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WEDNESDAY
4 March 2020

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STEVE'S RANT

Members say...



Well Done Not So Well Done



School NEWS

The New Year to deliver a new era for the Central Hunter Business Chamber and for Branxton/Greta

2020 is to see a new era for the Central Hunter Business Chamber and for Branxton/Greta.

Recent appointments to the new board has bought to the table relevant business, media and political skills which will prove invaluable as the Chamber builds the program to rejuvenate the Branxton & Greta business environment for the greater good of all residents & business.

The Chamber strategy is best expressed in its Mission Statement.....

"To create a better everyday life for the citizens of Branxton, Greta, North Rothbury & Huntlee New Town by working with business, Government and major stakeholders to inspire and implement solutions for an improved trading environment, infrastructure and stronger economic growth for Branxton, Greta, North Rothbury &

Huntlee New Town."

The Chamber executive has recently met with Cessnock City Council and can confirm that there was genuine interest expressed by those representing the Council in supporting projects to improve lifestyle and business outcomes.

"We must however be aware that any improvements to our town require funding and we also confirm that some positive steps have been taken by Council to obtain funding from various State Government programs," said Chamber President Brett Wild.

- * Items discussed for support included:-
- * The Branxton to Greta Cycleway projects
- * An upgrade to the Branxton RV Park facilities
- * Upgrade to the Branxton Rotunda
- * Provision of appropriate tourism signage for the Branxton RV Park

In addition to the above the Chamber has under consideration;

- * An expression of interest from a potential new operator from outside the region for an art/crafts and new café facility in Branxton
- * An opportunity to set up and operate a regional mining and agriculture community museum in the Branxton town centre

The Central Hunter Business Chamber is made up of local business owners and individuals that seek to advance and promote the economic and social benefits of the area.

The support and input from those members are essential to the preservation of Branxton & Greta's economic future.

"Members must be prepared to work for the advancement of the area," said Brett Wild.

The chamber and its members have been very successful in achieving a number of local benefits such as replacement bus shelters in Greta and the new construction of the Branxton Shelters opposite Miller Park, new footpaths and the current new works at Branxton Oval that are all through continued discussions with the council and others.

"The Constitution, new Board and Mission Statement, all witness a new and revitalized sense of purpose," said Brett Wild. "Assisting in lobbying local, state and federal government for grants and subsidies and having good working relationships with Cessnock City Council have been and will continue to be at the forefront of all we do," said Brett Wild. "In the past we have conducted and delivered some great community events that have brought great joy



Ongoing Chamber President Brett Wild with Cessnock Mayor Bob Pynsent at the 2020 Australian Day ceremony. Brett is holding a Community Award received for staging the commemorative 80th anniversary of the establishment of the Greta Army Camp (in 1939) and the 70th Anniversary of the site becoming a migrant camp in November 2019.

to people locally, however in 2020 and 2021 The Chamber & Board's focus will be solely on economic growth and working with Government to ensure the best outcomes for the Branxton, Greta & Huntlee business owners and their communities. **Membership in the Chamber is open to all businesses in our precinct subject to submission of a completed application for membership - please be aware,**

membership is not automatic. If you wish to join the chamber please email secretary@centralhunterbusiness.com.au All enquiries should be made by email addressed to the secretary



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Proposed Councillor developer ban



Member for Cessnock
Clayton Barr MP

The NSW Labor Party is proposing to introduce laws to ban property developers and real estate

agents being elected to NSW councils - in time for the forthcoming Local government elections.

The legislation will be introduced into the NSW Legislative Council. The bill, Local Government Amendment (Disqualification from Civic Office) Bill 2020 was drafted by Labor Shadow Minister for Local Government, Greg Warren. Mr Warren said it's been Labor's policy for years to

ban property developers and real estate agents from being elected to NSW councils. "Labor partnered with the local government sector and we even tried to work with the Liberals and Nationals to get it done, but in 2017 Ms Berejiklian directed her Liberal and National mates to vote against these draft laws. "These changes must be enforced well before the September local government elections otherwise it proves these

mooted changes are nothing but a desperate publicity stunt from a government with zero conviction," he said. In 2017 the following Liberals and Nationals voted to let property developers and real estate agents be elected to local government: Minister Don Harwin, Minister Sarah Mitchell, Minister Bronwyn Taylor, President John Ajaka, Deputy President Trevor Khan, Parliamentary Secretary Ben Franklin, Parliamentary Secretary

Scott Farlow, Parliamentary Secretary Catherine Cusack, Parliamentary Secretary Natasha Maclaren-Jones, Shayne Mallard, Taylor Martin & Lou Amato. Mr Secord, Labor Shadow Treasurer & Shadow Special Minister of State, said that communities expect the highest level of accountability and integrity from their councillors and mayors. "This is the government's chance to put up or shut up when it comes to ensuring transparency

and community trust in local government." Clayton Barr MP, State Member for the Electorate of Cessnock, Shadow Minister for Water, Shadow Minister for Innovation, Science and Tertiary Education & Shadow Minister for the Hunter, said one of the most common issues, often controversial, that Councils deal with is around development applications and land zonings. "It is pretty fair and obvious to link those issues at a

Council level with the groups of persons known as developers or real estate agents. Quite literally, a decision at Council on one of these issues could lead to a profit of millions, tens of millions or hundreds of millions of dollars for some of these people. That is why Labor believes that these certain groups of people should not be permitted on Councils," said Clayton. **The 2020 NSW Local Government elections are to be held on Saturday, 12 September 2020 8am-6pm**



PUBLIC EXHIBITION 57/2019/3 DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY

At the meeting of Cessnock City Council on 19 February 2020, Council resolved to place the Draft Climate Change Policy on Public Exhibition.

The aim of the Policy is to guide planning and development of Cessnock as a region resilient and adaptive to the changing climate. The Draft Policy will enable Council to align its operations and planning with the NSW Government's aspirational target of net zero emissions by 2050.

The Draft Climate Change Policy will be on exhibition for a period of **28 days from 26 February to 25 March 2020** at the following locations:

- Cessnock City Council's Administration Building
- Cessnock and Kurri Kurri Library

Copies of the documents are also available on Council's website www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au.

Written submissions quoting **"57 2019 3 Draft Climate Change Policy"** should be received by **25 March 2020**. Submissions should be addressed to the General Manager and can be submitted via post, online or email council@cessnock.nsw.gov.au.

Submissions are not kept confidential. Council releases submissions when a request is made in accordance with privacy laws and the relevant provisions under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*. When a submission is released by law, Council routinely withholds contact numbers, email addresses and signatures. **Should you wish for all personal details or any information that may identify you to be withheld from the public, please advise Council of this in your submission.**

If you have any further enquiries, please contact Council's Senior Environment Planner, Emma McDermott on 4993 4180.

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) CLEAN FILL AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC

ITEM: Council has surplus clean fill material available resulting from road and drainage works throughout the Cessnock LGA. Landowners wishing to obtain the fill are invited to complete an EOI form.

TIME FRAME: The EOI for provision of fill will be open on an ongoing basis for **6 months until 17 July 2020**. Delivery of the fill may commence from **24 February, 2020**.

INFORMATION: Allocation of fill to EOI applicants lies solely with Council. For the EOI form, please refer to Roads, Pathways, Bridges & Drainage on CCC website:

<http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/community/roads>

or contact our friendly customer service team on 02 4993 4100.

We look forward to serving our community with this infrastructure upgrade.

CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL RATE SUBSIDY 2020/2021

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 Acting Team Leader Revenue on 4993 4150 prior to lodging an application.

PUBLIC EXHIBITION 57/2019/1 DRAFT CONTAMINATED LANDS POLICY

At the Ordinary Meeting of Cessnock City Council on 19 February 2020, Council resolved to place the Draft Contaminated Lands Policy on Public Exhibition.

The purpose of the policy is to provide a framework for Council to appropriately manage land contamination through the land use planning process, and in doing so, ensure Council acts in "Good Faith" within its legislative obligations. The policy sets out the preferred practice of Council employees in relation to:

- Identifying, evaluating and managing contaminated land through the land use planning process;
- Recording, managing and disclosing contaminated land information;
- Reporting contamination to the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA); and
- Preventing or minimising the potential for contamination.

The Draft Contaminated Lands Policy will be on exhibition for a period of **28 days from 26 February to 25 March 2020** at the following locations:

- Cessnock City Council's Administration Building
- Cessnock and Kurri Kurri Library

Copies of the documents are also available on Council's website www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au.

Written submissions quoting **"57 2019 1 Draft Contaminated Lands Policy"** should be received by **25 March 2020**. Submissions should be addressed to the General Manager and can be submitted via post, online or email council@cessnock.nsw.gov.au.

Submissions are not kept confidential. Council releases submissions when a request is made in accordance with privacy laws and the relevant provisions under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*. When a submission is released by law, Council routinely withholds contact numbers, email addresses and signatures. **Should you wish for all personal details or any information that may identify you to be withheld from the public, please advise Council of this in your submission.**

If you have any further enquiries, please contact Council's Senior Environment Planner, Emma McDermott on 4993 4180.

ADOPTION OF AMENDED CESSNOCK SECTION 7.12 LEVY CONTRIBUTIONS PLAN 2017 & REPEAL OF TOURISM SECTION 94 CONTRIBUTIONS PLAN

At the Council Meeting of 5 February 2020, Council resolved to adopt the Amended Cessnock Section 7.12 Levy Contributions Plan and repeal the Tourism Section 94 Contributions Plan.

Council's existing S7.12 Levy Contributions Plan 2017 has been amended. The purpose of the amendments is to amend the works schedule of the Plan to include a tourist related project and update legislative references. All tourism development will now be levied under the Section 7.12 Levy Contributions Plan.

Council advises that the revised Cessnock Section 7.12 Levy Contributions Plan and the repeal of the Tourism S94 Plan becomes effective from 19 February 2020.

Scone bypass officially opened but planning for Singleton bypass almost non-existent



bypass was jointly funded by the NSW Government & the Federal Government," said Labor Leader Jodi McKay. Labor spokesperson for Upper Hunter and Shadow Minister for Roads John Graham slammed the Liberal-National Government for falling short on its election promise. "There is scarce detail about the Singleton bypass simply because of a lack of funding. It's not good enough to only commit to 20 per cent of the total cost and then only allocate 2 percent of that. The community is waiting, it's been waiting for a long time. The Premier claimed

we could have it all, she clearly lied. It's a disgrace," Mr Graham said. Labor Shadow Minister for Rural Roads Mick Veitch called for Singleton to be made a priority. "The divide between city and country is only getting wider under this Liberal-National Government. This bypass is critical and it's absolutely ridiculous to not even have a construction timeline," Mr Veitch said. Labor Shadow Minister for the Hunter Clayton Barr said the Singleton community can't wait any longer. "The bypass will remove up to 15,000 vehicles a day from the CBD. This will

completely transform Singleton for the better. You know that when there is no timeline that the Government is not serious and that is a slap in the face for Singleton and the people of the Hunter," Mr Barr said. "Our call for answers comes as the Liberal Infrastructure most recent blowout bill edges over \$13 billion in Sydney— enough to cover the cost of around 20 bypasses," said Clayton. "The state government's recent blowout bill is \$3.5 billion Sydney metro budget blow-out, \$1.3 billion Sydney light rail budget blow-out for a \$2.9 billion total, \$6.8 billion Westconnex budget blow out for a \$16.8 billion total, \$225 million Parramatta high-rise school

blow-out for a \$325 million total, \$100 million Sydney Football Stadium budget blow-out for an \$828 million total & \$1.5 billion unnecessary Powerhouse relocation. That is \$13.3 billion in total & is the equivalent of the cost of 20 bypasses," said Clayton. The NSW Labor Opposition has also demanded the \$24 million for regional communities, that is unallocated in Round 6 of the Resources for Regions program, is released to support regional communities immediately. "Why hasn't the \$24 million been allocated. The Deputy Premier is noticeable silent on the matter," said Clayton. ■ Photo at left: the official opening of the bypass last Saturday.

Last Saturday saw the official opening of the \$137million Scone bypass. Depending on who you listen too it is now open to traffic with some minor landscaping work to be completed or it will be open to traffic prior to Easter.

It appears the reason for the bypass was to alleviate the traffic through the town with a reported 8,400 vehicles a day transgressing the sleepy town a day & I guess giving a much needed boost to the business sector. On the other hand Singleton is a continual carpark each morning as mine workers and associated contractors inch their way through the town. Without RMS data I would suggest that the vehicular movement, each day, through Singleton would far surpass the 8,400 through Scone prior to the

commissioning of the new bypass so why would Scone be given priority over Singleton? Labor Leader Jodi McKay has declared regional NSW deserves better particularly Singleton. "The Labor Party is calling on the Government to speed up the Singleton bypass, which includes allocating the appropriate funding and releasing a construction timeline," said the Labor Leader. "The State Government has previously admitted the construction timeline for the Singleton bypass relies on funding availability. But Upper Hunter MP Michael Johnsen continues to pass the buck onto the Federal Government to cover the bulk of the project cost, raising serious questions about whether the Singleton bypass will ever be fully funded. The Scone






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SECTION 4.59 NOTICE, ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT, 1979, APPROVED DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS AND COMPLYING DEVELOPMENT CERTIFICATES

The public are hereby notified pursuant to 4.59 of the Environmental Planning Assessment Act, 1979 (as amended) that the following applications have been granted consent during the period from 1 December 2019 to 31 December 2019.

Locality	Reference	Decision Date	Property Address	Application Description
EAST BRANXTON	008/2019/00000692/001	12-Dec-2019	4 Tulloch ST	Dwelling Additions & Alterations
EAST BRANXTON	008/2019/00000709/001	17-Dec-2019	31 Yates ST	Shed & Associated Retaining Walls
EAST BRANXTON	008/2019/00000740/001	17-Dec-2019	30 Middle ST	Awning
GRETA	008/2019/00000702/001	10-Dec-2019	40 Popham ST	Storage Shed
GRETA	008/2019/00000722/001	16-Dec-2019	45 Talleyrand CCT	Single Storey Dwelling and Attached Garage
GRETA	008/2019/00000668/001	17-Dec-2019	36 Popham ST	Shed
GRETA	008/2019/00000728/001	18-Dec-2019	9 Laetitia CL	Single Storey Dwelling with Attached Garage
GRETA	009/2019/00000400/001	19-Dec-2019	49 Popham ST	Home Based Day Care (3 Days Per Week)
LOVEDALE	008/2019/00000762/001	17-Dec-2019	158 Wilderness RD	Demolition of Two Storey Dwelling
LOVEDALE	008/2019/00000665/001	23-Dec-2019	483 Talga RD	Garage with Attached Carport
NORTH ROTHBURY	008/2019/00000699/001	11-Dec-2019	12 Peachy Av	Exhibition Home and Associated Advertising Signage
NORTH ROTHBURY	009/2019/00000399/001	13-Dec-2019	1822 Wine Country DR	Installation of a 45kW Roof-Top Solar PV System
NORTH ROTHBURY	008/2019/00000723/001	18-Dec-2019	17 Abberton PWY	Swimming Pool
POKOLBIN	008/2019/00000749/001	16-Dec-2019	72 Gillards RD	Replacement of New Dwelling
POKOLBIN	008/2019/00000720/001	20-Dec-2019	29 Paperbark DR	Two Storey Dwelling with Attached Garage & Associated Retaining Walls

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

STEVE'S RANT

I love the words to the song quoted by Allan Thomas in his letter to the editor in the last issue of this paper. The thing we do know about clouds is how heat changes them in different circumstances. When the humidity level is high and a cold front moves across the land the heat it takes from the moisture in the atmosphere causes clouds to form and if sufficient heat is taken the water is condensed around dust particles to form rain. During the drought, humidity levels in NSW were so low that any cold front that came along produced some cloud and some lightening, but little if any rain.

Many people in the Hunter Valley are convinced that open-cut mines in the Valley have an impact on our weather. As an example, an eye witness account of how a visible storm front approached the mount Arthur mine, only to disappear over the pit and then reform as the air moved away, has been related to me by an OCE. The rising hot air from the vast hole became absorbed by the clouds which dissipated, into just atmospheric humidity. Once this moist air moved away, from the effect of the pit, it condensed again by the cold front, giving up the heat from the rising hot air.

If you think this is all HOT AIR, ask anybody who works in the pits. So that is how clouds or rather atmospheric moisture absorbs heat. The mechanics of this are observable by anybody as the sunshine burns off morning mist formed overnight. The

question is, what are the mechanics or physical reactions that are supposed to occur to make CO2 and methane retain heat in the atmosphere?

The theory can be replicated in the lab, but nobody has quantified this for the real world. So much for the so-called sciences.

We are all disturbed by the situation for the folks at Stockton. Before you think, OMG, the beach at Stockton is disappearing! It must be climate change!

Here are some more facts: So that you know. This brief article on sea-level changes was forwarded to me. It is consistent with other evidence - as against conjecture.

Daniel Fitzhenry – Hydrographic Surveyor
581 Singleton Road,
Laughtondale NSW 2775
Mobile 0419 876 222

Rising Sea Levels—The Climate Debate

The seas and oceans to the east of Australia form the largest body of water on earth.

This broadly connected vast body of water presents a genuine sea level. The Sydney Fort Denison Recording Station provides stable, accurate and genuine mean sea level data.

The following table shows mean sea levels at 10-year intervals and these levels are related to Chart Datum, which is at the lowest spring tide level.

100 YEARS OF MEAN SEA LEVELS AT FORT DENISON, SYDNEY:
1914 –1.11 metres
1924 –0.98 metres
1934 –0.98 metres
1944 –0.97 metres



1954 –1.00 metres
1964 –1.09 metres
1974 –1.09 metres
1984 –1.02 metres
1994 –1.04 metres
2004 –1.08 metres
2014 –1.12 metres
2019 –1.05 metres

Accordingly, the mean sea level at Sydney in 2019 is 6 centimetres lower than the mean sea level at Sydney in 1914 when the Bureau Of Meteorology commenced recording Mean Sea Level. High Sea Levels during Storm, Cyclone & Low-Pressure Events. BBC and ABC commentators have asserted that sea levels may permanently rise by 1 to 2 metres in the next 100 years. One hundred years of records on the largest water body on earth indicates that this is incorrect.

There has always been short period storm, and low pressure rises in sea levels. The highest recorded sea

level at Sydney occurred during the 1974 low-pressure storm. The sea level rose to 30 cm above high spring tide level for one day. During recorded history, there has been no indication whatsoever of a 100 to 200 cm permanent rise in sea level. There will always be short period storm, cyclone and low pressure rises in sea levels in close proximity to cyclone and storm centres. These storm centre rises in sea levels are not permanent. Ocean swells and storm waves can exceed 16 metres during major storm surge events. It is these massive waves that have caused significant damage to coastal and island communities in the past. It is certain that huge storm event waves will occur in the future and will cause significant damage to the island and low-lying communities. Coastline and flood zone protection is the sane answer to storm event

damage.

It is polite and essential that the world population should avoid incorrect climate nonsense. We need to divert the alarmist energy to caring for the planet. Cease polluting the oceans. Prevent development of flood-prone land and threatened coastal zones that have been, and will always be, subject to flooding.

Dan Fitzhenry.

Capt. Daniel Fitzhenry –CPHS1 Hydrographic Surveyor - Registered Surveyor – Dip. Environmental Studies (Macq.) Steven Fitzhenry– B.Eng. (Civil) Sydney – MIE Aust. – Maritime Civil & Structural Engineer – Project Manager Capt. Adam Fitzhenry– B. Eng. Honours (Civil) Syd, MBA AGSM – Maritime Civil & Structural Engineer – Oceanographer Ellie Fitzhenry–B.Sc (Sydney) – Marine Biology & Ecology – Marine Science

Capt. Paul McGaw–ROV Operations Manager – Electrical & Mechanical Engineer Tracey Hay–B.A (Macq) – Project Coordinator –IT, Statistics & Research Manager

How many readers remember David Mason-Jones? David worked at this newspaper with Mike at the very beginning, going on to be a successful journalist and author. David has written several books, two are push back books against the current mounting hysteria and nonsense of the global warming advocates. To be specific, his first book is on the subject "Should we eat meat?" against the ridiculous claim by SBS, that ruminant farm animals emit one-third of global warming gasses. The second book is an examination of the resilience of coral reefs throughout the world, but in particular, the Great Barrier Reef.

David is thorough, and he explains for the layperson, temperature, especially the mean average in Cairns over the last one hundred and twenty years and concludes that the Cairns temperature is flatlining. David explains how Professor Bill Johnston, a statistician started from a position of neutrality. He scrutinized statistics, finding steps, either up or down, in records coincided exactly with changes to the immediate environment close to the weather station. Where a weather station moved from the post office to the airfield, and when the airport increased in size. There is no increasing trend in the mean average temperature in any of the coastal cities from Cairns to Rockhampton. Get the book; *WILL THE GREAT BARRIER REEF SURVIVE?* David Mason-Jones www.journalist.com.au ISBN: 978-0-9924546-3-0 (pbk)

Cheers Steve.

helping to rebuild the strong sense of community that adds real quality of life to any city.

At request of writer name & contact details not be published



Bushfire Inquiry

I urge everyone who has been involved in any capacity during the recent bushfires to make a submission to the NSW Bushfire Inquiry. Your stories, concerns, and suggestions need to be heard.

It is a shame the Taskforce will not be holding public hearings. I would have thought that to get a real sense of people's feelings you would hold public forums in their communities and I urge the Taskforce to hold public forums. ~ Submissions close on

27th March 2020 and can be delivered in person to any Service NSW centre. People really need to make a submission so that their views can be given the appropriate consideration.

Mick Veitch MLC
Shadow Minister for Industry and Trade,
Shadow Minister for Rural Roads,
Shadow Minister for Rural Affairs and Show Minister for Western NSW.

Clouds

I refer to the letter from Allan Thomas of Lochinvar taking on Steves Rant about clouds published in

the last edition of The News.

The invisible part of clouds that you cannot see is water vapor and dry air. The majority of the cloud is just plain air in which the invisible water vapor is mixed with and the very tiny water drops and ice particles are suspended in. A cloud is a mixture of gas, liquid and solids. What percentage of greenhouse gases is water vapor? A greenhouse gas, like carbon dioxide, it represents around 80 percent of total greenhouse gas mass in the atmosphere and 90 percent of greenhouse gas volume. Water vapor and clouds account for 66 to 85 percent of the greenhouse effect, compared to a range of 9 to 26 percent for CO2. Allan needs to do some reading on clouds and water vapour.

That's my rant for today.
Clr Rod Doherty,
Maitland

Maybe a wake-up call. The disruption to clothing manufacturing in China due to the coronavirus may have the silver lining of turning our attention to recycled clothing, thereby reducing environmental damage and vast international delivery distances.

According to the University

of Queensland, Australia is second only to the United States in its annual consumption of new textile goods. We buy an average of 27kilograms a year and 85per cent of it goes to landfill. Globally, fast fashion is the second greatest polluter after oil. Shoppers buy 80billion pieces of new clothing each

year and most of that also soon ends up in landfill. In our once thriving Hunter Valley retail outlets, many shops have closed, with online shopping a big factor in that. At this time of re-evaluating how we live, I hope our local populace will return to their suburban strips, boosting local employment and



Hydro Aluminium site development in Kurri Kurri progresses with Stevens-McCloy joint venture

Demolished Kurri Kurri site, set for residential development this year



A joint venture between Stevens Group and McCloy Group has finalised an agreement with Hydro Aluminium Kurri Kurri for the sale of their 2000-hectare smelter site and buffer land, signalling a boost to the local economy partnered with significant environmental outcomes.

Stevens Group is one of NSW's leading private property development companies, with significant experience in the development of industrial land, along with residential and commercial offerings. McCloy Group is likewise a Hunter-based, award-winning residential land developer currently delivering more than 5000 residential homesites across 15 master planned communities within NSW, along with commercial office developments. The two companies have experience working together as partners on several projects including Radcliffe at Wyee and Principle Living, which provides premium lifestyle offerings for seniors in locations across the Hunter. Hydro Aluminium Managing Director, Richard Brown, is delighted with

the outcome and is excited to be see the development progress.

"We have been concentrating on demolition and remediation for a long time now, so are pleased to be able to progress to this stage, where parcels of land can be developed and Kurri Kurri can start to see economic benefits again," Richard said.

"We are mindful that the closure of the smelter in 2014 was a loss to the local community, and we are keen to see the local economy regrow, particularly with the promise of more jobs for the area".

Shane Boslem, Project Director and spokesperson for the Stevens/McCloy joint venture is looking forward to the development taking place.

"The Maitland and Kurri Kurri areas have a lot of potential for further growth given this area's strategic location close to the Hunter Expressway and the Maitland, Cessnock growth corridor," he said.

"Significant residential development has already occurred along this corridor, and our plans for housing there will complement and enhance this growth.

"The site's southern area is ideal for employment lands due to its proximity to the Hunter Expressway, access to significant existing infrastructure and the existence of a rail line through the site, and of course a skilled workforce. The economic benefits associated with the sites redevelopment has the potential to include a significant jobs boost," he continued.

An agreement to sell the land to Flow Systems in 2018 was thwarted when Flow was placed under administration in December of the same year and was sold shortly afterwards. Hydro has been continuing with the demolition and remediation of the site, with the large stacks demolished in May 2019.

The demolition of the site, being undertaken by CMA Contracting since April 2017 is currently around 80 per cent complete, and contractor Daracon was awarded the remediation contract last month.

The major remediation activity at the site includes the construction of an engineered containment cell. The environmental approval for the remediation, whilst close to completion, has not yet

been determined by the NSW Department of Planning, Infrastructure and Environment.

Daracon is in the early stages of planning the remediation activity.

The first steps towards residential development are expected to get underway within six months of the rezoning being completed, which is anticipated in late 2020.

The McCloy Group was founded in Belmont in 1961 and today creates outstanding master planned residential communities; owns, redevelops and manages commercial office complexes; and state-of-the-art retirement living villages.

The group currently has fifteen residential projects underway with ten others completed and a healthy project pipeline for future communities.

McCloy Group projects are mostly based around the Hunter region but stretch as far afield as the New England and Northern Rivers Region, with land assets also in Far North Queensland.

The McCloy Group is a multiple award winner, with various awards in the residential, commercial and hospitality space including for the The Lucky Hotel redevelopment, Heritage Parc, Ironbark Ridge and Northlakes Estate residential developments, City Exchange, a large scale commercial redevelopment and office fit outs in the Telstra Civic to name but a few.

ARTICLE COURTESY OF



REFLECTIONS

"Moving from unbelief to belief"

In our Gospel today, we hear that Nicodemus who was a Pharisee and a Jewish leader came to Jesus one night. In John's Gospel, light imagery symbolizes the presence of God, whilst darkness and night, symbolizes God's absence. So, Nicodemus coming to Jesus is a movement from unbelief to belief, from darkness into the light, however small or large that movement is. Nicodemus comes to Jesus and believes in His name because of the signs that he has seen Jesus do. We are told this at the beginning of the gospel, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God." (John 3.2)

I wonder how often we come to God in the night or the darkness or because of the signs that we have witnessed? I wonder too whether perhaps God calls us in these ways? Perhaps we come to God in the night as our unbelief moves to belief and because of the signs that help us to believe? Maybe these are actually, very authentic ways to come?

Jesus' response challenges the way Nicodemus understands the kingdom of God. Nicodemus found himself confronted by a seeming impossibility. Jesus tells him "no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above. (John 3.3)

Nicodemus utters a very human question ... "How?" This is not the only time he asks this question. Later in the passage the question "how?" is asked again when Nicodemus again fails to understand.

Can we put ourselves in the place of Nicodemus and imagine that Jesus is speaking to us? How would we respond when we don't understand? Maybe we would ask the same question, "how?" or maybe we would ask an equally important one, "why?" Being born of the flesh means being content, like Nicodemus, with the things that we can control and observe. Living in the flesh means using our senses to make judgements. Being born in the Spirit leads us on a different journey, a different way of life and a different understanding. The difference between the two is what Nicodemus and we fail to understand much of the time. Jesus took that opportunity with Nicodemus to teach him and us that "the wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes." (John 3.8) The wind, like the Spirit, is a mystery. The wind can be experienced, and its effects seen. The Spirit too is like this. We can experience the movement of the Spirit in our lives, and the lives of others, but we cannot control it or ever completely understand it. This is where our faith is important. We do not need to completely comprehend to believe. Even our limited understanding is a joy to God.

So as we continue our journey through Lent, as we question and wrestle with understanding, as we come to Jesus in the light and in the darkness, may we know in our hearts that God is delighted by us, Jesus welcomes us as we are, and the Holy Spirit dwells within us as our constant companion and guide who points us to God.

Every blessing, Reverend Nicole

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Members say



Bob Pynsent, Mayor Cessnock City Council

Congratulations to the Seniors Festival organising committee. The feedback has certainly been so positive. The cooperation between the 35 organisations involved strengthens the various links in our community. Seniors are able to experience the varied organisations that exist in our local government area. One of the aims of Seniors Festival is to increase membership of these organisations and to have varied activities to occupy the senior residents of our community. The involvement of the Cessnock City Library and its staff must be acknowledged, with their activities both fun and innovative. The residents attending were impressed with their experience. We now look forward to evaluating the Festival to make it an even better event in 2021.

Council would like to thank the 2020 Festival Gold Sponsors, East Cessnock Bowling Club, Cessnock Toyota, Cessnock Priceline Pharmacy, Calvary Cessnock Retirement Community and Northern Coalfields Community Care Association. Thanks also goes to the Festival's 2020 Media Partner, the Cessnock Advertiser.

Now Seniors Festival is finished, we are now gearing up for the celebration of our young people with Youth Week 2020. The event kicks off on Saturday 14 March and runs through until Saturday 11 April. The Cessnock Youth Week Planning Committee is excited to launch their action-packed program of events. Youth Fest is key event happening at TAFE Park, Cessnock on Saturday 4 April. This event will include live music, amusements, food stalls and an outdoor cinema.

I am already looking forward to attending the My School Rules cooking competition to taste and experience some of the wonderful food our young people create. Good luck to all the participants. To find out what else is planned this Youth Week visit www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/youthweek.

A reminder to all the community that Level 1 Water Restrictions now apply. We must all do our bit to conserve water and ensure we understand what the

varying levels of water restrictions mean for how we use water in our day to day lives. To find out more visit www.hunterwater.com.au/restrictions.

Council has allocated the \$1 million received from the Federal Government following the bush fires last year. The Disaster Recovery Funding has been earmarked for some vital projects that assist in the recovery and also build resilience for future fire events. A highlight includes \$500,000 for upgrading Yango Creek Bridge. This will allow for better access for fire trucks and larger vehicles. This is a good, common sense result enabling our emergency services and community better access to this area during an emergency situation. To find more about the projects being funded visit <http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/council/news/disasterrecoveryfunding>.

Cheers, Bob



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



Member for Cessnock Clayton Barr MP

Raising the BARR

GREEN GRASS DOES NOT SIGNAL END OF DROUGHT
It is pretty wonderful to see some green grass out there. Whether its front lawns, sporting fields or farms and paddocks, the green colour is a welcome sight after 2 years of brown. We in the Hunter are very lucky to have received the rain and now

thrive in the greenery because there are many other parts of the State that remain dry and desolate.

Some of the basic facts are that 99% of the State is still in drought. Hunter Water still have water storage levels at a very low 62% across the network. Many of the inland rivers in NSW are still bone dry. The environment of NSW, right now, is still desperately unhealthy as a result of drought and then fires, and now, in places where it is raining after fires, being poisoned by ash filled water run-off.

With regard to our local water levels and the decision by the Minister to lift Water Restrictions for Hunter Water, from Level 2 back to Level 1, I have been pleased by the many local pieces of feedback that this decision appears to have been made a bit early and that we need to place a greater value on what we now realise is such a precious resource. Going forward, over the longer term, we all just need to try to be more careful with our water and hopefully, set ourselves the personal household challenge of trying to consume just 140L of water, per person, per day – like they do down in Orange.

THE REGIONAL SENIOR TRAVEL CARD FIASCO

I find it quite disgraceful that the Regional Senior Travel Card rollout is being handled so hopelessly by this Government. I have enormous sympathy for the frontline workers at Service NSW and Centrelink who are trying to help people through this maze of madness. I remind people that at its core, the purpose of this \$250 for travel support in regional NSW was because there is so little public transport in many regional areas and hence most people need to run their own private car or rely on taxis. With this in mind, to me, it doesn't seem to matter what type of Senior you are, there is still very limited public transport and hence the original purpose should apply equally for all (the way that it was promised during the election campaign). Our Cessnock Electorate office, along with others across the State, has been putting as much pressure as possible on the Government to make sense of the craziness by getting rid of the many restrictions on this program. We recently had some success with returned service men and women (aged over 66 years) and War Widow(er) pensioners now allowed to access the scheme but the Government have explained that it will take them several weeks to update their systems to allow for this.

Please keep telling us your stories and lodging your frustrations. We will pass each and every example along to the Minister and leave it to him to explain his decisions.

To apply you can call Service NSW 13 77 88, visit a Service NSW Centre or apply online

www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/apply-regional-seniors-travel-card.

Note: You don't need a MyServiceNSW Account or

email address if you're applying in person or on the phone.

For enquiries regarding the State Government or its departments, or to put you in contact with someone who can help, please contact my office. My office can be contacted by phoning 4991-1466, by email to cessnock@parliament.nsw.gov.au or call into 118 Vincent Street (PO Box 242), Cessnock 2325.

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



MICHAEL JOHNSEN MP
Member for Upper Hunter

2020 NAIDOC GRANTS OPEN

I encourage community groups to apply for NAIDOC community grants that are currently open to support events that celebrate Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and achievements. Up to \$3000 is available to support groups to fund events that focus on the importance of Aboriginal culture and its place in our community. NAIDOC Week is an important time to acknowledge and celebrate the invaluable contributions Indigenous communities and their cultures make to our society and the NSW Government is proud to support this celebration. The 2020 National NAIDOC Week will run from 5 - 12 July, focusing on the theme *Always Was, Always Will Be*, reflecting the importance of the land and culture that has forever been part of Australia's Indigenous culture.

Eligible not-for-profit organisations in NSW can apply for grants of \$500 to \$1,000 to recognise their local Aboriginal community achievements, cultures, languages and identity. For more significant standalone events, which may involve a number of partners, grants of up to \$3,000 are available. This year the NSW Government will trial online funding agreements for successful applicants to reduce the administrative burden on communities. Grant applications are currently open and close Friday 24 April 2020. For further information visit: <https://bit.ly/2P2tEVO> or call 1800 019 998.

Update \$250 Regional Seniors Travel Card

Based on the feedback we have received, the NSW Government has made the decision to include those collecting a Service Pension or a War Widow Payment in the program. Applications for those individuals will open in the coming months as

we do the necessary work to incorporate their details in our system. We thank veterans and widows for their patience as we complete this work. Once cards become available, they will be able to be used for the full 12 months from activation. Currently Age Pension Card Holders and Commonwealth Seniors Health Card Holders can apply for the travel card. **EMPOWERING HOMES FOR A BRIGHTER ENERGY FUTURE** Eligible Hunter residents will be able to access interest-free loans for battery and solar-battery systems which could deliver more than \$250 in savings a year, thanks to a NSW Government pilot program. The pilot is an important first step in the delivery of the NSW Government's Empowering Homes program which will reduce energy bills for up to 300,000 households while helping the State to transition to a clean energy future.

For households that use more than 6,000kWh of electricity a year, installing a solar and battery system can help reduce their annual electricity bill by putting more than \$250 a year back into your pocket.

This will help create jobs, reduce emissions, increase system security and reliability, and place downward pressure on energy costs for everyone.

Interest-free loans of up to \$14,000 for a solar-battery system, or up to \$9,000 for the addition of a battery to an existing solar system will be available to owner-occupiers with an annual household income of up to \$180,000.

Running for up to 12 months, the pilot will be available to eligible residents who have postcodes in the areas of Cessnock, Dungog, Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Mid-Coast, Muswellbrook, Port Stephens, Singleton and Upper Hunter.

Homeowners in the Hunter electorates region are encouraged to check the Energy Saver website to see if their postcode is eligible and for details on how to apply.

Cheers, Michael



Sue Moore, Mayor Singleton Council

Since the Singleton

Bicentennial Commemorations Working Group was formed and began meeting more than a year ago, I've imagined countless times how it must have felt for those colonial explorers to emerge from the rugged outcrops of the Blue Mountains and see the vista of the plains of Whittingham, interrupted only by a lazy, winding river, unfurl

like a banner. The historians among us may dismiss this narrative as being entirely without any factual basis, and perhaps it is. But the true beauty of the commemoration of the bicentenary of Singleton is that it's a chance for all of us to bring our own meaning to what is a significant milestone in our history, and to share our own stories of Singleton. The Wonnarua/Wanarua people first belonged to this area, establishing an unbreakable connection that is revered and will continue to be revered for generations to come. A mere 200 years ago, the first European explorers arrived. Today, 22,987 people now call Singleton home. And each of us adds another chapter to the story of Singleton.

The bicentenary is not limited to John Howe and Benjamin Singleton, or any of the other 15 or so members of the exploration party who staked their claim on this land on 15 March 1820. It's in the stories of the Wonnarua/Wanarua who passed down the traditions of their ancestors, and in all of us who followed – no matter where we came from, how we got here, or which part of our local government area is home.

The premise of Back to Singleton 2020 extends to everyone with a connection to Singleton, whether you were born here and moved away, stopped once on the way up the highway or make a regular pilgrimage to our cellar doors. The story of Singleton is not owned by any one person, but is rather a rich tapestry of the stories of the people who were here and are still here, and those to come.

Another chapter will be written next week, when we come together for a weekend to enjoy all that makes our area special. All the festivities start with Singleton Homecoming on John Street on Friday 13 March, followed by free family fun on the Civic Green at Singleton Day Out on the afternoon of Saturday 14 March. I then invite you to buy your tickets to join us for some old-time glamour at the Singleton Soiree at the Civic Centre, including live music, canapes, dessert and entertainment for just \$35 per person (not including drinks). Tickets are available on Council's website, Administration Building or Singleton Visitor Information Centre. The community has also come together to compile a fantastic program of events to commemorate Back to Singleton 2020. For all the information you need to plan your bicentennial year, visit www.singleton.nsw.gov.au/backtosingleton2020 or contact Council for a printed copy.
Cheers, Sue

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Pharmacist Advice & Medical Advice

Corona Virus Update as at 27/2/2020

Protect yourself and others from getting sick

Wash your hands

- after coughing or sneezing
- when caring for the sick
- before, during and after you prepare food
- before eating
- after toilet use
- when hands are visibly dirty
- after handling animals or animal waste



As of 2:30pm 25 February 2020, there are four confirmed cases of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in NSW and 171 cases under investigation.

Infection with novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is now a notifiable condition under the NSW Public Health Act, so all cases and suspected cases must be reported by doctors to NSW Health public health authorities who will work to prevent spread of the infection to others.

Basic protective measures against the new coronavirus
Stay aware of the latest information on the COVID-19 outbreak, available on the WHO website and through your national and local public health authority. COVID-19 is still affecting mostly people in China with some outbreaks in other countries. Most people who become infected experience mild illness and recover, but it can be more severe for others. Take care of your health and protect others by doing the following:

Wash your hands frequently
Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water.

Why? Washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub kills viruses that may be on your hands.
Maintain social distancing
Maintain at least 1 metre (3 feet) distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing.
Why? When someone coughs or sneezes they spray small liquid droplets

from their nose or mouth which may contain virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 virus if the person coughing has the disease.

Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth

Why? Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body and can make you sick.

Practice respiratory hygiene

Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately.

Why? Droplets spread virus. By following good respiratory hygiene you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19.

If you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical care early
Stay home if you feel unwell. If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention and call in advance. Follow the directions of your local health authority.

Why? National and local authorities will have the most up to date information on the situation in your area. Calling in advance will allow your health care provider to quickly direct you to the right health facility. This will also protect you and help prevent spread of viruses and other infections.

Stay informed and follow advice given by your healthcare provider
Stay informed on the latest

developments about COVID-19. Follow advice given by your healthcare provider, your national and local public health authority or your employer on how to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.

Why? National and local authorities will have the most up to date information on whether COVID-19 is spreading in your area. They are best placed to advise on what people in your area should be doing to protect themselves.

Protection measures for persons who are in or have recently visited (past 14 days) areas where COVID-19 is spreading

- Follow the guidance outlined above.
- Stay at home if you begin to feel unwell, even with mild symptoms such as headache and slight runny nose, until you recover. **Why?** Avoiding contact with others and visits to medical facilities will allow these facilities to operate more effectively and help protect you and others from possible COVID-19 and other viruses. If you develop fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical advice promptly as this may be due to a respiratory infection or other serious condition. Call in advance and tell your provider of any recent travel or contact with travelers. **Why?** Calling in advance will allow your health care provider to quickly direct you to the right health facility. This will also help to prevent possible spread of COVID-19 and other viruses.



Lions 'Lap the Map' for diabetes comes to Branxton

Over 1.3 million Australians have diabetes, and an estimated 2 million are at high risk of developing the condition - and these numbers are increasing rapidly every day in communities across the country.

Diabetes doesn't discriminate, and rates are rising for the young and old, men and women, and across a variety of ethnic backgrounds. In response to this national health epidemic, diabetes is one of Lions' 5 key focus areas in 2020.

Fast facts ~ Diabetes is recognised as the world's fastest growing chronic condition.

- * One in 11 adults world-wide is confirmed as having diabetes (415 million).
- * 12 per cent of global health expenditure is spent on diabetes (USD\$673 billion).
- * Every six seconds globally, a person dies from diabetes.

As a national service organisation made up of volunteers from all ages and places, Lions Australia are uniquely positioned to promote diabetes prevention on a national scale, and within each of our local communities. We are calling for Branxton community members to 'Lap the Map' for diabetes prevention.

Lions has engaged with local groups and experts to provide information on diabetes at these events. Branxton Lions will be reporting the length of our 'Lap the Map' walks and we are walking to move

a combined distance that exceeds Australia's circumference (25,760 kms).

Branxton Event ~ On the morning of 29th March 2020, the Lions Club of Branxton invite you to participate in a self-paced walk, run or jog from the Branxton Oval to Miller Park carpark and return. The aim is to promote a healthy lifestyle and improve personal awareness about diabetes, its causes and effects.

The route is approximately 2.5 km over flat country on sealed paths with a minimum of road crossings.

Families can push a stroller, kids can ride a bike, the fit may choose to run, everyone can participate.

Registrations open and 0800 and step-off is between 0830 and 0845 from Branxton Oval; it is anticipated the walk can be comfortably completed within 30 to 40 minutes.

The entry fee is \$10.00 per adult and \$5.00 for primary school children, pre-schoolers are free or a family ticket for two adults and their children is \$25.00. There will be a halfway water station at Miller Park and on return to Branxton Oval a complementary bacon & egg roll and drink will be available for all participants. A raffle of fresh fruit and vegetables shall be conducted after the walk and all monies raised on the day shall be donated to Lions Australia Diabetes Foundation.

Come along, participate, have some

fun and at the same time brush up your knowledge about Diabetes. Looking forward to seeing you there. We're sure you will enjoy a great day out participating in a wonderful local opportunity for Lions' Australia to benefit our community as well as raise awareness around how we stop the spread of diabetes nationally.

'Lap the Map' is one important part of the Lions overall mission to reduce the prevalence of diabetes in Australia this year. Type 2 Diabetes represents 90% of all cases of diabetes, and can be prevented or delayed in more than half of these cases through making healthy lifestyle choices. These include:

- * Regular physical activity;
- * Maintaining a healthy weight;
- * Making healthy food choices;
- * Managing blood pressure;
- * Managing cholesterol levels; and Not smoking.

It doesn't matter how far you walk, jog or run, it's about being involved, getting active and moving together on this critical national project. Lions across Australia are committed to doing what we can to raise awareness and increase education around diabetes prevention and promote healthier living. By getting involved with Lap the Map, you are helping Lions Australia continue our commitment to community wellbeing through innovative Lions health projects that help Australians through education, awareness and the power of volunteering.

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Cook succulent pork loin in creamy thyme and garlic infused milk for an Italian-style twist to your traditional family roast.

- Ingredients**
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
 - 1.1kg Coles Australian Pork Loin Roast (see notes)
 - 1 whole garlic bulb, cloves separated, unpeeled
 - 4 thyme sprigs
 - 6 shallots, halved
 - 3 x 2cm-wide strips lemon rind
 - 2 cups (500ml) milk, approximately
 - 2 tablespoons Bulla Cooking Cream
 - 2 Packham pears, cut into wedges
 - Olive oil, extra, to brush
 - Sage leaves, to serve
- Method**
- Step 1**
Preheat oven to 240C. Heat the oil in a frying pan over medium heat. Cook pork, turning, for 5 mins or until browned. Transfer to a baking pan with garlic, thyme, shallot and lemon rind.
- Step 2**
Add enough milk to the baking pan to just cover the pork, leaving the rind uncovered (you may not need all the milk at this stage). Transfer pork to oven. Roast, uncovered, for 30 mins.
- Step 3**

Italian-style roast pork in milk



- Reduce oven to 170C. Roast, topping up milk when needed, for 2 hours or until meat is tender and the rind is crisp. Transfer to a serving plate. Cover loosely with foil and set aside for 10 mins to rest.
- Step 4**
Meanwhile, strain milk mixture into a saucepan, pressing garlic through sieve into milk mixture. Discard solids.
- Step 5**
Add the cream to the milk mixture. Bring to the boil over high heat. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 10 mins or until sauce thickens and reduces.
- Step 6**
Heat a barbecue grill or charrill on high. Lightly brush pear wedges with a little extra oil. Cook for 2 mins each side or until lightly charred.
- Step 7**
Arrange the pork and pear on a serving platter. Sprinkle with sage. Cut into slices and serve with the sauce.

"You'd never know all this used to be a mine."

Australian miners and farmers are working together towards a common goal. Mining land is being rehabilitated to graze cattle and grow crops. When the mining is gone, the rehabilitated land will be here to stay – preserving it for future generations.


There's more to Australian mining.



Authorised by Tania Constable, Minerals Council of Australia, 44 Sydney Avenue, Forrest, ACT, 2603.

www.minerals.org.au






WITH

Gemma BUNNER BA/LLB (Hons), Acc Spec (Personal Injury) & Kerri SHAW B.Comm/LLB (Hons)

SHAW & BUNNER
LEGAL

P: (02) 4046 1805 | F: (02) 4017 0646




IN-PRINCIPLE SETTLEMENT REACHED IN PFAS CLASS ACTIONS

The Australian Government have reached an in-principle settlement with residents of Williamstown, Oakley and Katherine who each bought class actions over the use of per-and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) at defence bases. The three communities had their groundwater contaminated by toxic fire-fighting foams used at defence bases until the early 2000s. The PFAS chemicals do not break down in the environment, and are known to persist in water, plant and human systems. Authorities overseas have found the chemicals can cause reproductive and developmental, liver and kidney, and immunological effects in laboratory animals. The class action contended that the Department of Defence was liable for depressed land values and business outlooks. In a joint statement from the Minister for Defence, Linda Reynolds, and the Minister for Veterans Affairs, Darren Chester, the Government said the parties have reached an in-principle agreement and were finalising the confidential terms of a settlement. These terms will also subject to approval by the Federal

Court of Australia. There is a formal process of seeking approval which requires a number of steps including notification to class members. The Court will consider whether the proposed settlement is a fair and reasonable compromise of the claims of the class members. The breakthrough came on Wednesday 26 February after two days of intense mediation talks between the Department of Defence and lawyers representing the communities. The 500 Williamstown residents covered by class action are yet to learn the full details of the settlement. An administrator will be appointed to assess individual losses and distribute settlements. Some residents had been represented by law firm Dentons, who said in a statement that the result was a vindication for the town. There are still hundreds more sites across Australia which have been contaminated by the toxic chemical compounds. Northern Territory senator Malarndirri McCarthy co-chaired a parliamentary committee into PFAS contamination across

Australia. She said while she welcomed the news of the settlement, the Government had still not responded to the committee's report which was tabled 18 months ago. Defence said in the statement that the Government would continue to engage with communities, and that it recognised the "difficult journey for many people over the past few years". "The Government remains committed to concluding the environmental investigations into PFAS contamination on and near defence facilities across Australia, and to the ongoing monitoring and engagement with communities once investigations are complete," the statement said. There are potential class actions which involve a number of different sites across Australia. These potential actions would be on behalf of members of the community who own, or have owned, property in the contaminated area. The Department of Defence are undertaking investigations to determine the extent of land and groundwater contamination from the use of PFAS chemicals on each site. Cheers, Kerri




Bingo and DINNER
AN EVENING OF FUN AND FRIENDSHIP

2ND WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH

6 PM DINNER
7 PM BINGO

at the Greta Workers Sports & Recreation Club

Inglican




Greta Museum invites you to their street library – no forms to fill in, just take a book or two of your choice, keep it/them, OR return it/them and, if you wish, donate some of your own. The library is put outside if it's not too hot or wet, or may be just inside the front door. Available when the museum is open at 96 High Street, Greta, between the historic courthouse & Greta Bakery each Saturday & Wednesday, 11am- 3pm. Enquiries, call Neridah on 0427657150.

going, according to the survey by financial website Money.com.au. It suggests some recent homeowners could be paying higher credit costs than they were counting on when they made their purchases. Younger Aussies were particularly confident of an additional cut, with 36 per cent of under 30s expecting a fourth cut and 30 per cent of under 40s expecting the same. Only about one in seven Aussies aged above 60 expected another cut. Money.com.au reported 17 per cent of respondents made changes to their personal finances based on an additional cut. Among the most common changes were switching to a variable home loan or personal loan and increasing personal spending. More than one in 10 borrowed more on their home thinking interest rates would drop another 0.25-0.5 per cent. Money.com.au financial adviser Helen Baker said the study suggested mortgagees borrowed as much as they could and weren't concerned about their debt. "For borrowers who expected the fourth rate cut last year, we can see that many chose to increase their borrowing rather than pay down more of the principal and pay debt off faster," Ms Baker said. "It would indicate that they believe their employment income will continue and they are comfortable with their ability to service loans at a higher level. "They are unlikely to have concerns that reduced interest rates is a form of stimulus to deal with bigger economic problems at play, such as low wage growth and a poorly performing retail sector."

Good intentions, big limitations:
By Alexandra Cain
All the initial places in the federal government's First Home Loan Deposit Scheme have been snapped up, as new borrowers rush to take advantage of record -low interest rates and the renewed vigour in the property market. The first 3000 scheme positions released to National Australia Bank and the Commonwealth Bank have already been reserved, according to spokespeople from both banks. A NAB spokesperson said: "We have a customer waitlist for positions as they become available. We continue to work with the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation as it makes a further 7000 places available from 1 February." Of those spots, 2000 places will be shared between NAB and CBA. A further 5000 loans will be made available through smaller lenders. **Good intentions, big limitations**
Despite the FHLDS's popularity, experts point to its limitations. "The scheme has good intentions, in that it is designed to help people get the deposit together they need to buy their first home," says financial services firm Pitcher Partners' client director, Jason Fallscheer. "It can take years to save the deposit even for a modest property." "But there are a few big limitations. It's only available to 10,000 people [each financial year], the caps on housing prices are very low, and there are some issues around equitable access for couples. It also doesn't address some of the big challenges to purchasing for people who don't fit the narrow first-home buyer demographic." Jane Slack-Smith, director of Investors Choice Mortgages, who is otherwise a fan of the scheme, agrees the property price

caps are limiting. "The people we're talking to are saying the caps are way too low." The scheme has an income limit of \$200,000 for couples and \$125,000 for singles. There are also price limits of \$700,000 in Sydney and \$600,000 in Melbourne, which reflect the median property prices in those capital cities. Other cities and regional centres have lower caps.

What to do if you can't pay your mortgage

By Alexandra Cain
There may be times in your life when, for whatever reason – relationship breakdown, a sick child or your own illness – you are unable to meet your mortgage repayments. If this happens to you, there are many steps you can take to minimise any fallout. **What are your options if you can't meet loan repayments?**
If you used a mortgage broker, they can assist you before you default on the loan by looking for a more economical lender or a different loan with your existing lender, according to mortgage broker Jane Slack-Smith from Your Property Success. "You can also negotiate with the hardship team with the lender involved and obviously you can sell – although this is a last resort," she says. If you choose to work with your bank to find a solution, the earlier you do this, the better. "If you let them know after three late payments or no payments, they will be less enthusiastic than if you give them a heads-up in advance that you anticipate issues repaying your loan," Slack-Smith said.

"I have a client I have worked with for more than 10 years. She had breast cancer surgery and has not been able to return to her job. When her loan goes from interest-only to principle and interest in 2020, she thinks she will have trouble paying. "We formed a plan to talk to the hardship team at her lender and they looked at reducing her rate now and also suspending payments for six months while she rebuilds her health and employment opportunities." Lenders are prepared to work with people who work with them but, as Slack-Smith says, ultimately the bank is a business and it requires funds to be repaid. **Can the bank force you to sell your home?**
The worst-case scenario is a forced property sale. When this happens, properties can be sold at below-market value, which is another reason to be on the front foot and sell on your own terms if you anticipate issues repaying your mortgage. Before a bank will force a sale, it will usually give the borrower a grace period to allow them to address the issue, Slack-Smith says. "Depending on the state you live in, the lender will issue you with a notice to pay and give you a time-frame to do this," she said. "If these conditions are not met, technically they can call the whole loan in and evict you from the property and sell it to recover the debt you owe them. But this is unusual and they really try to work with people through these issues." **How long does the bank have to give you?**
Under law, banks are required to send a default notice and give the borrower 30 days to rectify the payment. If the payments are not made and if the borrower does not enter a payment plan or approved hardship arrangement, the bank can foreclose. However, most banks issue a statement of claim and apply for judgment before foreclosing. CONT P. 11



Mortgage mistake: many Aussies maxed out loans banking on a fourth rate cut



An alarming number of homeowners took out extra debt late last year thinking there would be a fourth rate cut to push credit costs even lower. New research revealed a quarter of Aussies expected the Reserve Bank of Australia to make another rate cut before Christmas and many made financial decisions expecting their credit costs to drop. The Reserve Bank cut the cash rate three times last year, with the last cut in October pushing credit costs to the lowest in history. Last year also marked the first time the Reserve Bank made cuts over successive months but some Aussies expected the RBA to keep

Property Industry Reforms Are Coming In March 2020

The long-awaited *Property, Stock and Business Agents Amendment (Property Industry Reform) Act 2018 (NSW)* and the *Property, Stock and Business Agents Amendment Regulation 2019 (NSW)* will come into effect on 23 March 2020. The reforms are aimed at improving the professional and educational standards of agents working in the property industry, increasing transparency, accountability and streamlining the licensing framework. "The Property Services Reforms will significantly improve agency practice in NSW with the consumer as the primary beneficiary," said Tim

McKibbin, CEO. "These reforms will see education increase by 500%. There will also be relevant and structured continuing professional development to keep agents' skills current." "All industries are under pressure to respond to the contemporary consumers' increased expectation. The reform package that the REINSW has successfully fought for demonstrates that the profession is ready to meet the challenge." "The new regulatory controls set out in the reforms give the profession more guidance and support," said Mr McKibbin.

What experts really think of the First Home Loan Deposit Scheme

Speak up, be involved, get connected and have fun during Youth Week 2020

The Cessnock Youth Week Planning Committee is excited to launch their action-packed program of events for Youth Week 2020 which will kick off on Saturday 14 March and run through to Saturday 11 April. This community run event relies on the generous support of young people, local organisations, businesses and Cessnock City Council who have rallied together to provide a range of events and activities for everyone to enjoy. Each year, Youth Week is an opportunity for young people to share ideas, create events, showcase their talents, have their voices heard and try something new, and this year is no different. The theme for Youth Week

2020 is *Speak Up, Be Involved, Get Connected and Have Fun*. The Youth Week Planning Committee has launched a new and exciting initiative in 2020 with the introduction of Youth Week Ambassadors. The Ambassadors are a diverse group of young people aged 12-18 years old with a passion for their community. Look out for the Youth Week Ambassadors around town in the lead up to Youth Week.

There is something for everyone on this year's program including Skate Jams, a tech based trivia night, My School Rules Cooking Competition, TedX Youth and a cultural afternoon with Mindaribba Local Aboriginal Land Council. There are also a range of other workshops which are a great opportunity to learn new skills, including art, make-up and cooking.

The feature event on the 2020 Program is Youth Fest which will be held at TAFE Park on Saturday 4 April. This large scale event will include live music, amusements, food stalls and an outdoor cinema. To coincide with the launch of the Youth Week 2020 program, CYCOS has launched an Instagram account which will be used to help promote Youth Week activities. This will be a great tool to reach local young people, who tend to use this platform more than Facebook. To follow search @cycos_cessnock. Cessnock City Mayor, Councillor Bob Pynsent said he is looking forward to seeing local young people getting out and about and involved in Youth Week 2020.

"Each and every year, the dedicated committee work hard to put together an awesome program of events that caters to every interest and it just keeps getting better."

"I strongly encourage young people in our community to download or pick up a program and take part this year. It's all about trying something new and making new connections with other young people in your community, which is so important," added Cr Pynsent. Local young people can download the Youth Week 2020 program from Council's website at www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/YouthWeek and are encouraged to keep an eye on the CYCOS Facebook page for updates at www.facebook.com/CessnockYouthCentre/.



Smoother road ahead for supervisors of learner drivers

Cessnock City Council in partnership with Transport NSW is hosting a free workshop for parents and supervisors of learner drivers from 6 to 8pm on Thursday 26 March 2020.

This free workshop offers practical advice on how to teach learner drivers to be safer motorists and assists with L platers making the transition to their P plates. The workshop will cover the current laws for L and P licence holders, supervising learner drivers, completing the log book, low risk driving and the benefits of supervised on-road driving experience.

Cessnock City Mayor, Councillor Bob

Pynsent said it's worthwhile attending if you're supervising an L plater. "We have had great feedback from our attendees over the years who have got a lot of helpful tips and

advice during the free workshop. Getting behind the steering wheel and learning to drive is one of the most important skills a person can learn. Those teaching our future motorists need to ensure their knowledge and skills are up to date with any

current laws." Don't miss out! The workshops will take place in Council's Administration Building and you can book your spot today by calling Council's Road Safety Officer, Warren Jeffery on 4993 4244

FROM P. 10

What to do if you can't pay your mortgage

Leasa Mayes, a financial counselling team leader at Care Financial Counselling Service, agrees banks are usually prepared to listen and work with borrowers towards a resolution. "They may provide a period of hardship, defer payments or charge interest only on the loan for a period, depending on what suits the particular situation," she said.

"Periods of unemployment or illness happen to many people so banks have procedures in place to assist in these circumstances." There may, however, be penalties. "Interest may still accrue and the late payment history will appear on the borrower's credit score," says Mayes.

Borrowers can negotiate and make a complaint through the Australian Financial Complaints Authority if they believe the bank has not considered their offer. This will stop legal action while the complaint is being considered.

As a worst-case scenario, if the borrower, along with the bank, is unable to come up with a resolution to keep the home, the bank may give the borrower time to sell the property. No matter which path is the preferable one, the message to borrowers who are worried that they may not be able to meet their mortgage commitments is to contact their bank, mortgage broker or a financial counsellor as soon as they become aware they are in potential trouble. That's the best way to contain any damage and get back on a firm financial foundation.

Don't mess with seniors!



A solicitor and a senior citizen are sitting next to each other on a long flight. The lawyer is thinking that seniors are so dumb that he could get one over on them easily.

So, the lawyer asks if the senior would like to play a fun game. The senior is tired and just wants to take a nap, so he politely declines and tries to catch a few winks.

The lawyer persists, saying that the game is a lot of fun.... "I ask you a question, and if you don't know the answer, you pay me only \$5.00. Then you ask me one, and if I don't know the answer, I will pay you \$500.00," he says.

This catches the senior's attention and, to keep the lawyer quiet, he agrees to play the game. The lawyer asks the first question. "What's the distance from the Earth to the Moon?"

The senior doesn't say a word, but reaches into his pocket, pulls out a five-dollar bill, and hands it to the lawyer.

Now, it's the senior's turn. He asks the lawyer, "What goes up a hill with three legs, and comes down with four?"

The lawyer uses his laptop to search all references he can find on the Net.

He sends E-mails to all the smart friends he knows: all to no avail. After an hour of searching, he finally gives up.

He wakes the senior and hands him \$500.00. The senior pockets the \$500.00 and goes right back to sleep.

The lawyer is going nuts not knowing the answer. He wakes the senior up again and asks, "Well, so what goes up a hill with three legs and comes down with four?"

The senior reaches into his pocket, hands the lawyer \$5.00, and goes back to sleep.



Send us your community news. photos of eventshistoric photosweddings ... baptisms ... new babies joining the family anything about your community. We want you to use The News to tell YOUR News.

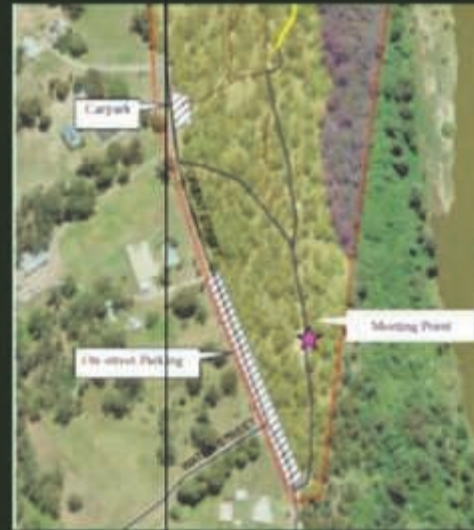


Phone us: 0414 757 826

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/>



Patricia Ann Stephen
Late of Lismore
Formally of Branxton

Passed away peacefully on 3rd February 2020, aged 85years.
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.





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

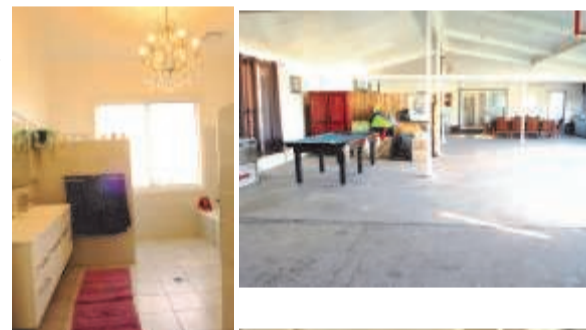
OPEN HOUSE

14 Russell Street, Branxton NSW 2335
 Saturday 7th March
 11am ~ 11:30am

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





formed high-visibility police unit. In January 2019, the NSW Government announced 100 new high-visibility officers to be stationed at five regions across the state. In the Northern Region, six officers will be posted at Newcastle Police Station to service multiple police districts including the Hunter Valley. The Northern High-Visibility Police (HVP) Unit is aimed at preventing, disrupting, and responding to crime by undertaking high-visibility patrols of crime hotspots, roads, transport networks, local neighbourhoods, and planned events. The HVP Unit will proactively engage with individuals, groups and communities at risk of crime in an effort to build intelligence-driven data.

The officers will be specifically trained in intelligence gathering, so they can proactively identify conflicts ranging from local level issues to more serious incidents. Northern Region Commander, Assistant Commissioner Max Mitchell APM, said the high-visibility teams will be a reassuring presence on Hunter streets, playing a key role in disrupting crime and anti-social behaviour. "High-visibility policing is a crucial element of regional policing – we want our communities to know we are there in numbers to protect and support them 24/7. "Local policing is at the heart of any regional community, and the HVP Unit is designed to increase overall confidence for all members of the community, by addressing

any concerns from retail owners, to visitors, to residents and workers. "The Northern HVP Unit will have the ability to be deployed wherever our demand and need is. They are highly-skilled and available to engage with the public – we want you to come up and talk to them, tell them what is happening in your neighbourhood. "By targeting crime with more boots on the ground and in a highly-visible manner, it's hoped offenders will have second thoughts before breaking the law," AC Mitchell said. The HVP officers can be deployed to any areas of the Northern Region as deemed appropriate. The Northern HVP Unit consists of one Sergeant and five Constables; the officers commenced their first foot patrols last week.

New high-visibility unit hits the ground in the Hunter and Central Coast

Residents of the Hunter will see a more visible police presence on their streets from this month, with the commencement of a newly

Draft Climate Change Policy to go on public exhibition

In an effort to address the changing climate affecting the Cessnock Local Government Area, Council has developed a draft Climate Change Policy. The community are encouraged to provide feedback on the Policy during the public exhibition period. The draft Climate Change Policy will be on public exhibition from the 26 February until the 25 March 2020. The development of the Policy is in response to the Australian Government and NSW Government making formal commitments to reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions. The NSW Government has set NSW the target of achieving zero net emissions by 2050. The Hunter Climate Change Snapshot prepared by the NSW Government shows, amongst other impacts, that

average fire weather is projected to increase in summer, spring and winter, with severe fire weather projected to increase in summer and spring. This draft Climate Change Policy proposes that Council adopt the target of achieving zero net emissions by 2050, which is consistent with the NSW Government's target. At a local level, this draft Policy will provide a framework for Council to investigate the appropriate actions for addressing climate change as an organisation, while also encouraging the region as a whole to act. Some key objectives include: * Enabling Council to align its operational and strategic planning with NSW policy. * Providing a whole of Council commitment to managing climate change

risks within the local government area. * Supporting community initiatives to deal with climate change. * Ensuring environmental risks are managed. * Providing direction on climate change for Council and the community. Cessnock City Mayor, Councillor Bob Pynsent said this policy is a positive step in the right direction and we should all work together as a community. "We must recognise the importance of shared responsibility in addressing this issue and building community resilience. Individuals, businesses and all levels of government play a role in reducing the damaging impacts of climate change. I encourage local residents to view the draft

Policy, provide feedback and be part of the process," added Cr Pynsent. Following the adoption of the Policy Council will work with the community to develop a Climate Change Strategy by June 2021. This will address climate change mitigation and adaptation, and will identify actions that Council can undertake to build climate resilience within our community. The adoption of the draft Policy and subsequent Climate Change Strategy will pave the way for long term financial benefits for Council in terms of income generation and cost savings. They will also allow Council to apply for grants related to climate change that can be used to upgrade infrastructure within our community.

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



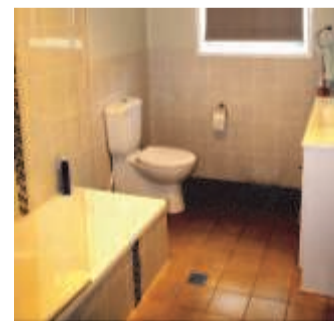
BRANXTON & VINEYARDS REAL ESTATE

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

Newcastle Writers' Festival is returning to Cessnock! Have your say



the people and experiences that have shaped him, and the power of faith to sustain us in the face of the world's biggest issues. Tim Costello is one of Australia's leading voices on social justice and global poverty, and has been instrumental in ensuring these issues are placed on the national and international agenda. He travelled the world for work in poverty alleviation and emergency relief as he led World Vision in Australia for 13 years.

Tim is an ordained Baptist minister and had years building community and addressing issues of justice in St Kilda and Melbourne. Tim was named in the Australian of the Year awards in 2006 and was made an Officer of the Order of Australia in 2005. His bestselling books include *Hope, Faith, Streets of Hope*, *Tips from a Travelling Soul Searcher* and, most recently, his memoir *A Lot with a Little*. This event will be hosted by Paul Bevan. Paul has worked in radio for 20 years producing and presenting current affairs programs on 1233 ABC Newcastle. Tickets to *A Lot with a Little: Tim Costello* are \$25 and available by contacting Cessnock Performing Arts Centre on 4993 4266. Tim Costello will also be signing books, which can be purchased for \$40 (hardcover) after the event.

■ Photo above: Rev. Tim Costello OAM



Local residents now have the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft City Wide Infrastructure Contributions Plan which is on public exhibition until the 19th March, 2020. The draft Plan aims to provide a basis for the levying and collection of development contributions for the provision of things like road maintenance and upgrades, cycleways, community facilities, recreation and sporting facilities and open space. Section 7.11 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act) enables Council to levy contributions on development to assist in the cost of providing the community with public amenities, facilities and services that are required as a result of demand created by that development.

Cessnock City Mayor, Councillor Bob Pynsent is encouraging local residents to review the draft Plan and provide their feedback. "New development is positive for our region but it's important that there's a balance and ratepayers aren't burdened by the cost of infrastructure generated by it." "This Plan will streamline all existing documents into one new complete plan and will provide more up to date information on development contributions moving forward," added Cr Pynsent. This draft Plan is the culmination of a complete review of all the existing

Strategic Plan, Cessnock Cycling Strategy, Aquatic Needs Analysis, Skate and BMX Needs Assessment, Cessnock LGA Traffic and Transport Strategy and Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan. For those wanting to view the draft City Wide Infrastructure Contribution Plan, it will be made available on Council's website at www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au, at Cessnock City Libraries and Council's Customer Service Centre.

Photo above: Huntlee New Town

Cessnock City Council is thrilled to welcome the 2020 Newcastle Writers Festival back to Cessnock for the third time as the Festival teams up with Cessnock City Library and Cessnock Performing Arts Centre (CPAC) to host a prestigious author event and popular children's author program in local schools.

Cessnock City Mayor, Councillor Bob Pynsent said it's an amazing opportunity for Cessnock and looks forward to Council working again with the Newcastle Writers Festival. "The festival started in 2013 and last year boasted 120 events enjoyed by around over 12 000 visitors, including 3 000 school children. We're excited to

be a part of this fantastic celebration of writers and welcome visitors to our local government area." Local school students will be lucky enough to meet and hear from acclaimed Australian children's authors Frances Watts, Tony Flowers and Tania McCartney as they visit nine local school locations, attended by a total of 22 schools as part of the Festival's Schools Program. The visiting writers will perform their work, talk about their craft and take questions offering local students a unique and creative learning experience. On Saturday afternoon 4 April, from 3 to 4pm, *A Lot with a Little: Tim Costello* will be held at the CPAC. Tim Costello will discuss

Daily Thoughts
My mother drew a distinction between achievement and success. She said that 'achievement is the knowledge that you have studied and worked hard and done the best that is in you. Success is being praised by others and that's nice too, but not as important or satisfying. Always aim for achievement and forget about success.' --Helen Hayes
Believe, when you are most unhappy, that there is something for you to do in the world. So long as you can sweeten another's pain, life is not in vain. --Helen Keller
If there is one thing upon this Earth that mankind love and admire better than another, it is a brave man. It is the man who dares to look the devil in the face and tell him he is a devil. -James A. Garfield
Enjoyment is not a goal. It is a feeling that accompanies important ongoing activity. --Paul Goodman

TRIAL GAMES

- 7 MARCH - BERKELEY VALE OVAL**
Berkeley Vale v Greta Branxton Colts
Mixed Grade
- 14 MARCH - GRETA CENTRAL OVAL**
Greta Branxton Colts v Woy Woy
1st Grade, Reserve Grade, 18s, Ladies League Tag
- 22 MARCH - LINDSAY MEMORIAL OVAL**
Beresfield v Greta Branxton Colts
U6 to 1st Grade
- 29 MARCH - GRETA CENTRAL OVAL**
Greta Branxton Colts v Blue Haven
U6 to U14
- 5 APRIL - GRETA CENTRAL OVAL**
Greta Branxton Colts v West Maitland
U6 to U14

Match times to be confirmed closer to match days

Public Speaking Workshop

Cessnock City Toastmasters Club will be conducting a 6 session workshop. To be held on 6 Monday nights

Venue Cessnock Leagues Club
When From Monday 20th April 2020
Time 7 to 9 pm
All course material included in cost

Limited places available!

To enquire contact
Anna 4990 4093
Anna.vannetten@bigpond.com
www.cessnock.toastmastersclubs.org

It's a great course!.....It's sure to be useful!.....It's Fun!

Cessnock City Toastmasters WHERE LEADERS ARE MADE
www.toastmasters.org

BRANXTON CROQUET CLUB

IMPROVE YOUR BODY AND MIND SATURDAY AND TUESDAY FROM 9a.m.

John Rose Avenue, Branxton (turn left on New England Highway at first traffic lights in Branxton)
All welcome.

For further information on this great no-contact sport go ahead and contact Chris Robertson, Secretary

0418 427 320/6574 7194

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



\$1000 Wed 4/3

\$600 Sun as at 1/3

Jackpots \$100 EACH DRAW

MEAT



Friday 6th March

PAT V's CAT

Friday 13th March

THE BAD & THE UGLY

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

\$2100 as at Sun 1/3

\$5000 Thurs 5/3



FRIDAYS & SUNDAYS

HOUSE



Every Wednesday

10am start



Wednesdays

4pm—6pm

\$4.00 Schooners



we begin not with a death but a house fire, and new questions: Who set it, and why?

The house belongs to Elena and Bill Richardson, a wealthy white couple who epitomize success in picture-perfect, late-'90s Shaker Heights, and their four teenage children, including girl-next-door Lexie and the troubled prankster Izzy, who is suspected of arson. "The firemen said there were little fires everywhere," Lexie says. "Multiple points of origin. Possible use of accelerant. Not an accident." But Izzy isn't the only one who seems to have fled the scene. Mia Warren and her 15-year-old daughter, Pearl, have also disappeared, vacating the small house they rented from the Richardsons. And so Ng again returns to the past for answers. It's Mia and Pearl's arrival in town 11 months earlier that ignites the story. Mia is an alluring Hester Prynne, a misfit nomad whose scarlet A might stand for Artist. She and Pearl have traveled the country in their VW Rabbit with little more than Mia's camera, living in dozens of towns before settling in Shaker Heights, where Mia promises her daughter they will stay. Pearl, longing to belong, quickly becomes a fixture in the Richardsons' home, entangling her mother along with her.

Witnessing these two families as they commingle and clash is an utterly engrossing, often heartbreaking, deeply empathetic experience, not unlike watching a neighbour's house burn. And the spectacle doesn't stop with the Richardsons and Warrens. Ng also introduces a custody battle that becomes the

centre of the town's attention — a 1-year-old girl who is wanted by both her Chinese immigrant mother and the white couple who has raised the baby. It's this vast and complex network of moral affiliations — and the nuanced omniscient voice that Ng employs to navigate it — that make this novel even more ambitious and accomplished than her debut. If occasionally the story strains beneath this undertaking — if we hear the squeaky creak of a plot twist or if a character is too conveniently introduced — we hardly mind, for our trusty narrator is as powerful and persuasive and delightfully clever as the narrator in a Victorian novel. As soon as we meet our matriarch — "Mrs. Richardson stood on the tree lawn, clutching the neck of her pale blue robe closed" — we have the sneaky sense that our well-mannered narrator is speaking from both within and above the order-obsessed neighborhood.

But as Mrs. Richardson — rarely "Elena" — struggles to keep her household in order, the narrator begins to shapeshift, surprising us with the expansion of her powers. Ng doesn't miss an opportunity to linger over a minor character, even those we meet for only a moment (the neighbor, the doorman, the bailiff) whose voices might otherwise be rendered in parentheses. At the same time, she offers a nuanced and sympathetic portrait of those terrified of losing power. It is a thrillingly democratic use of omniscience, and, for a novel about class, race, family and the dangers of the status quo, brilliantly apt.

Mrs. Richardson's vision of a

suburban utopia might strike some as a quaint fantasy, but this is the '90s, after all. Post-9/11, post-Obama, in the age of Trump and Black Lives Matter, we may know better, but Ng reminds us that 20 years ago, in the age of AltaVista, pagers and Sir Mix-a-Lot, some who voted for another Clinton claimed

to have within their sight post-racial America. "I mean, we're lucky," says the blond Lexie, whose boyfriend is black. "No one sees race here."

The magic of this novel lies in its power to implicate all of its characters — and likely many of its readers — in

that innocent delusion. Who set the little fires everywhere?

We keep reading to find out, even as we suspect that it could be us with ash on our hands.

In a Quiet Ohio Town, Who Started the Fire, and Why?

By Eleanor Henderson

Readers of Celeste Ng's second novel, "Little Fires Everywhere," will recognize a few elements from her acclaimed debut, "Everything I Never Told You." There are the simmering racial tensions and incendiary family dynamics beneath the surface of a quiet Ohio town. There are the appeal and impossibility of assimilation, the all-consuming force of motherhood and the secret lives of teenagers and their parents, each unknowable to the other.

And there's a familiar frame, too: At each novel's opening, we know at least part of the tragedy that will befall the characters — the mystery lies in figuring out how they got there. In "Little Fires Everywhere,"



from Hong Kong in the late 60's. Her father, who died in 2004, was a physicist at NASA in the John H Glenn Research Centre (formally known as the NASA Lewis Research Centre). Celeste's mother was a chemist who taught at Cleveland State University.

When Ng was ten she moved from Pittsburgh to Shaker Heights, Ohio with her parents and sister (who is now an engineer). She attended the schools in the Shaker Heights City School District, from Woodbury elementary all the way up to Shaker Heights High School. While attending Shaker Heights High school, Ng was involved with the student group on race relations for three years as well as being a co-editor of the schools literary magazine, Semanteme. She graduated from high school in 1998.

After graduating high school, Ng went on to study English at Harvard. She then attended graduate

school at University of Michigan where she earned her Master of Fine Arts in writing, now the Helen Zell Writers' Program. While attending the University of Michigan, Ng won the Hopwood Award for her short story, *What Passes Over*.

Ng now lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts, with her husband and son. While on a book tour for *Everything I Never Told You*, Ng stated that her favourite book when she was little was Harriet the Spy. Currently her favourite book is *The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy.

Career
Ng was a recipient of the Pushcart Prize in 2012 for her story *Girls, At Play*. Ng's fiction has appeared in *One Story*, *TriQuarterly*, *Subtropics*, and more. Her essays have appeared in *Kenyon Review Online*, *The Millions*, and elsewhere. Ng taught writing at the University of Michigan, and she has also taught at Grub Street in Boston. Ng

also was an editor of blogs at the website Fiction Writers Review for three years.

Her debut novel, *Everything I Never Told You: A Novel*, is a literary thriller that focuses on an American family in 1970s Ohio. The novel had four drafts and one revision before completion, which took 6 years. While working on her first novel, Celeste Ng stated that she pulled from her own experiences of racism as well as her family and friends. The book, which the Los Angeles Times described as an "excellent first novel about family, love, and ambition," won Amazon book of the year in 2014. *Everything I Never Told You* has also translated into 15 languages.

Ng's second novel, *Little Fires Everywhere*, is set in Shaker Heights, Ohio, and follows two families, one being a mother and daughter, that challenges the boundaries in the town.

The New York Times Best Sellers (5 March February 2020)

Combined Print & E-Book Fiction

- 1. New this week** - ONE MINUTE OUT by Mark Greaney. The ninth book in the Gray Man series. Court Gentry tries to stop the head of a group trafficking women and children.
- 2. 5 weeks on the list** - 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.
- 3. 76 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.
- 4. 54 weeks on the list** - LITTLE FIRES EVERYWHERE by Celeste Ng. An artist upends a quiet town outside Cleveland.
- 5. New this week** - CHASING CASSANDRA by Lisa Kleypas. The sixth book in the Ravenels series. Cassandra teaches a railway magnate a lesson.

Combined Print & E-Book Nonfiction

- 1. 7 weeks on the list** THE MAMBA MENTALITY by Kobe Bryant. Various skills and techniques used on the court by the late Los Angeles Lakers player.
- 2. New this week** DARK TOWERS by David Enrich. The New York Times finance editor traces the history and illicit dealings of Deutsche Bank.
- 3. 3 weeks on the list** OPEN BOOK by Jessica Simpson with Kevin Carr O'Leary. The singer, actress and fashion designer discloses times of success, trauma and addiction.
- 4. 5 weeks on the list** A VERY STABLE GENIUS by Philip Rucker and Carol Leonnig. The Pulitzer Prize-winning journalists use firsthand accounts to chart patterns of behaviour within the Trump administration.
- 5. New this week** UN-TRUMPING AMERICA by Dan Pfeiffer. A former senior advisor to President Obama offers suggestions for Democrats.

ABOUT

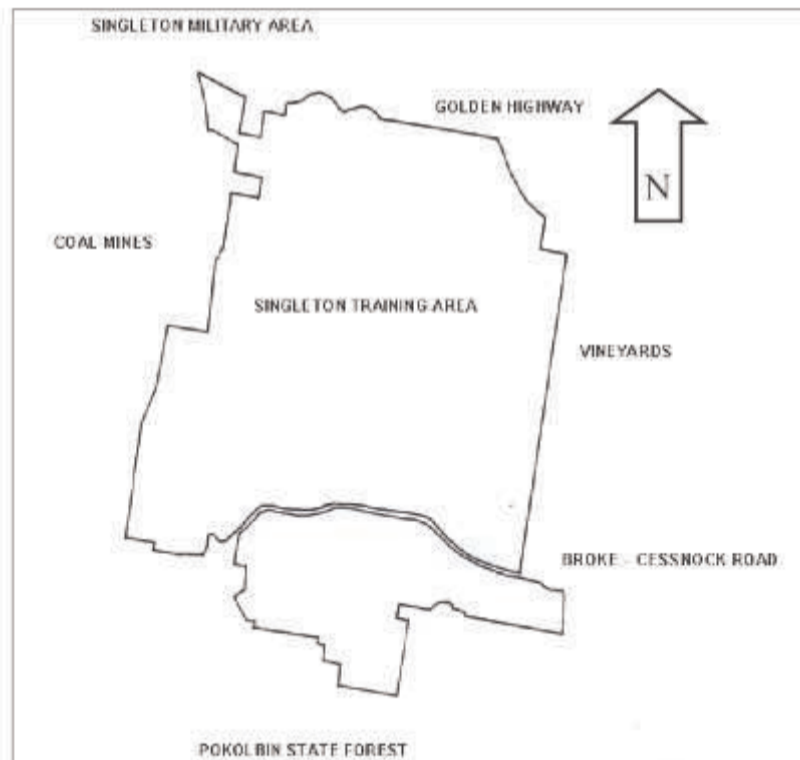
Celeste Ng
Celeste Ng (Chinese Name: 伍綺詩) is an American writer and novelist. She has released many short stories that have been published in a variety of literary journals. Ng's first novel, *Everything I Never Told You*, was released on June 26, 2014 and has won many awards, such as Amazon Book of the Year as well as praise from critics. Ng's short story *Girls at Play* won a Pushcart Prize in 2012. Her most recent novel is *Little Fires Everywhere*.

Early life and education
Celeste Ng was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Celeste Ng's parents moved



Australian Government
Department of Defence

WARNING NOTICE DEFENCE FIELD FIRING RANGES



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.

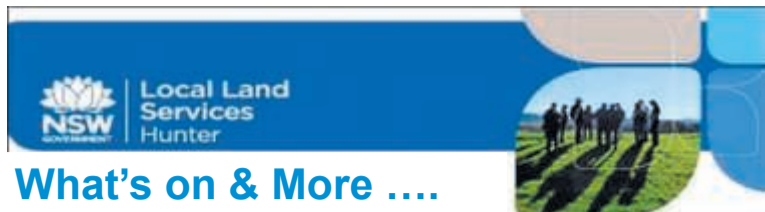
Unexploded ammunition is extremely DANGEROUS and should NOT be handled, but should be reported immediately to the nearest Police Station or Army unit. No reward will be paid for the reporting of ammunition which may be located on the training area.

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

YOUTH WEEK 2020
14 MARCH - 11 APRIL
SPEAK UP / BE INVOLVED / GET CONNECTED / HAVE FUN
FOR INFO ON EVENTS VISIT
cessnock.nsw.gov.au/community/youth



What's on & More

TRAVELLING STOCK RESERVE LEASES EXTENDED FOR HUNTER PRODUCERS

To support local farmers contending with a third year of continued drought conditions, Hunter Local Land Services has further extended Long-term Grazing Permits for the majority of Travelling Stock Reserves (TSRs) in our region. Permit holders have been offered a 12 month extension, to the end of 2020 – where conditions on the TSRs allow. It's the second year in a row drought conditions has led to the offer of extensions to existing permit holders. The same extension will apply to Short-term Grazing Permits; however, Hunter Local Land Services will be reverting to the former practice of issuing these permits on a month by month basis.



Long-Term Grazing Permits on Hunter region TSRs have been extended as part of Hunter Local Land Services drought assistance to local producers.

General Manager Brett Miners said it's one of the ways the organisation can take some pressure off producers, as well as ensure best practice management of these public assets.

"We understand the major impact the drought continues to have on local producers in our region," said Mr Miners.

"By extending the TSR leases, we hope we removed an unnecessary stress and workload for local farmers at a time when pressures were already heightened." Hunter Local Land Services is thankful to the permit holders for the way they have been carefully managing feed and water supplies on the reserves.

"We are committed to the effective management of our Hunter TSRs and, as groundcover and pasture species diversity are the primary indicators of biological health on these reserves, it's important we continuously assess their condition," said Mr Miners.

"Nearing the end of long and short term grazing permit lease periods in 2019, our Officers inspected each TSR to determine the biological health of each and this resulted in numerous lease extensions and a handful of lease suspensions due to degraded conditions."

It is up to each permit holder to decide if they wish to accept the extension, and Hunter Local Land Services is reminding all permit holders payment plans are available at any time, if they require financial assistance.

Opportunities for reinstatement of long and short term grazing permits may occur after a significant improvement in the season, when the biological health of these reserves have substantially improved.

If you have any questions regarding TSRs in the Hunter region, please contact TSR Team Leader, Luke Booth on 0408 681 576.

Weather Patterns explained by Alan Humphreys



How to Read the Weather:

There are a number of simple tools people can use to ascertain weather patterns, both current & into the future. This article relates to the East Coast of Australia, especially the Hunter Valley. The main weather tools are as follows.

Short Term:
* 7 day weather forecast. This information can be obtained from various sources including The Bureau of Meteorology (BOM), Weatherzone and other networks. The computer models are highly accurate for the immediate 4 days.

* 28 day rain forecast. Whilst this information is sourced from BOM the best data is obtained via Weatherzone, Elders or Farmonline & has a simple NSW regional map from which you can select your area, which provides a prediction of the likelihood of rain for the next 4 weeks & has a reasonable degree of accuracy.

Mid Term:
* 3 month weather forecast. This is a BOM service and works off computer models & historical data. This information is obtained by accessing the BOM website, then rainfall

forecast, then 3 month outlook & finally outlook scenarios.

* Indian Ocean Dipole. This aspect has only been seriously researched over the past 20 years & it only came in to vogue for reporting purposes over the past 4 years. It is highly relevant for the Northern Region & East Coast of Australia. A positive reading higher than 0.4 reduces the likelihood of rain whilst a reading less than 0.4 is good. This influence usually runs a cycle of 7 months from May to December with a positive reading running



Detailed Cattle report for Gunnedah

Last reported 25th February 2020

There was a reduced penning, with yearlings and cows well represented. The quality and condition of the offering was fair to good. Restockers were well catered for with good supplies of light weight young cattle. There was reduced processor competition. There was also reduced restocker and feedlot competition. Despite the reduced competition, demand for young cattle was again high from restockers. The steers particularly so, with heifers also well supported. Steer vealers sold to a significantly dearer trend. Light weight yearling steers to restockers were also substantially dearer, with some quality related price changes either way. The heavy steers saw a firm to slightly dearer price trend. There was little but quality related price changes through the yearling heifers. Both breed and quality factors. The limited supply of heavy grown steers sold to a slightly cheaper trend. Cows also sold to cheaper trends, however there was not a lot in it. Some quality related price changes at the top. There was reduced restocker competition on the plain condition cows. Heavy bulls saw a firm to cheaper market trend. Once again quality was a factor in the price change.

Detailed Cattle report for HRLX Singleton

Last reported 26th February 2020

Consignments lifted, while the quality remained mixed, with some well-bred younger cattle along with some very plain mixed breeds in the yarding. The majority were suitable for the lot feeder and restocker orders, with numbers of prime conditioned younger cattle spread throughout the market. There were approximately 60 cows in the penning. The market trend on average was dearer, with only breed and quality in places contributing to any negative prices. The vealer steers sold to strong competition, however failed to reach the high prices recorded at the previous market, this was mainly breed related, with prices ranging from 388c to 496c/kg. The over 200kg vealer heifers to the restockers and backgrounder orders gained 15c and sold from 368c to 405c, as the better bred lighter end reached 450c/kg. Light weight yearling steers to the restockers lifted 12c to 20c, as the medium weights to the feeders gained 8c and made from 370c to 402c, while the light weights reached 450c/kg. The yearling heifers to the restocker and lot feeder orders trended 15c to 20c dearer, with the better end topping at 394c, before averaging 369c to 372c/kg. The prime conditioned younger cattle suitable for the local butchers again sold to strong competition, with some carrying plenty of weight, with prices reaching 394c/kg. The grown steers trended dearer, with the restockers and lot feeders paying from 280c to 376c/kg to secure their selections. Restockers contributed to the light weight plainer cows trending dearer, as the better covered heavy weights improved 10c and sold from 275c to 286c/kg.

Detailed Cattle report for Score

Last reported 25th February 2020

Numbers increased five fold compared to the last rain affected market, and the quality on average was fair to good. The vealers were limited in supply, while good runs of the yearlings suitable for the feeder orders were offered. There were pens of high yielding cows, together with the plain quality drafts in the market. Due to the low numbers presented at the last market reliable quotes were difficult to obtain, however overall this was the dearest sale in this market reporters 16 year career. Calves ranged from 348c to 478c/kg. The vealer steers to the restockers made from 394c to 470c/kg. Vealer heifers also restocker orders made from 386c to 398c/kg. The medium weight yearling steers to the feeder orders sold from 358c to 402c, and the light weight end reached 428c/kg. Medium weight yearling heifers to feeder orders made from 368c to 384c, while the feature of the market was a large run of 60 European cross yearling heifers relocating to the Merriwa area, and made to 420c/kg. The prime conditioned young cattle to the butchers reached 390c/kg. The older heifers sold at a premium, with the restockers keen to secure future breeders, these sold from 328c to 384c/kg, depending on dentition. Cows continue to trade at high prices, with the plain condition drafts to processors making from 255c to 286c, depending on weight, and the better covered heavy weights made from 281c to 301c/kg. The best heavy bull carrying plenty of weight reached 315c/kg.

Detailed Cattle report for TRLX Tamworth

Last reported 24th February 2020

Numbers almost halved with feed stocks on the improve. There was a fair selection of young cattle along with some very good heavy trade and export lots. Overall the quality was fair to good, as was condition, improving in some cases. Restocker demand was again high. There was a reduced feedlot and restocker presence, while competition was not as strong for heavy trade and export cattle. Market trends for vealer steers to restockers experienced little but quality related price change. The heifer portion sold to dearer trends with some buyers preferring that option over the higher priced steers. Light weight yearling steers sold on a firm to slightly cheaper trend, while medium and heavy weights to feed followed a similar trend. The reduced feedlot and restocker competition combined with a variation in quality resulted in cheaper trends for those required for further finishing. There was little change in the market for well finished heavy trade heifers. Heavy grown steers saw a firm to slightly cheaper market trend. There were odd dearer sales in the heavy grown heifers, mostly dentition related. Trends were slightly cheaper through the cow market with quality not quite as good in the heavy weights. Restockers were again keen to purchase plainer condition cows.

upwards from May, not good for rain, and then the negative reading, good for rain, kicking in about December. This is when the Monsoon season starts in the northern part of Australia. There is a long term graph that can be easily accessed on the BOM site. The readings have a see saw impact with the eastern side of the Indian Ocean having the opposite reading to the west and is based upon ocean temperatures. A warmer eastern side of the Indian Ocean means increased likelihood of rain, due to increased evaporation. The Southern Part of Australia, South Australia, Victoria & Tasmania is influenced by the Southern Annular Mode, aka SAM.

Long Term:
* ENSO, the full name is El Nino Southern Oscillation. The "ENSO Wrap-Up" is produced fortnightly by the Bureau of Meteorology & is easy to access, simply by typing ENSO in to your search app.
* El Nino / La Nina was once considered the most important indicator for rainfall in Australia but I would venture to say

that the Indian Ocean Dipole has recently assumed this role, especially over the more immediate time period. El Nino / La Nina is a harder indicator to gain a good understanding but relates to the Pacific Ocean temperature and is highly relevant for the East Coast of Australia & the West Coast of America. El Nino is when the Pacific Ocean off Australia is cool & evaporation is limited, as is rainfall. La Nina is when the Pacific Ocean off Australia is warm meaning more evaporation & thus higher rainfall. Feel free to phone or email me for further explanation.
Alan Humphreys, M: 0427381311.

They said it

"If you look at what you have in life, you'll always have more. If you look at what you don't have in life, you'll never have enough." -*Oprah Winfrey*
"The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing." -*Walt Disney*
"The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall." -*Nelson Mandela*

Racing Review & News

Derby winner off to Sydney by Ben Dorries

The 2018 Australian Derby winner Levendi is off to race in Sydney with his training team insisting "recent track bias and firm tracks" in Melbourne have worked against him regaining his best form. Levendi, trained by Peter Gelagotis, returned to racing late last year after successive leg issues kept the stallion on a long road of rehabilitation since his 2018 Derby win. However, he has failed to flatter in two runs this year. Levendi ran fifth behind Miss Siska in the Carlyon Cup before finishing second last in the Peter Young Stakes at Caulfield. However on both occasions, the Gelagotis team claim they had their hand forced into riding Levendi out of his comfort zone, sending him forward because of track bias and firm tracks. They say he won't be

running in the Group I Australian Cup and he will be sent over the border to Sydney to race where the tracks have more give. I spoke to stable manager Manny Gelagotis and he said the issue was not so much about Levendi. He was not looking for excuses for Levendi and conceded the comeback galloper was not at the peak of his former powers. However he said it was impossible to get an accurate guide on how Levendi was going, considering he was having to be ridden forward because of track bias and hard tracks. Levendi's finest moment was when he swept home from 11th to win the Australian Derby in April 2018. The Caulfield track bias was a major issue with eight of the nine races on Blue Diamond day won by on-pacers

click's

Solutions

Toll Group recovers after ransomware attack

Company resorts to manual processes.
by Casey Tonkin

```
Hi!
Your files are encrypted.
All encrypted files for this computer has extension: .82e00
If for some reason you read this text before the encryption ended,
this can be understood by the fact that the computer slows down,
and your heart rate has increased due to the ability to turn it off,
then we recommend that you move away from the computer and accept that you have been compromised,
rebooting/shutdown will cause you to lose files without the possibility of recovery and even god will not be able to help you,
it could be files on the network belonging to other users, sure you want to take that responsibility?

Our encryption algorithms are very strong and your files are very well protected, you can't hope to recover them without our help.
The only way to get your files back is to cooperate with us and get the decrypter program.
Do not try to recover your files without a decrypt program, you may damage them and then they will be impossible to recover.
We advise you to contact us as soon as possible, otherwise there is a possibility that your files will never be returned.
For us this is just business and to prove to you our seriousness, we will decrypt you some files for free,
but we will not wait for your letter for a long time, we can be abused, we are moving on, hurry up with the decision.
```

Australian courier and logistics company, Toll Group, is gradually returning to its usual operations after a ransomware attack devastated its IT systems in late January this year. Toll has regularly updated its customers with information about the cyber incident that disrupted business. “We became of the issue on Friday 31 January and, as soon as it came to light, we moved quickly to disable the relevant systems and initiate a detailed investigation to understand the cause and put in place measures to deal with it,” Toll said. After locking down affected systems, Toll was forced to rely on “a combination of automated and manual processes” to continue operating. “We have also increased staffing at our contact centres to assist with customer service,” Toll said. “Notwithstanding the fact services are being provided largely as normal, some customers are experiencing delays or disruption and we’re working to address these issues as we focus on bringing our regular IT systems back online securely.” The transportation company confirmed that it was infected by a strain of the Mailto ransomware and has shared samples of the malicious software with “law enforcement, the Australian Cyber Security Centre, and cyber security organisations” to help identify and limit the potential of future infections. The company also said there has “no indication that any personal data has been lost” in the attack but it has not yet explained how the ransomware came to infect its systems. Toll has no intention of paying the ransom, according to the *Australian Financial Review*. So named because it locks affected files into an unusable ‘mailto’ format, the Mailto ransomware has

also been known as Netwalker after a related decrypter bearing that name was found by malware researchers. The ransomware is still new, with early sightings of it going back to October last year. Self-proclaimed ethical hacker, Vitali Kremez, told *Bleeping Computer* that the Mailto/Netwalker ransomware has “one of the more granular and more sophisticated configurations observed”. It is thus far unknown whether or not files encrypted by Mailto/Netwalker can be decrypted, or how easy that task is. The attack on Toll is the first known case of Mailto/Netwalker taking on enterprise-level systems. Although Toll appears to have mitigated the effects on its business operations, ransomware can be absolutely crippling for businesses. Recently, global currency exchange Travelex was knocked offline by what it initially referred to as a ‘virus’. A week after first going down, Travelex revealed it had been hit by the Sodinokibi ransomware. Many of Travelex’s websites are still down more than a month later.

Security Tip ~ Protecting Against Ransomware

What is ransomware?

Ransomware is a type of malware threat actors use to infect computers and encrypt computer files until a ransom is paid. (See *Protecting Against Malicious Code* for more information on malware.) After the initial infection, ransomware will attempt to spread to connected systems, including shared storage drives and other accessible computers. If the threat actor’s ransom demands are not met (i.e., if the victim does not pay the ransom), the files or

encrypted data will usually remain encrypted and unavailable to the victim. Even after a ransom has been paid to unlock encrypted files, threat actors will sometimes demand additional payments, delete a victim’s data, refuse to decrypt the data, or decline to provide a working decryption key to restore the victim’s access. The Federal Government does not support paying ransomware demands.

How does ransomware work?

Ransomware identifies the drives on an infected system and begins to encrypt the files within each drive. Ransomware generally adds an extension to the encrypted files, such as .aaa, .micro, .encrypted, .tt, .xyz, .zzz, .locky, .crypt, .cryptolocker, .vault, or .petya, to show that the files have been encrypted—the file extension used is unique to the ransomware type. Once the ransomware has completed file encryption, it creates and displays a file or files containing instructions on how the victim can pay the ransom. If the victim pays the ransom, the threat actor may provide a cryptographic key that the victim can use to unlock the files, making them accessible.

How is ransomware delivered?

Ransomware is commonly delivered through phishing emails or via “drive-by downloads.” Phishing emails often appear as though they have been sent from a legitimate organization or someone known to the victim and entice the user to click on a malicious link or open a malicious attachment. A “drive-by download” is a program that is automatically downloaded from the internet without the user’s consent or often without their knowledge. It is possible the malicious code may run after download, without user interaction. After the malicious code has been run, the computer becomes infected with ransomware.

What can I do to protect my data and networks?

- **Back up your computer.** Perform frequent backups of your system and other important files, and

- **verify your backups regularly.** If your computer becomes infected with ransomware, you can restore your system to its previous state using your backups.
- **Store your backups separately.** Best practice is to store your backups on a separate device that cannot be accessed from a network, such as on an external hard drive. Once the backup is completed, make sure to disconnect the external hard drive, or separate device from the network or computer.
- **Train your organization.** Organizations should ensure that they provide cybersecurity awareness training to their personnel. Ideally, organizations will have regular, mandatory cybersecurity awareness training sessions to ensure their personnel are informed about current cybersecurity threats and threat actor techniques. To improve workforce awareness, organizations can test their personnel with phishing assessments that simulate real-world phishing emails.
- **What can I do to prevent ransomware infections?**
- **Update and patch your computer.** Ensure your applications and operating systems (OSs) have been updated with the latest patches. Vulnerable applications and OSs are the target of most ransomware attacks.
- **Use caution with links and when entering website addresses.** Be careful when clicking directly on links in emails, even if the sender appears to be someone you know. Attempt to independently verify website addresses (e.g., contact your organization’s helpdesk, search the internet for the sender organization’s website or the topic mentioned in the email). Pay attention to the website addresses you click on, as well as those you enter yourself. Malicious website addresses often appear almost identical to legitimate sites, often using a slight variation in spelling or a different domain (e.g., .com instead of .net).
- **Open email attachments with caution.** Be wary of opening email attachments, even from senders you think you know, particularly when attachments are compressed files or ZIP files. **Cont p. 20**

MOVIE REVIEW

THE GENTLEMEN



THE GENTLEMEN follows American expat Mickey Pearson (Matthew McConaughey) who built a highly profitable marijuana empire in London. When word gets out that he’s looking to cash out of the business forever it triggers plots, schemes, bribery and blackmail in an attempt to steal his domain out from under him.
Directed & written by: Guy Ritchie

GUY RITCHIE IS READY TO STOP BEING GENTLE WITH THE GENTLEMEN
ASHER LUBERTO JANUARY 27, 2020



As *The Gentlemen* opens, you can practically smell the cigar smoke and taste the bourbon marinating in the room, as two lads are chatting next to a crackling fire. On one side of the room is Ray (Charlie Hunnam), the right-hand man of a drug lord. On the other side is Fletcher (Hugh Grant), a reporter hoping to blackmail him. The two trade insults until Fletcher reflexively asks, “Can I tell you a story?” The story makes up the movie’s plot, which was written and directed by Guy Ritchie, and is told in flashback sequences brimming with colourful characters and intoxicating action. The story of Ritchie’s career has been one of ups and downs, of course. His popularity took off faster than a speeding bullet when *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels* was released in 1998, and was solidified with *Snatch* in 2000. The director made a name for himself with these electrifying gangster yarns. Then he married Madonna. The couple divorced back in 2008, but for whatever reason, his career never recovered. He’s made boring blockbuster after boring blockbuster (*Sherlock Holmes*, *Aladdin*) ever since. The good news is that the director is back to his devilish old tricks in *The Gentleman*, and it

marks a return to his prima donna days (his literal pre-Madonna days), when his flair and flamboyant style was front and centre. Fletcher kicks off his story with Ray’s boss, Micky Pearson (Matthew McConaughey), a drug dealer with enough pot to smoke out an entire city. Pearson wants to expand his business by buying land from a local gentry, but he also needs someone to buyout his company so he can eventually leave the game for good. This sparks a bidding war between a posh businessman (Jeremy Strong) and an angry “Chinaman” (Henry Golding), which turns into an all-out-war when a hybrid strain of weed is stolen. Combining aspects from the gangster and whodunit genres, *The Gentlemen* offers plenty of twists and turns, and it’s enthralling to watch Ritchie return to his provocative roots with the material. People are thrown off balconies and heads are hacked off. Characters use every curse word imaginable, and then make up more once they run out of things to say. Some will find the crudeness off-putting, while others will find it refreshing at a time when R-rated comedies are nearly extinct within the hypersensitive cultural landscape.

Just about everybody will enjoy the performances, though. These may not be the most relatable characters or even people we want to root for (Pearson is the protagonist, even though he runs a drug ring, while blackmailer Fletcher is supposed to be the antagonist, even while his twisted narration makes the story fun). Grant, who famously starred in rom-coms like *Love Actually* in the 2000’s, has been playing against type as of late. Between this and *Paddington 2*, the actor has nailed the role of sardonically sassy villain. Every situation that falls on McConaughey makes an impression, much like cement. Whether his kingpin is shooting hoodlums in the crotch or rambling about how he’s the king of the jungle, he tackles each scene with the same laid-back swagger that makes his Lincoln commercials hard to resist. Colin Farrell also charms in a brief cameo, and Hunnam is terrific as Ray. And the more these character’s cause conflict, the more Ritchie indulges in his stylized techniques. There’s freeze frames, flash forwards, unreliable narrators, aspect ratio changes, film stock and gel change-ups; in one shot, a roundhouse kick connects with the camera, leaving the lens cracked for the remainder of the scene. It’s the sort of showmanship that audiences have grown to expect from Tarantino, and it incites a similar crazed energy here, suggesting Ritchie is ready to steer his career back in a blood soaked direction that’s anything but gentle.

If Arndt knows what chivalry is, she'll give her Order of Australia back

By Wendy Tuohy
Daily Life editor

The Sydney Morning Herald

EDITORS' CHOICE



This is not about free speech. If Arndt keeps an award that sets her values and standards apart as exceptional, this is a reflection of who we are. The real guts of this question is this: do we value the right of women and children to be safe from acts of violence, with no exceptions or qualifications, or are we happy to have that casually dismissed? Bettina Arndt makes her living from her opinions, and those she has had published and broadcast advocating for men's gender equality are the service to the community that attracted the Order of Australia. Like all of those whose income depends mainly on getting their voice heard in a crowded "social commentator" market, she's a dab hand at drawing attention to her messages by saying inflammatory things by design. It's a common enough model and it works. Her typical line on men being the real victims, which often involves her being inexplicably harsh on her own gender, has become so familiar as to be predictable. Her provocative, often "anti-feminist" tweets are clockwork-reliable when any culture war is brewing from which her brand could receive a puff of oxygen. Like so much Twitter bluster, you learn to ignore most of it, or at least hesitate to engage with it on the grounds it will only prolong a moment in the spotlight for someone attempting to merchandise outrage about easy targets for her audience, such as alleged fabrication of family violence claims by women or alleged exaggeration of the incidence of sexual assault (despite hard stats on both). The fact Arndt gave a platform to convicted paedophile Nicolaas Bester and was still deemed worthy of national recognition was astounding enough for the tacit endorsement it appeared to give to hearing "the other side" from child abusers. But her latest effort, cheering on comments by a

policeman who raised the possibility a man who burned his estranged wife and three kids to death may have been "driven too far ... by issues or circumstances" – so, in some warped world it may be understandable – is so irresponsible as to put vulnerable women and children at even greater risk. Queensland Detective Inspector Mark Thompson (who has since stepped aside from the investigation into the murders of Hannah Clarke, 31 and her children Aaliyah, 6, Laiannah, 4, and Trey, 3) told a press conference that investigators needed to keep an "open mind" about what happened to the mother and children. He said: "There are probably people out there in the community that are deciding which side, so to speak, to take in this investigation. Is this an issue of a woman suffering significant domestic violence, and her and her children perishing at the hands of the husband? Or is it an instance of a husband being driven too far by issues that he's suffered by certain circumstances into committing acts of this form?" Arndt rushed to social media to praise his comments, saying, "Congratulations to the Queensland police for keeping an open mind and awaiting proper evidence, including the possibility that Rowan Baxter might have been 'driven too far'. But note the misplaced outrage. How dare police deviate from the feminist script of seeking excuses." To suggest it's a good idea to question if Rowan Baxter had underlying reasons that made mass murder somehow something less goes beyond contrarian resistance against joining the rest of the nation in its shock, grief and fury. It amounts to an action that could produce harm on women and kids in the real world.

The comments not only show no sensitivity to the vast number of violence survivors and those still living in terror. They arm offenders and potential offenders with an excuse. If who we single out for prestigious awards indicates the actions and values we hold high, then Bettina Arndt's enthusiasm for comments that potentially water down culpability demonstrates we are a society that sees grey areas around the idea women and children deserve to be safe from violence, full stop. Bettina Arndt's Order of Australia is under formal review. If she really wants us to believe she is for equality of both genders, she should hand it back.

Wendy Tuohy is a senior writer

Woodland Warblers and Plant Pollinators Workshop

Elderslie Hall,

758 Elderslie Rd, Elderslie (via Branxton)

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 © Birdlife Australia and CSIRO

Free admission. RSVP and further information to upperhunterland.care@gmail.com or phone Paul Melehan on 0401 499838



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

I refer to the attack on Steve's Rant in the last issue of The News ~ Attenborough is a left wing journalist *Not* a Climate scientist. Has no degree in science. Bonny Prince Charles has an Arts degree and doesn't get his hands dirty on anything just his mouth. Al Gore the proverbial "Snake Oil Salesman" is a journalist, dropped out of law school & has *No* scientific qualifications. And our dear little 17 year old 'school dropout' Greta Thunberg left school to become the face of climate activism. None of these people have serious qualifications in environmental science or climate change science but just mouth pieces for the left.

to the mean spirited person/s who appear to have great delight in waking up the neighbourhood on Friday & Saturday nights after obviously having a skinful of alcohol. You live in a community that houses many people from different walks of life who, in some cases, work odd & differing hours & they need to be able to get some sleep. Please be more thoughtful! (I put this same un-smiley face in a couple of years ago ~ nothings changed!)

a little whinge ~ I see that the Scone by-pass has been opened at a cost of \$137m for 5kms. Surely, in the whole scheme of things, the Singleton by-pass should have had priority over this. I travel from Nth Rothbury to Singleton every morning & it is a torture!

how fortunate are we to have a swimming pool at our door step! Thanks to Bruce and Glenn and the staff for ensuring our safety and the cleanliness of the water and facility. Well done to the Branxton Greta Swimming Club committee and members and Millie of Aqua Zumba for providing the opportunity for the community to participate in sport, locally. Thank you and see you next season.



Classified's

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

Classified's

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 1/2 hour). Beginners welcome. call Josh on 0458 611 362

For Rent: Branxton 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 slasher/ 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 LXTR9 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 Branxton \$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 Branxton 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 silter 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 >

MON 9 MAR – Branxton Public School School Photos

TUES 10 MAR – Branxton/Greta CWA Mthly Mtg – Old St. Brigids Staff Room, Station St., Branxton, 9.30am, Morning Tea following. Visitors and New members welcome. Contact Marie Shearer 0402015850 for any information.

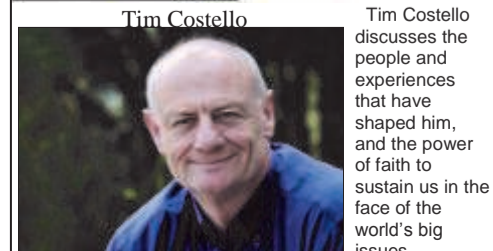
SUN 15 MAR – 19th Annual Coalfields Classic MOTORCYCLE Show @ Tatt's Hotel Greta. FREE admission. Entries start at 9:30am & show commences 10am

MON 16 MAR – Branxton Public School P&C AGM & meeting: 6pm School library

FRI 20 MAR – Branxton Public School Primary Cross Country

SAT 21 MAR – Branxton Public School P&C Trivia Night at Branxton Golf Club 7pm

TUES 14 APR – Branxton/Greta CWA Mthly Mtg – Old St. Brigids Staff Room, Station St., Branxton, 9.30am, Morning Tea following. Visitors and New Members welcome. Contact Marie Shearer 0402015850 for any information.



Dates for your diary >

MON 20 APL 2020 – Public Speaking Workshop. Conducted by Cessnock Toastmasters. 6 week course each Monday night at 7pm. Details: Contact Anna 49904093

SAT 25 APL 2020 – ANZAC Day

SAT 25 APL 2020 – ANZAC Day

SUN 10 MAY 2020 – Mothers day

TUE 12 MAY 2020 – Branxton/Greta CWA Mthly Mtg – Old St. Brigids Staff Room, Station St., Branxton, 9.30am, TUE 9 JUN 2020 – Branxton/Greta CWA Mthly Mtg – Old St. Brigids Staff Room, Station St., Branxton, 9.30am, Morning Tea following. Visitors and New Members welcome. Contact Marie Shearer 0402015850 for any information.

SUN 6 SEPT 2020 – Fathers day

TUE 8 SEPT 2020 – Branxton/Greta CWA Mthly Mtg – Old St. Brigids Staff Room, Station St., Branxton, 9.30am, Morning Tea following. Visitors and New Members welcome. Contact Marie Shearer 0402015850 for any information.

MON 5 OCT 2020 – Labour Day Public Holiday

Upcoming Concerts

SAT 24 OCT 2020 – Rod Stewart Live @ Roche Estate

SAT 31 OCT 2020 – "Jazz in the Vineyards" @ Hope Estate



networking capabilities. Ensure all shared and networked drives are disconnected

From p. 18
Keep your personal information safe. Check a website's security to ensure the information you submit is encrypted before you provide it.

- **Verify email senders.** If you are unsure whether or not an email is legitimate, try to verify the email's legitimacy by contacting the sender directly. Do not click on any links in the email. If possible, use a previous (legitimate) email to ensure the contact information you have for the sender is authentic before you contact them.

Inform yourself. Keep yourself informed about recent cybersecurity threats and up to date on ransomware techniques. You can find information about known phishing attacks on the Anti-Phishing Working Group website. You may also want to sign up for CISA product notifications, which will alert you when a new Alert, Analysis Report, Bulletin, Current Activity, or Tip has been published.

Use and maintain preventative software programs. Install antivirus software, firewalls, and email filters—and keep them updated—to reduce malicious network traffic.

How do I respond to a ransomware infection?

- **Isolate the infected system.** Remove the infected system from all networks, and disable the computer's wireless, Bluetooth, and any other potential

whether wired or wireless.
Turn off other computers and devices. Power-off and segregate (i.e., remove from the network) the infected computer (s). Power-off and segregate any other computers or devices that shared a network with the infected computer(s) that have not been fully encrypted by ransomware. If possible, collect and secure all infected and potentially infected computers and devices in a central location, making sure to clearly label any computers that have been encrypted. Powering-off and segregating infected computers and computers that have not been fully encrypted may allow for the recovery of partially encrypted files by specialists.
Secure your backups. Ensure that your backup data is offline and secure. If possible, scan your backup data with an antivirus program to check that it is free of malware.

- **Organizations:** immediately report ransomware incidents to your IT helpdesk or security office.
- All users:** change all system passwords once the ransomware has been removed. You can submit ransomware files to CISA for analysis via <https://www.malware.us-cert.gov/MalwareSubmission/pages/submission.jsf>.

Mamma Mia, here we go again. Australia's very own Ten Sopranos will bring the magic of ABBA to Belmont in March.

Celebrating 15 years of touring, audience members will be treated to a masterful and stimulating performance of some of ABBA's greatest hits by the Ten Sopranos. The latest concert offering from the group will include new vocal symphonic harmonies that will leave a lasting impression for the audience members and turn them in to dancing queens. The glorious melodies and harmonies are re-invigorated and given new life by the talented group of women which is led by internationally acclaimed and multi-award winning artistic and musical director Penny Pavlakis. She is joined by Jemilly Kalil, our local GRETA soprano Jade Riordan-Ayoub, Holly Prophet, Elizabeth Cartmer, Maria Hemphill, Tiana Young, Emma Masters, Sophia Campion and Ava Levin. Each of the vocally gifted singers were handpicked to create what is possibly the most powerful all female group in Australia. Get ready to boogie down to classic ABBA hits such as *Lay all your Love on Me*, *SOS* and *Voulez Vous* when the Ten Sopranos tour to Belmont 16s on Saturday, March 7. Together the Ten Sopranos will showcase their supreme talents to the audience in two concerts of epic proportions paying homage to the magnificent songs of ABBA. Friday 6th March - Wests Nelson Bay - Tickets cost \$40 for club members and \$45 for non-members. They are on sale now through the club or online at proticket.com.au. Doors open at 7.15pm for an 8pm show start. Saturday 7th March - Belmont 16s - Tickets cost \$40 for the show only and \$79 for dinner and the show. They are on sale now through the club or online at 16s.com.au. The show starts at 8.30pm.



Disaster Recovery Funding to be invested back in to the community

Cessnock City Council has announced its plan for the distribution of the \$1 million Disaster Recovery Funding received from the Federal Government following the bush fires last year. The funding is to be spent on projects and activities that Council deems essential for the recovery and renewal of the local community.

Cessnock City Mayor, Councillor Bob Pynsent is pleased with the program of works that address not only infrastructure damage but the impacts the bushfires have had on local business operators. "A big ticket item is the upgrade of Yango Creek Bridge. \$500,000 has been allocated to upgrade the bridge to provide greater capacity for fire truck and other large vehicles. It's fantastic to be able to ensure better access for our emergency services, building resilience for any future fire events." "In determining how to best use the funding it was extremely clear we needed to support our local business community. Tourism related businesses were hit hard during the bush fire emergency and even in the weeks following. \$100,000 has



been earmarked for Destination Marketing, promoting the 'open for business' campaigns." Funding has also been allocated to the following projects:

- \$300,000 for the regrading and rehabilitation of unsealed roads in Wollombi, Laguna, Bucketty, Paynes Crossing and Congewai areas.
- \$40,000 for embankment and stabilisation works in

various locations. \$30,000 for a temporary Disaster Recovery 'Infrastructure' Officer. The role will set up specialised 'Recover' software and systems to support the recording of infrastructure impacts from disaster events. This will also supports the disaster claims process. \$20,000 for road pavements repairs at Paynes Crossing \$10,000 for the replacement of damaged tourist signage in the Wollombi area. Council will also engage with Wollombi and Laguna communities in relation to the \$250,000 grant provided by the NSW Government's Economic Recovery and Community Resilience Fund.



If you require assistance please call Mike on 0414 757 826



GIVE US A BREAK

DUMPING ISN'T GIVING

STOP DUMPING Take your garbage to the Waste Management Centre.

CHARITY OPERATORS ARE NOT GARBAGE SERVICES

REPORT ILLEGAL DUMPING 131 555

A NSW EPA Waste Less, Recycle More initiative funded from the Waste Levy



Trinity Community Fairs
 Saturday 28th March and Saturday 26th September
 10am to 2pm
 in the grounds of the Anglican Church, Lochinvar
FREE ENTRY - ALL WELCOME!

Market Stalls
 Sausage Sizzle Cold Drinks
 Devonshire Tea

Enquiries Reverend Nicole 0481 269 892

Anglican Church

=== Daily Thoughts ===
 "Never say more than is necessary." - Richard Brinsley Sheridan
 "Truth often suffers more by the heat of its defenders than from the arguments of its opposers." - William Penn
 "I told my psychiatrist that everyone hates me. He said I was being ridiculous - everyone hasn't met me yet." - Rodney Dangerfield
 "Hegel was right when he said that we learn from history that man can never learn anything from history. George Bernard Shaw
 "History is more or less bunk. It's tradition. We don't want tradition. We want to live in the present and the only history that is worth a tinker's damn is the history we made today". Henry Ford (1863 - 1947)

School News



Branxton Public School

Branxton Public School News

Congratulations to our Zone swimmers who represented our school at the Zone PSSA Swimming Carnival. Mrs Melnik & Mr Tattis both commented on their excellent behaviour and commitment to achieving their personal best. Well done to Ethan,



Zone Swimmers

Dates for the Calendar

- Monday 9th March – School Photos
- Monday 16th March - P&C Meeting and AGM 6:00pm in the school library.
- Friday 20th March – Primary Cross Country
- Saturday 21st March – P&C Trivia Night at Branxton Golf Club 7pm

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



Debaters

Kaleb, Claire and Harrison who will represent the Zone at the Hunter Carnival later in the term. Branxton Public School now has the Skoolbag app. We encourage all families to use the app to keep up to date with what's going on at school. You can also use it to fill out forms for excursions and submit absentee notes. A great timesaver for busy families! Our canteen has been recognised as a 'Great Choice Healthy School Canteen'. It continues to offer a Monday to Friday service for our students but needs parent and family volunteers to keep it operating this way throughout the year. If you are able to help at all, please contact Sharyn (our wonderful Canteen Manager) via (02) 4938 1214. In Week 4 eight students went to Singleton to participate in a debating workshop. The students learnt many techniques used for debating and had a wonderful day with Mr Tattis. We look forward to seeing these students putting them into practice in the near future.

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

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



Caring for a garden during drought

By Kate Wall

Where ever you live in Australia, periods of extended dry weather and even drought are likely to impact on your garden. Water restrictions are likely to remain as long term realities which will limit the amount of supplementary watering you are able to give your garden during these dry times.

A garden which requires less watering during dry times will have a distinct advantage and will look better for longer during extended periods of drought. Reducing the need for supplementary watering can be done in a few different ways, including garden management practices and selection of drought tolerant plants. Garden management practices which reduce the need for supplementary watering include mulching, soil improvement, reduced fertilising, and timing of fertilising and pruning in addition to planting and watering techniques.

Soil improvement is critical for all garden success but in times of drought is even more so. A soil which has had organic matter added is better able to hold moisture in addition to having a better structure allowing better access for plant roots to penetrate deeply into the soil. Organic matter acts like a sponge in the soil, holding moisture for significantly longer. Organic matter is best added as aged compost and can be placed on top of the soil if it is then covered by mulch, otherwise should be dug in. The added organic compost also provides slow release plant nutrients which is essential during drought.

Water crystals can be added to sandy or very dry soils to aid water retention. Water crystals work best when they are soaked before digging into the soil, as they will swell significantly and if placed dry into the bottom of a planting hole, can swell enough to push the new plant out of the ground. Water crystals should not be placed on the surface but dug into the soil so plant roots will find them. An organic alternative to water crystals is to

add vermiculite to the soil. Vermiculite has the advantage of also being able to increase the porosity of the soil, holding air and nutrients as well as water. If water crystals or vermiculite can be added to the bottom of a planting hole, or a little deeper, they will help enormously to sustain new plantings through dry periods. By soaking the water crystals or vermiculite in a weak seaweed solution before adding them, you will be providing valuable nutrition to aid with plant stress, reducing transplant shock and improving drought tolerance.

Mulch is important for providing soil protection. It is able to protect soils from erosion and from temperature extremes in addition to conserving water in the soil. Mulch can also aid in weed suppression and make a garden look fresh and tidy so is valuable in any garden. The type of mulch used is often an aesthetic decision, however not all mulches will provide the same value. Fine mulches should always be avoided. They tend to form compacted crusts which prevent water penetration. When these fine mulches are used, water more often simply runs off the top and does not reach the garden

at all, making the garden below even drier than if the mulch were not used. By using an uneven or chunky mulch it is not able to

form a tight compacted crust, and will always have air spaces in the mulch which allows water to easily trickle through to the garden below.

Mulch should be applied thickly enough to give good protection but as water has to penetrate through the mulch to reach the ground, if the mulch is too thick it is much harder to get sufficient water to get through. 3 – 5 cm is usually thick enough for most gardens. As the mulch breaks down it will need to be replenished. For most chunky mulches this will usually be an annual job. It is a good idea to apply fresh mulch in spring to prepare the garden for the heat of summer. This is a good time to apply a slow release fertiliser under the mulch and give the garden a deep watering before adding the mulch.

Slow release fertilisers are usually best for the garden but during drought are particularly important. Water stressed plants are not able to take up fertiliser, so fast acting fertilisers can be wasted, or can burn stressed plants. Never fertilise plants at all during extreme drought. Slow release fertilisers can remain in the soil for long periods and the plants are able to take up small amounts as they receive

sufficient water to do so. Regular applications of a seaweed solution can assist plants to cope with stress, including drought. This should be applied as a foliar spray and applied during cool periods of the day when there are no strong winds about.

Avoid major pruning tasks during dry weather in most cases, as the plants do not have the available water to re-shoot vigorously. In extreme cases you may notice trees and shrubs dropping leaves. This is a drought protection mechanism as with less leaves the tree loses less water through transpiration. Careful pruning of small trees can remove excess leaves and emulate this natural process. If pruning must be done, always follow up with a deep watering to reduce plant stress.

Watering techniques are critical to drought management of gardens. Always water in the cool of the evening when evaporation is reduced, unless your night time temperatures are likely to be below 15°C, in which case you will be better to water in the cool of the morning. Watering is always more effective if it reaches deep in the soil to the plants root zone.

Frequent shallow watering can actually cause plants increased drought stress and even plant deaths. Plants need to be encouraged to have deep roots for increased drought tolerance. A deep soak once every week or two will be far more beneficial for your garden than regular short waterings. To check if your watering has reached the root zone of your plants, dig a small hole and see

how far the water has penetrated into the soil. This is usually best done with a watering system or sprinkler but you will need to ensure this complies with local water restrictions. Whilst all of this additional garden care will help get most gardens through periods of extended dry weather, by planting drought tolerant plants you are able to significantly increase the drought tolerance of your garden. These plants are often described as drought tolerant as they are able to withstand long periods without water. Although these plants are able to cope without a lot of water they will usually grow better if they do receive regular water. This means they will do well during times when your garden receives regular rain, but will not die easily during drought.

Plants which are able to withstand dry conditions often have certain characteristics which help them save water, including:

- course leaves which resist drying out such as banksias, eucalypts and many other natives
- grey leaves like westringias or lavender
- hairy leaves like many plectranthus
- reduced leaves like the casuarinas
- Large fleshy roots which store water like agapanthas
- fleshy stems, like geraniums
- store water in their stems and leaves the way cacti and succulents do.

There are many groups of plants which can be surprisingly drought tolerant. Salvias, ornamental grasses, geraniums, day lilies and agapanthus are all important plants in creating highly drought tolerant cottage gardens. Shrubs such as raphiolepis have course leaves and are very hardy and continue to flower well in dry times.

Top 10 Drought-tolerant Plants

You Should Grow
 'Agapanthus' 'Thyme'
 'Acacia' 'Gazania'
 'Correa' 'Lavender'
 'Echium' 'Agave'
 'Cordyline' & 'Grevillea'



Grevillea



Gazania

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SPORTS RESULTS

RESULTS GOLF

Branxton Veteran Golfers Results 20-2-20 Stableford

Div 1 Winner M Ryan 28 pts (SOD) R/u G Anderson 27 pts 3rd M Martin 26 pts
Div 2 Winner G Scobie 27 pts (c/b) R/u R Hebbe 27 pts 3rd B Ward 24 pts

Ladies Winner M Hunt 19 pts (c/b) R/u R Friis 19 pts
NTP Ladies R Friis
Gents G Scobie

Members draw - Not won
On a perfect late Summer's day, 42 of our members accepted the challenge of a round at the "Ultimate 9" golf course at Branxton, despite the long grass and being wet underfoot the players enjoyed the day, if not the scores.

Congratulations to Mike Ryan on winning his division and achieving the "Score of the Day" and, a well done to other winners and placegetters.

Results 27 Feb 20
"Millenium Trophy" -
Stableford

Div 1 & Trophy Winner P Anderson 31 pts (SOD) R/u E Munzenberger 29 pts 3rd G Jones 28 pts

Div 2 Winner J Flynn 30 pts 2nd B Ward 26 pts (c/b) 3rd I Harris 26 pts

Ladies Winner C Caldwell 28 pts R/u M Hunt 23 pts 3rd J Harris 18 pts
NTP Ladies J Harris

Gents R McMillan
Members draw - Not won
What a glorious day to finish the Summer season in providing comfortable playing conditions for our keen group of players. Congratulations to Paul Anderson on winning the 'Millenium Trophy' with the "Score of the Day". A well done to all other winners and place getters.

Results 28 Feb 20
"Away Day"
Hawks Nest

1st G Train 39 pts (c/b) 2nd G Sheldon 39 pts 3rd A Cannon 38 pts 4th P Anderson 37 pts (c/b) 5th K Anderson 37 pts
By dawn's early light our intrepid members head for Hawks Nest, a favoured venue for a round of golf. A fine sunny day with a gentle breeze wafting across the excellent golf course there, made playing conditions quite comfortable and enjoyable. Congratulations to Gary Train on winning the event. And a well done to the place getters.

LN Bootes, Hon Sec
Branxton Lady Golfers
15th January Round 1
Summer Cup
Winner Kerrie O'Connell with 21 points
Runner Up Neridah Busch with 18 points
22nd January Round 2
Summer Cup
Winner Kerrie O'Connell with 18 points
Runner Up Jen Salna with 12

points
NTP Ruth McCarthy
29th January Round 3
Summer Cup
Winner Carol Miller with 20 points
Runner Up Neridah Busch with 16 points
NTP Kerrie O'Connell
5th February Round 4
Summer Cup
Winner Tracey Miller with 20 points
Runner Up Jen Coe with 17 points
NTP Neridah Busch
12th February Round 5
Summer Cup
Winner Kerrie O'Connell with 17 points
Runner Up Trish McMillan with 15 points

Summer Cup Results
Winner Kerrie O'Connell
Runner Up Neridah Busch

Hunter Valley Golf Club

Sunday 16th February
The Weekly Challenge has been won by Andrew Campbell of the Singleton Golf club on countback to Peter Tierney after both returned excellent rounds of 40 points. No other details are available at this time.

Tuesday 18th February
Nicholas Wilson and Tom Bell handled the heavy going after the early week downpour to both record 38 points, Nick did best on the countack for the win, 3rd went to Amy Olsen with a solid 37 points. Ball winners were: Damien Porter 36, Nathan Sweeney 34, Geoff Boyd 34, Ken Scott-MacKenzie 34, Matt Delforce 33, Jacob Peace v32, Greg Mudd v32, Joe Olsen 32, Peter Franks 31, Graeme Flynn 31, Wayne Burgess 31, Lindsay Self 31, Jordan McMurray v31, Rob Hannah 30 and Phil Darcy 30 c/b. Nearest-the-Pins went to Tom Bell (3rd) Rob Hannah (01th) and Greg Mudd (17th)

Wednesday 19th February
The Ladies found the going very heavy with little 'run' making the holes much longer and the scores reflected that. Dale Hamilton did best with 34 points from Glenda Williams and Ann Grace-Smith 3rd.
Thursday 20th February
The Vets Stroke round was contested by a strong field with the scores still being affected by the soft going. Division 1 went to Steve Piggot on countback to Michael Gilbert after both returned 72 net, B Grade to Bill Freeman with the only sub par round of the day 70 net from Dennis Donn 71 and C Grade to John Barbour on countback to Neil Peterson after both returned 75 net. Ball winners were: Lindsay Meyn 72, John Pascoe 72, Don Bradley 72, Bruce Chambers 73, Jock Kendall 74, Richard Craft 74, Rob Hannah 75, John Grayson 75, David Peel 75, Gerry Irwin 75, Tom Bell 75, Ray Boyd 76, Jeff Taylor 76, Noel Ellenor 76 and William Duncan 76.

Nearest-the-Pins went to Kerry Bartlett, John Stewart and Bill Freeman.

Saturday 22nd February
Maitland visitor did best in A Grade with 41 points to win the Medley Stableford event from Andrew Zok with 38, B Grade to Col Somerville with 38 from James Schofield 36 and Bill Harden took C Grade with 36 from Jeff Shanahan with 33. Ball winners were: Shanon Attewell 37, Phil Douglas 36, Tracy Morison 36, Phil Small 36, David Agnew 35, Jeremie Morton 35, Michael Gilbert 35, Gary Arnold 35, Phil Jake v34, Ken Springbett 34, Andrew Bowden v34, Wayne Barber 34, Geoff Struczko v34, Paul Adams 34, Dean Morison 34, Dean Freebairn 33, David Peel 33 and Jeremy Holden 33 c/b. Nearest-the-Pins went to Paul McCudden (3rd) Tom Bell (4th) Nathan Mudd (8th) Robert Wilton (10th & 17th).
Next weeks event will be a Medley 2 BBB.

Pennants
The Seniors recorded their second win defeating the Vintage 2-1 at Maitland. A Grade suffered a 1.5 to 3.5 loss to Maitland at Scone, B Grade opened their account with a strong 4.5 to 0.5 win over Maitland at 'home' and C Grade finished square 2.5 - 2.5 with Maitland at Singleton.

Branxton Golf Club Saturday, 22nd February 2 MAN AMBROSE + KENO QUALIFIER

Field: 62
NETT WINNERS
JOHNNY LAWLER /
ADRIAN CHOMIZAK
59.25 NETT
NETT RUNNERS UP
RICHARD CROOKS /
MICHAEL CARLING 63.75
NETT
NETT THIRD LEE
HEUSTON / STEVE PRIMER
64.75 NETT C/B
NETT FOURTH
ROBERT BILES / STEVEN
ECCLES 64.75 NETT
NETT FIFTH DOUGLAS
ELPHICK / JAMES
ELPHICK 65 NETT
SCRATCH WINNER-
SCAMERON JOHANSON /
MICK SIMPSON 63 C/B
NTP
M BARRETT 231CM
R CALDWELL 261CM
D MATT 111CM

KENO TEAM QUALIFIER
- RICHARD CROOKS &
MICHAEL CARLING
Saturday's 2 Person
Ambrose + Keno Qualifier
proved very popular with 62
players enjoying the im-
proved greenery around the
Branxton Golf Course. John
Lawler and Adrian

Chomizak were the Nett
winners for the day with a
very impressive 59.25

score—well clear of run-
ners up Richard Crooks and
Mick Carling. However,
John and Adrian weren't
qualified to win the Keno
qualifier so Richard and
Mick will be representing
the club in the regional
qualifiers at a venue and
date to be announced,
where the winners progress
to the Bonville Course for
the State Finals. The nett
third to fifth placings were
tightly contested with only
0.25 of a point separating
these pairs. The Scratch
winners for the day were
Club Champion, Cameron
Johanson and Mick Simp-
son with an impressive 7
under score of 63—quite an
effort in a 2 person
ambrose. The shot of the
day belonged to David
Matt on the last, with his
tee shot finishing only
111cms away.

On Sunday our Pennants
teams didn't have a good
day although our defending
champions A Grade won
again in a tight contest
against Kurri at Scone. It
certainly is a tight
competition.

Pennants Results
A Grade- won 3-2 against
Kurri at Scone
B Grade- lost 3.5 - 1.5 to
Paterson at Hunter Valley
C Grade - lost 4-1 to Pater-
son at Singleton
Vets-lost 2.5.- 0.5 to Sin-
gleton at Maitland

Saturday, 29 February 2020 SATURDAY COMP - PAR

Field: 58
Grades A Benjamin Bridge
4
Grades A Adrian
Chomizak 4
Grades A Peter Wilton 0
Grades B Robert Hale 3
Grades B Reece Caldwell
3
Grades B John Burgess 1
Grades C Anthony
Charlesworth 1
Grades C Glenn Lockwood
1
Grades C Darren Mathers 0
NTP 2/11 A 2nd
Benjamin Bridge 233cm
NTP 4 B 4th Reece
Caldwell 560cm
NTP 9/18 C 9th James
Elphick 104cm
NTP 13 A 13th Tom
Foster 570cm
Balls 17 Distributed down
to score: -4
Ben Bridge, the 2019 B
Grade Club Champion,
continues to impress in A
Grade, once again win-
ning—this time in the un-
compromising par event,
with an excellent plus 4.



with Mark Bercini

Week 19 ~ Week 19 of Cessnock District Cricket was a week to forget for the Greta Branxton club, with all five grades going down in their respective fixtures.

In a fight for the minor premierships, first grade were gallant in their four-wicket loss to Mulbring at Miller Park no.1. Greta/Branxton won the toss and elected to bat, and at one stage were 8-80 and in all sorts of trouble. This was before a 73-run ninth wicket stand between Kyle Hall (36no) and Martin Shearer (30no) put some respectability back in the scoreboard. Josh Dagg (31) and Greg Andrews (12) were the only other batsmen to reach double figures. The match appeared to be very evenly poised at the drinks interval of the Mulbring run chase when they were 4-70, but they eventually reached the target in the 36th over with still four wickets in hand to claim the minor

premiership. Martin Shearer had the ball on a string for the Blues with 2-32 off 10. Second Grade went down to Chelmsford Hotel by 11 runs at Chinaman's Hollow. Chelmsford were all out for 107 batting first, with Mark Peace (3-31 off 8), Brett Bridge (3-17 off 10) and Alex Walkling (2-15 off 8) doing the damage for the Greta/Branxton side. Unfortunately Greta/Branxton fell short of the modest target when they were all out for 96 in reply. James Shoulders snr (29), Will Regan (18), Bridge (16), and Andrew Bercini (15) all making starts.

Third Grade Blue's disappointing year continued when they were humbled by 86 runs at the hands of Peden's Hotel White on Miller 2. Peden's posted 4-203 batting first, with Ayden Wilkinson (1-18 off 5), Tanveer Singh (1-19 off 6), Peter Davis (1-42 off 9) and Dave Seabrook (1-56 off 8) all snaring a wicket each. The Blues were all out for 117 in reply, with Singh (28), club president Sean Wright (18) and skipper Malcolm Hedger (16) providing the majority of the runs.

Third Grade White were beaten by 4 wickets by Mulbring at Mulbring Oval. After dominating most of the year with the bat, Greta/Branxton managed just 109 batting first, with Jamie McNamara leading the way as per usual with 37, with Ben Miezi (19) and Ethen Spliet-Miller (18) offering support. Mulbring achieved the target after losing 6 wickets. McNamara completed a fine all-round game with 4-27 off 10.

Fourth Grade completed the clean sweep of losses with a narrow 14-run loss at the hands of competition leaders Supporters Club at Baddeley 2. Supporters made 130 batting first, with Jeremy Brown skitting the home side with 5-36 off 9 with his hand grenades, with up-and-coming U/14 player Lewis Jacobs taking 2-6 off 3. Greta/Branxton fell for 116 in reply, with Mitch Bradford (38), skipper Sam Dagg (12) and Jacobs (12) providing the runs.

Week 20 ~ A successful final round of district cricket saw Greta/Branxton wrap up the club championship with victories in first, second, third white and fourth grade, with third grade blue unable to complete the clean sweep.

First grade accounted for Bellbird for the third time this year with what was in the end a comfortable 4-wicket victory at Carmichael Park. Bellbird batted first and were all out in the 38th over for 139. In what was probably their best bowling performance of the year, the Blues seamers had the Bellbird batsmen tied down for the majority of the innings, with Brent Watson (3-40 off 9), Darren Thomson (2-19 off 10), Patrick Andrews (2-30 off 7) and Martin Shearer (2-20 off 4.3) sharing the work load. Greta/Branxton recovered from 3-21 in reply when co-skippers Nathan Holz (50) and Joey Butler (32) got the run-chase back on track, with the Blues reaching the target in the 28th over after losing 6 wickets. Josh Dagg hit the winning runs with a pull stroke to the mid-wicket boundary to remain unbeaten on 26.

Second grade picked up a 5 wicket victory over Bellbird at Miller 1 to leapfrog them for the minor premiership. Both teams finished the season on the same points, with Greta/Branxton having the superior net run rate. Bellbird were skittled for 86 batting first, with Brett Bridge (3-12 off 7.1), Pat Fitzgerald (3-23 off 10), Alex Walkling (2-28 off 7) and US bound Jake Goodyer (2-17 off 6) doing all the damage. As was the case in first grade, the run chase started a little shakily at 3-22, but opener Bryce Element played a fine hand to carry his bat with 43, receiving good support from Brock Charnock with 27.

Third Grade White finished the season in second place following their 179-run thrashing of Peden's Hotel White at Jeffery Park. Greta/Branxton amassed 6-267 batting first, with association leading run-scorer Jamie McNamara notching an unbeaten 125. Cory Stephenson also timed the ball cleanly with 80, with Ben Miezi (20) and Dan Minchin (19) adding to the impressive total. Peden's Hotel were all out for 88 in reply, with Will Young not to be outdone by his step father by bagging 5-9 off 4.

Third Grade Blue could not finish their poor season off on a high following a narrow 3-wicket loss to Bellbird at Baddeley 3. The Blues were all out for 92 batting first, with club president Sean Wright (20), Will Regan (15), Jason Varley (14) and Ben Lahey (13) making starts. Bellbird reached the target in the 18th over with 3 wickets in hand, with Varley (2-25 off 5) and Jesse Wright (2-7 off 2) picking up a brace of wickets each.

Fourth Grade finished the season off strongly by fell just one point shy of the semi finals following their 4 wicket win over Chelmsford Hotel at Miller 2. Chelmsford were skittled for 85 batting first, with Jeremy Brown bamboozling the Chelly batsmen with his hand grenades to finish with 5-7 off 7 in a fine spell of bowling. Correy Stone supported well with 3-29 off 8. Greta/Branxton reeled in the target in just 12 overs after losing 6 wickets, with skipper Sam Dagg (36no), Doug Engel (19) and Mitch Bradford (15) doing enough to get the Blues home. The semi finals commence this week, with first grade taking on Peden's Hotel on Miller 1. In a first for the club, second grade will play their home semi on Miller 2 against Wine Country, with Third Grade White taking on Wine Country at East End.

Final Standings ~ First Grade Mulbring 74, Greta/Branxton 70, Peden's Hotel 57, Bellbird 52, Wine Country 41. **Second Grade** Greta/Branxton 87*, Bellbird 87*, Chelmsford Hotel 79, Wine Country 71, Denman Hotel 59, Peden's Hotel 55. * NRR - Greta/Branxton 1.37, Bellbird 0.84. **Third Grade** Bellbird 83, Greta/Branxton White 80, Wine Country 75, Mulbring 74, Peden's Hotel White 68, Peden's Hotel Blue 60, Greta/Branxton Blue 57, Denman Hotel 45. **Fourth Grade** Supporters 87, Cessnock Hotel 84, Bellbird Maroon 67, Bellbird White 64, Peden's Hotel 64, Greta/Branxton 63, Wine Country 59, Chelmsford Hotel 57. **Club Championship** Greta/Branxton 703.02, Bellbird 661.02, Peden's Hotel 558.00, Wine Country 546.88.

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BRANXTON GRETA VINEYARDS

The NewSPORT

Greta Workers



“The Surgeon” Scotty Beckett has continued his dominance

(39). Sons Cohen (26) and Ethen (31.5) both weighed in nice flathead. Lewis Jacobs is in outright lead in the juniors after his 34



weekend. Weigh in will be 4pm Sunday at the Greta Workers Club.

Wednesday Raffles have been very successful with 2 x \$30 seafood trays being raffled off as well as a \$25 Harvest Bistro Voucher for the non-seafood lovers. This has been a great afternoon to break the week up

Chook raffle at the same time. Tickets selling from 445pm and all are drawn by 5:30pm.

Another thanks again to all our 2020 Sponsors Gocon Rural Fencing, MacDougall Rural Concreting, The Bottlo at Greta, The Sea Shanty at Rutherford, and the Harvest Bistro at Greta Workers Club. Our Club polos are due in a couple of weeks and it will be great to see all these sponsors all over them out in public.

Any new members can pay online or come down to our weigh ins or Wednesday raffles. Happy Fishing!

Nevo



Photos: Cohen Spliet-Miller, at left & Ethen Spliet-Miller above

points, this also puts him in overall 4th place. New member Sharna Cannon lodged her first weigh in for the club with 2 bass (19.5). Glenn Beckett scored 34 points with Bream and Flathead and Mick “Mouse” Edwards scored 33 points with Bream and Whiting.

Our Next Outing will be Hawks Nest on the weekend of 13th, 14th, 15th

March. Most members are booking Jimmys Beach Caravan Park for this

with the bowler’s meat raffle (2 trays), Members draw, and free members

The Greta Workers Social Fishing Club February weekend was an “Open” event and both fresh and saltwater fish were weighed in. “The Surgeon” Scotty Beckett continued his dominance taking out the weekend with 69 points weighing in Flathead, Bream and Bass. New member Boxhead Miller scored second top points with Flathead and Tarwhine

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