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# Hills to Hawkesbury

Community News | 1st - 15th December 2023 | Volume 40 - Issue 24  
Local News, Local Events, Local People and Local Businesses

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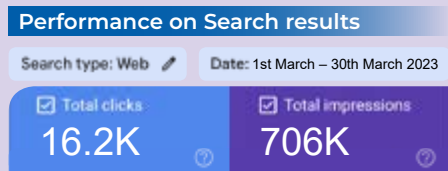
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# A Year of your Life, A Life in a Year

By INGRID ELKJAER (ROTARY EXCHANGE STUDENT)

*Hi everyone, my name is Ingrid and I'm an exchange student from Denmark living in Australia for a year. I came in July and have already had the most memorable experiences. I'm 16 years old and attend a local school in the Hills district. This week I have had work experience with Bev Jordan on the Hills to Hawkesbury magazine exploring journalism as a Job. I am sponsored by Norwest Sunrise Rotary Club.*



ROTARY EXCHANGE: Georgia, Ingrid, Ilsa and Janelle

As a 16 year old girl travelling to the other side of the world on your own, you learn a lot. You learn a lot about cultures as well as yourself. You learn how to be independent whilst exploring a whole new country.

My friend Lisa from Finland who is also on exchange and currently lives in West Pennant Hills says "the ability to explore a whole new aspect of the world at such a young age with the support of a safety network" when I asked her what her favourite thing about the Rotary youth exchange program was.

With Rotary as your exchange organisation, you know you are in good hands. Rotary club members take care of you as if you were their child for a year.

The Rotary youth exchange program is a program for young people aged 15-17 where you get the unique opportunity to travel to another country all by yourself. You get to know a whole new culture, get new international friends, and you get a new family whom you will know for a lifetime.

The friendships you get through an exchange year is something very special. You all share this experience which is extremely hard to put into words, but you all get one another and you make the best memories throughout the year.

Georgia from Westleigh, who is sponsored by the West Pennant Hills/ Cherrybrook Rotary Club, is going on exchange to Chile in January said "I'm excited to learn how to speak Spanish and learn

how to communicate with people in my new school in Chile"

It is one of the major experiences you get as an overseas exchange student.

The Rotarians do a lot to make this program run effectively, it makes you wonder why they are so passionate about the program.

Janelle Craig, the district coordinator, answers this question: "I'm passionate about the program because I have seen it and its impacts from different perspectives. I have seen it as a mum and seen how it is transformative. Rotary clubs comes to life when having an exchange student"

Part of the exchange program is the big yearly safari trip organised by Rotarians. This year, the 9685 district, which is my district, stretching from the Hills all the way out to Blue Mountains and all the way up to Central Coast, is collaborating with the Melbourne district to give us a Safari trip from Melbourne through Adelaide all the way to Alice Springs and Uluru.

We will be 60 students travelling together and it will be great fun getting to know one another and hear about all our different cultures and of course see all the amazing nature that's a big part of the trip."

What I have learnt from this experience already is to be grateful for all that I get, especially from Rotary and the Rotarians. I don't think I'll ever forget when I travelled down under alone and made incredible memories."

# Hills to Hawkesbury Community News

Local Stories, Local Events, Local People and Local Businesses

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The Hills to Hawkesbury Community News has been serving this area for nearly 40 years. It's name may have changed over the decades but the commitment to providing a free service to the community is still at the heart of what this hyper local fortnightly publication does. Established in 1982 it has evolved into a community news magazine with a big digital footprint. Our aim is to inform, inspire and connect our community. It is a family-owned small business. Our team is local and love what they do.

Please follow us on Facebook @hillstohawkesbury. Printed copies are available at local shopping centres and other outlets. For a full list visit our website [www.hillstohawkesbury.com.au](http://www.hillstohawkesbury.com.au).

# Housing Plea

Hills Mayor Peter Gangemi is urging the State Government to work with local councils to deliver more housing rather than use "a one-size-fits-all approach" that he says could make the housing crisis even worse.

He says The Hills Shire Council has one of the strongest track records of any council in Sydney on housing.

"In the 22/23 Financial Year, more than 1500 development applications were determined in The Hills, which is more than any other metropolitan council in the state," he said.

"The more than 13,000 homes expected in The Hills Shire LGA over the next five years are second only to Blacktown Council.

"The Hills is one of the few metropolitan councils meeting our housing targets, so we come to the table as a major contributor looking to find the best solutions for our communities."

He said councils were willing to work with the NSW Government on more nuanced approaches, rather than cookie-cutter planning rules across the entire metropolitan area.

"Councils I have spoken to are prepared to do even more when it comes to housing if there is additional investment in infrastructure to match the increase in population.

"Each area has its unique challenges that have been considered in planning processes

such as the Local Strategic Planning Statement, Local Environmental Plan and Precinct Plans. A one-size-fits-all approach is inferior planning and will lead to inferior results."

"There is already enough land zoned to accommodate an extra 100,000 people in the Hills by 2036. In the last ten years only 19,000 dwellings have been built in The Hills against 30,000 consents, so blaming councils and fashioning a greater number of approvals is not the magic answer to the housing crisis."

Hills Shire Council has already stated its opposition to State Government changes to housing density levels, particularly near the Showground Station where the cap on the number of dwellings of 5,000 was scrapped by the Government earlier this year.

Council is furious that doubling the number of dwellings in the area without provision for a new high school or primary school or the necessary infrastructure to cater for the influx

of new families would not reduce the housing crisis but lead to something worse.

Mayor Gangemi said the Government can work with councils on a number of key moves to deliver more housing in Sydney.

"The Government can do its part in the housing crisis by fast tracking the construction of homes on Landcom sites, funding key infrastructure projects to unlock housing and restoring confidence in the apartment sector.

"We want to work with the Minns Government. We think there are big opportunities for more housing in The Hills Shire and right across Western Sydney.

"We look forward to reviewing the details of draft policies when they are made public by the Government next week and productive discussions around how we can accommodate appropriate density and uplift in the right locations where they will be serviced by infrastructure."

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## Pedestrians Injured

Two young schoolboys were injured in separate traffic incidents just two days apart.

On Thursday a 14-year-old boy was hit by a vehicle at the intersection of Old Northern Road and Castle Hill Road, Castle Hill.

Emergency services responded to reports that a 14-year-old boy had been hit by a vehicle at about 3.30pm on Thursday 23rd November. NSW Ambulance paramedics treated the boy at the scene where he was taken to The Children's Hospital at Westmead with non life threatening injuries.

The driver - a 47 year-old female who was uninjured - was breath tested at the scene with a negative result. Officers from The Hills Police Area Command have commenced inquiries into the circumstances surrounding the crash. Anyone with information or dashcam footage is urged to contact Crime Stoppers.

On Wednesday, 22nd November, a 12-year-old boy was hit by a vehicle at the intersection of Piccadilly Street and Castlereagh Street, Riverstone just after 3pm.

The Mounties Care CareFlight Helicopter was tasked by NSW Ambulance and CareFlight's specialist doctor and NSW Ambulance paramedics treated the young boy on the scene for head and neck injuries.

The patient was then accompanied by the CareFlight specialist doctor in a road ambulance to the Children's Hospital at Westmead in a serious but stable condition.

The driver – a 35-year-old woman who was uninjured – was taken to Blacktown Hospital for mandatory testing. Officers from Riverstone Police Area Command established



a crime scene that was examined by specialist police from the Crash Investigation Unit. As investigations continue police are urging anyone who may have witnessed the crash – or has any available dashcam/mobile phone footage – to contact Riverstone Police Station or Crime Stoppers.

## TEENS CHARGED

Police have charged three teenage boys with deliberately lighting a fire in The Ponds last month.

Detectives attached to Riverstone Police Area Command established Strike Force Clennam to investigate a series of deliberately lit bushfires in and around The Ponds bushland between October and November 2023.

At about 7pm on Sunday 29 October 2023, emergency services were called to Peel Reserve bushland following reports of a large bushfire. Fire and Rescue NSW attended and extinguished the blaze before any nearby properties were damaged.

Police commenced an investigation into the cause of the fire, and about 11am on Friday 17th November, police arrested three teenage boys – two aged 14 and the third aged 16.

They were taken to Riverstone Police Station where they were all charged with intentionally cause fire and be reckless as to its spread and shoplifting.

The 16-year-old boy was charged with an additional charge of possess unauthorised pistol.

Investigations under Strike Force Clennam continue.

## SPEAK OUT

NSW Police are urging people to break the silence around domestic violence.

The message is: End the silence, stop the violence.

If you, or anyone you know has experienced, or is at risk of, family and domestic violence, contact your local police. In an emergency, call Triple Zero (000). Support is available via the following helplines – Domestic Violence helpline 1800 65 64 63, 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) or MensLine Australia 1300 789 978.

## DOUGHNUT THIEVES

A delivery van packed with 10,000 fresh doughnuts was stolen at a Carlingford service station at 4am on Wednesday (29th November).

Hills police say a woman who saw the driver had left the van, jumped in and drove off from the service station on Pennant Hills Road.

A spokesman for Krispy Kreme confirmed that the van filled with the freshly baked delights was on its way to Newcastle when it was stolen.

Officers attached to The Hills Police Area Command are investigating the circumstances surrounding the incident.

The woman is described as being of Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander appearance, in her early 30s, with long black or brown hair.

She was wearing dark clothing and carrying a white handbag.

The van is a white LDV van with NSW registration DG94MY.

Anyone with CCTV or information about this incident is urged to contact Crime Stoppers.

## FATAL AT DURAL

A 72-year-old man died after being caught under a lift cage on a property in Dural on Thursday, 16th November.

Emergency services were called to a property on Winnanga Rd, at around 6.30pm and were told a commercial lift cage that was intended to be used for removing branches from some trees on the property was being loaded onto a Utility. It is understood the 72-year-old man became trapped under the lift being operated by a relative, suffering fatal injuries.

The scene was forensically examined by specialist police, with @SafeworkNSW also in attendance. A report will be prepared for the information of the Coroner.

## SAVE A LIFE

When someone is in cardiac arrest every minute counts. NSW Ambulance is encouraging everyone to sign up to become a GoodSAM volunteer to help in CPR emergencies.

The more people who register to be a GoodSAM volunteer the better, because it increases the odds that someone nearby can provide CPR early and help save a life if someone is in cardiac arrest.

You can register as a GoodSAM volunteer if you're 18 years old or over, and able and willing to perform CPR. Chest compressions are easy and safe to do.

You don't need to have formal first aid or CPR training to sign up. Our emergency medical call takers are available to step you through the process. Help keep them alive while paramedics arrive. Sign up to GoodSAM: <https://www.ambulance.nsw.gov.au/goodsam>

## CYCLIST SEARCHED

In response to numerous complaints of trail bike riding and unregistered road bikes in the Bligh Park and South Windsor areas, plain clothes police from Hawkesbury Police Area Command were actively patrolling Bligh Park when they intercepted a male riding an unregistered bike.

The male was searched and was found to be in possession of prohibited drugs. He was also charged with breaching bail, and riding whilst disqualified.



In a life threatening emergency dial 000

# RFS Awards

More than 80 Rural Fire Service volunteers from the Hawkesbury District were recognised for their service at Panthers in North Richmond last month (November 2nd) including Julia Petrikas who was recognised for almost 70 years of dedicated service.

The RFS Deputy Commissioner Peter McKechnie, Superintendent Karen Hodges AFSM, and RFS members and their families and friends joined the awards presentation.

Deputy Commissioner commended the volunteers for accumulating about 1,900 years of service to the community.

Fifty-four members were awarded Long Service Medals and clasps, ranging from 11 to 69 years, for continuous service.

The Deputy Commissioner presented 28 National Medals for volunteers who have significantly exceeded their expectations. At the same time, six individuals received a National Emergency Medal for their contribution during the 2019 – 2020 fire season.

"I would like to make special mention of Julia Petrikas, a Life Member of the Tennyson Rural Fire Brigade, who is recognised for an impressive 69 years of dedicated service," the Deputy Commissioner said. "Julia has been a member of the Brigade since 1954, originally supporting her late husband Dick who was a founding member and more recently has been acknowledged for her significant contributions during the 2019/2020 fire season.

"Members of the Hawkesbury District have always answered the call, not only assisting with incidents locally but across the state," he said. "The RFS members being celebrated tonight have and continue to give their time, to not

only protect their communities, but to carry out critical behind-the-scenes work, like catering and planning, which enables our frontline firefighters to do their job. Deputy Commissioner McKechnie thanked those who supported the volunteers and members during the ceremony.

"I thank the family, friends, employers and colleagues of all RFS volunteers," he said.

"We know it takes their ongoing support and patience to assist and enable our volunteers to do what they do to save lives and property."

Rural Fire Service volunteers from the Hills were recognised on the 15th of October 2023 for their service to the community.



L-R: Clr Les Sheather, Susan Templeman MP, Julia Petrikas, Superintendent Karen Hodges AFSM, RFS Deputy Commissioner Peter McKechnie



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These kids and their families deserve to share in the excitement and celebration of this time of year - which is exactly what Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation Christmas Appeal is all about. By supporting the appeal, you

can make one donation that helps all sick kids, regardless of their age or the type of illness or injury they have. From the toddlers to the teenagers, the inner cities to the outer suburbs, regional, rural and beyond - this is your chance to give all sick kids the brightest Christmas possible.

The funds raised from this appeal will help support the network of world-leading children's healthcare services, including The Children's Hospital at Westmead, Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick, Kids Research, the Newborn and paediatric Emergency Transport Service (NETS) and the only children's hospice in NSW, Bear Cottage.

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# Christmas in Windsor

By JOSH KERWICK

December is officially here and the Hills and Hawkesbury are showing their Christmas spirit with plenty of events lined up for the remainder of the year. One such event is Light Up Windsor, co-organised by the Windsor Business Group and Hawkesbury City Council. The event is taking place in Windsor on Saturday December 2nd, and it's shaping up to be a seriously terrific event.

The festivities are planned to run from 5-9pm with a massive slate of activities on offer. At the main stage, attendees can expect hours of entertainment for the whole family with the best in local music and dance talent booked in for the evenings. Alongside that, there'll be snow flurries, free face painting, wandering entertainment, a silent disco at Thompson Square and the lighting of the Windsor Christmas tree that'll ensure everyone is having fun from beginning to end.

The highly acclaimed 'Find a Reindeer' competition is also returning, where visitors to the fair are challenged to find seven reindeer on the night that have stamps to fill up a passport. When completed, the passport goes into the draw to win a \$500 family prize which includes various gift vouchers and a Hawkesbury Hamper.

A massive 75 stalls offering everything from Christmas decorations to handmade jewellery will also be present at the event alongside many of the shops and restaurants in Windsor Mall being open for the entire evening, guaranteeing a massive retail space for attendees and

massive injection into the local Windsor economy. In 2022, \$1.373 million was spent at Light Up Windsor, and for members of the local business and residential communities, it's a chance to see the peaceful town of Windsor become an entertainment hotspot for one fantastic night.



Richmond Lions Club and Windsor Riverview Shopping Centre are also doing their part to create Christmas cheer with their event Pics in the Paddock on Saturday 16th December. Bring a camping chair and a rug to enjoy Tim Allen's Christmas classic *The Santa Clause* in a free open-air cinema experience under the stars, located at Hollands Paddock behind Riverview.

In addition to popcorn and other snacks available for purchase, there'll be a BBQ from 6:30pm with profits being given back to the community, and the film will start when the sun goes down (approximately 8pm). Pics in the Paddock is another great event to help you and your family get in the Christmas spirit - don't miss out!

We know locals enjoy the outdoors so it makes sense to have a snake bite kit in the home or in the car - just to be on the safe side.

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# Creating Canopies at WSU Hawkesbury

By JOSH KERWICK

As part of their mission to plant 200,000 trees in the Greater Sydney Area by 2025, Greater Sydney Landcare (GSL) have recently finished planting 10,000 trees at the Western Sydney University Hawkesbury Campus as part of the Creating Canopies project with the help of students from the university.

The first planting was held on Saturday 21st October, where 2,000 trees were planted in one day thanks to 25 students and teachers who used their green thumbs. Since then, the amount of trees GSL has planted on the campus has risen to 10,000, with a further 20,000 trees planned to be placed in the site's empty paddocks in 2024-25.

Creating Canopies Project Manager Danielle Packer, who began her environmental care career with the Cattai Hills Environment Network, is thrilled with the progress of the initiative that has seen 59,159 trees planted across Greater Sydney in 2023: "The NSW Government is planting trees to provide much needed canopy across Greater Sydney to cool down our city, prioritising LGAs that have a low canopy below 30%.

WSU's Hawkesbury Campus was eager to help create a more sustainable space, having recently become carbon neutral in 2023. Vice Chancellor of the University Barney Glover commented on the project: "We are delighted to partner with Greater Sydney Landcare on this tree-planting program. This is a significant step

in WSU's ongoing journey towards becoming nature positive by 2029 and a testament to sustainability and environmental stewardship."

Danielle echoes this sentiment: "The university was really on board to plant more trees and contribute to tackling climate change - they wanted to create habitat corridors to connect remnant bushland. It creates a lot of great shade for livestock, and the fact that they are so on board with the project and are continually helping us find more spots to put more trees is really great."

The Hawkesbury City Council LGA is estimated to only have 20-30% canopy cover while possessing plenty of opportunity for more trees to be planted. Danielle explains: "It's a bit tricky to find big spaces of land in the city that can support thousands of trees, so the Hawkesbury does make that easier. But Hawkesbury still needs more trees because there's a lot of old farmland that's just grass that can benefit from planting lots of trees there, and recreate that bushland that was cleared so many years ago."

The restoration of bushland has numerous benefits for both the environment and the



Students and volunteers at WSU Hawkesbury Campus planting with Creating Canopies

community at the WSU campus and beyond. "Obviously you're creating more canopy, which is really needed with all the development going on across Sydney," Danielle says.

"It's been scientifically proven that getting people outside and enjoying nature improves mental and physical health, and it provides habitat for native wildlife. The plantings are great because it gets a broader community to come together, get outside in nature and get their hands dirty, all the while learning a thing or two about why planting trees is important, which is a component I love."

Creating Canopies is planning to do even more work within the Hawkesbury next year, co-operating with Council to plant more trees on both private and public, with plenty of opportunities for members of the community to get involved. To stay updated, follow Greater Sydney Landcare on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/GreaterSydneyLandcare](http://www.facebook.com/GreaterSydneyLandcare).

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# What's a retirement village and why make the move?

Retirement villages are fast becoming a popular lifestyle choice for Australian seniors, with more than 380,000 people projected to make the move by 2025.

## What is a retirement village?

A retirement village typically refers to a cluster of homes, units or villas designed for independent living for people over the age of 55 with shared on-site facilities.

## Who are retirement villages for?

Retirement villages are suitable to anybody over the age of 55, however the average age is 75. They are a great lifestyle choice for both couples and singles.

They are a wonderful place to live if you value socialising and connecting with people at a similar stage of life – while maintaining your own personal and private space.

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

### 1. Feeling part of a community

One of the strongest attractions to retirement living is the dynamic social scene that comes with it! Residents can enjoy the 'community feel' through regular activities and events like movie nights, trivia, or fitness sessions.

### 2. Feeling safe and secure

Many BaptistCare retirement villages feature security measures that provide peace of mind, such as security cameras, sensor lights and the 'neighbourhood watch' of the community.

As an extra safety measure, most BaptistCare retirement villages also have a 24 hour emergency call system.

### 3. Onsite communal facilities

Many residents say that retirement living often feels like a permanent vacation. There are often swimming pools and gyms, beautifully manicured gardens, bowling greens, and walking tracks to enjoy as well as visiting health specialists.

Residents might meet friends for a coffee at the onsite café, or they might choose to host a barbecue for visiting family using the communal facilities.

### 4. Freedom from maintenance chores

One of the strongest attractions to retirement living is relinquishing the majority of your home and garden maintenance, work that can really take a physical toll - particularly later in life.

### 5. Planning for your future needs

Many BaptistCare retirement villages such as the nearby Gracewood Community in Kellyville and Aminya Village in Baulkham Hills have a co-located residential aged care home so that residents requiring additional care can remain within the community as well as access to in-home care services if required.

To learn more or book a tour at your closest BaptistCare retirement village, visit [baptistcare.info/village-locations](http://baptistcare.info/village-locations) or call us on 1300 275 227.

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# New Name in Solar Systems

Local company Solaray Energy, one of Australia's largest and most reputable solar installers, has undergone a name change to 1KOMMA5°.

German company 1KOMMA5°, a leading provider of solar systems, heat pumps and EV chargers in Europe will be expanding its Australian operations and sustainably and strengthening its team in the region by rebranding Solaray Energy.

Philipp Schröder, co-founder and CEO of 1KOMMA5° said the expansion in Australia with the upcoming launch of Heartbeat was an exciting development for the company.

Solaray Energy was founded in 2010 by Jonathan Fisk and Peter Thorne and has grown from a two-man operation to a flourishing, medium-sized company and is recognised as a pioneer and expert installer of smart solar and battery technology in the Sydney and Melbourne metropolitan regions.

With over 50 experienced employees and installers, the team has already installed over 20,000 sustainable energy systems for private households and companies in Australia's two biggest markets.

1KOMMA5° Sydney and 1KOMMA5° Melbourne plans to expand its team and services by more than 100% by 2025. This not only fortifies local trades but also contributes to job creation, reflecting 1KOMMA5°'s dedication to fostering a resilient and sustainable energy ecosystem.

Jonathan Fisk said: "We are excited to be part of the growing 1KOMMA5° global family and working to achieve zero carbon emissions for households and businesses across the world. We are especially thrilled to be bringing 1KOMMA5°'s innovative technologies to Australian households, accelerating the transition to sustainable energy practices and contributing significantly to a greener future."

Philipp Schröder said: "Jonathan and Peter have built a healthy and steadily growing business and together, we are now doubling down on decarbonising buildings, empowering customers to participate in the electricity market and contributing to a sustainable, CO2-neutral future."

The rebranding of Solaray Energy is the latest step by 1KOMMA5° to expand the coverage of CO2-neutral power supply, heat and EV charging in Sydney, Melbourne and beyond.

1KOMMA5° is currently driving the energy transition at five locations in Australia and 65 other locations worldwide. The aim is to develop a market-leading hardware and software platform across Europe and Australia that is capable of converting 500,000 buildings per year to climate-neutral power generation, heating and mobility.

1KOMMA5° Australia specialises in customised energy systems including solar systems, battery storage units, EV chargers



(L-R) Pete Thorne, Director of Solaray Energy, Jonathan Fisk, Director of Solaray Energy and Philipp Schröder, Co-Founder and CEO of 1KOMMA5°

and heat pumps. Its comprehensive services extend from initial consultation and planning to seamless installation and ongoing maintenance of cutting-edge energy systems.

Homeowners can rely on the expertise and benefits of a robust local partner and gain the ability to efficiently manage their energy supply through renewable sources in a decentralised and sustainable manner.

In addition, the 1KOMMA5° intelligent energy software, known as Heartbeat, is set to launch in Australia in 2024. This innovative system not only oversees and regulates energy usage but also establishes a crucial link between homes and the dynamic electricity market. Australians will have the opportunity to access the most cost-effective and environmentally friendly electricity sourced from wind and solar power.

This integrated solution not only empowers users to make sustainable choices but also helps them reduce electricity expenses, all managed conveniently through a centralised platform for home energy.

Check out our Tesla Powerwall special on page 27 or go to 1Komma5.com.au

## PETS WE LOVE

### The Hawkesbury Companion Animal Shelter

is at 10 Mulgrave Rd, Mulgrave.

Call 4560 4644 or visit Hawkesbury

Council's Facebook page

[www.facebook.com/hawkesburycitycouncil](http://www.facebook.com/hawkesburycitycouncil)



#### AT A GLANCE

NAME: AXLE  
SEX: Male  
BREED: Australian Kelpie cross  
AGE: 2 years  
PRICE: \$49

**AXLE** is a very well behaved dog with lovely manners according to staff at the Hawkesbury Companion Animal Shelter. Staff say that Axle is good on a lead and loves to show off. Axle will sit when asked and offer you his paw. If have been looking for a lovely well-mannered dog and you are interested in adopting him please come to the shelter with your family dog and children to meet him. His adoption price has been reduced to \$49. The adoption price includes the first vaccination, microchipping, desexing and life-time council registration.

*Hawkesbury Council's Rehoming Organisation*  
Number is: R251000145.



#### AT A GLANCE

NAME: SPOT  
SEX: Male  
BREED: American Bully x Staffy  
AGE: 1 year old  
PRICE: \$49

**SPOT** is a very happy, friendly boy who just loves his play time and being out in the exercise yard playing alongside other dogs according to the staff at the Hawkesbury Companion Animal Shelter. Spot has a big personality and loves to sit with you for attention. Staff say that Spot will need some training to help him settle into his new home, he is eager to please and does listen to commands. If you are interested in adopting Spot please come to the shelter with your family dog and children to meet him. He is already desexed and can leave the shelter with you. His adoption price has been reduced to \$49. The adoption price includes the first vaccination, microchipping, and life-time council registration.

*Hawkesbury Council's Rehoming Organisation* Number is: R251000145.

# Tick Paralysis and Tick Prevention

by Sydney Animal Hospitals

The paralysis tick (*Ixodes holocyclus*) is a small, eight-legged tick that produces a potent toxin. This toxin causes paralysis in dogs and cats and is potentially fatal. Paralysis ticks are commonly found on the east coast of Australia.

They are most active in the warmer months especially after wet weather which initiates hatching of eggs in the environment and activity of the larval stages which feed on mammals. This unfortunately means that they are a serious problem for pets in the Sydney area, particularly the Northern beaches.

After the tick has been attached for a day or two, enough poison will have been injected to cause significant neurological disease in pets due to blocking of nerve receptors. The most common symptom is a weak or flaccid paralysis starting in the hind limbs due to nerve signals being blocked from accessing the muscles of movement. As time progresses the paralysis ascends up the body to eventually affect the muscles of breathing and swallowing. This process causes significant illness and death unless an antiserum is administered to neutralise the toxin before it attaches to more nerve receptors. Other symptoms of tick paralysis include vomiting, coughing, excessive panting and grunting, an altered bark or limping if the tick is lodged in a foot or leg.

Tick poisoning is common, severe and very preventable. Our top tips for tick prevention are:-

- Tick clipping by an experienced groomer and daily tick searching.

- Administration of highly effective and safe tick preventatives such as the soon to be released yearly injection. Never rely on an animal's natural immunity against ticks or herbal or natural remedies that have not been properly tested and proven to be effective and safe.
- Avoid taking your pet into long grasses and bushland during the warmer months.
- Ensure that you have adequate pet insurance for your pet and that this covers tick paralysis.

Finally knowing the symptoms of tick paralysis is key. Signs of tick paralysis vary depending on the length of time the tick has been on the animal, as well as the potency of the toxin, which can vary between ticks.

Signs include:

- A change in bark
- Increased or laboured breathing
- Coughing
- Excessive salivation
- Vomiting or regurgitation
- Weakness in the hind legs, which typically progresses to involve the forelimbs also
- Reluctance to get up or walk
- Because the ability to breathe and swallow are affected, some animals will inhale saliva or food (aspirate) resulting in life-threatening pneumonia.



It is important to seek veterinary attention to determine whether your pet needs tick anti-toxin. Until then, there are some important steps you can take to reduce the risk of complications:

- Keep your pet calm, quiet and cool. Excitement, exercise and overheating can exacerbate illness associated with tick paralysis
- Remove food and water. Your pet's ability to swallow may be compromised, putting your pet at risk of aspiration pneumonia
- Search for other ticks on your pet

Prevention of tick paralysis is essential to maintain the health of your pet. With the upcoming release of a yearly flea and tick injection, your vet at Sydney Animal Hospitals can provide a long-term prevention to keep your pet safe, without the worry of needing to remember to give your pet a regular tablet at home. Book your appointment today.

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**16 - 24 December 10am - 4pm**

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- THE HILLS -

# The Hills Shire Council News

## Help pave the way for a smart future

Council has unveiled a plan poised to guide the rollout of smart technologies within the Hills. The creation of Smart Places can have a tangible impact on the lives of people who live, work and play in an area, as well as economic productivity and environmental sustainability.

The draft Smart Places Strategic Framework, currently on public exhibition, presents a long-term strategy to stimulate innovation, tackle urban challenges, attract investment and improve the overall liveability of the region by implementing technology into the urban environment.

Residents and stakeholders are invited to 'have their say' on the draft Smart Places Strategic Framework via Council's website by searching 'Draft Smart Places Strategic Framework'. The exhibition closes on Monday 11 December 2023.



## Do you know of a heritage building in need of some TLC?

Did you know you can get financial assistance to help fund the restoration of heritage listed properties in The Hills Shire through Council's Heritage Grants Program?

Individuals, not-for-profit community organisations, or commercial or private organisations based in The Hills Local Government Area (LGA) can apply for \$25,000 on a dollar-for-dollar basis for restoration and repairs.

## Your bin collection could be changing days



Starting from Monday 4 December 2023, bin collections for around 20,000 households and businesses across 16 suburbs of The Hills will change.

Affected residents\* have already begun receiving letters notifying them of their new collection days. Make sure you check your letterbox.

You can find out your new bin collection day by using the online bin collection map available on the Council website.

Visit Council's website and search for 'Bin Collection Schedule Changes' in the search bar.

*\*Affected suburbs include: Rouse Hill, Kellyville, Maraylya, Nelson, Baulkham Hills, Annangrove, Glenorie, Castle Hill, Box Hill, North Kellyville, Beaumont Hills, Norwest, Bella Vista and Glenhaven.*

Applications close on Wednesday 31 January 2024. Submissions are subject to a panel assessment process and reported to Council for endorsement.

For more information and to apply, visit [www.thehills.nsw.gov.au](http://www.thehills.nsw.gov.au) and search for 'Heritage Grants.'

Proudly sponsored by the NSW Government.

[www.thehills.nsw.gov.au](http://www.thehills.nsw.gov.au) | 9843 0555





Mayor of The Hills Shire, Dr Peter Gangemi, launches his 2023 Library Fine Amnesty & Christmas Appeal.

## Help those in need this Christmas

Council's heartwarming holiday tradition, The Mayor's Library Fine Amnesty & Christmas Appeal is back.

The annual Christmas event waives fines for late books from Hills Shire libraries in exchange for non-perishable food items.

The donated food items will be distributed to Anglicare for their Mobile Community Pantry, a program that offers affordable food options to individuals and families looking to have a more enjoyable festive season.

In addition to supporting a great cause, this initiative offers library members the perfect opportunity to return any long-overdue books to the shelves of the four Hills Shire Library branches.

The Library Fine Amnesty and Mayor's Christmas Appeal for 2023 ends on Sunday 17 December 2023.

Residents who do not have late library books to return are also encouraged to contribute to this worthy cause and help make a difference.

Head to Council's website and search 'Library Fine Amnesty' to see the list of acceptable items.

## Council Meetings

Tuesday 5 December, 2023 – 7pm

For more information, visit [www.thehills.nsw.gov.au](http://www.thehills.nsw.gov.au) and search for 'Meeting Agendas and Minutes.'

## Fun Family Open Day at Ellerman Child Care Centre



Are you looking for a child care centre for your child?

Ellerman Child Care Centre in Dural is having a Family Open Day on Saturday, 2 December. Meet educators from the Centre, ask questions, and explore the facility. There'll be fun, free activities for the kids, including face painting, arts and crafts, outdoor games and more.

Tours are available from 10am – 11am and from 11am to noon. Ellerman's goal is to create a nurturing and stimulating environment where your child can develop their skills and abilities through play-based learning activities, guided by experienced educators. The current fees and charges for 0-3 are \$147 per day and 3-5 are \$127 per day. Families can apply for Start Strong Funding.

To register your interest in the Family Open Day, visit [www.thehills.nsw.gov.au](http://www.thehills.nsw.gov.au) and search for 'Ellerman Child Care Centre Family Open Day.'



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# DINING OUT

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*We've been proud participants in the Hills to Hawkesbury Magazine's Dining Out section, and our experience with the team has been nothing short of exceptional.*

*The fast and reliable service provided by Tanya and her team has made each collaboration a pleasure. Their helpfulness and dedication have played a vital role in boosting our brand awareness within the local community.*

*We look forward to continuing our partnership and reaching even greater heights together.*

**NATHAN WOOD**  
Marketing Manager – Lone Star Rib House



**Manoosh**  
PIZZERIA

**Manoosh Pizzeria was born in Enmore in 2008 as a Lebanese bakery. Over the past decade they have evolved into Sydney's number one provider of Lebanese baked goods and pizzas.**

Their modern take on traditional classics continues to satisfy customers from near and far.

Manoosh Pizzeria currently has 18 locations across NSW and ACT. Their continued success has been built on a commitment to offering customers meals that only use the freshest ingredients. They freshly bake all of their pizzas and wraps, and make to order all sides, salads and hot desserts... ensuring that the first bite is always full of flavour.

Your local Manoosh Pizzeria is in Grove Square, Baulkham Hills (at the entrance of the mall of the outdoor car space).

**Stay tuned for the "12 days of Christmas" Giveaway online, and in their socials!**

Follow them on insta: @manoosh\_pizzeria or Facebook: Manoosh Pizzeria Australia

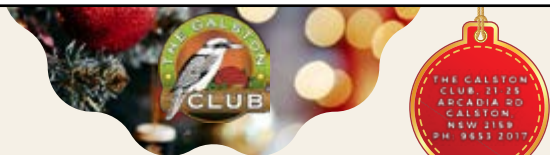
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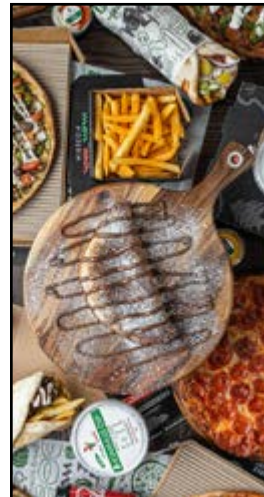
## Christmas Lunch!

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# KARU

## Delivering Quality Community Spirits

By JOSH KERWICK



Head distiller Ally Ayres with Karu products and awards

2023 has been an extremely busy year for Hawkesbury spirit-crafters Karu Distillery. Since *Hills to Hawkesbury Community News* last talked with Karu in March, they have continued to rack up acclaim worldwide for their high-quality products.

Their world-class Morita Chipotle Vodka emerged as the sole platinum spirit in the Infused/Flavoured Vodka category at the recent Las Vegas Global Spirit Awards; their three other signature drinks also took home platinum ratings. Their recently debuted Orsa Coffee Gin liqueur took home Best Liqueur and Best in Show at the Tasting Australia Spirit, and the Distillery won a Hawkesbury Business Award and was a finalist in the Australian Women's Small Business Champion Awards.

For Karu's head distiller Ally Ayres, who founded the Distillery in 2018 with her husband Nick, says this year being Karu's busiest so far has also made it one of the best. She says: "We've taken on more staff, we've got a warehouse in Richmond now, we're producing more spirits - and we're able to get back out there after not being able to for so long in the past four years!"

Orsa is another spirit from Karu that could only be made in the Hawkesbury, thanks to a collaboration with Darren Gerbasch's Little Coffee Co in the Blue Mountains. "We met Darren at a tourism beverage trail meeting a few years ago, and he's just as enthusiastic about coffee as we are spirits. We approached him and we asked him to teach us a bit about coffee expertise. He made a custom brew for us, and it was two or three months of R&D from seriously getting started with it to where Orsa is today."

Although the Karu team have been travelling all around the country and collecting awards on the international stage, they've continued to highly value the role of the community in their success. "Because Orsa was very much a collaboration of local businesses, it's been well received by the community - and we love to do those sorts of things," says Ally. "It's really cool that after the amount of stuff the community and industry has gone through the last couple of years, we've been able to get the spark back a bit and produce something that's truly a community spirit!"

Reflecting on the year that's gone by, Ally has been able to find lots of joy among the busyness. "We've had more events than usual, more distillation and ferment days, more barrels than usual - and we're having a real fun time with that. We're getting back out there and cementing Australia as a place of quality and having the medals and trophies to prove that. It's been really good!"

Ally, Nick and the Karu team have been hard at work creating plenty of spirits for the holiday season, while also planning a number of other products for 2024. Keep up to date with the world-class local Distillery here: <https://www.facebook.com/KaruDistillery>

To hear more from Ally about Orsa, keep an eye on our website and Facebook for a video interview coming in the next week.

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# Comfort Discovered Rebrands to Karis Life

For nearly four decades, Comfort Discovered has been an integral part of the local community, serving its needs with dedication and care. In 2018, the business embarked on a transformative journey, relocating to a state-of-the-art facility in Hornsby. The move was a pivotal moment in the brand's history, setting the stage for its evolution into Karis Life.

Rejimon Punchayil, the visionary behind this rebranding, sheds light on the inspiration behind the new name, Karis Life. "Compassion," he notes, "is what our customers have always identified as our defining trait." The name 'Karis' draws its roots from the Greek word 'Charis,' signifying goodwill, loving-kindness, favor, and grace. This name encapsulates the nurturing approach with which Karis Life addresses each customer's unique circumstances. Listening attentively and understanding individual needs are the cornerstones of our philosophy, enabling us to offer tailored, dignified, and independent living solutions.

Karis Life isn't merely a business; it's your partner in the journey to regain independence with dignity. With decades of industry knowledge and experience, the team at Karis Life is fervently dedicated to providing life-changing assistive technology solutions that enhance not only physical well-being but also the overall quality of life for every customer.

The genesis of Karis Life can be traced back to a chance encounter with an elderly woman struggling with mobility. This encounter stirred the founder, Rejimon Punchayil, to dedicate himself to helping vulnerable members of the community achieve a better quality of life, leading to the birth of Karis Life.

Rejimon Punchayil, the founder, is a seasoned professional with a wealth of experience spanning continents and industries, including

manufacturing, international trade, and marketing. His vast expertise and genuine commitment to community well-being drive a knowledgeable and passionate team. Together, they provide exceptional service and product solutions, while Rejimon remains at the helm, anticipating and addressing future challenges and trends within the assistive technology landscape.

"My highly experienced, trained and motivated team, sharing the mission and value of Karis Life is the force that delivers the Karis Life promise" – Rej Punchayil, Founder Karis Life

Karis Life is not your typical mobility store. In addition to providing top-notch products, they conduct training programs for therapists, enhancing their knowledge and understanding of innovative solutions in the industry. These programs, presented by industry experts specializing in allied health products, empower participants with valuable insights into the highest quality and most innovative products available in the market.

"Live Life Better Seminars for Seniors" is a community initiative offered by Karis Life. These friendly, informative 90-minute seminars are designed to educate seniors about health, well-being, and independent living. The seminars include a wellness segment, easy-to-use exercise items, trivia to spark discussions, and a conversation about solutions to everyday issues related to independence and mobility.

Karis Life also offers professional Assistive Technology assessments conducted by licensed independent Occupational therapists. These assessments alleviate the concern of selecting appropriate equipment and securing the necessary funding, ensuring peace of mind for customers.

Karis Life's journey is a testament to the power of compassion, knowledge, and community, and they continue to be a beacon of support and innovation for all those they serve.



## SUMMER READING CLUB

### LET'S KEEP KIDS READING!

The Summer Reading Club (SRC) has returned! This popular children's program is a great way to keep children engaged in reading over the summer holidays. Collect coupons for the books read between 1 December 2023 and 31 January 2024 and then redeem them at the SRC Shop in February.

It is free to join. Simply register at either of our libraries in Richmond or Windsor, collect a reading journal, and start reading. Record the books read in the reading logs that are available at both Libraries or download one at [hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au/library](http://hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au/library)

The more books you read, the more you will be able to spend – what a great incentive! This free activity is available to children aged 16 and under.

The SRC Shop has lots of cool items available to redeem with the coupons. A catalogue is available to show examples of what is available and how many coupons are needed. The Shop will be located at Hawkesbury Central Library, Windsor and it will officially open on Saturday, 3 February and will remain open during Library hours until Sunday, 18 February 2024. Kids can also be one of the first to shop at an early bird event on Friday, 2 February between 3 and 5:30pm. Bookings for the Shop are essential via Eventbrite <https://hawkesburylibrary.eventbrite.com>

Hawkesbury Central Library is located at 300 George Street, Windsor, and Richmond Branch Library is located at 29 West Market Street, Richmond. For more information call 4560 4460 or email [outreach@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au](mailto:outreach@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au)

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# And the Winners are ...

Castle Hill RSL Club Group (CHRG) celebrated its' amazing sub clubs and their members at the Annual Sports and Community Awards on Wednesday, 15 th November at Castle Hill RSL Club.

The night was not just about recognising excellence, but celebrating the vibrant tapestry of the CHRG community.

More than 20 sub-clubs thrive at the heart of CHRG, woven together by the dedication of volunteers and the passion of the members.

From the spirited competition of cricket to the harmonious notes of the Castle Hill RSL youth wind orchestra, the sub-clubs cover a spectrum of interests, creating a rich mosaic of community engagement.

CHRG President John Payne congratulated finalists and winners and told guests at the special awards night: "In our midst, we proudly boast nearly 3,000 registered sub-club members, a testament to the deep roots we've planted in the community.

"Whether you've been with us for almost 50 years or joined us just weeks ago, each of you contributes to the unique spirit that defines us."

"Tonight, we're not just here for the accolades. We gather to honor outstanding individuals in the categories of Volunteer of the Year and Junior Sportsperson of the Year at our annual Sports and Community Awards Showcase."

One of the key volunteer award winners was John Langford (pictured) who is a founding member of the CHRSL swimming club.

John has clocked up some 49 years membership and participation, alongside the 49 years membership with the RSL club itself.

Club President, David Hagan said "John Langford has contributed to the success of the club and has been on our committee at various times for over 25 years. Most of this as president. He is a great character and leads by example to many of the younger members. We celebrate his long service with 2024 being his 50th year in the club."



## AWARD WINNERS: Volunteer of the Year Award

**Ken Sherwood** – Castle Hill Bowling Club  
**John Langford** – CHRSL Adults Swimming Club

**Frank Gnanam** – CHRSL Badminton Club  
**Petar Sredojevic** – CHRSL Cricket Club  
**Simon Duda** – CHRSL Darts Club  
**Belinda Dale** – CHRSL Dolphins Junior Swimming Club

**David Spencer** – CHRSL Fishing Club  
**David Sherlock** – CHRSL Golf Club  
**Kieran Hart** – CHRSL Gymnastics Club  
**Boris Menante** – CHRSL Rockets Football Club  
**Louis Minihan** – CHRSL Snooker Club  
**Petra Evans** – CHRSL Youth Wind Orchestra  
**Tom Madigan** – Club Parramatta Golf Club  
**Wayne Ball** – Lynwood Golf Club

## Junior Sportsperson of the Year Award:

**Aarohi Puri** – CHRSL Badminton Club  
**Cadell Birch** – CHRSL Cricket Club  
**Hailey Leung** – CHRSL Dolphins Junior Swimming Club  
**Eva Fountis** – CHRSL Gymnastics Club  
**Shivam Lal** – CHRSL Rockets Football Club  
**Cindy Hu** – CHRSL Youth Wind Orchestra  
**Jordan Ball** – Lynwood Golf Club

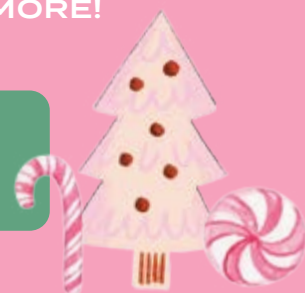
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## CYBER SECURITY BOOST FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES

**With over 12,000 small businesses in my electorate of Macquarie alone, it's no secret to anyone locally that they are the backbone of our economy.**

Small businesses have taken a leap with new technologies to help reach new customers, build their teams and streamline administrations task. These digital platforms, however, are increasingly exposing small businesses to cyber-attacks.

That's why the Government is investing the Australian Cyber Security Strategy, which will help businesses stay safe against cyber threats.

As a former business owner, I understand how hard it is to do the day to day work, and at the same time do all the things you need to keep you, your customers, your staff and your providers safe.

We know that small and medium businesses are less likely to have the financial resources, time and expertise to invest in cyber security. So, we're investing \$7.2 million to provide a voluntary, free cyber health-check, so small businesses can understand their strengths, vulnerabilities and what they need to do better protect them from cyber-attacks.

We're also providing \$11 million for the Small Business Cyber Resilience Service. With this assistance, small business owners won't be left behind when it comes to knowing the risks and likelihoods of cyber-attacks. In the event of a cyber-attack, small business owners will also

receive step by step, tailored advice and support for financial and structural recovery.

These services join a suite of programs from the Albanese and NSW Government to assist small businesses. Along with investments in cyber security, the Energy Bill Relief Fund and the Small Business Energy Incentive are helping small businesses tackle external pressures, allowing owners to focus on their long-term success.

And if you're not running a small business yourself, the holidays are a great opportunity to shop local and support the wonderful businesses in our area! Enjoy the Christmas break and travel safely.

## ALBANESE GOVERNMENT ACTS TO REDUCE COSTS OF BREAST CANCER TREATMENT

Like many Australians, breast cancer awareness is a cause close to my heart. It's the most commonly diagnosed cancer amongst women, with around 57 Australians diagnosed every day.

Concerningly, over half of women aged 50 to 74 in Western Sydney are overdue for a mammogram.

A couple of weeks ago I held my annual Greenway Pink Ribbon morning tea in The Ponds. There our community gathered to raise funds and awareness for the National Breast Cancer Foundation, and it was our most successful pink ribbon event to date. We shared pink treats from Premium Lovely Sweets, from Kings Park, over cups of tea. We heard from the director of BreastScreen NSW, and thanks to the

help of the Lions Club we raised over \$3,500 for the cause.

And, we had BreastScreen NSW in attendance so guests could book their free mammograms on the spot. We did all of this because we share the same vision: to achieve zero deaths from breast cancer in Australia.

The Albanese government shares this vision too. That's why I'm so pleased that, since 6 November, women diagnosed with an aggressive form of breast cancer have access to new treatment through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

As the Minister for Health and Aged Care, Mark Butler, said, women battling metastatic cancers can pay up to \$425,000 per course of

treatment. Thanks to the government's listing, these women will only have to pay a maximum of \$30 per script.

Earlier this month the Government also introduced the Medicare rebate for genetic testing of Breast Cancer to assist with earlier detection.

Together with our community, businesses, volunteer organisations and government, we are collectively making a real difference to Breast Cancer awareness and bringing breast cancer deaths closer to zero.

I'm so proud to represent a community in Greenway and a government who see this as a priority.

As your Federal Member for Greenway, I'm here to help.

Albanese Labor Government Delivers for Greenway in 2023-24 Budget

**Minister Michelle Rowland MP**

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Authorised by Michelle Rowland MP, Australian Labor Party, Blacktown NSW 2148



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## Box Hill Brumbies enjoying debut season

Box Hill Brumbies, the newest club in the Hawkesbury District Cricket Association, are enjoying a terrific debut.

Their Under-10s are lying second in the competition with six wins from eight matches. According to Chris Johnston, the secretary of the Hawkesbury DCA, this is a very impressive start.

"They (Box Hill) are close to having a senior team and we expect to have a couple of junior and senior teams next season," Johnston said.

"The Hawkesbury DCA has a long history and it's exciting to be welcoming a new club following the residential growth we are seeing in the North West," Johnston said.

"A lot of people have put in a lot of effort to get this club off the ground and we're excited to see it continue to grow and flourish in the coming years.

"Thanks to clubs like Box Hill, Hawkesbury has seen the biggest growth in junior participation of all districts across NSW.

Kian Singh Chawla of the Brumbies is the third-highest wicket taker in the Under-10s and has the best bowling average of 3.8 while his team-mate Samarvir Singh is sixth on the batting ladder with 68 runs.

Vice-president of the Brumbies Zeeshan Aqeel said the concept was first mooted by club president Bassam Sheikh in March. "It took us several months to address the absence of

sports groups, clubs, and facilities in Box Hill and its surrounds," Aqeel said.

They engaged with the community, approached the council, and liaised with sporting associations to highlight the dearth of events in Box Hill.

The Brumbies field junior cricket and basketball sides after the club was officially incorporated in May 2023. "We registered with the Hawkesbury DCA and the Hawkesbury District Basketball Association," Aqeel said.

Except for Amin Javed, who played Shire Grade 3 with Burwood Briars, the rest of the committee have not played competitive cricket. "Our cricket involvement stems from informal gully (street) cricket during our youth in Pakistan, India, and the UK," Aqeel said.

"The passion and strategic minds of our coaches Haider and Harpreet are nurturing the Under-10s cricket team and the future Brumbies cohort. At the beginning of the 2023-24 season, we were running short of senior players.

However, we now can at least one team for Grade 3 or 4 cricket, pending assessment. We are aiming to field at least one senior and three junior mixed teams.



The Brumbies Under-10 cricket team is having a fine debut season.

"The under-12 basketball team has had a steady start to the competition with the boys improving game by game. We are also seeking female participants for our mixed under-10s basketball for next season."

The Brumbies are also planning to start competitive football and are seeking an alliance with the Box Hill Rangers FC.

Aqeel confirmed the soon-to-be-open Brindle Parkway Reserve will be a major training and playing field hub for the Brumbies and the community.



The Under-12 basketball team who play in the Hawkesbury competition.

## Hills Hornets U14 side impress at Nationals

The Hills Hornets Under-14 boys Premier team have impressed against some of Australia's best teams in the 2023 Under-14 National Basketball Championships in Victoria.

The Hornets, which has a rich and proud history in basketball, said it was "an incredible achievement just to qualify in the top 24 teams in Australia, but the team had an amazing tournament overall."

The Hornets Under-14 boys outfit had an excellent run, winning their first five games to head their pool and qualify for the top eight, putting them through to the quarter-finals. The Hornets lost to Victorian club, Keilor Thunder, in the knock-out stage.

However, the Hornets rebounded to beat Casey Cavaliers and finish as the seventh team in Australia, and importantly the number one side in NSW.

The Hills Hornets paid tribute to the set of youngsters who gave their all at the championships.

"This is an outstanding achievement for the team and we congratulate all players, coaches, and supporters," the club said.



The Hills Hornets Under-14 Boys Premier team impressed at the National Basketball Championships. Picture courtesy HBA

The progress of their youth team is just one part of the highly-successful Hills Basketball Association, which was formed in 1984. The association is fielding 23 junior and seven senior representative teams, while more than 850 teams compete in their competitions.

The association runs more than 380 local competition games each week, involving more than 5,500 players, making them one of the largest basketball organisations in NSW. The HBA competitions are hosted at the Hills Basketball Stadium (Castle Hill), Bernie Mullane Sports Complex (Kellyville), and the Dural Recreation Centre.

Remarkably, the Hornsby Academy (skills sessions) attracts more than 1,500 each week, making it one of the largest development programs in Australia.

The Hills Hornets representative program is also one of the most successful in the state. With several state players and coaches, several NBL, WNBL, and Australian representative players, the Hornets program has become leaders in development.

This season there will be men's and women's teams competing in the NBL1 East Division. The senior program consists of a very successful tier of players through NBL1, Waratah 1, and Youth League (under-23) women & men.

Meanwhile, the HBA has integrated the Waratah Wheelchair team into the Hornets Representative Program from 2023.





*out and about*

with **MICHELLE BYRNE**

## The Hills Women's Shed

Nestled in the beautiful and historical Balcombe Heights Estate sits the Hills Women's Shed. An initiative of the Positive Vibes Foundation, the Hills Women's Shed offers an opportunity for women of all backgrounds and stages of life to meet together, to share stories and to learn new skills whilst forming meaningful friendships and connections.

The Hills Women's Shed offers a reprieve from the day-to-day responsibilities of home and work, where women can participate in a variety of recreational, leisure and personal development activities allowing them to feel part of an inclusive and welcoming community. Activities run at the Shed include workshops such as screen printing, gardening, macrame, making face masks, glass painting, canvas painting, intuitive painting, constructing mosaic coasters, and more. The Hills Women's Shed also hosts cooking classes as well as classes on good nutrition and mental health as well as life skill workshops such as learning to change a tyre and check your car's oil. Bus trips to places such as Bowral and Leura are also popular activities.

What is special about The Hills Women's Shed, it is also a place you can pop into for a coffee and a chat with the other ladies or to read a book in the front room or to potter around in the backyard and in the gardens. There is no pressure to participate in the work re possible the activities are provided free of charge to participants ensuring all those who want to attend the shed can regardless of their financial position.

For many of the women who attend the Hills Women's Shed it has become an important lifeline, offering a place to make deep connections with others, to find support for the challenges they are facing and to improve their well-being in many ways.

Women's Sheds are starting to become increasingly popular with more and more sheds beginning to spring up around the country. However, unlike the 1200 Men's Sheds which are part of the Australian Men's Shed Association which was formed in 2007, there is no peak body yet for the Women's Sheds that offers support and financial assistance to the running of the sheds. Putting this aside, what has become clear in the past few years is that Women's shed are equally important as Men's Sheds in reducing social isolation, connecting people, creating conversations and community whilst reducing the impact of mental health issues.

The Hills Women's Shed runs every Thursday 10am - 12pm and every second Saturday of the month 11am-1pm with the last session for 2024 to be held on 9 December. All women are welcome to attend.

For more information on The Hills Women's Shed and the Positive Vibes Foundation go to [www.positivevibes.org.au](http://www.positivevibes.org.au)



# WHAT'S ON

IN THE HILLS TO HAWKESBURY

## DECEMBER 2, 2023

### SUNSET ROCKS

The Backyard, Panthers Penrith,  
123 Mulgoa Road, Penrith NSW 2750

### THE SECRET GARDEN COMMUNITY HUB CHRISTMAS FAIR

09:00 AM - 02:00 PM  
Secret Garden & Nursery, Clydesdale  
Lane Richmond, NSW 2753

### LIGHT UP WINDSOR STREET FAIR

05:00 PM - 09:00 PM  
Street Fair - Windsor Mall to George  
Street, Windsor.

## DECEMBER 3, 2023

### ROTARY WPH/CHERRYBROOK CHRISTMAS MARKET

09:00 AM - 03:00 PM  
Rural Fire Services/Girl Guides site,  
cnr Shepherds and  
Macquarie Dr Cherrybrook

## DECEMBER 5, 2023

### WESLEY CARE FINDER

10:30 AM - 12:30 PM  
Hawkesbury Central Library  
300 George Street Windsor,  
NSW 2753

### AUTHOR TALK: RICHARD GLOVER

06:00 PM - 07:30 PM  
Hawkesbury Central Library,  
300 George Street, Deerubbin Centre,  
Windsor, NSW 2756

## DECEMBER 6, 2023

### FREE COMMUNITY LEGAL CLINIC (1st Wednesday)

10:00 AM - 01:00 PM  
Hawkesbury Central Library  
300 George Street Windsor,  
NSW 2753

## DECEMBER 9, 2023

### GROW OUR OWN FOOD - SESSION 4

09:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
Hawkesbury EarthCare Centre,  
Corner Campus Drive & Science Road,  
Richmond

### CHRISTMAS WREATH MAKING

10:00 AM - 01:00 PM  
1 Pellitt Lane, Dural, NSW

## DECEMBER 10, 2023

### CHRISTMAS CAROLS AT THE CENTRE

10:00 AM  
The Centre, 1 Pellitt Lane,  
Dural 2158

# LADIES FLYING HIGH

Recently, twenty members of the Hills Friendship Club of Castle Hill visited the new Western Sydney International Airport whilst, just days earlier on the 13th November, 17 year old Cherrybrook teenager Chloe FAMILTON embarked on her attempt to become the youngest pilot to circumnavigate Australia solo by air.

The new airport is named in honour of Nancy-Bird Walton, who was the first Australian female to obtain a Commercial Pilots licence at the age 19. There was a general discussion on the name with a few people questioning the use of a hyphen in the name "Nancy-Bird." This led me to investigate whether it was correct usage or not.

Nancy was born and christened "Nancy" by her parents in 1915, with the surname of Bird. In 1933 she learnt to fly, being taught by Sir Charles Kingsford-Smith's Flying School in Sydney. At the age of 24 she met and married Charles Walton in 1939, whilst living in England. Her husband Charles' pet name for her was Nancy-Bird although most people called her Nancy Bird (without hyphenating the names).

When Qantas took delivery of their first Airbus A380 (VH-OQA) it was named in her honour. Her name on the A380 was originally written "Nancy Bird Walton", but Qantas respected her preference for the hyphenation used by her late husband ("Nancy-Bird"), and the hyphen was added before the aircraft's maiden flight over Sydney, with Nancy on board.

Nancy was also given the moniker "Angel of the Outback" during her early days as a pilot. This came about after meeting the Reverend Stanley Drummond who asked her to help start up Flying Medical Service in NSW. In 1935, she was hired to operate the service, named the Royal Far West Children's Health Scheme. Bird's own Gipsy Moth was used as an air ambulance. She bought a better-equipped aircraft and began covering more territory, including Queensland, not yet reached by the Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia. She told others that it was rewarding but lonely work. She later said "One of the things that came into one's mind was the fear of being lost and never being found. You would have perished before being found in the summertime in that country."

"It was a wonderful opportunity for me to come from that back country and meet other flying people. You see, I was isolated out there. Nobody even spoke the same language."

After working in the outback for more than four years, Nancy knew she needed a

break from flying. Commercial aviation was still in its infancy when 31 aircraft competed in the 1936 air race from Adelaide to Brisbane. Nancy entered and won the Ladies Trophy. When a Dutch airline company invited her to do some promotional work in Europe, she accepted.

During World War II, she returned to Australia, setting up and commanding the Australian Women's Air Training Corps.

This pioneering airwoman went on to establish the Australian Women Pilots' Association (AWPA) in 1950 where she remained President for five years. Nancy-Bird Walton became Patron of the AWPA in 1983, following the death of Lady Casey, the original Patron. In 1958, she decided to return to flying after a hiatus of over twenty years. In 1966 she was awarded the Order of the British Empire (OBE) and made an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) in 1990, retaining her pilot's licence until three years before her death, aged 93, in Sydney in 2009. The terminal at Bourke Airport is named after her, and an annual sponsorship for young female adventurers was set up in her name by the Australian Geographic Society.

The Nancy-Bird Walton Memorial trophy, sponsored by the family, is presented by the Australian Women Pilots' Association for the "most noteworthy contribution to aviation by a woman of Australasia"

Nancy's name has gone down in history books as a pioneer in aviation and has been honoured in being used for the name of the new Western Sydney International Airport at Badgerys Creek.

It will be interesting to see how the future views Chloe FAMILTON's efforts in aviation. She has already shown her charitable side in raising funds for "A Start In Life" which assist students facing barriers in their education. ([www.astartinlife.org.au](http://www.astartinlife.org.au)) in which she hopes to raise \$20,000.



Chloe hopes to inspire young people, and especially girls, to spread their wings and take flight to new possibilities.

For me, Chloe's efforts to date, brought back memories of Nancy-Bird Walton and other early aviators of Australia, as well as many other firsts by local residents of our area such as Michelle Lee's epic rowing voyages across the Pacific and the Atlantic Oceans.

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# AS WE WERE

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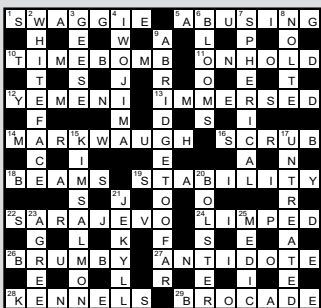
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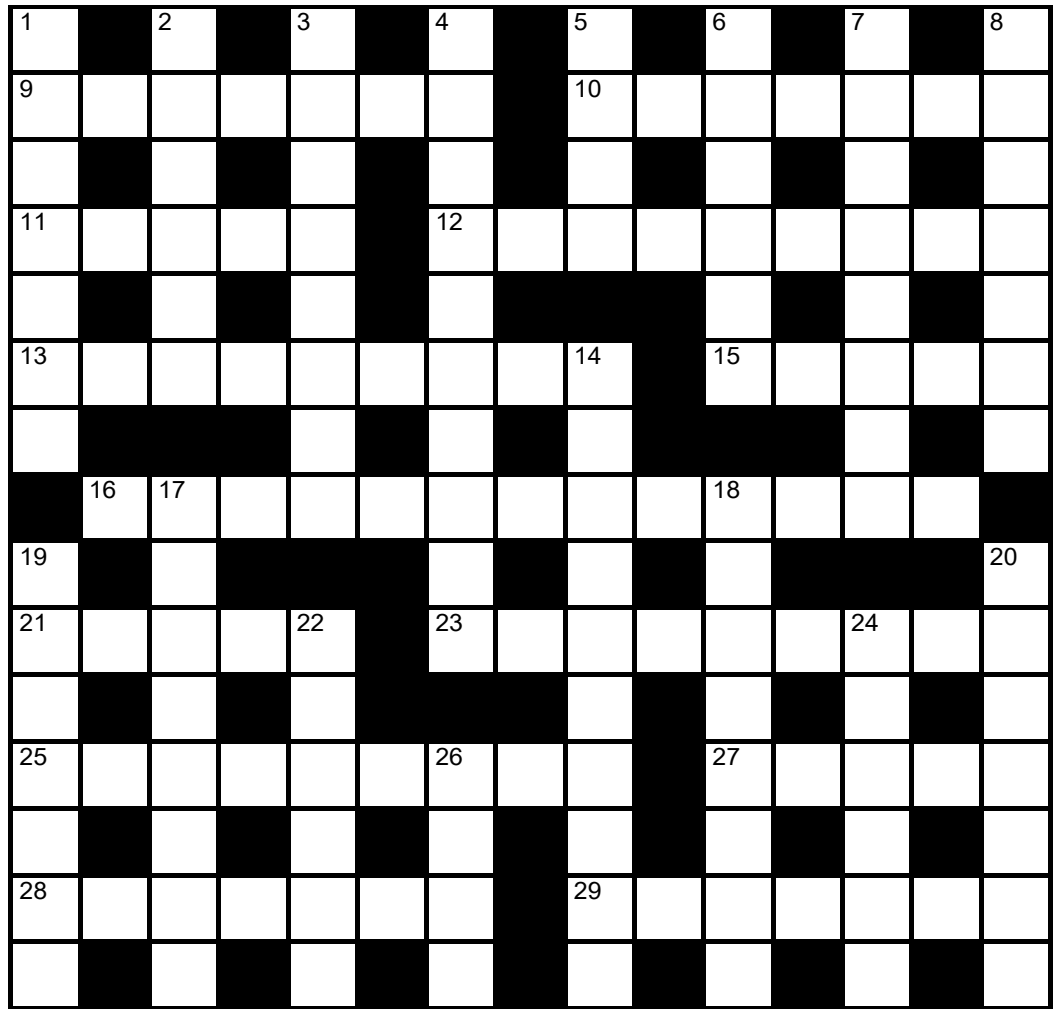
Answers from last issue

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU

6	7	5	4	2	8	1	9	3
2	8	3	1	9	6	5	7	4
9	1	4	3	7	5	8	2	6
1	2	7	5	3	9	6	4	8
5	9	6	8	1	4	7	3	2
3	4	8	7	6	2	9	1	5
8	6	2	9	4	7	3	5	1
4	3	9	6	5	1	2	8	7
7	5	1	2	8	3	4	6	9



### Across

- Small carnivorous marsupial of central Australia
- Visceral
- Have a little (3, 2)
- SUV-lite, perhaps?
- Southern Tasmanian mountain (5, 4)
- Poe's "Nevermore" bird
- South Australian site once used for rabbit disease research (7, 6)
- Pet pests
- Practised
- String puller
- Clean kind of energy
- Where Steven Bradbury would have practised (3, 4)
- Awkward nag wins sun shades

### Down

- Incomplete
- Actor
- Baby's state after leaving the font
- Place for stained suits (3-7)
- Oil lamp fuel
- Spoilsport
- Criminals' transport (5, 3)
- Tell the truth (2, 5)
- "The Voice" judge and country singer/songwriter (5, 5)
- Generally recognized
- Alison is prepared for illicit affairs
- Intervenes (5, 2)
- Formal speech
- Furious
- Bone immobilizer
- The Royal Queensland Show

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**Hills to Hawkesbury**  
Community News

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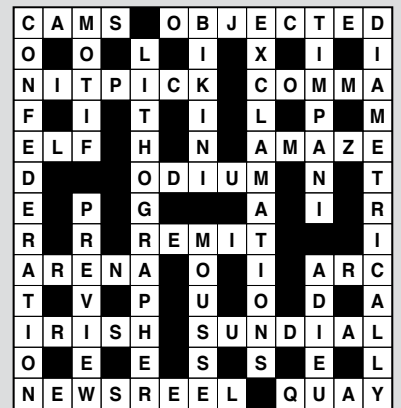
PUERTO RICO  
TOBAGO  
TORTOLA  
TRINIDAD  
VIRGIN GORDA

Answers from last issue

## WORD SEARCH

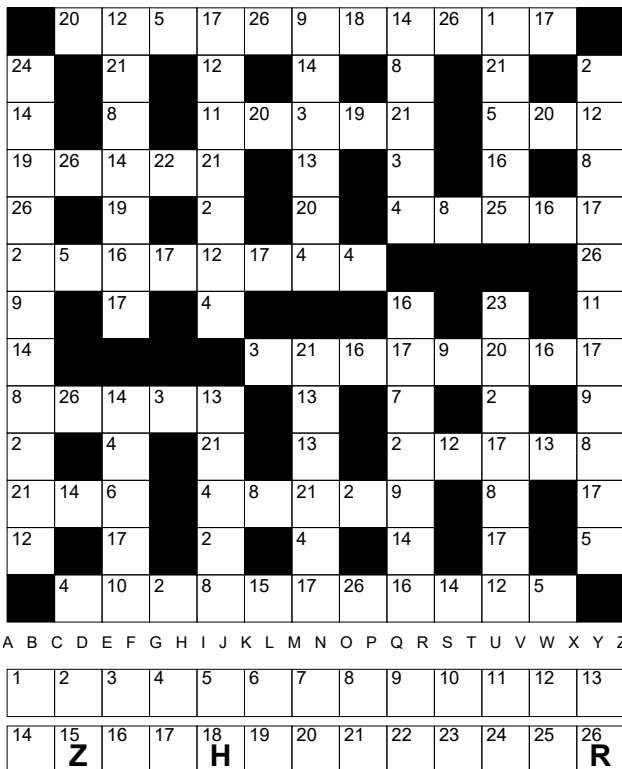


## CODE WORD



Numbers in the grid (1-26) correspond to each of the letters of the alphabet from A-Z in some order. Solve the puzzle and fill in the letters in the key provided as you find them. Three letters are provided to give you a start.

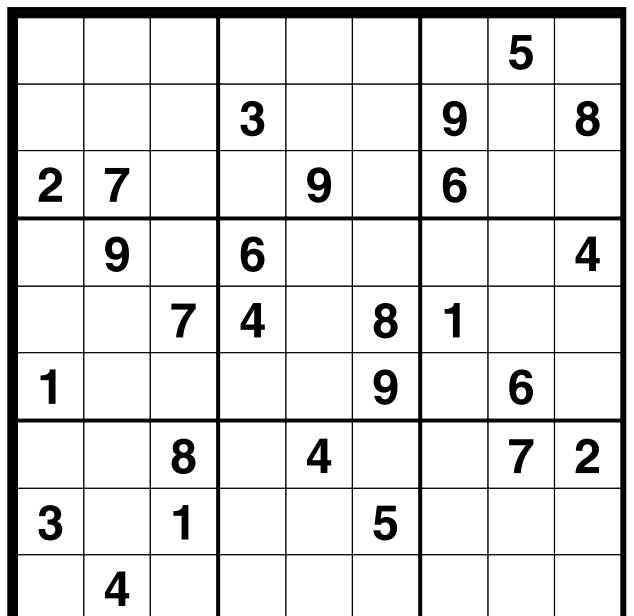
# CODE WORD




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Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9.





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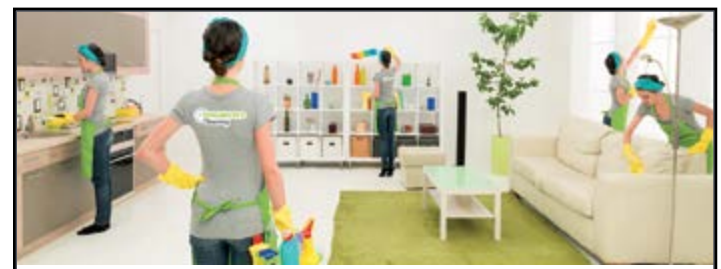
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