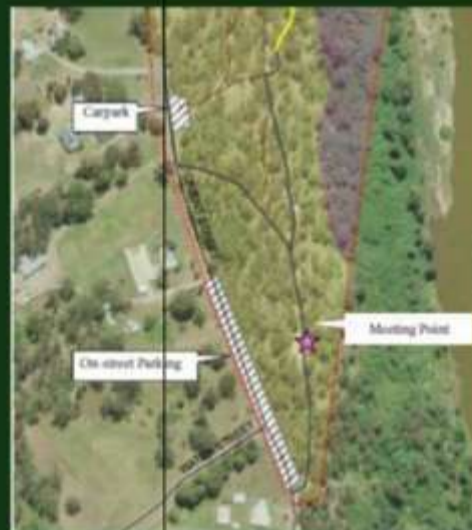
Passed away peacefully on 3rd February 2020, aged 85 years.
Much loved Mother and Mother-in-Law to Dale, Melissa, Greg and Laura.
Cherished Grandma Pat of Alexander, Matthew and Samuel.
Loving Daughter of Victor (deceased) and Florence Byron (deceased)
Loving Sister of Margo, Loving Aunt, and dear friend to many.

Family and friends are warmly invited to attend a *Celebration of Pat's Life*
on **Saturday 14th March 2020**
at the *Everafter Chapel 43 High Street Greta NSW 2334*.
Service commencing at 11.30am.

COMMUNITY TREE PLANTING

07 March 2020 9.00am-11.00am
Hunter River Reserve, Greta

Meet the Landcare team at Hunter River Reserve Lookout (accessed off Orient St)



- Morning tea provided
- Wear long sleeves and pants, hat, sunscreen
- Sturdy closed shoes a necessity
- All tools and materials provided including gloves
- Please note that a reasonable level of fitness is required to access the planting area. We will be walking approx 300m down the slope to the lower section of the reserve.
- We will be planting canopy trees to restore the Lower Hunter Valley Dry Rainforest

RSVP by 04 March 2020

lowerhunterlandcare@gmail.com

0429 444 305

<https://www.facebook.com/events/189958365444873/>





BRANXTON

Three bedroom, 2 bathroom Family home

3 good sized bedroom family home on large block just a 2 minute walk to the main street & across the road to Branxton Public School. Features include Two bathrooms, separate lounge-room, modern kitchen, dishwasher, split air-con system. All this on 970 square metre fully fenced block. INSPECTION RECOMMENDED

~~ASKING \$399,000~~ **\$389,000 ono**



BRANXTON

Large modern family home

This charming home is situated in a sought after street in Branxton; handy to schools, shops, golf club and Hunter expressway.

This charming house has all the modern conveniences of today's living; good size bedrooms, office, timber floors, lovely spacious kitchen to die for, modern bathroom and all this opens onto fantastic entertainment area which could cater for over 100 people. Extra unit at rear with own shower and toilet. Still plenty of room for the kids to play or park the van.

Must inspect to see all . . .

Asking \$515,000



NORTH ROTHBURY 14.65HA
STUNNING 36 ACRES BLANK CANVAS READY FOR YOUR DREAM HOME

With optional potential home sites, the property has plenty of opportunity for a weekend country escape or unique rural lifestyle existence. Under a 2-hour drive from Sydney, approx. 70 min drive from the M1 interchange Wahroonga...

Things You Will Love About This Escape Acreage...

- Approx. 14.65 hectare (36.2 acre) rural holding with dwelling entitlement
- Stunning views from elevated sites
- Potential building sites
- Unique lifestyle acreage
- Abundant wildlife and native flora

ASKING 745,000

NORTH ROTHBURY



Lots 521 & 523 Littlewood Road,
Vacant blocks

4ha (10 acres) very private bush blocks. Fully Fenced & within minutes to Hunter Wine Country
ASKING: \$420,000 each



East Branxton

Low Maintenance 2 Bedroom Unit

Are you seeking your first home or maybe an investment. Well this is the opportunity to buy at a low price. A brick and tile two bedroom unit with a large open living area and large bedrooms. The property has its own private outdoor space and internal access to the garage. Updated Bathroom and Strata managed with low fees. It is currently tenanted at \$260 per week. Situated on a quiet street and conveniently located close to the Hunter Expressway

ASKING \$275,000

Building Blocks

NORTH ROTHBURY Vacant building block ~ 809m²

Vacant Building Block
Fantastic visage

ASKING \$130,000 ono

BELFORD

Vacant Building Block 2559m²

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

ASKING \$160,000 ONO

NORTH ROTHBURY

Vacant building block

A 809 square metre lot which is relatively flat; an easy build-on.
Wonderful views from the back to the north overlooking Huntlee & the mountains to the north.

ASKING \$135,000





2020), the 37-year-old man attended Gosford Police Station, where he was arrested and charged with:

- torture, beat and seriously injure animal,
- torture, beat and cause prolonged suffering to animal,
- dog attack animal due to owner's reckless act, and
- two counts of fail to prevent dog from escaping.

He was given strict conditional bail and is due to appear in Dungog Local Court on Wednesday 11 March 2020.

State Rural Crime Coordinator, Detective Inspector Cameron Whiteside, said this investigation highlighted the teamwork and coordination that is ever present between police, the Rural Crime Prevention Team, RSPCA, local government and Local Land Services.

"This is just one example of a great team coming together, sharing expertise and tackling animal cruelty head-on," Det Insp Whiteside said. "I would also like to remind the community they can report matters of animal cruelty to their local police, Crime Stoppers, the RSPCA or the Animal Welfare League."

Third man charged after public place shooting – Cessnock

Wednesday, 05 February 2020 08:33:44 AM

A third man has been charged following an investigation into a public

place shooting in the Hunter Valley last month. About 3am on Wednesday 29 January 2020, police were called to Mills Crescent, Cessnock, following reports of shots fired. A short time later, officers attached to Hunter Valley Police District stopped a Holden Commodore sedan on Doyle Street, Cessnock. Four men got out of the vehicle, with two allegedly fleeing.

The two remaining men were arrested and taken to Cessnock Police Station before later being released, pending further inquiries. Following inquiries, two men – aged 27 and 21 – were charged last week and remain before the courts. Following further inquiries, a 23-year-old man was arrested at a Gorokan home by officers attached to Strike Force Raptor North about 3.40pm yesterday (Tuesday 4 February 2020). He was taken to Wyong Police Station and charged with fire firearm at dwelling-house with disregard for safety, fire firearm manner likely injure persons/property, possess loaded firearm public place, and destroy or damage property.

The man has been refused bail to appeared at Wyong local Court on Wednesday 5 February 2020.

Some wet weather advise

During sustained periods of wet weather, one of the key safety messages is simple: don't drive through floodwaters. Doing so will likely severely damage your vehicle and could also put

your life at risk. The temptation is understandable – it's been a tough drive and you're within minutes of the comforts of home when you're confronted with what looks like a relatively shallow and steady flow of water across the road. As the SES will tell you, still waters can run deep and the flow in front of you could pack a punch of a tonne per metric metre, which can tear away the road surface and result in a much deeper gully than is apparent.

A typical car will lose power in depths greater than 15cm as water enters the exhaust and washes into the air intake, causing it to float once flood levels exceed 30cm. Modern cars with electrically powered windows and locks are almost impossible to escape from once water finds its way into wiring and motors, disabling switchgear and pressing on bodywork. Owners of off-road vehicles shouldn't assume they are immune, as the fast-flowing force can overcome four-wheel drive or any other tool at their disposal. Even if you have the good fortune to survive getting caught in a flood in your car, the damage your vehicle will make you regret taking the chance.

And if you get caught in floodwaters, NRMA Roadside Assistance can't help you: not only from a safety perspective but also because damage to your vehicle suffered in this scenario becomes an insurance issue.

For Sale

BRANXTON "SUTTON GROVE"

Something for everyone

As you enter this lovely family estate you will see wide open spaces. 5 good size bedrooms, all with built-ins & main with walk-in robe & ensuite.

There are multiple living areas with a large covered decking off the family area & covered BBQ area.

Other features include ducted air conditioning, all gas cooking, 18 metre shed with toilet & 3-phase power, lovely gardens, water tank & dam.

All this on .8HA (Approx 2 acres)

PRICE RANGE \$779,000 to \$819,000



BRANXTON & VINEYARDS REAL ESTATE

M: 0412 566 041 P: 4938 3300

For Sale



BRANXTON & VINEYARDS REAL ESTATE

P: 4938 3300

NORTH ROTHBURY



A large family home with everything you could ask for



Features include 3 good sized bedrooms all with builtins, open plan living; sitting room, dining room, modern kitchen, separate lounge room & ensuite to main. The living area opens onto outside entertainment area deck. Large carport & large shed completes the true picture.



ASKING \$439,000

Things You May Not Know About

with Neridah Kentwell

GRETA, BRANXTON Local Events a Century Ago – January and February 1920

Maitland Weekly Mercury on Tuesday 6 January 1920, page 4
Anniversary Day Sports at Branxton

A sports carnival will be held on Branxton park on Anniversary Day (January 26), in aid of a soldiers memorial hall. Bicycle and foot running handicaps will be competed for, liberal prizes being offered. Entries for all handicap events will close on the 15th Instant, with the secretaries of local bicycle clubs or Returned Soldiers Leagues, or with Mr L Harrigan, hon. sec. of the sports committee at Branxton.

Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners Advocate, Wednesday 14th January, page 5 – Greta

On the motion of Alderman Ebrill, seconded by Alderman Proudfoot, it was decided to again ask the Railway Commissioners to consider the question of running a passenger train on Sundays. Alderman Lewis, the Mayor, informed Alderman Beswick that the rotunda committee would be called together shortly, with a view to proceeding with the erection of the rotunda.

Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners Advocate on Saturday 17th January, page 2 – Greta

William Lewis, 15 years old and employed at Whitburn Colliery, became caught in a machine where one arm was almost severed and three fingers of the other hand cut off. He was taken to the Colliery office then went to Maitland Hospital. His father was also in the hospital suffering from a fever. By the 24th January, William's arm amputated but he was reported to be doing as well as could be expected.

In *Greta: The Town and Its People 150 Years*, (compiled by Val Randall, first published in 1993) William had become a minor celebrity in that he was featured as an unsung hero, and written about by Jean Kingston (Allan). Bill, or 'Wingy' as many locals had called him, was admired for the way he overcame his disability with 'courage and determination'. He lived his life to the full, was a keen sportsman which included cycling and, as well, had his own coal carting business. He married and had children but died in 1957, aged just 51 years.

Maitland Weekly Mercury on Saturday 24 January 1920, page 4
The Returned Soldiers

Association will conduct a sports carnival on the Branxton Park on Anniversary Day (January 26). Splendid entries have been received, and the first event will start at 10am. There will be a grand procession at 10 o'clock of Diggers in uniform. Friendly Societies, and patriotic bodies, will hold a social at night.

Maitland Weekly Mercury on Saturday 24 January 1920, page 6
GRETA

The sports (day) and procession organised by The R S & S I League (Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League), for the purpose of raising funds to build a memorial hall, proved a great success. *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate* on Tuesday 27 January, 1920, page 5 –

Greta and Belford cricket teams played at Greta on Saturday and Belford won by 61 runs. Belford scored 97 (Deakins 20, Jacobs 14, Ivy 13) and Greta 36 (Walton 14 not out). *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate* on Friday 30 January, 1920, page 5

The Greta Council met on Tuesday. Alderman John A Lewis was Mayor. (There does not appear to be any connection between the Mayor and Wingy Lewis's family.)

The State Treasurer had paid to the council's credit a sum of £70 (\$140) towards a main roads grant. Messrs. Morgan and Morgan wrote to council, forwarding plans of the proposed subdivision of Leconfield Estate.

The district superintendent of railways wrote to the council to say that the Commissioners could not agree to the running of a train on Sundays.

Maitland Daily Mercury on Wednesday 4 February, 1920 page 3

1920 page 3 & *Maitland Weekly Mercury* on Saturday 7 February, 1920, page 3
BRANXTON SPORTS: A SUCCESSFUL GATHERING

The sports carnival held under the auspices of the local branch of the RSL was a success in every way. There was a large attendance including visitors from other centres. The sport provided was the best ever seen in Branxton. It was clean and most of the finishes, close. It is recognised by the sports committee that much of the success of the venture was due to the interest taken by the secretaries of the different bicycle groups in Maitland, Cessnock and Singleton. The ladies of Branxton and North Rothbury also worked hard to make the sports a grand success. They succeeded in catering in the best of style for all who needed refreshments during the day.

A grand procession of Diggers and Red Cross Workers in uniform and members of the different friendly societies in regalia marched from East Branxton onto the ground. The social held in the evening was most successful. About 100 couples danced to the strain of the Bendeich's orchestra. The ladies again provided a splendid tea. Mr R Cole ably performed the duties of MC. During the evening Mr G Perrett rendered a song and received a hearty round of applause.

Maitland Weekly Mercury on Saturday 6 February 1920, page 7

In connection with a report of the recent sports carnival at Branxton, it should have been stated that H. Slade, of Cessnock, won the slow bicycle race.

Maitland Weekly Mercury on Saturday 7 February, 1920, page 13 –

Central Hall, Greta, was filled to capacity for the semi-finals and final of a £10 boxing tournament promoted by Messrs Brooker and Redgrove. It showcased evenly matched contestants who included Reckenberg of Abermain who 'gained the decision' over Texas Allen of Branxton after six hard fought rounds. In the other semi, Jack Fenton of Branxton gained 'uneasy victory' over Pascoe of Elderslie. The final between Fenton and Reckenberg was regarded as 'well worth staging in any stadium' and consisted of six gruelling rounds for the participants and one of continued excitement for the audience. Jack Skillicorn's (the referee) decision in favour of Fenton, was approved of by all those watching, as were all his other judgements.

Singleton Argus, Thursday 12 February 1920, page 3
DISTRICT NEWS, BRANXTON
On Saturday last, the Branxton Amateur Athletic Club continued their usual fortnightly events. The various items were well contested and some exciting finishes were witnessed. Although the club has only been in existence since November last, it has progressed wonderfully and at present has over 40 members.

Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate on Thursday 12 February, 1920, page Greta
A special meeting of the council was held for the purpose of electing the Mayor. The Mayor's allowance was fixed at £10 per annum, payable quarterly. Alderman Walton was elected to the position. Alderman Beswick drew attention to the fact that the second (daily) mail delivery was to be done away with,

and that there was to be a curtailment of the facilities for the delivery of telegrams. Alderman Harris drew attention to the state of the bridge in North Street. At the conclusion of business the aldermen and officials and a number of rate payers partook of refreshments at the invitation of the Mayor, Alderman Walton. *Maitland Weekly Mercury* on Saturday 21 February, 1920, page 14 –
At the Veitch parent's residence at Harper's Hill, Greta, a splendid welcome home was put on for Private William and Private Robert. William was accompanied by his English bride. The men had returned from a long period of active service abroad. There were a hundred visitors present and a sumptuous spread was provided. Mr William Leonard presided and toasts were proposed, and duly honoured, to 'The King', 'Guests of the



Evening', 'Parents', 'R S & S League' (Returned Sailors and Soldiers League) and 'The Visitors'. During the evening Private William Veitch was complimented on the step he had taken in choosing and bringing out a wife to Australia. The hope was expressed that Mrs Veitch would find Australia everything that it was supposed to be, and that she would find and make many true friends out here. Parlour games, interspersed with musical harmony, took up the remainder of a very pleasant evening. *For more information on our area's history, and lots of pictures, call into Greta Museum, situated in the former Greta Council Chambers at 96 High Street, Greta on Wednesday or Saturday between 11am and 3pm.*

■ Photo above: William Lewis who, at 15, had an arm amputated after an accident at Whitburn Colliery.

Historical photos ~ Branxton



■ Above: The Royal Federal Hotel Branxton under construction

■ Below: The Westpac Bank Building Branxton & residence at the height of the 1955 flood



NEWS

Branxton/Greta CWA held the 1st meeting for 2020 on Monday, 10th February, due to two members working on Tuesday. Will be advising our functions for the year after our next meeting. Discussion was concentrated on the bush fires and drought and appreciation of the recent rain.

We would like to give our heartfelt thanks to all our local fire brigades, Belford, Branxton, Greta and North Rothbury and all they did to keep our community safe, not only during the bush fires but on other occasions where they are needed also. Also, thank you to anyone who assisted in anyway to help those affected

by the bush fires. We would also like to wish Dave Smith from Branxton Newsagency, a happy retirement and thank him for his support over the years (allowing us to sell raffle tickets outside the newsagency and place invitation notices in the window). Best wishes to you for the future. We would happily welcome anyone interested in helping to raise money to help others in need, or assist in any other ways, and also making new friends. Should anyone be interested in joining Branxton/Greta CWA, or like any information, or attending any of our functions, please contact our Secretary, Marie Shearer on 0402015850 or email branxtongretacwa@hotmail.com
Denise McGoldrick, Publicity Officer.

They said it....
"Wagner's music is better than it sounds". *Mark Twain (1835-1910)*
"History will be kind to me, for I intend to write it." *Sir Winston Churchill (1874-1965)*
"Always do what is right. it will gratify half of mankind and astound the other." *Mark Twain (1835-1910)*
"You have enemies? Good. It means you've stood up for something, sometime in your life." *Sir Winston Churchill (1874-1965)*
"Kindness is a language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see." *Mark Twain (1835-1910)*



Greta Museum

Continues to open and exhibit Army and Migrant Camp photos and memorabilia, as well as coal mining, sporting and some family histories, and artefacts, from the local area's past.

Open each Wednesday and Saturday 11am – 3pm at 96 High Street, Greta, in the former Greta Council Chambers.

Greta Workers Sports & Rec Club Ltd

2 West Street Greta Ph 4938 7325



Friday 21st FEB
BARRACUDA



Friday 28th FEB
All-STAR



\$800 Wed 19/2
\$2700 Sun as at 16/2
Jackpots \$100 EACH DRAW



FRIDAYS & SUNDAYS



Open Wed—Sun
Lunch & Dinner
Dine-in or Takeaway



\$4.00 Schooners
Thursdays
4pm—6pm

Miller Park Sports Club

6 Maitland Street East Branxton Ph 4938 1226



TUK TUK Thai & Aussie

BUFFET DINNER \$20/head
EVERY SATURDAY NIGHT
BOOKING ESSENTIAL



Every Thursday & Sunday

\$1900 as at Sun 16/2
\$5000 Thurs 20/2



FRIDAYS & SUNDAYS



Every Wednesday
10am start



Wednesdays
4pm—6pm
\$4.00 Schooners



#1 Matthew Reilly

And he's done it again! Matthew Reilly has been voted Australia's Favourite Author again!! This is the third time that Matthew Reilly has taken out the #1 position in our annual Australia's Favourite Author Poll. He is the only author to have won more than once – which makes this third win all the more impressive. No other author has won more than once ... but Matthew Reilly is not once, not twice but THRICE TIMES Australian's Favourite Author! Matthew Reilly is the international bestselling author of *Ice Station*, *Temple*, *Contest*, *Area 7*, *Scarecrow*, *Hover Car Racer*, *Seven Ancient Wonders*, *The Six Sacred Stones*, *The Five Greatest Warriors* and *The Four Legendary Kingdoms* and many more bestselling titles. Published in over 20 countries and known for their highly visual style, fast pace and large-scale action scenes, over 7.5 million copies of his books have been sold around the world, more than a million copies apiece between Australia, the UK and the USA.

He wrote and self-published *Contest* in 1996 while just 19, deliberately aiming to have his book noticed by publishers who talent-scout at bookstores. His dedication paid off, and was discovered by Pan Macmillan's then commissioning editor Cate Paterson. His first industry-produced novel, *Ice Station*, proved so monumentally popular, that it had to be reprinted six times in its first two years.

The continued success of his novels has been attributed to not only the accessible, 'storyteller' style of writing, but also the highly charged and kinetic action sequences that take place throughout his works, deliberately making use of his 'unlimited budget' of imagination to create scenes 'too big for Hollywood'.

There is just so much love for Matthew Reilly – he inspires the most devoted fans. He really is Australia's Favourite Author!!

ABOUT

Reilly was born on 2 July 1974 in Sydney, the second son of Ray (an employee at the Department of Corrective Services) and Denise, a mathematics teacher. He grew up with his brother Stephen in Willoughby, an affluent suburb on the lower North Shore of Sydney, New South Wales, Australia. Reilly graduated from Sydney's St Aloysius' College in Milsons Point, in 1992. He then studied Law at the University of New South Wales between 1993 and 1997, graduating 31st out of 250 students. While at university he was also a contributor to the student law society publication "Poetic Justice".

Career

Reilly wrote his first book, *Contest*, at the age of 19 and self-published it in 1996. It was rejected by every major publisher in Australia, leading him to self-publish 1,000 copies using a bank loan. He was discovered when Cate Paterson, a commissioning editor from Pan Macmillan, found a self-published copy of *Contest* in a bookstore. Pan Macmillan signed Reilly to a two-book deal. He wrote his second book, *Ice Station*, while studying at the University of New South Wales. It was quickly picked up by publishers in the US, UK and Germany. He has since sold over 7 million copies of his books worldwide, in over 20 languages. *Scarecrow and the Army of Thieves* was the biggest-selling fiction title in Australia in 2011. Three more of Reilly's books have been the biggest-selling Australian titles of their years of release: *Seven Ancient Wonders* (2005), *The Five Greatest Warriors* (2009) and *The Tournament* (2013). A *Sydney Morning Herald* reviewer praised Reilly's writing for its bold action, but criticized it for straining credulity and "frequent lapses in logic." In 2007, Reilly wrote a half-hour television script titled *Literary*

Superstars. The script was picked up by Darren Star (*Sex and the City*) and bought by Sony Pictures for the ABC Network. Jenna Elfman signed on to play the lead role. The pilot episode was at the casting stage when the 2007–2008 Writers Guild of America strike began, paralyzing Hollywood. The pilot was placed on indefinite hiatus before ultimately being dropped by the ABC. In 2015 Reilly alongside Benjamin Maio Mackay's *Preachrs Podcast OnLine & OnStage* premiered an audio drama adaptation of Reilly's best-selling novel *Ice Station*. This was the first adaptation of his works outside of a literary format. "Matthew Reilly's *Ice Station Live*" was performed in the Adelaide Fringe 2016 and piloted the first three episodes of a proposed full audio drama. As of 2017 no further updates on the project have been announced.

Personal life

In 2004 Reilly married Natalie Freer. Freer attended a nearby high school, Loreto Kirribilli, and also went to the University of New South Wales, where she studied Psychology. Reilly credits Freer with encouraging him to self-publish his first book. In early December 2011, while Reilly was in South Australia on a book tour promoting *Scarecrow and the Army of Thieves*, Natalie, who had suffered from anorexia and depression, committed suicide. Reilly subsequently cancelled his remaining book tours and announced his intention to take a break from online communications. Reilly owns several movie prop reproductions such as a life-size statue of Han Solo frozen in carbonite from *Star Wars*, a golden idol from *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, and a DeLorean from *Back to the Future*. A big fan of Hollywood blockbusters, Reilly hopes to one day direct a movie adapted from one of his own books. He currently lives in Los Angeles, California.



Tea Cooper Australian Author

Fiction Lover's Feast

There will be authors aplenty at our libraries and beyond in the coming weeks. Australian best-selling author and local, Tea Cooper will visit to discuss her latest release, *The Girl in the Painting*. Set in Sydney, Hill End and Maitland in the late 19th and early 20th century, Tea's much-anticipated new book is an atmospheric and richly detailed Australian historical mystery.

| | | |
|------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Cessnock Library | Saturday 22 February | 10.30am-12.00pm |
|------------------|----------------------|-----------------|

Next up, bestselling authors Fiona McArthur, Trish Morey a Janette Paul (aka Jaye Ford) are on tour promoting Trish's latest release 'One Summer between Friends'. It's a story about friendship, betrayal and the rocky road to forgiveness, all set on glorious Lord Howe Island. Janette, Fiona and Trish will be talking books, writing and women's fiction in a fun and chatty session.

| | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Kurri Kurri Library | Friday 28 February | 10am-12.00pm |
|---------------------|--------------------|--------------|

Then the Library hits the road to Wollombi Schoolhouse for the *HerStory* Tour. *Herstory* features a panel of five authors including Karen Brooks, Mary-Anne O'Connor, Victoria Purman, Kerri Turner and Tea Cooper who will be discussing their respective books, the importance of writing women back into history and their approach to writing historical fiction. *Herstory* was conceived to shine a light on the stories of strong women who have defied the social norms of their times with a rebellious spirit.

| | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Wollombi School House | Wednesday 22 April | 5.30pm-7.00pm |
|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------|

Council's Library Services Co-ordinator, Rose-marie Walters said women fiction is one of the most popular reading genres and historical fiction is a unique vehicle to draw readers into real-life events of the past: firing up the imagination and transporting readers to a different time and place." Bookings are essential. Book online at libraries.cessnock.nsw.gov.au under "Events and Bookings" or by calling Kurri Kurri Library on 4937 1638 or Cessnock Library on 4993 4399.


They said it....

"Success is not final, failure is not fatal, it is the courage to continue that counts." *Sir Winston Churchill (1874-1965)*
 "Attitude is a little thing that makes a BIG difference." *Sir Winston Churchill (1874-1965)*

The New York Times Best Sellers

Combined Print & E-Book Fiction (9 February 202019)

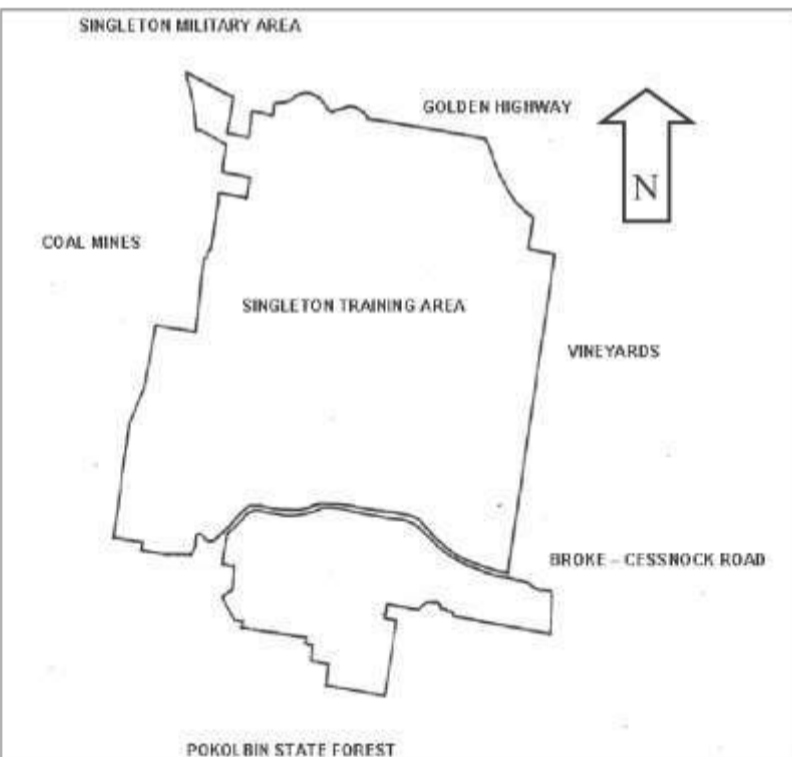
- 1. NEW THIS WEEK** AMERICAN DIRT BY JEANINE CUMMINS
A bookseller flees Mexico for the United States with her son while pursued by the head of a drug cartel.
- 2. 72 WEEKS ON THE LIST** WHERE THE CRAWDADS SING BY DELIA OWENS
In a quiet town on the North Carolina coast in 1969, a young woman who survived alone in the marsh becomes a murder suspect. Ranked 1 last week
- 3. 2 WEEKS ON THE LIST** LOST BY JAMES PATTERSON AND JAMES O. BORN
The new head of an F.B.I. task force takes on a crime syndicate run by a pair of Russian nationals. Ranked 2 last week
- 4. 19 WEEKS ON THE LIST** THE SILENT PATIENT BY ALEX MICHAELIDES
Theo Faber looks into the mystery of a famous painter who stops speaking after shooting her husband. Ranked 5 last week
- 5. 15 WEEKS ON THE LIST** THE GUARDIANS BY JOHN GRISHAM
Cullen Post, a lawyer and Episcopal minister, antagonizes some ruthless killers when he takes on a wrongful conviction case. Ranked 4 last week
- 6. 50 WEEKS ON THE LIST** LITTLE FIRES EVERYWHERE BY CELESTE NG
An artist upends a quiet town outside Cleveland. Ranked 12 last week
- 7. 3 WEEKS ON THE LIST** DEAR EDWARD BY ANN NAPOLITANO
A 12-year-old boy tries to start over after becoming the sole survivor of a plane crash in which he lost his immediate family. Ranked 7 last week
- 8. 4 WEEKS ON THE LIST** SUCH A FUN AGE BY KILEY REID
Tumult ensues when Alix Chamberlain's babysitter is mistakenly accused of kidnapping her charge. Ranked 8 last week
- 9. NEW THIS WEEK** AGENCY BY WILLIAM GIBSON
Ainsley Lowbeer can see alternate outcomes for Verity Jane and her digital assistant, who lived in the previous century.
- 10. 15 WEEKS ON THE LIST** THE OUTSIDER BY STEPHEN KING
A detective investigates a seemingly wholesome member of the community when an 11-year-old boy's body is found.



Australian Government
Department of Defence

WARNING NOTICE DEFENCE FIELD FIRING RANGES

SINGLETON MILITARY AREA



POKOLBIN STATE FOREST

Residents of areas adjacent to Singleton Training Area are warned it is a Defence 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.

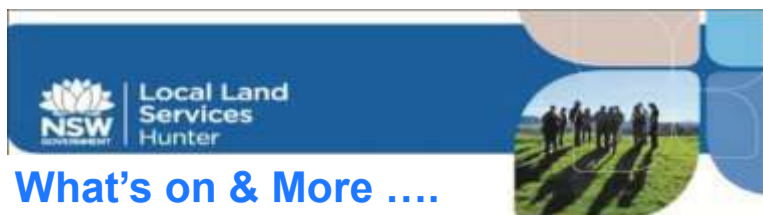
Death or serious injury may result from being struck by a projectile. Eye damage may occur when viewing laser beams from within the training area boundary.

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 Defence Training Areas will be prosecuted.

Enquiries regarding the Singleton Training Area should be directed to:

The Range Control Officer
 Directorate of Operations and Training Area Management
 Range Control Centre
 Range Road
 Singleton Training Area
 Singleton NSW 2331



What's on & More

Nominations now open for LLS Boards

Minister for Agriculture Adam Marshall is calling on landholders and primary producers to nominate as a candidate in the upcoming 2020 Local Land Services (LLS) board member elections.

Mr Marshall said nominations were now open until the end of the month and hoped a diverse range of candidates would throw their hat into the ring. "This election there have been changes to the voting process that will deliver a more streamlined and robust election," Mr Marshall said.

"It is now easier to vote and participate, as all eligible LLS ratepayers will be automatically included on the electoral roll for the first time.

"This year will also see one vote per ratepayer or company in each region, regardless of the number of holdings they have, meaning each ratepayer will have equal say in who will represent them on their local board."

Mr Marshall said during times of drought and devastating bushfires it would be more important than ever for local board members to work with communities to help identify and deliver the services they need most.

"There is no doubt the agricultural sector is doing it tough and the road to recovery is going to be a long one, but I am sure there will be no shortage of skilled candidates who will provide a strong voice for regional communities," Mr Marshall said.

Across all 11 Local Land Services regions, ratepayers will elect 34 board members to work with appointed board members and the Chair to ensure the efficient delivery of services to farmers and land managers across the State.

To nominate as a candidate visit www.austelect.com.au or www.lls.nsw.gov.au and download a candidate information package and nomination form.

Key dates:

- Nominations: Close noon on Friday, 28 February 2020
- Voting: Opens Thursday, 9 April, and closes at 5pm on Friday, 8 May 2020
- Announcement: Elected board members will be announced by the end of June 2020

NITRATE POISONING WARNING FOR HUNTER LIVESTOCK OWNERS

After significant rainfall across much of the Hunter and Manning Great Lakes, pasture recovery is posing some challenges for livestock owners.

There have been a number of confirmed cases of Nitrate Poisoning and kikuyu Poisoning in our region in recent days.

The wet and humid conditions have proved ideal for the common pasture weed Purslane, also known as Pigweed. This weed is known to contain nitrates and oxillates and although generally not considered highly toxic it can cause scouring or even death where stock consume a large amount.

There has been a proliferation of the weed in many paddocks, and this week it has led to nitrate poisoning in stock in the Lower Hunter, where Purslane was the dominant cover in the paddock.

District Vet Jim Kerr said producers need to watch their stock closely during this period, associated with the rapidly growing young pastures..

"With such wonderful rainfall there can unfortunately be downsides for livestock owners, as hungry stock chase the green pick," said Dr Kerr.

"We're encouraging landholders where possible to maintain their feeding regimes, including introducing silage or roughage bales in Purslane or kikuyu dominant paddocks.

Kikuyu poisoning can unfortunately occur when kikuyu grows quickly after a prolonged dry spell. It has a high mortality rate. Producers can reduce the risk to stock by removing them from kikuyu dominant pastures or adding a bale of silage or roughage to the paddock as an alternate feed source. Generally the risk to livestock subsides after three-four weeks.

Dr Kerr is reminding producers Hunter Local Land Services is offering free feed testing for local producers.

"We did see numerous nitrate deaths from hay and silage during this drought from feed harvested under stress or purchased from outside sources without necessary testing," said Dr Kerr.

"We continue to offer this service to ensure local producers have confidence in the feed their stock are accessing.

"If you have concerns about the feed or nutrition requirements of your stock, please contact Hunter Local Land Services on 1300 795 299, to speak to your local team."

Australian Thoroughbred

Compiled by Brian Russell Bloodstock Media Service
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Phone (02) 6547 2278, Email brianrussell67@bigpond.com

Stallions murdered in Peru and stolen in Libya

One of the biggest shocks in world thoroughbred history was the stealing out of his box at the Aga Khan's stud in Ireland in 1983 of Shergar, the Great Nephew colt who two years earlier stirred the world when he won the English Derby by a

record ten lengths. Allegedly taken by the IRA (Irish Republican Army), he was never returned after a \$2million ransom bid was rejected and what happened to him remains a mystery.

Such acts have been very rare in thoroughbred breeding, possibly because of registration, but currently the world is reeling after two horrendous attacks in a space of three weeks. Each having Australian connec-

tions, they were the murder of four stallions at Peru's oldest stud, Haras Barlovento, and the stealing of the six stallions and some forty other thoroughbreds including broodmares due to foal in the current northern hemisphere season from the Al Shaab Stud by armed forces in civil war torn Libya.

The stallions slaughtered by intruders at the stud in Peru, a South American southern hemisphere



Detailed Cattle report for HRLX Singleton

Rain throughout the drawing area produced a small penning, with the majority younger cattle, as runs of the plainer drafts along with a good supply of well finished pens suitable for the butchers were offered. Cows made up the bulk of the grown cattle, with approximately 76 head yarded. The usual orders competed in a generally firm to dearer market. The heavier calves to the restockers trended dearer, with prices topping at 442c, as the majority settled around the 418c/kg range. The limited selection of vealer steers continue to sell well, with the best to the restockers making from 402c to 416c/kg. The vealer heifers to the restockers also sold to strong competition and gained 15c, with prices up around the 332c to 354c/kg. The yearling steers to the restockers and lot feeders trended 10c to 18c dearer, with the lighter weights making 310c to 386c, while the medium weights received from 366c to 380c/kg. The light weight unfinished yearling heifers lifted 25c and made from 330c to 366c/kg, as the heavier drafts all sold to the butcher orders. The prime conditioned younger cattle to the butchers all made well over the 300c range, with the best reaching 390c/kg. The plainer cows sold at similar prices compared to the previous market, while the better covered heavy weights lifted 20c and made from 280c to 310c/kg. Heavy weight bulls trended 40c dearer and reached 320c/kg.

Detailed Cattle report for Scone

Substantial rainfall throughout the supply area produced a much smaller penning, with greater numbers of plainer cattle spread through out the market. There were runs of high yielding younger cattle suitable for the butchers, however the majority were more suited for the restocker and lot feeder orders. There were approximately 65 cows in the market and very few decent heavy weight bulls to quote. The market overall was dearer. The heavy calves improved 15c, and sold from 322c to 408c/kg. The over 200kg vealer steers to restockers gained 20c, and made from 350c to 428c/kg. The same weight heifer portion also to restockers lifted 18c, and made from 328c to 390c/kg. The yearling steers to the lot feeders were not up to the high standard offered at the previous market, however these still sold to strong competition and sold from 344c to 378c/kg. The yearling heifers to the lot feeders improved 15c, and sold from 340c to 370c/kg. The high yielding younger cattle to the butchers sold at a premium, with the majority making well over the 300c range, as the best topped at 374c/kg. Cows also eased in yield and quality, with restockers competing strongly for the plainer drafts. The plainer pens made from 210c to 274c, with the better finished heavy weights making from 285c to 290c/kg. A single heavy weight bull sold at 288c/kg.

Detailed Cattle report for TRLX Tamworth

Decent follow up rain resulted in a reduced penning. Most categories were represented. The quality and condition of the offering was fair to very good. Well finished cows and grown steers in good numbers. The usual processors were in attendance, plus one while restocker and feedlot activity was frenetic at times. Market trends through the young cattle were substantially dearer for the most part, driven by restockers taking advantage of the improving seasonal conditions. Light weight steers in particular came in for strong support to see a dearer trend of 70c to 90c/kg and more in places. Medium and heavy weight feeder steers sold very strongly to record significant improvement, while the medium weights to restockers experienced gains similar to the light weights. Yearling heifers to restockers saw a much dearer trend for the most part. There were some quality related price changes. Well finished heifers attracted both processor and feedlot competition to post strong improvement. The well finished heavy grown steers saw increased competition to sell to a dearer trend of as much as 20c/kg. The limited supply of well finished grown heifers sold to a slightly dearer trend. Restockers pushed the plainer condition cows to new levels, while local records were set for well finished cows to process. A line of young 2 score cows PT E attracted keen demand from local restockers. Well finished cows saw a dearer trend of as much as 30c/kg with quality in some cases not as good as the previous week.

Detailed Cattle report for Gunnedah

Good soaking rain that also provided some runoff reduced the penning by 500 head. Heavy weight heifers and cows were well represented along with a fair supply of young cattle. The quality and condition of the offering varied from fair to excellent. The full field of regular buyers were in attendance. Demand and competition was very strong through all categories. Restockers and feedlot activity were the predominant buyers through the young cattle. Market trends were dearer and significantly so in places. Light weight steer calves attracted keen restocker competition to break the 500c/kg barrier. Taking quality into account the light weight yearling steers to restockers experienced strong gains. Medium and heavy feeder steers were well sought after resulting in significant price improvements. Yearling heifers to restock and feed sold to dearer trends of 20c to 30c/kg. There was some breed and quality related negative price change through the young cattle. An outstanding line of heavy weight supplementary fed heifers attracted keen demand from both domestic and export processors. The market trend was as much as 50c/kg dearer, with the quality also showing a vast improvement. The plainer quality and condition grown heifers saw restocker activity high with this resulting in much dearer price trends. All classes of cows met strong competition with restockers competing strongly on the plainer condition lines. Market trends improving by 20c to 30c/kg. A live export order in the bull market contributed to significant price improvements.

breeding with one principal racetrack, one located at the nation's capital, Lima, included inaugural 2019 southern season Peru visitor The Lieutenant (USA) (2013), a G3 winning half-sister by Kentucky Derby and Breeders' Cup Juvenile winner Street Sense (USA) (Street Cry (Ire) to unbeaten American Triple Classic Crown winner Justify (USA) (Scat Daddy).

Now in Japan, Street Sense shuttled to the Hunter Valley from America for Darley five times, 2008-12, and left Group 1 winners Dixie Blossom, Sense of Occasion, Hallowed Crown and Politeness. Also, The Lieutenant's unbeaten Triple Classic Crown winning half-brother Justify has also been used in the Hunter Valley, put to a star studded debut book at Coolmore in the 2019 season.

Two of the other stallions ruthlessly destroyed in Peru, Cyrus Alexander (USA) (2012) (Medaglia d'Oro (USA) – Supercharger (USA)

(A P Indy (USA) and Kung Fu Mambo (ARG) (2009) (Giant's Causeway (USA) – Sweet City Girl (USA) (Kingmambo (USA), were also by sires used in Australia. Medaglia d'Oro came out eight times, 2010 – 2017, to Darley, contributing over 600 foals, and Coolmore hosted Giant's Causeway on four visits. 2002-2005, resulting in about 250 foals.

Cyrus Alexander, in addition, was a half-brother to 2010 Kentucky Derby winner Super Saver (USA), a visitor to Eliza Park Stud in Victoria for one season, 2011.

The veteran of the four sires killed was Timely Advice (USA) (2005) (A P Indy (USA) – Miss Carmie (USA) (Holy Bull (USA).

Put to stud in Peru in 2010, he has had winners up to Group 1 level. All of the wins appear to have been Since the death of the stallions, the owner of the stud has announced it will close and its broodmare

band dispersed. It is a big loss to Peru's small breeding industry.

Breeding and racing in Peru is on a very small scale, but Pamplona, a Peruvian champion race filly, at stud in America produced Empery, winner of the 1970 English Derby.

Slipper third among stallions stolen by Libyan rebels

Churchill Downs (2003, Danehill (USA) – Silken Whisper (USA) (Diesis (GB), a John Singleton (Strawberry Hill Stud) bred and part owned Sydney winner, Magic Millions 2yo Classic and Golden Slipper third at two and in Melbourne at three a G2 Stutt Stakes winner, Ascot Vale Stakes third and Caulfield Guineas fourth, was one of three Australian bred stallions taken in the raid

on the Libyan stud.

Churchill Downs had been shipped out to Libya in May 2012 after five seasons at Blue Gum Farm, Euroa, Victoria. So far from Blue Gum use he has had 190 winners (66.2%) of 688 races. Six have won stakes and five others stakes placed.

Both sent to Libya in July 2010, the other Australian bred sires looted were Backdraft (2003, Testa Rossa – Springfire (Snippets) and Brut Force (2003, Giant's Causeway (USA) – Champagne (NZ) (Zabeel). A winner of three races in New Zealand, Brut Force looked after a total of eight mares in two years at stud in Australia, two in 2008 and six in 2009, resulting in five foals. Three ran but none won or placed.

Besides the Australian bred stallions stolen, another grabbed was Eavesdropper (USA) (2000, Kingmambo (USA) – Weekend Surprise (USA).

click's



Here are some of the Top Online Scams You Need to Avoid Today And how cybercriminals use them to trick you

Nice to Know You

Naomi Surugaba [azlin@moa.gov.my]

Dear Beloved Friend,
I know this message will come to you as surprised but permit me of my desire to go into business relationship with you.
I am Miss Naomi Surugaba a daughter to late Al-baderi Surugaba of Libya whom was murdered during the recent civil war in Libya in March 2011, before his death my late father was a strong supporter and a member of late Moammar Gadhafi Government in Tripoli. Meanwhile before the incident, my late Father came to Cotonou Benin republic with the sum of USD4, 200,000.00 (US\$4.2M) which he deposited in a Bank here in Cotonou Benin Republic West Africa for safe keeping.
I am here seeking for an avenue to transfer the fund to you in only you're reliable and trustworthy person to invest the fund. I am here in Benin Republic because of the death of my parent's and I want you to help me transfer the fund into your bank account for investment purpose.
Please I will offer you 20% of the total sum of USD4.2M for your assistance. Please I wish to transfer the fund urgently without delay into your account and also wish to relocate to your country due to the poor condition in Benin, as to enable me continue my education as I was a medical student before the sudden death of my parent's. Reply to my alternative email: missnaomisurugaba2@hotmail.com, Your immediate response would be appreciated. Remain blessed,
Miss Naomi Surugaba.

original subject line: Fwd: Final Notice

From: "CANADA-UK LOTTERY" <patriciamela@multipaybandalarga.com.br>
Sent: Sunday, June 1, 2014 5:00:59 AM
Subject: Final Notice

This is to notify that you have won in the Canada-Uk National Lottery. Reply to this mail for more details and claims. Regards, Mrs. Evelyn McGregor

Here's how a Lottery scam could look like:

fall for this online scam and have a look at this checklist to see if you are getting scammed.

Source: Ripandscam.com
Facebook impersonation scam (hijacked profile scam)

Facebook. Everyone is talking about it these days and the scandal about Cambridge Analytica firm harvesting personal data taken from millions of this social media channel without users' consent. It's still the most popular social media network where everyone is active and uses it on a daily basis to keep in touch with friends and colleagues. Unfortunately, it has become also the perfect place for online scammers to find their victims.

Just imagine your account being hacked by a cyber-criminal and gaining access to your close friends and family. Nobody wants that! Since it is so important for your privacy and online security, you should be very careful in protecting your personal online accounts just the way you protect your banking or email account.

Facebook security wise, these tips might help you stay away from these online scams:

- * Do not accept friend requests from people you don't know

- * Do not share your password with others

- * When logging in, use two-factor authentication

- * Avoid connecting to public and free Wi-Fi networks

- * Keep your browser and apps updated

- * Add an additional layer of security and use proactive cybersecurity software.

To enhance your online privacy, I recommend reading our full guide on Facebook security and privacy.

Tech Support Online Scams

Here's another online scam that is common and you need to be extra careful. The next time your smartphone rings and you don't know the number, think twice before answering. Maybe it's not your friend on the other end of the

phone, maybe it's the scammer!

According to a recent report "nearly half of all mobile phone calls next year will come from scammers", so we need to learn how to better detect and prevent such malicious actions

coming from skilled persons. Tech support scams are very common and widespread these days. Scammers use various social engineering techniques to trick potential victims into giving their sensitive information. Even worst, they try to convince potential victims to pay for unnecessary technical support services.

To avoid becoming an easy target of these sneaky tech support scammers, we strongly recommend following these basic rules:

- * Do not trust phone calls coming from people pretending to come from tech "experts", especially if they are requesting for personal or financial information;

- * DO NOT PROVIDE sensitive data to them or purchase any software services scammers may suggest you as a solution to fix your tech problem.

- * DO NOT allow strangers to remotely access your computer and potentially install malicious software;

- * Make sure you download software apps and services only from official vendor sites;

- * Don't take it for granted when a stranger calls you out of the blue, pretending to have a technical solution for your issues. Make sure you ask for proof of their identity and do a quick research about the company they are calling you from;

- * Always have an antivirus program installed on your computer, and for more protection, consider adding multiple layers of security with a proactive security solution.

- * Have a security-first mindset and be suspicious about everything around you.

Conclusion
Since some scams are so well organized and really convincing, and people behind them so difficult to catch, we need to always keep our guard up. Stay informed about the latest scamming strategies.

MOVIE REVIEW

PARASITE



ACADEMY AWARDS BEST PICTURE

Bong Joon Ho brings his work home to Korea in this pitch-black modern fairytale. Meet the Park Family: the picture of aspirational wealth. And the Kim Family, rich in street smarts but not much else. Be it chance or fate, these two houses are brought together and the Kims sense a golden opportunity. Masterminded by college-aged Ki-woo, the Kim children expediently install themselves as tutor and art therapist, to the Parks. Soon, a symbiotic relationship forms between the two families. The Kims provide "indispensable" luxury services while the Parks obliviously bankroll their entire household. When a parasitic interloper threatens the Kims' newfound comfort, a savage, underhanded battle for dominance breaks out, threatening to destroy the fragile ecosystem between the Kims and the Parks.

It was Bong Joon-ho's social satire thriller *Parasite* that walked away with four trophies and made Oscar history as the first South Korean film to be nominated for (and win) an Academy Award and the first non-English language film to win Best Picture, as well as the first non-English language film to win both Best Picture and Best Director. Oh, and by the way, it was also the first film to win in the newly renamed Best International Feature Film category, and it snatched the Best Original Screenplay award out from under the nose of Quentin Tarantino, who was hoping to become only the second person to win the award three times.



By Rafer Guzmán

Jordan Peele's horror film from last year, "Us," about evil doppelgängers, itself now has a doppelgänger: Bong Joon-ho's "Parasite." Peele's film, a class-conscious fable in which a wealthy family is overtaken by its impoverished mirror image, initially seemed like the movie of the moment. "Parasite," however, which is built on essentially the same premise, has been hailed as the movie of the decade and is now the rare foreign-language film to be nominated for the Academy Award for best picture & succeeded. "Parasite" introduces us to the Kims, a South Korean family of four living in a subterranean apartment. They're so poor they can't afford wi-fi (a modern mark of poverty; they leech it from nearby cafes) and earn their meagre income folding pizza boxes. A gift from a well-heeled friend, a heavy stone that promises wealth to its owner, works its magic when the son, Ki-woo (Choi Woo-Shik) lands a job teaching English to a wealthy schoolgirl, Park Da-hye (Jung Ziso). She's part of the Park family, also a

foursome, who look like the negative (or maybe the positive?) image of the Kims, living comfortably in a modernist mansion high on a hill. This isn't a Korean Horatio Alger story – the Kims don't want to work hard, or at all. The clever daughter, Kim Ki-jung (Park So-Dam, whose mischievous eyes are among this film's best features), presents herself to the Parks as an art therapist for children; the obsequious Mr. Kim (Song Kang-ho) becomes a driver for the patriarchal Mr. Park (Lee Sun-kyun); and Mrs. Kim (Chang Hye-jin) replaces the Parks' loyal housekeeper (an excellent Lee Jung-eun). Finally, when the Parks go on vacation, the Kims move right in, raiding the fridge and emptying the liquor cabinet "Parasite" moves effortlessly between capitalist parable, horror film and situation comedy as the natures of the two families are revealed: The Kims, grasping and greedy yet unfairly stigmatized by poverty (even in their newly bought clothes, they give off an odor that can't be masked), and the Parks,

harmless and well-intentioned yet coasting through life on the backs of others. Who's the parasite, then? So recognizable is this picture of society that you may forget you aren't watching an American movie. (The spell breaks now and then when Mrs. Park tosses off an English catchphrase to prove her internationalist bona-fides.) Bong, the unfettered creative mind behind the dystopian fantasy "Snowpiercer" (2013) and the environmentalist satire "Okja" (2017), tends to cram his movies with more ideas than they can handle. It's a problem many filmmakers would kill for, but it also keeps "Parasite" from hitting its thematic nails squarely on the head. When the story reveals a surprising new layer – fans of "Us" will spot another similarity here -- "Parasite" becomes doubly entertaining and thought-provoking but, at the same time, less focused. Regardless, something about "Parasite" has struck a chord with Western audiences, who don't normally tolerate subtitles. It's a movie from an unfamiliar part of the world that paints an uncannily familiar picture.

The Great Australian Dream is keeping the economy weak

By Ross Gittins

The Sydney Morning Herald



Do you worry about the enormous size of your mortgage? If you do, it seems you're not the only one. And the way Reserve Bank governor Dr Philip Lowe sees it, people like you are the main reason consumer spending is so weak and the Reserve and the Morrison government are having so much trouble getting the economy moving.

Until the global financial crisis in 2008, we were used to an economy that, after allowing for inflation, grew by about 3 per cent a year. The latest figures show it growing by barely more than half that. (This, of course, is before we feel the temporary effects of bushfires and the coronavirus.)

This explains why the Reserve cut its official interest rate three times last year, dropping it from a record low of 1.5 per cent to an even more amazing 0.75 per cent. Cutting interest rates is intended to encourage people to borrow and spend. So far, however, it's shown little sign of working.

Similarly, the first stage of the massive tax cuts that were Scott Morrison's key promise at last year's election, a new tax break worth more than \$1000 a year to middle-income-earners, was expected to give the economy a kick along once people started spending the much bigger tax refunds they got after the end of last financial year.

Despite Treasurer Josh Frydenberg's confident predictions, it didn't happen. Why have the authorities had so little success at pushing the economy along? Why did real consumer spending per person actually fall in the year to September? That's what Lowe sought to explain to the House of Reps economics committee last Friday. His theory – which he backed up with statistical evidence – is that, the combination of weak growth in wages with falling house prices has really worried a lot of people with big mortgages.

So, rather than increase their spending on goods and services, they cut it and used whatever spare money they could to pay down their mortgage.

In principle when interest rates fall, people with home loans now have more money to spend on other things. In practice, however, most people leave their monthly payments unchanged. The amount they're paying above the bank's newly reduced minimum payment comes straight off the principal they owe, thus further reducing (by a little) the interest they're charged.

That's pretty much standard behaviour for Australian home-buyers. But this time they've also avoided spending their tax refunds, leaving the money in their "offset account". They may or may not decide to spend it later. But for as long as it's sitting in the

offset account it's reducing their net mortgage debt and the interest they're paying. But get this: not content with those two moves, households have also decided to cut their consumer spending and so save a higher proportion of their income. It's a safe bet that people with home loans have got that extra saving parked in their offset accounts.

Lowe makes the point that, when worried home-buyers take money sent their way to get them spending and use it to reduce their debt, this does bring forward the day when they feel confident enough to start spending again. That's true, but very much second prize.



If people with mortgages are feeling anxious, that's hardly surprising. By June last year, household debt reached a record 188 per cent of annual household disposable income, before falling a bit in

the September quarter. About half that debt was for owner-occupied housing and about a quarter for personal loans and credit cards, leaving about a quarter for housing investment debt. This is higher than in most rich countries, but that's mainly because of our generous tax breaks for negatively geared property investors, a loophole most other, more sensible countries have closed.

But hang on. Those of us living in Melbourne or Sydney (but not elsewhere in Australia) know that, in response to the recent cuts in interest rates, people have resumed borrowing for housing, causing house prices to stop falling and start rising again.

Is this a good thing? Lowe can see advantages and disadvantages. On the plus side, rising house prices are likely to make people with big mortgages feel less uncomfortable and so get closer to the point where they allow their spending to grow. It also brings forward the day when the building of new homes stops falling and starts rising again.

On the negative side, is it really a great thing for house prices to take off every time interest rates come down? How's that going to help our kids become home owners?

Lowe asks whether we benefit as a society from having very high housing prices relative to the level of our incomes. "There are things that we could do on the structural side . . . to have a lower level of housing prices relative to income." They're much lower across the United States, for instance, even though, by and large, the Americans' interest rates have been lower than ours. What are these "things on the structural side" we could be doing to make our housing more affordable? He didn't say. But I think he was referring to more liberal council zoning regulations and to getting rid of the many tax concessions that favour home owners at the expense of would-be home owners, including negative gearing.

Ross Gittins is the Herald's economic editor.

THE NEWS | No.514 | WEDNESDAY 19 Feb 2020

You can e-mail, fax or simply drop your ©WD or ©NSWD into our office:- 12 Clift Street, Braxton or Fax: 4938 3301 or E-mail: thenews@holkey.net.au All contributions welcome

DOES THIS bloke (Steve's rant issue 513) really believe the questionable statements he makes? Personal attacks on guys who only want to protect our planet from environmental vandalism. The opinion of Prince Charles, David Attenborough, Al Gore and Greta Thunberg are all based on science.

TO THOSE very judgmental motorists who complain when a car with a handicapped sticker takes an ordinary car park instead of using the handicapped designated parking. I imagine, as it is with myself, there are many, many motorists who are driving the designated car but are not the actual designated handicapped person. In my case my wife can use the handicapped parking but I cannot. The sticker stays in the car. So, next time you see the car parked at the IGA carpark & it's not in the handicapped parking then it's because I'm driving the car & not my wife.

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

FREE Classified's

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

Computer Tuition: From basics to highly skilled & learn all about ebay. P: 0429 381 908 repairs. Comtronics P: 4991 1128

Drum lessons: Young Musician studying Bachelor of Music will conduct lessons (drum) your home or mine. (\$25.00 at mine \$30 for away for ½ hour). Beginners welcome. call Josh on 0458 611 362

For Rent: Braxton RSL Hall, air conditioned. Short or long term. P: 0429 438 460

For Sale: Wood lathe, 1000mm bed, Good running order with 6 quality turning tools, \$230, White moulded top vanity in good condition, 900 x 470, \$30, Prime coat exterior solid core door, 820 x 2040 x 35, new, \$50, Solid timber block board door, 920 x 1985 x 40, \$20, White aluminium roll down security shutters with most fittings, 1800, 1860, 1760 and 1650 wide, free. 0437312905

For Sale: 2002 Rover 75 in need of a good home. Restoration project. Full leather interior, GPS, fully optioned. Needs new headliner, bonnet respray. Good tyres. Unregistered. P: 0414 757 826

For Sale: 2013 Nissan Navara ST-R (4X4) \$17,000 4 cyl, 2.5 L Transmission Manual Kilometers 101,000 km Body Type Ute / Tray Location North Rothbury, NSW

For Sale: Walk behind slash/mower, unused for a long time but was working. Free. 4 x Roll down security shutters, white, 1800,1860,1760 and 1650 wide with most fittings, Free. Painted block board solid door 1985 x 920 x 40, good workshop bench top, \$20. New Humes Prime coat, SCX1, solid core door, 2040 x 820 x 35, \$60, Chain wire, as new 1.2m x 6m, \$15. Edmonds whirlybird roof ventilator, woodland Grey, new in box, \$60 P: 0437312905

For Sale: 2000 Holden Rodeo LXTFR9 Dual Cab lpg/petrol (WSE547) rego 27/6/20. 156,239 bull bar ute liner canopy silvergrey \$2950 neg. olwynca@gmail.com P: 0249387430

For Sale: Small, almost new, Guinea Pig cage. \$25 P: 0404 499 849

For Sale: Practically new medium sized Mobility Scooter . Only 3yrs old and driven 3 times, as owner didn't have the confidence to use it. Brand new batteries just installed as it has been unused. or a long time. Always kept inside. Comes with canopy and shopping bag. 2200 ONO (value \$4500) Inspection by arrangement. Please call Cherie on 0458721077

For Sale: Aviary bred Rainbow & Scaly Lorikeets. \$20ea or \$45ea with new cage P: 0421 102 711

For Sale: Alpacas Ph 0400697148

For Sale: Free range eggs. \$4/doz Greta 0412 976 809

Riding Lessons: agistment, horses trained. 0407 453 494

Share Accommodation: East Braxton \$180 + share utilities cost P: 0407 383 026

Seamstress: Sewing & mending P: Brune 0413 351 057

Wanted: all kinds of Honda mini bikes qa50 z50a z50j1 z50jz ct70 st70 & atc70. Contact Drew 0435814841

Wanted: Clean Fill Required North Braxton area. No builders rubble or materials P: 0413161296 Fred

Work Wanted: Need a house cleaner \$25/hr P: 0488 588 333

Work Wanted: Need an extra hand? I do all maintenance, labouring, construction, asbestos & have working with children licence. P (Pat) 0414 278 292

Work Wanted: Lawns mowed, rubbish removal & slashing. Also 'Bobcat' work, trenching & post hole boring & general maintenance & handyman work. Phone Steve on 4938 3601

Work Wanted: HORSE CLIPPING - PERFORMANCE READY. Hunter Valley & Central Coast. Phone Caron 0416 128 701

Work Wanted: Lawns properties, mowing, trimming, removals, maintenance. Paul 0478103814 or 49987567

Work Wanted: Sick of cleaning, cooking dinner, washing. Call me! Taking bookings now. Professional and reliable service. Sue 0497257081

Work Wanted: Rural Fencing (TW & A Hollingshed) P: 4998 1583 or Trevor on 0429 320 787 for quotes.

Work Wanted: experienced baby sitter looking for work. Very reliable. P: 0458 606 804

Work Wanted: Lawn & Garden Maintenance, P: 4938 3153

Work Wanted: Piano teacher available to give lessons P: Phil Aughey on 0447 381 989

Work Wanted: Contract stock work with horses & dogs. Design & building wooden stock yards - rural fencing P Shaun: 0416 226 538

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

Dates for your diary

- TUE 25 FEB - Braxton Public School Year 6 Open Evening at Rutherford THS 5:30-7:00
- FRI 28 FEB - Braxton Public School Whole School PBL Assembly
- MON 2 MAR - Applications close 2020 Cessnock City Council Mayoral Scholarships
- MON 9 MAR - Braxton Public School School Photos
- TUES 10 MAR - Braxton/Greta CWA Mthly Mtg - Old St. Brigs Staff Room, Station St., Braxton, 9.30am, Morning Tea following. Visitors and New members welcome. Contact Marie Shearer 0402015850 for any information.
- SUN 15 MAR - 19th Annual Coalfields Classic MOTORCYCLE Show @ Tatt's Hotel Greta. FREE admission. Entries start at 9:30am & show commences 10am
- SAT 21 MAR - Braxton Public School P&C Trivia Night at Braxton Golf Club 7pm
- TUES 14 APR - Braxton/Greta CWA Mthly Mtg - Old St.

PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE

14 Feb. 2020 Roy Orbison Reborn starring Dean Bourne Come and relive the sound, the voice & all the magical hits of music legend Roy Orbison in an international production starring the world's No 1 Roy Orbison tribute star Dean Bourne.

ROY ORBISON Reborn

Starring INTERNATIONAL ACCLAIMED DEAN BOURNE

Dates for your diary

- Brigs Staff Room, Station St., Braxton, 9.30am, Morning Tea following. Visitors and New Members welcome. Contact Marie Shearer 0402015850 for any information.
 - SAT 25 APR 2020 - ANZAC Day
 - SUN 10 MAY 2020 - Mothers day
 - TUE 12 MAY 2020 - Braxton/Greta CWA Mthly Mtg - Old St. Brigs Staff Room, Station St., Braxton, 9.30am, TUE 9 JUN 2020 - Braxton/Greta CWA Mthly Mtg - Old St. Brigs Staff Room, Station St., Braxton, 9.30am, Morning Tea following. Visitors and New Members welcome. Contact Marie Shearer 0402015850 for any information
 - 14 JUL 2020 - Braxton/Greta CWA Mthly Mtg - Old St. Brigs Staff Room, Station St., Braxton, 9.30am, Morning Tea following. Visitors and New Members welcome. Contact Marie Shearer 0402015850 for any information.
 - SUN 6 SEPT 2020 - Fathers day
 - MON 5 OCT 2020 - Labour Day Public Holiday
- Upcoming Concerts**
- SAT 15 FEB 2020 - Red Hot Summer Tour @ Roche Estate-Hunters & Collectors, James Reyne, The Living End, The Angels & Baby Animals
 - SAT 29 FEB 2020 - A Day on the Green with A-HA, Rick Astley, Psuedo Echo Live
 - SAT 24 OCT 2020 - Rod Stewart Live @ Roche Estate
 - SAT 31 OCT 2020 - "Jazz in the Vineyards" @ Hope Estate

Woodland Warblers and Plant Pollinators Workshop

Elderslie Hall,

758 Elderslie Rd, Elderslie (via Braxton)

9:30am - 1:00pm

Saturday 7th March 2020

Singleton Shire Landcare Network is pleased to invite Landcarers and interested residents to a workshop discussing woodland birds and pollinators of native plants, the workshop is to be presented by Mick Roderick of Birdlife Australia and experts from the University of New England



Images: C. Birdlife Australia and CSIRO

Free admission. RSVP and further information to upperhunterland-care@gmail.com or phone Paul Melehan on 0408 499838



A little bit of history trivia ...

Citroen's WW II Sabotage

You're likely unaware that this year is the 100th anniversary of Citroën. While doing some research I have happened to stumble upon a fascinating bit of wartime Citroën lore. It involves screwing with Nazis in a genuinely clever and subtle way that nevertheless had big repercussions. I'll explain.

So, when France was occupied by the Germans in 1940, major French factories like Citroën were forced to produce equipment for the Nazis. Citroën president Pierre-Jules Boulanger knew he couldn't just refuse to produce anything, but he also knew there's no way in hell he's going to just roll over and build trucks for a bunch of filthy Nazis. Pierre had a plan.

John Reynold's book Citroën p2CV describes Boulanger's sabotage efforts. Of course, he instructed workers to set a nice, leisurely pace when building trucks (likely Citroën T45 trucks) for the Wehrmacht, but that's fairly obvious. What was brilliant was Boulanger's idea to move the little notch on the trucks' oil dipsticks that indicated the proper level of oil down just a bit lower.

By moving the notch down, the trucks would not have enough oil, but German mechanics would have no idea, because, hey, the little notch on the dipstick says its just fine. Then, after the truck has been used for a while and is out deployed somewhere crucial, whammo, the engine seizes up, and you've got a lot of angry, stranded, vulnerable Nazis, balling up their little fists and madly barking curses in German.

It's such a fantastic act of sabotage: it's extremely cheap to implement, it's subtle, there's no way to see something amiss is happening as the trucks are being built, and it delivers its blow away from the site of the sabotage and when it will cause the most inconvenience and trouble. That's some mighty good sabotaging, Pierre.

Happy 100th Anniversary, Citroën. The Free World thanks you.

Citroën T45 trucks



Countdown to Coles Opening

Work is progressing well on the new Huntlee Shopping Centre, with it's grand opening on track for mid-2020.

The centre will include a 3200 square metre market-style Coles supermarket boasting an in-store bakery, open-style meat counter with a qualified butcher, large gourmet deli and fresh produce area. A 200 square metre Liquorland will also open adjacent to the supermarket.

The centre also includes 1062 square metres designated for specialty shops, as well as approximately 240 car spaces.

Andrew La Martina, Coles Development Manager for NSW and ACT said there are only 11 specialty shops on offer.

"We have already secured a number of tenants who have recognised the opportunity to be part of this exciting greenfield development, anchored by the strength of the Coles brand," said Andrew.

"We're now in the process of looking for other experienced specialty retailers to complement the mix.

"The flexible specialty retail spaces range from 42 square metres, up to 184 square metres. Prime spaces overlooking the town square are ideally positioned for cafes and restaurants looking to capture the allure of alfresco dining.

Other spaces will be well suited to a variety of offerings such as take-away food, hair and beauty stores, dentists and real estate agencies, just to name a few.

"The Huntlee Shopping Centre will service a wide number of the surrounding villages, with the nearest major supermarket approximately 20km away. The Huntlee development is going from strength to strength with new customers moving into the area every week.

"When completed, Huntlee will be similar in size to Singleton, so the opportunity to get in on the ground floor in the town centre and establish a retail or service offering is highly appealing," added Andrew



Anyone interested in learning more about securing a space in the Huntlee Shopping Centre should contact Luke Rutledge at Colliers International on 0432 741 632.



If you require assistance
please call Mike on
0414 757 826



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Take your garbage to the Waste Management Centre.

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Branxton VIEW Club held its first meeting for 2020 at Greta Workers Club.

Shirley Green officiated at the Annual General Meeting and read the new Code of Conduct. Reports for the previous year were read and Helen Christy Rix thanked all the committee members for their contributions. We have 7 members and were delighted to welcome our 28th member, Jan Travis.

Office bearers for 2020 were as follows:-

President-Helen Christy Rix ,**Vice President**-Margaret Wilson, **Secretary**-Bethany Oldfield, **Assistant Secretary**-Evelyn Thrift, **Treasurer**-Yvonne Bell, **Assistant Treasurer**-Cathy Lindsay/Sandie Smith, **Delegate** - Judy Groves, **Publicity Officer** - Judy Spillard, **Program Officer** - Denise Hungerford, **Newsletter** - Sandie Smith, **Trading Table** - Joan Nightingale and Shirley Waters.

Congratulations everyone-we now begin another year in which our fundraising activities help to finance our five disadvantaged Australian school children through the Smith Family Learning For Life Program'

Our popular donna-lou Fashion Parade will be held on Monday 4th May at Branxton Community Hall. Pleas note this in your diaries.

On 14th March,10.30 am at Greta Workers Club we attend a memorial service for former member, Pat Stephens who passed away after a long illness.

We welcome any new members who would like to join our happy group. We meet on the second Thursday of each month at Greta Workers Club. Our secretary, Bethany (Phone 0419 429 364) is happy to give you further information.

Our grateful thanks for all the tireless workers during the fires and floods.



Our new Office Bearers

Peace and love to everyone, Judy Spillard

School News



Branxton Public School

We've been enjoying the rain over the past fortnight and our grass is starting to grow, but it has meant a few changes to our planned programs in the first few weeks. Our Swimming Carnival was postponed and became a competitor only event in Week 3. The students displayed outstanding behaviour and should be proud of their efforts. 'The Human Race' performance also had to be postponed due to weather and we are securing dates for later in the year.

Don't wait too long to book a table for the P&C Trivia Night. Half the tables have already been booked! The fun event will be held at Branxton Golf Club on Saturday 21st March. Contact the P&C to secure your table.



Monday 9th March – School Photos
Saturday 21st March – P&C Trivia Night at Branxton Golf Club 7pm

■ PHOTOS: Swimming Carnival

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



The Imaginaturalist program is continuing in 2020 and our students have begun their creative exploration into the natural world through art with Gillian. We look forward to seeing the results of their investigations.

Representatives from Rutherford Technology High School came for a visit to begin our Year 6 transition into high school. An open evening at the high school is offered later in February for students and parents/carers to become more familiar with the high school setting.

Dates for the Calendar

Tuesday 25th February – Year 6 Open Evening at Rutherford THS 5:30-7:00
Friday 28th February – Whole School PBL Assembly

ARE YOU SMARTER THAN A BRANXTON PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHER?

BPS P & C TRIVIA NIGHT

JOIN US FOR THE ONLY CHILD FREE SOCIAL EVENT OF THE YEAR!

21 MARCH 2020 | 6PM DINNER & DRINKS
BRANXTON GOLF CLUB | 7PM TRIVIA

TICKETS \$10 EACH (EARLY BIRD PRICE) - TEAMS OF UP TO 10 PEOPLE

TABLES ARE LIMITED SO BOOK FAST!

BOOKINGS CAN BE MADE BY MESSAGING P & C FACEBOOK PAGE

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

BRANXTON & VINEYARDS REAL ESTATE
P: 4938 3300

"Branxton Gardens" Senior Living, Branxton

Recent sales

UNIT 2 SOLD
UNIT 10 SOLD
UNIT 12 SOLD
UNIT 18 SOLD

In The Garden

How to grow and care for frangipani

(Ed. I have lived in the mid Hunter Valley for over 40 years & have been an avid gardener over that time ... what have I learnt:-

1. The best way to attract birds, particularly parrots, is to plant Australian native shrubs. The *red flowering gum* is a standout
2. Azaleas, camellias & gardenias do well.
3. The frangipani loves our climate & need next to nothing care.

The most common frangipani is the *Plumeria Rubra*. *Rubra* (picture at top) come in many colours, from white to cream to yellow, even oranges, pinks (both pale and hot pink), reds and even deep cerise. They also come in multiple colours (such as pink, apricot and yellow in the one flower). And *Rubra* has the most fragrant flowers!

No flower evokes thoughts of the tropics quite like a frangipani does—the beautiful form, the colours and that perfume! As well as its flowers, frangipani has a stunning form that can bring great summer shade. What you need to know about frangipani

Name: frangipani (*Plumeria* sp. and cvs.)

Height: 5–8m with age, canopy often as wide

Foliage: deciduous. Large (20–30cm long × 10cm wide), deep green, distinct veins and mid-rib.

Climate: tropics, sub-tropics, sheltered location in warm temperate, and microclimates in cold temperate.

Soil: free-draining to sandy soil. Will perform best with extra organic matter in the soil.

Position: full sun, protected from winds

Flowering: varies by region, from December through until April.

Feeding: not essential, although a spring/summer feed is beneficial.

Watering: during warmer months if needed. Avoid winter watering.

Appearance and characteristics of frangipani

The frangipani is a small tree with a distinctly tropical appearance. The richly fragrant flowers appear across the warmer months, and range from white with a yellow centre to vibrant pinks, yellows, pink-yellow-orange mixes (often called “fruit salad”) and dark shades of mahogany-red. Some reds are so dark they’re sometimes described as “black”. With age, the plant

develops a broad, spreading crown, with the branching often starting just above ground level.

The most commonly grown species are deciduous.

There are evergreen species, but they are generally only suitable for tropical and sub-tropical regions.

Uses of frangipani

Whether grown in the ground or in big pots, no tropical-look, resort style, Balinese or modern Aussie coastal garden is complete without a frangipani or two. You can even plant a perfumed rainbow! The choice of flower colours is enormous, and the perfume is divine.

Frangipani is excellent grown against sunny walls, providing cooling summer shade while letting winter sun flow through. It can also be a real problem solver, as it will thrive in sandy soil that many plants can’t handle.

And if you only have a balcony, you can still have a frangipani! They can do very well in large pots and planters too.

How to plant and grow frangipani

As frangipani hails originally from tropical regions, its best performance will be in the tropics and sub-tropics.

However, if protected from cold winds and frost, it can also grow well, albeit more slowly, in cooler zones.

In cooler areas, select a north-facing spot that will create a suitably warm microclimate. Frangipani will tolerate a wide range of soil types, provided drainage is excellent.

Avoid locations where soil may remain wet, especially across the cooler months, and avoid windy spots, as frangipani branches are brittle.

Frangipani planting tips

Follow these planting tips



to ensure your frangipani will thrive: Frangipani will benefit from some extra organic matter, such as a quality compost or composted manure, blended in with the planting soil. Don’t be surprised if the plant only has a very loose root ball when you remove its pot. Try not to disturb the roots too much, as they can be easily damaged. Larger plants will require staking, as they will be

top-heavy until they establish. **Frangipani care tips** Frangipani is a very easy-care plant. If conditions are dry in the warmer months, water the plant as the leaves and flowers are developing. Avoid watering your frangipani while it is dormant (leafless). Fertilising isn’t necessary, but will improve performance. Apply a controlled-release fertiliser around the edge of the canopy line in late spring or

early summer. **How to prune frangipanis** Occasionally, you may need to prune your frangipani to restrict size, tidy a broken branch or to remove an inconvenient branch. On older trees, look for any branches that have started rubbing or crossing over, or have stopping producing foliage or flowers, and remove them. **Diseases and pests** Frangipani rust generally appears shortly before leaf fall, and shows up as

discolouring of leaves above, and orange spots on their under-surface. Thoroughly spray all leaf surfaces with a suitable fungicide such as Eco-Fungicide and repeat weekly. Any fallen leaves should be promptly removed, sealed in a plastic bag and disposed of in the regular bin (not the compost). Scale insects are found on stems or leaves. They look like small white or brown lumps. These can easily be treated with a suitable horticultural spray oil. **Growing frangipani from cuttings** Frangipani grows very easily from cuttings. Your cutting should be a growth tip at least 10–15cm long. Ensure the cutting is cleanly cut, not crushed, and put it somewhere warm

and shady until the sap seals. Once dry, fill a suitable-sized pot with a free-draining potting mix or propagating mix. Put the cutting in, and support it if required. Put it in a warm spot and only water when dry. You can grow a new plant from even very large cuttings—just ensure they have adequate support as they grow. **Frangipani Species (or what frangipani is that?)** The question of how many frangipani (or plumeria) species there are is actually quite a contentious one. Some gardening experts say there are only 2, and all others are subspecies or hybrids. Others say 3, 4 or more.

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202 Wollombi Road, Cessnock (opposite ALDI)

Branxton Veteran Golfers
Results 6-2-20
2BBB v PAR

1st B Wallis & M Kingston +10
2nd A Hackett & L Bootes + 5 (c/b)
3rd J Harris & I Harris + 5 (c/b)
4th P Conroy & R Moylan + 5 (c/b)
5th E Munzenberger
G Train + 5
NTP Ladies M Hunt
Gents R Yandle

Members draw - Not won Well!!! The rain came, a little less than the forecast predicted, insufficient to delay the round, and all players did not reach for an umbrella or rain coat.

Congratulations to Bruce Wallis and Murray Kingston on winning the event, with an impressive score of +10 and streaking away from the place getter scramble. Some head scratching for the score keepers to sort out the placings. It was pleasing to see a couple of our older players running second, with a combined age of 172 years.

Results 13-2-20

Stableford
Div 1 Winner D Sheppard 26 pts(c/b) (SOD) R/u L Hunt 26 pts (c/b) 3rd J Beresa 26 pts

Div 2 Winner A Cannon 25 pts (c/b) R/u M Kingston 25 pts 3rd R Hebbe 23 pts

Ladies Winner M Hunt 20 pts R/u R Friis 19 pts 3rd Nil NTP Ladies R Friis

Gents M Martin
Members draw - Not won Another great day for golf, however the burgeoning growth seems to be having some effect on ball distances, if the scores are anything to go by. Congratulations Darryl Sheppard on winning his division and achieving the 'Score of the Day', as humble as it may be. A good effort by other winners and place getters.

LN Bootes, Hon Sec

Hunter Valley Golf Club Sunday 2nd February

The 2020 Pennants season Teed off today in blistering heat with Hunter Valley having B Grade and Seniors playing with mixed results. The Seniors had a 2-1 win over Singleton at Aberdeen while the B Grade went down to Singleton 3-2 at Paterson. A Grade will begin their campaign next Sunday and C Grade a week later, receiving the bye next week. The Weekly Challenge concluded today also with Clint Evans of the Singleton GC surviving a 3 way count-back with 40 points to claim the win, runner up went to fellow Singleton member Brendan James with other 40 point member Tony Krishna 3rd. Ball winners were: Ian Taylor 39, Patrick Dibley 38, Luke Stevens 37, Michael McNab 37 and Lloyd Barrett 37 c/b

Tuesday 4th February
Jeremy Smilie of the Newcastle GC had a clear win in the Tuesday Stableford with 42 points from Rob Hannah 37 on countback to Steve Piggot 3rd. Ball winners were: Brett Janssen v36, Jason Capararo v36, Mark Fullbrook 36, David Peel 36, Jason Bear 36, Peter Wilson 35, Nathan Sweeney 35, Paul Smith 35, Jennifer Williams v35, Jason McBeath 35, Heinz Kestermann 35, Matt Delforce 34, Blake Currington v34, Andrew Edwards v34, Graeme Flynn 33, Stephen Bear v33, James Hogg 33, Wayne Cowan 33, Paul Hyslop v32, Elliot Skinner v32, Jodie Dunn 32, Alex Mitchell v31, Bob Prentice 31, Scott Goldman v31 and Steven Wright v31 c/b. Nearest-the-Pins went to David Peel (3rd) Steve Piggot (8th) Matt Delforce (10th) and Paul Smith (17th)

Wednesday 5th February
Christine Tancred has produced a fine sub Par round of 41 points to win the Ladies Stableford from Melita Watson with 37 on countback to 3rd placed Diane Davies.

Thursday 6th February
Intermittent, much needed rain took the edge from some of the Vets scoring with only a small number breaking Par. Division 1 went to Gary Fairlie with 35 points from James Schofield 34 c/b, Division 2 to Dennis Donn with an excellent 40 point round from Bruce Chambers 37c/b and Division 3 to Heavy Track specialist Curly Tomlinson with 42 points from Peter Perkins 37c/b. Ball winners were: Eric Smith 37, Dave Gellwiler 37, Kevin Smith 37, Greg Harder 36, Neil Peterson 36, Paul Ireland 35, Ray Boyd 35, Ron Findley 35, Geoff Sweetman 35, Geoff Boyd 35, Ray Newton 34, Wayne Barber 34, Graham Donaldson 34, Alan Kendall 34, Murray Flannigan 34, Gerry Irwin 33, Doug Harley 33 and Graham Morris 33 c/b. Nearest-the-Pins went to Alick Bender (3rd) Kevin Smith (4th) Geoff Boyd with a **Hole-in-One** (8th) Danny Schofield (10th) and Ray Boyd (17th). Next week the Vets will play a 4BBB Par event, please use individual cards and nominate your partner when picking up your card.

Saturday 8th February
The continuing welcome rain was a tad unwelcome to many of the Blue Tee Challenge Stableford field with only the stout hearted taking the challenge. Viney Creek visitor Robert Campbell performed best in the tough conditions to return 35 points, Craig Sharp 'flew the flag' for members with 34 in 2nd spot and Kurri visitor Richard Ryan 3rd with 33. Ball comp details are not yet available.

Sunday 9th February

Ryan McGregor with a very good 39 point round has won the Weekly Challenge from Jeff Shanahan with 34 on countback

Tuesday 11th February
Wayne Burgess has quickly adapted to the new handicap system and a 'heavy track' to record 38 points to claim the Tuesday Stableford from Matt Lorenz with an even Par 36 on countback to Mick Barrett also on countback. Ball winners were: Lloyd Barrett 36, Phil Darcy 35, Paul Neuss 35, Brad Greenham v34, Peter Tierney 34, Nigel Brenton 33, Steve Grant v33, Steve Piggot 33, Nathan Sweeney 33, David Michael Menzies 33, Heinz Kestermann 32, Peter Franks 32, Ryan Wilson 31, Arthue Cuttriss 31 and Peter McIntyre 31 c/b. Nearest-the-Pins went to Wade Frith (3rd) Peter Tierney (4th) Eric Smith (10th) and David Peel (17th)

Wednesday 12th February
Toni Fisher has produced another solid round of 39 points to win the Ladies Stableford from Melita Watson 37 and Diane Davies 3rd with 34 points. Ball winners were: Dale Hamilton 33, Jan Hovey 31 and Joy Provenzano 30 c/b. The Ladies Summer Stableford will continue next week.

Thursday 13th February
Most of the Vets field found the course conditions to their liking following the recent rain and scores reflected the great conditions. Curly Tomlinson led the way in the Individual event with +5 from Wayne Drayton +4 on countback to Eric Smith in 3rd place also on countback. Nearest-the-Pins went to Wayne Cowan (3rd) Peter Fisher (4th) Garry Fairlie (8th) Ray Boyd (10th) and Redders (17th). The 4BBB Par team winners were Tom Bell & Rob Hannah with +10 on countback to Garry Fairlie & Gunner with Bindii & Bill Freeman 3rd with +9 on countback. Ball winners were: Dave Blackburn & Steve Rawlings +9, Curly & Fluff +8, Bruce Mathews & Ryan Wilson +7, Greg Noble & Wayne Oliver v+7, Wayne Drayton & Ray Newton +7, David Archibald & Peter McIntyre +7, Fluff & Gary Arnold +6, Maureen & Graham Donaldson +6, Eric Smith & Larrie Clarke +6 & Danny & James Schofield +6 c/b. Next week the Vets will play Stroke

Saturday 15th February
John Robertson has produced a fine round of 67 net to claim the Monthly Mug and A Grade with Russell

Calderwood runner up with 71, B Grade has gone to Phil Douglas with 71 on countback to Simon Nicholson and C grade to Tony Butler 75 from John Barbour with 77. No other details have been released at this Stage.

Sunday 16th February
All grades took part in Pennants round with mixed results, A Grade split the points with The Vintage after 2.5 matches each, B Grade once again lost 2-3 to Branxton, C Grade had a 3-2 win over Paterson and The Seniors went down 0-3 to Branxton

Branxton Golf Club Saturday, 8 February 2020 SUMMER CUP RD 3 - STABLEFORD

Field: 23
Grades A Peter Conroy 35
Grades A Edward Barrett 34
Grades B Luke Simmons 36
Grades B Robert Hale 34
Grades C Darren Mathers 35
Grades C Steven Primmer 30
NTP 2/11 A 2nd Darren Maskell 190cm
NTP 4 A 4th David Hollis 456cm
NTP 9/18 A 9th Darren Maskell 309cm
NTP 13 A 13th Peter Wilton 280cm
Balls 7 Distributed down to score: 29

A small but resilient 23 golfers braved the wet conditions to play on Saturday. The rain is most welcome with Sunday's Pennants at Branxton cancelled due to the course being underwater. Peter Conroy won A Grade with an excellent 35 pts, on a day where no player broke their handicap. Local legend and one of the most consistent golfers in the club, Eddie Barrett finished runner up with 34 pts. Luke Simmons was the only player all day to play to his handicap in winning B Grade with 36 pts, just ahead of Bobby Hale's well compiled 34 pts. One thing about Robert, nothing will stop him from playing golf on a Saturday! Darren Mathers won C Grade with 35 pts, well clear of runner up Steve Primmer. The shot of the day belonged to Darren Mather's shot to the 2nd, just under two metres away. Only 29 pts was needed to win a ball. Members are asked to check the club's website as Captain and adventurer Murray Johanson was out

and about on Sunday (he also played on Saturday) taking photos and videos of the flooded course—well worth a look. Another piece of historical news is that one of the trees in front of the 9th/18th has fallen down, much to the cheers of many who have consistently hit that tree over the years. As one member stated, "All those golf balls that have hit this tree over time have weakened it to the point it was vulnerable and all the nasty things that have been said about it may have had an effect as well." Well said Rob McMillan. All Pennants games were cancelled on Sunday due to the rain—all local courses are cheering this scenario as we look forward to some wonderfully green courses in the next few weeks.

Saturday, 15 February 2020 SUMMER CUP RD 4 - STABLEFORD

Field: 50
Grades A Benjamin Bridge 40
Grades A Lee Hunt 37
Grades A Gary Wilton 37
Grades B Nick Wheeler 39
Grades B Joseph Bereza 37
Grades B Robert Hale 37
Grades C Colin Hughes 34
Grades C Nicholas Redgrove 31
Grades C Darrell Fletcher 30
NTP 2/11 A 2nd David Hollis 168cm
NTP 4 A 4th David Matt 125cm
NTP 9/18 A 9th Chris Zawirski 103cm
NTP 13 B 13th Michael Carling 330cm
Balls 15 Distributed down to score: 31

The 2019 B Grade Club Champion Benjamin Bridge played beautifully to win Saturday's A Grade stableford with an outstanding 40 pts, well clear of runners up Lee Hunt and local legendary veteran Gary Wilton with 37 pts. Nick Wheeler's 39 pts was easily good enough to win B Grade, with Joe Bereza and Robert Hale sharing the placings with their 37 pts. B Grade struggled in the conditions with Col Hughes' 34 pts a clear winner, with Nicholas Redgrove runner up with 31 pts and Darrell Fletcher third with his 30 pts. The shot of the day belonged to Chris Zawirski on the 9th, finishing only 103 cms away. 31 pts was needed to win a ball. The Pennants on Sunday proved to be a very successful day for all the teams with A Grade defeating Scone 3-2 at Muswellbrook; B Grade won 3-2 against Hunter Valley at Branxton; C Grade were very impressive in defeating

2014 Scanlon Shield goes to the Colts



■ Back Row (L – R) Dave Axsentieff, John Gorman, John Richards, Brent Bailey, Chris MacKay, Brendan Neal, Ben Murray, Harry Good- yer, Adam Stinson, Jake Goward, Joby Patten, Josh Griffiths & Brady Hammond. Front Row (L – R) Josh Day, Michael Rinkin, Andrew Roberts, Mick Akers, Dylan Perry, Craig Ekert, Joey Griffiths, Daniel Bates & Ronald Griffiths

Congratulations to the Greta Branxton Colts First Grade side who were crowned winners of the 2014 Scanlon Shield when they defeated Muswellbrook in golden point extra time!!



■ Daniel Bates & Joey Griffiths with the Shield

Singleton 5-0 at Maitland, whilst the Vets were equally impressive in defeating Hunter Valley 3-0 at Singleton. On another note the Branxton Golf Course

received another drenching from the rain on Monday—look out for some updated photos from our intrepid photographer, Captain Murray on the website.

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The NewSPORT

Greta/Branxton hold good lead in Club Champions comp



with Mark Bercini

Week 18 of Cessnock District Cricket saw Greta/Branxton win second grade, third grade blue, third grade white and fourth grade, with first grade enjoying the week off with the bye. This takes the club a step further to winning the club championship with just two rounds remaining. Second Grade were far too strong for Denman Hotel, recording a 129-run at Miller 1. Greta/Branxton batted first and compiled a healthy 5-194 from their 40 overs. American import Jake Goodyer blasted 6 maximums and 3 boundaries in a cameo 69 not out, Will Regan scored a classy 67 not out, with Bryce Element making 35. Denman Hotel were all out for

65 in reply, with Mark Peace (2-20 off 6), Brett Bridge (2-24 off 7), Jason Varley (2-17 off 4.1) and Will Regan (2-4 off 2.4) sharing the workload with a brace of wickets each. Third Grade Blue picked up a much-needed win against Denman Hotel by 2 wickets at Carmichael 2. Denman Hotel managed just 72 batting first, with Ayden Wilkinson (2-38 off 7.2) and James Shoulders jnr (2-1 off 4) best serving the Blues. Greta/Branxton only just fell over the line in reply, reaching the modest target with 2 wickets in hand. Tanveer Singh led the way with 25, with club president Sean Wright (18) doing enough to get the win.

Third Grade White had a thrilling 3-run win over Peden's Hotel Blue at Turner Park. Greta/Branxton posted a modest 134 batting first, with Ben Miezi (29), skipper Neil Bird (29), Jamie McNamara (24), Dan Minchin (21) and Will Young (16) providing the bulk of the runs. Peden's fell just 3 runs shy in reply, running out of overs with still one wicket in hand. 11-year-old Noah McNamara opened the bowling and took 3-37 off 9, with father Jamie (2-17 off 9) and Aaron Stephenson (2-28 off 9) taking wickets. Fourth Grade are making a late charge towards the semi-finals, recording their second

consecutive victory to now sit just one point out of the top-four. They defeated Peden's Hotel by 51 runs at Miller 2. Greta/Branxton accumulated 149 batting first, with Dan McCann returning to form with a well-made 67. Cooper Wilton (19) and Mitch Bradford (18) made starts in supportive knocks. Peden's were all out for 98 in reply, with Correy Stone (3-9 off 6), Jeremy Brown (3-30 off 9) and Joey Regan (2-7 off 1.4) keeping the Blues' semi final hopes alive.

Points Tables

First Grade Mulbring 67, Greta/Branxton 60, Peden's Hotel 50, Bellbird 46, Wine

Country 31.
Second Grade Bellbird 77, Greta/Branxton 77, Chelmsford Hotel 65, Wine Country 61, Denman Hotel 53, Peden's Hotel 45.
Third Grade Greta/Branxton White 70, Bellbird 69, Wine Country 61, Mulbring 60, Peden's Hotel White 58, Peden's Hotel Blue 54, Greta/Branxton Blue 51, Denman Hotel 42.
Fourth Grade Supporters 77, Cessnock Hotel 74, Bellbird White 54, Peden's Hotel 54, Bellbird Maroon 53, Greta/Branxton 53, Chelmsford Hotel 51, Wine Country 49.
Club Championship Greta/Branxton 611.85, Bellbird 573.52, Peden's Hotel 480.83, Wine Country 443.72.

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