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

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.


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.

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 28 February 2020 via email recreation@cessnock.nsw.gov.au or post.

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 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 (Crown 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 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 tourists every year. Tourism is modelled to be the largest employing sector in 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 reinvoke 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.

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

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

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 Rothbury gate didn’t quite do it”. 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 Lyn Bowtell and her partner Damon Morton. They are now the events managers for Concerts by the Creek. Lyn 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 experience 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 Daley. He also has experience at running music festivals, which augers well for Concerts by the Creek.

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

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.

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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.
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 jack 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 it 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 try to destroy them and fence lines. The bean counters have this column before, ‘JUST DO IT’ and then 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. 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. I. The means and route for evacuation from the danger area

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

3. Insurance against loss of property and loss of life 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 9am & the show officially commences at 10am. Trophies will be awarded at 12.30pm.

Secondly, I stumbled on a Japanese vocalist while wasting time browsing: Kyu Sakamoto singing “I look up when I walk” 1968. Sold over 1 million 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

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 retarding the heat. But won’t the same clouds during the day make things cooler than they would have been? Or has there been an increase in those days 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 sky
And feathered canyons everywhere
I’ve looked at clouds that way
But now they only block the sun
They rain and now 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 a cloud illusion I recall
I really don’t know clouds at all

Allan Thomas Lochtevar
“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 this industry is powered is not so simple, and the renewable technology not quite as promising or cheap as people would like to believe?

Scott Hildard, New Lambton
King Coal
Many 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 of construction, and the probability that such generators will be stranded by the time of commissioning. Last night I heard from Martin 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 Tumut on the Murrumbidgee. 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 realty that it’s more expensive than renewables.

It’s time for the Morrison government to come clean with Australians about what it really got planned for nuclear energy and which communities are in its crosshairs. Sharon Claydon, Federal Member for Newcastle
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 benefit of residents at Bulga and nearby communities for the operation and maintenance costs for the benefit of residents at Bulga and Wollombi.

Cessnock City Council’s committed to financial sustainability

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 council’s realised cost savings in the order of $3.100,000 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 public.

The implementation of these projects is currently being managed and monitored through Council’s Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.

Peter, James and John are used to journeying with Jesus. He is their teacher, their friend and companion. He has called them all to follow him. Jesus often taught large crowds or his group of disciples. This journey is one for Peter, James and 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 if in fact 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 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 he speaks to us? when he prompts us? Do we take the time to really listen, to hear the words that he calls us? To understand what it means? 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 be all the 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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Every blessing, Reverend Nicole
for our community, and we, as 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 support and encourage people to reach their full potential.


Chers, Bob

Sue Moore, Mayor Singleton Council

At a time when extreme temperatures and extreme conditions from droughts to floods – and everything in between – are affecting the whole of our global debate to the consequences of climate change, and energy resources come under greater scrutiny. Sue Moore’s learning hard lessons that turning on the tap is far from a basic human right, and there is more of a 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 today.

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

The best aspect of our community was on display at this year’s Australia Day Awards at the Cessnock Memorial Hall, with 500 local people. It made me so proud to be part of a community that contributes so much to help and support others, not to mention the wonderful names and the twenty recipients of the awards.

Like our “Citizen of the Year” Melissa Goulet for her outstanding contribution to our community by supporting disadvantaged locals through her passionate work with “Hunters Hands of Hope” or our “Senior of the Year” Ted Jackson and our “Young Citizen of the Year” Chelsea Webby with leadership through various youth initiatives. They, along with all nominess and recipients, are truly the best representation of what makes this amazing community that continue to go above and beyond to help each other. The great place it is to live, work and play.

What matters most to me, is when I hear people say “it’s a privilege that is not just personally committed to, is a vital fundamental when determining issues that can reshape our ever-changing city. One of those matters is the draft ‘Cessnock Council Local Infrastructure Plan’ that was resolved to be put on public display as soon as possible to ensure you can have your say. In short, the draft plan was developed in consultation with Council’s Development Committee, ‘Neighbourhood Group’ with representatives from key areas of infrastructure, community facilities, cultural engagement and finance to ensure council can adequately deliver infrastructure funds prudently, but most importantly 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 to school for the new year, but it also means the end of holidays and return of sanity for us. It is a time of year where attempts at humour aside, I can’t help but reflect on the holiday chaos and the circumstances that seemed to just continually evolve from bad to worse. Nothing like a daily 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 families who unfortunately lost their lives, 25 of them here in NSW. The 2,900 homes lost and thousands damaged – however, nearly 15,000 homes were saved and it is a credit to the time and effort their time and fought to save those homes. Almost 5.5 million hectares are burnt in New South Wales alone, and approximately one billion wild animals alone are believed to be species pushed dangerously close to extinction. More than 113,777 firefighters were deployed around the State at varying times to defend and protect our communities, including our own local volunteers going wherever needed for the other times during their crisis. I can’t thank them enough.

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

JOEL FITZGIBBON MP

HEARING YOUR VOICE – Returning to work, my office receives an incredible amount of phone calls, emails, and letters each week. In addition to local traffic much of it comes on-hourly news breaks across the nation pushing their pet policy agenda. 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 when I hear people say “it’s a privilege that is not just personally committed to, is a vital fundamental when determining issues that can reshape our ever-changing city. One of those matters is the draft ‘Cessnock Council Local Infrastructure Plan’ that was resolved to be put on public display as soon as possible to ensure you can have your say. In short, the draft plan was developed in consultation with Council’s Development Committee, ‘Neighbourhood Group’ with representatives from key areas of infrastructure, community facilities, cultural engagement and finance to ensure council can adequately deliver infrastructure funds prudently, but most importantly consistent with our communities’ needs and expectations. You can have your say by following the links on Council’s web page.

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

MPs is a disappointing achievement for any government.

Experience tells me that for every person frustrated to contact our office, there are another three others who have the same problem. If you have a problem you believe 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 helps me keep my finger on the pulse of the problems.

I welcome the NSW Government’s back-down on its decision to re- fuse Veterans and War Widows access to its Returned Servicemen 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.

Chers, Joel

Michael Johnson MP

State Matters – Return and Earn contribution to return and earn reaches 3 billion containers.

Return and Earn has now overtaken the previous record in 2013 of 3 billion containers returned state wide just a month after the successful launch of the State Initiative.

People of Upper Hunter should be proud and reminded of 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 Community with more than 34.8 million containers returned helping to centralise a recycling system.

Technology has made it easy to do: simply submit their name and postcode on the the link on our Rabobank website or visit www.returnandearn. com.au

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Michael Johnson
**Ross River Virus**

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 occur 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.

**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 will 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.
‘We work together. There’s no them and us.’

Australia’s mining industry employs more than 220,000 people, supporting families and communities across the country and contributing billions of dollars every year to keep our economy strong.

Become a Friend of Australian Mining today and help us provide a stronger voice for mining communities.

Sign up at www.minerals.org.au
Aussies are choosing to undertake straightforward, yet serious due diligence when buying a property. Dr Kabbabe says a reviewer’s comment about people not taking the time to do due diligence is unfair, as he has received numerous requests from his office to assist homeowners with building defects, a risk of a natural event, or other concerns. Whether it’s risk of a natural disaster or an issue with a property, it’s essential to have the property surveyed to avoid any future problems. 

The Australian Federal Court has ordered Google to reveal the identity of the user who posted an article critical of Dr Kabbabe. Dr Kabbabe’s lawyer, 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 the Australian law reform experts that defamation cases over online reviews are on the rise. It also has a legal loophole that allows people to start proceedings against Google telling the company to turn over any information gathered to identify a user who posted under the pseudonym “CBsm 23.”

The survey of Australian homebuyers revealed that almost 37 per cent don’t consider flood maps when purchasing a property. As a result, we decided to have an independent report conducted,” she said. “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. The Australian Federal Court has ordered Google to reveal the identity of the user who posted an article critical of Dr Kabbabe. Dr Kabbabe’s lawyer, 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 the Australian law reform experts that defamation cases over online reviews are on the rise. It also has a legal loophole that allows people to start proceedings against Google telling the company to turn over any information gathered to identify a user who posted under the pseudonym “CBsm 23.”

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

With commemorations honouring the bicentenaray of the Singleton area set to kick off next month, residents and guests are invited to attend 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 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 Roslyn, bush poetry readings plus mouth-watering canapes and dessert by Manna’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 many activities and entertainment included in the price just $35 each from Council’s Administration Building or Visitor Information Centre, or purd an accordance,” Cr Moore said while the Soiree was for adults only, there were a wide range of events programming to suit the whole family showcasing all there is to love about 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 footstep 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/pr/230, 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.

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 Toke, the English Clerk of the Signet, sent a newsletter stating 10,000 Scots killed and 10,000 escaped the field. Duke reconciled 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 Chronique 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.
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

With optional potential home sites, the property has plenty of opportunity for a weekender 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

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

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

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 Hunter & the mountains to the north.
ASKING $135,000

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 ~ 809m²
Vacant Building Block
Fantastic View
ASKING $130,000 ono

Building Blocks
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BRANXTON & VINEYARDS
REAL ESTATE
P: 4938 3300
Man charged over alleged animal cruelty – Hunter Valley
Friday, 14 February 2020
06:27:25 AM
A man has been charged following an investigation into an alleged act of animal cruelty in the Hunter Valley.

On Monday 23 December 2019, police will allege that a 37-year-old man became aware of heifers grazing on his property that were not his.

It’s alleged he got into his vehicle and deliberately drove into one of the heifers – breaking its leg – before slititng its throat and releasing his dogs.

The heifer’s owner discovered the injured animal and was forced to euthanise it.

He then reported the matter to officers from Hunter Valley Police District.

Investigations commenced by Hunter Valley Rural Crime Investigators, with the assistance of Dungog police and local government authorities.

About 2pm yesterday (Thursday 13 February 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 failure to prevent dog from escaping.

He was given strict conditional bail and is due to appear in Dungog Local Court on Wednesday 13 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 report matters of animal cruelty to their local police, Crime Stoppers, the RSPCA or the Animal Rescue 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 bodwork.

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 certainly suffer 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.
**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 5th 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 Ebbrell, seconded by Alderman Proudfoot, it was decided to again ask the Railway Commissioners to consider the question of extending a passenger train on Sundays. Alderman Lewis, the Mayor, informed that the rotonda committee would be called together shortly, with a view to proceeding with the erection of the rotonda.

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

William Lewis, 15 years old and employed at Whitham 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 Old, (compiled by Val Randal, first published in 1993) Newcastle had become a minor celebrity in that he was featured as an unseen hero, and written about by Jean Kingston (Allan). Bill, or ‘Wingy’ as many locals had called him, was admired for the way he ‘did his bit in the war’ (Walton 14 not out).

The State Treasurer had paid to the council’s credit a sum of £70 (410) towards a main roads grant. Maitland, John A Lewis was Mayor. (There does not appear to be any connection between the Mayor and Wingy Lewis’s family.)

The evening was most successful. About 100 couples danced to the music of the 'Bendische Orchestra.'

The ladies again provided a splendid tea. Mr R Cole ably performed the duties of MC. During the evening Mr G Perrett delivered a long and concise in a hearty round of applause.

Maitland Weekly Mercury on Saturday 21 February, 1920, page 7

In connection with a report of the boxing held at Branxton, it should be stated that H. Slade, of Cessnock, won the slow run cycle race. Maitland Daily Mercury on Saturday 3 February, 1920, page 13 – Central Hall, Greta, was filled to capacity for the semi-finals and final of a $101 boxing tournament promoted by Messrs Brooker and Redgrove. It showed very well and contestants who included Reckenberg of Abermain who ‘gained the decision’ over Texan of Branxton after six hard fought rounds. In the other semi-final, Jack Fenton of Abermain gained ‘uneasy victory’ over Pascoe of Gosford. It is thought between Fenton and Reckenberg were regarded as ‘well worth staging in any stadium’ and consisted of six or eight rounds for the participants and one of continued excitements for the audience. Jack Skillicom’s (the referee) decision in favour of Fenton were confirmed by all those watching, as were all other judgements.

Greta Council met on Tuesday 27 January, 1920, at Branxton.

Alderman Walton was again in the chair and received a hearty round of applause.

The sports (day) and evening were all his other activities. Parlour 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 many true friends out here. Parlor games, interspersed with musical harmony, took 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.

**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

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FRIDAYS & SUNDAYS

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

Member's BADGE DRAW

Harvest Bistro

$4.00 Schooners
Thursdays
4pm—6pm

Happy Hour

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

MEMBERS' BADGE DRAW

Every Thursday & Sunday
$1900 as at Sun 16/2
$5000 Thurs 20/2

Meat Raffle

FRIDAYS & SUNDAYS

Housie

Wednesday
4pm—6pm
$4.00 Schooners

Every Wednesday
10am start
#1 Matthew Reilly

He's done it again! Matthew Reilly has once again 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 him win all the more impressive. No other author has won more than once ... but Matthew Reilly is a good two times twice but THREE TIMES Australia's Favourite Author!

Matthew Reilly is the international bestselling author of Ice Station, Temple, Contest, Area 5, Scarecrow, Hover Car Racer, Seven Ancient Wonders, The Six Sacred Stones, The Five Greatest Warriors and The Four Legendary Kingdoms.

His work has been translated into numerous languages and is published in over 20 countries and known for their highly visual style, fast pace and large scenes, over 7.5 million copies of his bestselling novel Ice Station. 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.

In 2007, Reilly wrote a half life novel, but criticized it for straining credulity and richly detailed Australian historical mystery. 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 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.

They used to....
Stallions murdered in Peru and stolen in Libya

The biggest shocks in world thoroughbred history was the stealing out of his box at the Aga Khan’s stud in Ireland 1933, the Great Neapolitan who was hung for horse theft and the English Derby by a 1983 of Shergar, the owner of the stallion remains a mystery. Such acts have been very rare and usually not related to horse thefts or breeders being able to prevent the thefts. The stallions slaughtered by intruders at the stud in Peru, a South American breeding with one principal raccotrack, one located at the nation’s capital, Lima, included inaugural 2019 southern season Peru visitot Put to stud in Peru’s oldest stud, Al Shaab Stud by armed intruders at the stud in 2012 (Medaglia d’Oro (GB), a John Singleton bred sire killed was Timely Miss Carmie – Indy (USA) (2005) (A P Indy (USA) and Kung Fu Mani (ARG) (2009) (Giunti’s (Canusa (USA) – Sweet City Girl (USA) (Kingmano), were among the top in Australia. Medaglia d’Oro came out eight times, 2010 to 2017, to Darley, contributing over 600 foals, and Coomooloo hosted Giant’s Causeway on four occasions 2002-2005, resulting in about 250 foals. Cyrus Alexander, in addition, was a half-brother to 2010 Kentucky Derby winner Super Saver (USA), the first American-bred stallion to win the 2010 (A P Indy (USA) – Supercharger (USA) – Purple Rain (USA) – Ultrafast (USA) – Thunderbolt (USA))

Nominations now open for LLS Boards

For Minister 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 means ratepayers or their representative 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."

"I am confident during times of drought and challenging 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 long and arduous," Mr Marshall said. "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. 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 is a dominant cover in the paddock. There has been a proliferation of the weed in many paddocks, and this week it has led to the death of cattle 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 pasture. "With such wonderful rainfall the risks 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 suitable or roughage bales in Purslane or kikuyu dominant paddocks.

Kikuyu poisoning can unfortunately occur when kikuyu grows quickly after a period of drought. The wet season can allow kikuyu to reach populations of times of the year when the young calves 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 buyers were able to secure very strong improvement, while the 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 push to strong improvement. The well finished heavy steers saw increased competition to sell to a dearer trend of 30c/kg.

There was a significant improvement in the bull market. Significant price improvements were seen for the full field of regular buyers with restockers and feedlot buyers attractive 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 Gumma

Good soaking rain that also had 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 the offering varied from fair to very good. The full field of regular buyers were in attendance. Demand and competition was very strong through all categories. Restockers and feedlot buyers were the predominant buyers through the young cattle. Market trends were dearer and significantly so in places. Light weight cattle entered as a dearer trend of 5c/kg. Heifer calves saw a dearer trend for the most part. Driving this trend was an outside line of heavy weight supplementary fed heifers attracted keen demand from both domestic and export processors. The market trend was as much as 30c/kg dearer, with the quality also showing a vast improvement. The price trend was essentially driven by the market trend on the eastern seaboard and restockers and feeders gaining advantage over processor competition for the same stock. Overall, the market saw a good trend on the east coast with improved lightweight prices being more prevalent. The market trend was dearer on the west coast with similar trends on the south coast.

Detailed Cattle report for LRLX Tamworth

December fall up rain resulted in a reduced penning. Most categories were represented. The quality and condition of the offering was fair to good. Well finished cows and grown steers in good numbers. The usual processors were in attendance. Light weight feeder steers sold very strongly to a dearer trend of 50c to 90c/kg, while the medium heavy 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 buyers were able to secure very strong improvement, while the 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 push to strong improvement. The well finished heavy steers saw increased competition to sell to a dearer trend of 30c/kg. Light weight heifers saw a strong trend of 20c/kg.

Detailed Cattle report for TRLX Yarrawonga

The yearling steers to the restockers and lot feeders trended 10c to 18c dearer, with the lighter weights making 310c to 320c/kg. A single heavy weight bull sold at 285c/kg. Vealer heifers to the restockers also sold to strong competition and gained 15c, with prices up around the 332c to 354c/kg. The yealing steers to the restockers and lot feeders trended 10c to 15c dearer, with the lighter weights making 310c to 360c/kg, while the medium weights received from 360c to 380c/kg. The light weight unloaded yealing heifers lifted for 25c and were sold from 330c to 360c/kg, as the heaviest drafts all sold to the butcher orders. The prime conditioned cattler to the butchers all made well over the 300c/kg range, with the best resulting 390c/kg. The prime cattler sold at similar prices compared to previous week while the second heaviest 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 a greater number of lighter weight cattle spread through the market. There were runs of high yielding younger cattler 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 imported 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 16c, and made from 325c to 370c/kg. The yealing steers to the lot feeders were not up to the high standards available at the previous market. However these still sold to strong competition and sold from 344c to 378c/kg. The yealing 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/kg range, as the best topped at 374c/kg.

There was a dearer trend with quality, with restockers competing strongly for the prime drafts. The prime heifers 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.
Here are some of the Top Online Scams You Need to Avoid Today And how cybercriminals use them to trick you

**Online Scams to Avoid**

1. **Phishing Scams**
   - **Description**: Scammers send fake emails or messages pretending to be from trusted sources to trick you into revealing sensitive information.
   - **Example**: You receive an email from your bank asking for your login credentials. If you click on the link, you're redirected to a fake login page.

2. **Social Engineering**
   - **Description**: Scammers use emotional manipulation or情景 to trick you into giving away information or money.
   - **Example**: A phone call from a tax official demanding immediate payment due to an error, which, if you comply, the scammers use to steal your information.

3. **Malware**
   - **Description**: Malicious software can steal personal and financial data.
   - **Example**: A downloaded app that appears trustworthy but actually installs malware on your device.

4. **Bait and Switch Scams**
   - **Description**: Scammers offer a prize or deal but then require you to purchase additional items or services.
   - **Example**: You win a car in a sweepstakes but must pay shipping costs if you want to receive it.

**How to Protect Yourself**

1. **Use Strong Passwords**
   - **Explanation**: Choose strong, unique passwords for different accounts.

2. **Enable Two-Factor Authentication**
   - **Explanation**: Adds an extra layer of security to your accounts.

3. **Keep Software Up to Date**
   - **Explanation**: Updates often fix security vulnerabilities.

4. **Be Aware of Scams**
   - **Explanation**: Stay informed about the latest scams and how to recognize them.

**Bong Joon-ho’s Social Satire Thriller “Parasite”**

Bong Joon-ho’s film is a social satire that explores the extreme wealth inequality in South Korea. The story centers around two families, the Kims and the Parks. The Kims are a poor family living in a cramped basement apartment, while the Parks are wealthy and live in a large mansion. The Kims work as servants for the Parks and are able to maintain a comfortable lifestyle.

As the story unfolds, the Kims are discovered to be opportunistic and cunning, using any opportunity to improve their lives. The Parks, on the other hand, are shortsighted and not aware of the underlying social issues.

**Conclusion**

“Parasite” is a thought-provoking film that highlights the societal issues of wealth inequality and the harsh realities faced by the lower classes. It is a must-watch for anyone interested in social commentaries and well-crafted narratives.
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 I may use the car/van but it can’t be driven by me. So next time you see the car you see 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!

Ross Gittins is the Herald's economic editor.
That's some mighty good sabotaging, Pierre. From the site of the sabotage and when it will cause the most inconvenience and trouble. It's such a fantastic act of sabotage: up, and you've got a lot of angry, stranded, vulnerable Nazis, balling up their little fists and have no idea, because, hey, the little notch on the dipstick says its just fine. By moving the notch down, the trucks would not have enough oil, but German mechanics would lower. 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. It's 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.
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.

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
- 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.
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 & needs next to nothing. 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 cvrs.)

**Height:** 5-8m with age, canopy often as wide as height.

**Foliage:** deciduous. Large (20-30cm long x 10cm wide), deep green, distinct veins and midrib.

**Climate:** tropical to sub-tropics, sheltered in warm temperature, and microclimates in cold temperature.

**Soil:** free-draining to sandy and dark shades 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. In cooler 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.

**Diseases and pests**

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 discoloring 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**

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.

**Come in to INSPECT**

what’s new in your local museum!

(Wood rimmed child-safe magnifying glass that really works)

Greta Historical Museum
96 High Street Greta
Opening 11am-3pm Wednesdays & Saturdays
Tuesday 4th February

Jerome Smiley of the Newcastle GC had a clear lead Stableford with 42 points from Rob Hannah 37 on 3rd. Ball winners were: Brett Janssen 36, Jason Cape 36, Mark Peeler 36, Peter Wilson 35. Nathan Simmons 33, Heinz Kersten 33, David Flater 33, Delancey 33, Stephen Bean 33, James Hogg 33, Wayne Cowan 33, Matthew Peeler 33, Bruce Mathews 33, Steve Grant 33, Steve Piggott 33, Nathan Sweeney 33, David Simmons 32, Kevin Kestermann 32, Prans 32, Ryan Wilson 31, Arthure McInerney 31. Nearest the pin were: 3rd tee - Paul Peeler 10th (30) and Paul Smith (17th)

Wednesday 5th February

Christine Tancock has produced a fine sub par round of 14 points to win the Ladies Stableford from Melina Watson with 37 on 3rd and place Diane Davies.

Thursday 6th February

Murray Johanson was out of the golfers with only a 15 points so far. Division 1 went to Gary Fawcett with 35 points from James Piggott 34, Division 2 to Dennis Dunn with an excellent 40 points to win the Division 3c & 3 Division to Hearty with 37 points. Hearty was 1st from Peter Perkins 37c. Ball winners were: Eric 37, Dave Gelliker 37, Kevin Smith 37, Greg Harder 36, Neil Peterson 36, Neil Robinson 36, Ryan Redgrove 35, Ron Findley 35, Geoff Smith 35, Geoff Brook 34, Nick Wheeler 34, Ray Neve 34, Robin Nye 34, Wayne Barber 34, Donald Donalson 34, Alan Kendall 33, Robin Nye 33, Gerry Irmion 33, Doug Harley 33 and Graham Harber 33. B Grade had a 4BBB Par event, please use individual cards and notification to Graham Harber is the winner with 35 points.

Friday 7th February

The rain was a total unevent 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 Campbel performed the flag for members with 35 points, Ray Campbell and Kurri Richard Ryan 3rd with 33. Ball comp details are not yet known.

Sunday 9th February

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

Tuesday 11th February

Brett Burgess has quickly adapted to the new handicap system and a healthy track to record 38 points to claim the Tuesday Stableford from Matt Lorenzo with an even 36 on countback to Mick Barrett also on countback. Ball winners were: Lloyd Barlow 36, Phil Darcy 35, Paul Neuss 35, Brad Greenham 34, Peter Tierney 33, Nigel Brennan 31, Steve Chapman 31, Grant v33, Steve Piggott 33, Nathan Sweeney 33, David Simmons 32, Kevin Kestermann 32, Prans 32, Ryan Wilson 31, Arthure McInerney 31. Nearest the pin were: 3rd tee - Paul Peeler 10th (30) and Paul Smith (17th)

Wednesday 12th February

Toni Fisher has produced another solid round of 32 points to win the Ladies Stableford from Melina Watson 37 and Diane Davies 36 with 34 points. Ball winners were: Dale Hamilton 33, Jan Howey 31 and Jo Haywood 30 c.p. La. Davies

Simon and David took the edge on Monday so it was a great effort by other winners and if the scores are anything to go by then it is a great effort.

The Branton Golf Club

Department of Planning, Transport and Utilities

Newcastle is on the rise as the city and region continue to attract new businesses and investment, creating jobs and supporting our communities. Our programs and priorities are focused on creating a safe, healthy, and thriving community for all.

The Newcastle City Council is committed to providing excellent customer service and delivering quality programs and services to our residents, businesses, and visitors. We are dedicated to enhancing our community and ensuring it is a place where people can live, work, and play happily.

The Newcastle Mayor, Catherine Lord, and the Newcastle City Council are providing leadership and strategic direction to ensure Newcastle is a prosperous and vibrant city.

The Newcastle City Council’s priorities for 2022-23 include:

- Developing and implementing a new strategic plan
- Enhancing our community engagement and feedback mechanisms
- Investing in infrastructure and public realm projects
- Promoting Newcastle as a tourism destination

The Newcastle City Council is dedicated to delivering programs and services that meet the needs of our community and make Newcastle an even better place to live.

The Newcastle City Council would like to hear from you on your experiences and perceptions of the Newcastle region.

If you have any questions or comments about our services, please contact us at 1300 367 263 or email us at info@newcastle.nsw.gov.au.

The Newcastle City Council is committed to providing accessible services and information.

We encourage you to contact us in your preferred language or mode of communication.

The Newcastle City Council is committed to respecting your privacy and protecting your personal information.

The Newcastle City Council is committed to being transparent and accountable in its decision-making processes.

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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 129-1 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

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 at Carmichael 2. Denman Hotel managed just 72 batting first, with Ayden Wilkinson (2-38 off 7.2) and James Shoulders (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.

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 (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 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.

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.